

HISTORY OF SCHOHARIE COUNTY.

CHAPTER I.

The *border wars* of New York, in the great struggle with England for American *nationality*, originated some of the most thrilling incidents that ever did or ever can stamp the page of history. Many of those transpired in that part of Albany county now known as Schoharie; while events of no less interest were enacted in Tryon, and other frontier counties. Some of them have already been published, but there are not a few, especially of those which occurred in the Schoharie settlements, that have either not been presented to the American reader at all, or if they have, but partially and inaccurately so.

Schoharie is the present name of a county, a town, a village, and a river, in the state of New York. The geographical position of the county, its division into towns, &c., will be given in a subsequent chapter of this work. The word *Schoharie*, is aboriginal, and signifies, agreeable to published definitions, *drift*, or *flood-wood*. The author has spared no little pains to arrive at the origin and true meaning of this word. The word *Schoharie*, or the word from which that was derived, when originated, not only signified *flood-wood*, but a certain body of flood-wood. At a distance of about half a mile above the bridge which now crosses the Schoharie in the present town of Middleburgh, two small streams run into the river directly opposite each other. The one on the west side, coming from a north-west course, was formerly

called the Line kill, being the northern boundary line of the first Vrooman Patent—which instrument embraced that part of the town of Fulton, now called Vrooman's Land. The other stream is called Stony creek, and runs into the Schoharie from a south-east course. John M. Brown, Esq., in a pamphlet history of Schoharie, published in 1823, attributes to this stream, which he calls the little Schoharie, the origin of the latter word. The two streams mentioned, falling into the Schoharie at that place, produced in the latter a counter current, which caused a lodgment of drift-wood at every high water, directly above. The banks of the river there were no doubt studded at that period with heavy growing timber, which served as abutments for the formation of a natural bridge. I judge so from the fact, that between that place and the bridge below, on the west bank, may now be seen a row of elm stumps of gigantic growth. At what period the timber began to accumulate at that place, is unknown; but it was doubtless at a date far anterior to the settlement of the Schoharie valley, by the aborigines of which we have any certain knowledge. At the time the Indians located in the valley, who were the owners of the soil when the Germans and Dutch first settled there, tradition says there were thousands of loads of wood in this wooden pyramid. How far it extended on the flats on either side is uncertain, they being at that place uncommonly wide; but across the river it is said to have been higher than a house of ordinary dimensions, and to have served the natives the purposes of a bridge; who, when crossing, could not see the water through it. One tradition says Schoharie signifies *to take across or carry over*; while another tradition, from an equally creditable source, gives its literal meaning to be, *the meeting of two waters in a third*—both referring, beyond doubt, to the drift-wood in question, and its locality. This *mausoleum* of the forest sugar-tree, gnarled oak, and lofty pine, was called by the Indians who dwelt in its immediate vicinity, *to-wos-scho-hor*,* the accent falling

* I give the orthography of this word as it sounded when spoken by Mrs. Susannah, widow of Martin Van Slyck. At an interview in 1837, I found Mrs. Van Slyck quite intelligent, and possessed of a very retentive memory.

on the third and fourth syllables. From that word has been derived the present word Schoharie, the first two syllables having been entirely dropped, while another has been added in its Anglicisement. Several years ago I saw an ugly shaped glass bottle in Schoharie, said to have been imported from London by John Lawyer, the first merchant among the German settlers. His name and the place of his residence were stamped upon the bottle in English letters, the latter being there spelled *Shoary*. Many of the old German people of that county, at the present day, pronounce it *Shuckary*, which, it will be perceived, differs nearly as much from the sound of the word as now written, as that does from the sound of the word here given as the original.

At what period the aborigines located who were occupying the Schoharie flats when the Germans and Dutch first settled upon them, is unknown. Judge Brown, in the pamphlet to which I have alluded, informs us that the first Indian settlement was made by Ka-righ-on-don-tee,* a French Indian prisoner, who had taken

She formerly dwelt in Vrooman's Land, near where the bridge of drift-wood had been—could once converse with the natives in their own dialect, and still retains many of their words. She gave the word to which the note refers, as the name by which they called the natural bridge—by whom she had often heard it spoken. The author is indebted to the kindness of this lady and her tenacious memory, for several interesting facts tradition has preserved, relating to the early settlement of Vrooman's Land by the whites, she being a granddaughter of the first Vrooman settler; and also for several incidents worthy of record which transpired during the revolution.

* At a personal interview with the venerable patriot Brown, in Sept. 1837, he pronounced this word as though written Kar-eek-won-don-tee. I adopt his written orthography, however, with the difference only of ending it *ee*, believing it to be sufficiently correct. At this interview he assured the author that on the 5th of the following November, he would be ninety-two years old. Although his faculties, mental and bodily, were failing him, still we are indebted to his good humor and hospitality for some explanations of his pamphlet, and for much other matter not contained in that. Reading his pamphlet to him, and questioning him about customs which were in vogue in his earlier years, he seemed almost inspired with new life—his spirits, animation and memory revived, and he was enabled to relate many anecdotes, which, to use his own words, "he had not thought of in fifty years before." Mr. Brown and his amiable consort were both sociable and urbane, and I spent nearly a day very agreeably with them. Brown was married at twenty-five to a Miss Hager, of Brakabeen, Schoharie county, with whom he lived

for a wife a Mohawk squaw; that his father-in-law gave him a part of those flats to remove him from the presence of the Mohawk Indians, by whom he had been made prisoner, as they bore a deadly hatred to the Canada Indians, and in a drunken frolic might kill him; that families from the Mohawk, Mohegan, Tuscarora, Delaware, and Oneida tribes there joined him, so that a new tribe, of which he was principal chief, was formed, numbering at one time about three hundred warriors.

Karighondontee was probably a Canadian chief of some celebrity, who had been taken prisoner by the Mohawks in one of the bloody wars, which the animosity existing between the Canadian Indians and the Five Nations was continually originating. As speculation alone can furnish any thing like a beginning to the first settlement of Schoharie by the natives known as the

thirty-eight years. He had nine children by that marriage, and several of them are now settled near him in Carlisle. Mrs. Brown, his present wife is, if memory serves me, twenty-two years younger than her husband. She was a Van Arnein from below the Helleberg, and has been married about twenty-six years. Her father was a captain of militia in the continental service. Brown had no issue by his second wife. He was among the first settlers in Carlisle, and, in common with the pioneers of that day, endured his full share of privations and hardships. He was a firm patriot, and a captian of the Tryon county militia in the revolution; he received a cut in one knee with a drawing-knife during the war, from which he ever after went very lame. Subsequent to receiving the injury mentioned, he sent a messenger to Gov. G. Clinton, informing him of his lameness; at the same time signifying a wish to resign his commission. He received in return a very civil letter from His Excellency, in which he expressed much regret at his misfortune; assuring him also that his services could not be dispensed with, or his commission returned; but that if he could not walk to command his company he, (the governor,) would send him a horse that he might ride.

When Otsego county was organized, Brown was one of the commissioners for laying out several public roads in that county; and when Schoharie county was formed, he was again called on to discharge the same duties. The commissioners associated with him in Otsego county, were Mr. Hudson and Col. Herrick, who together laid out twenty-seven public roads. Mr. Brown was appointed by the governor and council of appointment, third judge of the first bench of the Schoharie county courts. He was three times a candidate for member of assembly, and once lost his election by only *two votes*. Considering his limited opportunities in early life, he was an intelligent man. That he never obtained a pension while many others less deserving did, was to him a source of no little mortification and grief. Judge Brown died in the fall of 1838 or 39.

Schoharie tribe, save what has been already related; I trust the reader will indulge me in carrying it a little farther. The revolution in England in the latter part of the seventeenth century, which placed William and Mary upon that throne, was followed by a general war in which several nations of Europe were engaged. Nor were the colonies of America idle spectators of the tragedy. From Europe the grand theatre of that war, the crimson art was brought into the wilds of North America. The Canadas, then French colonies, with the Algonquin Indians within their own territory, were fiercely engaged with the British colonies and the Five Indian Nations then their allies; along the borders of New England and New York. The Mohegans,* who, as we have already seen, made a part of the Schoharie tribe, it is not improbable were engaged in considerable numbers with the people of New England, and at the close of the war or soon after joined Karighondontee: as I suppose that chief to have been made prisoner in that war. The Mohegans, to whom war or the chase may have discovered the Schoharie valley, finding it to be a country sparsely settled—equal in beauty to the banks of the Thames in Connecticut, from whence they emigrated—where game was plenty, and where, too, they would not be surrounded by the “pale faces” and amenable to their laws, may have been induced to settle there; or they may there have sought an asylum from motives not dissimilar to those which brought hither the Mohawk.

I suppose the time of Karighondontee's settlement to have been within about twenty years of the first German settlement in Schoharie; and conclude so from the fact that the tribe was not then more formidable in numbers; for the Tuscaroras† could not have joined it until about the time the Germans located, as they did not leave Carolina in numbers till near that period.

* A part of the Mohegan and Stockbridge Indians, migrated and joined the Five Nations before the revolution.—*Morse's Gazetteer*.

† This tribe came from North Carolina about 1712, and joined the confederacy of the Five Nations, themselves making the sixth. See Lewiston, where they still have a village.—*Spafford's Gazetteer of N. Y.*

It may not perhaps be improper to say a few words respecting the Six Nations of Indians. At the time our pilgrim fathers first landed in America, a confederacy existed between the five most powerful Indian Nations then living in the state of New York. They were called by the French the Iroquois; by the English the Confederates, or Five Nations; by the Dutch, more particularly those in the Mohawk valley, the Maquaas; and by themselves, Aganuschioni, or United People. Their government in many respects was republican. At what time and for what purposes this confederacy was formed, is unknown. It may have originated in conquest, the weaker nations in turn being subdued by the most powerful one; or, from a natural desire to resist and conquer a common foe, that existed from the alliance of other powerful nations. Whatever may have originated this union of Indian strength, it must have existed for a great length of time; for when the Europeans came here, it is said the Confederates all spoke a similar language. The Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca nations formed the confederacy—the Tuscaroras joining them, as has been shown, at a subsequent period. Says the historian Trumbull, “Each of the Five Nations was subdivided into three tribes or families. They distinguished themselves by three different ensigns, the Tortoise, the Bear, and the Wolf. Whenever the sachems, or any of the old men, signed any public paper, they traced upon it the mark of their respective family.” The same author, giving Roger Williams for authority, says the word *Mohawk* imports *cannibal*, and is derived from the word *moho*, to eat. This is undoubtedly a popular error. The Mohawk nation took its name from the river along which it dwelt, called the Mohawk’s river—as the Dutch have it, the Maquaas’ river—which signifies, in plain English, the muskrat’s river. Many ancient Indian land titles have so called the stream in English, writing it in the possessive case; and to this day muskrats are numerous along its shores, hundreds being killed in the valley at every spring freshet.

The Mohawk, which was the most eastern of the Five Nations, had in the latter part of its existence as a nation, three castles—

all of which were on the south side of the Mohawk river. The lower, or eastern castle, was at Icauderago,* afterwards called Fort Hunter, near the junction of the Mohawk and Schoharie rivers; the central or Canajoharie castle, as then called, stood on the brink of the prominence at the east end of the present village of Fort Plain; which hill was called by the Indians *Tu-ragh-jores*, signifying *hill of health*;† and the upper and most western was in the present town of Danube, not far distant from St. Johnsville. The Caughnawagas, who resided at the Tribes' hill, opposite Icauderago, and the ancient village which still bears their name, were a family of the Wolf tribe of Mohawks.

When the Dutch first located at Albany, they courted the friendship of the Confederates; and by furnishing them with fire arms and ammunition to war against their northern enemies, they secured their trade and friendship—the latter proving of most essential service to the colony of New York, in her subsequent wars with Canada. At the beginning of the American revolution, a majority of the Confederates, owing in a great measure to the unbounded influence of the Johnson family over them, remained true to the British interest, removed to Canada with the Johnsons and Butlers, and fought for Britain—proving a terrible scourge to our frontier settlements. Most of the Oneidas, however, and a part of the Tuscaroras, either remained neutral or sided with the Americans; rendering them, as guides and runners, very important services; on which account lands have been reserved to them in the state. The Oneida Reservation is in Vernon, Oneida county, and the Tuscarora in Lewiston, Niagara county, where they still have villages. Their numbers are fast

* McAuley, in his History of New York, gives this as the Indian name for the estuary of the Schoharie river.

† Peter J. Wagner, Esq., who learned the site of this castle, the name of the hill and its signification, from Col. John Frey, an early settler in the valley, who spoke the Mohawk dialect well. A territory extending from Spraker's Basin to Fort Plain, a distance of six miles, was originally called Canajoharie; indeed the town of Canajoharie now covers nearly the same extent on the river, and the castle stood on land still within the extreme limits of that town.

diminishing, and their national character departing; and the time is probably not very distant when it will be said of this once powerful confederacy, which often led to victory its thousands of warriors—it *has* been, yet *is* not. If such a writer as Washington Irving would write a history of the North American Indians, the world would owe him a debt of gratitude. Surely such a work would not detract from the merited literary fame of the author of *Columbus*, to say nothing of the well-emptied saddle-bags of that splenetic old gentleman, Sir Deidrich Knickerbocker.

The Schoharie tribe of Indians seems to have been made up of the fractional parts, or refugees from different nations, some of which may have been compelled to flee from the council fires and hunting grounds of their fathers; and perhaps might not have been inaptly termed by other nations, a tribe of refuge, since it corresponded in some degree to the cities of refuge established by Moses, among the tribes of Israel. That Schoharie was settled if only for indefinite periods to suit the convenience of the natives for hunting and fishing, long before its settlement by Karihondontee, there can remain no doubt; for to this day are found many flint arrow-heads, and not unfrequently other relics of savage ingenuity, which the contiguity of the whites at the time he settled was calculated to obviate the necessity of their retaining in use; for Schenectada and Albany were both within thirty miles of his location by the paths then traveled. It is true, bows and arrows were still used by some of the Indians after the Germans arrived there, but many of them possessed fire-arms and well knew how to use them long before.

It is astonishing to what perfection the aborigines of the United States had carried the manufacture of their wooden and stone instruments for defence and domestic utility, before the Europeans found their way hither; since history informs us that they were not the possessors of even a knife, or any instrument of iron. To look at a flint arrow-head, see the regularity of its shape, and to what delicate proportions it has been wrought from so hard and brittle a substance, it seems incredible that it could have been formed by art, without the aid of other implements than those

of stone. One would almost suppose the Indian to have been capable of softening the *flinty rock* by some chemical agent, previous to its being wrought into such beautiful forms. The *cabinet* of the antiquarian will exhibit them of various dimensions and a variety of colors; pipes, hatchets, wedges, and culinary vessels, all ingeniously formed from different kinds of stone, are likewise often found at the present day near the site of ancient Indian villages—giving additional evidence of the perfection to which necessity will carry certain arts.

The abundance of Indian relics formerly found there, the smallness of the tribe and its comparatively brief existence, are facts on which I predicate an opinion, that the Mohawks and Delawares, in times of peace, dwelt in and about Schoharie. This conclusion seems not only plausible but very probable, as the former, who were called *the true heads of the Confederacy*, lived along the Mohawk valley, and the latter inhabited along the Delaware—the Schoharie valley being to them the natural route of intercommunication.

Some twenty-five years ago, there might have been seen nearly a mile north of the Schoharie Court House, a deep pit, in which was observed a heavy, upright, wooden frame. Its location was on a knoll, in an old apple orchard upon the farm now owned by John L. Swart: which orchard seems, at least in appearance, to merit an existence coeval with the first German settlements. For what purpose that frame was there sunk, or by whom, tradition breathes not even a whisper. Judge Brown said he remembered having seen it, but assured the author that persons then living in the vicinity much older than himself, could give no clew to its origin. This artificial cavern, which is said to have been apparently fifteen or twenty feet deep, by those who looked into it, was discovered at the time alluded to, by the accidental caving in of the earth near one corner of it. The opening has long since been closed, without an interior examination of the pit. Its origin must be left entirely to conjecture. It may have been an underground place of refuge; or, it may have served as a depository for treasures; or,—but I leave to the curious the solving of its mysteries.

Indians have generally believed in the existence of a God or *Great Spirit*, and a *future state*. They worshiped a plurality of imaginary *deities*, such as the heavenly bodies, fire, water and the like—indeed any thing mysterious or superior to themselves. In New England, says Trumbull, *although they believed in one supreme God*, or a being of infinite goodness, *still they paid most of their devotion to the evil spirit, whom they called Hobomocko*: thinking, no doubt, that if they made peace with their enemy, they were safe.

Little is known of the Schoharie tribe of Indians until the Germans came into their midst. Their general customs and habits were as similar to those of neighboring tribes, as the multigenerous nature of their own would allow. The customs of the Carolina, Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania Indians, from which the Schoharie tribe was principally composed, no doubt differed as much, perhaps more, than would those of an equal number of the present white population, if collected from the same sections of the Union. The refugees from some of the tribes lived together when their numbers would admit, and they doubtless kept up in a measure their own national character. Time is required in all cases, where people from distant countries form a settlement, to sink into one general custom or habit, the diversified manners of their native land. The Mohegans settled near the mouth of the Little Schoharie kill in the present town of Middleburgh, and were living separate from the main body of the tribe, long after Conrad Weiser and his German brethren located in their immediate vicinity. One good reason for this, was the fact that they spoke a different language from the principal part of the tribe. They also had a small castle near the present residence of Henry Mattice.

It is said by historians that Indians are invariably born *white*: if so, I must presume this freak of nature found its way to the Schoharie tribe. "Indian lovers generally live together on trial before marriage:" and I have no reason to believe it was otherwise here. Among the Five Nations, history assures us, polyga-

my was not customary, but the Indians in general, Solomon like, kept many concubines—and never thought they had too many women. As the Schoharie tribe was deficient in numbers, I readily conclude it placed as much dependence on *women* to increase the number of its warriors, as did any of the Six Nations. In Virginia, it is said, the Indians had altars of stone whereon they offered a sacrifice of blood, deer's suet and *tobacco*. Now I dare not suppose that Karighondontee or any of his tribe were equally religious; but I may say, I have never heard that any people ever appropriated tobacco to a much better use—surely it were far better thus to burn, than masticate it: while its fumes, I do not scruple to believe, would ascend to heaven with as grateful odor—if neatness and health are called in question—as from the lips of that individual, whose taste is so perverted as to smoke it.

That the Schoharie Indians had many customs and habits in common with other nations, the author has obtained satisfactory proof: such as the burial of treasures with the dead—holding councils when on the eve of some momentous undertaking—celebrating victories—face painting—(from whom *some modern ladies* have possibly borrowed the disgusting habit)—scalping the fallen foe—wearing trinkets about their persons—compelling their women to do the drudgery—requiting hospitality with kindness, and secretly revenging insult with the tomahawk. What civilized people call *society* was rarely ever found among the aborigines of the United States. Unless engaged in war or the chase, their favorite employ—they led lives of indolence and inactivity. A custom once prevalent among the Indians of New England and New York, was that of burying the dead in a sitting posture facing the east: it was also customary among the Indians of eastern New England, for such as had taken prisoners, to kill as many of them as they had relatives or friends killed in battle.—See *Drake's Church's life of Benjamin Church*.

Besides the village of the Mohegans already located, the Schoharie tribe had several others: one of which was on the farm formerly owned by Alexander Vrooman—on the west side of the

river. Nearly opposite that, on the other side of the river, they had another ; and a distance of several miles farther up the valley, on the farm of the late Peter P. Snyder, a third. At each of the two former they had a small castle ; and at the latter, where they dwelt for many years after the two northern villages were abandoned, they had a burying ground. Those villages were all within four miles of the present site of the Court House. Within the recollection of some now living, twenty-one wigwams, were yet standing upon the Snyder farm ; and a few old apple trees still to be seen there, are supposed to have been planted by the natives. Near this orchard many burials are said to have been made at their place of sepulture : nor, indeed, were the manes of nature's children without companions, to share the pot-age* taken along at their death ; as a portion of the consecrated ground was set apart, for the defunct slaves of the early Germans.

The fifth, and most important village of the tribe, where dwelt Karighondontee and his principal chiefs, was in Vrooman's land : where they had a strong castle, and a place of burial. This castle was built by John Becker, who received from Sir William Johnson, as agent for the British government, *eighty pounds* for its erection. It was built at the commencement of the French war, and constructed of hewn timber. The Indians held some four hundred acres of land around it, which they leased for several years. Contiguous to this castle, along both sides of the river, could have been counted at one time seventy huts ; and relics of savage ingenuity are now often plowed up near its site. An angle of land, occasioned by a bend in the river, on which this castle stood, was called the *Wilder Hook*, by the Dutch who settled near it, and signified *the Indian's Corner*. Among the old people in that vicinity, it is still known by the same name.

The Indians gave names to most of the mountains and promin-

* It was not only customary for the aborigines of this country to bury the implements of war, and treasures of the warrior with his body ; but also a kettle of food, such as beans or venison, to serve him on his journey to the delectable hunting grounds, whither he believed himself going. There he expected to find plenty of wild game, handsome women, and revel eternally in voluptuousness.

ent hills in the county, among which were the following: On the west side of the river, directly opposite the brick church in Middleburgh, is a mountain rising several hundred feet, and covered with timber of stunted growth. The traveler will readily notice this, as being the highest of the surrounding peaks, which hem in the river and valley for a considerable distance on either side. This mountain the natives called *Ou-con-ge-na*, which signified, *Rattle-snake Mountain*, or *Mountain of Snakes*. It was literally covered with rattle-snakes in former times. The next peak above on the same side of the river, which has a very bold termination towards the valley, they called *O-nis-ta-gra-wa*, and spoke it as though written *O-nis-ta-graw-waugh!* It signified the *Corn Mountain*. Between that and the river was the Wilder Hook: at which place the flats are well adapted to the cultivation of Indian corn. It was this consideration which gave to this mountain its significant name. The next hill above the Onistagrawa, now known as Spring Hill, the Indians called *To-wok-nov-ra*—its signification is unknown.

At Middleburgh, two valleys meet; the one through which the Schoharie wends its way, and the other through which the Little Schoharie kill runs some distance before it empties into the former. Consequently, on the south-east side of the river as it there courses, the mountain ridge which confines the river to its limits on the eastern side, suddenly terminates, and again appears east of Middleburgh village. The termination of the hill alluded to, which lies south-east of the Onistagrawa and distant perhaps two miles—was called by the Mohegans who dwelt at its base, the *Mo-he-gon-ter*, and signified *Falling Off*, or *Termination of the Mohegan Hill*. It served not only to designate the locality, and preserve the name of the Connecticut Indians, but, like many of their words which have a twofold meaning; it denoted a hill terminating at a valley. A fraction of the Stock-bridge tribe of Indians, who emigrated from Massachusetts, also dwelt near the Mohegans.

I have no data by which to estimate the whole number of Schoharie Indians, except the statement in Brown's pamphlet,

which sets down the number of warriors at about three hundred. Now by supposing that each of those warriors, on an average, had two women, that there were two children to each woman—that there were fifty men unfit for warriors from age or infirmity, and as many old women; the tribe would then number *two thousand two hundred souls*. This estimate may be thought too large; but if so, the reader has the same right and means to lessen its numbers, that I have to increase them. And whether he is a Yankee or not, he may *guess* at their numbers with impunity; although it is hardly a supposable case, still there may have been here and there a warrior to whom Cupid had not revealed Ovid's art; there are *few* of nature's children who are strangers to love.

The coat of arms, or ensign of the Schoharie tribe, was a *turtle* and a *snake*. Figures representing those animals, they were careful to place on all deeds or writings—which were to prove an evidence of *faith*. Nor were they confined to placing them on paper or parchment; for whenever they deeded land, trees serving as bounds or land-marks, bore the characteristic emblem of the tribe.

Brown enumerates the five following foot-paths as being in use by the Schoharie Indians, when the whites first settled among them. The *first* he mentions began at Catskill, and followed the kill of that name up to its source at the *Vlaie*, from whence it continued down to Middleburgh. Over a part of this path now runs the Loonenburg turnpike. The *second* began at Albany and led over the Helleberg, down Foxes creek valley, and terminated in Schoharie. By this path the Germans traveled, who first settled Schoharie. The *old road*, as now called, from thence to Albany, follows very nearly the route of that path. The *third* commenced at Garlock's dorf, and led to Schenectada through Duanesburgh. By this path, the Dutch who first settled in Vrooman's Land, proceeded from Schenectada. This path was much used for several years by the Schoharie Germans, who went to that ancient city with grists upon their backs to get milling done! The *fourth* led from Kneiskern's dorf down the Schoharie to Sloansville, from thence through the towns of Charleston and

Glen to Cadaughrity and ended at Fort Hunter. This path was much traveled by the natives, who went from the Mohawk to the Susquehanna valley. The *fifth* led from Kneiskern's dorf north-west to Canajoharie. This path, says Brown, was much traveled by the early Germans, who often went to visit relatives at the German Flats. It continued in full use, he adds, until after the year 1762, at which time Sir William Johnson reviewed a brigade of militia, of which he was general—near the upper Indian castle of the Mohawks. Besides those enumerated, the Indians must have had other paths, perhaps of less notoriety, leading in different directions from Schoharie. One traversed not a little by the Indian hunter, led directly up the Schoharie to near its source, and from thence to the Susquehanna and Genesee valleys. While another of some importance to the hunter, must have led up the Cobelskill to its source, and from thence to Otsego lake.

It may justly be said, that *religion* has peopled by the whites, the greater part of North America; for many of the first European immigrants came to this goodly heritage to find a place where they could worship Jehovah as seemed to them proper and desirable. True, the prospect of realizing the desires of Ortugal, induced many to settle in Spanish America; but Catholicism was the handmaid of lucre, and aided not a little in conquering and civilizing Mexico, so far as that country has been civilized; it must be acknowledged, however, that civilization has advanced tardily in all Spanish America. This is owing no doubt to two obvious reasons: the general indolence of the inhabitants, (their wealth being derived directly from the precious metals instead of agriculture,) and the fact that the Catholic religion is less favorable to civilization, than is the Protestant.

After the throne of England had been vacated by the death of William and Mary, Queen Anne ascended it, and as her predecessors had done, she tolerated the Protestant religion. It was often the case in former times, that when one form of religious worship was tolerated in a kingdom of Europe, and laws were enacted to compel all to conform to it, many who had scruples about

adopting it, at the sacrifice of judgment and feeling, fled to other countries where their own religion prevailed. It was bigotry and Catholicism, which drove the ancestors of General Marion from France to South Carolina. The grandfather of Marion was a French Protestant: by the authorities of France he *was banished to perpetual exile*, and notified by letter, that if found in the kingdom after ten days from the date had transpired, his life would be forfeited, his body consumed by fire, and the ashes scattered on the winds of heaven. I have mentioned this case to show the reader the nature of the persecution, which tended in a great measure to people the United States.

The *Puritans*, as the Plymouth, Massachusetts, pioneers were called, fled with their pastor, the Rev. John Robinson, in the year 1607, from England to Amsterdam in Holland; from thence they soon after removed to Leyden. From the latter place, in the year 1620, they went to Southampton in England, from whence they embarked for America on the 5th day of August of the same year, and after a long, tedious voyage, anchored in Cape Cod harbor, on the 10th day of the following November. The colony which European persecution there planted, although several times on the eve of annihilation, was the means of peopling all New England.

Queen Anne, who received the crown of England in the year 1702, knowing that the Germans were in general peaceable, loyal subjects, and lovers of liberty from principle—anxious to increase the population of her American colonies, held out strong inducements to this hardy and industrious race of people to become British subjects. She offered to give them lands, if they would settle on the frontier of certain colonies, and furnish them at the beginning with necessary tools, provisions, &c. What added to the inducement, they could there practice their own form of religious worship.

There is a charm in the word *liberty*, that converts a desert wild into a paradise, and severs the cords of the fraternal, social circle. The generous offers of Queen Anne induced thousands to bid a final farewell to the land of their nativity—cross the foam-

ing Atlantic, and erect their altars of worship in the wilds of America, thousands of miles from the luring places to which they were known in childhood.

Schoharie, with the exception of its Indian inhabitants, was first settled by the Germans and Dutch, and to religion and the love of liberty is that settlement mostly to be attributed. In saying Schoharie, I allude to all the settlements first made in Schoharie county, without distinction of towns; as a territory of many miles in extent, now making a part of several towns, was, at first, known by no other name than that of Schoharie. I find it somewhat difficult to harmonize the contradictory statements, tending to fix the precise year in which the Germans first arrived in that valley. Brown says "they sailed on new year's day in the year 1710, from some port on the Rhine, down that river to Holland, from whence they sailed to England; that being there further provided, they sailed for America; and after a tedious voyage in which a great many died, they landed at New York on the 14th day of June, 1712; having been one year five months and several days [over two years,] on their journey; that they were then sent up the Hudson river to East and West Camp, (so called from the circumstance of their having encamped there,) where they wintered in ground and log huts.—That from there the spring following, they went to Albany, from whence some found their way to Schoharie, after a journey of four days by an Indian foot path, bearing upon their backs tools and provisions with which they had been provided by agents of the queen." Brown is doubtless in error about the time the emigrants were coming from Germany to New York; it could not have been *upwards of two years*, as it would seem by his data.

Many of the aged people with whom I have conversed on this subject, agree in fixing the date of their departure from Leyden in Holland, as early as 1709, while some others name that year as the traditionary one in which they first reached Schoharie. A record in the Lutheran church at Schoharie, states that Abraham Berg, from Hessen, came to America in 1709, but the record was made many years subsequent to that date, and may be in-

accurate; recording the time of arrival here, instead of departure from Hessen. From a comparison of all the evidence collected on the subject, I believe they left Germany late in 1709, arrived at New York in 1710, and the following year went to Schoharie. Smith's history of New York informs us, that General Hunter, who had been appointed governor of the province, arrived at New York on the fourteenth day of June, 1710, bringing with him near three thousand Palatines, who, the year before, had fled to England from the rage of persecution in Germany. That "many of these people seated themselves in the city of New York, where they built a Lutheran church; others settled on a tract of several thousand acres, in the manor of Livingston, where they still have a village called the Camp, which is one of the pleasantest situations on Hudson's river; right opposite, on the west bank are many other families of them. Some went into Pennsylvania, and by the favorable accounts of the country, which they transmitted to Germany, were instrumental to the transmigration of many thousands of their countrymen into that province. Queen Anne's liberality to these people," he adds, "was not more beneficial to them than serviceable to this colony. They have behaved themselves peaceably, and lived with great industry. Many are rich; all are Protestants, and well affected to the government: the same may be said of those who have settled amongst us, and planted the lands westward of Albany. We have not the least ground for jealousy with respect to them." It will be observed, that the arrival at New York of the Germans by whom Schoharie was undoubtedly settled, was on the same day of the same month, two years earlier than the date given by Brown, as the one on which they arrived. There can remain little doubt, that the time of their arrival as given by Smith is correct. Another writer, *Spafford*, in his *Gazetteer of New York*, speaking of Livingston's manor, says: "In the year 1710, agreeably to an arrangement with Queen Anne of England, the proprietor conveyed a tract of six thousand acres adjoining the Hudson, from the south-eastern part of the manor, to a

number of Palatines, who had served in her armies, and were now driven from Germany by the French army.

The same writer, speaking of Germantown, Columbia county, in which town is the village of East Camp, says: "In June, 1710, seventy families of poor Palatine soldiers who had served in the army of Queen Anne, by whom they were hired of the Electorate of the Palatinate, arrived at New York, the most of whom soon removed to these lands, then included in Livingston's manor." The reader will here understand why these people were called Palatines. Palatine is a term which was formerly given to a prince, and probably is still, in some parts of Germany. He was invested with royal privileges to preside over a certain territory, called a Palatinate; hence emigrants from such countries in Germany, as are subject to the government or direction of a Palatine, have been called Palatines or Palatinates. "In 1725," continues Spafford, "according to an arrangement of King George I. with the proprietor, letters patent were granted to certain persons belonging to the settlement of East Camp, as it was then called, as trustees for the whole, conveying the right of soil in perpetuity for the use of said inhabitants. And the grant seems to have been well devised, with the whole conditions on which it was made. Forty acres were directed to be appropriated to the use of a church and the maintenance of a school, and the residue to be equally divided among the inhabitants, which was faithfully performed by the trustees. This little colony received many marks of the kindness, care and beneficence of Queen Anne, under whose special patronage it was first planted. The country was then wholly wild, and the first encampments were distinguished by local names. Hence came East Camp, a more general name of three little lodges in this town; and West Camp, the name of a similar settlement on the opposite side of the river, now in Saugerties, Ulster county. The settlements first commenced by three small lodges of temporary huts, each of which was placed under the superintendance of some principal man, from whom they took their names, with the addition of *dorf*, a German word for village. Hence Weiser's

dorf, Kneiskern's dorf, names now disused, except by a very few of the ancient Germans."

According to Spafford's account it would appear as though the first settlers at the Camps, had been hired by Queen Anne to serve in her wars. But the other published accounts, and tradition, which seems not to have slumbered on this subject, unite in ascribing their emigration from Germany chiefly to religious oppression. It is not improbable that some of the most warlike of those Germans, may have aided the colonies and Iroquois in the war they were then waging with Canada;—a distinguished historian does indeed say that some of them were so engaged; (*See Bancroft's U. S.* vol. iii, p. 221)—but that those who tarried at the Camps left their native land for that purpose, seems hardly admissible, from the fact, that male and female, old and young, great and small were included in this group of immigrants; the major part of which would have been sorry materials for an army. He must be in error about the number of the first settlers, unless two different parties arrived at the Camps during the same year, which is not improbable; as more than seventy families, which he gives for their whole number there, removed to Schoharie; at which time many families settled along the Mohawk river. It is highly probable, that of those who arrived, seventy families at least remained at the Camps, and became permanent settlers.

Few incidents worthy of notice, in the long journey of these emigrants, have been preserved. They are said to have embarked from Plymouth, a port somewhat celebrated for the embarkation of Europeans to this continent. While the ship was lying at anchor some distance from the shore, awaiting for a fair wind or sailing orders, with the emigrants on board, six of them went to land in a boat to make some necessary purchases. Only one name of the six is now remembered, that was Becker. He was a relative of the ancestors of the Beckers, who now live on Fox's creek, in the present town of Schoharie. After making purchases, they put off to regain the ship; but having a gale of wind to encounter, which had sprung up while they were on shore, the boat capsized and its crew were all buried in the raging billows. With this unhappy commencement, it is but natural to

suppose their surviving friends anticipated a voyage across the Atlantic, fraught with difficulty and danger: indeed such it proved; for it was protracted by adverse winds to a length of months, and rendered truly appalling, when, as provisions began to fail them, they saw grim death, through all the horrors of starvation, staring them in the face. Before they reached New York, crumbs were sought for by the half starved children in every nook and corner, and when fortune thus discovered to them the scanty object of their search, no matter how filthily or stale, it was considered a God-send and greedily devoured. Several passengers died on the voyage: one old lady, who had been ill of consumption for some time, died and was consigned to the deep at the Narrows, below New York. If several died on the journey, it is not certain that the whole number of the emigrants was less at their final debarkation, than it was when they left the land of their fathers, as I have to record the fact, that the rule of ancient arithmetic, which subtracts one from one and leaves *two*, was not unfrequently exemplified during the passage. By the by, that is a valuable rule in peopling all new countries.

Soon after they landed at New York, they were sent up the Hudson to the Camps; (with the exception of those who became permanent settlers in the city, and those who went to Pennsylvania;) where they made a temporary location. As they did not arrive at New York until the middle of June, it will be observed that the season had too far advanced to allow those who intended to become frontier settlers, or citizen farmers, to select an approved location, and raise their sustenance for that season: they therefore went into quarters to await the return of Spring. They erected temporary huts, settling in seven squads or messes, each with a head man or commissary, through whom they received their provisions from an agent of the Queen, until they were permanently located. Conrad Weiser, Hartman Winteker, John Hendrick Kneiskern, Elias Garlock, Johannes George Smidt and William Fox were six of the number; and as John Lawyer became one after their arrival at Schoharie, he may have made the seventh. The several settlements over which they presided, were

called dorfs, signifying towns. Each of the said "list men," as Judge Brown termed them, (from the fact, that each had enrolled on a list or schedule, the names of every man, woman and child belonging to his beat;) was obliged to make careful report, from time to time, to the royal agent, of all changes in his dorf; of its approaching wants, etc. How these honest, good natured, simple people, spent the greater part of a year at the Camps, this deponent has been unable to learn; but as they possessed the characteristic good nature of their mother country,—were fond of athletic exercises, not to the exclusion of fumigation however, he supposes, as the Queen's punctual agent did not allow them to anticipate much care or concern about their temporal affairs, that they "drove dull cares away," by what their descendants term frolicking: and that although they were in a strange land, they resolved it should be to them a land of social enjoyment. The reader is ready to ask, what means the term *frolicking* in this place? It means, as I have been assured by the descendants of those virtuous and happy people, the indulgence of certain propensities of the human heart to seek pleasure. They fiddled, they danced, they ran foot races; and groups were not unfrequently seen among them, jumping, wrestling, &c., in summer: while winter found them skating, or playing various kinds of plays, such as now sometimes make part of an evening's entertainment at a village party, in which *bussing*, that delectable finale to which they generally tend, bears a conspicuous part. Some sedate mortal, on whom life hangs heavily, may be ready to exclaim, "strange that a people who left their native land on account of religious persecution, should have allowed their children or any of their numbers, to indulge in such foolish propensities!" It is indeed strange; but no less strange than true, if they lived at the Camps as they afterwards did in Schoharie. One fact however, might be urged in mitigation of their wickedness, if such the reader terms it. Not a particle of *hypocrisy*, that ingredient so necessary in making up the human character at the present day, dwelt in the hearts of these people. The reader will remember, that I have not called them a *fashionable* people. Na-

turally honest themselves, they supposed others so, and had imbibed liberally those true German principles of nature, founded on a belief, that "there is a proper time for every purpose;" which bade them not look to the morrow, for that which rightly belonged to the present day; or anticipate the troubles to which man is heir, and which are so profusely scattered along his path. That there were many among those emigrants who lived pious and exemplary lives, not approving the course of their fellows, there can be no doubt.

At what time in the spring of 1711, those who had not chosen to remain at the Camps, moved up the river to Albany, is uncertain. It must have been as early as circumstances would allow. On their arrival at that Dutch city, they sent several individuals of their number into the Mohawk and Schoharie vallies, to spy out a good location for their permanent settlement. Perhaps it may be well to say a few words in this place, in explanation of the term Dutch. Emigrants from the German circles, were originally called Germans or High Dutch; and indeed continued to be so called, long after their emigration to this country; while those from Holland or the United Provinces were called Dutch: or, in contra-distinction of the term High Dutch given the Germans, Low Dutch. Many persons of the present day, unacquainted with the geography of Europe, express surprise to hear the distinction of the terms German and Dutch made, supposing them synonymous. The German circles or states, and Dutch provinces, are as distinct countries, as are England and Scotland, perhaps more so; and their languages as little alike, as were formerly those of the latter countries. Nor indeed are the former under the same government, which is the case with the latter; and yet people express no surprise to hear the distinction of English and Scotch emigrants made, when those countries are in question. When the historian tells us that the Dutch settled at Albany, which was by them called *Willemstadt*, where they built Fort Orange; and at New York, then called *New Amsterdam*, in or about the year 1614, nearly one hundred years previous to the settlement of Schoharie; he does not intend to be understood that

those places were settled by Germans, but by Hollanders or Dutch.

As the sections of the United States, originally peopled by the Dutch and Germans, received additional settlers from other countries, and conformed to the English language,—the whole assimilating by gradual process to new characteristics, as their old were reluctantly absolved; the sectional appellatives of all, whether English, Scotch, or Irish—Dutch, German, or Swiss, yielded to two simple terms, Yankee and Dutch.

The German messengers, with whom we parted company a short time since, deputed to Schoharie, were conducted by an Indian guide over the Helleberg*, and on the second day they gained a commanding view of the flats along Fox's creek. They proceeded down that stream, until from one of the hills which skirt its lowlands, they gained a prospect of the Schoharie valley, at the place where Fox's creek runs into the Schoharie. There their vision was delighted by one of the most beautiful and picturesque scenes, with which nature has decorated the earth. They beheld the green flats of Schoharie, spread out before them like a beautiful, though neglected garden. To the west, directly opposite the mouth of said creek, their view was obstructed by a romantic mountain rising several hundred feet, and terminating in a bold cliff towards them. I regret that I have been unable to learn the original Indian name of that mountain: the Germans called it the Clipper berg, meaning the rocky mountain. I take the liberty of giving to it, the name of Karighondontee, intending by so doing to perpetuate the name of the Schoharie Indian tribe. On the summit of the Karighondontee, is a cultivated farm formerly owned by Henry Hamilton, Esq., an excursion to which often rewards the rambler in the summer season, with one of the

* On arriving upon this mountain, which is a spur of the Catskill mountains, those emigrants halted on several eminences to enjoy the rich prospect thus afforded. Helle—signifies light or clear, and berg—hill or mountain. Hence the appropriate name they gave it—Helleberg, *Prospect Hill* or *Sightly Mountain*. Helderberg, the Dutch orthography for this word, has, within a few years, very improperly gained place; its original German name being far more poetic and soft.

most enchanting views imaginable. Off to the right hand of the deputation, as they stood on the summit of the hill, near where it descends into the two valleys, on the north side of Fox's creek; they were enabled to catch a view of the great bend in the river, where it takes a more easterly course, immediately after receiving Cobel's kill. They did not long tarry to contemplate on the richness of the prospect, which the union of those three valleys, beautified as they then were by luxurious spring, was calculated to create. Perhaps there was no Mozart present, to catch inspiration from the wanton carol of the countless feathered musicians, by which they were surrounded: or Spurzheim to forestal the virtues,—perchance the hidden wealth, of the hilly protuberances which rose in romantic grandeur, on which side soever they gazed. The hill on which I have supposed the pilgrim messengers to have stood, and from which they caught a view of "the promised land," the Indians called Oxt-don-tee. After taking this hasty glance of the country before them, which they no doubt did with eyes and ears, if not mouths, open; they returned speedily to Albany, and reported progress to their anxious brethren. Would kind reader, I could serve you with the maiden speeches of those honest spies, who were among the first white men known to have trod upon Schoharie soil: but in the absence of such an intellectual treat, your own fertile imagination must create them. They were delivered before the immortal *seven*, who were the sanhedrim of the multitude, and one thing is certain: they were fraught with a prevailing argument against the entire Mohawk valley, which was not even allowed a hearing; and nearly the whole caravan,* loaded down like so many pack horses with provisions and tools, without a vehicle of any kind, started forthwith for Schoharie.

The interval lands which the deputies had visited, were, at that time, to a great extent cleared or timberless, and presented

* As the German settlements along the Mohawk were commenced about the same time with those of Schoharie, it is not improbable, that the relatives of the messengers sent up that river, awaited their return at Albany, and on their bringing a favorable report of the country, removed thither.

the appearance of a limited prairie: and few were the native inhabitants, who then dwelt upon them. These two considerations, no doubt, greatly influenced the hasty decision of the colonists.

Gentle reader, you, who ride perhaps in a gilded carriage, and think elliptic springs and a good road scarcely endurable, must not be offended when informed, that your great-great-grandmothers, (I am now speaking to the fair sex, of the uncontaminated descendants, of the primogenial pilgrims to the happy valley, not of Rasselas, but Schoharie;) clad in linsey-woolsey of limited length, bearing each in their arms an heir apparent, and each on their back a sack of provisions or unmentionables; set out on foot to make this long journey, upon an intricate Indian foot path.* Would you ask why their husbands did not carry the burthens, thus imposed upon their amiable consorts? I have already said they had not a vehicle of any kind; nor indeed had they the aid of even a single horse; consequently the husbands and all the children able to bear burthens, were heavily laden. They left Albany on Thursday, and as may be supposed, their progress was necessarily very slow. Nights they slept in the open air, after having built fires to keep off the wolves, which thickly infested the forest through which they were journeying. Nothing remarkable happened during the first two day's journey. On Saturday they reached the present site of Knoxville, which appears to be the summit level between Albany and Schoharie, where they halted and assembled together. Some misunderstanding having arisen, a contest ensued, in which many of the party were engaged, from which circumstance the place has since been known by the older inhabitants, as Fegt berg, or fighting hill.

* This journey of thirty odd miles, is looked upon at the present day as a small matter, since a stage rattles over it every day; but it was far otherwise at that period. Many were the tears of sympathy shed in Albany, at the departure of these good people, *because they were going so far from any other settlement*. What changes time brings. Where is now your sympathy, O ye Albanians! for the comely looking Swiss maidens and their forlorn mothers, who are now in motley groups, lingering not unfrequently a few days with you, ere they commence a western journey, which may number thousands of miles?

What gave rise to this quarrel, I have been unable to learn. It is not improbable that the "green eyed monster" was the direct or indirect cause, originating in a spirit of emulation to direct the movements of the party. No one seems to have been very seriously injured by this unlooked for trial of strength; the insurgents were overpowered, good order again restored, and the line of march resumed. On Sunday, (probably in the latter part of April,) a day of seven, dedicated to cleansing and decorating the outward man of the civilized world, having arrived at a small brook, which descends from the hills on the north side of Fox's creek, and runs into the latter near the present residence of Samuel Stevens, and within sight of the Schoharie valley, the party halted and resolved on having a general purifying. Says Brown, "*while washing, the lice were swimming down the brook; which is called Louse kill to this day.*" Tradition corroborates this story. I may have occasion hereafter to speak of the cleanliness of the descendants of these people. There can be little doubt, but that the washing adventure, may prove a mirror to many parties of emigrants, who have been long journeying. It is not difficult to account for the fact, that the most negligent of the number, (for I cannot believe all were so) should have become filthy. They were poor, had not changes of apparel; of course, the clothing they wore, without much pains-taking to keep it clean, must have become dirty: add to this the fact, that they had been for a great length of time, either journeying or dwelling in rude huts, in either case greatly crowded, without any conveniences for private ablution; and we have a plausible reason to believe the story a true one. Poor people, although cleanly, find it difficult at times, to exhibit evidences of their neatness, especially while traveling.

The Schoharie flats to which they were journeying, and upon which they arrived on the day of their purifying, had been purchased of the natives by an agent of the Queen, to prevent future hostilities between them and the Germans. The tract of land thus purchased, began on the little Schoharie kill in the town of Middleburgh, at the high water mark of the Schoharie river, at

an oak stump burned hollow, which stump is said to have served the Mohegan and Stockbridge Indians, the purposes of a corn mill; and ran down the river to the north, taking in the flats on both sides of the same, a distance of eight or ten miles, containing twenty thousand acres. By the side of this stump was erected a large pile of stones, which was still standing since the year 1800. Upon this stump was cut the figures of a turtle and a snake, the ensign of the Karighondontee tribe, the Indian seal of the contract. Having arrived in safety, the Germans settled along the Schoharie on the land provided by the queen, in several villages or dorfs, as they called them, under the direction of the seven individuals, who acted at the Camps as their captains or commissaries. Prudence, no doubt, dictated the necessity of settling near together, that they might be the better prepared to anticipate any hostile movement of their Indian neighbors. Weiser's dorf, (so called after Conrad Weiser the founder,) was the most southern village, and occupied part of the present site of the village of Middleburgh. This dorf contained some forty dwellings. They were small, rude huts, built of logs and earth, and covered with bark, grass, &c. They were built on both sides of a street, which ran nearly east and west, and may have been called Weiser street. Hartman's dorf was the next settlement down the river, and was about two miles north of Weiser's dorf. This was the only one of the settlements called after the christian name of its founder or patroon: his name having been Hartman Winteker. This *flekken*,* (if the largest village in seven merited the name,) is said to have contained sixty-five dwellings, similar in construction to those spoken of in the dorf above. The Germans, (as is the custom of their descendants,) built their ovens detached from their dwellings: and thirteen are said to have answered all the good house-wives of Hartman's dorf, the purposes of baking. Like the former, this village was built along one street; and I am gratified to think I can inform the reader precisely where it

* Dorf means a compact farmer's town or small village; *flekken* a larger village than a dorf and less than a city; and *stadt*, an incorporated city.—*Brown*.

was situated. Every man who has traveled from Schoharie Court House to Middleburgh will remember, that having proceeded about three miles, and crossed two brooks, the most southern of which was called, in former days, the Wolf's kill, he came to two angles in the road, between which, he perceived his course changed from south to west for the distance of, perhaps, a quarter of a mile. He will also remember, no doubt, how straight and level that part of the road was, gently descending to the west; and, too, that he expressed surprise to his companion, or, if he had no more sensible person with him, to himself, that the road had never been straightened. Now, since I have traced the location of Hartman's dorf by tradition, to the immediate vicinity of this knoll or table-land, upon which the two angles in the road appear, and have too much charity to believe, that that part of the road would not have been straightened, had the commissioners who laid it out not had some noble object in view, I have come to the conclusion, and doubt not the good sense of the reader will bear me out in it, that that part of the road which runs, east and west, between the angles spoken of, was once Hartman's street, and that upon each side of it once stood the unpretending dwellings of Hartman's dorf.

The next village north, was in the vicinity of the court-house, and was called Brunnen or Bruna dorf, which signified the town of springs. There are several springs in this vicinity; and a living one, which issues from beneath the rocks a little distance south-east from the court-house, supplies most of the villagers with excellent water. The principal or most influential man among the first settlers at this place, was John Lawyer. Some of his descendants, as also those of some of the Shaeffers and Ingolds, who were also among the first settlers, still reside near the location of their ancestors. The next settlement was in the vicinity of the present residence of Doctor C. H. Van Dyck, about a mile north of Bruna dorf; and consisted of Johannes George Smidt, (or Smith in English,) with a few followers of the people, for whom he had acted as commissioner at the Camps. Smith is said to have had the best house in Smith's dorf, which

was thatched with straw. I am not certain that any of his clan are now represented in that section. It is probable, however, that the Snyders who reside there, may be descended from the first settlers. Fox's dorf was next to Smith's, north, and took its name from William Fox, its leading man. He settled about a mile from Smith, in the vicinity of Fox's creek, so called after him. The Snyders, Beckers, Zimmers, Balls and Weidmans, now residing along, and near that stream, are regular descendants of the first settlers. Elias Garlock, with a few faithful followers, who, doubtless, adhered to him on account of his great wisdom, which remains to be shown, located about two miles farther down the river, near the present residence of Jacob Vrooman. This was called Garlock's dorf. The Dietzes, Manns and Sternbergs, were among the first settlers at Garlock's dorf, whose descendants still occupy the grounds. The last and most northerly settlement, was called Kneiskern's dorf, after John Peter Kneiskern, its leading man. It was two or three miles from the last mentioned settlement, and was made along the east side of the river, opposite the mouth of Cobel's kill. The Kneiskerns, Stubrachs, Enderses, Sidneys, Berghs and Houcks, residing in that vicinity, are descendants of the original settlers. This, and Bruna dorf, are the only ones of the seven settlements, in which the descendants of the list men or founders, dwell at the present day. The sectional names of Kneiskern's and Hartman's dorf, are still in use; while the other five have sunk into oblivion.

Among the first settlers at these seven dorfs, were some whose descendants still reside in the county, their first location in but few instances being now traceable. It is presumed many of them settled at the two most southern, and important villages. The Keyzers, Boucks, Rickards, Rightmyers, Warners, Weavers, Zimmers, Mattices, Zehs, Bellingers, Borsts, Schoolcrafts, Kryslers, Casselmans, Newkirks, Earharts, Browns, Settles and Merckleys, were doubtless among the first settlers. The whole number of Germans who located in the Schoharie valley in 1711, must have been between five and seven hundred.