

1927

The Hammond House
1715



Preserved by the
Westchester County
Historical
Society



HAMMOND HOUSE, 1927

THE HAMMOND HOUSE

at

Eastview, near Tarrytown

The Home of Captain William Hammond, of Colonel James
Hammond and of General William Hammond



Owned and Restored by

WESTCHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1926

ITS STORY

by

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Associate Member

WHITE PLAINS
1927

THE FAMILY OF HAMMOND
OF
TARRYTOWN, WESTCHESTER COUNTY

The Hammond family is of English stock and of great antiquity. Records exist in England which relate to persons of that name as far back as the fifteenth century. Those who emigrated to America appear to have been descendants of Thomas Hammond of Lavenham, in the County of Suffolk, who was born in 1587, and of a probable relative named William Hammond of London.

With other hardy pioneers some of the Hammonds reached the Massachusetts colony and settled about the year 1636 at Newton, Mass., whence one of the family made his way to Eliot, Maine. Somewhat later we find their descendants at New Bedford and it is probably from this branch of the family, perhaps from some sea-faring member, that William Hammond of Tarrytown, New York, owed his parentage. He was born on Bermuda Island and by some combination of circumstances made his way to the Manor of Philipsburgh at a date that is uncertain, but quite early in the eighteenth century, for he married Esther Storm of Tarrytown in 1715.

He became a tenant of the Manor, taking up leased farm lands, and he was an active member of the community and an Elder of the Reformed Dutch Church. He was appointed to the office of Fence Viewer in 1742 and was Captain of the Militia in the upper part of the Manor in 1755. By his will, dated at Tarrytown in 1762, we learn of the "improvements" he had made on his leased farm, doubtless including the dwelling which his son inherited and his widow occupied.

Captain William Hammond was twice married, first to

Mary Walgraft, who died in 1714, leaving an infant, John. John Hammond became the tenant of a tract on the west side of the Sawmill River, separated from his father's farm by the farmlands of Joseph Paulding. Captain Hammond's second wife was the daughter of Jacob Storm, of a family of yeomen farming lands of the Manor of Philipsburgh, just across the crossroad south of the Hammond homestead. By this marriage he had eight children:

David, born 1716, who enlisted in the Colonial Militia in 1759.

Susanna, born 1718.

Isaac, baptized 1 November, 1720.

Mary, baptized 23 April, 1723.

Abraham, baptized 10 April 1725, referred to in his father's will as not having his "naturall Sences."

James, born 1727, who inherited the property and became conspicuous by his services in the War of Independence.

Jacob, baptized 20 June, 1730.

And William, of whom no record exists except the reference to him as of feeble-minded, in his father's will.

James Hammond, the fourth son, came into possession of the old dwelling on his father's decease in 1762. In the year 1755 he had married Nancy Ann Wildey, born in "Manark" (Mamaroneck) 1739, being thus but a girl of sixteen at the time of her wedding. By her he had five children. His son William who succeeded him in possession of the estate, became General of Militia in the War of 1812. His son Staats, born 1744, entered military service in the Revolution and became a Sergeant in Captain Requa's company of the Westchester militia. He was in the engagements at Lexington, Bunker Hill, and at White Plains, and was wounded at Sing Sing, 17 June, 1779.

The home of Sergeant Staats Hammond is still standing at Hawthorne and is of particular historic interest, as it was at that building, wherein Staats Hammond was then lying wounded, that Major Andre stopped for the direction which led to his capture.

The other children of Colonel James Hammond were, Joseph, Sarah and Permelia, who married Van Wart.

James Hammond at the commencement of the Revolution was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel of the First Westchester County regiment on 14 October, 1775, and in 1776, upon the resignation of its Colonel, he was given the full command.

The regiment included in its roster several members of the Hammond family, and suffered severely by losses on the field and capture of its rank and file, so that in 1778 it had to be re-organized, on which occasion James Hammond was re-appointed to its command.

Its condition after its share in the continuous conflict with the Hessians, the British and the Tory forces, is illustrated by an original letter which came into the possession of the writer of this story, in which Colonel Hammond replies to a request of Governor Clinton for the detachment of forty men from his force, by stating that nearly all his regiment was then imprisoned in New York. He was himself captured and held a prisoner for about a year but effected his escape and promptly resumed his duty which he carried on faithfully to the successful close of the Revolution. He was present at the engagements at Lexington, at Bunker Hill, and was at the battle of White Plains.

After the war, the Manorial lands were seized by the Commissioners of Forfeiture from whom James Hammond purchased the fee of his farm of 242 acres in 1785, and he continued to reside in the old homestead until his death at the advanced age of eighty-three, on 26 July, 1810. His remains are buried at Tarrytown and the headstone is inscribed with the unusually appropriate lines:

" 'Tis finished, 'tis done,
The spirit is fled
The prisoner is gone
The warrior is dead."

Recognition of his services to his country's cause is made on the Tarrytown monument where his name heads the list of those who so well deserve remembrance.

His son William, following his father's example, entered military service in the war of 1812-14 and later became General of the New York Militia. General William Hammond who married Esther Miller lived in the old farmhouse until 1 January, 1832, when he passed away, leaving no children. His will which was proved 8 February, 1832, devised a life interest in his real estate to his wife Esther, with bequests among others, to his sister Permelia Van Wart and to his nephews William Hammond (son of his brother Joseph), and William Hammond Hawes, son of his sister-in-law, Lavinia Hawes.

The arms of the family of Hammond are as follows:

On a field argent, a chevron sable, charged with three escallops argent, between three pellets each charged with a martlet (swallow) argent, within a bordure engrailed gules.

The family motto: "Tentanda via est," or "The way must be tried," seems to have been appropriate to the life and labors of the three generations who made their home in the old dwelling, which is now preserved by the Westchester County Historical Society.