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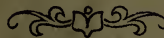
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BY EDSON SALISBURY JONES, PORT CHESTER, N. Y.



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The Lefevre and Pledger Tract
Broadway and the Bradway House
John Fenwick's Grave*



PAPER READ BEFORE THE SALEM COUNTY HISTORICAL
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**SUNBEAM
PUBLISHING COMPANY**



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In the initial portion of this paper, the situation of a long-lost landmark has been clearly established. In the remaining sections, one of the largest tracts of land possessed by Fenwick's grantees has been treated; proofs are offered that Broadway was not named for Edward Bradway, and that he never built a house upon that highway; and the location of John Fenwick's grave is considered, as well as the movement to erect a monument to his memory.

Old Fort Elfsborg

What was the situation and what the construction of this fort erected by the Swedes in the vicinity of Salem, and in what year was it built? Gordon, Johnson, Mulford, Hazard and Shourds tell us nothing of its character; but its position has been assigned to two localities, and the year of its erection has been variably stated. Several old maps seem to place it nearer the mouth of Salem Creek than the present projection of land known as Elsinborough Point; but judging by the shore lines of the Delaware as they now are, the latter location would seem to be the more reasonable, in one view, because there the river is narrowest until New Castle is reached, and the object in erecting this fort was to command the stream and govern the passage of the Dutch, or any who were inimical to the Swedes. It is well known, however, that the shore line between Salem Creek and Elsinborough Point has been receding for many years. At the time this fort was built undoubtedly the mouth of the creek was much nearer the western shore of the river than it is at present. Again,

the whole vicinity of Elsinborough Point is marshy, and for that reason not desirable or probable for such a structure. Nevertheless, in Johnson's opinion, the fort was erected there, for in Hazard, 71, we read the following:

"Some uncertainty exists as to the precise location of Fort Elsinborg; it has usually been placed upon the creek, but upon inquiry in the neighbourhood, and especially of an old resident there, the author is led to believe that it was situated three or four miles below Salem Creek, at a point which has long been known as 'Elsinburg Fort Point.' So early as November 12, 1676, 'a conveyance by warrant was made of 1000 acres, by John Fenwick, to be set out, limited and bounded at and near the point heretofore called Elsinburg Fort, and hereafter to be called Guy's plantation.' There was a large body of marsh on both sides of a creek then called Fishing Creek; 'on the south side of this creek was an island of upland, on which, I well remember, were three well-sized trees; on this island of upland I understood the fort formerly stood, nor have I ever heard any Salem county man locate it in any other place.' 'This island was most judiciously selected for the erection of a fort, being protected by the river on the west; on the north by Fishing Creek, turning east and south; on the south by an immense expanse of wild marsh.'" The foot-note to this paragraph reads: "For these facts I am indebted to the kindness of Col. R. G. Johnson, the well-known author of a small History of Salem, N. J., and one of the oldest inhabitants of

Salem, who has favoured me with a long letter on the subject."

Here we have the view of our local historian, expressed during the last century. In his little book, page 7, he conveys the impression that Fort Elfsborg was built in 1631. Now let us see what light is to be obtained as to the year of erection, character and location of this fort, from men who not only saw it but wrote about it during, and within a short time after, its construction.

On August 16, 1642, Queen Christina appointed Johan Printz Governor of New Sweden, as the land along the Delaware claimed by the Swedes was then called. Printz arrived at Fort Christina [now Wilmington, Del.] on February 15, 1642-3. (Campanius, 70.) Andries Hudde was in the employment of the Dutch at New Amsterdam [now New York], and on October 12, 1645, was appointed Commissary for the South River, as the Delaware was then designated. On October 22, 1646, Hudde made "A brief, but true Report of the Proceedings of Johan Prints, Governor of the Swedish forces at the South-River of New-Netherland, also of the Garrisons of the aforesaid Swedes, found on that river, the first of November, 1645." The translation of this report begins with these words:

"What regards the garrisons of the Swedes on the South-River of New Netherland is as follows:

"At the entrance of this River three leagues up from its mouth, on the east shore, is a fort called Elsenburgh, usually garrisoned by 12 men and one lieutenant, 4 guns, iron and brass, of 12 pounds iron (balls), 1 mortar (pots-hoof). This Fort is an earthwork and was ordered to be erected there by the aforesaid Johan Prints, shortly after his arrival in that river. By means of this fort, the above mentioned Prints holds the river locked for himself, so

that all vessels, no matter to whom they belong or whence they come, are compelled to anchor there." (Col. Hist. N. Y., 12. 28-9.)

In 1655, there were published at Hoorn, Holland, "Short Historical and Journal Notes of Several Voyages" made by Capt. David Pietersz de Vries, a skillful seaman who had also been a master of artillery in Holland's employ, and had established a colony on the western shore of the Delaware in 1631. He left that colony, but returned to the river on a trading vessel. He was thoroughly familiar with the Delaware, and piloted this ship. Under date of October, 1643, we read the following in the translation of this journal:

"The 13th, sailed by Reed Island, and came to Verckens-kil, where there was a fort constructed by the Swedes, with three angles, from which they fired for us to strike our flag. The skipper asked me if he should strike it. I answered him, 'If I were in a ship belonging to myself, I would not strike it because I had been a patroon of NewNetherland, and the Swedes were a people who came into our river; but you come here by contrary winds and for the purposes of trade, and it is therefore proper that you should strike.' Then the skipper struck his flag, and there came a small skiff from the Swedish fort, with some Swedes in it, who inquired of the skipper with what he was laden. He told them with Madeira wine. We asked them whether the governor was in the fort. They answered, No; that he was at the third fort up the river [New Gottenberg], to which we sailed, and arrived at about four o'clock in the afternoon, and went to the governor, who welcomed us. He was named Captain Prins. * * * The 19th, I went with the governor to the Minck-quas-kil * * * I staid here at night with the governor, who treated me

well. In the morning * * * I took my leave of the governor, who accompanied me on board. We fired a salute for him, and thus parted from him; weighed anchor, and got under sail, and came to the first fort. Let the anchor fall again, and went on land to the fort, which was not entirely finished; it was made after the English plan, with three angles close by the river. There were lying there six or eight brass pieces, twelve-pounders. The skipper exchanged here some of his wines for beaver-skins. The 20th of October, took our departure from the last fort, or first in sailing up the river, called Elsenburg." (N. Y. Hist. Soc. Col., 2d S., 3. 122-3.)

From these contemporary accounts we learn that this fort was begun after February, 1643, but had not been completed by October 20th of that year; that it was an earthwork structure in the form of three angles; and that it was located close to Delaware River, at Verckens Kill,—not on an island nearly surrounded by marsh, three or four miles below Salem Creek. Was Verckens Kill the "Fishing Creek" of Johnson? No: for in the deed from William Malster, conveying Windham to Roger Milton, the land is described as fronting on Virkins Kill alias Salem Creek (Salem Deeds, 2. 32); and in Col. Hist. N. Y., 12. 610, we see the commission appointing Malster and five others to be overseers or selectmen "In Verckens kill or hogg Creeke, commonly called Salem or Swamp Towne, & parts adjacent."

Guy's plantation of 1000 acres, referred to in the information given by Jonsson to Hazard, stretched along Delaware River about two miles, from Salem Creek on the north to Locust Creek, near present Elsinborough Point. At the time of the survey (1676), this land, "at and near the point heretofore called Elsinburge fort," was

in Guy's possession by virtue of his deed from Fenwick, and was then called Guy's Point or plantation. (Salem Sur. 1676, p. 45; Fenwick's Sur., 14.) Seemingly Locust Creek was Johnson's "Fishing Creek;" and what is now called Elsinborough Point was known in Fenwick's time as Kymball's Point. (Salem Deeds, 3. 99.)

In May, 1654, Printz was succeeded by John Rysingh as governor of New Sweden, and the first act of the latter upon his arrival was to capture Fort Casimir (New Castle) from the Dutch. In the next year, the Dutch wrested this fort from the Swedes, took from them Fort Christina and Fort New Gutenberg, and drove the Swedes from Delaware River. According to Governor Rysingh's official report of the capture of these strongholds, the Dutch in seven ships, with six or seven hundred men aboard, arrived in the South River on August 30, 1655, "and anchored before the Fortress of Elfsborg, which was then dismantled and ruinous." (N. Y. Hist. Soc. Col., 2d S., 1. 443.) In the Dutch account of the expedition, no hint is found that Fort Elfsborg was in a condition to be a factor—but the contrary impression is conveyed, for in Stuyvesant's letter to his Council we read that the Dutch ships came to anchor before this fort, and remained there three days, during which time they arranged their forces in five sections, in preparation for the attack upon Fort Casimir, to which they proceeded. (Col. Hist. N. Y., 12. 101.) Acrelius tells us that Fort Elfsborg was "abandoned by the Swedes and destroyed, as it was almost impossible to live there on account of the gnats (myggor); whence it was for some time called Myggenborg." This fort was in ruins, therefore, more than twenty years before Fenwick's arrival in 1675; and in Johnson's time, no Salem County man with whom he con-

versed knew where it had been situated. Its site had probably been submerged many years.

That it was an earthwork, thrown up in the form of three angles—like points of a star, has been proved herein by the testimony of eye-witnesses; but in a paper recently read before an Historical Society in this State, and printed in a local newspaper, we find the following erroneous description of it:

"The fort was constructed of huge logs hewn from the heavy timbers surrounding the site, and doubtless had the additions usual to that class of works, a deep mote, high embankments and strong lines of palisades, the latter chiefly to guard against the incursions of Indians."

In the newspaper print, there is an accompanying illustration of this fort (as the author imagined it), which shows a log building, rectangular in shape, and with a gable roof surmounted by a cupola. Seemingly the structure is placed upon a plot of ground, also rectangular, and raised above the surrounding land, such plot being embanked with horizontal logs. A sentry is seen near one corner of the building; another is walking his beat between it and the shore-line, along which tall grass grows; not far from the fort is a large log house; and within a stone-throw of the shore appears the stern of a ship flying a Swedish man-of-war flag. This wholly misleading picture needs only a band of menacing Indians in the distance to complete it; for there is abundant proof that the Swedes and aborigines were very friendly.

Before dropping the subject of early defenses in this vicinity, it is well that an error in Johnson, 54, be corrected. In his version of Mary Fenwick's letter of February 7, 1678-9, we read with relation to Mrs. Lefevre—"I found she had some design to make a fool upon

the view, and to have thy concurrence therein; but I do not understand the design, so must leave it to thy discretion and address." Johnson's expression, "fool upon the view," is nonsense. The words in the original letter are "fort upon the river." So Mrs. Lefevre had an ambition to fortify Salem County.

The Lefevre and Pledger Tract

This section of land, comprising 6000 acres, was the first in this vicinity to be occupied by any of Fenwick's grantees, and its owners had seated themselves upon it before Fenwick's arrival (Salem Sur. 1676, pp. 45-6), though it was not surveyed until November 12, 1676 (Fenwick's Sur., 15). According to N. J. Arch. 1. 414, this tract was known as "Packagomack"—an Indian name, thought to have meant land lying low along an inland body of water. It was bounded north by Mannington Creek and the lower portion of Swedes Run; west by Salem Creek; south by the lower part of Fenwick Creek, by Keasbey's Creek—early called Great Mill Creek, to a stream flowing northerly into it and named Smith's Creek in the survey of Smithfield (but later called Mill Hollow Creek), and by a line running from the latter stream due east for nearly a mile, where it turned south; southeast by Alloways Creek; and easterly by a line starting on this creek, about half way between Quinton and Alloway, and extending east of north to Swedes Run, which it touched about three-quarters of a mile east of the confluence of that stream and Limestone Run. This tract was divided into six lots by its owners.

The first lot was nearest to Salem Creek, and comprised 900 acres, called Lefevre's Chase, which Lefevre, Sr., conveyed to his son in 1687. (Salem Deeds, 4. 44.) Lefevre, Jr., sold 100 acres in the north end of it to Jonathan Beere, in 1688; 200 acres in the middle

portion to James Barrett, in 1690; and the remaining 600 acres, in the south end, to Rothro Morris, in 1700. (Salem Deeds, 4. 75; 5. 118; 7. 12.)

The second lot adjoined the first, on the east, and was owned by Pledger. In the southerly section of it was his "Netherland Farm," which he devised to his son, John. The northerly portion was Quietittity, or Sandyburr Wood, comprising 500 acres, which Pledger, Sr., conveyed to Christopher Saunders August 10, 1680, and Saunders gave to Jonathan Beere and wife in 1686. (Salem Deeds, 7. 196; 3. 224.)

During this last spring, a party visited what was supposed by its members to have been Quietittity, which has been referred to as an Indian village, and "the first seat of John Pledger in Fenwick's Colony." The writer understands that the visitors believed this place was situated on the south side of Mannington Creek, to the east of the thoroughfare running southerly from the Salem-Woodstown road to Quinton. Such a location for the Quietittity of record is erroneous, and makes it a part of the 544 acres sold by Pledger to William and Joan Braithwaite in 1689, which latter land was in the fourth lot. Quietittity was an Indian name, the meaning of which is thought to have been a place where bushes grew along the bank of a stream. The records do not disclose it as an aborigine village. The ownership of Quietittity was early in dispute between Michael Barron and Lefevre and Pledger, and a suit for the possession of it was decided against Barron, on appeal to the New Castle Court. Barron alleged that he had a grant from Governor Carteret long before the division of the Province; that under it he had purchased from the Indians, in 1671, 600 acres called "Quietetting;" that for several years he had made improvements and a beginning of settlement upon it, but

was hindered by Fenwick's threats. Lefevre and Pledger claimed the land as included in their 6000 acres. The Judges at New Castle decided that Barron had forfeited his right to Quietittity by not settling upon it within a proper time. In this suit, Christopher Saunders deposed that, in the fall of 1679, he had built a small house on the land by Pledger's order. (Printed New Castle Rec., 336, 337-8.) The record shows that this was the first house erected at Quietittity; and it was constructed four and a half years after Pledger's coming. It is certain that Pledger did not first reside there, for we know that he seated himself at Bereton Fields, and he is called of the latter place at all times when his domicile is specifically named.

The bounds of Quietittity clearly prove that it was a part of the second lot, and its situation is further defined by other deeds. In the conveyance by Lefevre, Jr., to Beere of the 100 acres at the north end of the Chase, the land sold bordered the south side of Mannington Creek for 40 perches; adjoined Saunders' land on the west; and was bounded south by Puddle Dock Creek. Now, Puddle Dock Creek flows westerly into Salem Creek, on the north side of "Denn's Island." Consequently, Quietittity lay west of the present Salem-Sharptown road—not east of the Salem-Woodstown highway. In 1692-3, Beere sold the 600 acres, comprising both of these parcels, to Bartholomew Wyatt (Salem Deeds, 5. 239), and the deed states that all the land was "at Quietittity," thereby making the amount equal that claimed by Barron.

The third lot adjoined the second on the east, was owned by Lefevre, and the line between the two ran south across the lower portion of Myhoppinies Creek. In 1680, Lefevre sold 400 acres in the northeast part to William Rumsey; in 1693, conveyed 400 acres in

the northwest portion to Roger Carary; and in 1696 sold 200 acres in the southerly part to widow Joan Braithwaite. (Salem Deeds, 2. 15; 5. 275; 6. 44.) The widow's portion of this third lot was bounded southerly by Hollybourne Creek (the upper part of Fenwick Creek, flowing west), and in her will she refers to it as "Hollybourne Pasture."

Hollybourne, Lefevre's plantation of 200 acres, where he resided, lay south of Hollybourne Creek, between Acton station and Penton. In 1696 he sold it to Joseph Pledger.

The fourth lot was owned by Pledger. It lay between the third lot and the easterly line of the whole tract. Out of the westerly portion of this lot, and bordering Limestone Run, Pledger sold 544 acres to William and Joan Braithwaite in 1689. (Salem Deeds, 5. 15.) The remainder of the fourth lot Pledger devised to his son, John.

The fifth lot was in the southeast corner of the main tract, south of the fourth lot. It was owned by Lefevre, and known as Petersfield. In 1679, he agreed to sell 300 acres of the easterly portion to George Provo, to be called Provo's Holt, but it passed to William Willis. In 1690-1, Lefevre conveyed 700 acres in the westerly part to John Worlidge and wife, who sold 600 acres of it to William Kenton in 1693. Kenton's widow married Hugh Middleton, and in 1698 he received a conveyance of this land from Kenton's son. (Salem Sur. 1. 8-9; Fenwick's Sur., 30; Salem Deeds, 5. 105, 293; 6. 238.)

The sixth lot was situated west of the fifth, and in Quaker Neck, between Fenwick and Keasovey's Creeks. Of this lot, 800 acres in the easterly part was Pledger's plantation, called Bereton Fields, the northerly portion of which bounded Hollybourne on the west. This plantation Pledger devised to his son, Joseph, together with the

remainder of the sixth lot. Joseph devised all his land to his wife, Mary, who subsequently married Hugh Middleton. Middleton devised the 800 acres called Bereton Fields, where he dwelt, to his son, John, who died under age, whereby his sister, Mary, became possessed of the land. Mary married Benjamin Vining. Vining devised "Barrenton House" and the 800 acres where he resided, to his son, John. The description of this land in Vining's will shows that its south line was coincident with the north line of Smithfield, from which it extended northerly.

Shourds, 473, locates Lefevre on Quaker Neck, and says that he "erected upon the tract a large brick residence in 1707. The building is still standing, and is owned at the present time [1876] by George Griscom, of Salem." Wherever Lefevre built his house, he did not erect it in 1707, as he was dead ten years earlier, and had sold Hollybourne in 1696. Shourds' chapter, entitled "Ancient Buildings," needs considerable revision.

Broadway and the "Bradway" House

Shourds, 35, tells us that "As early as 1676 the street now known as Broadway was laid out and called Wharf Street, and several town lots were laid out and surveyed on said street; one for Edward Bradway before his arrival, containing sixteen acres, commencing near the public wharf at the creek, and running up the street a certain distance, and from the line of said street a northerly course to Fenwick Creek. In the year 1691 Edward Bradway built on his town lot a large brick house which is still standing, for size and appearance surpassing any house built prior to that date, and for many years afterward, in Salem. * * * In 1693 the town of Salem was incorporated into a borough, and the authorities of the town changed the name of Wharf Street to Bradway Street, in honor of

Edward Bradway." What an imagination had this author, and how persistently did he use fancy's color-brush! Or, did he offer us tradition?

While it is true that, in a few comparatively recent deeds, Wharf Street is applied to this thoroughfare between the present dock and Market street, it is not true that such was the name given to it in 1676, or for many years afterward. In the early records, we find mentions of the "Town Landing;" and this name was used for the dock at least as late as December 24, 1688. (Salem Deeds, 4. 120.) N. J. Arch. 21, furnishes abstracts of deeds and surveys recorded up to 1704; but the index of this volume does not disclose "Wharf Street." Neither does the index of Arch. 23, which extends to 1730. In the former volume, this thoroughfare is called "the highway;" and there is every probability that it obtained its present name—as did streets in other cities, simply and only because it was the broad way of the town, and not from the presence in this county of Edward Bradway.

In September, 1676, six town lots were surveyed along the north side of this thoroughfare, between it and Fenwick Creek—their frontage upon it aggregating about half a mile. Of them, the one nearest the present dock contained 16 acres, was laid out to John Smith, and was bounded as follows: From a stake marked JS, by the highway, north by east 58 perches to a stake by Fenwick's River, or Creek; thence east by south 38 perches to a white oak marked RH; thence south by west 78 perches to a stake marked RH, on the highway; thence west by north 38 perches to the place of beginning. Adjoining Smith, on the east, was the 16 acre lot of Roger Huckings, with a frontage of 38 perches; adjoining Huckings on the east was the 16 acre lot of Samuel Nicholson, with a

frontage of 36 perches; adjoining Nicholson on the east was the 10 acre lot of Mark Reeve, with a frontage of 18 perches; adjoining Reeve on the east was the 10 acre lot of Edward Lumley, with a frontage of 16 perches; and adjoining Lumley on the east was the 10 acre lot of Robert Goulsbury, with a frontage of . . . perches. (Fenwick's Sur., 1, 1, 1; Town Grants, 1, 3; Salem Sur., 1. 18.)

In addition to his 16 acre lot, John Smith had 6 acres, which were deeded to him by Fenwick in 1679 (Town Grants, p. 5), and were bounded as follows: From a stake marked JS, by the highway to Salem landing, along the west [should be east] side of the highway to a stake marked JS, by Fenwick's River; thence south along the west side of his 16 acre lot; thence to the place of beginning. These two adjoining lots, aggregating 22 acres, were sold by John Smith and wife Martha, of Alloways Creek, to Sarah Cannon, on June 4, 1683, and the deed recites the bounds of both lots. (Salem Deeds, 2. 137.) Sarah Cannon gave all her property to her daughter, Sarah Pile. (Salem Wills, 2. 2.) On April 13, 1686, William Hall, as attorney for Sarah Pile, sold the said 22 acres to Samuel Carpenter, who, on the same date, assigned this land to William Kelly, a weaver. (Salem Deeds, 4. 113, 117.) Kelly retained it until April 2, 1691, when he sold it to William Hall, late of Pilesgrove, but then of Mannington Creek, and his wife, Elizabeth. (Salem Deeds, 5. 114.) By August 17, 1692, William Hall was an inn-holder of Salem. (Salem Deeds, 5. 200.) Now, the so-called Bradway House stands on a part of the 16 acres originally laid out to John Smith—title to which has here been traced to William Hall. There is every reason to believe that this house, which bears upon its east gable the date, 1691, was built by William Hall,

and that he had established it as his inn by 1692. His will, dated April 10, 1713, devised to his son, William, the "capitall house" where the testator dwelt, with all the lots bought of William Kelly. Salem records do not show that Edward Bradway ever owned a house or lot on the north side of Broadway, between the wharf and Market Street.

Edward Bradway, a bargeman or lighterman, of St. Paul, Shadwell, co. Middlesex, England, bought of Fenwick 1000 acres on May 6, 1675; and on June 23d, following, purchased a second 1000 acres of John Edridge. (Salem No. 1, pp. 52, 110.) Bradway, his wife, his daughters Mary and Susannah, and three servants arrived in Salem in 7 mo. [September], 1677. (Meeting Rec.) The first land laid out to him, as far as the records disclose, was his tract of 984 acres on the south side of Alloways Creek. Next was surveyed to him his 984 acres on Stow Creek. Each purchaser of 1,000 acres had a right to a town lot of 16 acres in Salem, and Bradway had two there; but the records do not designate him as ever a resident of Salem, though undoubtedly he first lived there, as in the Meeting Records a minute is found showing that a committee of four was appointed on 12 mo. 2d, 1679 [February 2, 1679-80], to view his house, and see if it were suitable for a meeting-house. As early as June 6, 1680, he was of Alloways Creek (Salem Deeds, 5. 311); and such was his specified abode at all later times. The records do not show when his two town lots were surveyed, but neither of them was on Broadway, as clearly evidenced by the bounds named in the conveyances of them. The 16 acre lot secured by virtue of his purchase from Fenwick was sold by Bradway to Richard Wilkinson, December 23, 1680. On three sides, it was bounded by marsh, and the fourth side was

not said to be on any highway. (Salem Deeds, 3. 22.) The other 16 acre lot he conveyed to his daughter, Mary Cooper, widow, on February 1, 1692-3. This lot then had a house upon it; was on a street running north-north-west; and was bounded as follows: From a red oak marked CW, by a highway, southwest by the southeast side of Christopher White's plantation 80 perches, to a tree marked CW; thence east-southeast, by the marsh side, 16 perches to a tree marked EB; thence northeast 80 perches to a stake marked EB, by the wayside; thence north-northwest down the highway 48 perches to place of beginning. (Salem Deeds, 5. 288.) There was a street named for Edward Bradway—and probably this lot was upon it, which appears of record as Bradways, Bradaways, Broadways, and Broadaways street (once, in 1689, as "Edward Bradaways street"), but no part of it is specified as running substantially east and west, as does present Broadway between the wharf and Market Street. Upon this Bradway's Street, under its various spellings, Christopher Saunders had a 14 acre lot in 1679, which he sold to Jonathan Beere in 1686; Richard Robinson had a 10 acre lot in 1679, which passed to Edward Lumley in 1686-7; Joseph White had a 10 acre lot in 1684-5, which had been in the tenure of Charles Bagley; and Richard Johnson had a 10 acre lot at the same time, which had formerly belonged to Henry Jennings, and adjoined that of Joseph White. The bounds of these various lots prove that the street upon which they were located had a corner in its course, to which it ran northwesterly in one direction and southwesterly in the other. A portion, at least, of this highway retained its name as late as December 10, 1737, for on that date a public road, forty-five feet wide, was laid out "from the line of Mannington,

on Keasby's Dam, to the main street in Salem," the survey of which road reads as follows: "Beginning at the Old Creek at the aforesaid Dam, and run west 33 rods, 10 links, to a stake corner; thence north 49 degrees west, 33 rods to a street called Bradway's Street; and thence south 50 degrees 30 minutes west, 98 rods, 20 links, to the main street, on Penny Hill, which said road we do order to be opened on or by the first day of May next, and at the same time we do vacate the private road heretofore laid out from the aforesaid Dam." (Original paper in Salem Co. Hist. Soc. Archives.) Evidently the Bradway Street here named was not a part of Broadway, but was the northerly portion of present Johnson Street.

JOHN FENWICK'S GRAVE

The attention of the writer has been called to a movement for the erection of a monument to mark John Fenwick's last resting-place, as stated in an article printed last May in one of the county papers. Laudable as such a project is, we are met by the fact that no real proof has been presented as to the location of the grave. All the information we have concerning the matter is hearsay, or tradition, the true value of which is always uncertain unless it can be unquestionably proved, for much hearsay has been found badly awry, when determined and proper efforts have been made to substantiate it.

As evidence that Fenwick was interred in a certain locality, the statement of the late Robert G. Johnson is offered. On page 36 of his brochure, we read that Fenwick died "at his plantation in Upper Marmington, which he called Fenwick's grove, * * * and was buried in the family burying ground about two hundred yards from the main road leading towards the poor house, and near the line of that farm. I believe there is nothing at

this time [1839] to mark the place where the remains of that adventurous and great man lie, except a thicket of briars and brambles."

Johnson was mistaken in many things, one of which was the location of Fort Elfsborg, in the erroneous situation of which no Salem County man with whom he conversed on the subject had disagreed. He knew that his statements were not wholly accurate, for on page 170 we find the following confession:

"I am aware that the sketch which I have given you of the historical events thus detailed through a long series of years, embracing a period of four generations of mankind, must necessarily be imperfect, especially as I have been obliged to draw largely upon memory, in comparison to the documents which I possess, for the information derived from many of those, my near and dear friends, who have long since gone to their silent tombs."

This author was born in 1771. It is in no degree probable that he became interested in history before his fourteenth year (1785). If at such early age he heard a statement as to the place of Fenwick's interment, it was one hundred and two years after the burial; and, for aught we know, it was many years later. He could have had no personal knowledge of the matter. What he said as to the situation of the grave must have been what he remembered to have heard; or what he thought he remembered concerning it; or his own conclusions, based upon we know not what. At best, his evidence is purely hearsay.

What and where is the proof that Fenwick had any "family burying ground?" The only members of his family who came to Salem were his three daughters; and each of their husbands had his separate estate. Ann Hedge outlived her father more than

twenty-three years. Elizabeth Adams was alive February 12, 1682-3 (Salem Deeds, 2.19), but was not named in her father's will. Priscilla Champneys died soon after arrival, while Fenwick was residing in Salem. We have no evidence as to where Priscilla and Elizabeth were buried; nor do we know of the decease of any of Fenwick's grandchildren prior to his demise, or where they were interred when they passed away.

The late Thomas Shourds has also been cited for the location of the grave. On page 12 of his book, published in 1876, we find the following:

"John Fenwick was elected one of the members of that body [the Legislature] from Salem county, in the fall of 1683, but being unwell, he left his home in Salem and went to Samuel Hedge's, his son-in-law, in Upper Mannington, there to be cared for by his favorite daughter, Ann Hedge, in his last days, for he died a short time afterwards at an age of 65 years. He requested before his death to be buried in the Sharp's family burying-ground, which was complied with. The said ground was formerly a part of the Salem County Almshouse farm, but now belongs to Elmer Reeve. If the ground could be designated where the grave-yard was, although the exact spot where Fenwick lays could not, it would be a grateful deed for his descendants and the citizens of this county to assist in erecting a monument to his memory there on the spot where the grave-yard was."

No author so unreliable as Shourds has ever written of Salem County, or its families. His mistakes were legion. In Leaming and Spicer, 457, we find John Fenwick's name among the members of the Legislature in May, 1683—the spring of that year. Fenwick's will announces that he signed it on his sick bed at Fenwick's Grove, and that

he requested to be buried in that place. This plantation of 3,000 acres he leased to Mary White on August 2, 1683, for twenty-one years, and devised to his grandson, Fenwick Adams, when the latter should be of age, who was to live there provided he behaved peaceably to Mary White. Upon it was located the manor house, in which the executors were to have liberty to hold courts, and where were household goods and books. It is evident, from the will, that this was not Samuel Hedge's domicile.

No person named Sharp resided within the limits of Salem County earlier than 1704, when Isaac Sharp married Margaret Braithwaite (Meeting Rec.), and is said to have established his home at "Blessington," now Sharptown, about two miles north of the alleged location of the graveyard. One of their descendants has informed the writer that the land which included the burial-place was bought by Joseph Sharp, son of Isaac, about 1750—nearly seventy years after Fenwick's death; and a mortgage executed by Joseph, in 1769, shows that he purchased property in the vicinity in 1752.

In 1876, Shourds did not know where his "Sharp's family burying-ground" was located, as his language clearly shows; yet, ten years later—without any evidence that he had obtained proof in the meantime, he is said to have agreed with Samuel Kelty upon the place where Fenwick was interred. These two men, with Dr. Joseph Hedge Thompson, went to the alleged spot in 1886—two hundred and three years after Fenwick's demise; and, in Thompson's report of the visit, the following statement appears: "Every vestige of the sacred purpose to which this ground was devoted has long since been effaced, and crops are annually gathered from" it. According to another portion of this report, the

Sharp graveyard was without the bounds of Fenwick's Grove, in Dr. Thompson's estimation, for he remarked that Fenwick requested to be interred on the Grove land, "but for some unknown reason his wish was not complied with and his remains were deposited in the burying ground of the Sharp family." This report adopted Shourds' view that Fenwick passed his last days at the house of Samuel Hedge.

William Stuard, a colored man, is also brought forward in support of the situation of Fenwick's grave; but his testimony amounts only to statements that on the farm of Elmer Reeve there were gravestones in 1848, which were removed by the owner of the land during the following two or three years, when the ground was plowed up. "There was talk at that time of putting a monument to Fenwick's grave," he said, "but they did not know exactly which it was." This was nearly forty years before Shourds' and Kelty's amicable agreement; and more than one hundred and sixty-five years after Fenwick's decease. Not one of the stones referred to by this witness was identified as that of any named person.

John B. Reeve, son of Elmer, is quoted as remembering "when a boy seeing these gravestones carted from this graveyard, * * * and that these, with quoit stones gathered from the farm, were sold for masonry." This witness also "often heard his father refer to Fenwick's burial in the old graveyard." We are not told when Elmer Reeve listened to the allegation, or who uttered it.

Lastly, the statement of Mrs. Clark Pettit is cited, who "reports that her father often referred to the spot, telling her that his grandfather, who was born in 1750, and lived to the age of 81 years, used to point out to him when a boy, this location as the place

where John Fenwick was buried, designating the same site as that fixed upon by Messrs. Thompson, Shourds and Kelty;" and Phyllis Moore agreed with these gentlemen. If we assume that Mrs. Pettit's great-grandfather, at the early age of fourteen, was told where Fenwick was said to have been buried, it would have been eighty-one years after the interment; and it may have been much later. As Mrs. Pettit's father was born in 1815, he would hardly have heard of the matter until about one hundred and forty-five years after Fenwick's death.

Nothing is commoner than mistakes in dates, names and localities. Erroneous associations of individuals with places are very frequent. Memory plays us all many tricks. What originally were only conjectures, are often later asserted to have been stated as facts. Remarks but a few days, or weeks, old are wonderfully changed in passing from mouth to mouth, as we all know. What, then, is to be said as to the accuracy of attempted repetitions during a century and more? No one has ever claimed that a stone had marked Fenwick's grave, or that anything had designated it, as far as we are aware. Burial places on private property were abundant in the olden time. In 1764, when we have assumed that the elder Mr. Austin, as a boy, may have heard where Fenwick's remains were said to have been deposited, there is no probability that any one was alive, who, even as a child, had attended the obsequies. It is quite possible that the alleged situation of the grave was based upon the statement of some one person, whose memory of what he had heard in the matter was badly awry—whose association of name and place was wrong; or who stated as a fact what had been merely conjecture.

A well-known author, of much experience with hearsay evidence in connection with local history, has remarked: "Sometimes very old people assert things as facts, which they verily believe and have often told, only because their extreme age has destroyed the power of accurate discrimination—they confound things; and yet they seem so sure and so plausible that we are constrained to believe them, until subsequent official or written data of the true time and circumstances disclose the truth. *

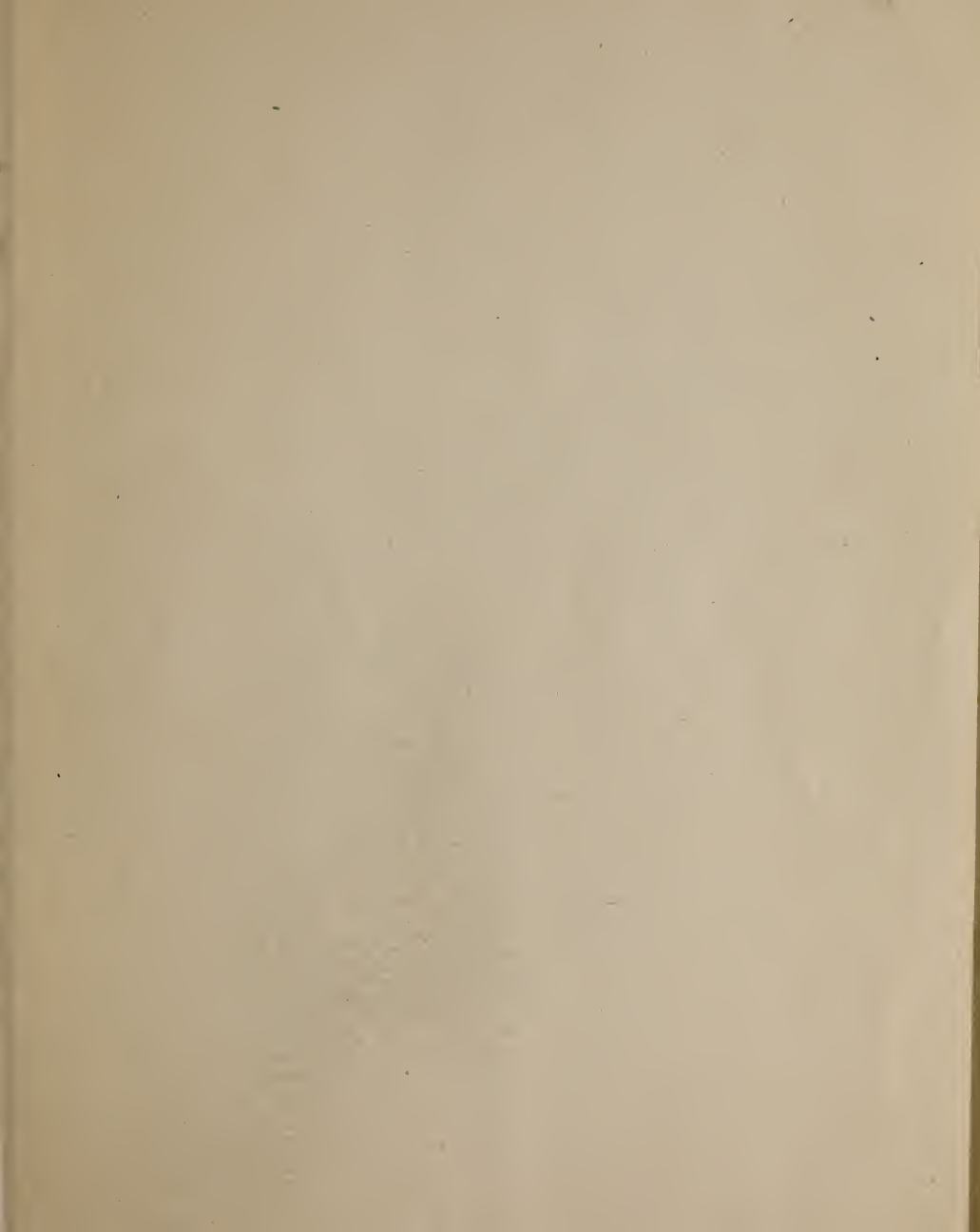
* * If these never come to light to contradict the former assertion, the oft repeated tale goes down to posterity unmolested forever. In this manner the oldest persons in Philadelphia had all a false cause assigned for the name of 'Arch street,' and it was only the records of the courts which set me right." (Watson's Annals of Phila., 2. 14.)

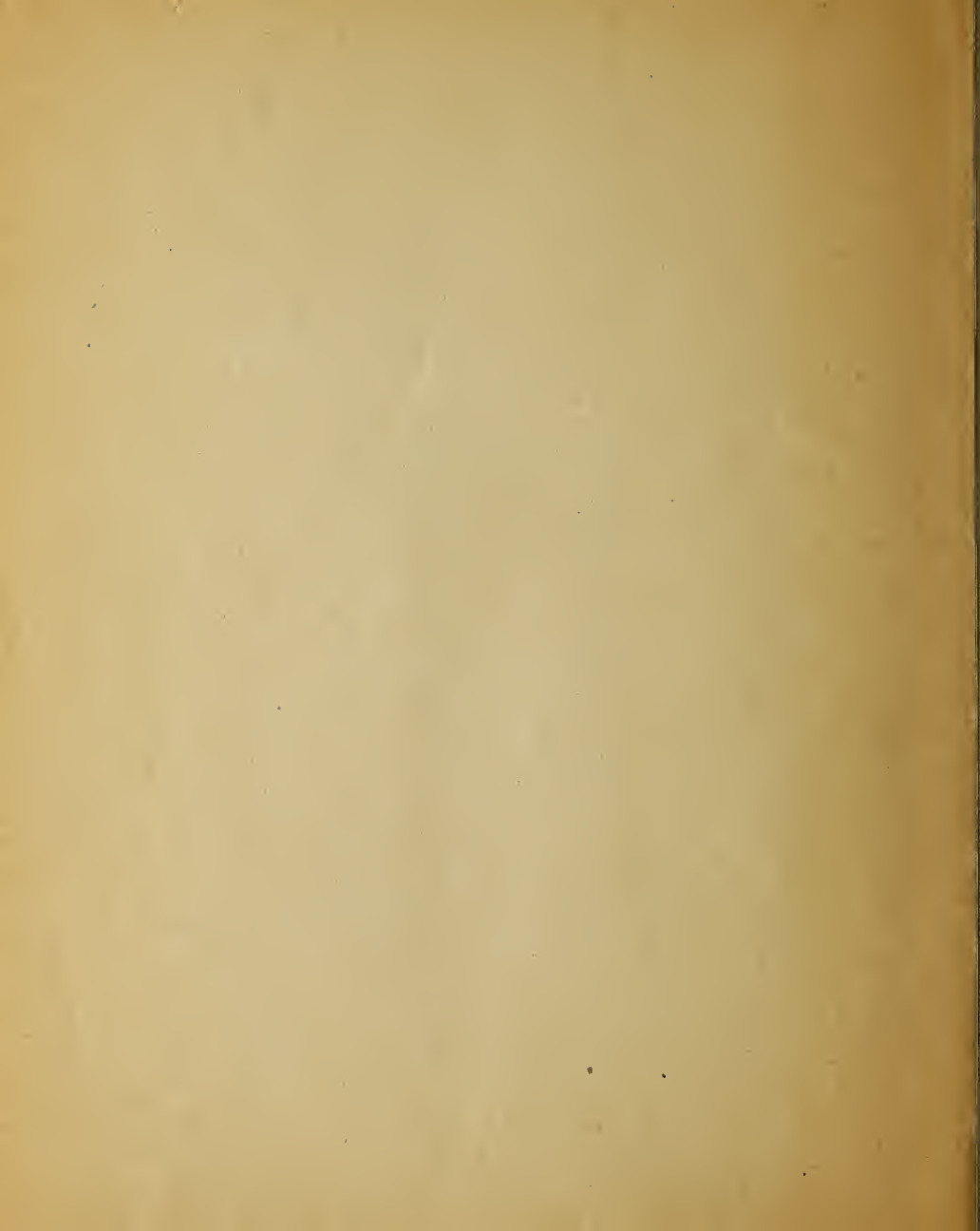
While, at present, we may not be able to offer good evidence that Fenwick's interment did not take place in what came to be known as the Sharp graveyard, we can deny that any proper proof has been presented that this was the spot, for all is hearsay concerning it. Further, this is not the only location that has been claimed as that where Fenwick was buried, for it has been asserted that his sepulcher was the top of Big Mannington Hill. These rival sites are nearly a mile apart.

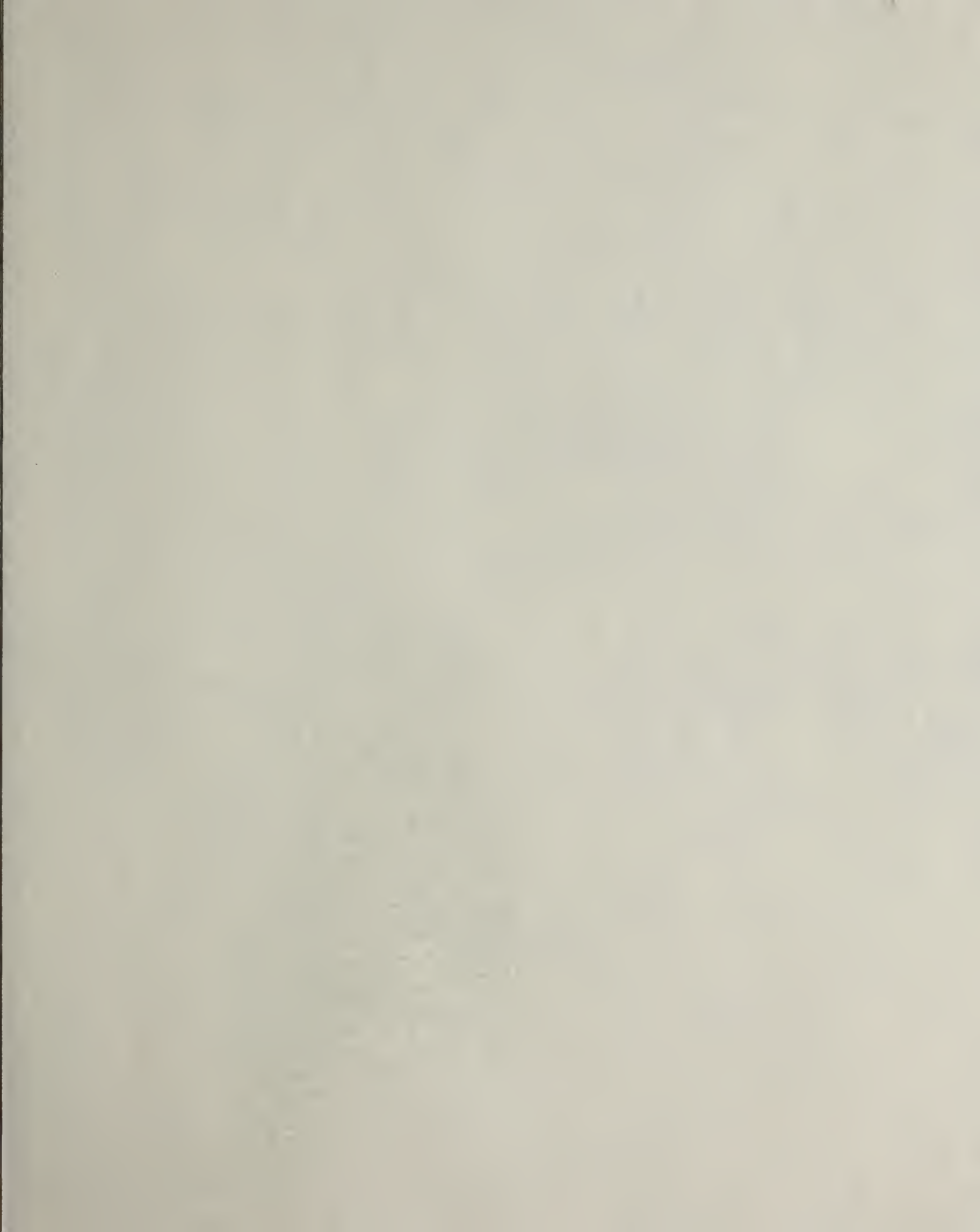
Fenwick's earliest residence in New Jersey was in Salem Town. Later, he built his manor house in Fenwick's

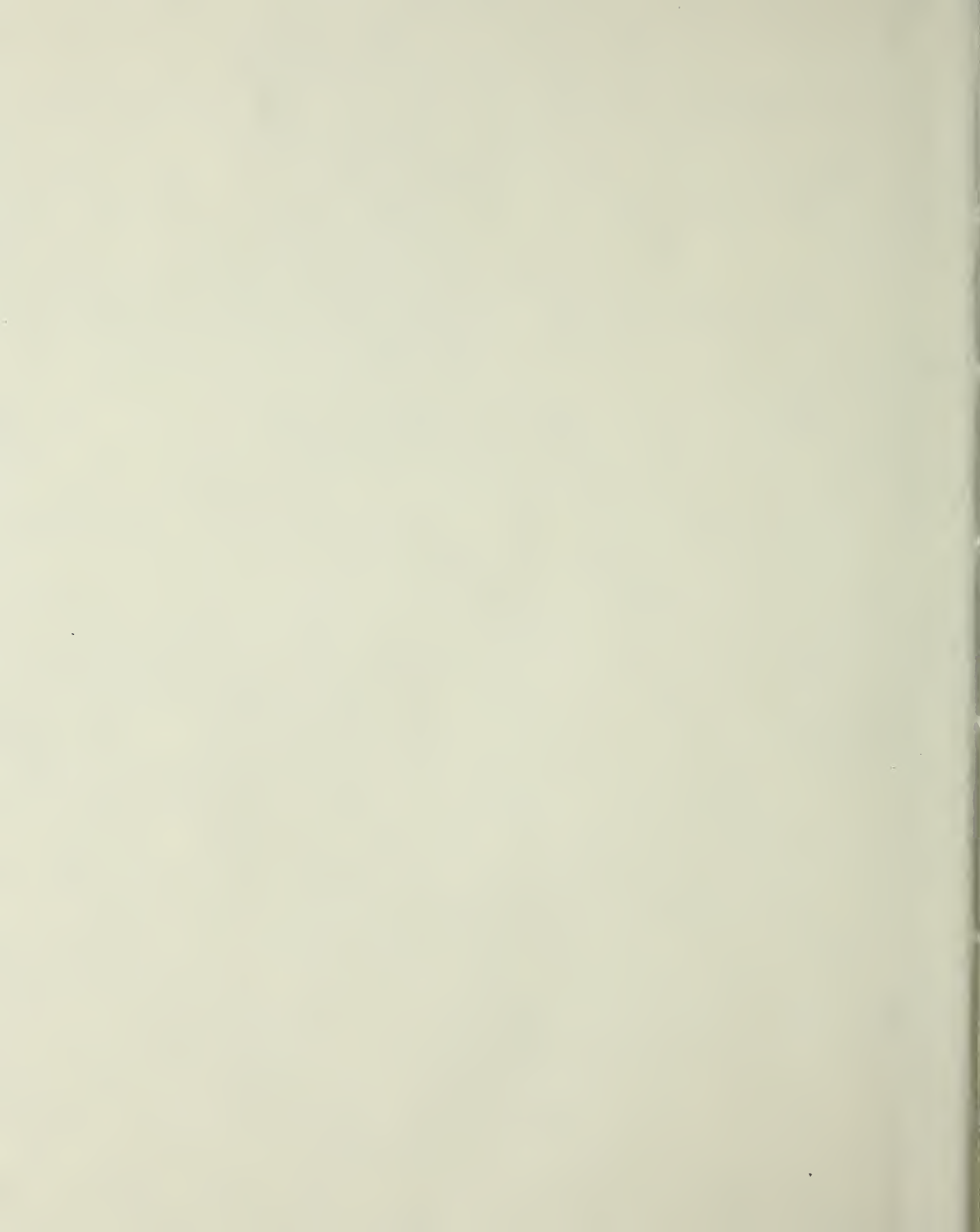
Grove, on land which he located under John Ashfield's assignment to him of 1677. There is every probability that this house was his residence during the last years of his life; and that within five hundred feet of it he was buried. Unquestionably define the position of this manor house, and we have the probable vicinity of his grave; but toward which of the thirty-two points of the compass from this dwelling, or just how far from it, his body was deposited, there is only the barest possibility that any one will ever be able to prove. Why, then, under the conditions which have been stated, should an attempt be made to erect a monument purporting even approximately to mark the grave? Delusions as to Salem County history are far too abundant. Why run the risk of perpetuating one in a matter of this importance?

The real object of this movement is to honor the man. No place is so suitable for that purpose as the city of Salem—for within its boundaries the colonists first established themselves; Salem was Fenwick's and their headquarters; it has always been the county seat; its population is three times that of the largest borough or township within the county. Here, a memorial will be viewed by thousands, while comparatively few will ever see it on any spot in Upper Mannington. Let the citizens of the county unite upon Salem, which is pre-eminently the proper historical location for a monument to John Fenwick's memory. The site of his grave is unknown.









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