

I was born in Hopewell Township in 1741 and lived in Trenton on King Street where I was a well-to-do merchant involved in many civic affairs. I married Theodosia Pearson in 1764 and the following year became a commissioner overseeing the 1758 stone barracks at Trenton and in 1770 I served as barrack master.

As the disagreement between Britain and her colonies grew in the early 1770s I was a leader in the protests. In 1774 I was one of the men chosen to elect delegates to the Continental Congress and I helped collect funds to assist the people of Boston experiencing British army occupation. I was also one of three men appointed to be the New Jersey Committee of Correspondence. In December 1775, about eight months after the fighting at Lexington and Concord, as member of the Committee of Safety, I signed a document about the treatment of suspected Loyalists. I became lieutenant colonel, second in command, of the newly organized First Hunterdon County Militia Regiment. Throughout the war for independence, my business partner Moore Furman and I played important roles in supplying the American army.

Although an active Patriot, I stayed in my home rather than retreat across the Delaware River when the British army occupied Trenton in December 1776. Why Hessian commander Colonel Rall did not treat me as a rebel, but actually treated me very well, has been a subject of speculation, especially by my enemies. Some people have accused me of switching to the Loyalists or simply looking out for myself rather than the cause. However, I was never officially accused of any wrongdoing and I continued to be a highly respected citizen after the Hessians left. Others think I was serving the Patriot cause in some capacity when I stayed in Trenton. When Washington's army crossed at McConkey's Ferry and marched through the stormy Christmas night to attack Trenton, I was entertaining, possibly distracting, Colonel Rall.

Theodosia died in 1784 and I married the very patriotic Mary Dagworthy. I continued to be active in Trenton civic affairs until my death on October 17, 1821.



When the Revolution began, I was enslaved by Trenton's Dr. David Cowell. Several Quakers in town, including Nathan Beakes and Stacy Potts, sought to help me gain my freedom. At one point I ran away from Dr. Cowell, which the doctor said in a notice about my escape cost him greatly due to the "great expence in gaol fees, money paid the guards, and riding more than two hundred miles after" me. On January 12, 1780 Dr. Cowell placed an advertisement in the *New Jersey Gazette* offering to sell me. He described me as "a sober, healthy, able bodied Negro man of about 32 years of age, who has had the small pox, and understand all kinds of farming business, and the care and management of horses, equal to any in the country."

With the help of Mr. Beakes and Mr. Potts, I placed a letter in the newspaper stating that I had purchased my freedom, but that Cowell was trying to deny it. We warned potential buyers that I would be protected by the "freedom, justice, and protection which I am entitled to by the laws of the state, altho; I am a Negro." This started a public debate among several of Trenton's leading citizens who denounced each other, bringing out unrelated, longstanding suspicions of each other. Mr. Beakes and Mr. Potts protected me and hired me to work for them. They kept moving me around to prevent Dr. Cowell from capturing me. During all this controversy, Trenton citizens continued to elect Mr. Potts each year to be the town clerk, while they did not elect Dr. Cowell to any public office.

The dispute continued and Dr. Cowell may have proven in court that he had not freed me. However, in June 1783 he again wrote in the newspaper that I was still absent from his service and "employed, protected, secreted and encouraged, by the same evil-minded advisers as formerly." To resolve things, Dr. Cowell even offered a generous reward to anyone who succeeded in encouraging me to return "to his duty, which will prove much to the advantage of the negro."

My story reveals the mixed feelings about slavery in Trenton at the time of the Revolution, as well as some of the tensions between members of the community. There is no evidence that I ever returned to Dr. Cowell.



I was born in 1720 into the prominent Tucker family of Trenton. I married Henry Bellerjeau who died in 1746 and I then married Trenton shoemaker Joseph Britton. I operated a tavern at our home and continued to own and operate it after Joseph died in 1755. In all my actions I supported the American Revolution's cause.

Trenton had about a dozen taverns. Stage coaches travelling between New York and Philadelphia often stopped for a meal or for overnight. My Indian King Tavern was a large, two-story frame house with four rooms on each floor, and a large kitchen building attached to it. The property also had a wood house and shed, a two-story stable that could hold more than 40 horses, and many trees bearing fruit. In 1757 and 1758, during the French and Indian War, I provided housing for six British soldiers for 21 weeks and five days, two soldiers for 13 weeks, and three soldiers for a week and five days. Even though reimbursed for this, the citizens of Trenton asked for a barracks to be built to house transient soldiers and it was built in 1758. During the Revolution, my tavern provided meals for army officers travelling through Trenton on their way to join with George Washington's army. My sons served in the militia and we suffered greatly when the British and Hessians occupied Trenton in December 1776 and two battles were fought in our town. My tavern, on King Street, was in the thick of both battles.

My son Isaac took over the family business starting in July 1779. In October 1779, a joint meeting of the General Assembly and Legislative Council met at our tavern and reelected William Livingston as governor of New Jersey. The government met at our place other times as well during the war, but Trenton was not yet the State capital.

Auctions were often held at taverns and in January 1780, Isaac advertised a public auction to sell an almost new scarlet broadcloth coat, a pair of silk stockings, a piece of silver lace, a neat silver mounted sword, a port-manteau, a bound blank day book, and a pair of four-year-old horses fit for a carriage. Unfortunately, the economic problems of the Revolution hurt us and we lost our tavern at a sheriff's sale in 1783.



By the time of the American Revolution I was a well-known and trusted tailor of Trenton at my home and shop on King Street near its intersection with Front. I employed several men to work in my shop and one of my apprentices was William Robinson, who also had to serve in the Hunterdon County militia. William and my daughter Sarah fell in love and, against my wishes, were married on a snowy day in February or early March 1777. I had been brought up a Quaker, but when just the third Methodist Church built in America was completed in 1774 at the corner of Queen and Fourth streets, I joined and became the first Methodist Steward.

To help the Revolution, I served as assistant commissary to the Trenton military hospitals, primarily at the stone barracks, for about a year in 1777. That work got me involved in the 1777 court martial of Continental army Dr. William Shippen, accused of neglecting the patients at the barracks. I testified on his behalf that he always directed me to purchase everything necessary and comfortable for the sick. I told the court, "I was well supplied with sugar, molasses, wine, spirits, rice, and other hospital stores" and "Dr. Shippen visited the hospitals several times." I emphasized that, "Dr. Shippen always appeared to me as attentive and humane, to the sick under his care."

During the fighting around Philadelphia in 1777 wounded soldiers came through Trenton before going on to Princeton. A doctor with them later claimed that their temporary Trenton quarters had not been cleaned and a number of patients caught putrid fever. However, the rooms had been cleaned and that there had been no putrid fever at the hospital for three weeks before their arrival.

I was elected by the citizens of Trenton to be a county freeholder in 1779 and 1783. With other Trenton citizens we organized a school for Trenton's children in 1781. In 1782, I served on a town committee set up to stop all trade with the enemy and promote the payment of taxes, two things necessary for bringing the war to its final conclusion.

I benefitted from state and Continental officials who lived temporarily in Trenton during the war. One time in 1782, Deputy Quartermaster General John Neilson hired me to make him a double-breasted jacket.



During the time of the Revolution, I lived in Trenton as an enslaved woman, with my two children and two grandchildren, in the home of Mary Dury, a member of the Quaker meeting. At that time, Quaker meetings were attempting to have their members free all their enslaved people and I was one who benefitted from that. Mary raised my hopes in October 1774, when she freed two of her enslaved men, 43-year-old James and 23-year-old Bedford. Soon after, in the summer of 1775, while Trenton's Patriot men were forming the militia, the local Quakers formed a committee to meet with members who continued to be enslavers to discuss freeing their enslaved people. Those few who did so were advised to preserve the manumission papers, partly to "bear witness of the Friendly belief of equality of all man-kind irrespective of race."

As an enslaved woman, I performed a number of household tasks, such as general housework, cooking, washing, ironing, spinning, and sewing. Over the years, I also took care of my own children and then my grandchildren. Other enslaved women I knew in Trenton also had some farm skills, especially in dairying. I was also aware that two enslaved women had unusual skills, including one everyone said understand "business well" and another who understood economics. But, most of us just did the same kind of work I did.

Those of us still enslaved were frustrated that the freeing of enslaved persons was taking so long and many enslavers kept insisting they did not want to free anyone. New Jersey laws discouraged freeing slaves by requiring former enslavers to put up £200 in security for each freed person and forbade their freedmen to own property.

My enslaver was Mary's father, William, who lived in Barbados far removed from the local Quaker efforts. Finally, in 1782, near the end of the Revolution, Mary received the rights to me and my family and then gave up those rights to local men Israel Morris and Nichols Walm who thankfully freed us. However, once we were free, how were we to survive? How was I to help my grandchildren learn to read and write? Would the Quakers take steps to help us overcome the obstacles freed Black people faced so we could support ourselves?



I was one of a number of enslaved persons owned by Trenton residents Dr. William Bryant and his wife Mary. During the Revolution our names do not appear in records, as was true for many enslaved persons. Some of us appeared in her will which she wrote in 1797. At that time, she lived in New York City, but still had property and interests in Trenton. She listed me as living in Trenton as one of her enslaved people and granted me my freedom. She also granted freedom to Hannah who was living with Mrs. Broome in New York and to another “negro boy” named Samuel, making New York hairdresser William Hutson his guardian.

However, Mrs. Bryant did not free all her enslaved people and only gave some money to her other “negro boy” Samuel currently living with liveryman James Hutson in New York. She also just left money to Emilia, whom she formerly owned but had sold to a New York merchant named Blackwell.

She left money to three free people she had formerly enslaved but whom she had freed before making her will. Orion George was living in Albany where he had done well and appears in the records as taxed on the value of his house and store. Flora was also now free and living in Albany. Amaretta was now living in New York City.

In a complex bequest, she requested help from the New York hairdresser William Hutson I mentioned earlier. She bequeathed him some money along with another sum he should hold in trust while paying the interest to Catharine Bell, a negro woman and Mrs. Bryant’s former slave currently living in the West Indies. If Catherine returned to New York, William was to give her the principal. But, if she did not return, then he must give it to Catherine’s still enslaved daughter, Cressy Bell. She also left some bank stock for Hutson to hold in trust and pay the interest annually to Cressy until she reached age 22. She also granted Cressy her freedom. Mrs. Bryant also left Cressy one silver mug, one silver tea pot, and other silver items along with the residue of her wearing apparel and moveable furniture. All the rest of her personal and real estate she gave to William Hutson and Cressy.



In 1775, I was 34-years-old and living in Trenton, where I owned several properties. I was a well-to-do lawyer descended from one of the original 1674 West Jersey proprietors and served on the Royal Governor's Council. My family was one of the wealthiest and most politically influential, and often hated, proprietary families from the first days of British ownership of New Jersey. I opposed the protests against the acts of Parliament and believed the problems could, and should, be resolved by legal means. I completely supported the British government whose policies had benefitted my family over four generations. This got me into trouble with a number of my fellow Trentonians. I was "frequently subject to much personal insult & danger." When protests increased after Lexington and Concord, I "opposed the measures of the insurgents" at every public meeting, resulting in threats of "tarring & feathering." I refused to sign "an Association paper" pledging to boycott British goods. A year before the Declaration of Independence, I wrote, "What then have men of property not to fear and apprehend, and particularly those who happen and are known to differ in sentiment from the generality? They become a mark for popular fury, and those who are esteemed friends to Government devoted for destruction. They are not even allowed to preserve a neutrality, and passiveness becomes a crime."

With the American army approaching town in late November 1776, and wanting to "escape arrest and imprisonment" for my support of the Royal Government, I decided it would be better for me to get out of town. I left quickly, leaving my property in the care of my servants and tenants, and took my Trenton Ferry across the river on December 1. My widowed mother, who had lived in Trenton for over 40 years "in comfort and affluence," accompanied me. She would later seek asylum in New York before sailing to England in 1778.

I have to admit that in the political struggle, while I did not do anything to encourage the rebellion, I also did not actively try to prevent it. Still, the Whigs branded me an arch Loyalist and made me suffer just like those people who actively opposed the Revolution. I kept a low profile in Pennsylvania until the arrival of the British army in 1777 and never returned to New Jersey.





Dr. William Bryant — Owner, William Trent House 5

I was born in 1730 in New York City where my father was a ship captain and merchant making several voyages each year between New York and London. I graduated from Yale College at age 17 and went to France to study surgery. I served as a British army surgeon during the French and Indian War on the island of Guadeloupe in the West Indies. When the war ended I served on the West Indies Island of Grenada. On April 5, 1767, I retired with a half-pay pension and returned to New York.

I saw a newspaper advertisement for the sale of the 200-acre Kingsbury plantation of Robert Lettis Hooper at Trenton. I purchased it for £2,800 on October 28, 1769 and moved there with my wife, Mary.

I quickly acquired a reputation as a skilled physician and man of integrity. By November 1769, I was a member of the Trenton Presbyterian Church, whose members deeply supported the protests against the acts of Parliament. I paid taxes in 1773/1774 on my 200 acres of land, 13 horned cattle, two enslaved men over the age of 16, and one riding chair, considered a luxury. When protests against the acts of Parliament became strong I felt pressured to take a side, but I resisted it. I was not a man of politics and just tried to avoid all the controversy. If I actively supported the protests, I might lose my half-pay pension. I was not poor, but my health was not strong and I might need that pension at some point.

I received orders to join the British army at Boston in late 1775. I would lose my pension if I refused to go. The New Jersey Committee of Safety had me sign a parole that I would “not go farther than twelve miles from my present place of residence, except to Philadelphia, without leave of the Congress.” Their action saved my pension. I took no actions to oppose the revolution and was never personally attacked by Patriots or had my land confiscated. I was really neither a Loyalist nor a Patriot.

I died on January 11, 1786 at the young age of 55. Today, the house I lived in on my Kingsbury plantation is the William Trent House Museum.





I was born in Africa and sold into slavery as a child to a New York lawyer named Wickham with whom I learned to speak English very well. At some point as a young adult I was sold to Trenton tavern owner John Cape and in the early years of the Revolution worked for him primarily as a waiter, cook, and butcher, becoming well-known to his customers and neighbors. At some point I was sold to Mr. William Buchanan of Baltimore, Maryland. In 1782 I ran away from Mr. Buchanan but was caught and put in jail in the town I knew so well, Trenton.

I knew that when a runaway enslaved person was caught and placed in jail, the jailer would place a notice in the newspaper for the enslaver to come and claim his “property.” If no owner showed up to claim the runaway person, the sheriff would sell him or her at public auction at the jail. Before that could happen to me, I became friendly with two other runaway men and also a white prisoner from Woodbridge, New Jersey, named John Cumtain who wanted to escape confinement. Rather than wait to be sold to new enslavers, we three Black men worked out a plan with Cumtain to break out of the Trenton jail and then all four of us escaped in August of 1782.

The Trenton gaoler (jailer), Peter Hulick, placed a notice in the Trenton *Gazette* in August and September, offering a monetary reward to anyone who could capture any or all of us. In that notice he gave my name as Fortune but that I now went by the name Jack. He described me as being five feet six or seven inches tall, stout, well-made, and active. He also commented on my speaking good English and that I had smooth skin, was full-faced, and had a smiling, open countenance. He mentioned my working for Mr. Cape and also told a couple of bad things about me to help people identify me. He said I was fond of strong drink, and when drunk, was very impudent and quarrelsome. He also gave detailed descriptions of the other two Black escapees, but no description of John Cumtain, the White man.

He offered a special additional reward for anyone who captured me and delivered me to a Mr. George Davis in Trenton. There is no record of what happened to me after I escaped jail.



I lived in Nottingham Township as an enslaved women of John Abbott, Jr. In May 1777, I was about 43-years-old when Mr. Abbott freed me. The previous month, Anne Abbott had freed her enslaved woman named Jude who was about 23-years-old. The Abbotts were Quakers obeying the Quaker order to free their enslaved people. Not everyone did. In August 1779 John Appleton was reported in the Men's Monthly Meeting Minutes of the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting for not manumitting "a Negroe he has under his care." Merchant Abraham Skirm and another man were appointed to speak with him about this.

All of us enslaved persons in Trenton lived in constant fear of being sold and having to leave our families and friends. Thank goodness the Abbotts had not sold me, before deciding to free me, as other enslavers in Trenton had done over the years. I had seen that enslaved girls were often sold when young, with most in their teenage years or twenties. Two daughters, one 6 months and the other 10 months, were put up for sale with their mothers. The mother of the "beautiful female child six months old" was just nineteen years old. Other mother and child combinations I knew about included a mother with a female child, a mother with a young child, a mother with a three year old child, and a "hearty strong wench, with a young child at her breast." The oldest woman being sold was forty-six, but noted as "remarkably healthy and active."

In March 1781, I heard about a mother, father, and two male children put up for sale, and people talked about Randle Mitchell of Nottingham Township advertising a man and a woman "with two children, one a girl two years old the other a boy on the breast." They would be sold to a person willing to take the whole family. The only reason Mitchell was selling them was to "lessen his family." That is, he needed to reduce his expenses.

If an enslaver no longer had enough work for his slave, he might not sell the slave but hire him out for a time. To insure potential buyers that the enslaved person was not being sold because of misconduct, the newspaper advertisements frequently stated something to the effect that the enslaved person was being sold for no fault on their part.



I was a distiller living in Trenton on Queen Street near the Assunpink Creek bridge. During the French and Indian War I served as a lieutenant in Captain John Dagworthy's company of New Jersey troops. Early in the American Revolution, I boarded some British officers who were prisoners of war captured in Canada and sent to Trenton. I also served as the High Sheriff of Hunterdon County, appointed by Royal Governor William Franklin, but I resigned when the new government required me to arrest suspected Loyalists, since I was a Loyalist myself. Until that time, I had been a well-respected citizen.

When Washington's army approached Trenton in late November 1776, as a Loyalist I felt I had to leave to avoid arrest myself. I left behind my wife, May, to take care of our home and property. I joined the Loyalist First Battalion of the New Jersey Volunteers and was commissioned to serve as major.

At the time Washington attacked the Hessians at Trenton on December 26, 1776, I had returned to town, but was at a house on the northern side of Trenton. There I observed the opening attack by the troops under Washington and General Greene drive back the Hessian guard outpost at Richard Howell's cooper shop. I particularly saw the retreat of the squad of Hessians posted with Captain Altenbockum and could see that he "behaved well, and made a retreat which redounds to his honour." The fighting then continued down Queen Street right in the direction of my house where my wife was. It was clear that Washington was winning the battle, so I got out of town rapidly to avoid capture.

When a court inquisition was held on August 1, 1778 to examine the cases of men who had joined with the British army or had "otherwise offended against the form of their allegiance to this State," I was charged with "joining the army of the King of Great Britain" on or about December 8, 1776. A public auction of confiscated Loyalist property was held at the tavern of Rensselaer Williams on December 9, 1778 and the items sold included some of my valuable household furniture. Some months later, on March 25, 1779 a public auction at Charity Britton's tavern sold parcels of confiscated Loyalist land, including some of mine.



I was born in September 1732, in New Brunswick, New Jersey and grew up to be a prominent Philadelphia merchant. I married 20 year old Esther Bowes as my second wife in 1760. In 1770, I became owner of the iron works at Batsto in Burlington County and also a forge and rolling mill at Mount Holly. I continued to live in Philadelphia.

An ardent supporter of the Patriot cause, I contributed both politically and militarily. In February 1778 when Washington and Congress talked with General Nathanael Greene about taking on the important role of Quartermaster General, Greene told them, "I hope the Committee of Congress will not lose sight of Colonel Cox; there is no man will serve their purpose better." Greene made me to be his assistant, one of his conditions for accepting the position. On March 2, 1778 Congress appointed me to be Assistant Quartermaster-General.

In 1778 I decided to move to Trenton, which I considered a healthier location, along with my wife and six daughters. We took up residence at a house I renamed Bloomsbury Court in Trenton, a house with large, comfortable rooms that I purchased from Dr. William Bryant, who had called it Kingsbury. It was considered an elegant property with an avenue lined with cherry trees leading to it and featuring boxwood hedges and hundreds of roses. Because we were intimate friends with the Washingtons, as well as Generals Knox and Greene, Count Rochambeau, the Marquis de Lafayette and other leaders of the Revolution, our home was often the scene of elegant and festive occasions. My property also became a supply depot for the army and several times during the course of the war I allowed patriot troops to establish camps on my fields south of Bloomsbury Farm.

On August 5, 1782, I was chairman of a committee appointed to prevent trade and dealings with the enemy. Although the fighting was over, we did not want the enemy to gain economic strength. On October 8, 1782 I was elected to represent Burlington County on the New Jersey Legislative Council and then on October 24 was elected Vice President of the Council. We lived in Trenton for the rest of the war until returning to Philadelphia in 1792 and I died there in 1793.



I came to Trenton from Connecticut when I was 26-years-old in 1769. I became a violent opponent of the acts of Parliament that restricted our rights and would have sacrificed everything to save my “Country and done it cheerfully.” I knew surveying, working with brass, and watch and clock repair. When the silversmith who gave me lodging fell into extreme debt, I purchased his tools and ran the shop. I soon established myself as a silversmith and hired several journeymen for my shop on King Street in the middle of town. We made buckles, tea tongs, milk pots, spoons, pincushions, tankards, buttons, soup ladles, lockets, and seals, and I also did watch repairs.

Early in the Revolution I considered applying for a Continental army officer’s commission. After submitting my request, I asked that it be rejected because I objected to making recruits furnish themselves with muskets and clothing. I knew “the soldiers were the poorest class of people and could not equip themselves and put themselves on an equal footing with the British troops.” Even when that law was soon changed, I stayed in the militia and became very active making muskets for the Continentals and militia.

Although not trained as a gun smith, after being asked by members of the Committee of Safety, I agreed to do it. I continued to serve in the militia as a lieutenant, even though I did not have “the malignant disposition against what they called Tories as some had.” However, when I lost an election for promotion to a higher rank, losing to a man I held in contempt as an officer, I left the company and focused on making and repairing muskets, working from dawn late into night. I even worked on Sundays, which “gave great disgust to the Methodists of whose society I then was a member.” I had 12 to 15 men working for me in June and July 1776 as silversmiths or gunsmiths.

When I got involved in another officer selection dispute, I left the militia and asked for a court martial to defend myself. However, when the British approached Trenton in December 1776, I left Trenton with as many of my tools as I could fit in a small wagon and took refuge across the Delaware River in Bucks County. I enrolled in the Bucks County militia and did not live in New Jersey during the remainder of the war.



In 1776, I was a young girl living with my mother and siblings in Trenton while our father was away serving in the New Jersey militia. When the Hessians occupied our town in December, we pictured them as “scarcely one remove from brutes,” having heard many stories of “their savagery” and believed “no house, nor home, no woman, nor child was safe from their wanton cruelty; they pillaged and destroyed as they chose, only stopping short of absolute murder.”

When the Hessians settled into their quarters on a cold night, “mother, and we two children were gathered in the family room; when we heard the sound of many feet outside, then the door opened, and in stalked several strange men, and a couple of women, who looked like giants, and giantesses to us they were so tall.” We children “jumped up screaming, and clung to our mother” who stood up, pointed to the door, and told the intruders to leave. They refused. When one Hessian woman snatched a buckle from my mother’s shoe, the buckle snatcher was rebuked by one of the men, who appeared to be the captain, and he told mother “that they had been sent to secure quarters” for an officer and his suite and “our house seemed suitable.”

My mother convinced the Hessians that our father was an officer in the British army. After that, “they treated us with rough kindness, and permitted us to go to our beds in safety.” But, they still stole many of our belongings and food and ruined some of our prized possessions.

When General Washington’s troops attacked Trenton on December 26, the fighting took place all around our house and scared us greatly. When the battle ceased, we were left to repair the damage but then a second battle took place, with much cannon fire, that caused even more damage to our town. After those battles, American troops passed through or stayed in town and there were no more battles.

Living as a child in the small, war-torn town of Trenton meant dealing with many fears and frustrations most other children never had to face.



Mary Barnes — Spouse of Loyalist John Barnes 10

When the American Revolution broke out, I was living in Trenton at the foot of Queen Street very near the Assunpink Creek with my husband, Trenton distiller John Barnes, who also served as High Sheriff of Hunterdon County. He opposed the Revolutionary cause and resigned as sheriff when it meant he had to arrest other Loyalists. When the American army approached Trenton on its retreat across New Jersey, my husband left town. He left me behind to care for our large, two-story house, our stables and other outbuildings on our one and a half acres of land. John joined the Loyalist First Battalion of the New Jersey Volunteers to fight with the British.

When the British occupied Trenton shortly after John left, the British wanted to continue pursuing Washington by crossing the river. However, Washington had made sure no boats had been left behind for the British to use. British army engineer Captain John Montessoro, hoping to build boats, asked Pennsylvania politician loyal to Great Britain, Joseph Galloway, who was now sharing quarters with British Deputy Quartermaster Thomas Gamble at our house, to find out about materials at or near Trenton useable for building pontoons, boats, or rafts.

Just before the battle of Trenton on December 26, 1776, my husband was back in town, but not at our house. He avoided capture in the battle. Fighting took place around our home in the battle due to our location near the Assunpink Creek stone bridge.

When Washington returned to Trenton the last days of December, he took over my house as his headquarters. Then, on January 2 as the British army approached town to get revenge for their December 26 defeat, he moved his headquarters to Jonathan Richmond's tavern on the other side of the Assunpink Creek. Our house was right at the focal point of the battle and artillery exchange late that afternoon and evening.

When the new state government of New Jersey confiscated property from Loyalists like my husband, we lost much, including some of our valuable household furniture.



I was born in 1748 and became a teacher as an adult. As the protests against the acts of Parliament heated up in 1774, I was 26 and teaching school in Trenton in the building on South Broad Street later known as the Eagle Hotel. My older brother, Ely, fought in the French and Indian wars and was still serving in the British army when the war for independence broke out, but either because he was ill or refused to fight against his fellow Americans, he returned to Trenton in 1775 where he died in early 1776. Throughout the war my mother and I lived in Trenton. I was a strong supporter of independence and did whatever I could to help us win it.

I saw firsthand the suffering of our soldiers and helped care for sick and wounded soldiers and provided aid to soldiers traveling through town. In June 1780, I joined a group of Trenton women raising money to aid our soldiers. Most of the women were wives of men serving as militia officers and supply department officials in Trenton and they wanted to contribute also, in addition to caring for their own households. I served as secretary for the group. By July 17, I wrote General Washington that we had raised \$15,488 and were sending it to him to use as he thought best to help the soldiers. We promised to send additional money as we raised it. Washington wrote me back that he preferred us to send cloth or clothing – because giving the men money would just cause trouble. Continuing to raise money, we also purchased or made clothing items, including 380 pairs of stockings we forwarded to General Washington.

I didn't marry until after the war in 1785, when I was 37. I married Trenton merchant Abraham Hunt, whose first wife had died. When General Washington was elected as our first President, he rode through Trenton on his way to New York to be inaugurated in April 1789. I was one of the young girls and mature ladies who serenaded him as he rode through a triumphal arch the people of Trenton created for him, that commemorated the battles in Trenton on December 26, 1776 and January 2, 1777. The bridge over the Assumpink Creek on which the arch was erected had played a critical role in those battles that helped save the Revolution. I continued to live in Trenton until my death in 1814 at age 66.



At the time of the Revolution, I lived in Trenton where I owned much property and was known for being a vocal opponent of the war for independence. After my first husband's death, I married British army Captain Brereton Poynton at Trenton's St. Michael's Church in 1772. Brereton had fought against the French in Canada and afterwards served in the West Indies. He came home briefly to Trenton in 1774, but then returned to his regiment. Local Patriot leaders told me that if I convinced Brereton to switch to the American army, he would be made a brigadier general. He did not accept that offer and remained in the British army, although not active in the fighting against the Americans. Still, I was a Loyalist and one that Loyalist Daniel Coxe said, "rather spoke her mind too plain." When my mother married Trenton Patriot Elijah Bond, I felt he was "a great Rebel and a great enemy to her."

When George Washington's army came to Trenton in December 1776, I decided to stay in town although very concerned for my safety as a Loyalist. Then, when the British army came to town I saw that they also did not treat we Loyalists very well. I recall that, "Mr. [Daniel] Coxe's dwelling house and offices, and his other houses in the town were taken and occupied as quarters and barracks for the Hessian Troops, who ... drove out his servants."

As the British settled in, I helped them locate items hidden by Patriot leader Samuel Tucker at the Abbott house. After telling the British about those items, I drove my wagon there, supposedly to retrieve some of my belongings there, and met the British troops sent to get Tucker's Patriot documents and money.

When the Patriots held inquisitions in 1778 to identify Loyalists, Brereton and I were accused of joining with the army of the King of Great Britain about October 1, 1777. Although Brereton had long been in the British army, we were found guilty and had much of our property confiscated and sold at public auction on March 25, 1779 at Charity Britton's tavern. In 1789, Brereton and I separated, but we put in a claim for damages due to our Loyalty to the Crown for £1,764 6s. However, we were only awarded £775.



I was born in 1753 in Metz, France and from a young age I studied medicine, including seven years in Paris. In Paris, I met Polish Count Casimir Pulaski, who offered his services to the American struggle for independence and I became his personal physician. Surgeon General Dr. William Shippen commissioned me a surgeon in the Continental army at Valley Forge.

In the winter of 1778, I went with the Count to Trenton, New Jersey where his cavalry brigade had been assigned winter quarters while the Continental Army was wintering at Valley Forge. I quartered with Dr. William Bryant (at what is today known as the William Trent House) who was the town's most prominent physician, although considered to be a Loyalist because he refused to swear loyalty to the revolutionary government and give up his pension as a retired British army doctor. Each morning I walked from Dr. Bryant's to the stone military barracks which served as a Continental Army hospital. I enjoyed my time in Trenton, even though the citizens were very unhappy about having to accommodate Pulaski's cavalry, because the town was already crowded and short of food for man and horse. During my military service I became acquainted with General Washington and for the rest of my life I spoke highly of his character on many occasions.

Pulaski was ordered south in the spring and Dr. Bryant unsuccessfully urged me to stay behind and practice medicine with him. While in the south, I received an urgent message from Dr. Bryant requesting me to return to Trenton to practice medicine, because he was near the end of his career. The Count graciously allowed me to leave the army and return to Trenton in the fall of 1778, where I resided for a time at the tavern of Mrs. Charity Britton. On January 10, 1780 I married her daughter, Ann. We had two daughters.

As I got older I tried to retire, but some of the families I had treated so long begged me to continue seeing them and I did. In December 1831, I was 79 years old and suffering from the flu and knew my end was near.



Philemon Dickinson — New Jersey Militia General 21

Originally from Dover, Kent County, Delaware, in 1767 I married Mary Cadwalader and became owner of an estate on the banks of the Delaware just outside Trenton. I was commissioned as first brigadier general of the New Jersey militia in 1775. In 1776, I also became a member of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey, representing Hunterdon County and was appointed to a committee to draw up a State constitution that declared New Jersey independent. New Jersey adopted this Constitution two days before the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence.

During the disastrous New York campaign of the summer and fall 1776 my troops served in eastern New Jersey guarding against British forays from Staten Island and New York City. We retreated with Washington's army across New Jersey after the Battle of White Plains, crossed with the Continental army to Bucks County, and I established my headquarters at Yardley about four miles north of Trenton. During the British occupation of Trenton, my property became a Hessian outpost and the Hessians ransacked the buildings.

Due to the conditions of the river ice on the night of December 25, my troops were unable to cross and help General Washington's attack on the Hessians at Trenton. We were able to cross several days later and performed valuable service at a second battle at Trenton on January 2. When the battle ceased for the night, my militiamen helped convince General Cornwallis that Washington's army remained encamped on Mill Hill by keeping bonfires going all night. During the night, Washington made a roundabout march to Princeton and defeated the British detachment there on the morning of January 3.

General Washington praised me and several months later I was promoted to major general and commander-in-chief of the New Jersey militia. In May 1778, the British in Philadelphia sent a force up the Delaware River that threatened Trenton. I had redoubts constructed to defend Trenton, but my militiamen at Lambertton, just south of Trenton, succeeded in convincing the British to return to Philadelphia.

I continued to be active in financial and civic affairs until my death on February 4, 1809 at the age of 70.



In 1772 I operated a tavern at the Trenton Ferry, which I called the Royal Oak Inn. By 1777, I had moved my business to the house on the northeast corner of the intersection of Queen and Third Streets. Military and government officials were frequent guests. Government meetings were held in addition to legislators staying with me. The French Marquis de Chastellux visited Trenton in 1780 and commented on my Royal Oak sign as a political emblem of the struggle for independence, because it showed a beaver bringing down a large tree with his small teeth over the motto “perseverando.”

I was one of the members of Anglican St. Michael’s Church who supported the Revolution, while others remained loyal to the Crown. Annual town meetings elected me to a number of offices over the years.

On August 1, 1778, I presided over court inquisitions concerning Trenton people who had demonstrated they were Loyalists, many of whom were my neighbors. We found them guilty and confiscated much property from them. We auctioned their confiscated property to the public at my tavern on December 9.

In 1781 the Assembly appointed me to take charge of the Trenton barracks and render them more comfortable for quartering of troops.

On Thursday, July 4, 1782 Governor Livingston and the principal men of Trenton and vicinity met for “an elegant dinner” at my tavern, where an American flag was displayed and thirteen toasts were made

Peace was celebrated in Trenton on April 15 1783. At about 11:00 am the governor, several members of the Legislature, judges of the Supreme Court, and other magistrates, along with a huge number of people from the town and vicinity met at my tavern and paraded with the trustees, director, and students of the Trenton Academy, which I had helped organize, to the courthouse where they heard the governor’s peace proclamation. The militia fired thirteen cannon shots, followed by boisterous “huzzas of the people.”



I came to Trenton in 1770 as pastor of the Trenton Presbyterian Church. When the Provincial Congress assembled at Trenton, I alternated with Rev. Panton opening their meetings with prayer “so that peace, unanimity and harmony may be happily re-established between both countries upon a permanent foundation.”

In 1775, my Presbytery approved a journey to southern colonies to preach and talk with the “exceedingly ignorant” settlers in the back country about the reasons for the Revolution and the need to stand together to support it.

I was warned the night of December 7 that I needed to escape Trenton. My daughter, Margaret, had married Continental Congress delegate Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant and lived in Princeton in their recently built home, but Jonathan was attending Congress in Philadelphia, leaving Margaret and their young daughter at home. Fortunately, Margaret was warned of the British advance and set off immediately in the family carriage heading to a Delaware River ferry. On my way to warn her, I learned that she had escaped. I returned to Trenton to remove the rest of my family to safety. I locked up my house without removing any contents, left my cattle without being able to provide care for them, loaded my entire household into a large carriage, and drove north to Howell’s Ferry.

Leaving my family at Howell’s, I continued north to Johnson’s Ferry where I found my daughter. I brought my family up from Howell’s and we all crossed to Pennsylvania at Johnson’s. My daughter, Lydia, was left with indelible images of that night and to her “youthful imagination they called up the day of judgment: so many frightened people were assembled, with sick and wounded soldiers, all flying for their lives, and with hardly any means of crossing the river.” Most of the local boats had been diverted to Trenton, and Margaret recorded, “We were unspeakably delighted when we got over safely.”

The Hessians established their hospital in my recently abandoned parsonage. When I came home in July after a seven month absence I found my house empty, damaged, and its contents, including my papers, burned by the Hessians.



Rev. George Panton — St. Michael's Anglican Church 7

I was born in Scotland and became pastor of St. Michael's Anglican Church in Trenton in 1774. I did not support the protests against the acts of Parliament and from their beginning I "cooperated with the Principal Loyal Characters in New York, Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland, in counteracting the popular system and endeavouring to maintain the civil government." I travelled through those provinces at my own expense for that purpose.

However, when the New Jersey Provincial Congress, the New Jersey protest government formed by the Patriots, met at Trenton, the Congress asked both myself and Rev. Spender of the Presbyterian Church to alternately open their meetings with prayer at 8:00 a.m. Although Rev. Spender and I completely disagreed with each other about the protests, we hoped for a peaceful solution and provided our churches for their meetings and conducted the opening prayers requested. For this, the Congress gave us both their thanks.

The Declaration of Independence created a serious dilemma for myself and my church. As an Anglican clergymen, I took a sacred oath of loyalty to the King as part of my ordination. I was faced with either making changes in the liturgy, such as omitting a prayer for the King, or closing up my church. The St. Michael's vestry met on Sunday, July 7, the day before the Declaration of Independence was read publicly, and passed a resolution to suspend services, partly out of fear for my safety and that of the church members, who were split between supporters and opponents of the war for independence. Services would not resume until October 1783, over seven years later.

I sought refuge with the British garrison at New York after suffering "a variety of dangers and hardships" supporting the British government at "great expense and personal hazard." From there, I accompanied the British army pursuing General Washington's troops through New Jersey. In December 1776, I was back in Trenton and found my church building had been taken over to quarter British troops. My losses in the Revolution included more than 200 valuable books taken by the Americans during their attack on the Hessians, and a huge number of my writings either taken or destroyed.



In 1774, I was a 54-year-old devout Quaker descended from early Trenton settlers, Mahlon Stacy and Thomas Potts, hence my name. I had four children from my first marriage and in September 1774, my second wife, Marguretta, gave birth to our first child. My primary business was my tannery that converted animal hides into leather. I provided many full and part-time jobs for workers who soaked, scraped, placed hides in pits, monitored the hides, removed the hides, and made them flexible and finished by pounding, drying, stretching, oiling, and rubbing. I sold leather to craftsmen, such as shoemakers and also hired craftsmen to make breeches, gloves, horse bridles and harness, and other items from my leather.

I also served my town in various civic offices. Every year of the Revolution the citizens of Trenton elected me to be their Town Clerk and some years a Hunterdon County freeholder. In 1774, I was one of several men who agreed to provide the poor with many necessities. In 1781, I served as clerk of the board of trustees for a new school formed for the children of Trenton. The following year, I was chairman of the Trenton group organized to reduce trading with the enemy and promote the payment of taxes.

When the Hessians occupied Trenton in December 1776, their commander, Colonel Rall, chose my house as his headquarters and lived with me. My house stood on King Street, across from St. Michael's Church, on a lot adjoining my tan yard. My house had four rooms on each of its two floors and the lot was fenced with cedar posts and boards to protect my garden. When the battle of Trenton broke out early on the morning of December 26, one of my daughters was slightly injured while running home from a neighbor's house, when a musket ball hit and sent flying the comb in her hair. When the battle ended, soldiers carried mortally wounded Colonel Rall on a bench to my house. Generals Washington and Greene visited Rall and promised that his men would be treated well. Rall died in my house soon after.

I refused to swear a loyalty oath to the new State government on religious grounds and was fined £100. I was certainly loyal to the new State government, but still had to pay the heavy fine after unsuccessfully petitioning the Assembly for relief.



I owned the King of Prussia Tavern on King Street shortly after one entered the town of Trenton from the north. I first obtained my license to keep a tavern and “public house of entertainment.” in 1768. In 1758 I had been one of fifty-seven citizens of Trenton who signed a petition in which we noted that because Trenton was on “so great a thoroughfare,” numbers of soldiers were “continually passing and re-passing upon their several commands and quartered upon us night and day.” Our petition asked the Assembly to enable us to build a barracks, and it was approved.

I was also very active in the affairs of my town. In 1774, I was elected at the annual town meeting to serve as town Assessor, a very important and often delicate job. I continued to be elected at least until 1782. In 1774, I also agreed to serve with several other men to provide the poor with necessities, except “phisick and doctoring.”

My tavern had many customers who came through Trenton during the war. In August 1775, eighty “remarkably stout and hardy men” of a Lancaster County Pennsylvania Rifle Company came through. Many were over six feet tall and all wore “white frocks or rifle shirts and round hats.” The officers purchased food and services from me and other tavern owners telling us to submit bills to the Continental Congress. Congress later ordered the bills paid.

During the battle of Trenton in late December 1776, some of the heaviest fighting took place directly in front of my tavern. Several days later, during the battle of January 2, my home was damaged when at least one cannon ball entered my house and destroyed a walnut tea table.

I was a member of St. Michael’s Anglican Church just down the street from my tavern. The church closed for several years and received much damage from our troops occupying it that I tried to prevent and when the church reopened after the peace treaty, six and a half years later, I was chosen a vestryman.



As the county seat of Hunterdon County before and during the American Revolution, Trenton drew a large quantity of legal business and several prominent lawyers lived in town. I was one of those lawyers. The conflicts and protests that developed as the Revolution approached presented me with difficult choices. I chose to seek legal ways to solve the problems and sided with the British colonial government and loyalty to the King and Parliament.

This put me at odds with a large number of my neighbors and colleagues in Trenton. About the time the American army entered town, ahead of the British army following it, the first week of December 1776, I took my family and travelled the short distance to an area controlled by the oncoming British. I signed a loyalty oath and accepted General Howe's protection papers. Just days later, on December 3 I was commissioned as a lieutenant colonel in the New Jersey Volunteers, a Loyalist brigade of regiments organized by Cortland Skinner, the former colonial attorney general and speaker of the General Assembly. Several Trenton men I knew, including Charles Harrison and Peter Campbell, joined my Loyalist regiment. Unfortunately, they were later captured and made prisoners of war whom Washington ordered "closely confined."

While I was not captured, I did lose my property. People who knew me in Trenton read in the August 19, 1778 New Jersey Gazette about court inquisitions held on August 1 concerning individuals from their town who had joined the army of the King or had "otherwise offended against the form of their allegiance to this State." Daniel Coxe was accused of joining with the British army at Philadelphia on April 9, 1778 and serving it "by acting as a magistrate of the police" of that city. Myself, along with John Barnes, Charles Harrison, Joseph Taylor, and Jesse Waln were charged with "joining the army of the King of Great Britain" on or about December 8, 1776.

Because I was found guilty, the court ordered my property confiscated and sold at public auction at 10:00 am on Thursday, March 25 1779. The auction was at Charity Britton's tavern and really ended my connection to Trenton.



As the protests against the acts of Parliament heated up in the early 1770s I served as judge for the British Colonial government of New Jersey. Before that I had served as county sheriff in the 1760s. I was a lawyer by profession born in 1726 in Burlington County. Although I was at the upper age for required militia duty, I was still subject to it. Because of my age and my reluctance to go against Britain, instead of serving on tours of active duty, when called out I paid a fine.

When the British and Hessians came to Trenton in December 1776, men of the Lossberg fusilier regiment in their blue coats with orange lapels and cuffs were billeted in my house, in St. Michael's Church, and in the houses of some of my neighbors. As a member of St. Michael's church, I suffered due to its closure for over six years during the war. When the war ended and the church reopened, I was chosen as a vestryman.

In 1781, I ran afoul of the militia law and the fines I had been paying to avoid active service. In April, Captain William Tucker fined me £15 for not turning out in January. Having been a sheriff and judge, I knew about laws in detail. I told Tucker he had fined me an excessive amount and I appealed it in writing stating that when I was called out on December 28 to appear on January 2, the law then in effect, dating from April 1778, called for a fine of £6. I stated that I was never informed of the change in marching date from January 2 to January 9, and that the new law was not published in the newspaper until more than 10 days after the company marched. Therefore, I should not be liable for the fine of £15. Had I known about the change in fine when I was called out, I would have gladly paid it. In refusing to pay, I was objecting to how the law was implemented.

I was involved in civic affairs and that same year I purchase stock in a new school that citizens were building for the children of Trenton. When General Washington rode through Trenton in 1789 on his way to be sworn in as president in New York, my wife and daughter were among the famous group of women who arranged for a decorated arch to be built on the Broad Street bridge and honored him with songs and flowers.



As a member of a large Trenton family, I made my living as a cordwainer, a shoemaker. My house and shop were on Queen Street near my hatmaker brother Ellett. I employed several men in my shop and purchased many tanned hides of various types for shoe soles and uppers from local tanner Stacy Potts.

When fighting erupted in 1775, I became captain of a Trenton militia company and served throughout the war. I also contributed to the cause in other ways while also serving my community in non-military ways. In 1776 I was appointed to be one of two barracks masters to take care of the stone barracks. My brother Samuel, our Provincial Treasurer, gave me £125 on March 23 so I could hire men to clean and repair the barracks. This was a big project and I also needed to purchase forage, boards, and other items along with hiring a man to do masonry work and another to do some carting. In May, I paid for washing the beds and blankets of the barracks.

When my neighbor, county sheriff John Barnes, left town to join with the British, I was chosen to replace him until the next election even though I was involved in so many duties outside of my business.

Serving as militia captain meant I had a lot of duties in addition to just showing up when called out on active duty for a month or so at a time. I also had to deal with instructing and keeping track of my men, including issuing fines when they did not show up for active duty.

When the Hessians occupied Trenton in December 1776, men from the Knyphausen Regiment occupied my house and shop after I crossed over the Delaware River to Pennsylvania with General Washington's troops the first week of the month. After the Battle of Trenton, the town became an army supply depot and I became very active as Assistant Deputy Quartermaster, purchasing arms and equipment. I never was completely repaid for the money I spent even though I submitted the required paperwork.

In 1778, when cavalry colonel Pulaski stationed his troopers at Trenton for winter quarters, I employed several local men to make and mend boots for the cavalry.



At the time of the American Revolution, I lived in a house on the south side of the Assunpink Creek. I lived in a housing area known as Kingsbury that had been land of William Trent, who called his house Kingsbury, and was now the house of Dr. William Bryant. It made our lives very confusing that while Trenton, as a social and economic community, existed on both sides of the Assunpink, the county line dividing Hunterdon and Burlington counties was the Assunpink.

At the time of the Battle of Trenton in December 1776 not much action took place near my house. We did see the fifty Hessian Jäger and twenty British dragoons who escaped the battle by crossing the Assunpink Creek and heading for Princeton. When Washington returned to Trenton several days after that battle, he stationed his troops and created defensive works on Mill Hill just between my house and the Assunpink Creek. General Arthur St. Clair took up quarters at my house. During the day of January 1, 1777, Dr. Benjamin Rush, who had signed the Declaration of Independence and was serving now with General Washington as a military surgeon, came to my house along with General Hugh Mercer and Colonel Clement Biddle.

The next day, when British General Cornwallis marched about 8,000 troops to Trenton from Princeton, the late afternoon and evening fighting across the Assunpink Creek that included so much artillery fire both ways, ended after dark and the two armies settled down to rest and prepare to resume the battle in the morning. General Washington held a meeting, a council of war, with his chief officers in the front parlor of my house and they made the decision to march overnight to Princeton to attack the small British force that had been left there. They called in me and several local militiamen who knew the roads well to determine the best route to avoid contact with Cornwallis's troops. I helped guide that overnight march resulting in the important victory at Princeton that ended what became known as the Ten Crucial Days between Washington Crossing the Delaware and the victory at Princeton.

Today, my house still exists and has been moved to be part of the Mill Hill Park along the Assunpink in Trenton.



I was a highly regarded merchant of Trenton owning a tannery on the west side of the town. I participated in a number of town activities and was a member of St. Michael's Anglican Church. Like many Trenton citizens I was accepting of other versions of Christianity and when people attracted to Methodism raised money to build a church, just the third one built in America by Methodists, I was one of the subscribers. I remained an Anglican, however, and suffered through the time our church was closed during the war and when it reopened in 1783 I was chosen one of the wardens.

When the Patriot militia formed in 1775, I was chosen to be the major, the third highest ranking officer, of the First Hunterdon County Regiment. When I was chosen, everyone expected the conflict to be short and not really involve much active fighting. Also, when I agreed to be major, we were fighting to resolve our conflicts with the Parliament and its actions we felt reduced our rights.

Just after the signing of the Declaration of Independence I resigned my commission, either because I was not really skilled as a military leader or because, like a number of other men, I did not support the idea of fighting for independence. While some people became Loyalists at this time, I did not and continued to serve in the militia as a private. However, whenever called out for active duty I paid a fine rather than turn out. This included a hefty £20 fine in 1781 after the fines had been increased to encourage people like me to actually serve. Although people may have questioned my loyalty, I remained a well-regarded citizen. I even supported and recommended other men when they sought commissions as officers in the Continental army, including my friend Thomas Yard.

I was elected to public office at the annual town meetings, including as a constable in 1779 and a surveyor of roads in 1781.



When the protests against several laws of Parliament broke out in the 1760s, I lived in Trenton with my husband, Jacob, and our children. Jacob had ties to both Maidenhead (today's Lawrence Township) and Trenton. He was an active Whig or Patriot in those protests and very early in the war Jacob signed up for Captain Joseph Brearley's Maidenhead minuteman company that included several men from Trenton and Nottingham townships. He later joined the First Hunterdon Militia Regiment that contained men from Trenton.

When British forces came to Trenton in early December 1776, Jacob got out of Trenton and crossed the Delaware to Bucks County, Pennsylvania where a number of New Jersey militiamen had gathered under militia General Philemon Dickinson of Trenton. He left me and the children at our house in Trenton. This would lower the risk of the British plundering our home because it would not be abandoned. British plundering tended to be worst on abandoned properties. We also bravely and resolutely hoped that women and children would not be harmed.

However, I was among a number of residents who experienced Hessian plundering, as well as quartering. By the time a party of Hessians entered our home on King Street, I had locked our valuable silver in a bureau. I sent one of my children to find a Hessian officer and stood before my bureau, holding the keys in my hand. The Hessian soldiers demanded that I open the drawers. I pretended not to understand them, and they angrily began to break the drawers with their musket butts until my young one returned with an officer who roughly made the men leave.

We survived the Hessian occupation and the battle of Trenton that took place in the area of our house. The following month, Jacob enlisted in the Continental Army for the duration of the war. We only saw him a couple of times when he was given furlough until he was discharged in June of 1783. One of my fondest memories is of our daughter, Mary, who was one of the girls who sang for General Washington when he rode across the Broad Street bridge on his way to being inaugurated as our first President in 1789.



I was a member of a large, influential Trenton family who lived on King Street at the northern edge of Trenton. I had served in the British colonial legislature, but when the protests against the acts of Parliament broke out, I was a very strong Whig, or Patriot. I served on protest committees and then in the New Jersey Provincial Congress that soon replaced the British colonial legislature. I was chosen vice-president and was on the Committee of Safety that could operate when the Congress was not in session. In October 1775, I was chosen president of the Congress. I became very active in purchasing supplies for the Patriot army. I was also one of two Provincial Treasurers for New Jersey. I was an extremely active Patriot.

On July 8, 1776, I read the newly passed Declaration of Independence to the people of Trenton assembled in front of the Hunterdon County Courthouse. I also read the newly written New Jersey State Constitution, creating the new state government structure, that had been written simultaneously with the Declaration. When that government was formed in August, I was elected to be a Supreme Court Justice and was still a state treasurer.

When the British neared Trenton in early December, I had a large amount of New Jersey paper money because I was one of three people who had to sign each piece to make it legal currency. I still had not signed all the pieces. While most Patriots got out of town by crossing the Delaware River to Pennsylvania, I took my valuable possessions, including the money, to the house of a friend in Nottingham Township where I thought it would be safe. I was apprehended by some Loyalists who also got my hidden possessions. I had a pistol put to my chest and ordered to sign a loyalty oath to the British government in order to keep my life and protect my family who were still in Trenton. I had made a terrible mistake not to cross the river with everything.

Because of my mistakes, I have often been called a Loyalist. However, while I was shunned for several years, before the end of the war I was again elected to the state assembly and put on committees that involved finances. I was never punished as a Loyalist and lived the rest of my life accepted in Trenton.



I moved to Trenton in 1777 with my family from Burlington where I had established a newspaper, *The New Jersey Gazette*. I had been the official printer for the British colonial government and then the new government. In addition to the newspaper, I also published government journals, records of the legislature meetings, laws, and other government items. My printshop was in the heart of Trenton on the corner of Second and Queen Street and because I also had a general store and several businesses my office always had visitors and, because I was a Quaker, became known as the Quaker Tavern.

I ran afoul of the Quaker teaching not to participate in military activities. Although I was required to serve in the Trenton militia, I could pay a fine to avoid turning out for active duty. I willingly paid that fine but was then disowned by the Quaker meeting. I refused to appeal and remained outside of the meeting for almost ten years.

My paper represented the Patriot point of view and reported on the activities of the state government as well as military activities. It also published advertisements for local businesses and notices from various citizens with property to sell, seeking to find the owner of stray livestock, or asking for help in securing a runaway enslaved person. Individuals who wanted to sell an enslaved person could simply have me let people know they could stop by my office for information on available enslaved people. In that way I also went against my Quaker religion that was trying hard to end the practice of enslavement.

During the war I was very active in civic affairs. In 1781, I was one of about twenty citizens who formed the Trenton School Company to provide a school for children, such as my six who were already of school age or approaching it. I was one of the original board of trustees. I was appointed one of the two “visitors” who would oversee the school operations. I made sure people knew about what we were doing by placing articles in my newspaper.

It was a very happy day in my life when I could publish a newspaper with the headlines “Peace, Liberty, and Independence” and help everyone understand the terms of the peace agreement.



Born in Trenton in 1740, I graduated from the College of New Jersey, today's Princeton University, in 1755. I then earned my medical degree and was an early member of the New Jersey Medical Society.

When protests against the acts of Parliament heated up in 1774, although only 34 years old, I became a leader in the protest movement. I helped elect New Jersey delegates to the Continental Congress. I also worked to send contributions to the people of Boston who were suffering due to the consequences of the Boston Port Act.

When the Provincial Congress established the militia, based on my character and social standing, I was elected as colonel, the commander, of the First Hunterdon Regiment even though I was young and had no military training whatsoever. We hoped that Parliament would come to its senses without a war. I continued serving in the Provincial Congress where I had to help determine how to deal with Loyalists. Should we force them to leave and go to the British? Or, could we let them stay if they signed a parole?

My militia regiment was very active in the fall of 1776 and became disheveled and in need of reorganization. Before I could do that, I crossed the Delaware River with General Washington's troops in early December to the area around Yardley. Men from the von Lossberg fusilier regiment resided in my house during the Hessian occupation. The ice conditions on the river near Trenton made it impossible for those of us at Yardley to cross and help in the December 26 battle.

In February 1777, I was elected to the New Jersey Supreme Court and resigned my colonel's commission on March 15. In 1780, my wife, Mary, together with other women of Trenton raised money to help our troops. In 1781, I was active in the Trenton School Company to establish a new public school.

When Washington came through Trenton on his way to be inaugurated as our first President in 1789, Mary was among the women who welcomed him with song. His letter of appreciation to them was read to a gathering of the ladies at our home the next day.



I was a merchant and operator of the lower Trenton Ferry. Trenton became an important military supply depot and I became heavily involved with the supply department. In September 1776 I became Assistant Deputy Quartermaster at Trenton.

By 1778 life had become difficult due to a huge workload. However, it was extremely important work, because the lives of soldiers, and horses, depended on it. It was also frustrating that I did not really know the official title of my job.

I really did not care about the title, though, I just wanted to carry out my job with dignity. To do that, I desperately needed the Congress and my department superiors to provide me with the required amounts of cash. About this time, my immediate superior, Moore Furman, of Trenton dismissed me from my job. This angered two of his superior officers, including John Cox, the Assistant Quartermaster General of the army. Mr. Cox felt Furman had disgraced me unfairly, because I was “an industrious active gentleman.” However, I was offered a deputy quartermaster position, a promotion, in Bucks County in the area of Bristol just across the river.

I also operated the lower ferry at Trenton and for part of the war it was designated as the Continental ferry where those connected with the Continental army could cross and Congress would pay the toll. That designation switched several times between my ferry and the upper ferry closer to the heart of Trenton.

When the American and French armies came through Trenton in 1781 on their way to Yorktown, Virginia many Trenton people provided services for which we were paid. The French even paid in real gold. I ferried nearly 4,800 men, over 600 horses, and 399 wagons drawn by over 2,000 oxen of the French army. While the armies may have damaged roads and property due to so many men, animals, and wagons passing through, the economic benefits at least partially compensated for it. On their return from Yorktown in December, I ferried 945 soldiers, 33 four-horse wagons, 44 saddle horses, and four cattle for the New York and other troops.



At the time of the Revolution, I was a boarding school student in Trenton at Mrs. Rogers' school for training aristocratic young ladies. At the time of the Battle of Trenton I was twelve years old. My parents lived in Philadelphia and my father served George Washington's Continental Army as a chief physician. They were very rich, and my mother was the sister of Richard Henry Lee of Virginia who had made the motion in Congress that led to the Declaration of Independence. In Philadelphia, we lived in a three-story brick house with white marble steps and trimmings. Mrs. Rogers was helping prepare me to be the belle of the ball in Philadelphia high society.

On January 2, 1777, I sat down in Trenton to write a short letter to my mother, telling her how much I missed her and my hope that she was well. It had been some time since I had received a letter from her. I knew mother had been badly weakened by a difficult pregnancy the previous August. I was afraid she had not received the last five letters I had sent her. Then I closed with "God bless you my dear Mamma and make me a deserving daughter of so good a mother."

I did not tell her about the sometimes tragic and sometimes glorious things that had been taking place in and around Trenton over the month of December, or how Mrs. Rogers had protected her students. I also did not tell her I was in imminent danger from the British army led by General Lord Cornwallis who was at that very moment approaching Trenton where he would engage General Washington's army in a battle that could either destroy or enrich the high morale resulting from the recent capture of the Hessians here.

As I wrote, everyone in Trenton was preparing for the British arrival and seeking cover. When the British arrived late in the afternoon we sought the best cover we could while the British chased American troops through town and across the Assunpink Creek where they could defend Mill Hill which already had many troops and artillery ready to resist them. Cannons fired both ways across the creek until well after dark when the fighting ceased. When we awoke the next morning things were pretty quiet because Washington's troops had left overnight. We learned they attacked and defeated the British in Princeton.



I was one of the several tavern owners in Trenton at the time of the Revolution. Mine was located on the road climbing Mill Hill and leading south toward Bordentown. My wife, Ann, helped me and I also had several enslaved people. Like other owners of enslaved people in Trenton, at times I sold an enslaved person or had one run away from working for me. Because of the help I had, I could do several other things besides keep the tavern. I was also well known as a fish merchant.

Just after the fighting in the American Revolution broke out in 1775, a group of New England delegates to the Second Continental Congress passed through Trenton. At that time, I had been selling fish for thirteen years and was running ads in Philadelphia newspapers saying that I had for sale “choice pickled sturgeon, at ten shillings the two gallon keg, and twelve shillings the three gallon keg, cured after the Baltic manner.” Trenton had at least three other profitable fisheries because fishing had been important from the time of the Lenape indigenous people due to the river conditions that attracted fish to the area. My newspaper ads also told people how to preserve properly the fish they purchased from me. I told them to “draw off the liquor at the bung into a clean pan, then take out the head that is branded, harden on the hoops, and pour to it again its own pickle, and if at any time there is a supply wanting to cover the fish, add some good neat vinegar.”

When troops from both armies came into Trenton in December 1776 we did our best just to survive. The American troops took away barrels of brandy and wine along with spoons, plates, tankards and other items from the tavern. The British troops took a lot fencing and other wood things to burn for heating and cooking. Some also took clothing items, several guns and bayonets, clothing items, some bedding, two tons of hay for their horses, and even a barrel of cyder.

Ann refused to leave town, staying with the tavern and trying to prevent the thefts. At one point during the two battles at Trenton, Washington used our house as his headquarters but in the cannon fire from and to Mill Hill the night of January 2 our house was severely damaged. I continued to help the Revolution for the rest of the war.



I owned and operated a tavern in Trenton beginning before the American Revolution. My husband, Pontius, had owned it until his death. It was a brick building containing four rooms on the first floor and a spacious entry. The three rooms on the second floor, included a well-appointed meeting room with a door that opened to a balcony overlooking the street. The third story contained rooms for people staying overnight like a motel. Very close by it was a large two-story brick kitchen and washing house. It stood on a large property containing a well, a garden, large horse stables and houses for cows, hens, and pigeons.

During the Revolutionary War my tavern was used by American military units passing through Trenton on their way to join Washington. The officers, the ones with enough money, enjoyed themselves at my tavern. Early in the war, some British army prisoners captured in Canada were quartered in Trenton, with the officers assigned to taverns, including mine. The question came up as to who would pay their expenses. The prisoners felt they should not have to pay because the “rebel” government had put them there. Eventually, it was decided that the Continental Congress would reimburse me and other tavern owners for their expenses. After paying my initial bill Congress would only repay me two dollars per week for room and board. The prisoners themselves had to pay for anything over that amount. Finally, the officers, soldiers, and families were removed from Trenton after months of taking care of them and trying not to go broke.

When the Declaration of Independence was passed in July 1776, Trenton received a copy on July 8 and it was publicly read aloud in Trenton that day. The Provincial Congress reimbursed me for providing food for people at my tavern during the celebration.

It was not unusual for our government to hold meetings at Trenton taverns and mine was no exception. The Provincial Assembly and Council met at my tavern at 3:00 pm on November 1, 1777 and elected our Governor William Livingston to another term and John Hart, who had signed the Declaration of Independence, as Speaker of the Assembly.



I was one of the people who moved with my family to Trenton for several years of the Revolution and became active in Trenton's life while doing my job for the Continental Army. I was originally from New Brunswick and when the Revolutionary War broke out, I raised a company of militia for which I was captain. I was urged to become a delegate to the Continental Congress but declined, believing I could be of more service to the cause in the military. I was appointed colonel of the 2nd Middlesex County Regiment of the militia in August of 1776. When Washington retreated through New Jersey and crossed the Delaware River from Trenton, where I had been helping cross his troops, to Bucks County and soon after, Washington ordered me to go back over to New Jersey to help with calling out and organizing more of the state militia. This was really difficult since the British controlled most of New Jersey until Washington recrossed and captured Trenton and its Hessian garrison on December 26. In 1777 through 1779 I was a high-ranking officer in the militia.

The quartermaster department was responsible for obtaining and distributing the food for the army and its horses. When Timothy Pickering took over the job of quartermaster general he commissioned me as Deputy Quartermaster General for New Jersey on September 18, 1780 and I would serve until the end of the war in January 1783.

Because Trenton was so important to the supply system due to its location on the river and main roads, I moved my family to Trenton in January 1781. My job was very difficult, but I worked hard to make it successful bringing in other men to live in Trenton and help me. The people of Trenton supported my work and I got to know them well. I rented a house and made the town my home as well as my job headquarters. I became an active citizen of Trenton. Because I wanted to educate my son John, I paid a teacher named James Burnside to teach him. Some of the leading people in Trenton wanted to establish a better school system and I became very active with them.

When the war ended, I returned to my merchant business in New Brunswick and carried on extensive trade with Lisbon, Madeira, London, Dublin, and the West Indies.



I was part of a large Trenton family, a son of early settler and innkeeper, William Yard. Among many activities I was involved with the iron and steel complex created in the 1730s on Petty's Run. It included a plating mill, steel furnace, one or two smith's shops, a coal house, and a waterpower system. It was one of the earliest in the colonies and one of the very few because beginning in 1750 the Parliament passed laws to prevent the growth of a colonial iron industry. Beginning in 1762 my steel furnace went through a succession of owners from Philadelphia while I continued to own and operate the plating mill. The whole operation was very complex with many parts and even under different ownerships the various parts were connected and helped each other by exchanging raw materials, completing and partially completing products, and sharing tools, water for power, and labor. I was also one of several Trenton residents who established a fishery business.

During the French and Indian War, the colonial legislature received petitions, including one from Trenton citizens, objecting to providing shelter for British soldiers. I had been one heavily involved in sheltering them, so I was glad to sign the petition. This led to the building of the Old Barracks.

As anger over the actions of Parliament were leading to war, a Continental Congress committee reported in December 1775 on the great difficulty obtaining muskets from outside the colonies and the very important need to manufacture enough muskets in the colonies to supply the soldiers being raised as well "every freeman." I employed men with the skills to make musket barrels, as well as bayonets, steel ramrods, and other metal items. I could also hire persons with the skills to assemble complete muskets with a wooden stock. I oversaw the construction of dozens of muskets before the British occupation of Trenton in 1776.

When George Washington came through Trenton in 1789 on his way to New York to be inaugurated president, I supervised a group of men to construct a triumphal arch, on the bridge over the Assunpink Creek, supported by 13 pillars, and gaily festooned with a variety of flowers and evergreens arranged by the women of Trenton.



During the Revolution I owned a grist mill outside the town of Trenton near the Delaware River. My mill was very complex having several grinding wheels to turn wheat and other grain seeds into flour. The farmers around Trenton grew very large amounts of wheat that I turned into flour and then sent it by boat to Philadelphia where it could be shipped to many places in the world. My mill and house were not far from the large farm owned by militia General Philemon Dickinson so I knew him well. When the Revolution broke out late in 1775, I became captain of one of the several Trenton militia companies and served for the rest of the war.

A really difficult time for us was when the British and Hessians took control of Trenton in early December 1776. The British pushed Washington and his troops across the Delaware River where I went with them and camped with other New Jersey militiamen at Yardley's Ferry about four miles up the river from Trenton. From there we crossed back over to New Jersey in small groups almost every day so we could make life miserable for the Hessians.

By a few days before Christmas, Washington had decided to attack the Hessian troops stationed in Trenton. He would cross the Delaware at McConkey's Ferry, and then march overnight about nine miles down to Trenton to attack at dawn. It would be a long, dark march with no road signs, lights, or other ways to know where you were. Washington did not have troops who knew our part of New Jersey so he contacted General Dickinson to find men who knew the area really well and could guide the army to Trenton. Washington had several thousand troops organized into groups that would each need a guide. General Dickinson knew that I was very familiar with the area since I lived on part of the route several groups would take and that I knew men from my company and other Trenton companies who could also help. We selected about twenty-five men at Yardley's Ferry and I marched them up to near McConkey's. We crossed the river with Washington's troops and then guided them through the darkness and the severe nor'easter storm that night so they could defeat the Hessians in the morning.



In 1775, I was an energetic, self-confident young man who early joined the militia and served as an officer with the high rank of major. Local craftsman John Fitch repaired and polished a sword hanger for me. When Continental Army regiments were established, I resigned after accepting a lieutenant's commission in the Second New Jersey Continental Regiment for Captain Joseph Stout's Company on October 28. We organized at the Barracks in Trenton. Trying to improve my position I applied for a higher rank when a Third New Jersey Regiment was authorized in February. I made sure to note that I had formerly been a field officer, major, in the Hunterdon County militia and was now regimental adjutant, an administrative position for which I received extra pay for the additional duties. Wanting to help the cause, I would even take a pay cut if necessary "for the good of the Service." However, I was not promoted and remained a second lieutenant and adjutant in the Second Regiment.

Captain Stout's company was preparing to march for service in Canada on February 10, 1776 when I made out my will, authorizing my wife, Rezine, to dispose of my property as she saw fit "if I never return from service to my country." I returned from Canada in July 1776 and stayed with family while recovering from severe burns suffered during the fighting in Canada.

While Washington was retreating across New Jersey in November I was named a captain in the new version Second New Jersey Regiment that was not yet formed. I decided to help Washington by going to Yardley Ferry where militia were stationed under General Dickinson. During December I led several raids across the river to harass the Hessians and received a lot of honor and respect for these raids.

After the battle of Princeton on January 3, Washington took up winter quarters at Morristown. In June, General Howe sent a force deep into northeastern New Jersey hoping to entice Washington out from Morristown and into a full battle. The result was the Battle of Short Hills on June 26. A few days later, Rezine learned of my death in the battle.

