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THE QUEEN'S HOUSE (see page 34)

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Johnnie Schreiber Sees the Battle of Germantown

by CATHARINE MACFARLANE

ALMOST two hundred years ago, a little boy named Johnnie Schreiber, lived in Germantown, about six miles from the State House in Philadelphia. He lived with his mother and brother Will in a log house on the Great Road out of Philadelphia. His father had been away for a long time.

Up on the hill from where they lived was Cliveden, the home of Chief Justice Benjamin Chew. This was a large and beautiful mansion, surrounded by trees and well kept lawns. The Chief Justice was a very rich man. He had horses and carriages and servants to take care of them. The boys liked to watch the people going through the great gate.

Best of all they liked to sit by the side of the road and watch what happened there. The road was narrow, with deep ruts filled with dust in summer time, knee deep with mud in winter time.

Sometimes they saw Indians walking single file to visit the Great White Father in the State House. First would come the Indian Brave, with feathers in his hair, carrying a bow and arrows. Then came children about their own age. Then came the Indian Squaw, the children's mother, with a baby on a board strapped to her back. Silently the Indians walked toward Philadelphia. Silently the boys watched them.

Sometimes they saw great Conestoga wagons carrying loads of flour to the city. A few days later the Conestoga wagons would come out from the city loaded with goods for the country towns. The wagons were drawn by strong horses but sometimes they got stuck in the ruts or mud. Then the drivers would crack their whips, pull on the horses and push on the wheels until the wagons moved again.

Often they saw men on horseback riding to Philadelphia from their homes in the country. A few days later the men returned bringing news of the great city and the war.

One hot day in July 1776, the riders coming from the city brought the news that there had been a great celebration at the State House. The bell tolled, there were speeches, guns, fireworks, all because a paper had been signed. The paper was called The Declaration of Independence. The boys did not know what that meant but they wished they had seen the celebration.

"What is that piece of paper, Mother?" they asked.

Their mother told them—"The Declaration of Independence says that all of us who live in Germantown, in Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, in all the thirteen American Colonies are no longer subjects of the King of England, George the Third, but are free and independent American citizens. We can make our own laws and raise our own taxes from now on."

"Three cheers for the Declaration of Independence," cried the boys.

After a long hot summer, school opened in the fall. One morning Johnnie was watching a hop toad that he had discovered in the grass. His brother called out—"Hurry, Johnnie! We are late for school." "Be good, boys," called their mother, as they dashed out of the yard and down the hill to the Concord schoolhouse. They wiped their feet carefully before stepping into the sunny room. Master Grimes met them at the door, said "Good morning, boys" and watched them take their places on the wooden benches. When all were there, he walked to his desk, read a chapter from the Bible and lessons began.

"Two and two make four. C-a-t spells cat." That was easy. Johnnie knew that already. He looked out of the windows at the trees, listened to the birds and wished 12 o'clock would come. One of his little friends was in trouble. He was a dunce. So the teacher put a duncecap on his head and told him to stand in the corner. The other children felt sorry for him and were glad when 12 o'clock came. They walked out of the room quietly, then broke into shouts and laughs and rushed into the dusty road. Then home to eat their midday meal.

In the afternoon the boys went out to the woods to look for berries and wild grapes. Squirrels darted across their path, sometimes they saw a deer. When they came home they studied their lessons for the next day and their mother heard them recite. Soon they were tired enough to go to bed, first saying their prayers and asking God to send their father home. "Why must Father stay in Chester Springs, Mother?

Why can't he come home?" they asked. "Your Father is helping General Washington," she said. "He is building a Hospital at Chester Springs for wounded soldiers. General Washington needs him there." Soon they were asleep. Next morning they woke bright and early, ate breakfast and started off to school.

One day, more than a year later, the riders from the city brought bad news. They said General Howe and the British army would soon enter Philadelphia. The great bell in the State House tower had been taken down, put on an army wagon, and was on the way to Allentown so that it could not be melted and made into bullets with which to shoot American soldiers.

One morning Master Grimes met them at the school door, but instead of sending them to their seats, he said, "Go home and tell your mother to keep you in the house. The Redcoats are coming to Germantown." They knew what Redcoats were. Because of the

The Battle of Germantown



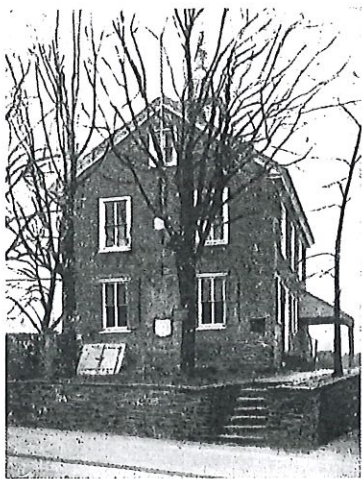
Redcoats their father was building a Hospital at Chester Springs. Their mother turned pale at the bad news, and hurried them into the house. They could not go for berries that day. Before long they heard a fife and drum. Their mother sent them to the cellar, told them to keep very still, and locked the cellar door. Peeping between logs, the boys saw a line of men in red uniforms marching past. "They are British soldiers," Johnnie's brother whispered to him. The soldiers marched through the great gate at Cliveden, climbed the front steps and walked through the big front door. More soldiers came. They carried guns and flags.

Suddenly they heard a knocking at the door of their house, then heavy footsteps on the floor above them. "Any men here? Where's your husband?" a rough voice asked. The two boys kept very still. "We'll look in the cellar anyway." So down the cellar steps came a big man in uniform, carrying a gun. He looked at the two boys cowering in the corner, put his bayonet into a bag of grain so it spilled on the floor, then stamped up the stairs again and out of the house. Creeping up the cellar steps, the boys saw their mother's face was very red. She was wiping it with her apron. "This must be war," they thought.

They stayed in the house all day. Johnnie could not go out to look for his hop toad. How he wished he had brought it into the house,—it would have been good company.

The next day was Saturday. There was a thick fog. The boys were eager to go to the woods for nuts—Shellbarks, black walnuts, chestnuts. Their mother said, "No, boys, it is too early. It is only the fourth of October. The nuts are not ripe yet, there has been no frost."

The fog lifted a little. At the top of the hill, near Master Bensell's house, the boys saw soldiers in blue—American soldiers, with General Washington at their head.



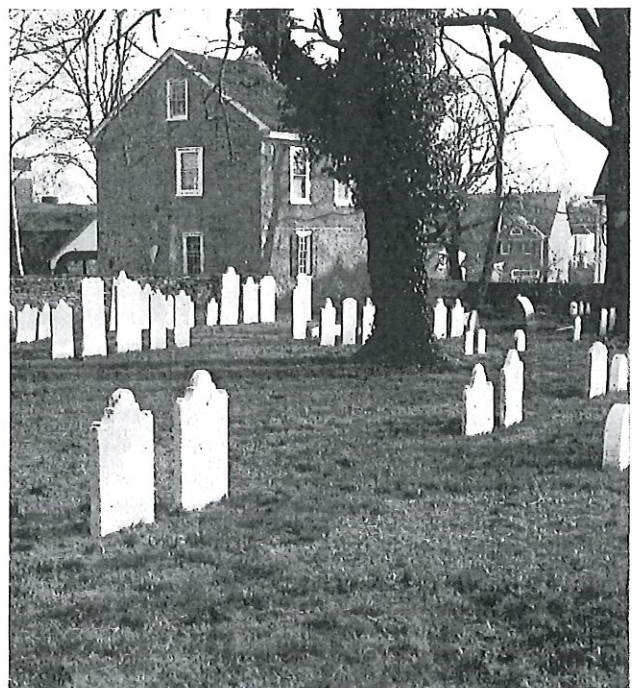
The boys dashed out of the yard and down the hill to the Concord Schoolhouse.



Cliveden was a large and beautiful mansion.

"If Father were not at Chester Springs, perhaps he would be there too," the boys thought. "We will all go to the cellar this time," their mother said. Soon they heard the Redcoats in the Chew house firing on Washington's soldiers. Men fell dead or wounded but others took their places, and marched on down the Great Road towards Market Square, where General Agnew and the main body of the British Army stood.

There they fought. The fog was so thick the Americans sometimes fired on each other instead of at the Redcoats. There were brave men and good soldiers on both sides. The battle was a tie. When General Washington saw that his soldiers could not win, he ordered them to retreat. This they did in good order,



They watched the bodies of three American soldiers being buried in Ax's Upper Burying Ground.

marching back over the Great Road, dragging their cannons and carrying their wounded companions. Johnnie and his brother watched them from the cellar. The British did not follow them. All in good order the Americans withdrew over Mount Airy, Cresheim, Chestnut Hill, and up the Bethlehem Pike to their headquarters at Skippack, ten miles away.

Next day the boys peeped over the Schoolhouse wall and watched while the bodies of three American soldiers were buried in Ax'es Upper Burying Ground.

They had seen part of the Battle of Germantown on October 4th, 1777. They knew what war was now.

Months later when the news of the Battle of Germantown reached Europe, all were amazed that young General Washington, with untried troops, had the courage to attack the regular soldiers of the British Army and fight them to a tie. As a result of this battle, the King of France, Louis XVI, decided to help the American cause.

About Johnnie Schreiber and the Author

Johnnie Schreiber was a real person whose identity was discovered when Doctor Catharine MacFarlane was doing research on the Battle of Germantown. Because all children like to associate themselves with the children in stories—regardless of the period or time involved—Dr. MacFarlane has written this little tale primarily for younger folks.

Dr. MacFarlane hopes that the story of "Johnnie Schreiber Sees the Battle of Germantown" will be published in book form before the year is out. The Revolutionary period is one with which every child should be acquainted and the Doctor has written this tale as her contribution.

Dr. MacFarlane is a well-known figure in medical circles, not only in Germantown and the city but also in many locations throughout the country. Her interests are diversified and her knowledge of local history is vast. This story gives just a little inkling of the historical facts that the Doctor has at her fingertips.

Historical Local Area Chosen for American Baptist Headquarters

By GEORGE A. DANIELS

IN NOVEMBER 1812, almost 150 years ago—Adoniram Judson sailed to Burma and thus became the first American Baptist Foreign Missionary. While Judson himself had no connection with Germantown, those who sponsored him did.

In 1814 Luther Rice (who had accompanied Adoniram Judson to India to open up a mission for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions) thrust upon our American Baptists the obligation to participate in organized, independent work in the foreign fields. And through his efforts, local missionary societies were formed in many of the more intelligent communities.

Following this, in 1814, representatives of such mission societies met for the first time in Philadelphia and at that meeting formed the Triennial Convention. This meeting brought together the leading Baptist ministers from all parts of the country. As a result, within a few years there grew a national organization for foreign missions, publications and educational societies.

Today, 1962—150 years after the joint efforts of our first foreign missionaries, the National Headquarters Building of the American Baptist Conven-

tion has been completed in Valley Forge. This structure is an imposing round concrete building that stands at the junction of the Schuylkill Expressway and the Pennsylvania Turnpike. It houses not only the American Baptist Publication Society but also the Judson Press—(named after Adoniram Judson) and the various foreign and home Mission Boards of the American Baptists.

Why did the Baptists choose the greater Philadelphia Area for their National headquarters? The answer is that the battle for the freedom of religion and the war for the freedom of our country occurred during the time of the American Revolution in this very area—Germantown and adjacent Valley Forge. The services of American Baptists in the cause of civil and religious liberty are acknowledged by scholars of other denominations.

This year, for the five day period between May 23 and 27 the American Baptists are again holding their annual convention in Philadelphia.

As we go to press, we have no way of knowing what changes or additions or new ideas will be introduced and adopted at this latest history-making meeting, in our history-laden city.

