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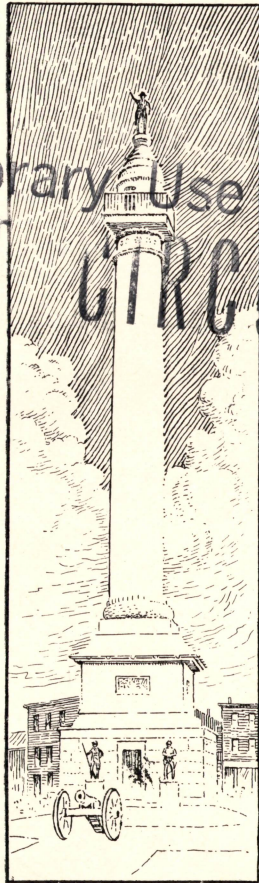
The Battle of Trenton

AN HISTORICAL NARRATIVE
IN VERSE

By HAMILTON SCHUYLER

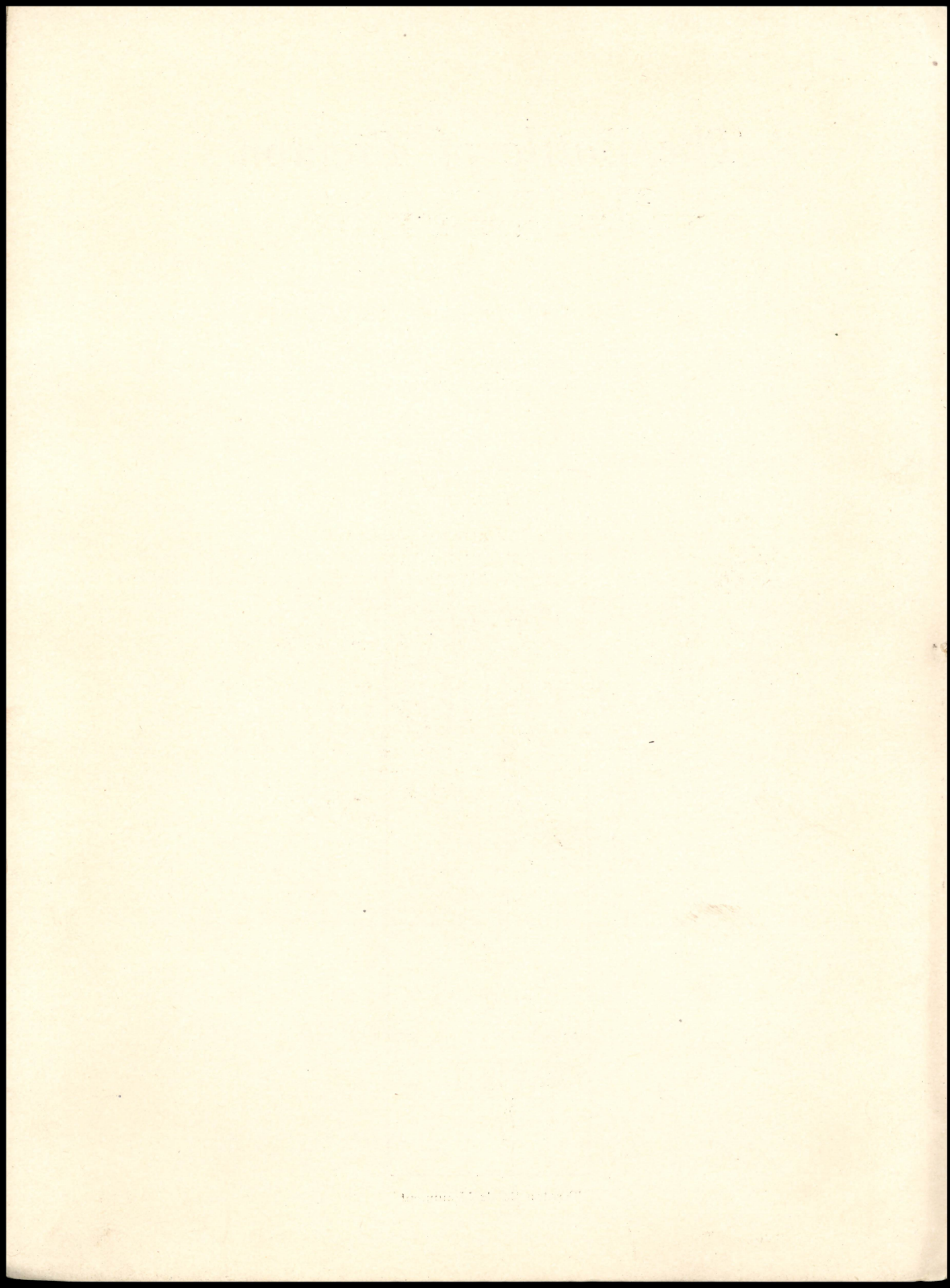
With Illustrations by
GEORGE BRADSHAW

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Trenton Battle Monument

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THE BATTLE *of* TRENTON

PROLOGUE



LISTEN, my masters! if indeed ye deign
To hear in verse the story once again
Of how the troops of Washington's command
From Pennsylvania crossed to Jersey land
Upon a wild and bitter Christmas night,
And marched to Trenton ere the morning's light,
And took the Hessians with complete surprise,
A victory winning, glorious in the eyes
Of all who know the worth of that event;
How to the failing patriot cause it lent
A hope renewed, and gained us fresh support,
As was admitted at the British Court.
*"All our hopes were blasted by that sad affair
Which occurred at Trenton"*—so they did declare.

Jan. 1927 - 100 (Est)



THE CROSSING OF THE DELAWARE



HE night is chill and dismal
With mingled snow and hail,
The bodies of the ragged troops
Are shivering in the gale,
The very ground is reddened
With the blood from shoeless feet,
But hearts are stout and steady
And high with courage beat.
The ice-floe on the Delaware
Is drifting fierce and strong,
As company by company
The river-banks they throng.
All silently they load the boats,
Nor dare to show a light,
Lest Hessian scouts take warning
And thus forestall a fight.



"Shivering in the gale"



"Silently they load the boats"



THE MIDNIGHT MARCH TO TRENTON



ASSEMBLED on the further bank
They march through drifting snow,
All safely led by trusty guides

Who well the country know.
Dividing then in columns twain,

Where forked ways are seen,
By "River Road" goes Sullivan,
By "Pennington" goes Greene.

And Washington, himself the chief,
Elects with Greene to ride,
Together with his gallant aides

Attending by his side;
Sterling, Mercer, Hamilton;

They are a valiant band,
And Forrest, Fermoy, Stephen;
None braver in the land.

The Philadelphia Light Horse comes
To join the dangerous quest;
And sturdy Knox, whose bulky form
Now serves to point a jest.

With Sullivan rides Glover,
And St. Clair, Hugg and Neil,
With Sargeant too, and Moulder;
All hearts of tempered steel.

Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The way
Is perilous and drear.

Patience is the watchword
And Hope the soldier's cheer.

The icy winds are chilling
The body, limb and brain;

Not long can human nature
Endure the awful strain.

Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The roads
Are iron-hard with frost.

Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The victory
Must be won at any cost.



Washington



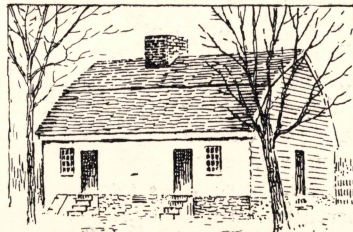
Greene



Sullivan



Hamilton



House at "Washington's Crossing"



THE ATTACK ON THE TOWN AT DAWN



BUT lo! the day is breaking,
 Behold, the town is near,
 The Hessian outposts challenge;
 They fire and disappear.
 So, the alarm is sounded,
 And now upon the run
 The Continentals enter,
 The battle has begun.
 Hemmed in between two forces
 The Hessians waver, break;
 Confused and in disorder
 Know not which way to take.
 Some seek to make surrender,
 While others strive to find
 A refuge from the galling fire,
 Before, between, behind.



Hessian Grenadier

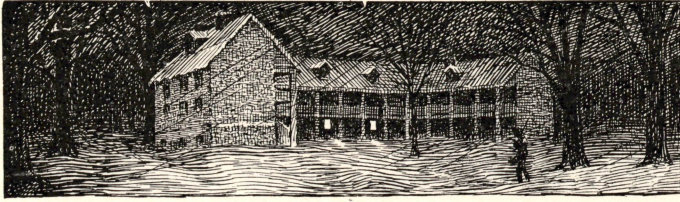


The Rifleman

The riflemen with steady aim
 From sheltering fence and wall
 Pour murderous fire upon the foe
 And threaten one and all.
 Artillery upon the heights,
 Where Federals hold the hill
 Above the town, take dreadful toll
 And rake the streets at will.
 Hasten, ye Hessians! All is lost!
 Capture or death your fate!
 If ye would save your wretched lives,
 Surrender! ere too late.



"Surrender!"



CHRISTMAS NIGHT AT TRENTON



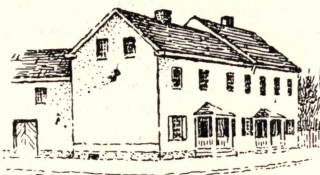
WITH Christmas toasts and greetings duly drunk
The village folk are deep in slumber sunk,
Dreaming, it may be, of the coming day
When British rule shall cease its hated sway.
Along the silent streets no footfall sounds,
Save that of sentry passing on his rounds.
Four! Five! and Six! o'clock. "All's well!"
The watchman's voice drones out his hourly spell.
Though dawn approaches and the darkness wanes,
A dim light flickers still through barrack panes.
Some Hessian yagers, lingering yet, prolong
The festive hour with drinking bout and song.
One rises up alert, with listening ear;
"Harken!" he cries, "What's that I seem to hear?"
" 'Tis naught! 'Tis naught! Sit down and have a mug
Of this good ale; so tight we are and snug
On such a night. Let's take our well-earned ease,
While sentries go their rounds and numbly freeze,
And we, my mates, enjoy the warmth within
And by this cheery fireside toast our shin.
Come, Kamarad, calm thyself! Dost thou not think
The time has come to have another drink?"
"Mein Gott!" Again—"but that's a musket shot!"
"Du bist *verrückt!* 'Tis but some drunken sot
Of ours, just now, who's let his matchlock fall.
'Tis that ye heard. Our trusty Colonel Rall
He knows what's up. This very night he feasts
At Abram Hunts'. No fear those Yankee beasts
Will venture out and show themselves tonight;
Not they, *Nein! Nein!* They only know to fight
And run away. They never will attack,
They haven't got the spunk, besides they lack,
Those swine, the skill and arms to match our men.
If the 'Old Fox' doesn't quit his den
We'll dig him out some fine day soon
And make him caper to a Hessian tune."
"Der Teufel! Donner-blitzen! What was that?"
And now the musket shots ring out. Pat! Pat!
The bullets go. The buglers sound alarms—
"Der feind! Der feind! Heraus! To arms! To arms!"



THE HESSIAN COMMANDER COLONEL RALL

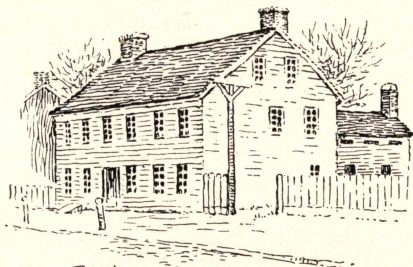


At Abram Hunt's the Christmas cheer is spread
 And Rall is feasted till the night is sped.
 He lingers o'er the playing-cards and toasts.
 Good easy man! He sees and fears no ghosts



Abraham Hunt's House

A Tory spy, with message at the door—
 "The foe they cross this night to Jersey's shore!"
 Unread the warning till, alas! too late,
 And Rall unheeding rushes on his fate.
 Late to his quarters, in a tumbled heap
 He lies upon his bed in heavy sleep;
 But what is that assails his deadened ear?
 A voice cries out—"The enemy is here
 And now attacks us in the very town."
 Rall rises up with muttered curse and frown
 And hurriedly throws on his scattered clothes,
 Not yet believing it can be his foes.
 Mounting his horse, the "Hessian Lion" stands
 At bay, and hoarsely issues his commands.
 Too late! Too late! For with the morning sun
 The day is lost—the victory is won.

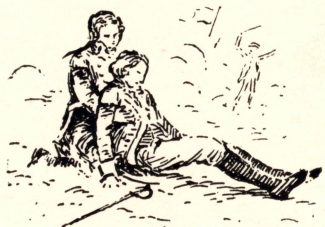


Rall's Headquarters



THE DEATH OF COLONEL RALL

WOUNDED to death, amid the din and shots
 They bring his body back to Stacy Potts'.
 Rall lies there speechless, gasps a while for breath;
 A valiant man, but rash, he welcomes death,
 And Washington, the chivalrous and bold,
 Attends his beaten foe, will not withhold
 His meed of sorrow for the grievous state
 Of one who bravely meets a soldier's fate.
 His tomb is here; we know its place today,
 Although no stone is set to mark the clay.*
 His epitaph—"*Here Colonel Rall lies dead;*
All's over with him"—so a comrade said.



Rall Wounded

L'ENVOI

AY! "All's over with him" and his hireling crew
 Long years ago; King George, his soldiers too.
 And Washington, with those who won the fight
 At Trenton on that memorable night,
 They too, have passed, but yet their memories stay
 As we to them our grateful tributes pay.
 There but remains the record of those years
 Of blood and battles, terror, death and tears,
 Of victory achieved, of freedom won,
 Of all we are and all we since have done.
 My story's finished; only this word more—
Keep ye the faith the Fathers kept of yore!

*Tradition says that Colonel Rall was buried in the graveyard of the First Presbyterian Church, but the exact spot is unknown.