

## WASHINGTON IN CAMBRIDGE.

FROM the battle of Lexington, Concord, and Cambridge until the evacuation of Boston by the British troops, Cambridge was the seat of war. Here was the American army, and here were the forts and other defenses of the colonies. England and America were represented by Boston and Cambridge, while Charles River answered to the Atlantic.

Within a few feet of the room where these lines were written stands the majestic elm which is the living memorial of those eventful days. Just beyond is Cambridge Common, with its granite monument in memory of the men of Cambridge who fell in the recent war. Opposite the common is the ancient burying-ground, where, among the good and great of earlier and later days, lie five men who found patriot graves in the first year of the Revolutionary War. Across the way rise the red walls of Harvard College. On this side of the historic tree towers the tall spire of the church which bears the name of Thomas Shepard, the first minister of Cambridge. At the summit of the spire stands the renowned cockerel who in 1721 ascended to his lofty station upon the "New Brick Church" in Hanover Street, Boston, and who from that eminence for a hundred and fifty years looked down upon the shifting scenes of peace and war. He marked the entrance of the British ships into Boston harbor; through the mist of evening he overlooked the destruction of the tea; he heard the muffled sound of the English oars on the night of the 18th of April; he caught the light of the twin lamps which hung on

"The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,  
As it rose above the graves on the hill,  
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still;"

he listened to the roar of cannon and musketry at the battle of Bunker Hill, and saw the flames which made Charlestown a desolation. Now he surveys the peaceful field, the busy streets, the pleasant homes, the churches, the schools,

the college, and keeps his restless watch above the Washington Elm.

This tree is believed to be a survivor of the primeval forest. Its size bears witness to its great age; its trunk is more than six feet in diameter, and it is nearly one hundred feet in height and ninety feet in the spread of its branches. Notwithstanding its antiquity, the tree is full of life and strength; and while it has lost some of its branches, it retains its graceful and imposing form. Very many *souvenirs* have been made from its wood, and the pulpit in the chapel of the neighboring church is partly constructed from one of its limbs, which was necessarily removed. Through the generosity of a clergyman an iron fence has been placed around the tree. Visitors from all lands come with interest to the spot, gaze into the spreading branches, and account themselves happy if they can bear away a twig as a sacred token. On a thick granite slab is this inscription:—

UNDER THIS TREE  
WASHINGTON  
FIRST TOOK COMMAND  
OF THE  
AMERICAN ARMY,  
JULY 3, 1775.

Two days before the battle of Bunker Hill it was voted by the Continental Congress to appoint a general for the Continental army. At the suggestion of John Adams, and on the nomination of Mr. Johnson, of Maryland, George Washington, of Virginia, was unanimously chosen by ballot as commander-in-chief. On the 17th of June his commission, signed by John Hancock, was reported to Congress and adopted. The new general expressed his sense of the honor conferred upon him, and declared his devotion to the cause. "But," he added in words specially worthy of record, "lest some unlucky event should happen unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gen-

tleman in the room, that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with. As to pay, I beg leave to assure the Congress that, as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit of it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

Four major-generals were also appointed, Artemas Ward, Charles Lee, Philip Schuyler, and Israel Putnam. To these were added eight brigadier-generals.

On the 21st of June Washington left Philadelphia on horseback, to take command of the army at Cambridge. He was accompanied by Major-Generals Lee and Schuyler. He was everywhere received with honor as he made the journey. At New York he heard of the battle of the 17th, and asked eagerly, "Did the militia stand fire?" When he was told of their firmness and heroism he answered, "The liberties of the country are safe." At New York and at Watertown the Provincial Congress presented an address of congratulation, to which he afterwards made a fitting reply. In the latter response he said, "In exchanging the enjoyments of domestic life for the duties of my present honorable but arduous station, I only emulate the virtue and public spirit of the whole province of Massachusetts Bay." At Springfield he was met by a congressional committee who attended him on his way.

On Sunday the 2d of July, about two o'clock in the afternoon, Washington entered Cambridge, "escorted by a troop of light horse and a cavalcade of citizens." "As he entered the confines of the camp the shouts of the multitude and the thundering of artillery gave note to the enemy beleaguered in Boston of his arrival." Major-General Lee was with him. The Provincial Congress had prepared for their reception the house of the president of the college, reserving one room for President Langdon's use, and thither Washington and Lee were conducted.

The house was first occupied by President Wadsworth, who has left this record: "The President's House to dwell in was raised May 24, 1726. No life was lost, nor person hurt in raising it; thanks be to God for his preserving goodness. In y<sup>e</sup> Evening, those who raised y<sup>e</sup> House had a Supper in y<sup>e</sup> Hall; after wch we sang y<sup>e</sup> first stave or staff in y<sup>e</sup> 127 Psalm." The house is yet standing on the college grounds, though it has not been occupied by the president since Mr. Everett retired from office.

In the accounts which Washington promised to keep, the first entry charges the United States as follows: "1775, June. To the purchase of five horses (two of which were had on credit from Mr. James Mease) to equip me for my journey to the army at Cambridge, & for the service I was then going upon, having sent my chariot and Horses back to Virginia, £239 (Pens<sup>a</sup> currency)." After this we have an entry of "the acct of Thomas Miflin Esq<sup>r</sup> for money Expended by him in the journey from Philadelphia to Cambridge, in which the expences of General Lee, Col<sup>o</sup> Reed etc. were included, 129-8-2 (Pens<sup>a</sup>)." And again, "Sundry sums paid by myself in the aforesaid journey amounting to 34-8-3 (Lawful)." The Massachusetts Congress made provision for a steward and servants for Washington, and for the furnishing of his table. What was needed in his house was provided. July 22 it was "Resolved, That the Committee of Safety be desired to complete the furnishing of General Washington's house, and in particular to provide him four or five more beds." But at the time of this vote Washington was probably established in the house which is generally known as his headquarters, and is now the residence of Mr. Longfellow. Why he removed from the president's house we are not told. It has been suggested that he wished for a house from which he would have a more extended view of the country and of some of the fortifications. Possibly a shell which came over the president's house and descended in Harvard Square may have made a residence more dis-

tant from the enemy seem desirable. In Washington's accounts is this entry, 1775, July 15: "To Cash paid for cleaning the House which was provided for my Quarters & w<sup>ch</sup> had been occupied by the Marblehead Regm<sup>t</sup>, 2-10-9 (Lawful)." It was undoubtedly about that time that he removed to the house on Brattle Street with which his name is connected.<sup>1</sup> This was the house of John Vassall, who early in the year had been driven to Boston on account of his tory principles.

On the morning of the 3d of July the patriot soldiers were drawn up on Cambridge Common, and Washington, with a numerous suite, rode from his headquarters, and under the branches of the ancient elm wheeled his horse, drew his sword, and formally assumed the command of the Continental army. A multitude of people—men, women, children—had assembled to behold this military pageant, and to look upon the Virginia chieftain, whose fame had preceded him. They saw a man forty-three years old, about six feet and two inches in height, of well-proportioned figure, with large hands and feet, with a somewhat florid complexion, a profusion of brown hair brushed back from the forehead, and blue eyes which were very far apart. His whole appearance was dignified and commanding. He wore a blue coat with buff facings, and buff small-clothes, a rich epaulette on each shoulder, and a cockade on his hat.

What did Washington find upon his arrival at the camp? On the 27th of July he wrote to his brother: "I found a mixed multitude of people here, under very little discipline, order, or government; the enemy in possession of a place called Bunker's Hill, on Charlestown Neck, strongly intrenched, and fortifying themselves; part of our own army on two hills, called Winter and Prospect hills, about a mile and a quarter from the enemy on Bunker's Hill, in a very insecure state; another part at this village; and a third part at Roxbury, guarding the entrance in and out of Bos-

ton. My whole time, since I came here, has been employed in throwing up lines of defense at these three several places, to secure, in the first instance, our own troops from any attempts of the enemy; and in the next place, to cut off all communication between their troops and the country. To do this, and to prevent them from penetrating into the country with fire and sword, and to harass them if they do, is all that is expected of me. . . . The enemy's strength, including marine forces, is computed, from the best accounts I can get, at about twelve thousand men; ours, including sick and absent, at about sixteen thousand; but then, we have to guard a semicircle of eight or nine miles, to every part of which we are obliged to be equally attentive, whilst they, situated as it were in the centre of the semicircle, and having the entire command of the water, can bend their whole force against any one part of it with equal facility. This renders our situation not very agreeable, though necessary." In his first letter to Congress, dated July 10, he states that about seven hundred men were posted in several small towns along the coast. He reported the "want of engineers to construct proper works and direct the men, a want of tools and a sufficient number of men to man the works in case of an attack." He said they were laboring under great disadvantages for lack of tents, and begged that some might be sent from Philadelphia. The arrangement for supplies was inconvenient, and he was much embarrassed for a military chest. He asked that money might be sent to him; he said that the soldiers, and especially the troops raised in Massachusetts, were very deficient in necessary clothing, and recommended that ten thousand hunting-shirts be furnished them. He complained that there was so great destitution of ammunition that the artillery would be of little use. Added to all these difficulties, there was much dissatisfaction in the provinces of Massachusetts and Connecticut with the appointment of general officers, and there

<sup>1</sup> For a full discussion of the question of "General Washington's Headquarters in Cambridge,"

see a paper read before the Massachusetts Historical Society, in September, 1872, by Mr. Charles Deane

was danger that the whole army would be thrown into disorder. He had "a sincere pleasure in observing that there are materials for a good army, a great number of able-bodied men, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage;" but he thought their spirit had "exceeded their strength," and he humbly submitted "the propriety of making some further provision of men from other colonies."

The soldiers in Cambridge occupied the common; but, though the sea-port towns had sent a collection of sails, there were not tents enough, as we have seen, and troops were quartered in private houses and in the colleges. Soon after the 19th of April "the students were ordered to quit the college;" they were removed to Concord. A portion of the library and apparatus was also taken there, while the rest was kept at Andover. The vacated buildings were of great service. The college held a prominent place in those days. It was said to have been a part of General Gage's plan to supplement the destruction of the stores at Concord by destroying the college buildings and throwing up an intrenchment on the common. As early as 1683, Cranfield, the Governor of New Hampshire, wrote to Sir Lionel Jenkins, "This country can never be well settled, or the people become good subjects, till the preachers be reformed and that college suppressed." Verily, the spirit of prophecy was upon the loyal governor.

The headquarters of General Ward, who had been commander-in-chief of the forces here, and was next in rank to Washington, were in the house subsequently occupied by the Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D., near the college and the common. General Putnam's headquarters were at the "Inman house," in what is now Cambridgeport. Near Washington's headquarters were many houses whose historical associations have become familiar by frequent repetition.

Soon after Washington assumed the command, the army was in three divisions, each of which consisted of two brigades, or twelve regiments. In dividing the soldiers pains were taken to put

the men from each colony together, so far as possible, and under a commander from that colony. The right wing was placed at "Roxbury and its southern dependencies," under General Ward; the left wing, under General Lee, was stationed on Prospect and Winter hills; the centre was at Cambridge, under General Putnam. Thus did the army settle down to its work.

During the months which followed there were frequent skirmishes, — at Charlestown Neck, at Lechmere's Point, now East Cambridge, at Beverly, at Dorchester, — but the general position of affairs was not changed by these conflicts. It was a very trying period for Washington. The expectation of the country was large, but the means in Washington's hands were small. It was difficult for him to keep his army together. Most of the men had hurried to the field without enlistment, or engaged only for a year's service. The new regulations were irksome to them, while liberty was the watchword. There was still a great lack of ammunition. "Our situation in the article of powder is much more alarming than I had the most distant idea of." "The bay is open," wrote Colonel Moylan, in January; "everything thaws here except Old Put. He is still as hard as ever, crying out for powder, powder, ye gods, give us powder!" "In all his wants Washington had no safe trust but in the spirit of the country, and that never failed him. Between the 25th of July and the 7th of August, fourteen hundred riflemen, a greater number than Congress had authorized, arrived in the camp." Men came from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania; but as winter drew on the situation of the "naked army" was deplorable. The time of service of most of the men was almost expired, and no provision had been made for this event. There was no money in the military chest, and the commissary-general had strained his credit to the utmost in providing subsistence for the troops. Washington felt himself neglected. Congress responded to his appeal by sending a committee, including Franklin, to confer with him,

and the result was a scheme for an army of about twenty-three thousand men.

Congress was anxious to have some blow struck which would revive the popular enthusiasm, but delegates sent to confer with Washington were not prepared to advise the bombardment of Boston. Washington was quite as desirous of active operations as any one. But his general officers, glad as they would have been to engage in it, thought an attack on Boston imprudent and unpromising, and he was forced to wait. So the months dragged on. In Boston the "Old South" was a riding-school, and Faneuil Hall a theatre; the British occasionally sent their play-bills to Cambridge, in derision of Washington and his army.

The American sentinels annoyed the English by scattering handbills among their soldiers. One of these was a contrast of the condition of the soldiers on the two sides:—

PROSPECT HILL.	BUNKER'S HILL.
I. Seven dollars a month.	I. Three pence a day.
II. Fresh provisions and in plenty.	II. Rottensalt pork.
III. Health.	III. The scurvy.
IV. Freedom, ease, affluence, and a good farm.	IV. Slavery, beggary, and want.

But amusement of this nature could not do much to break the dreary monotony of inactivity. In November Mrs. Washington was invited to join her husband in the camp, as it was impossible for him to visit his home; and her coming brightened the dark days for him and for the army.

The position of Washington made it necessary for him to maintain his house in a generous style. His wishes were consulted by the Provincial Congress in this regard. Some of his officers dined with him every day. Frequently members of Congress and other public men were his guests. He was social but not convivial in his habits. "His own diet was extremely simple, sometimes nothing but baked apples or berries, with cream and milk. He would retire early

from the board, leaving an aid-de-camp or one of his officers to take his place." In his accounts we find the charge of "a light phaeton" and "double harness," which must have been used in the public service. He was always very neat in his dress, and though he left his tent at sunrise, when he was in camp, he was usually dressed for the day.

On Sundays he attended divine service in the old church which stood on the college grounds, near the spot where Dane Hall now stands, the minister being the venerable Nathaniel Appleton, D. D. One stone from the foundation of the old house is now in the walls of the church whose spire rises above the Washington Elm.

The unfortunate expedition against Canada relieved the tedium of the long months of waiting, in some measure, but could not quicken hope. In October, Falmouth, now Portland, was burned by the British. In January, Norfolk was burned. In August, several Indian chiefs came into camp in savage costume, and offered to take up the hatchet for the Americans, if an invasion of Canada should be made.

On the first day of 1776, "the day which gave being to the new army,"—organized out of the old one with such additions as could be gained,—the Union flag of thirteen stripes was hoisted "in compliment to the United Colonies."

Not long after his coming to Cambridge, Washington was obliged to enter into correspondence with General Gage in behalf of American officers who had fallen into the hands of the enemy and were thrown into a common jail, without regard to rank or personal condition. "My duty now makes it necessary to apprise you that, for the future, I shall regulate all my conduct towards those gentlemen who are, or may be, in our possession, exactly by the rule you shall observe towards those of ours now in your custody." Among others in whose behalf Washington interposed was, according to the story, the daring sexton who hung out the lanterns on the night of the 18th of April, and who

had been arrested at a funeral and condemned to death. Upon Washington's threat of retaliation he was respited, and finally exchanged.

These incidents illustrate the variety of occupation in which Washington engaged. There seems to have been nothing wanting to make his position arduous in the extreme. Admirably was he fitted by disposition and training for the work given him to do. His mind was intent upon his task; sore was the trial of his patience, with the enemy entrenched before him, a clamorous Congress and people behind him, and around him a poorly furnished body of undisciplined men to be made into an army; but he was strong in waiting. There is a doubtful story that he had a platform built among the branches of the elm, where he used to sit, and with his glass survey the surrounding country. Better than that, his watchful eyes were everywhere. Here in his accounts is a charge of "the expences of myself and party reconnoit<sup>r</sup> the Sea Coast East of Boston Harbor." Again, "333 $\frac{1}{2}$  Dollars give to — to induce him to go into the Town of Boston, to establish a secret correspondence for the purpose of conveying intelligence of the enemy's movements and designs." Again, "Expens<sup>s</sup> of myself and Party visit'g the shores about Chelsea." At length the time of his reward came. Here is an entry, 1776, March 4: "To exp<sup>s</sup> of myself and Party recon'g Dorchester Heights previous to our possessing them." In the early part of March, 1776, there were in the American camp signs of an impending conflict. Materials for intrenchment were collected, two thousand bandages for broken limbs were prepared, boats were gathered in Charles River, and two floating batteries were placed there. The militia came in from the surrounding country, ready for action. Washington was about to take possession of Dorchester Heights, and he hoped to be able to make the attack on Boston which had been so much desired and so long delayed. The attention of the British was drawn to other points, and on the morning of the 5th of

March they were amazed to find the heights covered with works which commanded the town and harbor of Boston. "The rebels have done more in one night than my whole army would have done in a month." "They were raised with an expedition equal to that of the genii belonging to Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp."

The question of evacuating the town or driving back the Americans was forced upon General Howe for an immediate answer. He determined to attack the American works with his whole available force. A storm delayed the attack, and gave Washington time for strengthening his works. General Howe was compelled to withdraw the troops he had sent out, and his position remained critical. On the 7th of March General Howe held a council with his officers, and it was decided to leave the town to save the army. But Washington kept at work. He determined to fortify Nook's Hill, which was still nearer Boston. The first attempt was not successful, but on the 16th, Washington sent a strong force for that purpose. The Americans held their ground, though the British cannonaded the hill through the night. General Howe was at last satisfied, and early on the morning of Sunday, the 17th, the embarkation of his army began. At nine o'clock the troops left Bunker Hill, and a large number of boats filled with soldiers and loyalists left the Boston wharves for the ships. The old cockerel, on his lofty post, saw the fleet drop down to Nantasket Road, where a few ships lingered for several weeks. But most of the fleet presently sailed for Halifax.

The siege was raised; the work was done; the patriot army had conquered. Congratulations were showered upon the victorious chieftain: the selectmen of Boston sent their greeting; the Council and House of Representatives of Massachusetts presented their testimonial; Congress offered to him thanks and gratitude, and ordered a gold medal to be struck in honor of his triumph; and from individuals came hearty praise and blessing.

At the Commencement of 1776, Harvard College conferred for the first time the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, and it stands in her triennial catalogue, as an "expression of the gratitude of this college for his eminent services in the cause of his country and to this society:" 1776. GEORGIUS WASHINGTON, LL. D.

Henceforth his duties were upon another field, in the cause to which his life was devoted. His own feeling and

purpose had advanced. It was not long after his first great success that he said, what he often repeated, "A reconciliation with Great Britain is impracticable, and would be in the highest degree detrimental to the true interest of America; when I first took command of the army, I abhorred the idea of independence; but now I am fully convinced that nothing else will save us."

On the 4th of April, 1776, Washington left Cambridge.

*Alexander McKenzie.*

### AN OBSOLETE FINE GENTLEMAN.

IN 1748 began for Italy a peace of nearly fifty years, when the Wars of the Succession, with which the contesting strangers had ravaged her soil, absolutely ceased. In Lombardy the Austrian rulers who had succeeded the Spaniards did and suffered to be done many things for the material improvement of a province which they were content to hold, while leaving the administration mainly to the Lombards; the Spanish Bourbon at Naples also did as little harm and as much good to his realm as a Bourbon could; Pier Leopoldo of Tuscany, Don Filippo I. of Parma, Francis III. of Modena, and the Popes Benedict XIV., Clement XIV., and Pius VI., were all disposed to be paternally beneficent to their peoples, who at least had repose under them, and in this period gave such names to science as those of Galvani and Volta, to humanity that of Beccaria, to letters those of Alfieri, Filicaja, Goldoni, Parini, and many others.

But in spite of the literary and scientific activity of the period, Italian society was never quite so fantastically immoral as in this long peace, which was broken only by the invasions of the French republic. A wide-spread sentimentality, curiously mixed of love and letters, enveloped the peninsula. Commerce, politics, all the business of life

went on as usual under the roseate veil which gives its hue to the social history of the time; but the idea which remains in the mind is one of a tranquillity in which every person of breeding devoted himself to the cult of some muse or other, and established himself as the conventional admirer of his neighbor's wife. The great Academy of Arcadia,<sup>1</sup> founded to restore good taste in poetry, prescribed conditions by which everybody, of whatever age or sex, could become a poetaster, and good society expected every gentleman and lady to be in love. The Arcadia still exists, but that gallant society hardly survived the eighteenth century. Perhaps the greatest wonder about it is that it could have lasted so long as it did. Its end was certainly not delayed for want of satirists who perceived its folly and pursued it with the keenest scorn. But this again only brings me the doubt, often felt, whether satire ever accomplished anything beyond a lively portraiture of conditions it proposed to reform.

It is the opinion of some Italian critics that Italian demoralization began with the reaction against Luther, when the Jesuits rose to supreme power in the church, and gathered the whole educa-

<sup>1</sup> Some Arcadian Shepherds, *Atlantic Monthly* January, 1872.