

Nearby Frederick, And Barbara Frietchie

By John Claggett Proctor.

*Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear, on the cool September morn,
The clustered spires of Frederick stand,
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.
Round about their orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree rooted deep,
Fair as the garden of the Lord.*

Thus spoke Whittier in 1862, and thus it is still today—fair as the garden of the Lord. Indeed, Frederick County, Md., is now and always has been one of the richest and most fertile counties in America, and at one time—many years ago—it raised more wheat to the acre, and more acres of wheat, than did any other county in the United States. And few sights are more beautiful to behold than this great Middletown Valley from Braddock Heights just about when the grain is ripe and ready for harvest, and to see what intelligent farming, in co-operation with nature, can do with a minimum of effort.

The writer has always admired Frederick County, especially its old taverns, its old landmarks and its old cemeteries where its distinguished dead lie buried awaiting the great day when all shall rise again.

Indeed, Western Maryland has always been more than attractive to him, since his great-great-grandfather, John Hines, a Revolutionary soldier, and his good wife, had born to them in Libertytown, near Frederick, Md., eight sons and two daughters before moving to Georgetown, D. C., in 1790. And the writer's own father, for whom he was named, was born in Cavetown, in Washington County to the north.

But in Frederick Mount Olivet Cemetery is of particular interest because here is buried Francis Scott Key, author of "The Star Spangled Banner," and though born in the Monocacy Valley of Western Maryland and buried in Frederick City, for many years of his life he was a resident of Washington, D. C., where he served as United States district attorney from 1833-1841, and practiced law here from 1805 to the time of his death in Baltimore, January 11, 1843, where he had gone to attend to some legal matters. And it was in connection with his profession that he went to the British fleet in September, 1814, to secure the release of Dr. Beanes and while thus engaged wrote "The Star Spangled Banner."

Frederick Town

It has been said that Whittier's famous poem of "Barbara Frietchie" is what made Frederick, Md., or in other words, as we might carelessly say today, put it on the map. But this is not so, for good old Frederick, as Frederick Town, was a well-known place a hundred years before the Civil War and no doubt would have grown to its present greatness if Whittier and his heroine had never been born. Its part in the Colonial wars, in the Revolutionary War, in the Civil and subsequent wars have all added to its fame and its glory. It has had many great men and its women have been of the substantial and sterling kind that forms even to the present day the real backbone of the Republic.

The Debated Legend

Recently the writer paid a visit to Frederick and visited the graves of Francis Scott Key, Thomas Johnson and Barbara Frietchie in Mount Olivet Cemetery, and he naturally recalled the much-debated question whether Dame Barbara did or did not wave the Union flag in Stonewall Jackson's face when the Confederate troops passed through this quaint Maryland city. Of course, like the capturing of John Wilkes Booth, there will always be those who will say that the assassin of Lincoln was never taken into custody, and there will always be those who will believe that Barbara Frietchie did wave the flag, as so beautifully recorded by Whittier, regardless of the facts in either case.

As to Barbara and Whittier's poem, there are three reasons authentically recorded by those in a good position to know why this good woman did not wave the American flag on September 10, 1862, at the time of the flag-waving incident. These reasons are: Barbara was then 96 years old and bedridden and had been so for quite a while, and that in her condition it would have been impossible for her to have waved a flag. Indeed, she died a few months later from old age, and this alone should be enough to dispose of the story.

But further it was not light when Jackson left Frederick, as evidenced by the following note left at the door of Dr. Ross, Presbyterian minister of the place: "Regret not being permitted to see Dr. and Mrs. Ross, but could not expect to have that pleasure at so unseasonable an hour."

"T. J. JACKSON."

"September 10, 1862, 5:15 a.m."

Hence since the sun did not rise that morning until about 6:45, it is extremely doubtful if Jackson could have seen Barbara or Barbara could have seen him.

By Another Route

The third reason that brands the incident a myth is that Jackson did not march by Barbara's home, but selected another route.

It is remarkable how a story like this can gain credence.

One could not imagine a better news item. With an invasion in progress, how better could the patriotic impulses be excited than by just such a story. The one about the man biting the dog is not in the same class, it lacks the setting of the Barbara Frietchie tale.

It is said there is only one account of "Stonewall" Jackson's entry into Frederick, and that was written by a Union Army surgeon, who was in charge of the hospital there at the time. He says: "Jackson, I did not get a good look at to recognize him, though I must have seen him, as I witnessed the passage of all the troops through the town." And he does not mention Barbara at all.

Battle of Antietam

A week after the Confederates left Frederick the Battle of Antietam was fought. Among the wounded here was Oliver Wendell Holmes, late associate

justice of the United States Supreme Court. He had been shot through the neck and had been reported as mortally wounded.

His father, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the celebrated poet and writer, came on from Boston to see his son, and passed through Frederick on the way to the hospital. His reminiscences of the occasion resulted in a book, "My Hunt for the Captain."

Had the Frietchie story been true, one would naturally expect so able a writer to have mentioned it in his experiences. His son, was then a captain, and it was the second time he had been wounded, the first time through the breast, at Balls Bluff, October 21, 1861. After his Antietam experience he again joined the Army and was wounded for the third time in the heel, at Maryes Heights, Frederickburg, on May 3, 1863.

The evidence against the Frietchie incident would seem overwhelming. Col. H. Kyd Douglas of Jackson's staff concludes a letter with this statement: "We did not pass or see the house of Barbara Frietchie. I was with him (Jackson) every minute he was in Frederick, and nothing like the scene described by Whittier ever happened. Stonewall Jackson never saw Barbara Frietchie, nor she him. Besides Mrs. Frietchie was at that time 96 years of age and bedridden, and could not have arisen to defy the rebels if she had wanted to, nor did she have the strength to wave the flag if she had one. It is still sadder to mention that her own loyalty was not above suspicion, as her relatives assure me if she had waved a



Original Barbara Frietchie Cottage, Frederick, Md.

flag to 'the rebel tread,' it would not have been the Union flag."

How the Story Started

The starting of the story seems to have begun with a Frederick lady who was on a visit to this city. She spoke of Barbara Frietchie and her open sympathy and valor. The story was repeated over and over—and, like so many stories, with always just a little bit added. Mr. Whittier first heard of it through our celebrated native authoress, Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth, who sent him a newspaper clipping, purporting to give an account of the subject. Naturally, he followed it as closely as possi-



Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth, who suggested to Whittier the writing of the poem "Barbara Frietchie."

ble, and exercised a poetic license, as is customary with poets.

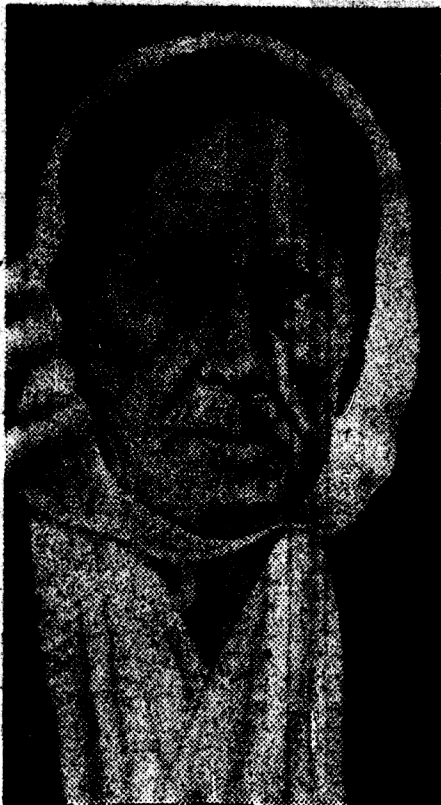
He does not attempt to stand for the accuracy of the poem, only that he believed it to be true. Here is what he says: "The poem, 'Barbara Frietchie,' was written in good faith. The story was no invention of mine. It came to me from sources which I regarded as entirely reliable; it had been published in newspapers, and had gained public credence in Washington and Maryland before my poem was written. I had no reason to doubt its accuracy then, and I am still constrained to believe that it had foundation in fact. If I thought otherwise, I should not hesitate to express it," etc. In another letter he concludes with the statement: "I think she deserves all I said of her even if I was mistaken on some of the details."

Mrs. Southworth's acquaintance with Mr. Whittier occurred through her writing for the National Era of this city of which Gamaliel Bailey was editor and Mr. Whittier corresponding editor. It was this publication that first printed Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

That there was foundation in fact for the poem, few would doubt for a minute. Indeed, a Mrs. Mary Quantrell, then living in Frederick, Md., and whose descendants, no doubt, still reside in Washington, is said to have been the real heroine of the poem, but as she did not have sufficient age to make the story "news," naturally age had to be added, and this fit in better with Barbara's 96—hence, exit Mary; enter Barbara.

Of Barbara's Ancestry

Barbara Frietchie was the daughter of Nicholas and Catherine Hauer, whose names are said to be found in the records of the First Reformed Church of Lancaster, Pa., and beside Barbara, who was born in Lancaster December 3, 1768, and who was baptized in the Reformed Church by Rev. William Henda, the



Barbara Frietchie, heroine of James Greenleaf Whittier's poem by that name.

other children of Nicholas and Catherine Hauer included Daniel, George, Margaret and Catherine. Of these, Margaret became Mrs. Stover and Catherine Mrs. Peter Mantz.

Barbara Hauer married John Caspar Frietchie on May 6, 1806, and her husband, John Frietchie, died in 1849. Barbara died December 18, 1862.

As to the name "Hauer," it would seem that the census of Frederick County, Md., for 1790 errs in spelling this name "Hower," which likely is intended for Hauer, a name which does not appear in this census at all; but the name "Nicholas Hower" does so appear.

In the latter case the record shows

that in addition to the head of the family and his wife, Nicholas Hower had five sons over 16 years of age, two sons under 16 and three daughters, and that he owned two slaves, which would put him in the prosperous class.

Thomas Johnson, before referred to, was the first of the three commissioners appointed by President Washington on January 22, 1791, "to survey the District, to accept and purchase land on the eastern side of the river and to provide suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress, the President and the executive departments."

Rose Hill Farm

His historic Rose Hill farm is 1 mile north of Frederick City, at the junction of the Northern Central Railroad and the Frederick Turnpike road. It is quite an estate and contains 750 acres of limestone land. The old mansion is built of brick, is large and of the Colonial style. In front is a two-story portico, so often found in the stately homes of a century and a half and more ago. It stands back some distance from the road, on a slight elevation, surrounded by a grove of trees, of which some are massive oaks.

Thomas Johnson was the first Governor of Maryland after the break with Great Britain, and in this picturesque old home Gov. Johnson entertained George Washington and other distinguished patriots of the period in which the Governor himself played an important part.

Thomas Johnson was a native of Calvert County, Md., also noted for its historic homes. As Governor of Maryland, he succeeded Robert Eden, who was the last of the proprietary Governors. In the trying times of the Revolutionary War, he was a central figure in Congress, always standing up for the right of the Colonies against the oppression of the mother country. He voted for the Declaration of Independence in Congress, but did not sign that famous document owing to his absence on account of illness in his family.

Gov. Johnson

Gov. Johnson was a delegate from Maryland to the First Continental Congress and nominated Washington as Commander in Chief of the Army. On February 13, 1777, he was elected by the Legislature of Maryland the first Governor of the State. Prior to that he had been sent to Congress at every election. With William Paca, George Plater and James Holliday, he was on the committee which invited Gov. Eden to resign and leave the province.

In 1776 he went to Annapolis to urge the convention to authorize the Maryland Delegates to unite with the other members in declaring the Colonies free and independent States. When he was eligible for re-election as Governor, the people voted for him, but he declined to serve. He was appointed chief judge of the General Court of Maryland, and in 1791 President Washington appointed him an associate justice of the United States Supreme Court. At one time he was offered the post of Secretary of State by Gen. Washington, but declined.

He died at Rose Hill mansion on October 28, 1819, and his death is recorded in the National Intelligencer of this city. He was first buried in the family vault in the old Episcopal graveyard on All Saints street. After many years, according to Judge Edward S. Delaplaine of Frederick, Md., the grave became obscure and in 1864 a marble stone marking the spot was laid by the Daughters of the American Revolution. In 1912 the remains were removed to Mount Olivet Cemetery, where a monument was erected.