



MAJOR GENERAL LORD STIRLING

# OVERLOOKED HEROINES OF THE REVOLUTION



LADY CATHERINE DUER, LORD STIRLING'S DAUGHTER

VOLUMES have been written lauding the courage or endurance of the American army that braved the winter of 1777-78 at Valley Forge. Monuments have been erected to the memory of men and officers. The site of the camp has been reserved by the state of Pennsylvania, and converted into a memorial park, but the women who shared the dangers and suffering with them, who nobly nursed the sick, fed the starving and clothed the naked, are left unrecognized. There are no public records of them, even their quarters that had been the shelter of the needy, the stage of the Conway cabal (that was one of the remarkable and dramatic incidents of the war), the cradle of the first aid to the injured, and the setting for a love affair of one of the first presidents of the United States, was not included in the state reservation and taken under its protection, but is fast falling into decay, to the shame and dishonor of the guardians who are neglecting one of the two houses at Valley Forge that are historically noteworthy, and for a puerile reason unworthy of a great commonwealth.

This little farmer's house was the headquarters of Major General Lord Stirling, one of the most gallant and loyal American soldiers. Born and bred in New York, he had inherited a title from his Scotch ancestors, just at the breaking out of the Revolution. He had served as major and aide-de-camp to General Shirley at the time of General Braddock's defeat. He had been in every battle fought against the British in New York and New Jersey, and was General Washington's most trusted general, as is proved by the numerous letters still preserved in the New York Historical society. The headquarters of this gentleman was shared by his brave wife and daughter, who abandoned their beautiful home at Baskingridge on the hills of New Jersey, and with the men contended with the discomforts and trials of the celebrated winter spent in the wind-swept valley on the outskirts of civilization as bravely as any soldier, officer or general.

To these heroines of Valley Forge no history points, no cenotaphs are raised, even their deeds are only traditional and crystallized in the memories of a few lovers of bravery, self-sacrifice and feminine devotion.

It was early in the season when it was decided to camp near Philadelphia, and the army under General Washington was collected at Valley Forge, when Lord Stirling wrote to his wife entreating her to join him there, as his duties detained him with his men, but he had been promised comfortable quarters, and he had no idea of the smallness of the house and its numerous discomforts. For it was a great demand to make of the delicately nurtured women, who had been reared at the luxurious Livingston manor house, on the Hudson river, or in Mr. Livingston's comfortable house in New York. But Lady Stirling wisely determined that her place was by her husband's side, so with a full staff of servants (for she foresaw the demands that would be made on her hospitality) she and her daughter, Catherine, started in the great family coach, drawn by four gray horses, for the long drive over the Jersey hills to Pennsylvania.

When they reached their destination they found a small farmer's cottage had been assigned to Lord Stirling for his quarters. It was the farthest house from General Washington's headquarters, under a hillside and near a creek. It was a damp and lonely spot, and quite inadequate for the accommodation of family and servants. But with unflinching good humor and the capability of splendid housewives, the ladies coped with the situation and made the house ready for winter. They filled long flannel bags with earth and placed them against the door sills and the loosely fitting sashes to keep out the wind, so the house could be more readily kept warm. They pasted muslin on the walls and hung curtains before the windows for the same purpose. Then they sent to Baskingridge for many loads of hickory wood before the roads became choked with snow, for fuel was scarce, and the soldiers requisitioned all that there was to be found in the neighborhood.

General Washington welcomed them gladly and at once requested that they would assist him to entertain the various people who daily visited the camp, either for political purposes, business or curiosity.

Lady Stirling's household was composed of her husband and his aide, Dr. Enoch Edwards, whose name will be recognized by many of his descendants in Philadelphia today. Then there was Lady Kitty and her friend, Miss Nanny Browne, the orphaned granddaughter of Governor Brockholst, and these dames may well be called the heroines of Valley Forge, although their ministrations and sufferings found no recognition in the man-written chronicles of that fearsome winter.

Christmas passed sadly with little merrymaking or good cheer, and daily the sufferings of the ill-clad, badly-housed soldiers were forced on the attention of the women, for the reports of the medical men became more and more distressing. There were no comfortable hospitals, trained nurses or even necessary clothing, bandages and lint for the poor fellows. Lady Stirling and her daughter were no strangers to the sick room; both were capable nurses and had learned from an old Indian woman many salves and remedies made from herbs or simples, not the least of which was the celebrated Seneca oil, St. John's wort lotion and rattle-snake grease, all of which they had provided themselves with before leaving home. Without hesitation these brave women arranged a division of work among them, for it fell entirely on their individual efforts, since the whole country was overburdened and there was no relief to be obtained from an organized sanitary commission or red cross association. Quietly and unostentatiously the three ladies divided the work among them to do what was possible to alleviate the increasing horrors about them. To Lady Kitty was assigned a daily visit to the camp, while the delicate Miss Nanny sewed or



HEADQUARTERS OF LORD STIRLING AT VALLEY FORGE

scraped lint at the fire-side, and the head of the house superintended the food department and the rations to be doled out every morning. The labor of Malvina, the old turbaned black cook, was doubled. She was not only called upon to provide delicate repasts for Le Marquis de Lafayette and Major James Monroe, Generals Knox and Greene, with many other distinguished visitors, who crowded around Lady Stirling's hospitable table, but a huge soup kettle was hung over the logs in an improvised kitchen, and from the day it was started until the camp was broken, great palls of nourishing soup were freely given to the famishing soldiers who called at the house for food.

Every week vegetables, poultry, mutton, etc., were brought to Valley Forge by the general's own people, either from his farm eight miles from Morristown, N. J., or from the Livingston manor house, for our heroes of the Revolution had to supply their own rations, and this one in particular, who raised a regiment and equipped it at his own expense, was never repaid for food, or services, by an ungrateful country.

Daily Lady Kitty would sally to the camp with a basket filled with goodies on her arm, followed by a servant laden with clothing for the soldiers. It was a long, cold walk from her home to the camp, but the young girl braved it in spite of snow and storm. The doors of hut after hut would be gently knocked at and the inmates questioned as to their most pressing needs. No one can imagine what a blessing these visits were to the suffering men. There was hardly one who was not afflicted with frostbites, and for these Lady Kitty had a sovereign cure learned from the old squaw. This, with other remedies drawn from the handy reticule, were lavishly given with many a cheery word or laugh at the traveling drug shop. The baskets containing delicacies for the very sick were soon emptied and besides many a man's heart was made glad by the gift of a warm worsted comforter for his neck or a pair of knitted stockings or mittens. Then there were underclothes made from the fleece of the sheep raised on the Jersey hills, the wool having been spun in tenants' houses and woven on the looms that groaned and creaked unceasingly. This was the work of the women who stayed at home, while the men folk struggled with the horrors of army life.

The fingers of the women of the day were never idle. We are told on page 417 of Mr. Irving's "Life of General Washington," that his wife, "set an example to lady visitors by diligently plying her needles knitting stockings for poor, destitute soldiers." And, indeed, women's busy needles clicked far into the night, even when frugal housewives only permitted the blaze of the fire to light the rooms, for candles were luxuries in those days, although they were homemade, and these self-sacrificing women denied themselves every comfort they could, in hopes of being able to relieve the needs of the soldiers, and many a candle that had been made in the family kitchen, and perhaps from bayberries picked by delicate fingers, found its way to the huts of the men. Most of these were illiterate fellows who had obeyed the call to arms, leaving their families in distant parts of the country. "Lady Comforter," as she was called by the men, would ask each one about his life, and suggest that she would write letters to his home-bound family or friends. Pen, ink and paper would be whipped from the great reticule hanging by her side, and a dictation taken down, which must have given pleasure and hope at many a desolate fire-side. The ladies were cheered in their benevolent work in the camp by the commendations of the commander-in-chief, who could not be sufficiently grateful for these ministrations.

The young aide-de-camp, James Monroe (who was recruiting his strength after a severe wound received during a late battle) was detailed to accompany the young lady on her daily rounds, to report officially on the condition of the men. This duty was not unbecoming to the young Virginian and the one bright spot in the dark days of suffering for the men in camp was watching the courtship of their future president, and his engagement to Miss Nanny Browne was soon duly announced and hurried arrangements made for a wedding in the spring at the home of her aunt, Mrs. Van Horne. She could not have asked



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General Washington advice on the subject of her marriage, or she would have been saved much misery and mortification. It is said that when Nelly Custis announced her engagement the general said: "Question yourself. Is he a man of sense? For be assured a sensible woman can never be happy with a fool." James Monroe was no fool, but the end of this romantic courtship is another story.

It is more than probable that a steady supply of food and clothing reached the camp from many of the nearby places, for it is certain that Carlisle had a number of women, headed by Mrs. John Armstrong, who employed every leisure moment knitting stockings or scraping lint for the soldiers. This lady was born in Ireland and had married an Irishman, but was devoted to her adopted country and countrymen. There were other Pennsylvania women who sacrificed time and comfort for the brave defenders. Mrs. John Bull was approached by Lord Howe, who tried to bribe her to induce her husband to join the English army and desert his command as colonel of the First Pennsylvania, but she proudly refused. Her descendants doubtless would be proud to read the unpublished history preserved by the writer.

Mrs. Minn (Sarah Morris) sent stockings of her own making to be distributed among the soldiers, writing: "In this way do I throw in my mite to the public good. I know this—that as free I can die but once, but as a slave I shall not be worthy of life, and I have the pleasure to assure you that, these are the sentiments of my sister Americans." Those women who could do so visited the camp, and Mrs. Andrew Porter (Elizabeth Parker) rode there on horseback, to see her husband, who had boasted proudly that he never wore a garment not made by his wife. A story is told of him that at a dinner at Valley Forge General Knox said to him: "Porter, how does it happen that you look so genteel while the rest of us are in rags, although you receive no better pay than we?" To this Captain Porter replied: "My wife took this coat apart and turned it inside out, so you see it now as good as new," and then went on to relate how she had visited him but had lost her way, when she met a gentleman out of uniform, of whom she asked directions. The officer tightened the girths of her saddle and admired her horse, which, Mrs. Porter proudly declared, was home bred. Then walking beside the rider, the person conducted the lady to her husband's quarters, valued his hat and strolled away.

After a warm welcome, Captain Porter said: "Well, my lady, you came into camp highly escorted by the commander-in-chief."

Lady Kitty had a love affair of her own on hand during the dark days at Valley Forge, which culminated in 1799 by her marriage to Col. William Duer, when General Washington gave the bride away, for he felt that no honor was too great to be lavished on the heroine of Valley Forge.

## WHY NOT?

Mrs. Flattie—I see that 21 women are employed as railway brakemen and 10 as baggage-men in the United States.

Mr. Flattie—Well, I see no reason why women shouldn't brake and smash things as well as men.

## THE CAUSE.

"I looked at the man and saw his face grow darker and darker."

"What was the matter with him?"

"He was blacking up for a minstrel show."

# BOOM IS COMING SAYS PRESIDENT

Mr. Wilson Predicts Business Will Have Great Revival

WHEN THE TRUST BILLS PASS

Speaking to Virginia Editors, He Makes Final Reply to Opponents of That Legislation, and Prophets of Evil Times.

Washington, June 28.—The greatest business boom in the history of the United States is promised by President Wilson. This, he says, will be brought about under a "new constitution of freedom" given by the anti-trust legislation soon to be passed by congress.

Though the president spoke to a group of Virginia editors in the White House, he really was addressing the entire country, and was making his final reply to the opponents of trust legislation at this session of congress and to prophets of evil times.

"We know what we are doing," Mr. Wilson said. "We purpose to do it under the advice—for we have been fortunate enough to obtain the advice—of men who understand the business of the country; and we know that the effect is going to be exactly what the effect of the currency reform was, a sense of relief and security."

**Boom to Follow Program.**  
"Because, when the program is finished, it is finished; the interrogation points are rubbed off the slate; business is given its constitution of freedom and is hidden to go forward under that constitution. And just so soon as it gets that leave and freedom there will be a boom of business in this country such as we have never witnessed in the United States."

"I, as a friend of business and a servant of the country, would not dare stop in this program and bring on another long period of agitation. Agitation longer continued would be fatal to the business of this country, and if this program is delayed there will come agitation, with every letter in the word a capital letter. The choice is a sober and sensible program now completed or months upon months of additional conjecture and danger."

"It is a matter of conscience as well as a matter of large public policy to do what this congress I am certain is going to do, finish the program. And I do not think that it is going to take a long time. I believe that the temper of those engaged in this great thing is admirable; that the various elements sometimes in antagonism in the congress of the United States are drawing together, and that we shall see an early statesmanlike result for which we shall all have abundant reason to be thankful."

**Fever Lasted Long Time.**  
"I want to suggest this to you: Business has been in a feverish and apprehensive condition in this country for more than ten years. I will not stop to point out the time at which it began to be apprehensive, but during more than ten years business has been the object of sharp criticism in the United States."

"Business men have acted as some men do who fear they will have to undergo an operation, and who are not sure that when they get on the table the operation will not be a capital operation. As a matter of fact, as the diagnosis has progressed it has become more and more evident that no capital operation was necessary; that at the most a minor operation was necessary to remove admitted distemper and evils."

**Guessing Unfair to Business.**  
"There is nothing more fatal to business than to be kept guessing from month to month and from year to year whether something serious is going to happen to it or not, and what in particular is going to happen to it if anything does."

"The guessing went on, the air was full of interrogation points for ten years and more. Then came an administration which for the first time had a definite program of constructive correction; not of destructive correction, but of a constructive correction of admitted evil—a clear program, disclosed so far as possible in a general program, in its particulars as well as in its general features. And the administration proceeded to carry out this program."

"First, there was the tariff and business shivered. 'We don't like to go in; the water looks cold;' but when the tariff had been passed it was found that the readjustment was possible without any serious disturbance whatever. So that men said with a sense of relief, 'Well, we are glad to get that behind us and it wasn't bad after all.'"

"Then came the currency reform. You remember with what resistance, with what criticism, with what systematic holding back a large body of bankers in this country met the proposals of that reform, and you know how, immediately after its passage, they recognized its benefit and its beneficence, and how, ever since the passage of that reform, bankers throughout the United States have been congratulating themselves."

"Then we advanced to the trust program, and again the same dread, the same hesitation, the same urgency that the thing should be postponed, it will not be postponed, and it will not be postponed because we are the friends of business."

# The ONLOOKER

HENRY HOWLAND

## A FABLE



A gleaming pebble lay beside an acorn in a field; The pebble was possessed of pride; That never was explained; To more explicitly explain, It viewed the acorn with disdain. "I'm white and smooth," the pebble said, "I glisten in the sun; Your color is a dullish red, Your day will soon be done; For ages I have dazzled here; You soon shall rot and disappear."

The pebble, boasting day by day, Its neighbor viewed with scorn; A season slowly wore away, And then a sprout was born; The pebble, lying close at hand, Looked on and did not understand.

Year after year the sapling grew, Its healthy branches spread; Its leaves above the pebble blew, And stained it dullish red; Deep in the mold concealed, at last, The pebble's foolish pride was past.

### MORAL.

Those whom we treat with scorn may grow, Develop and expand; There is so much we do not know And cannot understand; We may by those whom we deery Be overshadowed by and by.

### The Lady Strategist.

"Here," she said, rushing back to the ticket window, "this dollar you gave me in change is counterfeit."

"Pardon me, but I didn't give you a dollar in change."

"Yes you did. I bought a ticket here not two minutes ago and you changed a \$5 bill for me. It was all the money I had, so I couldn't have got this bad dollar anywhere else."

"You should have examined your change when it was handed to you. I can't make any correction now."

"I shan't budge from this window till you give me a good dollar for the bad one you tried to foist upon me."

"Let me see it."

"There."

"Why, this is a perfectly good bill. Here is another. I'm not afraid of it."

"No. I won't take this bill. It's torn. Give me a new one."

"I'm sorry, but if you don't want that bill I'll have to give you your change in nickels."

"Thank you," she said, after counting the pieces of coin. "I wanted a dollar's worth of nickels, but I knew you wouldn't have that many if I asked for them in the first place."

### WAITING FOR A DECISION.



"Do you expect to spend your vacation in the mountains or at the seaside?"

"I haven't found out yet. My wife is trying to discover where it will be necessary to have the most costly clothes."

### Qualified Enthusiasm.

"Don't you think he is too cute for anything?" asked the proud young mother, referring to her baby.

"Oh, I don't know," replied her seventeen-year-old brother. "He's cute enough, I guess, but I never did think much of people who hadn't any teeth."

### Egotism.

"I will win you yet!" he passionately exclaimed. "I will show that I am worthy of you."

"There," she replied, "that proves what I have always said—that you were a confirmed egotist."

### Something Equally Dangerous.

"Have you ever sniffed the smoke of battle?" she asked.

"No," he said, drawing himself up to his full height, "but I once went automobile riding through the East side in New York."

### Unfortunate.

"Did you find it expensive when you were in St. Louis?"

"Yes, rather. My wife's relatives all seemed to be away from home every time I went around to try to find any of them."

### Only One of His Kind.

"Did you say he was eccentric?"

"Yes. He's afraid of his wife."

"Most men are afraid of their wives."

"But he admits it."

### Too Cold and Distant.

"Are you familiar with Hauptmann?"

"No, I can't say that I am. What's one of my worst troubles. My wife is always blaming me for not being a good mixer."

### He Knows.

"The man who knows his business doesn't waste any time wondering what to do next."