

THE HISTORY OF VALLEY FORGE

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The history of Valley Forge by Henry Woodman

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HENRY WOODMAN

**THE HISTORY OF
VALLEY FORGE**

M. E. Mitchell

WOODMAN'S
HISTORY OF
The
VALLEY FORGE





HENRY WOODMAN

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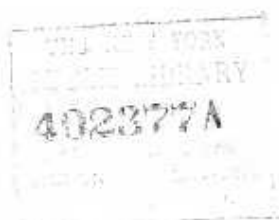
WITH A BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR AND THE AUTHOR'S
FATHER WHO WAS A SOLDIER WITH WASHINGTON
AT VALLEY FORGE DURING THE WINTERS
OF 1777 AND 1778

AUTHORIZED BY THE WOODMAN FAMILY

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GENERAL WASHINGTON

PREFACE

ALARGE portrait of a plain, unassuming man was hanging on the wall of the Old Camp School-house in Valley Forge park, when John U. Francis, Sr., publisher of this history, took charge. Father was born in Lower Providence township, just across the Schuylkill river from the Cradle of American Liberty. His great-grandfather, Captain Arnold Francis, had commanded the Providence militia and had rendered conspicuous service under Washington at Valley Forge. In the family, Valley Forge was sacred ground and to the name of Washington was rendered a homage hardly due to mortal man. In keeping with the suffering endured, a resentment toward British arrogance was developed which even today causes the eye to flash at the slightest semblance of the thing on our national horizon. A patriotism purer than father's we have never met. To tell the story of Valley Forge, than whom no man knows it better, and to provide for visitors to the park suitable souvenirs, has been to him a labor of love. The publication of this history is a becoming climax of his labors.

But year after year the portrait continued to hang on the wall. When at times we visited the Park and inquired, "Whose is that portrait" practically no light could be given. "It was sent down from Headquarters." Some one knew better than father. In the summer of 1919 a group of visitors entered the School-house. One of the ladies pointed to the portrait and said: "That is a portrait of my grandfather, Henry Woodman. He wrote the first history of Valley Forge." The lady was Mrs. Alice Woodman Smith of Wycombe, Bucks county, Pa. She promised a letter giving particulars, and in due time one was received. Miss Mary S., daughter of Henry Woodman, a lady now of some eighty summers, was the embodiment of the first commandment with promise. She had had a small portrait of her father enlarged and had sent it to the Headquarters at Valley Forge. As already stated, from there it was sent down to the old Camp School-house.

Henry Woodman, after many years of urging, wrote his