

**HISTORY OF THE
WASHINGTON
ASSOCIATION
OF NEW JERSEY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649347544

History of the Washington Association of New Jersey by Edmund D. Halsey

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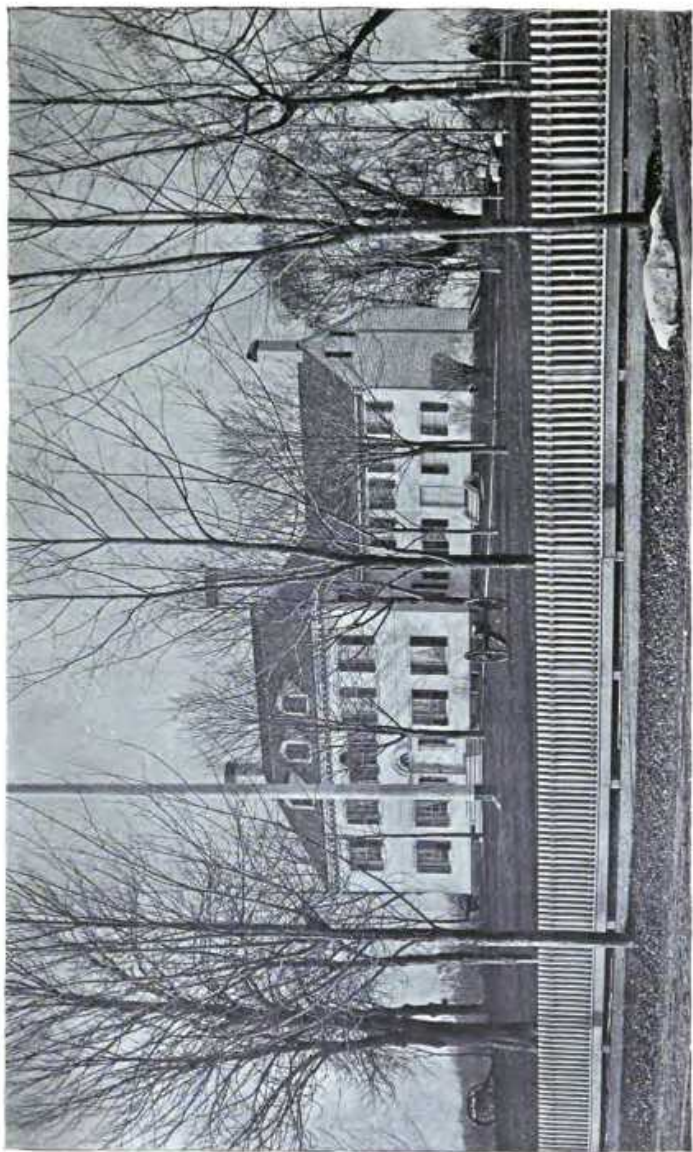
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EDMUND D. HALSEY

**HISTORY OF THE
WASHINGTON
ASSOCIATION
OF NEW JERSEY**



WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS, MORRISTOWN, N. J.

HISTORY
OF THE
WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION
OF NEW JERSEY.

PREPARED BY
EDMUND D. HALSEY,
SECRETARY,

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.



MORRISTOWN, N. J.
1891.

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HISTORY OF
THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION
OF NEW JERSEY.

THE Washington Association had its origin in the thought of a few public-spirited and patriotic individuals to whom it occurred that a house which had been the Headquarters of Washington during one of the most trying periods of the Revolutionary War, and around which all the historic associations of three years' encampment of the patriotic army had gathered, should be preserved in its integrity and be maintained through future generations as a memorial of the Father of his Country, and of the heroism and fortitude of the officers and enlisted men who here, in Morristown, withstood the severe hardships and sufferings of the winters of 1777, 1779-80, and 1780-81.

After the death of the Hon. Henry A. Ford in 1872, his heirs at law, for the purpose of settling or partitioning his estate, caused this, his homestead, and the adjoining lands, to be surveyed and divided into plots, and advertised the whole for sale at public vendue, on the 25th day

of June, 1873. The sale attracted the attention of Governor Theodore F. Randolph, Hon. George A. Halsey, General N. N. Halsted, and William V. V. Lidgerwood, Esq. Without preconception these gentlemen attended the sale, but before the property was offered, the three first named had agreed to purchase the Headquarters and the plot on which it stood, and offer it to the State to be preserved as "a historic place." In the bidding, Mr. Lidgerwood alone competed with them, and had bid it up to \$24,100, when Governor Randolph made public announcement of the intention of himself and his friends, and their willingness to give \$25,000 for the property, and offer it to the State at cost, or make such other disposition of it as would effect their purpose. Mr. Lidgerwood stated that his object in bidding was precisely similar to that of the others, and expressed his willingness to be a fourth to carry out the Governor's plan. The property was at once struck off to the four gentlemen, who paid then, or soon after, thirty per cent. of the purchase-money, and deeds were executed to them dated July 31, 1873, for the house and lot on which it stood, being about 253 feet front, and about 545 feet deep, and containing a little over three acres. The deeds were at first held not to convey a complete title, and afterward, doubts having arisen as to the constitutionality of that part of the charter granting State aid, as is hereafter stated, their delivery was further delayed so that, though possession was taken at once, the deeds were not recorded until July 3, 1877, when a deed from the four original grantees to the Association, dated May 1, 1877, was also executed and recorded. They may be found in Book S, 9, of deeds for Morris County, pages 566 to 574. A confirmatory deed signed by all the heirs of Henry A. Ford to the Association dated, June 29, 1877, was recorded July 23, 1877, in Book X, 10, of deeds, pages 401 etc. With the real estate was transferred the furniture of Washing-



Your Obedient Servant
William Vleck Ridgenwood