

**THE DOWNERS OF
AMERICA, WITH
GENEALOGICAL RECORD**

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The Downers of America, with Genealogical Record by David R. Downer

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DAVID R. DOWNER

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...WITH...

GENEALOGICAL RECORD.



BY DAVID R. DOWNER,
NEWARK, N. J.

1900.

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PUBLIC



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paration of these pages.

ERRATA.

- Page 57—Name No. 452, read *Canton, N. Y.*
" 102—Read 1027 — Elisha.
" 135—Name No. 1597 Mary Adeline, omit "d in 1892" and read *is living at Hopkinsville.*
" 148—Name No. 1629, read Maple Grove, Del. about 1835 for 1785.
" 148—Name No. 1641, read Glen Falls, N. Y., 13 Jan., 1870 for 1873.
" 151—Name No. 1663, read *Porter* for *Potter*.
" 155—Name No. 1682 Alfred Sayre, read 1837 for 1887.
" 169—Name No. 1836, read Erwin M. Bacon, *e* for *m* 26 July, 1818.
" 201—Name No. 2180, read *Engenia* for Eugene.
" 214—Name No. 2433, read *By* for B.

INTRODUCTORY.

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IN BEGINNING the collection of these notes in 1869 the Author's only thought was to trace his own line of descent, but as the task advanced he became interested in other branches of the family, and these have been more or less completely followed out.

It is to be regretted that some one of the past generation, when there were so many still living whose memories reached back of the Revolutionary period, did not undertake the task. That it could then have been more successfully accomplished is plain, and much of interest relating to the Revolutionary and Colonial experience of our ancestors would have been preserved to us.

The discovery and early settlement of this country is justly regarded as one of the greatest events in the world's history, and in view of the vast immigration of the past half century, those of the present generation who can trace their lineage back to that period may well feel an honorable pride in their ability to do so. Those of our name now in the United States have come for the most part from the Newbury settlers who came with other colonists from England to Massachusetts Bay about the middle of the seventeenth century, whence their descendants scattered at an early time to New Hampshire, Vermont and Connecticut, and again later from those States to other parts of the Union.*

They were of Puritan stock, and in character were doubtless like those with whom they came.† They shared with their neighbors in the hardships and trials incident to those early times, and we know from tradition, as well as from their affiliations, that they feared God, loved their country and were respected. So far as I have learned, no one of the name became pre-eminent during the Colonial period, but later, in the time of the Revolutionary War, three at least achieved considerable fame. Chief of these was Dr. Eliphalet Downer, of Brookline, Mass., who was known as "the fighting surgeon." His encounter with a sturdy Briton, who was returning from Bunker Hill, and his subsequent career as a surgeon on a privateer, made him famous. (See 172 Eliphalet.) Another was John Downer, of Bennington, whose fame as a skillful marksman won him a place in local history. (See 2159 John.) Still another was Silas Downer, of Providence, who used his gifts as an orator in protesting against British aggression and gained an honored mention in the annals of his adopted State and

*Three families of Downer, not related, so far as known, have come to this country within the past half century. Notice of these is made in the latter part of the work.

†The settlement of New England was almost wholly due to the bitter antagonism between Protestant dissenters and the Church of England. These dissenters were of two kinds—the Pilgrims, who were separatists, and who, after some years of exile in Holland, landed at Plymouth, and the Puritans, who, under Winthrop and others, settled the towns upon Massachusetts Bay.