

**WILLIAM CANBY OF  
BRANDYWINE, DELAWARE. HIS  
DESCENDANTS FOURTH TO  
SEVENTH GENERATION IN  
AMERICA**

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William Canby of Brandywine, Delaware. His descendants fourth to seventh generation in America by Various

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**VARIOUS**

**WILLIAM CANBY OF  
BRANDYWINE, DELAWARE. HIS  
DESCENDANTS FOURTH TO  
SEVENTH  
GENERATION IN AMERICA**



WILLIAM CANBY,

OF

BRANDYWINE, DELAWARE.

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*"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that  
man is peace."*

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HIS DESCENDANTS

FOURTH TO SEVENTH GENERATION

IN AMERICA.

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IN MEMORY OF

## WILLIAM AND MARTHA CANBY.

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William Canby, grandson of Thomas Canby who came to America in 1683, was the son of Oliver Canby, who married Elizabeth Shipley in the year 1744 and settled at Brandywine, where his son William resided from his birth in 1748, until his death in 1830.

He married Martha Marriott, of Bristol, Pa., who was born at Trenton in 1747, and died in 1826. She was the daughter of Thomas Marriott, the son of Thomas, and grandson of Isaac Marriott, who came to this country and settled in New Jersey in 1680.

After the marriage of William and Martha Canby in 1774, their humble but pleasant and comfortable home was a small two-story brick house, containing, on the ground floor, only a "living-room" and kitchen.

To this was attached a frame building, consisting of an out-kitchen and wood-house below, with two sleeping-rooms above.

The dwelling faced with a fair frontage toward the Brandywine, but the depth sufficed for a single room only; the living-room was a cheerful apartment, with an old-fashioned corner chimney, where a bright wood-fire burned in a Franklin stove; this was finally replaced by a grate for anthracite coal, one of the first two used in Wilmington.

On a corner of the mantel piece above it lay the New Testament, the life of Lady Guion, and Pope's Essay on Man. William Canby's usual seat was on a chair beside the fire-place, and from the volumes named he read daily for several hours; although reading for himself, he preferred to read aloud but in a low tone, so as not to disturb those around him.

A volume of history, the journal of John Woolman, Thos. Ellwood, or some other "ancient worthy," was sometimes substituted for the life of Lady Guion, but he rarely read from the writings of any poet except Pope, although he frequently repeated Montgomery's beautiful lines on Prayer, also those beginning "Spirit leave thine house of clay," and Pope's Universal Prayer.

On the southerly side of the "living-room," a window and glass door looked out on the large old-fashioned garden, which was bright with flowers all through the season, and also supplied the small fruits and vegetables for family use.

There was a yard in front and at the side, in which stood a fine locust tree and three weeping willows that shaded the house and gave it a pleasant rural appearance.



The new part at the westerly end, consisting of a parlor and entry, was added in 1809.

The building still stands at the corner of Sixteenth and King Streets, but is much changed in appearance and character; the grassy yard is gone, the old part of the house, which contained the "living-room" and kitchen, is divided into two small tenant houses, the new part has been enlarged by the addition of a front porch, third story and back buildings, so that it presents a comfortable appearance.

Humble as this home was, it held a very happy family; no pictures hung upon its walls, no ornaments except natural flowers were there, but it was adorned in its severe simplicity and plainness by the presence of parents, who, in obedience to that Indwelling Light which they publicly professed to follow, were found prompt to evidence their religion, pure and undefiled before their God and Father, by their readiness "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep unspotted from the world."

The influence of their Christian graces, their gentleness and truth united the household in the bonds of love and peace; cheerful social intercourse brightened its atmosphere, and a sincere unostentatious hospitality welcomed the frequent guest to its customary simple fare.

This was rendered possible only by the admirable management, thrift and energy of the excellent help-meet of William Canby.

Eminently gifted as he was with ability to lay up treasures where "neither moth nor rust doth consume," he was utterly lacking in the worldly talent of adding houses to lands, but the narrow means of the household, under the able administration of its maternal head, sufficed to meet the outlay for all actual necessities, although nothing was left to expend upon superfluities or for indulgence in useless luxuries.

Restricted means enforced close economy, the housework was mainly performed by the members of the family, but this never interfered with the openhearted reception of all who could properly claim a welcome at this cheerful Christian home.

Truly independent in the possession of a small income, from means which would not now suffice for the annual disbursements of a liberal household, but which to them, with their modest wants, proved a competency, here William and Martha Canby educated and brought up a family of children, who, in their various allotments in life, never forgot the loving lessons of their youth, and seldom neglected the performance of any duty required at their hands.

The difficulties of a narrow income were thoroughly experienced by them to their lasting advantage, but the example always before them of the denial of self for the benefit of others, so beautifully moulded their characters, that sympathizing kindness was their rule of action, and when in after years ability was afforded, the open hand ever responded to the dictates of the loving heart.

The oldest son, Oliver, led a very quiet and secluded life, being generally employed upon a farm; he died at the advanced age of 83 years.

The youngest child was named Marriott; he was, however, generally called Merrit, and his father had such an objection to the designation of persons by any other than their correct names, that he changed his son's to that usually given to him.

Inheriting from his mother a resolute and energetic spirit, Merrit Canby left home early to obtain a mercantile education in Philadelphia. About the year 1830 he associated with himself as a partner Joseph S. Lovering, who was the first to successfully introduce into the United States the improved process of boiling sugar by steam in vacuum.

This connexion proved mutually advantageous, and Merrit Canby retired from business in the latter part of the year 1835. His local and family attachments then drew him back to Wilmington, the strong ties of kindred and old acquaintance never having been weakened by absence. Here he lived during the remainder of his long life, actively engaged in furthering the philanthropic and public interests of his native place.

An attractive sweetness and gentleness characterized the sisters; various as were their temperaments, few women have had more warmly attached friends or have left records of greater simplicity and purity of life than Fanny Ferris, Mary Biddle and Anna C. Smyth; the ancestral name does not de-