

**A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF
THE COUNTY OF SCHOHARIE, BY THE
GERMANS: BEING AN ANSWER TO A
CIRCULAR LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR
BY "THE HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL
SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK"**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760573829

A Brief Sketch of the First Settlement of the County of Schoharie, by the Germans: Being an Answer to a Circular Letter Addressed to the Author By "The Historical and Philosophical Society of the State of New York" by John M. Brown

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN M. BROWN

**A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF
THE COUNTY OF SCHOHARIE, BY THE
GERMANS: BEING AN ANSWER TO A
CIRCULAR LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR
BY "THE HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL
SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK"**

A Brief Sketch

OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE

COUNTY OF SCHOHARIE,

BY THE GERMANS:

BEING AN ANSWER TO A CIRCULAR LETTER
ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR BY "THE
HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL
SOCIETY OF THE STATE
OF NEW YORK,"

BY JOHN M. BROWN.

SCHOHARIE.

Printed for the Author by L. CUTHBERT.

1823.

REPRINTED BY
G. W. BELLINGER,
Editor of the INDEX,
COBLESKILL, N. Y.

1891.

1740035

STATEMENT.

One object in republishing Judge Brown's "First Settlement of the County of Schoharie by the Germans" is to bring into general circulation an important local historical work now nearly extinct. It was only after the most diligent and long continued search that we were able to secure a perfect copy. Any effort to perpetuate and make familiar the early history of our forefathers in this our native home must be worthy, and we appreciate the opportunities presented which enable us to help such public benefaction.

Another object is to have opportunity to present our compliments to the 2,000 subscribers to the Cobleskill INDEX. The INDEX was first published in the year 1865, and continued under one management until the year 1873, when the undersigned came into the responsible duties of editorship and publication. The fact that the circulation of said publication under our management has steadily increased from 800 to 2,000 copies per week, leads us to desire in some way to express appreciation of favors that has made this growth

possible. What better then, at this glad-Christmas tide, than to present the compliments of the season to INDEX readers with a copy of history of early settlement of this our native land. This, then, is another object of republication.

Judge Brown was a half brother of Capt. Christian Brown, a gentleman who resided on the James Becker place, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles North-East of Cobleskill on the Barnerville road, an officer in the Army who did noble service in the days when the blood thirsty Brant and his followers scalped settlers and burned buildings in the early history of Cobleskill. In the year 1771 Judge Brown settled upon 300 acres of land located in what is now the town of Carlisle, situate about five miles Northward of Cobleskill. His lot as a farmer was similar to the conditions which surrounded his neighbors. It was only after many years of excessive toil and rigid economy that he cleared his land and his home of troublesome incumbrance of debt. His first wife was Gitty Hager, by whom he became the father of eight sons and one daughter. His first wife died in 1796. A few years thereafter he married Elizabeth, daughter of Capt. Van Arnein of the Continental Army. No children were born of this union.

Judge Brown manifested religious convictions and demonstrated deep piety. He was a member of the Reformed church of Schoharie and for years served the organization as clerk and chorister. He was regular in attendance. He would journey afoot, oftentimes of necessity bare-foot, a distance of 14 miles, following an Indian footpath, which he would strike just below his residence. Such evidences of religious devotion are now unknown.

People are yet living who remember Judge Brown in his old age. In person he was below rather than above medium height, but broad-shouldered and stout. His eyes were blue and deep-set under overshadowing brows. There was a scar upon one cheek, from a wound inflicted by a squaw. When a lad he was engaged wholloping an Indian boy, when the mother of the dusky contestant came up just in time to save her son. Pulling up a sapling she belted young Brown over the head, ending the contest and leaving a scar from the wound which lasted until the grave claimed its own. In old age Judge Brown engaged in song and those living who listened remember that the infirmities of age had not so impaired the high strong voice as to make impossible calculations of the power it possessed in the days of its greatest vigor.

Judge Brown had the benefit of only a few weeks schooling. He was self educated. He spoke English as well as Low and High Dutch and wrote in both English and German. He was deprived of associations and surroundings which develop the mental faculties, yet he wielded a powerful influence, and wrote his name high on the scroll of local history. In the year 1795 he was appointed third Judge of the First Bench of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Schoharie, a position he resigned in 1820. He was a Justice of the Peace. He was three times a candidate for Member of Assembly, once failing of election by only two votes. He was Captain in the Militia. He was on a Commission to lay out public roads in the County of Schoharie, and in like capacity helped locate 27 public thoroughfares in what is now the County of Otsego. He was the confidential counselor and adviser of a wide circle of neighbors.

A record of the "Early Settlement of Schoharie" must have been considered a matter of importance or else there would have been no formal request from high authority for publication. Judge Brown must have possessed intelligence, keen observation and good judgment or else the Governor of the State would not have asked him to write upon a subject of such moment to history as the "Early Settlement of Schoharie."

Judge Brown tells in his published work where he was born and when. He died upon the estate, which he purchased when a young man, in the year 1838, aged 93 years. He was buried a few rods from the dwelling where he died, across a brook, on an elevation, beside his wife and a number of neighbors and friends who preceded him. There he rested in perfect peace for 41 years, the chanceler sounding a tocsin over his remains at early morn and the patient ex-loying a requiem over his lonely grave at eventide. On the "4th of July," 1879, his remains, as well as those of his wife, were exhumed, and followed by long winding procession, were taken to the Carlisle Cemetery, where with song and patriotic speech, booming cannon and swelling notes from brazen instruments they were tenderly lowered, there to remain until the Great Arch Angel shall "set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth," and with a mighty blast shall summon every grave to open—the stony front of the sepulchre to roll away and the vasty deep to uncomplainingly yield up its dead.

December, 1891.

GEORGE W. BELLINGER,

Editor and publisher of the Cobleskill Index.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The author begs leave to submit the following pages to the public, all written from his own memory; being well aware that it cannot, in every instance, be perfectly correct. But finding that so valuable a part of history as the emigration of the Germans from Germany—their journey—arrival at New York, and their settlement and improvement of Schoharie would be lost, time wearing out memory, therefore hoping and expecting that future generations yet to come, may be benefitted by his labour, is the ardent wish of your humble servant.

JOHN M. BROWN.

Carlisle, Schoharie County, Nov. 20th, 1823.