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# HISTORY and GENEALOGY

OF THE

ANCESTORS AND  
SOME DESCENDANTS OF

## Stukely Westcott

One of the Thirteen Original Proprietors  
of Providence Plantation and the Colony of Rhode Island

WITH ESPECIAL MENTION OF

THE WESTCOTTS OF CHESHIRE,  
BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS,

AND

THE WESTCOTTS OF MILFORD,  
OTSEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK

AND SOME OF THE ALLIED FAMILIES

Incorporating, and Extending, the Research of  
the late Hon. J. Russell Bullock of Bristol, R. I.

BY

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1932

Stephen Arnold Douglas, statesman, known as "the little giant," secretary of state of Illinois, judge of the supreme court, member of congress 1843, 1844, and senate 1847; in 1852, received the largest number of votes of any candidate for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency but was not nominated; returned to congress, and again, in 1856, an unsuccessful candidate for the Presidency. In 1858, defeated Abraham Lincoln to the senate from Illinois, and in 1860 was defeated by Lincoln for the Presidency. His last coherent words (1861) expressed an ardent wish for "the honor and prosperity of his country and the defeat and dispersion of her enemies." (For his ancestry, see Pt. II, p. 133.)

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### A Tragic Life

There is no purpose here of attempting to condone the culpability of General Benedict Arnold, a Revolutionary soldier of the Westcott blood. However, evidence found in recent years throws a new light on his tragic life.

His Westcott ancestry reverts to Damaris Westcott, eldest daughter of Stukely, the Founder. Her husband was the first Benedict Arnold of Rhode Island. Their son, 3-Benedict m-Mar. 9, 1670-1, Mary Turner. Their son, 4-Benedict m-Jan. 3, 1705, Patience Coggeshall. Their son, 5-Benedict m-Nov. 8, 1733, Hannah Lathrop (King). Their son, 5-Gen. Benedict Arnold m(1)-Feb. 27, 1767, Margaret Mansfield, who d-1775, m(2)-Apr. 8, 1779, Margaret ("Peggy") Shippen.

Discovery of old letters of Sir Henry Clinton, an almost unknown diary of Aaron Burr, and "Peggy" Shippen's own letters, some of them in code to Major Andre, "furnished testimony," writes E. Irvine Haines in the New York Times Magazine of Jan. 31, 1932, "too damning for 'Peggy' to controvert were she alive and on trial."

"If we read," continues Mr. Haines, "the story of the Revolution's greatest personal tragedy in the light of what we know now, it becomes a drama of ambitious femininity unique in American annals. It was not the game-legged, hot-tempered, disgruntled hero of Quebec and Saratoga, but the ambitious Tory girl, the spy, the tool of Clinton, who schemed so cleverly that she deceived such astute politicians as John Hancock, John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, and even Washington himself."

"It was Clinton, acting on the suggestion of Lord George Germain, the British Colonial Secretary, who conceived the conspiracy, but it was 'Peggy' Shippen, with a skill and effrontery amazing in one so young, who carried it out."

"Peggy Shippen, b-1760, was the daughter of Judge Edward Shippen, a wealthy Quaker merchant of Philadelphia, strongly pro-British and a power to be reckoned with. "From childhood," Mr. Haines writes, "she had been reared in an atmosphere of luxury and taught to adore British uniforms and manners."

In May, 1777, when a mere child of seventeen years, she met Major John Andre. She perhaps flirted with Andre. They were still exchanging letters when, in June, 1778, the Continentals took possession of her home city, Philadelphia, and there came along its Military Gov-

ernor, Gen. Arnold. She made a friend of the susceptible and jealous Arnold, now a widower of three years. In April, 1779, they were married "to the amazement of all Philadelphia, and that same month Clinton learned that Arnold was for sale." The remainder of the tragedy is history.

In "Vermont, Once No Man's Land," by the late Merritt C. Barden of West Pawlet, Vt., the author shows a picture of the only marker to Gen. Arnold—and his name does not appear upon it. This monument stands on the old Freeman farm, Saratoga battlefield at Bemis Heights, and shows an empty boot. (Some vandal has broken off the toe of the boot.) Mr. Barden writes:

"With wounded leg and horse killed, he (Arnold) led his men bravely into the thickest of the fight and won the battle that decided the destiny of the U. S. A., while General Gates lay behind a wooded hill, out of danger."

"Washington knew that if any man could win the battle, it was Arnold, and said so. Washington sent Arnold and he won—one of the bravest men of the Revolutionary War. But through the jealousy of Gen. Gates, who got all the honor, and the Tory wife of Arnold, he became a disheartened traitor. Can we blame him? But we can forgive him who was officially abused from first to last, and his statue should stand in the vacant alcove in the monument facing the South and the battlegrounds of Bemis Heights. For it was Benedict Arnold who won that battle and decided our fate."

When Arnold died in London twenty odd years later, it is said that his last request was that the epaulettes and sword-knot which Washington had given him, might be brought. "Let me die," he asked, "in my old American uniform, in which I fought my battles. God forgive me for ever having put on any other." (See Pt. II, p. 129.)

(Those who are interested in further studying the tragedy in the life of Gen. Arnold, should read the article "The Fatal Web Spun by Peggy Shippen," by E. Irvine Haines, which appeared in the New York Times Magazine, Dec. 4, 1932.)

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#### A "Remote Cousin"

J. A. Clark of Pueblo, Col., stated in 1932 that he descends from Sir Thomas Littleton, b-1402, whom, it will be recalled, was the eldest son of Thomas Wescote and Elizabeth Littleton, his wife, and who, by pre-nuptial arrangement, took his mother's maiden name. The three brothers of Thomas retained the name of Wescote.