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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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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.)

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-