

Dorothea Krihak, Founder of Black Brook Park who has been studying Kenilworth's early Colonial and Revolutionary War Period since 2001 in conjunction with Borough Early History Historian, Michael Yesenko, have written the following history of Kenilworth:

## **Kenilworth: Part of the First English Settlement of New Jersey**

### **Chapter I**

#### **A Glance Back at the First Permanent English Settlement, 1664**

**by Michael Yesenko**

Henry Hudson landed his ship "Half Moon" on the shores of New Jersey in 1609 and claimed the land for Holland. Dutch settlers settled Paulus Hook, now Jersey City, New Amsterdam (New York City) and Staten Island, New York.

English settlers on Long Island, New York, seeking a land where they could have freedom of religion, speech and self-government also desired to live in this area. They applied to the Dutch Governor, Peter Stuyvesant for permission to do so and were rejected.

March 12, 1664, English King Charles II gave his brother the Duke of York absolute power to govern the land between the Delaware and Connecticut Rivers. The Duke sent Colonel Richard Nicolls with four ships and 450 soldiers to New Amsterdam to seize the Dutch settlement, claim the area for the English, and rule the land as deputy governor.

August 1664 Nicolls sailed his fleet into New Amsterdam waters, disembarked, met with Stuyvesant and demanded Stuyvesant surrender the fort. Dutch citizens saw the situation as surrender or be killed and told Stuyvesant to surrender. August 27, 1664, Stuyvesant lowered the Dutch flag and went home to Holland.

English soldiers took over the fort and offered the Dutch settlers very good terms for living on their land if they swore allegiance to the Duke of York. Nicolls became a deputy governor and renamed New Amsterdam, New York, in honor of the Duke.

#### **Duke of York Gave Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret a Gift**

On June 23, 1664, the Duke of York gave his two good friends a deed to all the land between the Hudson and Delaware Rivers. He called the land, New Cesarea or New Jersey. Sir Georg Carteret had defended the Isle of Jersey during the British civil war for the Duke, who was very pleased with actions taken by Carteret.

The Duke did not realize when he gave this gift of land to Berkeley and Carteret that he had already sent Sir Richard Nicolls with four ships and 450 soldiers to subdue the Dutch Fort at New Amsterdam and govern the people remaining on that land.

## **Deputy Governor Nicholls**

Nicholls had his men circulate information throughout the colonies under his command. He directed the colonial settlers to “set out a town and inhabit together.” He guaranteed religious freedom, self-government and self-taxation.

Settlers of this new land which he call Albania, had to purchase the land from the Indians after they received a land grant from the governor. Eight families were needed to create a new town and the settlers could choose a name for the town. One group from Jamaica, Long Island, New York, applied for land along the Arthur Kill Waterway, which became present day Union County, New Jersey.

September 24, 1664, the Long Island men met with the Indians to purchase land between the Raritan and Passaic Rivers. The Indians accepted “Twenty fathoms (120 feet) of trading clothes, two coats, two guns, two kettles, ten bars of lead, twenty handfuls of gunpowder, plus 400 fathoms (2,400 feet) wampum shells, to be paid within one year.

In the spring of 1665, families settled areas of New Jersey. The colonist near the Arthur Kill Waterway, Elizabeth River and its West Branch were mostly Puritans. Today’s Kenilworth was part of the first permanent English settlement in New Jersey which became Elizabeth Town.

## **Chapter II**

### **Kenilworth - Part of Elizabeth Town-Today’s Union County**

**By Michael Yesenko**

Elizabeth Town, 19<sup>th</sup>, February 1665/6, Meeting – James Bollen, Esq., President, by the approbation of Governor Philip Carteret of a Town meeting of Freeholders and inhabitants agreed “the province (County) should consist of fourscore families for the present,” and if necessary make an addition of twenty more families. Samuel Whitehead was appointed Town Clerk. Some of the families settled within today’s Kenilworth border. This new 1<sup>st</sup> English Settlement was Essex County and Union County branched off to become its own official County in 1857.

The settlers in the first two or three years were mainly New Englanders from Long Island, New York and Connecticut. The land around the Town (Elizabeth Town) was divided into lots to be about six acres, set on both sides of the Creek (Elizabeth River) and extended upland for two miles. The front dimensions were 264 feet on the street by 660 feet deep. A lottery was held and the person drawing number one had the first choice of all lots mapped out for the first lottery.

The male inhabitants were required to take an oath of allegiance and fidelity to King Charles II and his successors, the Lord Proprietors and their successors and the Government of New Jersey. It was signed by sixty-five men. They were:

Mr. John Ogden, Sr., Capt. Thomas Young, Michael Simpkin, Abraham Shotwell, Thomas Skillman, John Woodrofe, Thomas Leonards, Jonas Wood, Jacob Clais, Rodrick Powell, Luke Watson, Stephen Crane, Joakim Andris, John Waynes, Jacob Moulains, William Johnson, John Gray, Nicholas Carter, Thomas Pope, William Cramer, Barnabas Wines, Thomas Tomson, Nathaniel Tuttle, Robert Mosse, Peter Mosse, William Trotter, Euan Salisbury, George Packe, Thomas More, Samuel Marsh, Moses Peterson, John Haynes, Caleb Carwithy, William Oliner, Humphry Spinage, Joseph Phrasie, Zackery Graues, Peter

Wooluerson, Charles Tucker, Benjamin Holman, Jeffry Joanes, Christopher Young, Jeremy Osbourne, John Dickenson, Dennis White, John Ogden, Jr. , David Ogden, Robert Vauquellin, Benjamin Price, Ben Concklin, Robert Bond, Joseph Bond, Moses Tomson, Joseph Osburne, John Brackett, Sr., William Meacker, Isaack Whitehead, Nathaniel Bunnell, Mathias Heathfield, Jonathan Ogden, Leonard Headley, John Parker, Daniel Harris, Richard Paynter, Francis Barber.

The names of the original Associates that signed their names during the command of Colonel Nicholls were listed in Elizabeth Town Book B, "Richard Nicolls, by virtue of the Power and Authority vested in him by James, Duke of York, did hereby grant, bargain, sell and confirm unto Capt. John Baker of New York, John Ogden of North Hampton, John Baily and Luke Watson and their Associates the premises aforesaid, in fee simple, equally seized a Third Lot-Right, and with them Thomas Young, Benjamin Price, John Woodruff, Philip Carteret; two-thirds lots Robert Bond, Sealy Champaign (transferred to Benjamin Parkhurst), William Meeker, Tomas Thompson, Samuel Marsh; Town Lot for the Minister William Piles, Peter Couenhoven, John Brocket (transferred to Samuel Hopkins), James Bollen, Jacob Melyen, Nicolas Carter, and Jeremiah Beck. And, to each a Second Lot-Right in the premises, Isaac Whitehead, Joseph Meeker, Humphry Spinning, Jeoffry Jones, George Ross, Joseph Bond, Mattias Hetfield, Barnabas Winds, Robert White, Peter Morss, John Winans, Joseph Sayre, Richard Beach, Moses Thompson, John Gray, William Johnson, John Brocket, Jr., Simon Rouse, William Trotter, John Ogden Jr., Jonas Wood, Robert Morss, M. Leprary, Caleb Carwithe, William Pardon and Stephen Osborne. And to each a first lot Right in the same Premises, Jonathan Ogden, Abraham Shotwell, David Ogden, Nathanael Tuttle, Benjamin Price, Jr., Roger Lambert, Abraham Lawrence, John Hindes, Thomas Moor, Joseph Frazey, Yokam Andross, Denis White, Nathanael Norton (since transferred to Henry Norris), Great John Wilson, Hur Thompson, Benjamin Oman, Evan Salsburry, Little John Willson, Stephen Crane, Henry Lyon, John Parker, John Ogden, for John Dickinson, Leonard Headley, Nathanael Bonnel, George Morris, Joseph Osborn, Pardey (transferred to Henry Norris), George Peck, John Pope, Ffrancis Barber, (note the incorrect spelling of Francis), William Oliver, Richard Painter and Charles Tooker.

The number is eighty; of whom twenty one had third lot rights, twenty six had second lot rights and thirty three had first lots rights. Some of these original families of the first English Settlement; Woodrofe, Woodruff, Meeker, Meacker, Ogden, Baker, Sayrearid and Crane have ties to today's Kenilworth.

Governor Philip Carteret Guarantees – Governor Philip Carteret guaranteed the settlers that the new proprietors (owners) of the Berkeley and Carteret colony would have a popular elected assembly of settlers. The assembly would have a say about taxes imposed by his government. Religious freedom was guaranteed to encourage Puritans from New England to move to New Jersey. However each settler had to pay one half penny annually for every acre of land owned to the proprietors Berkeley and Carteret, starting on March 25, 1670.

In 1665, Reverend Robert Treat and members of his congregation met with Governor Carteret to discuss plans for a Puritan settlement. Treat has seen Milford, Connecticut grow into a prosperous village, with a church, ship yard, mill and a Latin School. He hoped to create a new prosperous Puritan community of action in all religious concernments.

Reverend Abraham Pierson leads his flock to New Ark, New Jersey – May 18, 1666, Captain Robert Treat and Puritan preacher Reverend Abraham Pierson and their flock aboard small boats sailed along the Passaic River and landed at a new unsettled land which he called New Ark (now called Newark), New

Jersey. It was named after Pierson's former home in England, Newark-on-Trent. Soon the people spelled the town Newark.

The families built small homes and were pleased with their new village. One year later in 1667 there were 64 families tilling the soil, growing food, making cloth and building streets and homes.

**Chapter III**  
**Connecticut Farms – Today's Kenilworth and Union, New Jersey**  
**By Michael Yesenko**

**Connecticut Farms Settled in 1667**

In 1667, the group that followed Reverend Pierson created a small village southwest of Newark which they called Connecticut Farms because the land, rivers, plant and animal life reminded them of Branford, Milford and Guilford, Connecticut. The Wade, Headley, Lyon, Whitehead, Townley, Bonnell, Crane, Osborne and Meeker families started to build small wooden homes on this land.

A New England type of village was created in which life was centered on a meeting house or church. Public lands were set aside for pastures, markets and military training. This colonial village, under the allegiance of British rule, became today's towns of Kenilworth and Union, N.J.

These new established towns and villages, Newark, Connecticut Farms (Kenilworth & Union) and Elizabeth were all part of Essex County. They were close together geographically and their borders touched each other. Today's Newark Liberty Airport is in both Elizabeth and Newark. Essex was another British affirmation.

Elizabeth became the major crossover point from Staten Island, NY for the British because Staten Island was the main established port for the British and their ships during colonial times and during the American Revolutionary War.

These paths became roads and one of the most famous during the American Revolutionary War was Galloping Hill Road. It has been written about and parts of it exist in today's Union and Kenilworth, NJ.

Another path was created by today's Michigan Avenue by colonists which was used later by General Von Lossburg, a Prussian (German) General for the British during the American Revolutionary War. His second division went through this path as well as spies and patriots using the Beacon Hill watch known as Tin Kettle Hill or Sayre's Hill in today's Kenilworth.

A little over one hundred years later, when the American Revolutionary War began in 1775, by law all residents were required to own arms to defend themselves from the British.

**Land Surveys**

April, 1665, Robert Bond was given a warrant to have 360 acres of land surveyed: Leonard Headley and his wife had 120 acres surveyed. March 8, 1676, Henry Lyon had 360 acres surveyed; Isaac Whitehead had 180 acres surveyed; March 1, 1676, Benjamin Wade had 120 acres surveyed; March 27, 1676, Stephen Crane had 120 acres surveyed; April 10, 1676, Stephen Osborne and Nathaniel Bonnel had 108 acres surveyed; May 31, 1676, Joseph Meeker had 180 acres surveyed; and on June 14, 1676, Benjamin Wade had 144 acres surveyed.

All members of Connecticut Farms agreed to work together to construct a church, which also served as a meeting house. A horse hitched to a wagon was a means of travel. The dirt roads had to be cleared of rocks, ruts, tree branches and bushes making travel difficult.

### **Puritan Practices**

In May 1668 the first New Jersey General Assembly was called by Governor Philip Carteret and met in Elizabethtown. They adopted a criminal code which provided death for; burglary, murder, bearing false witness and for being a witch.

Children age 16 years or older who attacked their parents could be executed unless they could prove they were defending themselves. A person convicted of burglary had a capital T branded on their hand for Thief.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Three historic figures of the American Revolutionary War from Connecticut Farms, N.J.**

**By Dorothea Krihak and Michael Yesenko**

#### **The American Revolutionary War Twenty Thousand British Troops Land on Staten Island, New York**

The American Revolutionary War started April 19, 1775, when the British Army attacked Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. Events moved swiftly for the patriots in Elizabeth (Elizabethtown). Many of the Staten Islanders welcomed the British forces of 20,000 but the majority of the people living in Elizabethtown supported the Revolution.

Continental troops under General William Livingston were stationed in Elizabethtown. General William Livingston was elected to be the first Governor of the State of New Jersey, after independence was declared from England.

### **Governor William Livingston**

William Livingston resided in Connecticut Farms, at today's Liberty Hall in Union, since 1772. William Livingston was also the executive in charge of the New Jersey militia since 1775. Later he signed the Constitution of the United States. He represented New Jersey in the first and second Continental Congress which was our first national government at that time. The Governor had been a prominent opponent to British policy and remained the first governor of the State of New Jersey for the rest of his

life. Today's former New Jersey Governor Tom Kean is an ancestor of Governor Livingston. Tom Kean's son, Tom Kean, Jr., is Kenilworth's State Senator. Governor Livingston's brothers Robert and Phillip, who lived in New York, were also pillars of our fledgling country. Robert helped write the Declaration of Independence and administered the Oath of Office to the first U.S. President, George Washington. Phillip signed the Declaration of Independence and helped fund the war effort.

### **Reverend James Caldwell**

Prior to preaching in Connecticut Farms, Reverend James Caldwell was parson of the Elizabethtown Presbyterian Church. He then accepted the position of Chaplain in the New Jersey Regiment. The Regiment consisted of parishioners from his church. He marched with his men, preached to them, aided them in retreat and blessed them in the name of the Lord. His exploits were noticed by the enemy and soon they called him "The Rebel High Priest". The Reverend, also known as the "Fighting Parson" became a target of the British before the war was over. This also was a dubious honor bestowed on Governor William Livingston.

In the autumn of 1776, Caldwell returned home to move his wife Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell and their nine children into the mountains of Turkey (now New Providence). He immediately proceeded to gather information about British activities in central New Jersey and wrote to General George Washington. On December 6, 1776 Washington relayed this information to the President of Congress and noted that the Reverend was a "staunch friend of the cause". The British scheme to break the Revolution in Elizabeth Town did not work. The patriots of Caldwell's home parish held firm to their beliefs of independence, freedom and self-government. The Reverend moved his family to Connecticut Farms in 1780 after his Elizabeth Church was destroyed.

### **Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell**

Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell was from two prominent colonial families. The Sayre and Ogden families were N.J. families who were heavily involved in the American Revolutionary War. These two families have roots in today's Kenilworth. Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell is pictured in the Official Seal of Union County, N.J. Her role was pivotal in this war against Britain.

## Chapter V

### Protecting General George Washington

By Michael Yesenko and Dorothea Krihak

#### Battle of Connecticut Farms, Today's Kenilworth

The Reverend James and his wife Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell had just moved to a section of Elizabeth Town, known as Connecticut Farms in January, 1780 after the British destroyed and burned Reverend Caldwell's Elizabeth Town Church in (aka Elizabeth, Elizabethtown). They moved their nine children into the empty church home (parsonage) located by the Connecticut Farms Church, five miles west of Elizabeth Town proper. Kenilworth was part of Connecticut Farms during colonial times, part of this first N.J. settlement, Elizabeth Town, that was permanent and English speaking.

Connecticut Farms was a suburb of Elizabeth Town, approximately fifteen square miles in size and contained eighteen families maintaining large farms. It was called Connecticut Farms because of its resemblance to Colonial Connecticut and its rich farm land.

Some of the original families who established Elizabeth Town were these families who were known as the Elizabeth Town or Newark Associates and settled in Connecticut Farms.

Some of these original family settlers to colonial Connecticut Farms were the Bonnell, Baker, Crane, Faitoute, Headley, Meeker, Ogden Winans, Woodruff, Williams and Sayre families.

Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell, who is pictured on the County Seal of Union, was a member of two of these families. Daniel Sayre of today's Kenilworth was a family member to Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell and from the Sayre family. His house today is also known as the Shallcross House or the Locorriere House. Daniel Sayre, the grandson was a soldier in the American Revolutionary War and labeled a "hero" of the Revolutionary War. A musket was found in the rafters of this house. Marion Sayre Crane Shroeppe, of today's Kenilworth was a member of two of these families. Marion Sayre Crane Shroeppe, before her passing, was actively involved in this knowledge of her family history and getting this history to the residents of Kenilworth. These families of long ago are still a part of today's Kenilworth, even Faitoute Avenue is a reminder of our earliest time. The first fire chief of today's Kenilworth was Andrew Ogden.

These families were involved in the American Revolutionary War, some more than others. The Sayre and Ogden families were devoted to the war cause. By the beginning of the Battle of Connecticut Farms, they were firmly established as staunch supporters of the war cause with ties to its leaders. Reverend Caldwell was preaching at his pulpit and riding the countryside to recruit minutemen and local farmers to help fight in the American Militia, who could be ready in a minute. A friend of General Washington and member of his army, Hannah's husband was involved one hundred percent.

The British march to Morristown, New Jersey begins by boat. Near midnight, June 6, 1780, a British Major General, of the Hessians (Germans) army, helping the British, Wilhelm Von Knyphausen, leads 5,000 British and Hessian troops across the Arthur Kill tributary from Staten Island to Elizabeth Town, a small distance at this section of the water in small boats. A surprise attack was underway.

The British goal was to finally end the war which had been going on since 1775. They were to destroy Washington's camp at Morristown, to persuade the tired, unsupplied American mutinous troops to join the British Army and to prevent the State of New Jersey from supplying Washington's Army with the necessities of war, all learned with the help of British spies. The Battle of Connecticut Farms, fought protecting our Commander-in-Chief General George Washington, camped at Morristown, New Jersey is about to begin.

The British and Hessian troops crossed over and were spotted by a small guard of Americans, led by Moses Ogden & twelve men, posted by the water. The surprise attack was foiled. One of the leading British Generals was shot in the leg and this delayed the British advance. Captain Jonathan Dayton, of the American Army scribbled a note and gave it to a horseman with orders to ride swiftly on Galloping Hill Road to Morristown to inform Washington that a large British Army was in Elizabeth Town and was marching west to Connecticut Farms. Parts of this Galloping Hill Road still exists today in Kenilworth. It went to Morristown. Beacon Hills had artillery men posted on them. Tin Kettle Hill or Sayre's Hill in today's Kenilworth was one of these large hills. It was 186 feet above sea level and acted as a warning beacon for Washington and the local militia that the British were on the move. The soldiers on Tin Kettle, Sayre Hill fired their cannon and lit the tall cluster of wood and shrubs to sound the alarm and send off streams of smoke into the air.

This Beacon Hill was part of a series of beacon hills order by Washington to be set up. It was set up with the help of Reverend Caldwell, who knew the area well. Sayre Tin Kettle Hill was the eastern most beacon hill, according to Robert Woods, Kenilworth's first historian/researcher on this subject. It was the closest beacon hill to Elizabeth Town and the tallest other than the one at Watchung Mountains. This beacon hill no longer exists in Kenilworth. The dirt from the hill was removed in the early 1900's to use as filler to create tracks for a railroad further north in New Jersey. The project took three years to remove all the dirt.

Reverend James Caldwell knew what these signals meant. He pleaded with his wife to leave their home. She stayed. She felt she would be safe and did not want to travel with the two young children.

The alarm system that Reverend Caldwell had helped establish was of no value now to his wife who put motherhood above it all. She felt God would keep her and her two youngest children safe.

## CHAPTER VI

### **OUTNUMBERED SOLDIERS OF CONNECTICUT FARMS, TODAY'S KENILWORTH, STOP AND CONTAIN FIVE THOUSAND SOLDIERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND PREVENT THE BRITISH FROM CAPTURING THE MAIN HEADQUARTERS OF WASHINGTON AND HIS CAMP WHICH WOULD HAVE ENDED THE WAR WITH A BRITISH VICTORY.**

**By Dorothea Krihak**

June 7, 1780 was the Battle of Connecticut Farms. Kenilworth was part of this New Jersey colonial section of Elizabethtown at that time and part of the first permanent British settlement in New Jersey. Called Connecticut Farms because of its rich farmland and its resemblance to colonial Connecticut, Kenilworth was in the heart of this battle. The war began in 1775 and ended with the battle at Yorktown, Virginia in 1781, in 1781 the British surrendered. By 1783 all British soldiers left our new country, The United States of America. In 1808 Kenilworth became part of Union, New Jersey and in later years, New Orange, just before becoming Kenilworth in 1907.

Our early American history of the Colonial and American Revolutionary period of Kenilworth had been buried in the archives of the Union Township Historical Society, where Mr. Michael Yesenko, Kenilworth's new Town Historian of Early History taught Friends of Black Brook Park Kenilworth's inclusion in this history of this most major battle fought during the American Revolutionary War. Mr. Michael Yesenko is also the Township Historian of Union, New Jersey, a member of the Union County Historical Society and author of several books on this subject. Mr. Yesenko is now available to us as a consultant on the subject of our Borough's Early History. It is not until now that our total knowledge of this history has been completed.

The June 7<sup>th</sup> Battle of Connecticut Farms began as the British and Hessians landed at Elizabethtown (Elizabeth, New Jersey) to head to Morristown, New Jersey, through Connecticut Farms to cause the surrender of General George Washington. The word had gotten to the British that our American troops camped at Washington's main winter headquarters, were undersupplied and had a strong desire to leave the army and return home. Some soldiers were even talking mutiny. They had all just survived the worst winter in the history of New Jersey, worse than Valley Forge, without basic necessities.

Hessian troops were German mercenaries hired by the British for \$30.00 a month to fight with and for the British Empire which was the most trained, disciplined, well supplied and most powerful army at that time. British soldiers and Hessian soldiers fought together and landed at Elizabethtown's port for a surprise attack and what they felt would be an easy victory. They were foiled on both points.

Five thousand enemy soldiers began their march to Morristown through Connecticut Farms. They were spotted by the Americans guarding the port of Elizabethtown. Their surprise attack was no longer unseen. The warning signals went out to the Americans and Washington's Army at Morristown. A messenger on horseback rode along Galloping Hill Road (through Kenilworth) which was the fastest road at that time from Elizabethtown to Morristown to warn Washington and General Maxwell, the General

of the New Jersey Brigade of Washington's Continental Army and the local militia who were farmers and others who signed up to leave for battle in one minute against the British called "Minuteman".

Sayre Tin Kettle was armed with artillery men. A cannon was sounded and a fire lit on top of our (Kenilworth's) Beacon Hill to send smoke into the air. The Country was called to arms.

The New Jersey soldiers were hiding behind trees and brush along dirt and Indian trails as well as, according to Robert Woods, Galloping Hill Road and the "Road to (the) Springfields", today's Springfield Road in today's Kenilworth. According to Dorothea Krihak, they also hid along the West Branch of the Elizabeth River which was a river route that led to Sayre Tin Kettle Hill and up to Morristown. This water route of springs, swamps and marshes was both avoided and used, depending on the objective. According to Yesenko, by 9 A.M., the entire Hessian Corps arrived. Five thousand troops vs. our 1,500 American fighters. The Hessians were stopped by Maxwell's men and fought for three hours on the northeast section of today's Kenilworth, where Kenilworth looks like a dinosaur head on the map, at Galloping Hill Golf Course today, according to Krihak. The fighting took place around every bend of the road. The fighting was heavy throughout Connecticut Farms and nonstop. The American soldiers would leave these routes and go into the woods in search of British soldiers who had cannons. Cannon balls have been found in Kenilworth.

## **Chapter VII**

**By Dorothea Krihak**

### **General George Washington praises Connecticut Farms soldiers during the American Revolutionary War – House of Daniel Sayre, a militia soldier and labeled a hero, still stands today in Kenilworth**

On June 7, 1780, Kenilworth was the location of the Battle of Connecticut Farms during the American Revolutionary War. The war that was fought declaring our independence from Britain to become the United States of America. This is how our country was founded.

Kenilworth was part of the colonial section of Elizabethtown, now known as Union County, New Jersey. Kenilworth was called Connecticut Farms back then because this section of Elizabethtown, which also included Union, New Jersey resembled Colonial Connecticut and had rich farmland. New Jersey was one of the thirteen original colonies ruled by Britain back then.

During the Battle of Connecticut Farms, General George Washington, who later became the first President of the United States and known as the "Father of Our Country" was the target of the British during this battle that took place in Kenilworth.

General George Washington had his winter headquarters at Morristown, New Jersey where he was stationed at that time with our troops. Five thousand British troops marched through Connecticut Farms from Elizabeth to get to Washington's headquarters in Morristown to end the war with a British victory.

During this battle the British were held back in Connecticut Farms and the battle stayed here. There was no movement passed our borders.

The British were held back from reaching Washington because of the alertness and quick action of the American soldiers and local militiamen, the warning beacon hill, Sayre Tin Kettle Hill, in today's Kenilworth and Galloping Hill Road which went through today's Kenilworth. It was the fastest road to get to Morristown by horse which was used to warn the American troops and Washington of the British advance through Connecticut Farms. Galloping Hill Golf Course in Kenilworth is named after this historical road.

The British never got out of Connecticut Farms, thanks to the resistance put up by the American Soldiers here. The British thought the march through Connecticut Farms would provide them with a surprise route to an easy victory for them. They were wrong. The Connecticut Farms American troop strategies and the show of force of one thousand five hundred American soldiers stunned the British soldiers. After all, they were five thousand British soldiers who were well trained and supplied. This strongest army in the world went up against the newest army in the world, ours, and lost. Our new army in hindsight, here at Connecticut Farms helped to shape our Country and prevented a British victory.

According to our Borough Historian of early history, Michael Yesenko, General George Washington himself wrote of the great impression he had of the soldiers of Connecticut Farms and the hard fight they put up in stopping the British from getting to him (which would have ended the war with a British victory at Morristown). "Thanks to Mayor Fiamingo and Council for providing us with Mr. Yesenko", states Dorothea Krihak who consults with Mr. Yesenko on this subject. " Mayor Kathi Fiamingo and Mr. Yesenko are both honorary members of our group. It was a group effort to get this history to the residents of Kenilworth."

The British retreated along today's Springfield Road in Kenilworth to get back to Elizabeth. As they retreated they burned down Connecticut Farms , it's buildings and homes, in anger for not having succeeded in ending the war with a British victory for them in this war that began in 1775.

Luckily, the Daniel Sayre house of today's Kenilworth was not burned down. Daniel Sayre was a resident of Kenilworth in Connecticut Farm days. He was part of the militia during the American Revolutionary War. He and his homestead survived the war. It still stands today in Kenilworth and can be seen while driving passed its address on 515 Springfield Road in Kenilworth next to Black Brook Park The Sayre family were large land owners of that time in Elizabethtown (Union County, New Jersey). There is besides the Sayre Tin Kettle Hill beacon hill that was used here in Kenilworth during the war, a road bridge in Springfield, two streets in Union, a road in Summit and a road in Elizabeth, named after this family. Sayre Tin Kettle Hill was the closest beacon hill to where the British were stationed. It no longer exists today. The dirt was removed and transported to fill in marshes for a railroad out of town in the early 1900's. The beacon hill was set up under General Washington's orders. Our beacon hill strategically was the most important one because it was the first that would see the British on the move, from where 20,000 British troops were stationed.

A musket, which is the rifle of choice during the war, was found in the rafters of the Daniel Sayre House in Kenilworth. This Daniel Sayre House is also known today as the Shallcross House and/or the Locorriere House. This house was built before the American Revolutionary War. It had a beehive oven, colonial mantels on its fireplaces, a carriage house on the property as well as a barn and sheds. This homestead had much land.

The Daniel Sayre House was built by his grandfather, also named Daniel Sayre. It is located on the northwest corner of Black Brook Park also on Springfield Road, which is a Union County Park. Some of the land from this homestead, was deeded to the County of Union today, to become part of Black Brook Park in Kenilworth. The home is presently owned by the Locorriere family of Kenilworth and is used for commercial business purposes. According to Bob Woods, Honorary member of Friends of Black Brook Park and local historian. "The deed was presented to the County with the stipulation that it be kept an open-space park," states Ms. Krihak.

The official seal of Union County has been placed on the North 19<sup>th</sup> entrance to Black Brook Park which depicts Hannah Sayre Ogden Caldwell, also a member of this Sayre family, by the County of Union.

Marion Sayre Crane Shroeppe of today's Kenilworth was also a member of this Sayre family. Known as "Miss Marion", Marion Sayre Crane Shroeppe taught for years in Kenilworth public school as a volunteer puppeteer teacher, before her passing.

Dorothea Krihak, founder of Friends of Black Brook Park who has learned about the history of Black Brook Park since 2001 states "I contacted Ms. Schroepppe and informed her about Hannah Sayre Caldwell and Daniel Sayre. She was extremely pleased and began researching her family ancestry. It was amazing to find out. Ms. Schroepppe gave me her family history so that I could inform the County of Union how special the Sayre Family is to Kenilworth and to bring it to the attention of Kenilworth. Marion Sayre Crane Schroepppe was actively involved in this. I hope this helps inform all who knew her of how much she wanted to let you know of her family's role in our history. Marion Schroepppe was also a Crane, the family who founded Cranford today.

Dorothea Krihak also states, "I am currently working on a book to include this history for distribution to the Borough Library Director, Superintendent of School and the Historical Society to serve as a permanent record of this great history of ours." It can also be found on the Kenilworth Web Site [www.kenilworthborough.com](http://www.kenilworthborough.com) under Friends of Black Brook Park.