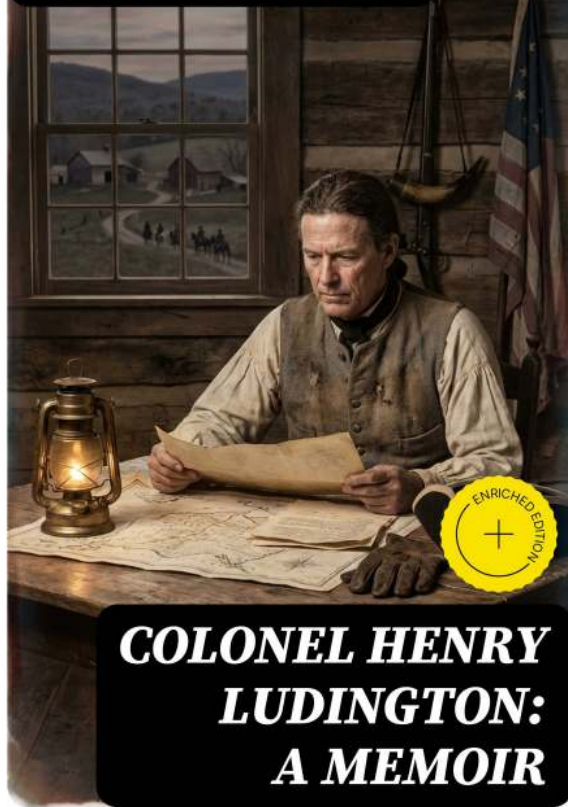


***WILLIS FLETCHER
JOHNSON***



***COLONEL HENRY
LUDINGTON:
A MEMOIR***

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Willis Fletcher Johnson

Colonel Henry Ludington: A Memoir

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Logan Bremner

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PREFACE

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The part performed by the militia and militia officers in the War of the Revolution does not seem always to have received the historical recognition which it deserves. It was really of great importance, especially in southern New England and the Middle States, at times actually rivaling and often indispensably supplementing that of the regular Continental Army. It will not be invidious to say that of all the militia none was of more importance or rendered more valuable services than those regiments which occupied the disputed border country between the American and British lines, and which guarded the bases of supplies and the routes of communication. There was probably no region in which borderland friction was more severe and intrigues more sinister than that which lay between the British in New York City and the Americans at the Highlands of the Hudson[1], nor was there a highway of travel and communication more important than that which led from Hartford in Connecticut to Fishkill and West Point in New York.

It is the purpose of the present volume to present the salient features of the public career of a militia colonel who was perhaps most of all concerned in holding that troublous territory for the American cause, in guarding that route of travel and supply, and in serving the government of the State of New York, to whose seat his territorial command was so immediately adjacent. It is intended to be merely a memoir of Henry Ludington, together with such a historical

setting as may seem desirable for a just understanding of the circumstances of his life and its varied activities. It makes no pretense of giving a complete genealogy of the Ludington family in America, either before or after his time, but confines itself to his own direct descent and a few of his immediate descendants. The facts of his life, never before compiled, have been gleaned from many sources, including Colonial, Revolutionary and State records, newspaper files, histories and diaries, correspondence, various miscellaneous manuscript collections, and some oral traditions of whose authenticity there is substantial evidence. The most copious and important data have been secured from the manuscript collections of two of Henry Ludington's descendants, Mr. Lewis S. Patrick, of Marinette, Wisconsin, who has devoted much time and painstaking labor to the work of searching for and securing authentic information of his distinguished ancestor, and Mr. Charles Henry Ludington, of New York, who has received many valuable papers and original documents and records from a descendant of Sibyl Ludington Ogden, Henry Ludington's first-born child. It is much regretted that among all these data, no portrait of Henry Ludington is in existence, and that therefore none can be given in this book. In addition, the old records of Charlestown and Malden, Massachusetts, and of Branford, East Haven and New Haven, Connecticut, the collections of the Connecticut Historical Society, the early annals of New York, especially in the French and Indian and the Revolutionary wars, and the publications of the New England Genealogical Society, have also been utilized, together with the Papers of Governor George Clinton,

Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution," Blake's and Pelletreau's histories of Putnam County, Smith's "History of Dutchess County," Bolton's "History of Westchester County," and other works, credit to which is given in the text of this volume. It is hoped that this brief and simple setting forth of the public services of Henry Ludington during the formative period of our country's history will prove of sufficient interest to the members of his family and to others to justify the printing of this memoir.

HENRY LUDINGTON

A MEMOIR

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CHAPTER I

GENEALOGICAL

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“This family of the Ludingtons,” says Gray in his genealogical work on the nobility and gentry of England, “were of a great estate, of whom there was one took a large travail to the seeing of many countries where Our Saviour wrought His miracles, as is declared by his monument in the College of Worcester, where he is interred.” The immediate reference of the quaint old chronicler was to the Ludingtons of Shrawley and Worcester, and the one member of that family whom he singled out for special mention was Robert Ludington, gentleman, a merchant in the Levantine trade. In the pursuit of business, and also probably for curiosity and pleasure, he traveled extensively in Italy, Greece, Turkey, Egypt and Syria, at a time when such journeyings were more arduous and even perilous than those of to-day in equatorial or polar wildernesses. In accord with the pious custom of the age he also made a pilgrimage to Palestine, and visited the chief places made memorable in Holy Writ. He died at Worcester at the age of 76 years, in 1625, a few years before the first colonists of his name appeared in North America. The exact degree of relationship between him and them is not now ascertainable, but it is supposable that it was close, while there is no reason whatever for doubting that the American Ludingtons were members of that same family “of a great estate,” whether or not they came from the particular branch of it which was identified with Shrawley and Worcester.

For the Ludington family in England antedated Robert Ludington of Worcester by many generations, and was established elsewhere in the Midlands than in Worcestershire. Its chief seat seems to have been in the Eastern Midlands, though its name has long been implanted on all the shires from Lincoln to Worcester, including Rutland, Leicester, Huntingdon, Northampton, and Warwick. There is a credible tradition that in the Third Crusade a Ludington was among the followers of Richard Cœur de Lion, and that afterward, when that adventurous monarch was a prisoner in Austria, he sought to visit him in the guise of a holy palmer, in order to devise with him some plan for his escape. Because of these loyal exploits, we are told, he was invested with a patent of nobility, and with the coat of arms thereafter borne by the Ludington family, to wit (according to Burke's Heraldry): Pale of six argent and azure on a chief, gules a lion passant and gardant. Crest, a palmer's staff, erect. Motto, *Probum non penitet*.

Authentic mention of other Ludingtons, honorable and often distinguished, may be found from time to time in English history, especially in the annals of Tudor and Stuart reigns. In the reign of Henry VIII a Sir John Ludington was a man of mark in the north of England, and his daughter, Elizabeth Ludington, married first an alderman of the City of London, and second, after his death, Sir John Chamberlain. In the sixteenth century, the Rev. Thomas Ludington, M.A., was a Fellow of Christ Church College, Oxford, where his will, dated May 28, 1593, is still preserved. In the next century another clergyman, the Rev. Stephen Ludington, D.D., was married about 1610 to Anne, daughter of Richard

Streetfield, at Chiddington, Kent. Afterward he was made prebendary of Langford, Lincoln, on November 15, 1641, and in June, 1674, resigned that place to his son, the Rev. Stephen Ludington, M.A. He was also rector of Carlton Scrope, and archdeacon of Stow, filling the last-named place at the time of his death in 1677. His grave is to be seen in Lincoln Cathedral. His son, mentioned above, was married to Ann Dillingham in Westminster Abbey in 1675.

It will be hereafter observed in this narrative that the family name of Ludington has been variously spelled in this country, as Ludington, Luddington, Ludinton, Ludenton, etc. Some of these variations have appeared also in England, together with the form Lydington, which has not been used here. These same forms have also been applied to the several towns and parishes which bear or have borne the family name, and especially that one parish which is so ancient and which was formerly so closely identified with the Ludingtons that question has risen whether the parish was named for the family or the family derived its name from the parish. This place, at one time called Lydington, was first mentioned in the Domesday Book of William the Conqueror, where it was called Ludington—whence we may properly regard that as the original and correct form of the name. It was then a part of the Bishopric of Lincoln and of the county of Northampton; Rutlandshire, in which the place now is, not having been set off from Northampton until the time of King John. The Bishop of Lincoln had a residential palace there, which was afterward transformed into a charity hospital, and as such is still in existence. In the chapel of the hospital is an ancient folio Bible bearing the

inscription “Ludington Hospital Bible,” and containing in manuscript a special prayer for the hospital, which is regularly read as a part of the service. The name of Loddington is borne by parishes in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, that of Luddington by parishes in Lincolnshire and Warwickshire (the latter near Stratford-on-Avon and intimately associated with Shakespeare), and that of Luddington-in-the-Brook by one which is partly in Northamptonshire and partly in Huntingdonshire; all testifying to the early extent of the Ludington family throughout the Midland counties of England.

The earliest record of a Ludington in America occurs in 1635[1q]. On April 6 of that year the ship *Hopewell*[2], which had already made several voyages to these shores, sailed from London for Massachusetts Bay, under the command of William Bundock. Her Company of eleven passengers was notable for the youthfulness of all its members, the youngest being twelve and the oldest only twenty-two years of age. Seven of them were young men, or boys, and four were girls. One of the latter, whose age was given as eighteen years, was registered on the ship’s list as “Christiom” Ludington, but other records, in London, show that the name, although very distinctly written in that form, should have been “Christian.” Concerning her origin and her subsequent fate, all records are silent. In John Farmer’s “List of Ancient Names in Boston and Vicinity, 1630-1644,” however, appears the name of “Ch. Luddington”; presumably that of this same young woman. Again, in the Old Granary burying ground in Boston, on Tomb No. 108, there appear the names of Joseph Tilden and C. Ludington;

and a plausible conjecture is that Christian Ludington became the wife of Joseph Tilden and that thus they were both buried in the same grave. But this is conjecture and nothing more. So far as ascertained facts are concerned, Christian Ludington makes both her first and her last recorded appearance in that passenger list of the *Hopewell*.

The next appearance of the name in American annals, however,—passing by the mere undated mention of one Christopher Ludington in connection with the Virginia colony,—places us upon assured ground and marks the foundation of the family in America. William Ludington was born in England—place not known—in 1608, and his wife Ellen—her family name not known—was also born there in 1617. They were married in 1636, and a few years later came to America and settled in the Massachusetts Bay colony, in that part of Charlestown which was afterward set off into the separate town of Malden. The date of their migration hither is not precisely known. Savage's "Genealogical Register" mentions William Ludington as living in Charlestown in 1642; which is quite correct, though, as Mr. Patrick aptly points out, the date is by no means conclusive as to the time of his first settlement in that place. Indeed, it is certain that he had settled in Charlestown some time before, for in the early records of the colony, under date of May 13, 1640, appears the repeal of a former order forbidding the erection of houses at a distance of more than half a mile from the meeting house, and with the repeal is an order remitting to William Ludington the penalty for having disobeyed the original decree. That restriction of building was, of course, a prudent and probably a necessary

one, in the early days of the colony, for keeping the town compact and thus affording to all its inhabitants greater security against Indian attacks. It seems to have been disregarded, however, by the actual building of some houses outside of the prescribed line, and in such violation a heavy penalty was incurred. By 1640 the law became obsolete. Boston had then been founded ten years. The colonies of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut had been settled and organized. And three years before the Pequods had been vanquished. It was therefore fitting to rescind the order, and to let the borders of Charlestown be enlarged. We may assume that it was with a realization that this would speedily be done that William Ludington, either at the very beginning of 1640 or previous to that year, built his house on the forbidden ground, and thus incurred the penalty, which, however, was not imposed upon him; and we may further assume that it was this act of his which finally called official attention to the obsolete character of the law and thus brought about its repeal. In the light thus thrown upon him, William Ludington appears as probably a man of considerable standing in the community, and of high general esteem, else his disregard of the law would scarcely have been thus condoned.

Reckoning, then, that William Ludington was settled in his house in the outskirts of Charlestown—on the north side of the Mystic River, in what was later called Malden—before May 13, 1640, the date of his arrival in America must probably be placed as early as 1639, if not even earlier. He remained at Charlestown for a little more than twenty years, and was a considerable landowner and an important

member of the community. Many references to him appear in the old colonial records, with some apparent conflicts of date, which are doubtless due to the transition stage through which the calendar was then passing. Most of the civilized world adopted the present Gregorian calendar in the sixteenth century, but it was not until 1751 that Great Britain and the British colonies did so. Consequently during most of our colonial history, including the times of William Ludington, the year began on March 25 instead of January 1, and all dates in the three months of January, February and March (down to the 24th) were credited to a different year from that to which we should now credit them. In many cases historians have endeavored to indicate such dates with accuracy by giving the numbers of both years, thus: March 1, 1660-61. But in many cases this has not been done and only a single year number is given, thus causing much uncertainty and doubt as to which year is meant. There were also other disturbances of chronology, and other differences in the statement of dates, involving other months of the year; especially that of two months' difference at what is now the end of the year. Thus the birth of William Ludington's daughter Mary is variously stated to have occurred on December 6, 1642, December 6, 1642-43, February 6, 1643, and February 6, 1642-43. Also the birth and death of his son Matthew are credited, respectively, to October 16, 1657, and November 12, 1657, and to December 16, 1657, and January 12, 1658. There is record of the purchase, on October 10, 1649, of a tract of twenty acres of land at Malden, by William Ludington, described in the deed as a weaver, from Ralph Hall, a pipe-stave maker,

and also of the sale of five acres by William Ludington to Joseph Carter, a carrier. The deed given by Ralph Hall is entitled "A Sale of Land by Ralph Hall unto William Luddington, both of Charlestowne, the 10th day of the 10th moneth, 1649," and runs as follows:

Know all men by these presents, That I, Ralph Hall, of Charletowne in New England, Pipe stave maker, for a certaine valluable consideration by mee in hand Received, by which I doe acknowledge myselfe to be fully satisfied, and payed, and contented; Have bargained, sould, given, and granted, and doe by these presents Bargaine, sell, give, and grant unto william Luddington of Charletowne aforesayd, Weaver, Twenty Achors of Land, more or less, scituate, Lying, and Beeing in Maulden, That is to say, fifteen Acres of Land, more or less which I, the sayd Ralph formerly purchased at the hand of Thomas Peirce, of Charltowne, senior, Bounded on the Northwest by the land of Mr. Palgrave, Phisition, on the Northeast by the Lands of John Sybly, on the South Easte by the Lands of James Hubbert, and on the South west by the Land of widdow Coale, And the other five Acres herein mencioned sould to the sayd William, Are five Acres, more, or less, bounded on the southeast by the Land of Widdow Coale aforesaid, on the southwest by Thomas Grover and Thomas Osborne, Northeast by the Ground of Thomas Molton, and Northwest by the forsayde fifeteen Acres: which five acres I formerly purchased of Mr. John Hodges, of Charltowne. To Have and to hould the sayd fifeteen acres, and five Acres of Lands, with all the Appurtenances and priviledges thereoff To Him, the sayd William Luddington his heigres and Assignees for

ever: And by mee, the sayd Ralph Hall, and Mary my wife, to bee bargained sould, given, and confirmed unto him, the sayd william, and his heigres and assignes for him, and them peasable and quietly to possess, inioy, and improve to his and their owne proper use and usses for ever, and the same by us by vertue hereoff to bee warrantedtised (sic) mayntained, and defended from any other person or persons hereafter Laying clayme to the same by any former contract or agreement concerning the same: In witness whereof, I, the sayd Ralph Hall with Mary my wife, for our selves, our heires, executors and Administrators, have hereunto sett our hands and seales.

Dated this Tenth day of December 1649.

This is testified before the worshipfull Mr. Richard Bellingham.

On November 30, 1651, William Ludington was mentioned in the will of Henry Sandyes, of Charlestown, as one of the creditors of his estate, and in 1660 he was enrolled as a juror in Malden. Early in the latter year, however, he removed from Malden or Charlestown to the New Haven, Connecticut, colony, and there settled at East Haven, adjoining Branford, on the east side of the Quinnipiac River. Five years before there had been established at that place the first iron works in Connecticut. The raw material used was the rich bog ore which was then found in large quantities in the swamps of North Haven and elsewhere, precisely like that which at a still later date was abundantly found and worked in the swamps of southern New Jersey, where the name of "Furnace" is still borne by more than one village on the site of a long-abandoned

foundry. This industry flourished at East Haven until about 1680, when the supply of bog ore was exhausted and the works were closed. Although William Ludington had been a weaver at Malden, he appears to have been interested in these iron works, and indeed probably removed to East Haven for the sake of connecting and identifying himself with them. But his career there was short. On March 27, 1660, evidently soon after his arrival there, he was complainant in a slander suit, and in either the same year or the next year he died, at the East Haven iron works. The manner of his death, whether from sickness or from accident, is unknown. But it evidently produced some impression in the community, since it is the only death specially recorded in the early annals of the place.

The precise date of his death, even the year in which it occurred, is a matter of uncertainty. Mr. Patrick quotes a passage from the East Haven records which says: "In 1662 John Porter obtained a piece of land to set his blacksmith shop upon ... and about the same time William Ludington died." Therefore he concludes that William Ludington died in 1662. But was it 1662 according to the chronology of those times or according to that of our time? Wyman's records of Charlestown and Malden, which mention William Ludington's departure thence for East Haven, relate that on October 1, 1661, John White made petition for the appointment of an administrator of William Ludington's estate in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, and Pope's "Pioneers of Massachusetts" confirms that record, giving the name of the petitioner as Wayte or Waite, and adding that the inventory of the estate was filed by James Barrat, or Barret, on April 1,

1662. Mr. Patrick has the name Bariat and the date February 1, 1662. Here we have, then, the same discrepancy of exactly two months in statement of date which was noticed in the case of Matthew Ludington's birth and death. Of course, if the petition for administration of William Ludington's estate was made on October 1, 1661, his death must have occurred before that date, instead of in 1662 as the East Haven records suggest. The explanation of the apparent conflict of dates is doubtless to be found in the changes of calendar to which reference has been made, one historian giving the date according to the chronology then prevailing and another according to that of the present day. Concerning the date of the probating of his estate at East Haven, however, there is apparently no doubt, since in the records of it the dual year-dates are given. That estate was inventoried and appraised by John Cooper and Matthew Moulthrop, and their inventory, according to Hoadly's "New Haven Colonial Records," was filed in court at New Haven on March 3, 1662, according to the chronology of that time, or 1663 according to ours. This interesting document was entitled "An Inventory of ye Estate of William Ludington, late of New Haven, deceased, amounting to £183 and 10s., upon Oath attested yt ye Aprizents was just to the best of their light, by John Cooper, Sen., and Matthew Moulthrop in Court at New Haven, 1662-63." It ran in detail as follows:

	lbs	sh	d.
Inv'ty bd's, bouldsters pillows, coverlits, rugs, curtains—value	20	07	02
" sheets, pillow covers, table clothes and a blanket	05	16	00

" five yards $\frac{3}{4}$ of krosin	02	00	00
" four yards of red kersey	01	00	00
" six yards of kersey	02	14	00
" five yards of serze at 7s	01	15	00
" eight yards blew kersey at 7s	02	16	00
" twelve yards of serge at 6s	00	18	00
" $1\frac{3}{4}$ th of wosted yarns	00	12	00
" $1\frac{1}{4}$ th of woolen yarns	00	05	00
" 4 guns, 2 swords and a piece of a sword	05	16	00
" 3 chests and three boxes	02	00	00
" pewter, chamber pots, spoons and 2 sauce pans	02	13	02
" 2 dripping pans, 1 cup, 4 cream pots, some eartyn ware	00	08	02
" 3 bottles and a tu mill	00	02	06
" warming pan, 2 iron pots, kettle, brass pot 2 skillets, frying pan	03	15	00
" iron dogs, tramell, share and coulter and an iron square	01	01	06
" tooles, wedges, sithes & a	05	04	00

payre of still yards & a 7lb waight			
" a smoothing iron, a parcell of wayles, a hogshead & 2 chests	01	08	06
" sheeps wooll and cotton wooll	02	10	09
" Indyan corne, 7lb 10s; 10 bush turnips, 18s	08	08	00
" 2 loomes and furniture, 3 chayres	05	09	00
" wooden ware, a table & forme, a sieve, some trenches & bagges	01	09	04
" house and land 60lbs	60	00	00
" 3 coves & two calves, 2 sowes & 3 shoates	16	06	08
" 6 loads of hay, 50s, and some other thinges in all	30	07	00
	185	02	09
The Estate Cr.	00	15	00
The Estate Dr.	02	07	09
Which being deducted there remains	183	10	00

The marke, i. e. of

John Cooper,

} Apprisers.

Mathew Moulthrop,

Again, in the "Records of the Proprietors of New Haven" we find that "At a Court held at New Haven March 3, 1662-3 ... an inventory of the Estate of Willm. Luddington deceased whas presented.... The widdow upon oath attested to the fulness of it to the best of her knowledge.... The widdow being asked if her husband made noe will answered that she knew of none for she was not at home when he died.... The matter respecting the childrens portions was deferred till next court & the ... widdow with him that shee was to marry & all her children above fourteen years of age was ordered then to appear...." At this date, therefore, William Ludington's widow was engaged to be married again, and that engagement was publicly announced. Moreover, she was actually married to her second husband, John Rose, a few weeks later, for on May 5 following, in 1662-63, according to the "Proprietors' Records," the court was again in session, and "John Rose who married widdow Ludington was called to know what security he would give for the childrens portions that was not yet of age to receive them." It is true that in those days the period of mourning before remarriage was sometimes abbreviated, but it is scarcely conceivable that this widow's marriage took place within a few months of her husband's death, or sooner than a year thereafter. It may therefore be assumed that William Ludington's death, at the East Haven iron works, occurred at least as early as March or April, 1661-62.

There is reason to believe that William Ludington was not only a man of note in the East Haven community but that