

James Alexander, Surveyor-General of New York and New Jersey. This worthy had gifts as an amateur student of the heavens; for years he corresponded with Edmund Halley, the English astronomer. John Stevens, as son of this pair, was born, as we have said, in New York in 1749. During 1762 and 1763 he attended Kenersly's College in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Thence he passed to Columbia College, New York, where he was graduated in 1768. Among his classmates were three lifelong friends, who rose to eminence,—Gulian Verplanck, as an author; Gouverneur Morris, in public life; and Benjamin Moore, who became the second bishop of New York. With the best academic training of his day, young Stevens took up the study of law, receiving his license as an attorney on May 1, 1772. Law, however, he never practised; but his legal discipline inured throughout his life to an uncommon clarity of deduction and of statement. He early entered heart and soul into his father's convictions regarding the new-born Union, and the defense it should command. In 1776 he became a Captain in Colonel Beaver's Battalion; he was soon the Colonel of a regiment of his own. Like his father, he was marked for public trusts at an early age. From 1777 to 1782 he was the faithful and honored Treasurer of New Jersey, a post which broadened his knowledge of business while it matured his executive faculty.

Toward the close of his term of office, on October 17, 1782, Colonel Stevens married Miss Rachel Cox of Bloomsbury, New Jersey. Soon afterward the wedded pair removed to New York, establishing their home in the house vacated by the Colonel's father at 7 Broadway, opposite Bowling Green. Here the Colonel and his family resided until 1814, for thirty-one years. In March, 1784, Colonel Stevens bought for ninety thousand dollars the confiscated lands of William Bayard, a Tory, across the Hudson River, comprising what was then the Island of Hoboken. In addi-