

The Descendants of Thomas and Hannah (Annable) Bowerman

Nathan Hoag, probably the son of Moses and Alice (Tripp) Hoag of Dartmouth and Beekman was the noted "Robber" Hoag. He was taxed in Beekman from 1775 through 1778 and refused to sign the Association in 1775. Enoch Crosby testified at the Board meeting held 28 Feb. 1777 that "Nathan Hoag of Oswego was to engage part of said Compa who had already been down twice with the enemy." [ConC 163]. Nathan Hoag took the oath 15 March 1777 but it was reported at the Board meeting held 13 May 1777 that Nathan Hoag was one of the men who had gathered at the house of Lawrence Losee in Oswego to go to Long Island. Nathan Hoag and Garret Luyster hired a boat which took them back to Hunt's Point and Nathan Hoag took the oath of Allegiance to the King. [ConC 282-283]. Jabez Thorn repeated the charge at the meeting held 15 May. [ibid 292].

LAR includes this note about Hoag: "Nathan Hoag, of Westchester Co., [sic] joined DeLancey's Corps in June 1777 and served until the peace. Settled afterwards at Cumberland, NS and estimated his losses at £108, NY."

He was probably the Nathan Hoag 2nd 25 years old, a Sergeant in Capt. Israel Vail's company of Minute Men. He was noted in a muster of that company in August 1776 as a blacksmith, born in Dutchess County. He had enlisted from Vail's Company of the 5th Beekman Regiment of Militia. He had a fresh complexion, black eyes and black hair and was 5' 7" high.

The New- York Journal of 6 Aug. 1781 carried this notice which mentioned the notorious "Robber" Hoag:

"Last Wednesday evening six or seven prisoners were brought to Poughkeepsie, inhabitants of Fredericksburgh, for harbouring and secreting the noted robbers Daniel Duncan, Nathan Hoag and others; the former is taken and confined in goal."

The last notice we have found concerning Nathan Hoag was in the New York Packet issue of 15 May 1783. A large bold headline on the second page of the paper stated WHIGS Take Care!!! The article continued:

"It is reported by a person directly from New-York, that the notoriously infamous Hoeg declares he will not go to Nova-Scotia, but to Canada, through this State, and that he will murder three persons in Fish-kill, or its vicinity.

N. B. Might it not answer a valuable purpose to Immediately offer a proper reward for this daring villain, dead or alive, without the British lines, and set a subscription on foot to raise the money? If this is adopted there will be a propriety in describing his person as accurately as possible, as he will, no doubt, disguise himself and conceal his arms. Other precautions that are not elegeble to be mentioned at this time may be taken to prevent his passing through."

Enoch Hoag was born 7 Nov. 1747 in Pawling, son of John and Elizabeth (Springer) Hoag. He was of lot 7 in Pawling where he took a lease of 150 acres ca. 1774, later Abner Allen in 1785. This farm was first settled by Alexander Blower, (who m: Isabel Tripp, dau. of James), then James Birdsall and then Hoag, [LRB 39, 123]. He was active in recruiting men to go over to the British, as was noted in a report to the Board on Friday, 28 Feb. 1777 by Col. Morehouse. Morehouse reported that he had apprehended nine men at Enoch Hoag's house who intended to go off. Enoch Hoag was ordered to jail on that date. As we noted above Enoch Crosby reported "Silvester Handly ... directed this informant to the House of Enoch Hoag where he assured him he

could be concealed, and this informant accordingly went to said Hoags, where he tarried four or five days undiscovered--- that said Hoag talked much against the Rebels, and said that he had a Barrel of Pork & forty Bushels of Wheat, which he meant to keep for the King's Army." [ConC 163]. [See Addenda].

On 4 March 1777 Enoch Hoag and several other men were ordered to be sent to the jail in Kingston. [ibid 174].

On 4 May 1781 the listing of prisoners in the Poughkeepsie jail included Matthew and Catherine Buys, spelled Buice in the listing. They had been committed by James Vanderburgh and Maurice Pleas, Esquires, of Beekman, for "Comforting, aiding and abeting Robbers." Matthew Buys was bp. 21 March 1710, the son of Johannes and Mary (Brouwer) Buys, the first settlers of Oswego in present day Union Vale. Mathew m. (bans) 16 July 1736, Catherine, the dau. of William Lossing, and lived in Oswego in Beekman, near the Nine Partners line, until about 1773 when he was taxed in Poughkeepsie.

The NYP of 29 March 1781 carried a notice about a robbery at the home of Zaccheus Newcomb in Charlotte, which follows:

Ten Pounds, New Emission, Reward

WHEREAS the house of the subscriber was robbed last evening of a number of articles to the amount of £200, hard money, among which were leather breeches, deer-skins, a silver watch, with a gold case, &c. by the noted villains Jacob Storm, Joseph Earl, _____ Howeg, and six or seven others. Any person securing and bringing to justice,..." etc.) (signed) Zaccheus Newcomb, Esq.

The following week's paper contained a long notice by Comfort Sands who announced that his home had been robbed "on Sunday night, the first inst." also in Charlotte. "--- one of the villains is Hoeg, of a brown complex[ion, black hair tied, a cocked hat, with silver buttons and loop, about five feet four inches high [note this differs by three inches from the muster roll description of Nathan Hoag above-FJD]. One named Joseph Earl, about five feet high, thin visage. -- One named Storm, [was also in same Minute Man company as Hoag-FJD] about five foot eight inches high, thin visage. ---One they call Nickerson, another name unknown," etc.

Sands posted a reward of \$25 for anyone who would take them up and a double reward if they were to be killed in the process. He suggested that every Whig search all the houses of the disaffected in the neighborhood in order to catch them.

Evidently Joseph Earl and Nathan Hoag, and perhaps others, had taken refuge in the home of Matthew and Catherine Buys and were discovered. As a result Mathew, age 60 and his wife, age 49, were sent to jail to be executed. There were several petitions in favor of Mrs. Buys, under sentence of death, that were omitted from the printing of the Clinton Papers. [GCP 3732].

Judge Richard Morris recommended a pardon for her in a letter to George Clinton, 21 May 1781. [GCP 3736]. "Sir, At the Special court of Oyer and Terminer and goal delivery held at this place the last week, Catherine Buys, was under a Late act of the Legislature of this State (Entitled "an act for the more speedy tryal of felonies without Benefit of clergy for subjecting the accessories to such felonies to a like punishment with the principals and for the tryal of such accessories although the principals may not be convicted"), tried and convicted of receiving, relieving, aiding, comforting and assisting Joseph Earl and Nathan Hoag, knowing them to have been guilty of certain felonies mentioned in the Indictments and of receiving stolen goods from Joseph Earl. The only material evidence to support the Charges was one Francis Cole, who from his own

Testimony appeared to have been an accomplice with Joseph Earl. Twelve other persons were afterwards tried for the same offences (by three several juries) who in their defence produced several witnesses not only to impeach the Veracity of the said Cole (who was also the principle witness against them) but which tended to show a great weakness in his Intellect if not something like Insanity at times with other Circumstances which induced the said several Juries not to credit Cole, for they acquitted them, notwithstanding, his Testimony was full and pointed against most of them; from these Circumstances, we think it wrong that the said Catherine Buys should be executed upon such Testimony only, and therefore, do recommend her to your Excellency for a pardon and are with the Greatest Respect your Excellency's most obedient Humble Servants."

(signed) Ri'd Morris

Several neighbors of Matthew and Catherine Buys sent a petition to Clinton dated 9 June 1781 which follows: "To His Excellency George Clinton Governor of the State of New York, May it Please Your Excellency, We the Subscribers having been acquainted with Catherine Buise now under Sentence of death for near twenty years before the recent war beg leave to report that she has during that period according to the best of our knowledge and belief, sustained a fair character and been deemed a good member of Society as an industrious, solid and honest person. And that she has several Whig connections, on whom we should be very sorry to have a stigma fixed, so very disagreeable, as that, of having a near relative die by the hand of justice. We therefore beg your Excellency would grant her a pardon, and Suffer a life to be lengthened which is of great use to her family--- And Same Petitioners as in duty bound Shall ever pray--- (signed) Benjamin Westervelt, Gores Storm, Elias VBunschote, Johannis Fort, Cornelius Westervelt.

Dutchess County, personally appeared before me Peter Tappen Esq. Benjamin Westervelt, Gores Storm, who being duly sworn deposed and say severally, that the facts set forth in the above petitions are the truth and that it is their earnest desire; the prayer thereof may be granted:" [GCP 3766].

Joseph Earl is of uncertain ancestry, but supposedly related to Jane Richmond, dau. of Cyrus⁴ and Phebe (Molt) Richmond. The Bowerman family of Ontario Canada by A.C. Bowerman of Picton Ont., contains the following about Joseph Earl: "It is a family tradition that a relative of Jane Richmond, Ichabod's [Bowerman] wife, - one Joseph Earl, a pro-British agitator, was a frequent visitor at the house of Ichabod. [In lot 16 in Beekman, near the Verbank grist mill-FJD]. True to the precepts of the sect, the whole family are well known to have favored the Royal Cause; but the overt act of harboring a spy brought the family under the surveillance of the Continental troops. Searching parties catechized even the infants, and more than once ransacked the premises to secure the arrest of Earl, but without avail. After many minor depredations, Earl escaped into New Brunswick, Canada, where he is said to have died at an advanced age."

The fact that Thomas Bowerman, the son of Ichabod, was in jail for aiding Earl, lends credibility to the family connection. The Richmond Genealogy claims that Mary, the sister to Jane Richmond, m. Joseph Ellison. We wonder if perhaps he was actually Joseph Earl: According to Richmond Mary and Joseph Ellison were "much persecuted as Tories, so they removed to Canada."

Jacob Storm, the son of Gorus and Maria (Palmentier) Storm, was probably the man associated with Hoag and Earl in the robberies. He m. 10 May 1769, Nelly Masten, sister to Loyalists Barent Masten and Cornelius Mastin Jr. Jacob Storm was listed in a muster roll of the Minute Company commanded by Capt. Israel Vail in August 1776. He was described as having enlisted 1 Aug. 1776, age 29 and born in Dutchess County. He was a laborer and had originally enlisted in Straight's Co. He was 5' 11 1/2" tall with light brown hair, blue eyes and a pale complexion.

Thomas Brundage of Oswego testified before the Board 26 April 1777 that "... then [Jacob] Storm said that he

was come as a Spy and that he would not suffer the Dept to go home but would put him under a Stronger guard than ever he was in his life, and that he would be the Death of the man who would betray him and Exhorted a promise from him the Dept that he would not betray him in five Days. That then Storm said that there were two hundred of them going off to the Enemy. ...' [ConC 267].

[SOURCE: BP I:540-544]

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