

## STORIES of New Jersey

Princeton for seven generations. They were brought from England in 1762. The old house was a favorite meeting place of patriots in colonial days. On the Fourth of July these catalpas bear pure white blossoms. For this reason they have been called "Independence Trees."

Two yew trees, said to be the oldest of their species in America, are at Haddonfield, brought from England in 1712 by Elizabeth Haddon, founder of the town, whose romantic life was celebrated in Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn" and in Lydia Maria Child's story "The Youthful Emigrant." She married John Estaugh, a Quaker, and built a fine brick mansion for their home, setting the trees before it. When the mansion was destroyed by fire in 1842 her descendants saved them by spreading wet rugs over the branches. Yew trees are not native to this country and only rarely adapt themselves to the soil and climate.

The Washington Walnut, shading the Washington Inn, 425 Ridgewood Road, Maplewood, is believed to have been planted by Timothy and Esther Ball when they built their home, now the inn, in 1743. According to the tablet on the tree, when Washington visited the home during the Revolution he tied his horse to an iron ring which the bark has since overgrown. Although many of the branches that overhung the road have been cut away, this old giant still flourishes. The trunk is about 13 feet in circumference.

On the property of Dr. Maurice Cohen, at Claremont Avenue and Valley Road, Montclair, where the historic Crane house once stood, is another walnut tree, surviving from the days when Washington visited there. This tree is of especial interest to the children of the community because of the fantastic figures of animals and gnomes placed in its branches by Dr. Cohen.

Cedars of Lebanon are distinctly not native to this country, but in a congenial environment are known to live to a great age. One of these, imported about 1850 as a sapling from Mount Olivet in the Holy Land, stands in front of the Borough Hall in Woodlynne, Camden County. This was the site of the where Mark Newbie established the first bank in New Jersey, if not in the country.

At Ringwood Manor in the northern part of Passaic County, recently given to the State as a historical park, are many old trees. A large part of the munitions for the Continental Army was manufactured at Ringwood. Robert Erskine, the iron master, was also Washington's surveyor-general. So important were Erskine and his forges to the Colonial cause that their names were excluded from all military dispatches as a precaution against British spies. Alongside the house and still bearing luscious fruit is a fine pear tree that was standing when Washington visited here. In front of the house is a double row of trees planted by Mrs. Martin Ryerson, wife of Erskine's successor, to commemorate the Peace of Ghent following the War of 1812.