

## STORIES of New Jersey

the majesty of the famous waterfall there that he wrote the poem, *THE FALLS OF THE PASSAIC*:

In a wild, tranquil vale, fringed with forests of green,  
Where nature had fashioned a soft sylvan scene,  
The retreat of the ring-dove, the haunt of the deer,  
Passaic in silence rolled gentle and clear.

*SALMAGUNDI* continued through 20 issues and then, a year and a day after its founding, it was abruptly halted by its amateur authors. Probably the novelty had worn off for most of them and they turned to other pursuits. To Washington Irving, however *SALMAGUNDI* proved to be much more than a jest. The success of these papers contributed to his decision to devote himself to writing. Never one to hurry himself, Irving did not begin his real career until a few years afterward, but when he did make a start, he wrote very much in the facetious manner of *SALMAGUNDI*. Years later, after he had written satires and histories which made him world-famous, he wrote gratefully to Kemble of his debt to "Old Sal."

Nor did he forget the good times at Cockloft Hall. He must have smiled when he read in a letter from Kemble in 1824, "I still look forward to the time when you, Paulding, Brevoort, the Doctor (Peter Irving) and myself shall assemble there, recount the stories of our various lives and have another game of leap frog." Many years later, Irving himself wrote, "with Newark are associated many pleasant recollections of early days and of social meetings at an old mansion on the banks of the Passaic." Still later, nearing the end of his life, in a letter to Kemble he referred to the old Cockloft Hall days with the playful question, "Who would have thought that we should ever have lived to be two such respectable old gentlemen?"

Nearly half a century after publication of *SALMAGUNDI* had ceased, a New Jersey town grasped an opportunity to return the compliment of Irving's interest in the State. In 1852, when Irving had earned undisputed rank here and abroad as a leading American author, Camptown, just outside of Newark, honored him by adopting the name of Irvington. From the little town on the Hudson where he had settled, which was also called Irvington, he gracefully acknowledged the tribute but declined to attend the ceremonies.

Before Irving's death in 1859, old Cockloft Hall had passed out of the hands of the Kemble family. Although it continued to stand for many years on what is now the northeast corner of Gouverneur Street and Mount Pleasant Avenue, the tastes of a succession of owners constantly altered the building until only the walls of the original structure remained. Gradually the city of Newark crept up and covered part of the garden. The fish pond and summer house disappeared when a new street was cut through. In 1921 the remainder of the grounds were used for the site of a tobacco machine factory, and the last inhabitants of Cockloft Hall left the house vacant. When the factory building was to be enlarged the following year, there was a movement to have the old house moved elsewhere but the effort to preserve the cradle of *SALMAGUNDI* and all its joyous background failed, and the house was demolished. All that survives of the Kembles' Passaic River homestead is Cockloft Hall in *SALMAGUNDI*.