

## STORIES of New Jersey

tillery corps at Burlington and spent several days at Morristown to discuss with his staff the exchange of prisoners. On his trip back from Philadelphia in July he stayed the night at Newton after dining in Hope.

On August 18, 1783, Washington left Newburgh for Rocky Hill, four miles from Princeton. Here, in the Berrien house overlooking the Millstone River, he set up the last headquarters of the Revolution on August 23. Two days later, before the Congress at Princeton, President Elias Boudinot said to him: "Your services have been essential in acquiring and establishing the freedom and independence of your country."

The weeks that Washington spent at Rocky Hill were very pleasant and relaxing. About him were his wife and friends. Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton and John Paul Jones visited him, and Tom Paine came from Bordentown for a few days. Washington had invited him in the hope that Congress would be reminded of the debt they owed the man whose writings had stirred the fire of revolution.

Waiting for the peace treaty to be signed at Paris, so that he might retire to private life, Washington had his portrait painted by Peale and crayoned by young William Dunlap. The Peale portrait still hangs at Princeton University.

At the end of October Washington attended the reception in Princeton for the first minister from a foreign nation to the United States: the Netherlands had recognized the 13 States across the sea.

At the Berrienhouse on November 2 the commander in chief composed his farewell message to the Continental Army. He asked them to be good citizens, just as they had been loyal soldiers, and to protect the union. In the third person, to avoid over-sentimentality, he wrote:

...to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only again offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favors...attend those, who...have secured innumerable blessings for others. With these wishes and this benediction, the commander in chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed forever.

Two days after his farewell the troops were discharged, and on November 9, Washington left for the Hudson River forts. From here he proceeded to New York City, and on December 4 crossed to Jersey City with Baron von Steuben. He was now on his way home to Mount Vernon. At Trenton, on December 6, 1783, New Jersey bade good-bye to General George Washington. Here in her beautiful hills and quiet river valleys the Father of his country had fought and suffered and prayed and had grown to wise maturity and lasting greatness.

*Berrien House--the Last Headquarters*

