

THE RAMBLER CONTINUES HIS STORY OF RIPON LODGE, AN OLD VIRGINIA HOME

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Along the Trail to the Lofty Ridge—Coffee Trees in the Yard. Some Plants Used by Pioneers Instead of Asiatic Tea—A Word About Sassafras—The Hooe Family.

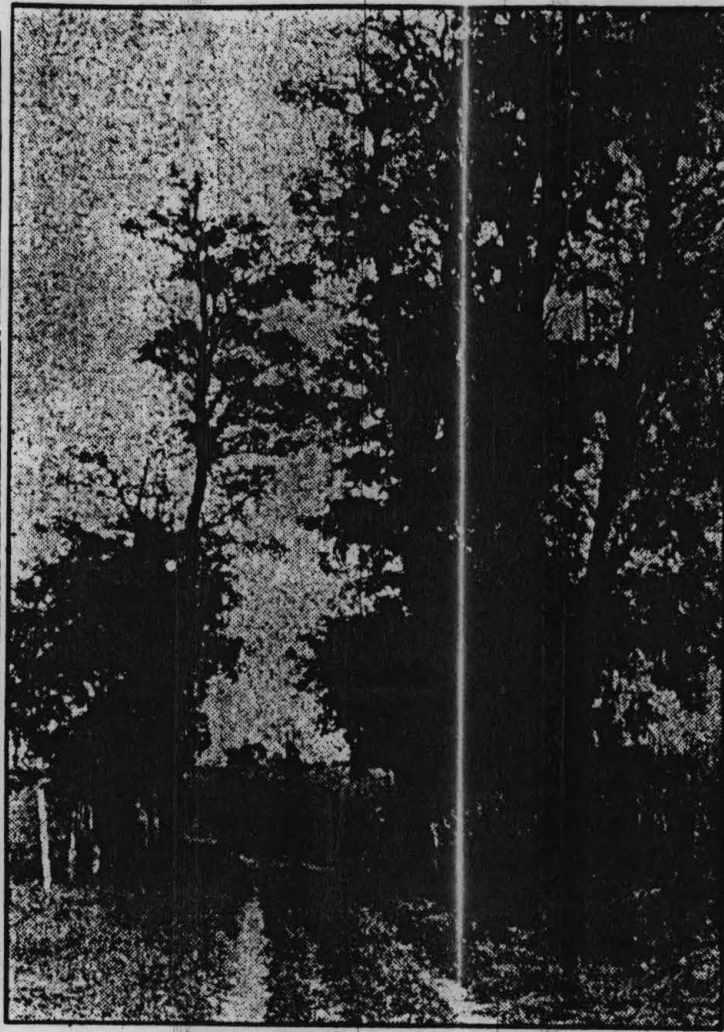
THE trail which the Rambler took to reach the lofty ridge where Ripon Lodge stands led him through the lowland by the side of that wide creek called Neabsco and the trail was broadened by, almost bowered in, that shrub which botanists call benzoin, a fellow member with the sassafras of the laurel family, and which no doubt when you were a boy or a girl you knew by the name of "spice-wood," "spicebush," "feverbush," "wild allspice" or "Benjamin-bush," Benjamin being a corruption of benzoin. And, as the Rambler means to tell of the coffee trees that grow in the garden of Ripon and cast their shade on the old house, he deems it not out of tune, or out of harmony with the motif of this yarn, to write a few paragraphs about spicebush. It is probable that your father and mother, before they moved to town, or before you left the plain and rugged pleasures of the country to seek riches and renown by a career in the city, made tea of the leaves and twigs of the spicebush.

It was used by the Indians before the coming of the whites as a remedy for fevers. It has been used all over the south as a substitute for Chinese tea, and its red berries, dried, have been used in thousands of homes as spice for flavoring many kinds of food. Andre Michaux, a French botanist, who traveled extensively in the United States toward the close of the eighteenth century, writing in his notebook under date of February 9, 1796, set down what follows:

"I supped last evening on tea made from a shrub called spicewood. A handful of young twigs or branches is set to boil and after it has boiled at least a quarter of an hour, sugar is added and it is drunk like tea. I was told that milk makes it much more agreeable to the taste. This beverage restores strength, and it had that effect, for I was very tired when I arrived."

Dr. Francis Peyre Porcher, a surgeon in the Confederate army, published a little book at Charleston, S. C., in 1863, on "Resources of Southern Fields and Forests." The book recalls some tragic memories because it was not written with the idea of instructing people in the science of botany, but in pointing out to them how they could find things to eat in the woods and fields, and things to serve them as medicines, of which the Confederate armies and the civil population over a wide part of the south were in need. Dr. Porcher pays tribute to the good qualities of spicewood and says that soldiers from the upper country in South Carolina, serving in the regiment of which he was surgeon, kept themselves supplied with it for making tea, both because they liked it as a beverage and because they believed in it as a preventive and as a remedy for fever.

IN putting up preserves your grandmother and your great-grandmother, or perhaps old Aunt Dinah, or Aunt Letty, or Aunt Charly, who did the cooking, finding that there was no West India allspice in the pantry, ground up some of the dried berries of spicewood and used it instead of the foreign article, and in eating the food flavored with it, the people at the table no doubt said:



THE GATEWAY OF A ROAD.

times entire, or mitten-shaped, or three-lobed; used like bay leaves for flavoring food; bark of root used for making tea and for dyeing; the source of an aromatic oil used in perfumery and for flavoring sweetmeats and molasses."

Sassafras tea has been used for three centuries as a "spring medicine" by the white and colored people of the south. During the years before the American revolution sassafras furnished much of the tea used on the tables of rich and poor in the Atlantic, because it was against public policy to use Asiatic tea.

THE non-use of tea calls to the Rambler's mind the action of the First Continental Congress at Philadelphia in September and October, 1774. That Congress not only urged the non-use of imported tea, but also many other things. Some time when the matter of a boycott against a nation comes up in conversation, it might be useful to know that we boycotted Great Britain to the best of our ability. This matter is of course a little dim in your memory, and the Rambler will remind you that that Congress was of the opinion "that a non-importation, non-consumption and non-exportation agreement faithfully adhered to, will prove the most speedy, effectual and peaceable measure; and therefore we do, for ourselves and the inhabitants of the several colonies, whom we represent, firmly agree and associate, under the sacred ties of virtue, honour and love of our country, as follows:

"That from and after the first day of December next, we will not import into British

this county or that county to carry out the regulations formulated by the Continental Congress. In this connection let the Rambler jot down here that the first Continental Congress also sought to regulate prices, and bear in mind that the prices were regulated, and please spell Regulated with a capital R. Our rather stern and commonsense ancestors did something more effectively than their descendants.

THE Congress after pledging that "We will, in our several stations, encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts and the manufactures of this country, especially that of wool; and will discountenance every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, and all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibition of shows, plays and other expensive diversions and entertainments and on the death of any relative or friend, none of us, or any of our families, will go into any further mourning-dress than a black crape or ribbon on the arm or hat, for gentlemen and a black ribbon and necklace for ladies, and we will discontinue the giving of gloves and scarves at funerals." Now listen to the admonition to the merchants of colonial times:

"Such as are vendors of goods or merchandise will not take advantage of the scarcity of goods that may be occasioned by this association, but will sell the same at the rates we have been respectively accustomed to for twelve months last past. And if any vendor of goods or merchandise shall sell such goods on higher terms or shall in any manner or by any device whatever violate or depart from

tea." There was another plant, a creeping wintergreen, out of whose berries the American housewives of the revolution made tea, and the popular name for that plant today is teaberry.

WHEN you come to Ripon you will see five large coffee trees that were planted not for a coffee crop, but for shade and ornament. These trees were probably set out because they were "something different" from the locust trees which so many of the early settlers planted around their homes. It is not a common tree, though it is native American, and many a pot of "coffee" has been brewed from its seeds by pioneer Americans. The name which botanists have given it is *Gymnocladus dioica*. The first word is compounded of the Greek words "gymnos," meaning naked, and "cladus," meaning branch. "Dioicus" is made up of two Greek words "di," or two, and "oikos," house; and by "dioicus" the botanist means a plant having male and female flowers on different branches.

The coffee tree at maturity is from 75 to 110 feet tall and from two to three feet in diameter of trunk. The leaves are "pinnate"; that is, featherlike form "pinna," or feather, which is also the parent word of our "pen," which was first made from a feather or goose quill. Ten or fifteen feet from the ground the tree generally separates into three or four principal divisions which spread slightly and form a narrow pyramidal head. The bark is deeply fissured, dark gray in color and the surface is often tinged with red and roughened by small scales. The leaflets are pink at first, later bronze green and then dark green above and light green beneath. It comes into leaf about the same time as the oak and its foliage turns bright yellow in autumn. Legumes hang on all winter unopened. These are from six to ten inches long and from one and a half to two inches wide. In the pods are dark reddish-brown seeds three-quarters of an inch long, ovate, or slightly obovate in form. These are the "coffee" berries. It grows on the shores of Lakes Cayuga and Seneca, N. Y.; in the Conococheague valley, in Pennsylvania; in southern Ontario, southern Michigan, eastern Nebraska, eastern Kansas, southwestern Arkansas, and generally between the Allegheny mountains and the Mississippi river. It is rare in the neighborhood of Washington.

The Rambler thinks he remembers that years ago William R. Smith, then superintendent of the Botanic Garden called his attention to a Kentucky coffee tree in the garden. It is usually found in rich bottom lands in company with black walnut, blue ash, hackberry, cottonwood, honey locust, red elm and the hickories.

One of the things about Ripon Lodge that has interested the Rambler is the death there in 1808 of Bernard Hooe. As the result of a wound received in a duel with William Kemp. There were several Hooes in Virginia bearing the Christian name Bernard, but he who was killed in this duel was Bernard J. Hooe. The Rev. Horace Edwin Hayden makes mention of the duel in his volume on Virginia genealogy, and it is also mentioned in Henry S. Footes' "Casket of Reminiscences."

BERNARD J. HOOE married Margaret Pratt. The first mention one finds of him is in Henning's Statutes, where he is appointed to receive slaves for debts due from the sheriff of Gloucester county. That was in 1790. He was overseer of the poor in Dettingen parish in 1791, justice of the peace in Prince William county in 1790, trustee of the town of Haymarket in 1798 and sheriff of Prince William in 1800. He had four children. The first was Thomas Pratt Hooe, who married a Miss Ople. He died the year after his father was shot to death, and his will is among the records of Prince William. He leaves his little daughter to the care of Sallie, the wife of Col. Thomas Parker of Fredericksburg, and in his

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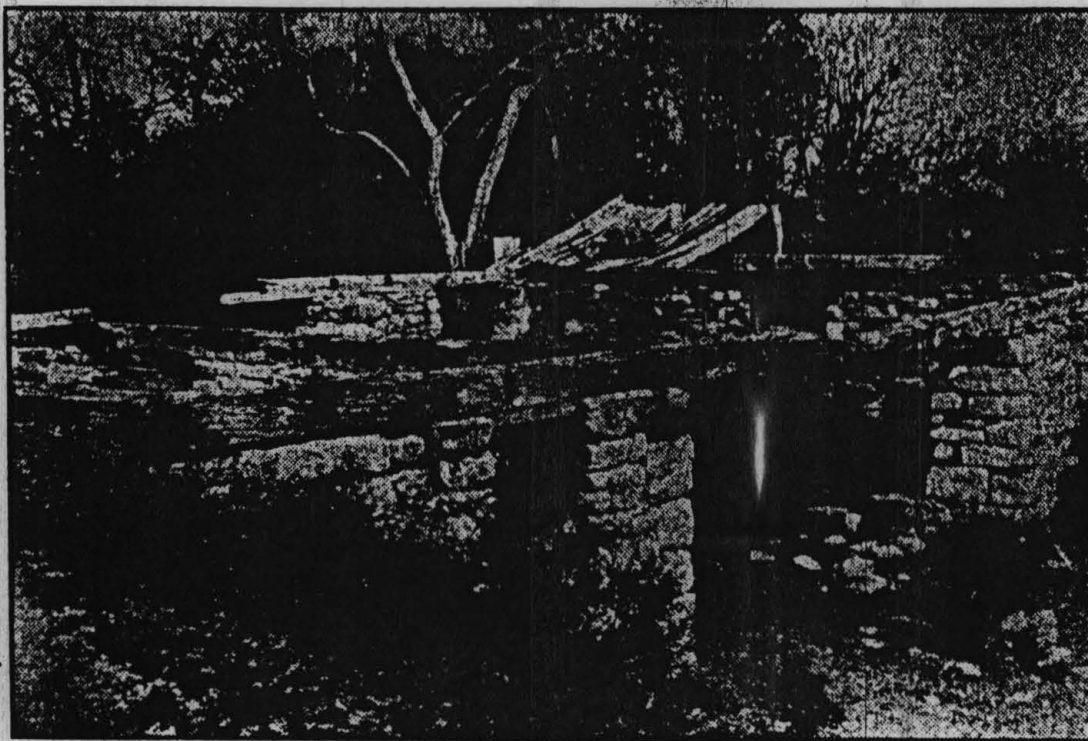
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Bernard J. Hooe had a son Bernard, a daughter Lucy, who became the wife of Arlo Buckner, and another daughter, Eliza Thacker Hooe, who married James Hewitt Hooe. Bernard Hooe, jr., died in 1810. In his will he names his wife, Bernard H. Hooe, his uncle, and James H. Hooe as his executors, and Daniel M. Chichester guardian of his children, who were all minors at the making of the will. This Bernard Hooe married Mary Symes Chichester and their children were Mary Chichester Hooe, who died unmarried; Bernard Hooe, Richard Chichester Hooe, Sarah McCarty Hooe, who married Thomas or Mordical Throckmorton; John Hooe of Locust Grove, Prince William county, who married Maria, daughter of Robert Gates of Westbury, King George county; Anne Powke Hooe, who married George Johnson; Mary Symes Chichester Hooe, who married George Sweeney, and Clarissa Bernard Hooe, who married Gaskins Moncure.

There was another Bernard Hooe in Prince William county long ago. He was born in 1791 and died in 1869. His wife was Eleanor Buchanan Briscoe, who was born in 1793 and died in 1862. She was a daughter of John Hanson Hooe and his wife, who was born Mary Elizabeth Attaway. As nearly as the Rambler can work it out with the aid of Dr. Hayden, there were eight children born to Bernard Hooe and Elizabeth Buchanan Briscoe. They were Mary Elizabeth Hooe, Anna Maria Hanson Hooe, Richard Henry Hooe, Sarah Ellen Hooe, Jane Cecilia Hooe, John Bernard Hooe, Bernard Hooe and Philip Beverly Hooe. Mary Elizabeth married Dr. William P. Johnstone of Georgia; Anna Maria married a gentleman named Hardin of North Carolina; Richard Henry died young; Sarah Ellen, who died in 1832, married George D. Fowle of Alexandria, and if the Rambler is not tangled in his notes their daughter, Ellen Barnard Fowle, married Fitzhugh Lee, general and governor of Virginia. Jane Cecilia married James Upshur Dennis; John Bernard died young. Bernard Hooe was a captain in the Confederate service. He went out with the Alexandria Rifles in the 17th Virginia Infantry as a second lieutenant, and in the second year of the war was promoted to captain and acting adjutant general in Montgomery D. Corse's brigade, Pickett's division. Capt. Hooe's wife was Mary Helen Dangerfield, daughter of John Bathurst Dangerfield, and his wife, who was born Rebecca Hooe of Alexandria. It is late now, the typewriting machine has done its allotted task and the Rambler will try next Sunday to tell such facts relating to the Bernard J. Hooe-William Kemp duel as have come before him.

RUINED BARN AT RIPON.



"Genuine allspice certainly does give an agreeable aroma and taste to food."

Not far from the spice bushes, but where the land is drier, one will find sassafras. Aromatic, pungent and fragrant, it was well spoken of by the early seventeenth century immigrants to America, and even today those persons whom perhaps some of you would call "provincial" hold it in regard. Sassafras is widely distributed in the United States and it is very common in the Chesapeake basin—in the valleys of the Potomac, Patuxent, Rappahannock, York and James and all the intervening rivers and creeks. It grows along every road and path in the coastal plain and it strikes its roots into the colder, stiffer soils of the Piedmont.

One sees sassafras nearly everywhere in the rich woods and the poor "old fields" on the Atlantic side of the continent. Nearly everybody born in rural America has tasted the tea that is made from the bark stripped from sassafras roots, and little bundles of this bark are found for sale in the markets of all cities in the south. There is no boy, no girl, country-bred, who has not chewed the green twigs and the spring flowers of sassafras. Almost everybody has noticed the curious "mitton" shaped leaves of the sassafras tree, and which are the first leaves to turn red in the fall, though the tree is not the first to set a red or yellow bouquet in the landscape. While some of the leaves turn red under the influence of a little cold, many others on the same tree remain green after other trees are all red or yellow. And there is this curious thing about sassafras, that on the same tree in autumn there will be green leaves, red leaves, pink leaves and yellow leaves.

In "The Flora of the District of Columbia," prepared by the Smithsonian Institution, one finds this reference to the sassafras: "A tree usually of moderate size; aromatic; flowers appearing about the middle of April before the leaves; leaves variable on the same branch being some-

America, from Great Britain or Ireland, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, or from any other place, any such goods, wares or merchandise as shall have been exported from Great Britain or Ireland, nor will we, after that day, import any East India tea from any part of the world; nor any molasses, sirups, panelas, coffee or pineno from the British plantations or from Dominica, nor wine from Madeira or the Western Islands, nor foreign indigo.

"We will not import nor purchase, any slave imported after the first day of December next; after which time, we will wholly discontinue the slave trade; and will neither be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures to those who are concerned in it.

"As a non-consumption agreement, strictly adhered to, will be an effectual security for the observation of the non-importation, we, as above, solemnly agree and associate that from this day we will not purchase or use any tea on which a duty hath been or shall be paid; and from and after the first day of March next we will not purchase or use any East India tea whatever; nor will we, nor shall any person under us purchase or use any of those goods, wares or merchandise, we have agreed not to import which we shall know, or have cause to suspect, were imported after the first day of December, except such as come under the rules and directions of the tenth article hereafter mentioned."

There was much more matter in this document. Any merchant who sought to import goods from Great Britain or sell such imported goods was to be boycotted by the community. The word "boycott" was not used. It had not then come into our language. The prohibition was phrased that if any merchant sought to break the non-importation agreement, "on such unworthy conduct being well attested, it ought to be made public; and on the same being so done, we will not, from henceforth, have any commercial connection with such merchant."

The Congress recommended the formation of a committee in each county, city and town to see that the boycott was observed. And that is the genesis of the organization of so many "committees of safety," and to have been a member of one of those colonial committees of safety, was a matter of pride and honor and many descendants boast today that this ancestor or that ancestor was a member of the committee of safety of

this agreement, no person ought, nor will any of us deal with any such person or his or her factor or agent at any time thereafter for any commodity whatever."

It was further declared "That all manufactures of this country be sold at reasonable prices, so that no undue advantage be taken of a future scarcity of goods," and "We do further agree and resolve that we will have no trade, commerce, dealings or intercourse whatsoever, with any colony or province, in North America, which shall not accede to, or which shall hereafter violate this association, but will hold them as unworthy of the rights of freemen and as inimical to the liberties of their country."

Do you not get from the reading of these old documents a sense that those men of the revolutionary period were of serious and earnest mold? There is little that was flamboyant, rhetorical or frothy in their recorded utterances. They boycotted the mother country and they made the boycott stick by enforcing its observance by their neighbors by measures that were often ungentle. They resolved calmly on the organization of "companies of export riflemen" and the organization of troops went on in every county. And our dear, dear, great-great-grandmother was as big a rebel against the mighty empire of Great Britain as any man. She wore homespun dresses even to church, and sassafras tea and spicebush tea were poured at the table even though the teapot was of silver. It was hereby to do otherwise. A Tory in this part of the country was in hard luck; if he had not a mind to leave the country, he was generally run out. There were some Tories in New York city and it is said that some Tories calling themselves Royalists kept on living in South Carolina, but Maryland and Virginia Tories were treated rough — don't make that roughly. Our northern patriot cousins who did not have as much sassafras and spicebush as we, used a plant known by some learned gentlemen as *Ceanothus Americanus*, but which even today is called by plain-speaking Americans "New Jersey

The Chromo.

HARVEY MAITLAND WATTS, a Philadelphia art critic, said at a dinner in Rittenhouse Square:

"The ignorance of the new rich in art matters is quite incredible. The wife of a new rich profiteer was buying pictures in a Walnut street shop the other day. After she had bought a number of costly pictures she said: 'Now show me something a little cheaper for the back hall. It's dark there.'"

"The salesman brought out another picture.

"This, madam," he said, "is only a chromo, and we could let you have it for nearly nothing."

"Yes, of course," she said. "Chromo is a struggling and obscure artist, and he can't expect to command good prices till he makes a popular hit, can he?"