

FROM BARBER & HOWE'S  
"HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS  
OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY,"  
1845

The following is traditional. About the year 1670 the Indians sold out this section of country to Lewis Morris for a barrel of cider, and emigrated to Crosswicks and Cranberry. One of them, called Indian Will, remained and dwelt in a wigwam between Tinton Falls and Swimming River. His tribe were in consequence exasperated, and at various times sent messengers to kill him in single combat; but being a brave athletic man, he always came off conqueror. On a certain occasion, while partaking of a breakfast of suppawn and milk at Mr. Eaton's with a silver spoon, he casually remarked that he knew where there were plenty of such. They promised if he would bring them, they would give him a red coat and cocked hat. In a short time he was arrayed in that dress; and it is said the Eatons suddenly became wealthy. About 80 years since, in pulling down an old mansion in Shrewsbury, in which a maiden member of this family in her lifetime had resided, a quantity of cob dollars, supposed by the superstitious to have been Kidd's money, were found concealed in the cellar wall. This coin was generally of a square or oblong shape, the corners of which wore out the pockets. Our informant, a respectable revolutionary pensioner, in his younger days made shoe-buckles from coin of this description.

When this country was first settled, deer and wolves abounded. Among the deer hunters was one Webberly West, who died just previous to the war of the revolution. He is said in the course of his life to have killed many hundred. Wolves were caught in pits covered by brush, with meat on the top as a decoy. Snapping turtles were formerly numerous in the creek, and proved destructive to ducks; they would catch them with their claws, tear them in pieces, and devour them. Some of the turtles weighed 20 or 30 pounds, and were much valued by the settlers as an article of food. They were so abundant that in two hours a person could catch a bushel basket full. They laid their eggs in the sand, perhaps 30 or 40 in one spot;

which the foxes destroyed in great numbers. The Indians used to catch large quantities of clams on the seashore. Their method of cooking was to dig pits, heat them with wood, and then put in the clams and cover them with seaweed and brush to confine the heat. They were considered a great luxury.

## GOVERNOR LEWIS MORRIS

Under Colonial administration, New Jersey and New York were under the jurisdiction of one Governor. When it was decided to separate the two colonies, Lewis Morris of Tinton became the first Governor of New Jersey in 1738. He governed until his death in 1746.

His papers during this period, including his will, were published in 1852 by the New Jersey Historical Society. Following are a few excerpts from these documents:

Will of Governor Lewis Morris (Jan. 12, 1746)

“. . . I give and bequeath to my son Robert Hunter Morris, all my negroes (probably slaves), cattle and all other of my personal estate now at Tinton in the county of Monmouth in New Jersey not herein otherwise disposed of. I give and bequeath to my said son Robert Hunter Morris and to his heirs and assigns forever, all my mannour of Tinton, and all lands, mines, minerals and water-courses thereof . . . . . and all privileges and liberties for fishing, carting or otherwise reserved to my uncle on sale of the lands at Passage Point (now the north end of Navesink Ave., Rumson) in Shrewsbury, now in the tenure and occupation of Richard Salter; and . . . .” “I forbid any rings or scarfs to be given at my funeral, or any man paid for preaching a funeral sermon over me. Those who survive me, will commend or blame my conduct in life as they think fit and I am not for paying of any man for doing of either; but if any man, whether Churchman or Dissenter, in or not in priests orders, is inclined to say anthing on that occasion, he may, if my executors think fit to admit him to do it.”

Report of Governor Lewis Morris to the Bishop of London, 1700.

SHREWSBURY (Meaning Shrewsbury Twp., including present New Shrewsbury)

“Shrewsbury settled from New England, Rhode Island and New York; there is in it about thirty Quakers of both sexes, and they have a Meeting House; the rest of the people are generally of no religion, the youth of the whole province are very debauch’d and very ignorant, and the Sabbath day seems there to be set aside for rioting and drunkenness. In a word a general ignorance and immorality runs through the youth of the whole Province (of East Jersey).”

Address to the Assembly

“It is a hard matter to mend a bad world, but the hindering men from growing worse than they are, is no small step towards it.

All the moral virtues seem to be comprised under the terms of Justice and Honesty, and it is God only can make men so; but it is the business of the legislative to make it dangerous for men to be otherwise.”

Letter to William Morris, Trenton, January 26, 1739, who apparently had endeavored to decline an appointment as a Judge:

“It may be possibly attended with some prejudice to your private affaires – but we are not borne for ourselves, and when the best man declines the magistracy it must necessarily fall in the hands of the worst.”