JOHN HATFIELD, HUSBAND AND HUSBANDMAN*

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On a central Pennsylvania hill-top overlooking the broad Susquehanna, bounded by a stately square of pointed evergreens, a little cemetery has stood for more than a century. In the heart of this old burying ground, an aging stone is inscribed, "In Memory of John Hatfield who departed this life on the 4th day of August A. D. 1813 in the 69th year of his age." Snuggling close beneath this same hill, an old stone house bears, high in the west wall, the chiseled legend, "John and Sarah Hatfield, 1786.''

Such are the visible evidences of a pioneer of the past, but behind these cold stone records of a home built, a journey ended, lies a tale; a tale of John Hatfield, husbandman, soldier of the Revolution, sire of eighteen children by three wives, "a very intelligent man and quite a Scholar in his day.''

I.

The Hatfields were Yorkshire men, who, via Leyden, came to America in the 1660's; settling in Connecticut, in New York and in Pennsylvania. John Hatfield, who sleeps in the little hill-top cemetery, was a descendant of the branch of the family, which selected Pennsylvania as its destination in the New World. He was born on May day of 1745,1 in Oxford Township, Phila-

* The great-great-great grandfather of William Bell Clark, the author of this article. Editor.
1 John Hatfield's Receipt Book; original in the possession of Samuel Grant Hatfield, of Denver, Colorado.
delphia county,\(^2\) the son of John Hatfield and Catherine Supplee, who had been married in the First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, on November 20, 1736.\(^3\) Young John was born in the year that Louisburg was taken; in the year that Whitfield, the Evangelist, visited Philadelphia; in the year that Bonnie Prince Charlie led the Scotch through the fatal campaign of "the 45." He was a lad of ten when Braddock met defeat and death in western Pennsylvania. In his teens, he heard the stories of the soldiers and frontiersmen back from the last French war, the war that had expelled France from Canada. Restlessness was in the air; the desire to expand, to become land owners, to open up the great spaces farther west.

John Hatfield watched the westward movement, listened to the tales of priceless heritages in land only awaiting takers and, shortly after he became of age, forsook the parental roof, with its few acres and one cow,\(^4\) and joined the trek toward the setting sun. He had received as good a schooling as any farm boy did in those days; perhaps a little better than the average. He could read and write and figure, and he had that pleasant type of personality that wins friends.\(^5\)

Out the old Lancaster pike by easy stages he made his way and then, turning northward, he headed for Harris' Ferry. There were two accepted routes westward through Pennsylvania in those days and John Hatfield had chosen the northern one. Fate played its hand then, for the westward journey of the young man ended on the farm of David Patton of Paxtang township, Lancaster county, where he arrived sometime in the year 1769. This we know for John, as a "Free-

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\(^2\) Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XIV. 39.
\(^3\) Ibid., Second Series, IX. 31.
\(^4\) Ibid., Third Series, XIV. 39.
\(^5\) Genealogical Notes of Jane Eliza Miller; original owned by William Bell Gross of Dauphin, Pennsylvania.
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man," appears on the Paxtang assessment for 1770, and three years later, still a "Freeman," he paid fifteen shillings as his share of the "Sixteen-Eighteen Penny Tax" levied for 1775. Young Mr. Hatfield's western journey had ended at the Susquehanna River.

We find the reason for the arrested progress on the farm of David Patton. Patton was a fairly well-to-do land owner, a few miles north of Harris' Ferry, with a wife and seven children, the youngest of whom, Sarah, was just entering her teens when John Hatfield arrived on the scene. Sarah had been born on February 10, 1756. The explanation as to why John remained with the Patton's as a "Freeman" from 1770 to 1773 and even longer, is written in his own hand in his treasured Receipt Book, thus, "January ye. 2d. 1775, John & Sarah Hatfield Maryed." Sarah, at the age of nineteen, had wed the young man of thirty, who had entered her life six years before.

II.

What if, several months later, the shots heard at Lexington, sounded 'round the world. They did not, apparently, make much of a percussion on the mind of the young bridegroom, who had other things to think about, in 1775, than Kings and Ministers and taxation. "In the year 1775, in May," wrote he, "when all Fruit was form'd, Came On a very hard Frost and kill'd all Fruit And all Leaves, The Woods Look'd, as in winter on the last of June following." Thus thought the husbandman. Ere the year was done, John wrote again, "December ye. 2d. 1775, A Daughter Born 4. 'oClock A M. Named

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*Kelker, History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, I. 396.
*Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XVII. 382.
*Abstracts of Lancaster County Wills, in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
*John Hatfield's Receipt Book.
Thus thought the husband.

But the American Revolution was underway, and, despite frosts and babies, John Hatfield, by June of that year, was shouldering a musket to attend the drills of Captain James Cowden's company of Associators at Esthertown, a little cluster of houses along the Susquehanna about five miles north of Harris' Ferry. He had become a cog in the militia machinery which the Committee of Observation for Lancaster County had set up on May 1, 1775, and which, insofar as the area around Harris' Ferry was concerned, comprised the bailiwick of the Fourth Battalion, Lancaster County Associators, Colonel James Burd commanding. It embraced Derry, Hanover, Paxtang and Upper Paxtang townships, an area described by Colonel Burd as "very long being 40 & 50 miles in length & Broad with all."

So, no matter what might be the needs for him on David Patton's farm, every Monday John trod off to Esthertown, where, with more than a hundred others, he went patiently through the evolutions which were slowly making soldiers out of all of them. That continued, week in and week out, as 1775 ended and 1776 began and, on March 13, 1776, when Captain Cowden made a return of his company to Colonel Burd, he could report a muster roll of 112 rank and file, many equipped with muskets, all well drilled and ready for any call which might come for their services.

While John Hatfield drilled along the Susquehanna, the war moved along its historic course and, on June

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* John Hatfield's Receipt Book.
* Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series, VII. 338.
* Shippen Papers, VII. 217 (The Historical Society of Pennsylvania).
* Ibid., XII. 38.
* Kelker, History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, II. 873, 874.
3, 1776, Congress, in resolving "that a flying camp be immediately established in the middle colonies," requested that Pennsylvania furnish 6000 militia. In due time, the effect of this pronouncement reached the back settlements, but it was not until mid-July that the Fourth Battalion was called upon for its first quota. "I have last week sent off a Detauchm'. of my Battalion of 4 officers & 80 men to Join the Flying Camp to the 1st Novem'.... the[y] are Chiefly wealthy Farmers sons & I hope will give Satisfaction." So wrote Colonel Burd on July 25. This was a company commanded by John Reed and consisting of volunteers from all eight units in the battalion.

When the second call came, less than a month later, it was for two companies and one of them was James Cowden's. So, on August 15, John Hatfield bade farewell to Sarah and the infant Rebecca, reported at Esthertown and, before the day was done, was encamped at Garber's Mills, the battalion headquarters nigh Colonel Burd's residence at Tinian, on the outskirts of the present Highspire. The Colonel elected to send off this part of his battalion under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Murray and Major Cornelius Cox. They marched for Lancaster the following day, 120 strong, Cowden's company mustering sixty men and Captain James Murray's a like number, and arrived at the county seat on Sunday evening, August 18. "The officers of Both Companys have been as Active & Industrious as possible in Getting Arms Repaired & Equipping the Men," Lieutenant Colonel Murray reported by letter to Colonel Burd on August 20, "But such a Hurry in town Can't get much done But I purpose Marching with all Expedition as Orders are to march without Equipping the Men."
Captain James Murray’s company struck off down the Lancaster pike for Philadelphia on August 21, and Cowden’s men followed the next day, many of them still without arms as but nine muskets were collected at Lancaster.\footnote{Shippen Papers, VII. 203.} Thus, John Hatfield marched into Philadelphia on August 26, back in his old environment just seven years after he had started west. During the next two days, the Pennsylvania Council of Safety provided “Capt. Cowden of Col. Bird’s Battalion £9 3 0 for Canteens to be charged to the Col.; & £5 10 0 for support of his men to be charged to Congress; also £3 11 8 for Repairing Arms, to be charged to this State.”\footnote{Colonial Records of Pennsylvania, X. 699.} Twelve stands of arms and fifteen cartouch boxes for distribution among the two companies, completed the equipping on August 28 and the same day, upon direction of the Council of Safety, they again took up the march, this time for Perth Amboy, where the Flying Camp was being formed.\footnote{Ibid., X. 703.}

The arrival at Perth Amboy was but a day or two after the disaster to American arms on Long Island and the Flying Camp, under General Mercer, was a place of confusion. Washington, from New York, had written urging a diversion with the militia against Staten Island and in the same breath had recommended sending most of the men intended for the Flying Camp to him.\footnote{Force, American Archives, Fifth Series, II. 121.} Hence, resulted a re-alignment of commands which directly affected the two companies from the Fourth Battalion. Colonel Burd had furnished more men for the Flying Camp than his quota required. Consequently, a single unit was formed of volunteers from both companies with Captain James Murray in command, while Captain Cowden remained with the balance of the men to act as militia until relieved.\footnote{Shippen Papers, VII. 205.}

\footnote{Shippen Papers, VII. 203.}
\footnote{Colonial Records of Pennsylvania, X. 699.}
\footnote{Ibid., X. 703.}
\footnote{Force, American Archives, Fifth Series, II. 121.}
\footnote{Shippen Papers, VII. 205.}
Hatfield was one of the volunteers who went with Captain Murray.26

A provisional Pennsylvania militia regiment was in the process of formation to be attached ultimately to a brigade to be commanded by General Ewing and assigned to a post on the Jersey side of the North river opposite Mount Washington.27 But what with the confusion, delay piled on to delay and, when the new regiment was finally completed under the command of Colonel Jacob Clotz, it mustered but three companies totaling 150 rank and file and was still stationed at Perth Amboy as late as October 8.28 By October 26, it had reached its station along the Jersey shore and had been augmented by three more companies swelling its complement to 392.29

Then followed for John Hatfield a sample of the unpleasantness of soldier life. The post on the Jersey shore was being turned into Fort Lee, which meant that shovel and pick replaced musket and bayonet, while the men toiled at the gruelling task of turning up earthworks to comply with Washington's orders that they "lay out such additional works as may be judged essential and proper."30

And then, on November 16, the war rolled right up to the opposite shore from Fort Lee, for John Hatfield, along with several thousand others, watched impotent while the Hessians overwhelmed Fort Washington. Alas, for the wasted energy in fortifying the Jersey shore. With the fall of Fort Washington, Fort Lee became untenable and, save for the promptness of the withdrawal from the exposed position, John Hatfield might have wound up his campaign experience as a

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26 John Hatfield's Receipt Book.
27 Force, American Archives, Fifth Series, II. 139.
28 Ibid., 941, 942.
29 Ibid., 1250.
30 Ibid., 139.

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prisoner of war. Instead, he, along with the rest of Ewing’s brigade, started hot-footing it out of the neck of land which lay between the North and Hackensack rivers. Personal safety was the first motive with the result that Fort Lee with its cannon and most of its supplies fell into British hands on November 20.\textsuperscript{31}

John Hatfield has left us nothing descriptive of his individual experiences in the events that followed, but we can trace him through the occasional reports from Ewing’s brigade during the hectic retreat across New Jersey to Trenton. On the night of November 20, they lay on the west bank of the Hackensack and by noon of the following day were across Aquackenonk bridge over the Passaic river.\textsuperscript{32} Two days later they were double-quicking it out of Newark.\textsuperscript{33} Followed rear-guard actions galore until December 1 found them panting for breath at Trenton. Clotz’s regiment had shrunk to a total personnel of 204.\textsuperscript{34}

The rest is familiar history; how Washington crossed the Delaware and withdrew all boats from the Jersey shore; how Rall’s Hessians went into winter quarters at Trenton; how General Howe considered the campaign ended and went back to New York and how Washington turned defeat into glorious victory at Trenton and Princeton. Clotz’s decimated regiment was in both actions.\textsuperscript{35} Just when John Hatfield with the rest of James Murray’s men returned to their homes is not quite apparent. Colonel Burd reported the company still in service on December 27, 1776.\textsuperscript{36} His next report is on May 30, when he turned in an appraisement of their losses in arms, blankets and accoutrements.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{31}Force, American Archives, Fifth Series, III. 764, 765.
\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., 788, 790.
\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., 822.
\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., 1035, 1036.
\textsuperscript{35}Kelker, History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, II. 874.
\textsuperscript{36}Shippen Papers, VII. 217.
\textsuperscript{37}Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series, VII. 352–356.
But there is a better way of reckoning John Hatfield’s return to the bosom of his family and that can be found in his receipt book. It consists of a simple entry, “October ye 24, in the Year of our Lord 1777—at one 'O Clock in the After Noon (a Daughter Born) Named Catharine, Christianed by Mr. Elling according to the Church of England, Elisabeth Carson Sen'. Surity.”

John Hatfield, soldier, had again become John Hatfield, husband, some time in January or February, 1777.

With the advent of a second daughter, and the memory of six months of active duty, John Hatfield lost interest in rushing to arms, whether for drilling or to serve a tour of duty. A system of fining had been devised for those who would not serve and John contributed his share. He paid better than thirty pounds in 1777 and forty in 1778. Apparently, he was accumulating some little money as a husbandman and he was again making agricultural observations, thus,

In the year 1778 Blossoms & leaves out Earlier than Common After all Fruit formed on the 27, of Aprill Came On hard frost, killd all Fruit & leaves, But not Flax for it was better that year than Common, & Bark of Trees Stuck fast as in Winter Loo't [looked] if forced of [f] as if [it had] been in [a] fire.

They drafted him for his last military services in the spring of 1779, when as one of seventy men in a provisional company from the Fourth Battalion under Captain John Rutherford, he marched off to the frontiers of Bedford County “for the protection of the inhabitants.” How long the tour of duty lasted the records do not say. Probably not for long, as there was need for him at home.

Early in 1779, Sarah was again quick with child and John began to realize that, as a providing husband and

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*John Hatfield’s Receipt Book.
*Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, VI. 628–632.
*John Hatfield’s Receipt Book.
*Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series, VII. 390.
father of a growing family, the Hatfield ménage was blossoming a little too rapidly for comfortable living in the Patton homestead. When a third daughter, Elizabeth, was born on September 9, 1779, he had his plans laid. North of the first range of the Kittatinny Mountains, just four or five miles above the Patton farm was plenty of virgin territory that had been acquired by the Penns in their last purchase from the Indians. He had his eye on a desirable tract, of about forty-five acres, lying to the north of Clark’s Creek just before it emptied into the Susquehanna and about a mile above Hunter’s Falls.

Thither, early in 1780, he removed his family and, as a man of property bought for himself a receipt book. Then he made application for more acres against the day when the state would take time-out from war activities to grant land warrants. The Hatfield’s in moving from Paxtang to Upper Paxtang township, had merely moved from one military area to another. In their new home, they were within the jurisdiction of Captain James Murray, who had been John’s commander in the campaign of 1776 and who, promptly, returned him as a male white inhabitant between the ages of eighteen and fifty-three residing in his district.

But whether the drilling was at Esthertown or at the Hill Church some mile or more from his home, John Hatfield did not propose to waste his time in that manner. As a result, the first entry in the new receipt book was, "September ye. 2d. 1780—Received from John Hatfield the Sum of twenty Pounds for Noneattendance at Muster pr. me John Cochran." In 1781, he again

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"John Hatfield's Receipt Book.
"Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XV. 586.
"Kelker, History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, II. 983, 984.
"John Hatfield's Receipt Book."
paid a fine, this time eleven pounds, but did not use the receipt book. In fact, after a record of taxes paid, May 7, 1781, it ceased to be a receipt book. John probably found it too much of a nuisance to carry it with him when it was far more simple to secure a receipt on any handy piece of paper. Thus, the receipt book took on new and dual purposes. In the front pages he entered matters of, to him, climatic importance, and in the back pages kept a chronicle of his growing family. To bring it up to date, he filled one page with the observations on the frosts of 1775 and 1778, as already quoted, and two more with the record of the births of himself and Sarah, their marriage and the births of their three daughters. Then, sorrow struck the little family and John entered at the bottom of the second page of the family register, "Elisabeth Dyed, August 7th, in the Night, 1782—". That same year, the Supply Tax figures showed how he was prospering, for he was assessed £1, 2, 6 for forty-five acres, two horses and three cattle. The Fall also brought another child to replace the one who died in August as, on October 3, 1782, "a Daughter [was] born, in the Evening—Named Jane, Christianed by Mr. Enderline—."

III.

The American Revolution came to a conclusion in 1783, but John Hatfield, in Upper Paxtang township, found it more significant to note an unusual phenomena, namely, "June 1st. 1783. Locusts Out and in their prime. Do. 22. hardly any to be Seen."

As an observer and recorder of climatic conditions, John reached the apex of his abilities in the early

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47 Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, VI. 544, 545.
48 John Hatfield’s Receipt Book.
49 Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XVII. 698-707.
50 John Hatfield’s Receipt Book.
51 Ibid.
winter of 1784, when he described the Susquehanna on a rampage which he sensed would make river history. He took pains to tell the story in detail and here it is:

January ye 19th 1784—The Greatest Snow fell, That I Ever Saw, With a verry great wind N.E. So that it was Drifted in Many Places five, till Six feet Deep, So that it was almost impossible to go to Ones next Neighbours House, All Mills went with Difficulty, if not Totally Stop’d, and Such that Did go, were ill to get at, So that Many had to Boil their grain to keep Soul and Body together—The 27th. following an Other Snow fell, almost as big as the former, with great Wind at N.W. Drifted Verry Much—Then followed by a Sudden thaw, and Rain, The River broke up and Shovd in Dams quite across the River, So that Houses were Set in Water, three or four feet, More or less—

I shall take Notice to One of those Dams, the greatest That I know of, In the Breaking up of the Ice as before Said for want of Water, The Ice Stopd at Harrises Ferry—and fill’d up, the farther up the higher, till a little above Hunters Falls, a Matter of Eight Miles in length, and at upper End at Hunters Falls, The water was Swell’d about fifteen feet above low Water Mark (and this was the Case for Several Miles, as it fill’d) The River being in this Condition there Ensued Clear frosty Wether for two or three Weeks So that, where the water was Dam’d Over the bank, Or Island the broken up Ice, and the New Ice was all Froze together The River, above, where it was broken up was Still Driving Down New Ice, Sometimes it wou’d Stop and Freeze over, but the Water Swelling On account of the Dam, wou’ld quit the Shores, and was Driven Down to the Dam, Still Freezing hard, and helping to Consolidate the whole in One Mass—

On the 10th. of March following, there fell a Soft Snow, Seamingly half Water, Folowed by 3. Days of a thaw, with a pritty Smart Rain in the End, The Creeks Rose uncommon high—On the fourteenth following Juniata broke up, and Crowded all the Ice, (together with Hulings’ Mill) into the Dam, But Did not Break it—the fifteenth the River broke up In general upwards, the Water Rose about thirty feet high, above low water mark, Broke the Dam, and took Out of their Places a Matter of thirty Buildings, Broke, and Distroid them, So as to be almost useless, All Trees & Fences, in its Way (in Some Places half a Mile from the River) were broke and Cary’d from their Places, Many living creutures were Drown’d

The Shores, and Islands about Mr. Carsons, where it was 40 feet Perpendicular above low Water Mark, and Consequently
worst, were Clear'd of all trees—Destroid Orchards and Other Fruit Trees Verry Much

One Tree in Particular of 17. yards Round at the But, and Bran-[ch] ing into four Stems, about ten feet above ground, Beset with Ice, about 10. or 12. feet Over the whole Island that it grew on was Carry'd of Standin up Straight till out of Sight Down the River, together with the Surface of the Island for about three feet Deep & all Trees on it Helter Skelter\footnote{John Hatfield’s Receipt Book.}

Another daughter, Sarah, was born on March 29, 1785,\footnote{Ibid.} and that year Dauphin county was created from a portion of Lancaster county, the Hatfield holdings being in a newly created township called Middle Paxton.\footnote{Kelker, History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, I. 70–73.} That year also, on October 29, he received patents for two tracts of land, comprising 100 and 103 acres, respectively, which gave him broad acreage above Clark’s Creek including the tall hill of red shale which rose abruptly just north of his log farm house,\footnote{Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XV. 586.} and a long tract beneath Peter’s Mountain.\footnote{Hatfield Estate Papers, Dauphin County Court House.}

With his land holdings assured, he began plans for a more permanent residence and builded well of stone; so well in fact that the original homestead, as erected in 1786, still stands close under the hill. This is the dwelling to which reference has already been made, with the inscription, “John & Sarah Hatfield, 1786,” chiseled high in the west wall.

But to Sarah Hatfield, the new home brought only misfortune. In March, of 1787, a daughter was born dead, and a little more than a year later came tragedy. John and Sarah reached the heights of their aspirations on July 15, 1788 when, after a succession of six daughters, they became the proud parents of a son. But Sarah died in child birth and the infant survived but fifteen days. There is stoical calm in the entries with which John Hatfield described his bereavement:
John Hatfield, Husband and Husbandman

July ye. 15th. 1788, at 7. O,Clock in the Evening a Son Born—Liv'd 15. Days, and then Dyed—July ye. 21, 1788, Sarah Hatfield Dyed, Consort of Jn° Hatfield after 13 years, Six months, and 21 Days Cohabitation in the 34th. year of her age. 357

Sometime in the early years of his residence along Clark's Creek, John laid out the little cemetery that crowns the tall hill behind his home. If Sarah and the three children, who died between 1782 and 1788, lie buried there, their grave stones have disappeared. In fact, the earliest stone now decipherable is dated 1799.

Tradition, that tricky substitute for fact, has it that when he planned the cemetery, John Hatfield remarked that he wanted to be buried there on the hilltop where he could forever watch the rafts coming down the Susquehanna. He may have so expressed himself. It is, at least, a pleasant sentiment.

IV.

At any rate, in 1788, John Hatfield was forty-five years old, with a new and grand home and four daughters, Rebecca, thirteen years old; Catharine, eleven; Jane, six, and Sarah, three. He remained a widower just six months and then married Elizabeth Cochran, 58 daughter of Samuel and Margaret Cochran, also residents of Middle Paxton township. 59 Their life together is covered tersely in five brief entries in the Receipt Book:

January ye. 29th. 1789, Was Marryed, John Hatfield to Elisabeth Cochran, Second Consort February ye. 22d. 1790—A Daughter born (Second Wife) Named Margaret at 8. O'Clock in the Morning—

May ye. 29th. 1791, a Son born Dead—1792. November ye. 10th. at 10 '0 Clock a Son born Named John January 29th. 1793, Second Consort Dye'd after four years Cohabitation to a Minute—60

357 John Hatfield's Receipt Book.
58 Ibid.
59 Biographical Encyclopaedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, p. 96.
60 John Hatfield's Receipt Book.
But even though a second time a widower, John Hatfield at last had a son, and, after a period of a year and nine months, the mating call stirred again within him. This time his choice fell on Nancy Berryhill, daughter of Andrew and Elizabeth Berryhill, who were newcomers to Middle Paxton township, but old acquaintances of Paxtang township in pre-Revolutionary days. John and Nancy were married on October 9, 1794. John was then forty-nine years of age and Nancy, twenty-eight. He had also become a land owner of note, having secured another warrant of land on January 4, 1794.

The misfortune which had been dodging John's heels for more than a dozen years was not to be shaken off in the beginning of his married life with Nancy for their first child, Andrew, born on August 23, 1795, "Dyed the 12th of October Same year." But thereafter Providence was good. No more did he need make entries of death in the little Receipt Book.

Eleanora Maria, born January 31, 1797, was a healthy infant. So, too, was Clarissa, who first saw the light of day "at 6 'O Clock in the Morning" of January 11, 1800. John returned to his climatic observations, after a lapse of fourteen years, clear evidence that all was again well with the world. His first entry was in 1800. It fell beneath the entry for the same date in 1783 and referred to the same subject, for, on June 1, 1800 he wrote; "Locusts in their Prime. D° 22. few to be Seen—So that they Come Once Every Seventeen Years—." In the following spring of 1801, he was recording a snow and a frost between April 22 and 26, but,
fortunately, with ‘No harm Done’ even though ‘the Sun was Not Seen for Six Days.’

Another January baby—the third in succession—arrived in 1802. She was Eliza, born on the second day of the new year. Small wonder that John Hatfield was seeing nature through roseate spectacles, nor that he could rhapsodize as the year closed upon

A Fair Green Christmas—Mild and Moderate weather Some-things actually Growing as in Spring, and Continu’d to the 4th. of January at Evening, Blew up Cold N.W. But soon grew Mild—5th, Warm—3. Salmon & 2 Chubs at the Out line in the Morning being 6th. 10th. warm—But Snowed a little from the West—15th. The Prettiest and warmest Day I Ever Saw the Same Time of the year and goes On Warm.

His entries continued intermittently for more than a month, February 14 being recorded ‘as Pritty and Warm a Day as Ever is in aprill Bees Carry Wax.’

By now his and Sarah’s daughters were full grown. Rebecca, the eldest, was wed first, to a James Dixon, and moved to Meadville, and Catharine shortly afterwards to John Faulkenberg who followed the Dixon’s to Meadville. On March 10, 1803, John Buchanan married Sarah, and, on April 5, 1804, Jane and James Armstrong were united in wedlock. Thus, all four of the daughters of the first marriage left the homestead to begin homes and families of their own.

But the fecundity of Nancy, the third wife, was a guarantee against depopulation of the stone house. A daughter, Hetty, was born on July 6, 1804, and John noted ‘A Mulberry Cut out of her throat at 5. Weeks Old of Common Size, by Doctor Hall it grew Close by the Palate.’ Less than two years later, on June 16, 1806, came, at last, another son, Jehu, and, on March
17, 1808, still another son, Cyrus, was born and "Christned by M'. Brady a Prisbiterion."  

When Nancy was brought to bed with another child, on November 7, 1810, John Hatfield could record his eighteenth offspring and probably took keen satisfaction that the eighteenth was another boy, who was christened Enoch by the same Mr. Brady, the "Prisbiterion."  

John Hatfield then was sixty-five years old.

And now the record is almost completed. With the birth of Enoch, John made his last entry in the Receipt Book. For the space of two and one-half years, he lived in the bosom of his family, honored and respected by his neighbors and generally regarded as one of the most scholarly and intelligent men in the township.  

To sixteen year old Eleanora Maria, oldest daughter of his third marriage, must we look for the end. She wrote it into her father's Receipt Book in her angular, childish hand. He was "struck with the palsy on friday morning the 23 day of July [1813]" she inscribed on one page.

Then, in youthful reverence, came a poetic entry two weeks later:

And last of all he died also In memory of John Hatfield of Middle paxton Who died August 4th AD 1813 in the 69th year of his age—

Go home my friends and C eas your tears
I must lie here til Christ apear s
Repent in time while time you have
Theres no repentance in the grave.

And finally, there is the aging tombstone on the hilltop overlooking the home he built and the river down which, on rare occasions, the rafts still float.