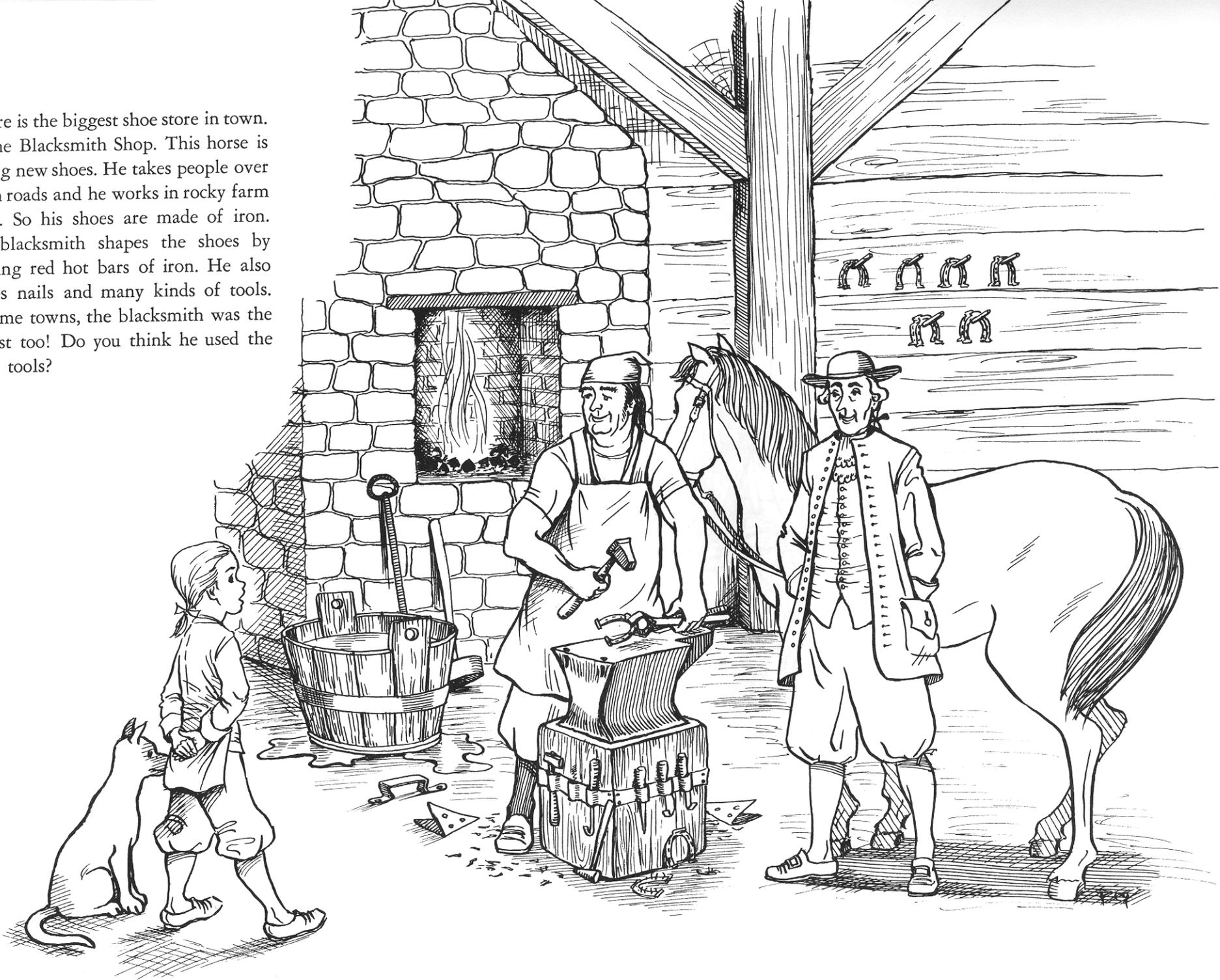


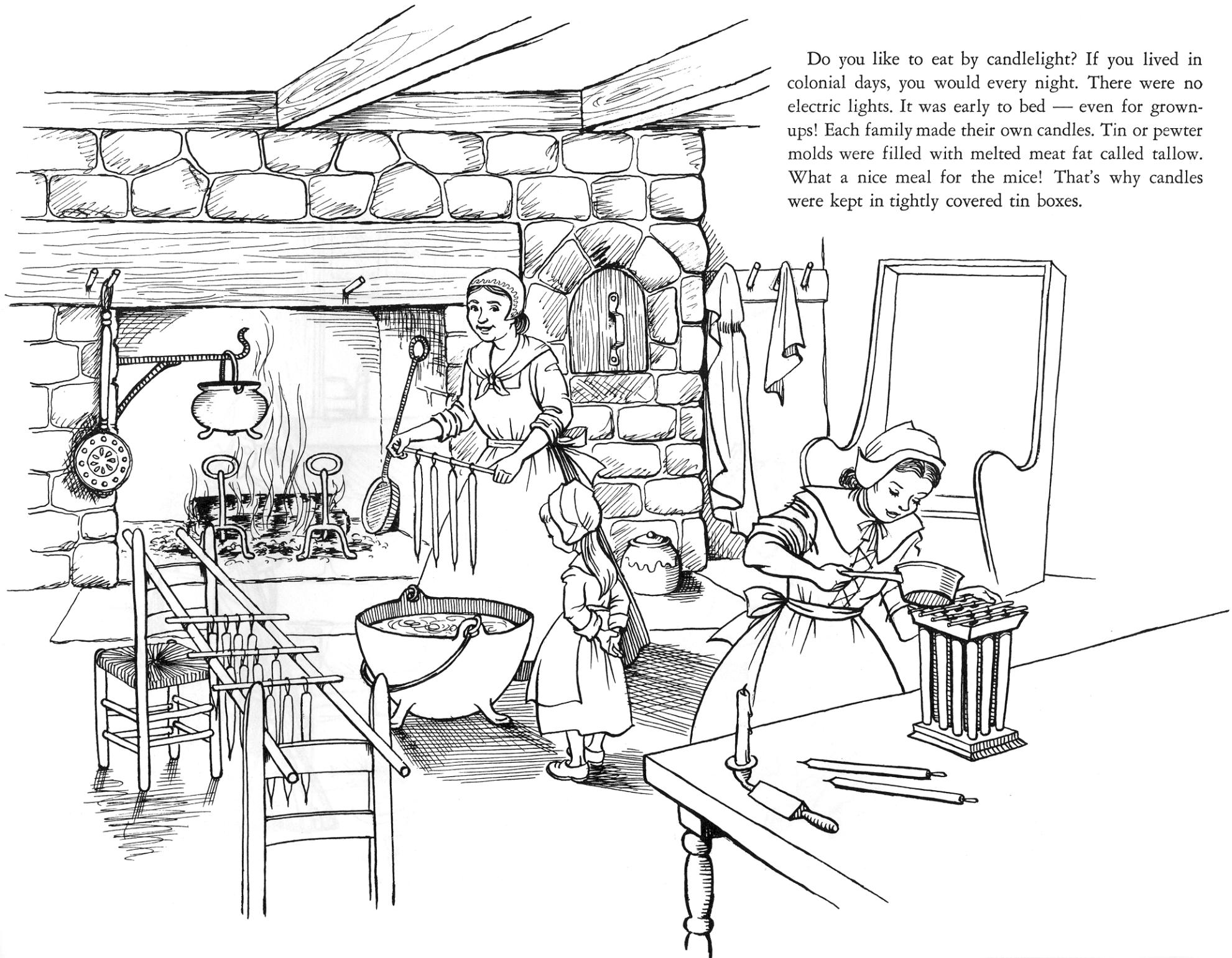
Once upon a time there lived a farmer who grew pumpkins in one of his fields. One moonlit night he heard a horse galloping at great speed. Peeking out a window, the farmer filled with fright!

The Dutch loved to tell tales of ghosts and goblins. This slave woman heard these tales told many chilly nights. Now she tells them to the children before bedtime. Do you think they will have bad dreams tonight?



Here is the biggest shoe store in town. It's the Blacksmith Shop. This horse is getting new shoes. He takes people over rough roads and he works in rocky farm fields. So his shoes are made of iron. The blacksmith shapes the shoes by bending red hot bars of iron. He also makes nails and many kinds of tools. In some towns, the blacksmith was the dentist too! Do you think he used the same tools?





Do you like to eat by candlelight? If you lived in colonial days, you would every night. There were no electric lights. It was early to bed — even for grown-ups! Each family made their own candles. Tin or pewter molds were filled with melted meat fat called tallow. What a nice meal for the mice! That's why candles were kept in tightly covered tin boxes.

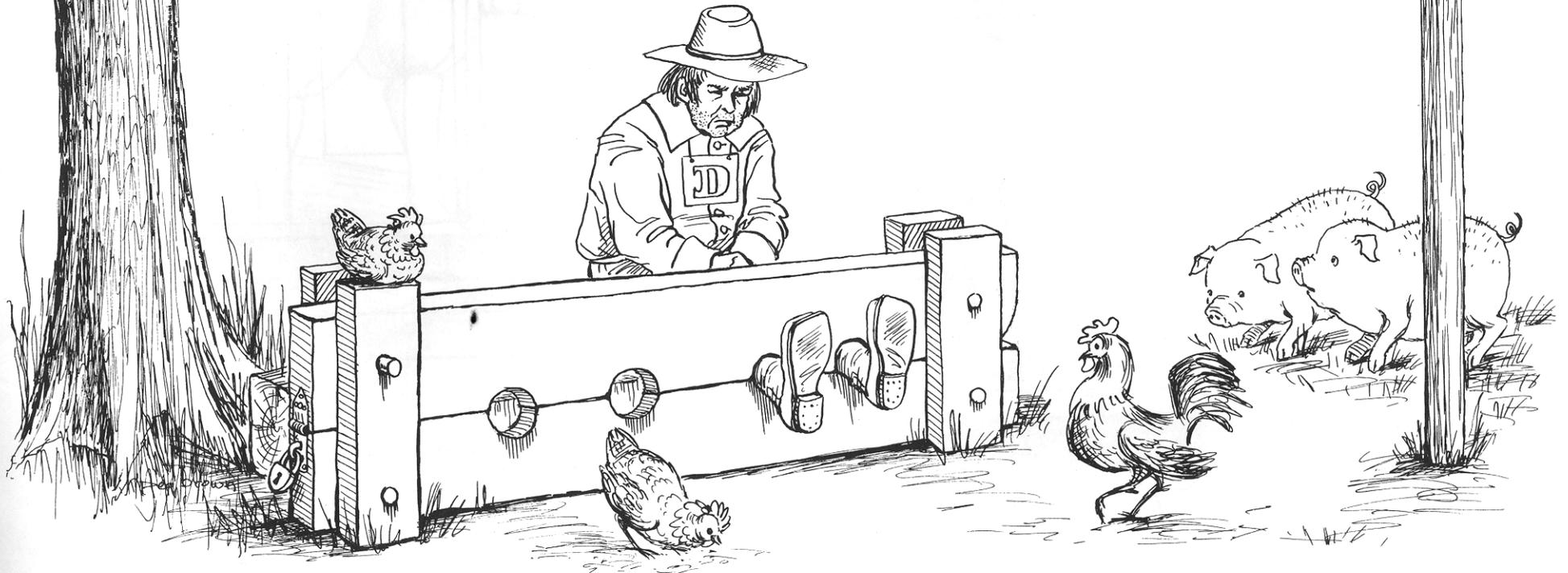
This handsome horseman is someone to sing about! He's Yankee Doodle Dandy! He was a colonial soldier. British soldiers wore fancy uniforms. They were called 'Redcoats'. They made fun of the colonists' plain battle clothes. That's why one Englishman wrote the tune we still sing today.

In time, many colonists came to be unhappy. The King kept asking for more and more taxes. This made them mad. They had no say in the way they were ruled. On April 19, 1775, the first shots were fired in the colonies' fight to be free.

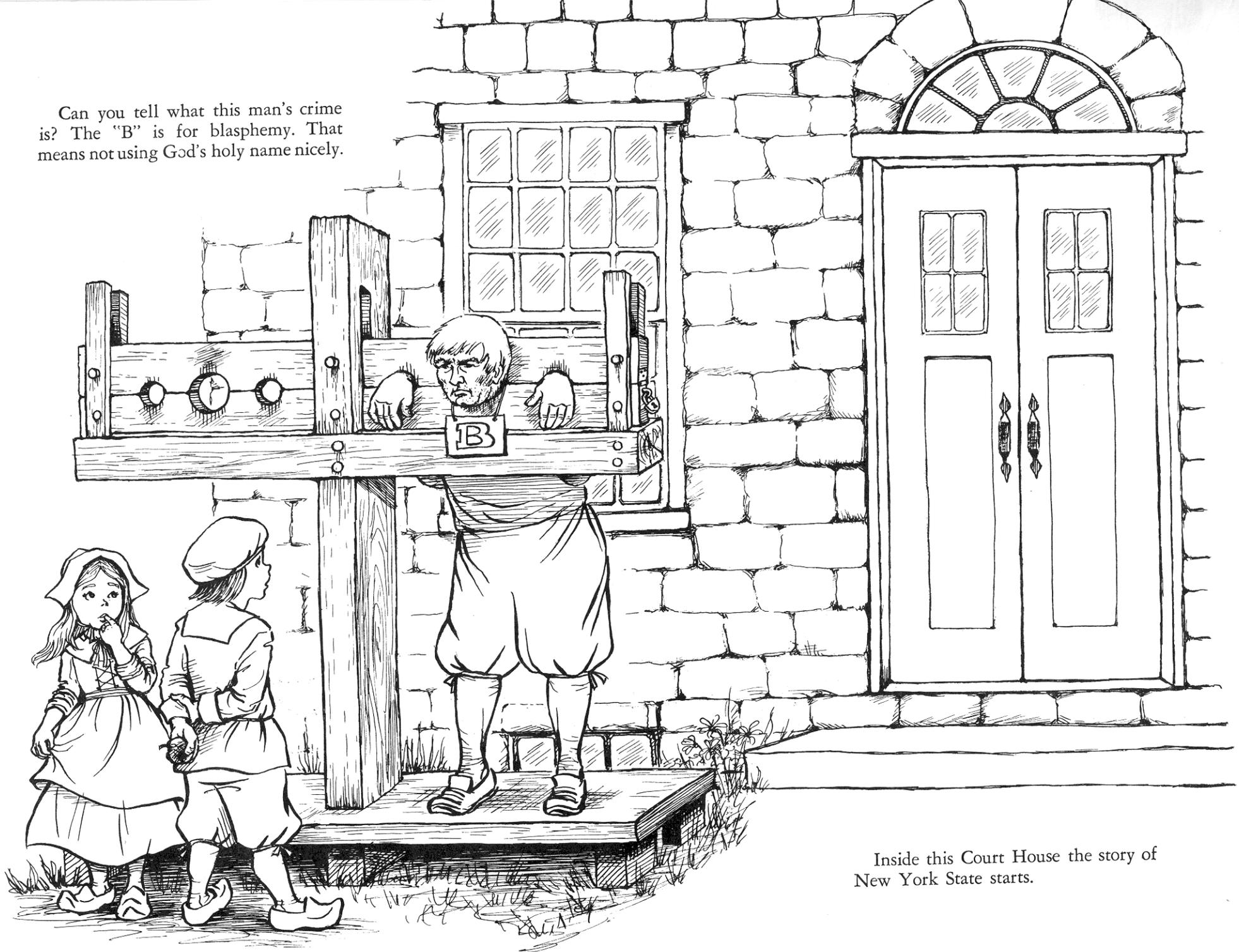


Would you like to spend the day this way? This man must sit a long time locked in the stocks. He did not obey the law. In colonial days, there were lots and lots of laws. You couldn't steal or kill, of course. But it was also a crime to quarrel or kick. It was against the law to smoke on the street when walking with a lady — or to be on the street at all on Sunday! And it was a crime to say bad words — or skip school.

You could tell what a man's crime was by the card he wore around his neck. This unhappy Dutchman drank too much. People were punished outside where everyone could see. Passersby made fun and sometimes threw rotten eggs at someone in the stocks. There was a whipping post too and a town whipper. Even women and young boys were punished this way. The post and stocks stood in front of the Court House.



Can you tell what this man's crime is? The "B" is for blasphemy. That means not using God's holy name nicely.



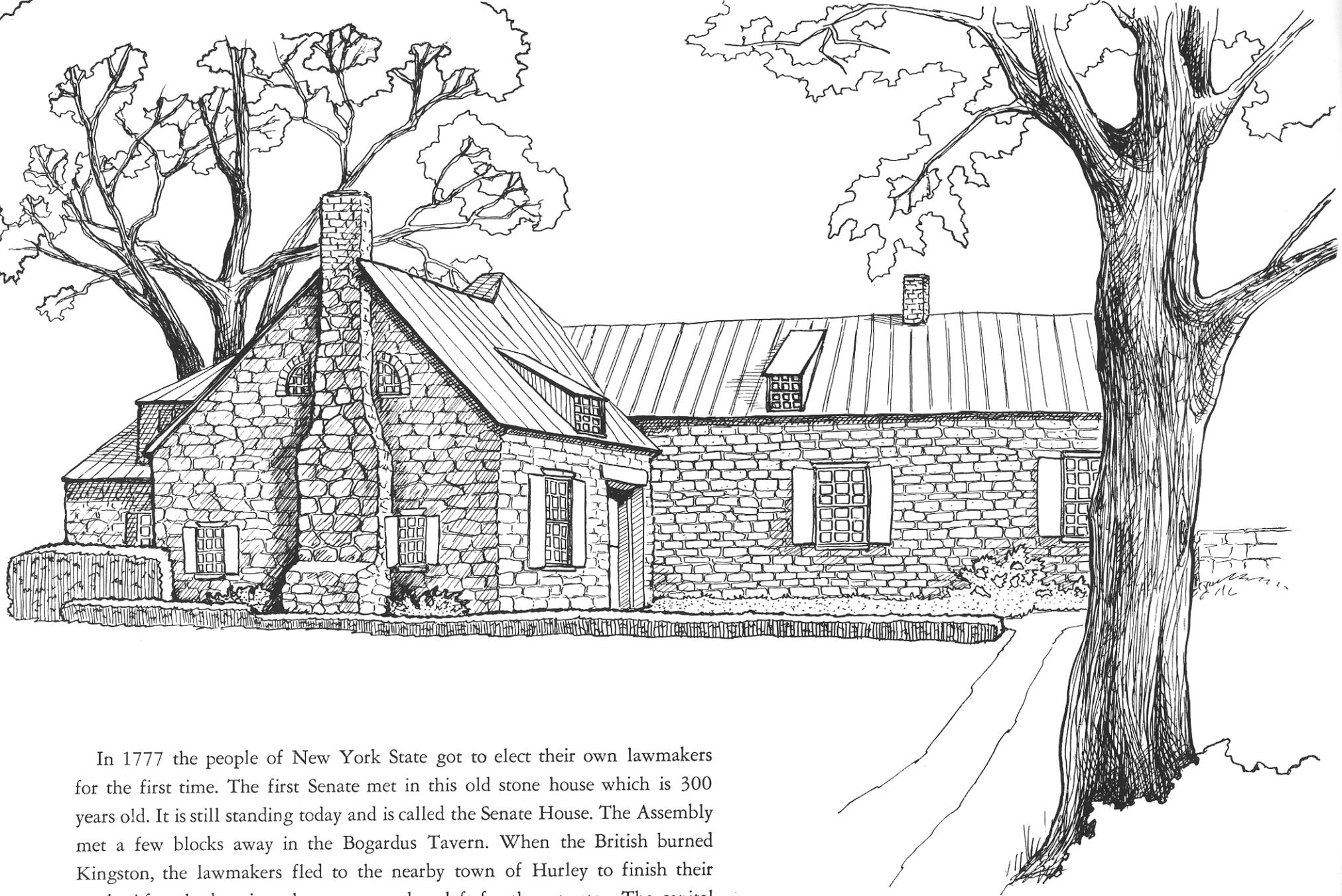
Inside this Court House the story of New York State starts.



On July 4, 1776, the thirteen colonies told the English king that they no longer belonged to him. In this building, one year later, a group of men met to set down rules for the new state about to be born. Below was the jail. Like most jails in those days, it was dirty. The smell from the cellar rose to the noses of those upstairs. At last, they had to pass a rule to let the men smoke so they could go on with their work!

When the Constitution was done, bells were rung. Everyone came to the Court House. An official stood out front on a few wood planks resting on big barrels. Out loud to all the townspeople, he read the first Constitution of New York State.

In this same building, the first court of New York State was held. A very famous judge, John Jay, was the Chief Justice.



In 1777 the people of New York State got to elect their own lawmakers for the first time. The first Senate met in this old stone house which is 300 years old. It is still standing today and is called the Senate House. The Assembly met a few blocks away in the Bogardus Tavern. When the British burned Kingston, the lawmakers fled to the nearby town of Hurley to finish their work. After the burning, there was no place left for them to stay. The capital had to move. But Kingston will always be called "The first capital of New York State".

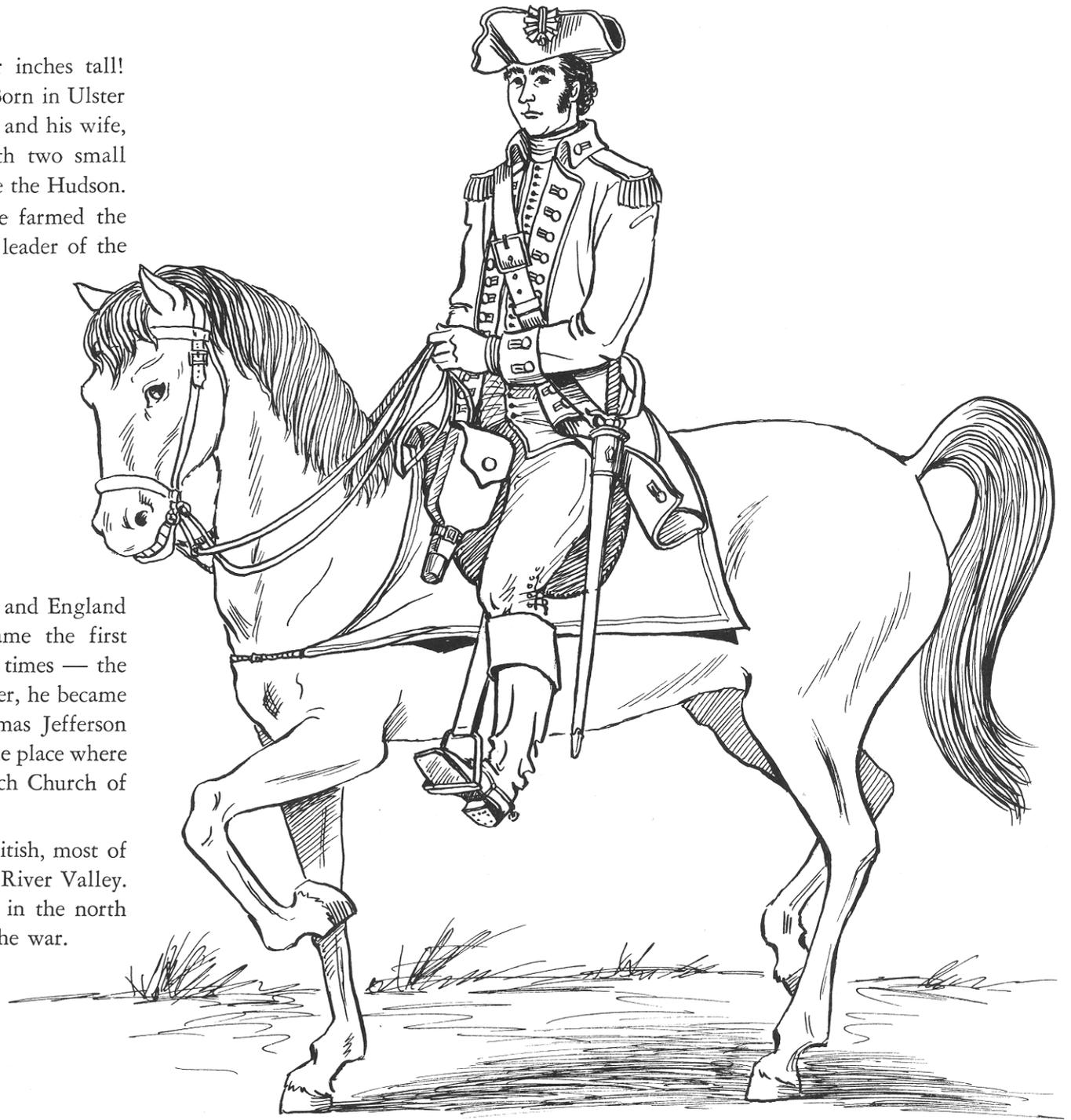
George Clinton stood six feet four inches tall! He was as brave and bold as he was big. Born in Ulster County, Clinton was a country lawyer. He and his wife, Cornelia Tappen of Kingston, lived with two small daughters on a farm high in the hills above the Hudson.

The people liked and trusted him. He farmed the land like most of them. Clinton was the leader of the Continental Army in the Hudson Valley.

One time he slipped away from the British by a fast slide down the side of a hill to the river.

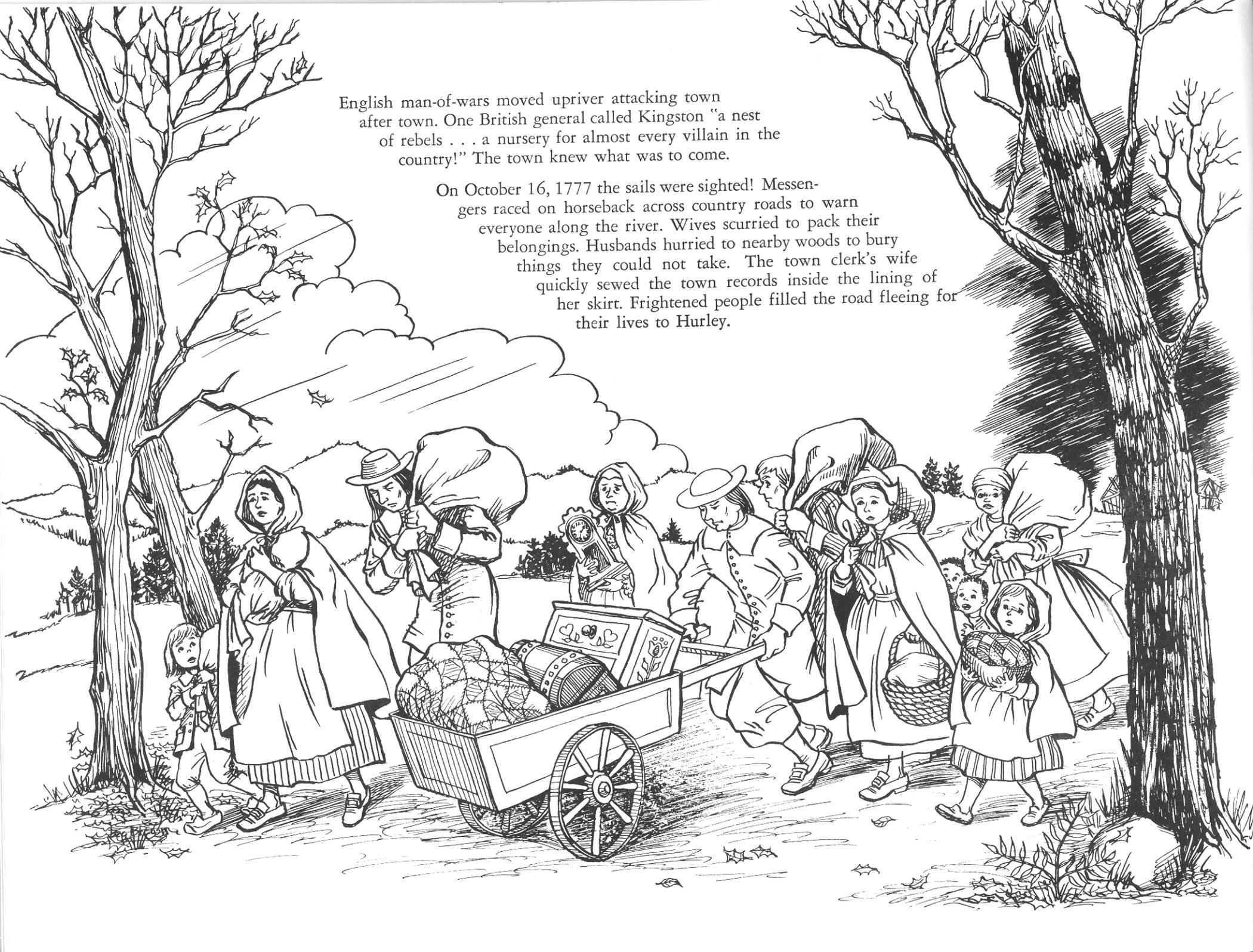
On April 22, 1777, while the colonies and England were still at war, George Clinton became the first governor of New York. He served seven times — the longest of any governor of the State. Later, he became Vice-President of the country under Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. A big stone marks the place where he is buried in the yard of the Old Dutch Church of Kingston.

George Clinton had a big job. The British, most of all, wanted to win control of the Hudson River Valley. This way they could cut off the colonies in the north from the colonies in the south and win the war.

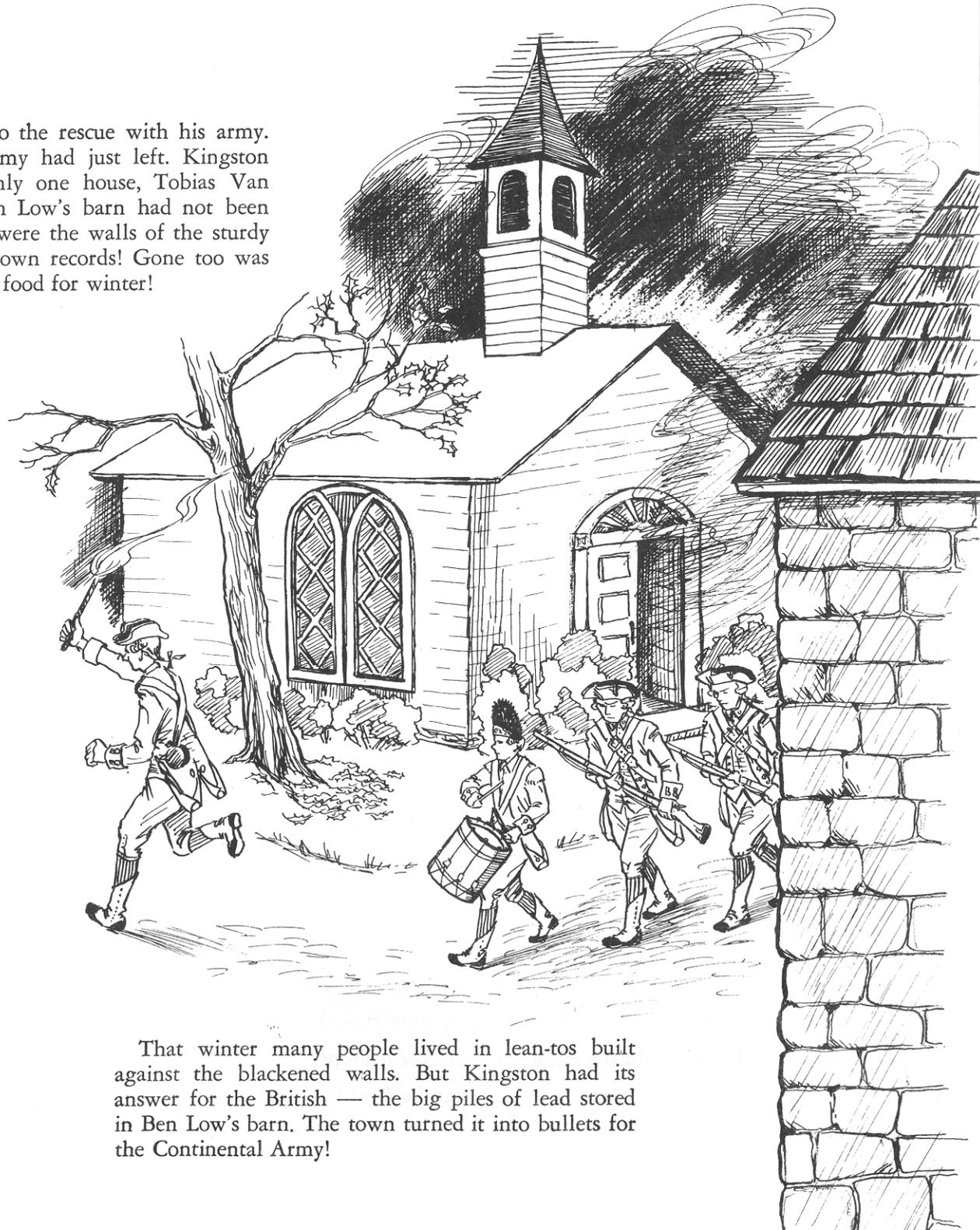
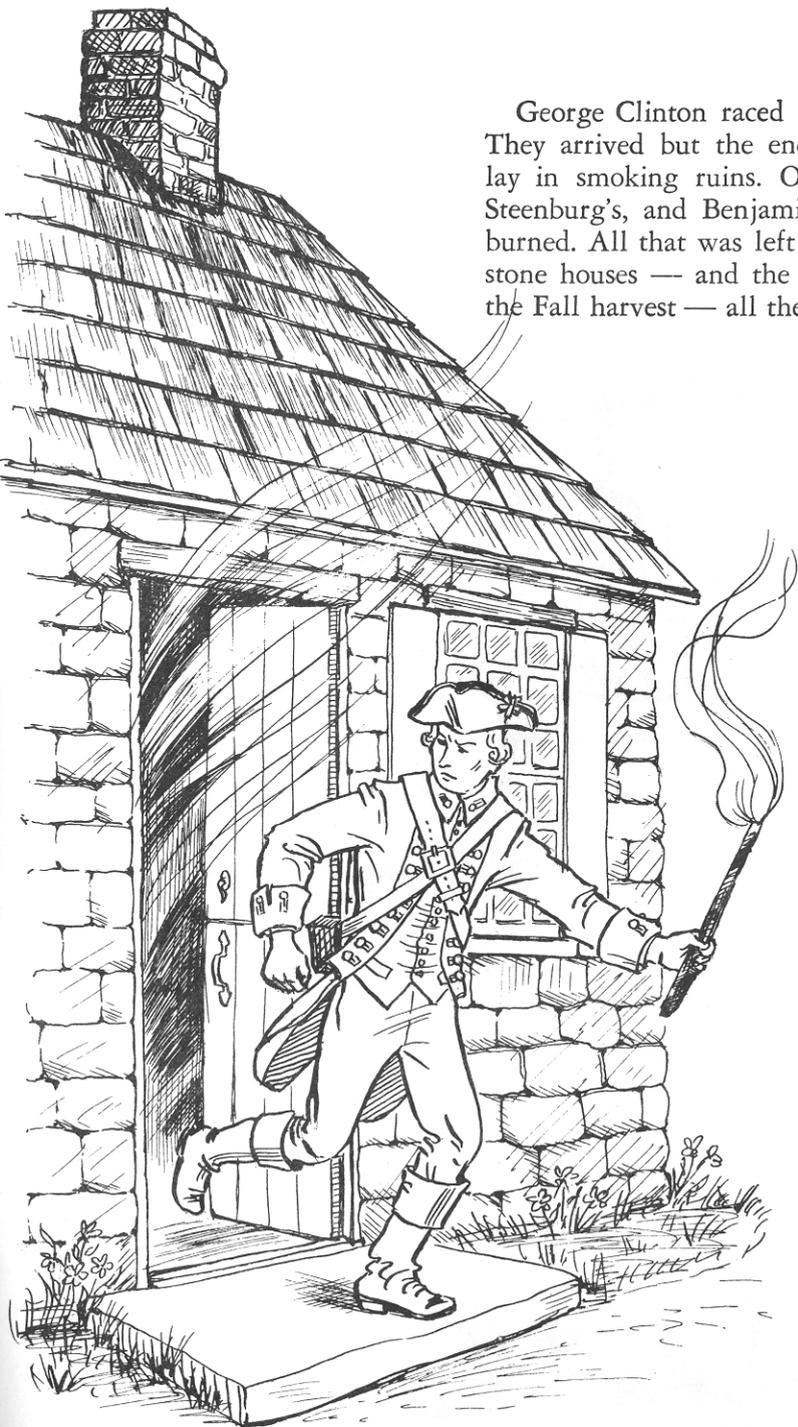


English man-of-wars moved upriver attacking town after town. One British general called Kingston "a nest of rebels . . . a nursery for almost every villain in the country!" The town knew what was to come.

On October 16, 1777 the sails were sighted! Messengers raced on horseback across country roads to warn everyone along the river. Wives scurried to pack their belongings. Husbands hurried to nearby woods to bury things they could not take. The town clerk's wife quickly sewed the town records inside the lining of her skirt. Frightened people filled the road fleeing for their lives to Hurley.



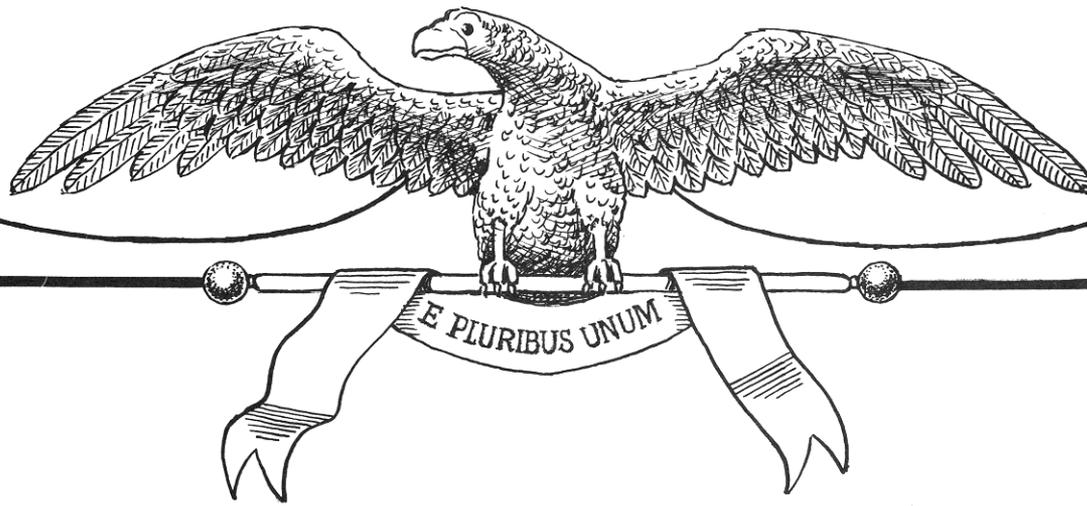
George Clinton raced to the rescue with his army. They arrived but the enemy had just left. Kingston lay in smoking ruins. Only one house, Tobias Van Steenburg's, and Benjamin Low's barn had not been burned. All that was left were the walls of the sturdy stone houses — and the town records! Gone too was the Fall harvest — all the food for winter!



That winter many people lived in lean-tos built against the blackened walls. But Kingston had its answer for the British — the big piles of lead stored in Ben Low's barn. The town turned it into bullets for the Continental Army!

The war lasted eight years. When it was over, the colonies were free. We celebrate our country's birthday on the Fourth of July. On this day in 1776, the colonies signed a paper called the Declaration of Independence. For many years, the townspeople gathered every Fourth of July to hear it read again. Guns and rockets were fired, church bells rang and people paraded. Children filled themselves with gingerbread and cider. Fireworks lit the night sky over North Front Street. Then everyone went home happy to be free!





If Peter Stuyvesant came to Kingston today, what would he say? "A shopping mall! Where is my wall?"

The Stockade is gone — and so is the grist mill and the blacksmith shop. Now, not cow bells, but car horns are heard up and down the busy streets. Sights and sounds are not the same.

But the Dutch are still very much here. Many of their sturdy stone houses stand side by side with modern homes and stores. They are more than 200 years old but are still lived in and loved by families today.

In Dutch days, a house was built to stay. Each stone was hand-cut! The walls were two feet thick! This helped to keep the house cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

Step inside and you can see the fireplace where they cooked in big kettles. Close your eyes and you can almost hear Dutch wives working at their spinning wheels.

But better watch out when the moon lights the night. People say they sometimes see a headless rider on a horse. And no one knows who makes that noise — thump . . . thump . . . thump! Could it be a wooden stump?

