



# METUCHEN AND HER HISTORY,

AND

## THE CHURCHES OF METUCHEN.



### A HISTORICAL SKETCH,

AS GIVEN IN TWO ADDRESSES,

BY

EZRA M. HUNT, M.D.,

*April 14th and April 16th, 1870.*

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*To the Citizens of Metuchen, at whose request and expense  
this Historical Sketch is transferred to print, it  
is respectfully dedicated, by their  
friend, the Author.*

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## METUCHEN AND HER HISTORY.

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Before our village shall have arrived at dimensions which would complicate the work of tracing its history, and ere the statements and traditions of those in whose memories many of the reminiscences of the past are treasured have been forgotten, it seems proper that what is authentic, interesting and valuable should be gathered in such form as to be available to those who come after us and serve to gratify that laudable inclination which most individuals and communities have to recall and perpetuate the historic associations of the vicinity in which their lot is cast.

Situated as our town has been, in portions of two townships, the settlements in these were so correlative to, and connected with that of our own neighborhood, that a reference to them furnishes the proper introduction to what is more specific and local.

Lord Carteret having obtained grant and power over this part of the Jerseys, sent hither his brother, afterward Governor Carteret, to manage the same in his own way.

Carteret arrived here from England in the fall of 1665, with about thirty others, including servants. He went, the next season, to New England,\* "where he so recommended his plan of government and promised the people so much if they would go with him," that he caused a large number to follow him—chiefly from two places in New England—and these are the ones from which came the original settlers of Woodbridge and Piscataway townships. In accord with an agreement made December, 1666,† the Charter for the Township of Woodbridge was granted June 1st, 1669, and included an area of six miles square, which would make its boundary in this direction nearly the same as since. Many of the settlers had come the year before, but titles for lands within the bounds of the township were given "principally in the year 1670"—just two hundred years ago. Among the seventy who at, or near that time, acquired title for lands, we find names still familiar among us, such as Ayres, Blomfield,

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\*See diary of Jasper Donkers and Peter Sluyter, who traveled through here, 1679-80. The original manuscript is published by the Long Island Historical Society, 1867.

† See Whitehead's "Contributions to East Jersey," to which I am here and often indebted.

Conger, Compton, Toppan, Clarkson or Clawson, Martin, etc. Two hundred acres were assigned "for the Ministry," and one hundred acres "for the maintenance of schools."

These original settlers were therefore from New England, and most of them from the town of Newbury, Mass., thirty-four miles north-east of Boston. The graves of the ancestry of the Ayres, Toppan, and others may still be found there. Our township was named after the Rev. John Woodbridge, of Newbury.

Piscataway was chiefly settled by a colony from Piscataqua, near the Maine and New Hampshire line, by a grant dated December, 1666—the same month as the agreement made with the first settlers of Woodbridge. Donkers and Sluyter, the missionary travelers before referred to, speak of both Woodbridge and Piscataway as English villages, for not only were they settled by persons from New England, but their settlements there had been made only about thirty or thirty-five years before by English people.

This, you will remember, was not many years after the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers (1622). I have not been able to ascertain that any of our forefathers actually came over in the Mayflower, which, according to the claims of ancestry, seems to have been a very crowded boat. I doubt not, however, that some of the Newbury and Piscataqua people had seen some of the original immigration, and there is a little tradition that one cause of the settlements here was that some of our good ancestors became a little tired of the exacting strictness of their predecessors, and concluded to come where they could express themselves more freely.

Most of these early settlers were persons of character, imbued with Christian principles, recognizing their dependence upon the blessing of God, and seeking by frugality and industry to promote the interests of their families and society at large.

Among those for whom land was surveyed in Piscataway up to 1690, we find the familiar names of Bonham, Dunn, Dunham, Fitz-Randolph, Giles, Martin, Maning and Mundaye. Of these the Bonhams, Duns, Dunhams, Martins and Manings were from New England. Luther Martin, the famous lawyer of Maryland, and one of the founders of Clio Hall, College of New Jersey, was of this ancestry.

Nicholas Bonham, from whom Bonhamtown has its name, died in 1683.

We are not to overlook another source from which a large immigration to our own immediate section was derived at an early period. In Scotland; and among Protestants and dissenters in Ireland, these were days that tried men's souls. Many were banished, or thought it wise to seek refuge in a land of larger liberty, and Amboy was at this period a prominent landing point.

We know that a Protestant company from Tipperary, in Ireland,



settled in Piscataway in 1683. It is not possible to determine with exactness the particular party of immigrants to which each of the earlier names belonged. I think from circumstantial evidence, that the names Mundaye, Payne, Kelly, Laing, Morris, Noe, Daniels, Freeman, Ross, Talmage, Foard, Thornal, were of this descent, or of those who, impelled by similar motives, arrived with other bands of Scotch and Scotch-Irish refugees.

The name of Nicholas Mundaye appears as an owner of land in Piscataway in 1686, and one of the same name appears as a pewholder of the Presbyterian church here in 1794. This family probably lived on the Vineyard Road, not far from the New Brunswick Turnpike. Moses Martin, who died several years since at an age past ninety, told me that the first of the Mundy name here was said to have come from the West Indies. If so, this would trace him as of those exported thither by the English Government for so-called treason in matters of religion, and in holding "conventicles." Scot, who chartered the "Henry and Francis," which arrived at Amboy in 1685, asked the transfer to him of a large number of persons who had been banished to Jamaica, and twelve were granted him, and others probably came before and afterward.

The name of Martin occurs both in the colony which came from New Hampshire and also among the passengers of the "Henry and Francis." The name as occurring in Woodbridge was probably that of a settler from Amboy, while most of those in Piscataway are of the New Hampshire descent, John Martin being the first one named in the original grant. The farm, at present owned by Wm. R. Martin, on the Turnpike, and near the Vineyard Road, has been in possession of the family for about two hundred years. Before the Parkers had settled in Woodbridge from Staten Island, and the Rowlands from Long Island. The farm quite near here, until recently sold, had been in possession of that family over two hundred years.

In a pamphlet published in Edinburgh in 1683, by the "Scots proprietors" having interests here, "for the information of such as may have a desire to transport themselves or their families hither," seven towns are mentioned as already established, namely, Shrewsbury, Middletown, Bergen, Newark, Elizabethtown, Woodbridge and Piscataway. They are declared to be "well inhabited by a sober and industrious people, who have necessary provision for themselves and families, and for the comfortable entertainment of travelers and strangers."

Some other names of our early settlers it is not difficult to trace directly to the Amboy arrivals.

Lord Neil Campbell, brother of the Earl of Argyle, and like him obnoxious to the English Government, was obliged to flee from Scotland and embarked for East Jersey, and landed at Perth Amboy

about December, 1685. Many of the Campbells came about the same time or accompanied him, as is shown by a list of the passengers of the "Henry and Francis," and some settled in this neighborhood. John Campbell, son of Lord Neil Campbell, died at Amboy 1689, leaving two daughters and one son, named John Campbell, "of whose descendants," says Whitehead, "I have no knowledge." The oldest stone in the old grave-yard here, so far as I know, is that of John Campbell, who died in 1731, aged seventy-two years. Next to his is the grave of Neil Campbell, who died in 1777, aged forty-three. The name here is of this stock and kin. The present Duke of Argyle, so eminent in statesmanship, in philosophy, and in exemplary character, is of this lineage.

The Craiges, Edgars, Jacksons, and probably the Hamptons and Potters, were of this same Scottish faith, and like the Scotch-Irish families before named, preferred banishment to that unlawful authority which attempted to govern them in matters of conscience.

The Ackens, Crowells, Carmans, and the "Manings" of the Maning Thornal family, were among those who came to Amboy in the famous "Caledonia" during the Scottish troubles of 1715. All these were Presbyterian Covenanters.

With such settlements from New England, Scotland and Ireland, it can be said of us as truly as it has been said with other reference, that we too had the "wheat of three kingdoms," and thus furnished, had vouchsafed to us foundation material most hopeful and substantial.

The settlers about Woodbridge village maintained religious worship, although the church was not instituted until 1792. Town and church matters were so united, after New England custom, that our people here were in both alike identified with them, except such as were included in Piscataway. The Baptist church in Piscataway was established in 1680, and this too was part and parcel of "town affairs," and was voted about and provided for at "town meetings," like other material interests.

The first Seventh-Day Baptist congregation in New Jersey had its meeting-house above New Durham at the head of the Amboy and Boundbrook Turnpike, which passes through this village. Its formation is said to have resulted from a discussion between one Mr. Bonham and a minister named Durham as to the proper day to be observed. After the meeting-house was removed toward Newmarket, some of the Bonham family settled among those of their faith in Shiloh, West Jersey, where the name still obtains; and I have somewhere been told that Bonham, Texas, owes its name to a branch of this family. I have noted this fact because the name Bonhamtown makes these accessory incidents of interest to us, as being derived from this family. The wife of Jacob Ayres, whose descendants are still among us, had Bonham as her maiden name.



The name Metuching was applied to the section of country bounded by the Short Hills on the north, by Piscataway on the west, by the Raritan on the south, and by Rahway on the East, without any very precise limits of territory. Local names, such as those of Pumptown, Allentown, Bonhamtown, were sometimes used, but this was the general appellative, and the church was always known as the Metuching Meeting-house. There is reason to believe that the name was more distinctly applied to the region between where Mr. Greason's house now is and the Oak tree neighborhood. I have in my possession a deed executed in 1811, in which a certain piece of land beyond Pumptown is described as on the road leading from Metuchen to Bonhamtown. As more business was done in that direction than here, it is not surprising that the name was prominently applied to that vicinity. All these smaller towns are now included in the village of Metuchen.

As to the origin of the name, I think there can be but little question. History acquaints us with the fact that there were many Indian tribes in New Jersey.\* The early settlers about Orange and Newark purchased the land from the Indians, and the adjacent name of Rahway is quite traceable to an Indian origin. I have it from Mr. Compton, now seventy-eight years of age, that his father told him that in his earlier years there were several Indian families hereabouts, and contemporary history confirms the fact. 'The Indians of New Jersey were divided among twenty kings, of whom the king of the Raritans was the greatest.\* His domain reached all along the valley of the Raritan, of which our section was regarded as a part. It is a uniform tradition that a local leader called Metucheeon had his camp in this section, and is probably buried on the farm now occupied by Lebbeus Ayres. Indian arrows, axes and utensils from time to time plowed up in this locality seem to attest the fact of a former encampment there. No one is so old as to remember the chief, but he probably belonged to the period between 1650 and 1700. The name "Squaw Field," which from time immemorial has attached to a part of the Strong farm, would seem to point to some circumstance in early Indian history; but as at that time the doctrine of Homestead Exemption and Female Rights had not become fully developed, we scarcely suppose that the lady aforesaid had a separate dowry. General Ezra A. Carman is quite confident that he has seen the name Metuchen appended to a deed among the papers of the N. J. Historical Society. A hypothesis has been entertained that the name is an Indian term for "rolling land," in reference to the undulating character of the country. I have been able to trace this tradition to a branch of Fred-

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\* See foot-note in address of Rev. Mr. Cowen, of Millstone, 1866.



erick Mundy's family, so that it is not the mere pleasant fancy that it was once viewed by some to be.

It was not uncommon in ancient times, and still is not in formative states of society, to designate a leading individual by the name of his locality, and I am under the impression from all that I can gather, that this section had received its name from the Raritans because of its "short hill," undulating character, and that the recognized head Indian of the neighborhood was by them designated by the Indian name of this locality as Metucheon, or chief of the rolling land.

In a pamphlet on Indian traditions, published (1868) by Rev. N. N. Jones, called Indian Bulletin No. 2, kindly furnished to me by George Tait, Esq., there is the following record :

"Ma-touch-in, much rise up, much hill, from *mach*, much, and *tahshinunuk*, lifted up. Or mut, from *amut*, a hill, and *ish* or *oush*, intensive, having the sense of high—high hill. It is said to be the highest spot between New York and Trenton. Its natural scenery is the most attractive of any on the route from New York to Philadelphia."

Mr. Jones, who has visited me since this address was given, informs me that he arrived at his conclusion as to the meaning without at all knowing the opinion here, but simply from a study and analysis of Indian words, and is thoroughly satisfied that it has its origin in the rolling or "short-hill" character of the landscape.

This derivation almost settles the origin of the name as claimed by many, and yet does not contradict the tradition which I have traced very far back, that the local Indian chief was called by the name of this locality.

When I was in the army an odd story as to the name was told me by Col. Josiah Simpson, U. S. A., Medical Director at Baltimore, and he had it from the venerable Col. W. Scott, of New Brunswick. Soon after the Turnpike from New York to New Brunswick was opened, a robbery of a horse and carriage occurred at the Cedars, near New Brunswick, and two men followed in pursuit. After riding three or four miles along this road, they met a traveling Frenchman and inquired of him whether he had met with a man driving a carriage in haste. The poor Frenchman could only understand the word "met," and so replied "met-tu-chien," which in Canada French is "met two dogs." Over and over again did they try to make the Frenchman understand, but his constant and vociferous reply was, "met-tu-chien." Coming at length to a store and a public house with a similar sign, they at once concluded this to be the place about which the traveler had talked. It is what Dickens might call "a remarkable coincidence;" but we are quite sure Metuchen is neither dog-French nor dog-Latin, but genuine Indian aboriginal.

It is so distinctive, that Methuen, the name of a manufac-

turing town in Massachusetts, is the only one on our continent at all resembling it.

An effort in 1867 to change it did not meet with public approval, and although the word has in it more of strength than euphony, we will garland it with the poetry of Indian romance, and when we come to be a city will sound it as gracefully as ever does Longfellow his Mandamin and Wenonah, his Hiawatha and Algonquin.

As to the spelling of the name, the authority is manifold but contradictory. The Indian antiquarian already referred to gives the form Matouchin, and this is the more usual Revolutionary and early Gazetteer orthography. In the old church books the uniform spelling up to 1800 is Metuching, but afterward there are many variations. Most old deeds seem to have taken the privilege of shortening the "ing" into "en," which quite conforms to the habit if not the idiom of our language. Of words pronounced like this "in" is not the most usual termination, and so if we change it at all we will spell it like Heaven and call it Metuchen.

This form was always used by such good authorities as Simeon Mundy and Ezra Ayres, and as the form of the first post-office register and of the first railroad sign at Campbell's Station, it may well be accepted as the best uniform orthography.

And now having found out what our name is and how to spell it—two of the earliest efforts one can make toward intelligent recognition—we are prepared to proceed to other matters of history.

In our early colonial period there is little for extraordinary record. An industrious and moral society followed those avocations which developed the soil and supplied the then existing wants of community, and when great subjects of political bearing came to be discussed, the first printing-press in New Jersey—that of James Parker at Woodbridge—did not fail to acquaint the good people of our vicinity with the character of the questions at issue. Woodbridge township was even at this period an influential part of East Jersey, and Piscataway town was at one time the county seat of Middlesex and Somerset Counties (see Thomas' Gazetteer). In the first legislative assembly held in 1668, Woodbridge township was represented.

You will remember that as early as 1765 a Colonial Congress assembled in New York, and declaring their grievances, protested against the Stamp Act, and claimed the right of regulating their own taxes. It is recorded that the "Sons of Liberty" of Woodbridge and Piscataway took the lead, in 1765-6, in several of the prominent measures of the day, and it was through their interference mainly, that William Coxe, of Philadelphia, was led to decline the office of Stamp Distributor for New Jersey. A deputation from them to that gentleman, while instructed to treat him with great deference and respect, bore to him a communication to the effect



that, "a week's delay in resigning the office would render a visit from them in a body necessary, and produce results mutually disagreeable."<sup>\*</sup>

These and like protests compelled Stamp officers to resign, and the Act itself was soon after repealed.

During the period of our Revolution there is incidental evidence that this region and its people fully shared in all the privations and perils to which New Jersey and its inhabitants were greatly subjected.

It is not forgotten by you that the period of 1776, after the Declaration of Independence, was especially one of disaster and defeat. After the unfortunate conflict of August 27th, 1776, on Long Island, and after the disasters of White Plains and Fort Washington, and the evacuation of Fort Lee, (November 20th, 1776,) our broken army hastened its retreat by way of Newark, Bonhamtown and New Brunswick to Trenton, and could afford no protection to our people. We were left at the mercy of the British forces, and under these circumstances had but little hope from the exultant English and the hired Hessians, ready to exercise the rights of victors and to despoil both the land and the people.

So dispirited, broken, and completely routed did Lord Cornwallis regard the American forces at the time of their retreat through the Jerseys, that he considered the rebellion crushed, and proceeded to New York to take the first vessel to England.

Lord Howe was also in New York, and with British and Hessian troops scattered through New Jersey from the Hudson to the Delaware, was waiting for the freezing of the river for the purpose of crossing, and, as Cornwallis termed it, "bagging the fox in the morning."<sup>†</sup>

But it was our own glorious band of patriots that did the bagging, and by the capture of the Hessians near Trenton, (December 25th, 1776,) and the battle of Princeton a few days after, revived the drooping hopes of our fathers. British troops were now stationed at Perth Amboy, in those old buildings of colonial times still known as "the Barracks," and for a time there was also a camp at Bonhamtown, now so much a part of our own village.

After the successes of Trenton and Princeton, it was the policy of Washington to retrace his course through New Jersey, and May 28th, 1777, he took position with his army in the rear of Plainfield and along the line of hills so plainly seen to our north, and from points such as Washington Rock he and his officers, with vigil eye, watched the whole region of country reaching toward the encampments of the British forces, at and adjacent to Perth Amboy.

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<sup>\*</sup> See Whitehead's History.

<sup>†</sup> See Davidson's address, Feb. 22, 1867, and Whitehead's Correspondence.



The entire road through Woodbridge, Bonhamtown and Piscataway was guarded by British troops, and from various points scouts were sent out and raids were made. The crossing and the recrossing, and the skirmishing of detachments of either army through this immediate neighborhood occurred with alarming frequency, and our people suffered much from fear, foraging and personal molestation.

Five regiments of British troops were stationed at Bonhamtown, the officers taking possession of a house where Mr. Benjamin Tappen now lives, and, without due notice, dispossessing its owner, the grandfather of Jerome Ross.

At one time we have the record that "Lord Howe, for the purpose of drawing Washington from the heights, crossed from Perth Amboy to Staten Island, while part of the Continental army hung on the rear of the British and inflicted considerable loss on the retiring foe. Howe suddenly recrossing, (June 25th, 1777,) and marching rapidly to gain the Short Hills, General Sterling struck his forces at Matouchin Church, and detaining the enemy, skirmished with his entire line. Lord Cornwallis pressed forward with another detachment, but his advance was disputed at Quibbletown, (now Dunellen,) and again on the Westfield road, and the feint at Bonhamtown proved a failure. The British commander again outgeneraled, and his army again outmarched, fell back to Amboy. A marauding party sent out by Cornwallis was routed at Spanktown, (now Rahway,) and indeed almost every cross-road within a circuit of twenty miles from this spot was the scene of conflict between the American forces and the common enemy—Elizabethtown, Springfield, the Short Hills, etc., witnessed the valor and triumph of our forces."\*

My maternal grandfather, Ezra Mundy, who was born near Oak Tree school-house, and who, after retiring from business in New York City, settled in this section, used to love to amuse me by stories as to some of these chasings and encounters; and not unfrequently the loyal farmers, by watch and plot, helped to decoy and entrap the cavalry of the enemy. He has told me that he well remembered, when a child, being in an old barn near Oak Tree school-house with numbers of women and children who had fled there for safety while a detachment of British troops was passing from the shore toward the mountains. His father being in service, he was taken thither by his mother, and while playing with other children his attention was arrested by a woman who said to another, "how little these children know of our danger." Soon after a cannon-ball passed through the building and hushed even them to silence. The hiding-place was not discovered, and so they escaped unharmed.

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\* See "Civil War in America," and "General Howe's Letters."

On a window-pane of the east room in the house now occupied by Benajah Kelley, near Oak Tree, is still to be seen the following record, cut into the glass:

"Capt. Wm. Thompson arrived at this house from New York 10th Day of October 1775 and with sorrow and harts Distress he many days here spent much. . . ."

Above it is the name of John Cutter, also. It is probable that this was once used as a guard-house by the British, and prominent prisoners of war were here temporarily detained.

The grandfather of Henry Compton, and brother of Samuel Compton's father, lived by the brook between here and Bonhamtown, and soon after the British made encampment there, finding that he had two sons in the army, they took possession of his six horses, thirty head of cattle, and fifty sheep, gave him the venerable old grey horse and a wagon, and telling him to put on board his bed, furniture and family, gave him just time to leave before setting fire to the buildings.

The father of Henry Campbell, Sr., then lived where the grandson now lives, opposite the house of Mr. Greason, and by one of these scouting parties he was taken from a sick bed, placed on horseback behind a cavalryman, and conveyed to the encampment at Bonhamtown. Soon after, the British were compelled to make sudden retreat toward New Brunswick, and as they were going through the cedars this side of the bridge, he escaped and found his way to the house of a friend in Piscataway town.

Just after Mr. Campbell was captured, some of the neighbors went out as a spy corps, to see if they could in any way get trace of him. They were on foot, and being discovered by the British cavalry, were chased to what is now the corner of the old grave-yard lot, but there leaving the main road, they cut across the low ground, where the horses of their pursuers mired, and they being out of rifle-shot made good their escape.

Annoyances such as the presence of hostile armies and frequent skirmishes always inflict, continued until nearly the close of the war, detachments of both armies being often in this section.

So late as June, 1780, we have a record of an attack upon General Greene, who was stationed among the Short Hills, and soon after the British retreated from Perth Amboy, Woodbridge, Rahway, Elizabeth and New Jersey generally, by way of Staten Island.

We need seek no further into our portion of home Revolutionary history than thus to know that the citizens generally were loyal to the interests of freedom, and bore with fortitude the many molestations to which the proximity of armies subjected them.

Our forefathers no doubt welcomed the return of peace with all the more gladness because of these exposures—really more harassing, and requiring more patriotism than that active participation in conflict which some of them shared. They seem soon to have set themselves, with manly industry, to the replenishing of their empty purses and the improvement of their foraged farms, that the homes for which they had suffered might be adorned with thrift and comfort, and that by vigorously adding to the material productions of the new nation, they might secure the highest blessings of a blood-bought and peril-endured freedom.

Could you have stood upon Prospect Hill on some May-day morning of the year 1800, and taken a survey of this whole region,



you would have seen the same beautiful valley, with the range of blue hills to the north, with the Raritan river and bay to the south, and with the picturesque and undulating variety of slope and dale to the east and the west, surrounding the leveler intermediate plateau; but how different the roads, the people, the houses and the landmarks. Not a building is now standing which you then would have recognized, and the old brown head-stones of the old grave-yard are the only unchanged erections and silent mementoes of the past.

The Turnpike road from New York to Philadelphia, where it passes through our village, now known as Middlesex Avenue, had not yet been made, and the Turnpike from Perth Amboy, which passes under the railroad bridge, and so on to New Durham, was still a part of the fields.

The only access from Piscataway was either by the Bonhamtown road or by that running by Campbell Tappen's and coming-out by the house of Ellis F. Ayres.

The old Woodbridge road passing the Presbyterian Church was the route both to Woodbridge and Perth Amboy. The town we now call Metuchen was really a place with one main road, reaching from the Short Hills to Bonhamtown, intersected here only by the Piscataway road near the house of Ellis F. Ayres, by the Woodbridge road opposite the old grave-yard, and then running on to the Bonhamtown road, which was the thoroughfare route between Philadelphia and New York, over which Washington had passed on his way to his inauguration as President, and which was a chief post-road of the State.

At the south-east end of the old grave-yard stood the Presbyterian meeting-house, of which the Rev. Henry Cook was the pastor. On the corner opposite lived a man of the name of Mundy, who, although not addicted to cowardice, was once somewhat startled by a ghost. One night he heard a strange noise, and looking out of his window, saw a white object in the grave-yard moving to and fro, with an occasional suppressed groan. It really seemed as if some spirit was abroad, and though at first hesitating, he concluded to make advance upon it. With due preparation, he betook himself through the darkness to the spot, and as he approached, still unable to discern what it meant, he could only see that the being retreated not at his coming, but swayed up and down as if looking out from a grave and then withdrawing into it. Summoning new courage, he marched up to the spot and found that a grave had caved in and that a stray sheep had fallen into the pit and, unable to extricate himself, could only signal his trouble by stretching his head ever and anon above the surface. The ghost was relieved from his dilemma, and the story lives to show how many a grave-yard apparition of human form and spirit has no better basis in fact.



Between the point now occupied by Edgars & Acken's store and the road which comes out by Ellis F. Ayres' house, there were but five houses.

The nearest school-houses were a log building facing the Vineyard road; one near the first bridge above Pumptown, and another where the Lafayette school-house now stands. The mill stood on the brook toward Bonhamtown, near the bridge adjacent to the house of Samuel Lafarge. The chief store of those parts was kept near the Oak Tree, on the place now occupied by Benajah Kelly, by Major Carman, the father of M. F. Carman, and the maternal grandfather of Governor Randolph, the present Governor of our State. It was a depot between the up-country and river trade, to which came the great farm wagons of the upper counties laden with grain, butter, wool, flax, etc., and received in return the various articles of merchandise. The business then done at that point was greater than is now transacted by any one store of our place. Major Carman, about 1803, sold the building for a hat factory and removed to New Brunswick. Ezekiel Ayres kept a hotel near where Howard Ayres now resides, and the famous pump at which travelers watered their horses gave to the place the name of Pumptown.

In the house, since enlarged, and now occupied by the Misses Deborah and Eunice Bonham Ayres, lived a Mrs. Allen, and on it was a sign, "'Allentown'—Cake and Beer sold here." Between the long meeting which, according to New England custom, was held morning and afternoon, with half an hour or an hour intermission, it was not unusual for the young men to get a ginger cake and a glass of beer at this famous restaurant. Some, however, of the older people brought a lunch with them, and at a little later period some one took up the plan of driving to the meeting-house, just as the first meeting was out, with some plain refreshments. In these days women as well as men sometimes rode to church on horseback, and now and then voted at town elections as was their privilege.

Miss Deborah Ayres, our oldest inhabitant, was born in 1780, near where Mr. Christol's house now is, and where her grandfather then lived. He built there a blacksmith shop, that her father might learn the trade, which he did, and after a time moved the shop to where John Talmage now resides, and lived there until his death, in 1836.

Benajah Campbell occupied the house where Samuel Durham now lives, but it then stood over in the field a little to the south-west of that point. He was trustee of the Vineyard school, and Ezra Ayres once told me that, having finished his arithmetic, and being a fair penman, when about fifteen years of age, in the scarcity of teachers, Mr. Campbell invited him to take charge of the school, but not thinking he had learning enough for that, he declined.

Doctor Melancthon Freeman, who lived on the Ezra Mundy place beyond Pumpton, was the chief doctor, and Dr. Nathan Martin, the grandfather of Gershom Martin, who lived near the present residence of C. C. Poole, also shared the practice.

With these items as to roads, church, shops, stores, school-houses, and a few residences, and with the addition of a half dozen small farm-houses within the circuit of a mile, and mostly reached by lanes or short roads, you can easily picture to yourself the Metuchen of 1800 in its undeveloped infancy—having a good character, but not very much of it, and though having some germs of its future, not as yet having started into any very demonstrative development. Indeed, Oak Tree and Bonhamtown were its more stirring suburbs. The church had been built centrally between the two, to accommodate both, and the parts of Piscataway toward New Durham, and only a very little village had begun to nucleate here. The good old times had not yet fully passed away : farming had not become an antiquated and homespun thing ; butter was nine pence a pound, eggs six pence a dozen—and a baker's dozen at that—and buckwheat cakes and honey didn't give old-fashioned stomachs the dyspepsia. The great brick oven burned up all the old posts and rails on the farm, and furnished home-made bread not baked in a pan : milk was too cheap to sell ; farmers, unlike doctors, did their own killing and curing, and a lamb from the flock or a calf from the stall was easily changed about among the neighbors, so that neither baker, milkman or butcher needed to make their daily rounds ; the wide fire-place, which would take in half a tree for a back log, blazed away without any thoughts as to the price of wood and coal, and gas-burners had not yet reported. Linen was cheap, and collars high enough to reach up to the hat and keep out the cold ; linsey-woolsey had partly disappeared, but many a farmer's daughter curtsied in her becoming calico, and many a successful sparking was had by the embers of a Franklin fire and the dull light of a tallow candle, nuts, apples, doughnuts, mince pie and a mug of cider being passed around between ten and twelve o'clock. One did not then have to bow in "tights," at an angle of over 45°, and study up on the latest novel, and know the difference between a piano-forte and a melodeon, in order to be considered intelligent enough for matrimony, and was not so much in danger as now of being considered familiar because of a smacking salutation. But somehow I know of good matches made in those days, and I must give it as my opinion, (non-professional,) that at least a medium between these ancient habits and modern formality would be more conducive to family ties and not cause so many young gentlemen to postpone propositions out of sheer embarrassment, and from that modesty so characteristic of our sex.

The next quarter of a century—from 1800 to 1825—wrought



some important changes in this vicinity. At this period, the construction of roads was as much connected with development and the progress of civilization, and excited as much interest as that of railroads since.

Up to this time, communication between New York and Philadelphia was had by conveyances from Trenton to Blazing Star or Amboy or Elizabeth Point passing through by Bonhamtown. It was considered something of an advance when, in 1765, "covered Jersey wagons," without springs, running twice a week, enable travelers to make the time in three days; and a line afterward "of good stage wagons, and the seats on springs," which in summer got the passengers through in two days, was known as the "Flying Machine line," and up to the year 1800 there was little improvement upon that. Drivers cracked their whips and ran their races along the lower sand road with as much enthusiasm as if striving for steamboat or railroad speed, and by the journey's end the horses were enough jaded, and the passengers enough jolted, and the reinsman enough "treated," to make rest convenient for the whole party.

The charter for the "Essex and Middlesex" Turnpike, from Newark to New Brunswick, was procured March, 1806, and that for the "Amboy and Boundbrook" Turnpike, which passes under the railroad bridge and on through New Durham, was procured June, 1808. Both were probably finished by 1810. This, of course, made lively times in the little village, which thus became a place on two regular lines of travel.

The stage-coach passing through the town realized to it a connection with the adjacent cities, and occasioned the usual amount of awakened interest. If you have ever traveled in a section which had no other mode of communication with the outside world, you can easily picture to yourselves the curiosity thus excited. Either from the driver, or from the passengers, or from an occasional newspaper left with the landlord, the latest accident, or the most important and recent public occurrence was duly heralded.

Great rivalry existed between various lines, and Rev. Dr. Beattie, of Steubenville, but formerly of New Jersey, has told me that he well remembered riding through here when two finger-boards at the intersection of the two turnpikes, pointing in different directions, each assured the passer-by that it designated the nearest route to New York.

Public houses sprung up in abundance, to accommodate travelers and the group that gathered at evening to hear local and general news.

At one time or other in this period a public house was kept by Mr. Harriot in a small building, where R. R. Freeman now lives, and until about 1826; another on the corner now owned by Mr. Swan; another by John Hampton, Sr., in the Board house, and still another



opposite. The house of Mr. Board had just been built at the foot of the hill, and from the inability of its owner to finish it, obtained the name of Ross' Folly. The public house of Mr. Campbell, opposite, had been moved from a field near by, and refitted soon after the turnpike opened. A store was also kept in the small house opposite, and another where Alexander Ayres now lives. Col. Robert Ross resided where the Vail House now stands until the time of his death, in 1827. A school-house had been moved soon after the Turnpike was opened to the locality of the present one. Rev. Mr. Cook was still pastor of the church, and so remained until his death, in 1824.

Dr. Manning, a son-in-law of Dr. Melancthon Freeman, and Dr. Cool practised here for a time; but in the later portion of this period Dr. Wm. Martin, who lived at the corner known as Pumtowntown, and also kept store, was the chief practitioner. In 1814 and 1815 the name of Dr. Van Meulen also appears.

Ezra Mundy and two or three others of the same surname who had gone from this place to New York, and been successful enough as merchants to buy farms, soon after 1800 returned and located here, and also Simeon Mundy, from New Brunswick, about 1823.

Bethune Duncan, the brother of Chief Justice Duncan of South Carolina, and so well remembered by many of us, commenced teaching school at Oak Tree October, 1819, and continued his service there for forty-five years. He was born in Boston June 6th, 1786, and is therefore now in his eighty-fourth year. As a clerk in counting-houses in Philadelphia, New York, Savannah and Charleston, he had added to a good English education excellent business training. The house he served sent him to India, and after mercantile employment there for a year, he returned to find his father dead, his employer broken, and himself without funds. "But," says he, in a letter to me, "I did not despair. The world was all before me. I had all my limbs in good order, and left Jersey City in good heart, with two shillings and three pence in my pocket." Seeking employment of some kind, he came to the house of Major Frazee Ayres, who directed him to Mr. Henry Campbell, with whom he staid until Mr. Ayres secured him an appointment as teacher. He had found his place, for he loved books and children, was competent in all he undertook to teach, and many a man and woman of this vicinity received from him thorough knowledge and impress of character, which has done much to make them valued and efficient citizens. Elegant in penmanship, exact in reading, spelling, arithmetic and bookkeeping; a good disciplinarian, and devoted to his work, he could not but succeed. All the money he could spare he spent in flowers and in books, giving presents, circulating his library, and delighting to ornament the gardens of his patrons with slips and bulbs from his choicest selections. He was

ever welcome at the homes of his pupils; at every wedding was always a favorite guest, and in single blessedness enjoyed his life among us until increasing years made rest and recreation desirable. To his pleasant home in the family of his sister, Mrs. Dr. Adams, of Waltham, Mass., he is followed by the grateful good wishes of hundreds of scholars and friends.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century occurred our second war with Great Britain, which, by the high prices prevailing for many articles raised by our farmers, was, in a pecuniary point of view, an advantage to our community. I remember well hearing John Hampton, Sr., who was then a leading and successful farmer, tell how he made money very fast by selling wood at fourteen dollars a cord; and other things were somewhat in proportion.

Although this great epoch, both in European and American history, did not reflect any very wonderful events into Metuchen, yet a gradual increase of population and thrift, and the changes already noted, were foundations for progress, which the lapse of time has made more apparent. Material prosperity was increasing, religious interests were advancing, and intelligence was at least so valued that, as I judge from a subscription list I have seen, a circulating library had been secured.

The patriotism which had been evolved by the memories of '76, and replenished by the events of 1812-14, continued to be cherished. The Fourth of July was an occasion of more significance than now, as often the comrades in patriotic service met together, and with marches, and reading of "The Declaration," and a good dinner for all, they renewed and reconsecrated the precious memories of the hard-fought and well-won triumphs of liberty.

Besides this, the yearly Training-day, which had been appointed for the purpose of preserving a military spirit, and for practice in tactics and fire-arms, was still an institution, and served to awaken the latent enthusiasm of all the commonwealth. Continental and militia captains imagined themselves once more on duty, and tried to adjust the home-guards and untrained militia in something of military order. Old suits and new, swords, bayonets and fowling-pieces, cavalry horses and spurs, stars and stripes, were quite in demand, and as the citizen soldiery trained along to the music of fife and drum, the whole township was roused to patriotic zeal, and the people generally held grand holiday.

But alas! time seemed to develop the fact that many fell out of line; that defenders of our country were not to be made by such methods, and some accustomed to sobriety would on this special occasion lose their hats and return to the bosom of their families somewhat tipsical. The result was that "general training" incurred the disapprobation of some of the more sturdy yeomanry, and as it was fondly hoped that war would never come again, a few years



later all the brave legions were excused from this fatigue duty and allowed in retracy to rest upon the laurels they had won.

So much as to the Forefathers. As to the Fore-mothers, they were mostly models of industry and comeliness. They laid their hands to the spindle, and to weave and knit and make a sampler, were accounted necessary accomplishments.

They no doubt followed the fashions then as now, protecting their head and ears from the inclemency of the weather and the rays of the sun by bonnets, any one of which would now furnish material for a dozen cockle-shells. They had little occasion for veils or parasols, and dared to appear in the same silk dress at least sixteen times in a year. As to what the young ladies were, I see some here present, older than then, but jolly yet. How they managed and how they won; they can spin that yarn better than I. Among the daughters may there be many such like.

The next quarter of a century, from 1825 to 1850, I must notice by reference to somewhat shorter intervals.

Between 1825 and 1835 Ezra Ayres, (1825)\* Steele Manning, (1828) W. M. Ross, (1832) and Frazee Ayres, who had gone from here when young and been successful as merchants in New York, lured by a love for their former homes, returned and settled in this locality. Rev. Holloway W. Hunt became pastor of the Presbyterian church (1828) after the brief pastorate of Rev. Michael Osborn, and Lewis and David G. Thomas (1831) of Woodbury, Conn., settled here. All these persons became prominently identified with the place, and by their influence or individual enterprise did much to give moral and material basis for future advance.

In 1828 M. Freeman, the father of R. R. Freeman, moved here from New Brunswick. Lewis Campbell and Lewis Thomas, Lenox and Tucker (1834) were actively engaged in merchandise or more general trading; Samuel Voorhees superintended a thriving carriage and blacksmith business where Mr. Marshall now lives, and the village seemed gradually becoming a more important centre. A Post-office was first established at Metuchen March 29th, 1832, and was kept in Upper Metuchen by Lewis Thomas until February 2, 1839, when George B. Stelle was appointed.

About 1832 a mystery occurred which has never yet been unraveled. A Mr. Randolph, then resident at Rahway, was within a few weeks to be married to an estimable lady of this neighborhood, and on his return from her house one Sunday evening about eleven o'clock, the discharge of a rifle was heard in the direction of the store now kept by Mr. Lewis Thomas. It did not cause any very particular inquiry until two days after, when it was reported that Mr. Randolph was missing from his store and had not been heard of since that

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\* These dates are taken from first pew rentals.



night. Search was made in the thicket which then covered the spot, and his saddle was found besmeared with blood.

The whole community was soon aroused, and a day appointed, by notices from the pulpits of the county, for the people to assemble and make search for the body. A lady who lived on an obscure road told me that her little girl counted one hundred and fifty-eight persons who crossed the fields just from that direction on their way to the spot, and from every course groups gathered, divided in opinion as to the affair, and determined, if possible, to get a clue to facts.

That day his pocket-book was found, containing his papers but no money. It was said that he had received \$2000 the night before. A letter was found saying that the body was in "Mine Gully," about three miles distant; but search being made there, another letter stated that it was in a distant creek. His relatives mourned his death, and a funeral sermon was preached.

Reports that he had been seen were freely circulated, and believed by some, but others regarded them as the devices of robbers, who had followed him from his home and thus waylaid him. Whether it was a lover's freak or an actual murder has never been revealed. Neither horse or rider, living or dead, have ever been found, and the air of mystery has not been cleared by the lapse of years. Romance and Tragedy still dispute their claims to the occurrence, and some coming writer of "fiction founded on fact" may here weave a story wonderful as the Legends of Sleepy Hollow, and marvellous as the exploits of a headless horseman.

When I was a boy, a traveling merchant, distressed by his losses, had but lately been found suspended to a tree in the opposite woods, and some who looked as if they ought to be suspended frequently passed along that lonesome road. I often had occasion to walk that route alone, and many a time did I march through with the tread of courage and the heart-throb of fear. Now the thickets have been domesticated, and woods and lawns and attractive homes give cheerful diversity to the landscape.

The period from 1835 to 1840 was more eventful in our history than any of the years which preceded.

In 1835 the antiquated Presbyterian church which stood in the old grave-yard lot was replaced by the present one, (40x60,) without its additions but with a small cupola, and the first pews rented February 6th, 1836, were all taken. More detailed facts as to churches and those identified with them will be added in another connection.

The New Jersey Railroad from Jersey City to New Brunswick was finished to New Brunswick bridge in 1836,\* and at once gave

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\* The Viaduct at New Brunswick was not crossed until October 28th, 1837, but the track was extended in 1834 to Newark, in 1835 to Elizabeth, and in 1836 to East Brunswick.

new incitement to all this section. Many of our farmers were busily engaged with their teams in preparing the grades, and Mr. Lewis Campbell was a prominent contractor. The first depot was that still known as Campbell's Station, and our people rejoiced to find themselves four or five times nearer to New York than ever before—reckoning by time-tables.

I well remember the first locomotive and train that passed over the road. The event having been duly pre-noted, at about ten o'clock, A.M., the village school, with its teacher, adjourned to the church grounds, and, there having been some detention, we awaited with others for an hour or more, the expected arrival. And then, for the first time in our lives, we saw the locomotive and the passenger-cars. Curiosity was on tip-toe—all were interested; some excited, some alarmed, and I have quite a vivid recollection of one stout young miss who screamed and ran quite a distance in her fright.

Soon one or two regular trains, and a short freight train, commenced daily trips, and the facility of access was found quite preferable to the stage-coach and post-road.

These were years, as some of you will remember, of financial uncertainty and of much speculation in country and city. Metuchen, like many other small towns, was laid out in building lots, and nothing but the absence of sufficient purchasers prevented sales. *I have seen a full map of Upper Metuchen about Campbell's Station, with its streets and building plots as located at that time.* But although business was generally depressed by unrealized anticipations, and by the financial crisis through which the country was passing, these were not sleepy days in Metuchen.

The Campbells, the Thomases, the Mundys, the Freemans, the Rosses, Van Sicklens, D. S. Voorhees and others, in their activity and clear-sightedness, would favorably compare with the most of those who have succeeded them or are still their contemporaries.

Besides the store in Upper Metuchen, L. Thomas opened one in the house now occupied by J. J. Clarkson. Farmers labored hard, and brought remunerative produce more in this direction. Board varied from one to two dollars a week; the expense of getting married averaged from two to five dollars; men and women were shrewd for bargain or trade, and if real estate was less buoyant than now, personal property, cattle, wares and merchandise of all descriptions frequently changed hands, and increased thrift was apparent. Monsieur Beaumont built the large Tilby House, and waked up the natives by his lavish expenditures. The Debating Society flourished in the Franklin school-house; singing schools were popular; Horace Greeley discoursed on politics to an interested audience, and when the "log cabin and hard cider" campaign fully set in, a great big meeting in Upper Metuchen called together



the whole country round, and enthusiasm was unbounded. The great "Salt Water Day," as the Harvest Joy Day and the great washing time, came off in August then as well as now, and no inhabitant is so old as to remember the origin of the custom. Metuchen was the chief town on the route, and its people joined with the dusty crowds that hastened to the bay. It was oft a time of good cheer and pleasant meeting in pic-nic style, and as a live relic of the olden time, is not likely soon to disappear.

The Wood Bee, or Minister's Frolic, as it was then called, came off yearly about October, when with oxen and horses the good people made general turn-out to fill up the pastor's wood-pile. And truly a frolic it was. There was brushing about and log-rolling in abundance, and when the work was done, over chicken pot-pie and good coffee, and divers other good things, all endeavored to give practical evidence that active labor was promotive of good appetite.

The old school-house still continued to be the spot where young ideas began to shoot, and manifold teachers, mostly from New England, sought to guide and model the rising race. The names of Miss Abigail Thomas, Mr. Lane, Mr. Tibbitts, Mr. Fuller, now a leading citizen of Peekskill, and many others, are still familiarly recalled by our earlier citizens.

In the year 1839 Mr. Alpheus W. Kellogg was recommended to us by Mr. Hastings, of New York city, as an educated gentleman and a good chorister, and for many years took charge of the school, and of the music of the Presbyterian church from thence onward to this date. He has accomplished much for the training and culture of the children of our community, and in fostering musical taste, and I rejoice that I had the honor of graduating from the public school under his tuition. In his voluntary retiracy, we are glad to claim him as a permanent citizen, and to recognize his earnest interest in all that relates to the welfare of our town.

During these years the Rev. Mr. Hunt was still pastor of the church, and had built the house now occupied by E. F. Ayres.

Mr. Smith Bloomfield returned here from New York in 1639, and became a prominent citizen.

Dr. Wm. Martin, who had so long practised here, died in 1839, and Ezra Mundy and Lewis Campbell within a year or two after. The loss of all these was severely felt by this community. Dr. Hall, who had resided here from about 1830, had removed to Newark, N. J., but a little time previous.

Dr. Nelson Stelle settled here in 1835, but removed to New York about 1838. I knew him as a noble-hearted and successful practitioner, and, with numerous friends, mourned his death in 1864. Dr. Crane succeeded him, but only remained a year, and then removed to Orange, where he still resides. Dr. C. H. Schapps then settled here, and after practising for six or seven years, removed to



Perth Amboy, and afterward to Williamsburgh, N. Y., where he is still an active and efficient physician.

I cannot account for these frequent medical removals, except that the peculiar healthiness of the place, while it was sustaining to others, made it quite impracticable for doctors to attempt to survive and make a living. "To live and let live," you know, is reasonable even for a physician.

During most of this period Dr. Jacob Martin resided here. He was a man of good medical education, but devoted himself to practice only to a limited extent. In his old age he has recently removed to live with his son, at Elizabethport.

We are now brought to the period which may be included in a decade reaching from 1840 to 1850. These years afford little so marked as to require particular and extended notice of the chronicler, and yet are easily recognized as characterized by steady and substantial increase in real and material prosperity.

In the whole neighborhood round about there was a gradual improvement of lands, and of buildings upon them; of roads and facilities of access; of the people, as to intelligence, and of the immediate village, by the addition of a few houses and the repair and adornment of those already erected.

A new railroad station was made at the road-crossing by the old grave-yard, in 1841, and two or three houses built between it and J. J. Clarkson's store.

The Post-office was changed from Upper Metuchen, and R. R. Freeman appointed Postmaster, July 23d, 1841. He was succeeded, July 3d, 1845, by Ezekiel Merritt. The appointment since to date has been successively held by J. J. Clarkson, Thomas Van Sieten, Freeman Edgar, Ezekiel Merritt and J. E. Van Geisen.

Captain Nathan Robins, a merchant of New York, but formerly of Monmouth County, N. J., removed here in 1840, and the branches of his family as represented by N. Robins, Hon. A. Robins and Wright Robins, have ever since been prominently identified with us.

New stores were opened at the corner now occupied by J. J. Clarkson, another by Mr. L. Thomas, near where Mr. Gilmur now lives, and one by Ezekiel Merritt, at the station.

The old unpainted school-house was moved away, to give place (1842) to the present one, long used both for a school and a lecture-room.

The Rev. Mr. Hunt preached in the Presbyterian church as before until his resignation in 1847, and in 1848 the Rev. Peter H. Burghart was settled here. The present Parsonage was built at that time.

To the period from 1850 to 1860 the general record made as to the former decade, still more fully applies. General thrift and ac-

tivity became more apparent; more attention was given to real estate and more consideration as to its value and improvement.

That part of the town south and east of the old grave-yard, especially began to improve, and an academy for a parochial school was built (1852) nearly opposite the Reformed Church, but has since been removed (1858) to the present locality.

A demand for stone and gravel on the part of the railroad company gave active employment to many of our farmers and teamsters, and brought considerable money into the place. The company afterward purchased the gravel-pit at Bonhamtown, and built a railroad to it about 1859.

Mr. David S. Thomas either built himself, or induced others to build on portions of his land, and Mr. L. Thomas, who had for a year removed to Newark, returned and (1850) built the house now occupied by Mr. Coleman.

Mr. T. W. Strong, of New York city, soon after purchased the Freeman farm, and about 1854 built his present residence in Woodwild. In the winter of 1852 the Hay Press was built by Augustine Campbell, and in charge of M. Freeman, soon made an active business.

By the death of John Hampton, Sr., the chief land-owner of this section, a large quantity of valuable real estate came into market, and its sale, May 15th, 1855, passed it into the hands of various persons, who have since improved and developed it. Mr. Ellis F. Ayres the next year built the house now occupied by Mr. Nathan Robins, and some twenty houses during these few years so added to the size and neatness of the village, as to give it a more townly and inviting appearance.

In 1850 Rev. Robert S. Finley had been called to the pastorate of the Presbyterian church, and continued his connection about seven years. The First Reformed Dutch church was built in 1858, and in 1859 called the Rev. J. Bodine Thompson as its first pastor. The Rev. Gardiner S. Plumley was called to the pastorate of the Presbyterian church January, 1858.

In 1849, Dr. D. Decker commenced practice here, and in 1851 also, Dr. Lytell, now of Princeton, who remained here but little more than a year. Dr. E. M. Hunt commenced practice April, 1852, and was at first associated with Dr. Decker, who ceased practice in 1854. He, however, resided in this vicinity until 1867, and for a short portion of the time assisted Dr. Hunt, and supplied his place during his absence in the army. Dr. Joseph S. Martin commenced practice here about 1857; but in 1862, having received an appointment as surgeon to a New Jersey regiment, he served for three years, and soon after settled in Elizabethport, N. J. Dr. W. Knight came November, 1862.

The public school continued, as before, under the charge of Mr.

Kellogg, and about 1860 Prof. Wm. Hopkins opened a prosperous select school in the academy.

The beginning of the present decade, from 1860 to 1870, found us a prosperous and growing community. The spirit of improvement was more general, and although, by reason of depression connected with the beginning of the war, there was little extension of building or business, yet some property changed ownership, and lands and streets and buildings were improved. Mr. D. G. Thomas opened the street on which he now resides, and other avenues were projected.

A few of our number joined the great army of the Republic and did what they could to secure victory and peace. A company was raised from this township, and many others joined different regiments, while those that remained at home for the most part took earnest interest in sustaining the Government.

The stones of the Cemetery bear evidence as to some of our losses, while the well-known record as to most that survive, shows that they zealously and faithfully performed their duty.

The great union meeting at the beginning of the war; the rally for promoting enlistments; the big wagon drumming up recruits for Captain Inslee's Company; the drilling of Home-Guards; the anxieties of that beautiful, solemn Sabbath day, when we were all in suspense over the latest news of the night before, that the Confederates had cut off access to Washington; the stunning tidings of the Manassas defeat, when all were expectant of victory—these are among the early home memories of the war. Then for many a month there was the hurrying of crowded soldier-trains; the keen appetite for news, so that even the Sunday postman must supply the mail; the reverses and successes, and at last the dreaded but necessary draft that hastened on the victories. Anon comes the glad return of joyful regiments; the veteran parade of thankful victors, and ere the first flush of joy had passed, that strange tragedy of Presidential death, and that funeral car, with solemn escort, bearing along the remains of the "Great Executive" to his distant home. These are scenes so fresh and vivid, that I need not dwell upon them; but what your ears have heard, and your eyes have seen, is a whole era and epoch of history condensed in a few short years, and many a father will, in the days of his age, recount to his children these sights and sounds of his own times, and cultivate a true national patriotism by the rehearsal.

And now we are brought to the more recent five years of our history. It is especially within these that most of the development of the place has occurred. During this period all but one of the new streets, now numbering fifteen or more, have been opened, and more than half the houses within a mile from the East Station have been built or remodelled. Messrs. T. W. Strong, L. & D. G. Thomas,



E. F. Ayres, E. M. Hunt, C. C. Campbell, M. Daniels, A. W. Marshall and C. O. Poole have opened avenues or streets, and most of them, as well as G. Greason, Homer Jones and N. Robins, built more houses or stores than they needed for their own accommodation. Mr. Greason's new block of stores, the sign-boards of streets, and some private lamp-posts, are hints as to a future city.

The Public School is well conducted by J. Newton Smith, although a new building is much needed; and Mr. L. P. Cowles has opened a select school under encouraging auspices. A reading-room and library (1870) have just been opened to the public, and the Order of the Sons of Temperance, organized about two years since, and who initiated this movement, are doing what they can to promote mental culture and good morals.

In the past we owe much to the fact that those who have been able among us, have shown a disposition to improve their properties and to develop the town. New families have been welcomed, and in many instances have readily co-operated in plans for future progress.

Within a year a new Methodist and a new Episcopal church have been occupied, and Roman Catholic service is held in a small chapel on ground secured for a church.

A Building Loan Association has recently been organized, and mechanics and laborers are striving to secure homes of their own. The fitness of the location for trade and manufacturers is attracting the attention of capitalists, while the recent clay developments near to us at Bonhamtown have already commanded large investments from experienced dealers.

An Act of Incorporation, passed 1869, was viewed by our people as premature, and although there is much that can be done to advantage in the way of public improvement, we hope the spirit and liberality of our citizens will be found equal to a wise and judicious expenditure, and that they will, with good degree of unanimity, co-operate in such plans as wise policy, no less than public spirit, dictates.

The Railroad Company are this year to build a permanent Central Station, with such improvements and facilities as they believe will greatly appreciate the interests and value of this whole section.

The access to large adjacent cities is so ready, the society so good, and the remarkable healthfulness of the place so well authenticated, that it presents the best inducements for business and for suburban residence, while its natural drainage, its undulating landscape, its fertility of soil, its equibilty of climate, midway between river and mountain, all conjoin to render it a popular and attractive home.

Most of those who have settled here find their purchases a pecuniary advantage, while social and moral attractions of a high order give the promise of continued and accelerated growth. While large

additions have been made of new residents, the branches of our older families cling with fondness to their early homes, and after years of absence not a few return to locate here. Among those native born, who, by professional position have helped to reflect honor on their early home, we may name Ezra Mundy, long a teacher in St. Louis; O. Van Derhoven, Esq., editor of the Paterson "Guardian;" C. S. Titworth, Prosecuting Attorney, Newark; Rev. W. Randolph, of Boston, and Rev. Ezekiel Mundy, of Syracuse, both Baptist ministers; General Ezra A. Carman, and D. B. Hunt, M.D., a recent graduate of Columbia Medical College, N. Y.

Just now, as we enter upon a new decade of our history, the Legislature has assigned us new boundaries. By Act of March, 1870, parts of Woodbridge and Piscataway adjacent to the river, and extending some three miles back therefrom, have been formed into a new township, with the name of Raritan, and Metuchen becomes the natural centre of this rich and important district. The name of Raritan, like Metuchen, is an Indian name, and means "the forked river," in allusion to the two chief streams from which it is formed. The head waters of one of these, now known as Raritan brook, is in our village, and we most properly appropriate this as the name of our new township.

Piscataway and Woodbridge, so allied in early history and settlement, thus have a part of each joined as one, and, as the two fountain-sources of the Raritan commingle into one grand river, so that none can distinguish the drops of the one from the other as they flow pleasantly on in one undivided stream, so it is hoped and believed that our people, with unity of sentiment and of interest, will co-operate together in the promotion of our mutual, moral and material prosperity.

The township thus formed is one of the very best in our State, and as to Metuchen, the locality is appreciated by visitors as well as by those who are residents. Its pleasant diversity of hill and valley, meadow and wood; its central and slightly position, commanding views from points here and there of Plainfield, Westfield, New Brunswick, Amboy, Staten Island, Rahway, Elizabeth, Newark and New York, render its elevation and scenery desirable and inviting. There is only need that by the adornments of art, and in the spirit of public improvement, we take grand advantage of natural adaptations.

We have thus traced the past in order that we may have some adequate appreciation of those who have preceded us, and of the successive steps in our development, and that the future historian may have an authentic source from which to glean an introduction when grander events and more inciting progress demand a more extended notice.

The record, though unpretending, has been substantial and hon-

orable, with names and history unmarred by any blot or blur inimical to fairness and respectability of fame; the present is with us to plan and enjoy, the future is before us to execute and unfold.

Let us see to it, that in every respect a wise and broad policy governs us; that we lay out for the future what the next generation will approve; that we so combine the beautiful and the useful as to season the substantial with the attractiveness of taste, and do nothing so meagre on the one hand, or so extravagant on the other, as to stint or overburden the coming population.

In our care for so-called material interests, let us ever remember that the demands of religion and education are more material than all else, and that he builds for himself and for his posterity on a flimsy foundation who does not see to it that means for moral and mental elevation are provided and sustained with hearty and munificent patronage. While physical energy and business foresight are commendable, these must not be parted from such wisdom as revelation, reason and experience alike attest.

In this, our goodly home and pleasant heritage, let us do our parts in laying concrete foundations, like those of cemented jasper and amethyst, on which those who come after us may build as wise master-builders, feeling that the basis is a good one to work on, and such that even great expansion and lofty workmanship will never at all imperil it. Thus will our memories be cherished, and thus, even better than that, our words, our acts, our deeds, will have abundant fruitage in the happiness and elevation of society.





# HISTORY

OF THE

## CHURCHES OF METUCHEN.

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### *History of the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen,*

FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE SECOND CHURCH OF WOODBRIDGE.

It is impossible accurately to determine at what time a place for religious worship was first established at Metuchen. We have already seen that its first settlement, about 1670-90, was due chiefly to the colonies which formed at Woodbridge, Piscataway and Perth Amboy, and as all these had a decided Christian character, it is probable that those settling in the neighborhood of what is afterward termed "the upper part of Woodbridge, known as Metuching," early provided themselves with some accommodations for Christian service.

In a paper which I have seen bearing upon the church parsonage case in chancery, there is reference to a union which was formed with the church at Woodbridge August 5th, 1767, showing that then this was not a branch formed at that time from the Woodbridge church, but had before that an independent existence.

A list of a half dozen or more names was at that time also adduced, of original settlers of Woodbridge township who were members of a congregation here, in order to show that the right to the land originally given "for religious purposes," appertained to this portion of the township.

Miss Deborah Ayres is under the impression that the church which was standing during the Revolution was the second building upon the same spot, for she had heard her father say that they had preachers before Parson Roe's time, and when a child, had heard reference made to a barn, which was said to have been the old church before the new one was built.

As the first church of Woodbridge was finished about 1682, although not constituted as a Presbyterian church until 1692, and as the settlement of the three townships of Woodbridge, Piscataway

and Perth Amboy were all of this period, it is quite probable that early in the century commencing with 1700, some place for worship existed on a part of the land the early inhabitants had selected as their grave-yard, and which has been enlarged by at least three purchases since. If so, although no ecclesiastical connection with Presbytery had been instituted, our people had those who preached and labored for their spiritual welfare. The sister of Manning Thornal has told me that her great-grandfather, Nathaniel Manning, when the church had no stated supply, was in the habit sometimes of seeking a preacher in New Brunswick, and spoke especially of the preaching of Gilbert Tenant. He was one of the subscribers for Tenant's Sermons, published in 1757, taking a dozen copies, which were distributed among the family, and she has one copy in possession.

Rev. Azel Roe was settled as pastor of first Woodbridge church in 1763, and by the union of 1767 the church here probably took presbyterial organization, he becoming co-pastor of this church, the Woodbridge session serving for both.

The first schedule of accounts is in 1780, when it appears that he ministered to this congregation one half of the time, and received from them £70, or one half of his whole salary. This of itself shows the congregation at that time to have been nearly or quite equal to that of Woodbridge.

The first official record which we have of the church is dated June 2, 1784. Instead of Trustees, collectors were chosen each year, who collected pew-rents, and paid the amounts to Mr. Roe, according to an understanding with the church at Woodbridge, called "the lower congregation." There was also an arrangement of the two congregations in reference to the rent of the "Great Parsonage," situated between the two. Metuching was allowed one third, which was then £20. After 1783 it was one half, but on account of lower rental, amounted to about the same. In addition, they carted and delivered wood from the "Great Parsonage" for Mr. Roe.

The number of seats in the church below-stairs at this time was forty-two, and in the galleries twenty-two. An aisle ran east and west, with rows of seats each side, at the head of which was the high pulpit, with its sounding-board, and a place in front, and a little to the left, for the clerk of the singing, as the Leader was then called. An aisle ran along the front of the pulpit, at the south end of which was the only church door, this being the front of the church. Besides the centre-aisle, running east and west, two narrow side-aisles parallel with it, ran down each side a little distance from the wall, leaving side slips against the wall lengthwise, which were called pews, as distinguished from the other seats. Each gallery on the side extended over one fourth of the width of the



church, and the gallery opposite the pulpit was of the same depth. The number of seats from the pulpit back was seven, and the width four seats and two pews. The size of the church was thus probably about 36x25, until enlarged.

There was no place for stoves, these not being used, and the good people depending for warmth on the foot-stoves they brought with them, until a change was made in 1792.

The meeting-house had a shingle inclosure, was unpainted, had no steeple, and the roof was four-sided, or, as it is now called, "Mansard."

Two meetings were held on Sabbath, with an intermission, and although plainness, by necessity, marked those primitive times, yet freedom of worship, and sincerity of doctrine and of life, made many to love their chosen place of assembly.

The following are the pew-holders and the amount of rental paid, as by the list of June 2, 1784:

## RENTAL OF SEATS, JUNE 2d, 1784.

No.	Names.	£	s.	No.	Names.	£	s.
1	Ebenezer Ford	2	15	28	Matthew Freeman	1	5
2	John Blomfield	1	5	25	David Crow, Esq.	1	5
3	James Ayres	1	4	26	Dugal Campbell	1	4
4	Robert Ross	1	3	27	Alexander Cotheal	1	3
5	Zachariah Kelley	1	3	28	Zebulon Ayers	19	
6	Martin Mundy	1	2	29	John Noe	1	5
7	Thomas Goodfellow	19		30	John Conger	1	5
8	Joseph Freeman	1	5	31	James Manning	1	5
9	Benj. Kelley	1	5	32	Benajah Martin	1	4
10	Ephraim Morris	1	5	33	Thomas Manning	1	1
11	John Morris	1	4	34	Joseph Freeman, Jr.	1	00
12	William Thixton	1	1	35	Ellis Ayers	17	
13	Reuben Ayers	1	00	36	Daniel Compton	19	
14	Samuel Ayers	17		37	Daniel Hampton	15	
15	Phinias Manning	1	15	38	Israel Thornal	2	00
16	Benj. Ford	1	5	39	Clossen Mundy	1	5
17	Dr. Nath'l Martin	1	5	40	Timothy Bloomfield	1	5
18	Dr. Mel'n Freeman	1	5	41	Jeremiah Clarkson	1	3
19	Wm. Bloomfield	1	4	42	William Manning	1	2
20	Moses Morris	1	3				
21	George Kelley	19			Seats below stairs	50	6
22	Ellis Bloomfield	1	5				
23	Benj. Manning	1	5				
		28	12				

## RENT OF SEATS IN GALLERY.

Taylor Brown..... 10

Chose Mr. Daniel Hampton for Doorkeeper for the current year, at 40s. per year.

From action had at a parish meeting held October 29th of the same year, it is evident that the meeting-house had been recently in some way altered and repaired, as reference is made to a committee for "finishing and repairing the meeting-house," and the plan of the building as before referred to is given.

An Act having been passed by the Legislature March 16th, 1786,

in reference to the incorporation of religious societies, this church was regularly incorporated as the Second Presbyterian Church of Woodbridge, October, 1787, and April 5th, 1787, the following, its first Trustees, were chosen :

BENJAMIN MANNING,	EBENEZER FORD,
JOHN CONGER,	ELLIS AYERS,
JOHN ROSS,	TIMOTHY BLOOMFIELD,
ROBERT ROSS.	

In 1790 a gracious and extensive revival in this and Woodbridge church added over a hundred to the membership, but how many to each church is not stated.

In 1792 the meeting-house was enlarged by an addition of fifteen feet, and its roof changed and chimneys provided. A subscription of two hundred and seventy-five pounds, nine shillings was made, but by accounts, April, 1795, it appears that 390 pounds, or about \$900, was expended. The lowest bids for doing the work were made by Mr. Jonathan Freeman and Mr. Johile Freeman, as follows :

MR. JONATHAN FREEMAN.—“ Himself 6 shillings per day, one hand at 5s, one at 4s, 6d, and an apprentice at 3s, 6d. And asks no rum or any other spirits, and will through in as much work as any other undertaker.”

MR. JOHILE FREEMAN.—“ For himself 6 shillings per day, and 3 Journeymen at 5s, 6d, per day, and will through in 10 days work for one hand, and asks no spirits, if found with small beer.”

The contract was given to Jonathan Freeman. The meeting-house, as now enlarged, had an entrance made to the east, which became the main entrance. Five or six more seats were added in depth, and by the new plan fifty-six seats and pews in all were made below stairs. The size now was probably about 36x40.

The congregation applied to the First Church of Woodbridge for leave to cut timber for this addition from the “Great Parsonage.” They gave no direct answer, but sent a request, through our Committee, that we should “jointly apply to Presbytery to call an assistant minister, for the benefit and purpose of having divine service every Lord’s day.” The Trustees of our church replied that, “inasmuch as they were about repairing and enlarging their meeting-house, they could not think it expedient at the present time to join in their request.”

The church at Woodbridge, thereupon, made application to Presbytery meeting at Woodbridge, October, 1792, for a separation, but it was opposed by Metuching, and was not granted.

April 6th, 1793, the Woodbridge church appointed a Committee to renew their request, at the same time offering to Metuching one third of the services of Mr. Roe. and one third of the rents of the Great Parsonage for one year, and as might be agreed from year to year afterward, if the separation took place. The Metuching con-



gregation met April 15th, 1793, and declined to join in the request, and, if it should be granted, declined to accept of the offer made by the First Church of Woodbridge.

At this meeting Mr. James Manning was chosen a ruling elder. Before this the session of the church at Woodbridge had served for both congregations, (see Sprague's Annals,) and the election of Mr. Manning seems to have been in view of a possible separation. The congregation also appointed a Committee of five to attend Presbytery, with plenary power to obtain supplies in case of separation.

The Presbytery of New York, meeting at Orange, May 9th, 1793, authorized a separation, but recommended that Metuchen retain the services of Rev. Mr. Roe for one third of the time.

The congregation at Metuchen, May 16th, 1793, declined to accede to this recommendation unless Woodbridge would give and lot off to them one third of the "Great Parsonage," which they declined to do.

So the connection was dissolved, and it was agreed "that the pew rents for that year should be applied to raise money for the deficiencies of salary, and of enlarging the house, and also to raise a fund to go toward purchasing a parsonage."

It was agreed that the supplies to the congregation "be paid out of collections to be made for that purpose, and that young ministers not settled be paid five dollars, and that settled ministers be paid thirty shillings per Sabbath."

The separation seems to have been the natural result of the growth of both congregations, and the unwillingness of our people to accept any thing less than preaching each alternate Sabbath.

I have been told that on the vacant Sabbaths some, both of men and women, went on foot or on horseback to the Woodbridge church, some of the more particular ladies carrying a second pair of neater shoes with them, in order to appear well with their nice short dresses and silk stockings.

But it was too much to ask that they journey thus far two thirds of the time. The period was at hand when the interests of each parish required a settled pastor, who could devote his whole time to a single flock.

Dr. Roe lived until the year 1818, and continued his connection with the First Church of Woodbridge until his death. He is remembered by some of our oldest people, and is represented by them, as by the portrait of him in possession of the Edgar family at Rahway, as a man of commanding presence and pleasing personal address. He often rode hither on horseback, and labored

with great activity and zeal, not only attending his appointed service here, but holding occasional preaching service at private houses.

As illustrative of the usual hospitality of those days, Henry Campbell, Sr., has told me that he well remembered one cold, blustering day in March, when his mother came to the door, and calling to his father, said: "Dugal, Dugal, don't you know that Parson Roe is to preach here to-night, and we havn't got a drop of sperits in the house?" "Well then," said he, "one of the boys will have to go and get some." And sure enough one of them was posted off that afternoon away to Bricktown, and brought back the desired supply. Whether the parson or his parishioners accepted the kind courtesy, history does not inform us.

The following items in respect to Dr. Roe are gathered from the notice of him in Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*:

"He was born at Setauket, L. I., March 20th, 1738, and installed at Woodbridge in the Fall of 1763. In height he was about five feet eight or nine inches, and of good presence. As a preacher, he was argumentative and able, trusting more to gospel matter than to any special power of delivery.

"As a patriot he became quite prominent during the Revolution. At one time he incited members of his congregation to follow one of our Continental captains in an attack upon some British troops near Blazing Star, and himself participated in the onset. He was afterward, by the instigation of Tories, taken from his home and carried off by the British, and confined in the famous 'Sugar-House' prison in New York. While being conveyed thither, a courteous English officer, who was won by his deportment, offered to carry him over a small ford, and Mr. Roe accepting the 'backing,' said to him: 'Well, sir, you can say after this that you were once priest-ridden.'"

Mr. Roe was Trustee of the College of New Jersey from 1778 to 1807; was in 1789 a member of the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and its Moderator in 1802. He received the degree of D.D. from Yale College in 1800.

His services had always been acceptable here, and as our first settled pastor, he has left to us the precious legacy of a faithful and successful ministerial life.

By the separation from Woodbridge (1793) the church of Metuchen, being entirely thrown upon its own resources, seems at once to have bestirred itself with Christian energy to securing and sustaining stated religious services.

A call was made out April 22, 1794, and presented to the Presbytery of New York, for the services of Rev. Henry Cook, of Morris County, at a salary of £120, and from May 1st, 1794, he became the pastor. He was then a young man, and was a student of Princeton College about 1789.



The following is the list of pew rentals, as made April, 1794:

## LIST OF PEW RENTALS, AS MADE APRIL, 1794.

No.	Names.	£	s.	d.	No.	Names.	£	s.	d.
1	Ellis & Timothy Bloomfield..	2	13	4	29	Dugal Campbell.....	1	18	8
2	Ebenezer Foord & Martha Tal- mage.....	4	6	8	30	Wm. Foord.....	2		
3	Joseph Freeman & Gesham Manning.....	4			31	Nicholas Mundy & Gersh'n Martin.....	2		
4	James Manning.....	3	13	4	32	Jacob Ayers & Jno. Campbell.	2		
5	Zach. & George Kelley.....	3	13	4	33	Nathan Bloomfield.....	2		
6	Isaac Ayres.....	1	12		34	Jno. Bloodgood and Eph'm Morris.....	2		
7	John Flatt, one half.....	1	12		35	Benj. Mundy & Sam. Mundy.	2		
8	Vacant.....	1	9	4	36	Henry Freeman & Captain Bloomfield.....	2		
9	Sam'l Ayers & Wm. Tappan.	1	13	4	37	Wm. Bloomfield.....	2		
10	Wm. Thixton & Lewis.....	1	14	8	38	Jno. Martin.....	2	10	
11	Benj. Soper & Benj. Ayers...	1	18	8	39	Phin. Maning.....	2	13	4
12	Samuel Compton & Randal Stivers.....	2			40	Ellis Mundy & Shubet Merri- t.....	1	3	4
13	Phineas Carman.....	2			41	Daniel Compton & Mrs. Bates	2		
14	James Ayers & Elik M. Comp- ton.....	2			42	Benj. Campbell & Reub'n Hull	2		
15	Ezek'l Ayers & Henry Mundy.	2	10		43	Daniel Hampton & Isaac Pots	2		
16	Joseph Freeman, Sr.....	2	6	8	44	Jonathan Rowland.....	2		
17	Capt. Freeman.....	2	10		45	Thomas Goodfellow & Rach. Van Derhoven, 1 quarter.	2		
18	John Ross & Jacob Compton.	2	10		46	Israel Thornal.....	2		
19	John Bloomfield and Isaac Cotheal.....	2	10		47	Mich'l Martin.....	1	18	8
20	Thomas Manning.....	2	10		48	Moses Morris.....	1	13	4
21	James Freeman & Sam. Comp- ton, Jr.....	2			49	Ellis Ayers.....	1	13	4
22	Benj. Foord.....	2			50	Joshua Mundy.....	1	12	
23	Dr. Martin & Nathan Mundy	2			51	Jeremiah Dunn.....	1	12	
24	Lewis Mundy.....	2			52	Wm. Manning.....	1	16	
25	Aaron Mundy.....	1	18	8	53	Robt. Ross.....	4		
26	David Morris & Dan'l Noe...	1	17	4	54	Dr. Freeman.....	4		
27	Jessey Van Derhoven & Jas. Morris.....	1	12		55	Benj. Manning.....	4	6	8
28	Zebul'n Ayers.....	1	17	4	56	Enos Ayers & Henry Camp- bell.....	4		
							127	6	0

In 1795 a small house and lot was bought for £200, as a Parsonage, where Ellis F. Ayres now lives. A Committee was also appointed to ask of the First Church of Woodbridge a share in the "Great Parsonage," as land which had been granted to the township of Woodbridge for the "support and maintenance of ministers of the Gospel." A refusal on the part of the church, at Woodbridge gave rise to a long and vexatious law-suit, which was litigated with the utmost persistency by the church here, as, after having laid the whole case before Frederick Frelinghuysen, of Millstone, they believed their claims were just and right. He and Mr. A. Kirkpatrick and Samuel Leake, of Trenton, were employed to manage the case, which was long in Chancery, and was then carried to the Court of Errors, and finally, in 1800, decided in favor of Woodbridge by a vote of eight to five. An attempt was again made to re-open the case in 1815.



When we come to examine the character of the grant made, the allowance of one half of the rents to Metuchen, and the identity of the founders of the congregation with these early settlers, it is not surprising that the claim should have been made, and it is even yet to be doubted whether the decision was an equitable one.

Amidst all this burden of expense, for which £130 8s. 6d. was at once raised, and £40 in 1798, and still more afterward, the congregation continued to raise the amount of salary, and in 1796 repaired the Parsonage for the occupancy of Mr. Cook, put a picket fence about the garden, and a board fence in place of the post and rail fence about the grave-yard and church lot.

The subscription started November, 1793, for a Parsonage, now amounted to £382.

In 1799 Benjamin Manning, who had long been President of the Board of Trustees, resigned, and was succeeded by Colonel Robert Ross, who remained in office until 1824.

From 1800 onward there was a steady increase of the congregation, and not only were the fifty-six seats below stairs rented, but in 1805 six were also rented in the gallery. The law-suit, however, had so involved the people, that at one time they made arrangements for selling the Parsonage, but wiser counsels prevailed.

In 1805 Mr. Cook's salary was raised to \$400, and four choristers appointed.

In 1807 a small lot was added to the Parsonage, and also one third of an acre to the burying-ground, and the executor of Daniel McGrory paid in £150 which he had left to the church. He was a bachelor, generally called Dan McGregory, and sat in the gallery. Both his name and the gift seem to have been quite forgotten, but it was a most generous and timely aid to the church at that period.

April 28th, 1813, Richard Ross and Lewis Thornal were elected ruling elders. I think that before this period Captain M. Freeman, Benajah Mundy and Thomas Manning had been also elected elders, as they were members of session in 1818, and are believed to have acted as such long before that. As we have no sessional records of these times, it is not remarkable that there is no reference to them in the Trustee book. James Manning, who had been chosen in 1793, was still living. Thomas Manning died in 1819, and Benajah Mundy in 1823.

In 1814 Robert Ross, Jr., was appointed chorister, with David Kelly, who is mentioned as having been appointed Clerk for Singing in 1813, and an affirmative vote was taken on "the subject of employing Wm. Lover to assist them in raising the psalms." Mr. Kelly has told me that he then took much interest in music, and he and Mr. Lover, the singing-school teacher, were in harmony.

Captain Wm. Manning, who died in 1814 at the age of seventy-five, left seven hundred dollars "for the support of the Gospel in

this church." He had long been a useful and prominent citizen, and his decease was greatly lamented.

After 1814 we have no entry of Congregational meetings until 1826, but the Trustee account runs on to 1843.

In 1824 Robert Ross resigned, and was succeeded by Simeon Munday as President of the Board, who long and earnestly served the church in this capacity, afterwards also as an elder.

The death of Rev. Mr. Cook in 1824, at the age of fifty-five, and after a pastorate of thirty years, was lamented by all the congregation as a great bereavement. A stone with suitable inscription marks his resting-place in the old grave-yard. As a faithful pastor, an acceptable preacher, and a noble man in all his relations in life, he is ever spoken of with praise by those who remember him and by those who from their ancestors have learned to respect his memory.

As we have not his sessional book, we only know of the fruits and success of his labors by those who were gathered into the the church during his ministry.

A lady now living has told me that the first time she was ever in a church was the day of his installation. She was so much interested as a little girl, that she was allowed to go the next Sabbath, when he preached from the text, (1 Cor., 2 : 2,) "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." His life was the application of his text.

One who well remembers his first appearance in Metuchen, describes him as a spare built, medium sized young man, dressing in the shoes, stockings, and breeches of a continental costume, and not at all remarkable for comeliness of features.

By his clear, earnest preaching, his great solemnity of manner, and his kind-hearted faithfulness as a pastor, he soon commended himself to the people, and always secured, to the end of his life, their affectionate regard.

He was married twice, and left four daughters, none of whom now survive.

It was customary in those days for a minister, the Sabbath after a funeral, to wear the scarf into the pulpit, and Mr. Cook once appeared with three scarfs on.

He at times—especially in later years—was subject to depression of spirits, and the story is told, that in one of these periods, being out of health, he went to spend three or four days with a parishioner in Piscataway. He lived adjacent to two neighbors who had married sisters not very remarkable for amiability, and one morning before sunrise, as he was walking to and fro in a field, the husband of one of these seeing him thus walking, without any apparent object, concluded to go and see who it might be. Coming near enough for recognition, he said: "Why, Mr. Cook, is this you? Why, what could have sent you here at this time in the morning?"



"Well, sir," said he, "I have not been very well, and came up here a few days to recruit a little." "Ah! Parson Cook," said he, "it's a desperate poor place for any man to recruit so near to my brother's wife or mine."

Dr. John McDowell, of Philadelphia, and formerly of Elizabeth, in a note under date December 24th, 1860, in reply to a letter of inquiry from Rev. Ezra F. Mundy, thus speaks of him :

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 24, 1860.

REVEREND SIR : I long knew Rev. Henry Cook, who was for many years settled in the congregation of Metuchen, New Jersey. He was, I think, originally of Mendham, Morris County. He was a very retiring, modest, and even diffident man. He was at times subject to much depression of spirits. He was a good pastor and a good preacher, much respected by his people. He was also a good scholar. In the early part of my ministry—say more than fifty years ago—candidates for the ministry were not examined on the Hebrew language ; the Presbytery of New York, which then embraced the city of New York and the Eastern part of New Jersey, as far as the Raritan River, resolved in future to examine on the Hebrew language ; Mr. Cook was the only member of Presbytery who could conduct such an examination. Mr. Cook was what you have very appropriately styled him in your letter, "a good man." I regret I cannot give you more details respecting him.

With fraternal respect, yours,

JOHN McDOWELL.

He preached without notes, and Miss Deborah Ayres says that the worst thing she knew of him was, that "he would sit up late at night and not take much exercise. She speaks particularly of one Saturday when he walked to and fro in his garden, not having suited himself with a text for the Sabbath. He came over to her father's and asked her older sister if she could not find him a text. She said she would at once look him up a verse and bring it over. She selected Isa. 54 : 8, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." She found him on his couch in tears, but the next day he preached two sermons from that text, which were accounted as especially precious.

In those days it was usual for Presbyteries to have longer meetings, and special visitations of the churches, thus aiding the pastor in protracted meetings. Dr. Griffith, Dr. Richards, and Dr. McDowell were among those who thus preached for us, and made lasting impression.

A revival in 1818 brought many into the church. Rev. Joel Campbell thus speaks of it : "I united with the Metuchen church, under the ministry of Rev. Henry Cook at that time. Ninety were received on that Sabbath, and twenty-seven at the next communion. Wm. M. Ross was one of the converts, I think, and united with Dr. Romeyn's church, N. Y. Several went to the Baptist Church, and some to the Seventh-Day Baptists. That revival was a great revival in many respects. Some aged people were brought in—one over a hundred years of age. The people would walk two, three, and even



four miles to attend a prayer-meeting. In those times the Sabbath-school was held in the old school-house, but we had few helps such as they now have. I have watched the results of the labors and self-denials of that Sabbath-school, and almost, and I think all have been brought to Christ and become useful." I find by the records of Piscataway Church that forty-nine joined as members about that time.

The person above alluded to as over one hundred years of age at the time of his conversion lived between here and Piscataway, and was buried in the grave-yard near the Piscataway Baptist Church. An aged person who was at his funeral has described him to me; and the following epitaph is still to be seen in that burial-ground:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

ABRAHAM VAN GUILDER,

WHO WAS BORN ON THE HIGH SEAS OCTOBER, 1701,

DEPARTED THIS LIFE FEBRUARY THE 28TH, 1818,

*Aged 116 years 4 months.*

---

Rebel against Heaven this man had been;  
Full years one hundred and sixteen;  
By Christ's free grace he then became  
An heir of God—a new-born son.

This great revival evidently infused new energy into the church. An Education Society for "educating pious youth to supply the waste places of our country," was soon after formed, and in 1823 as auxiliary to the "Society for Ameliorating the Condition of the Jews."

Mr. Cook was able to continue his labors until a short period before his death. His whole estate, as inventoried, amounted to nine hundred and forty-five dollars, and other circumstances show that his heart was not at all concerned about earthly treasures. But he labored faithfully in the vineyard here assigned him, and gathered fruit unto eternal life. While so few remain to remind us of him, it is a pleasure thus to gather fragments of his history, that his memory may never fail to be fondly cherished by the church of his life-long love.

Just at this period, in 1824, we have a resumption of the records of Parish meeting, as registered by Simeon Mundy, May 24, 1824. Ezekiel Ayers was appointed Trustee in place of Robert R. Ross, resigned, and W. W. Ford in place of Richard Ross, resigned. Abram Long was re-appointed Sexton. Matthias Campbell, Frazee

Mundy, David Kelly and Lewis Campbell were selected to lead as singers. Richard Ross was appointed Door-keeper, for which he was to receive ten dollars per annum. Matthias Campbell is to be paid one shilling for each day that he attends and sings.

The following is the

LIST OF PEW RENTALS, AS MADE MAY, 1824:

No.	Names.	No.	Names.
1		29	Ezra Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ , Jer. Campbell $\frac{1}{2}$ , R. Clarkson 1-6, Rachel Bloomfield 1-6.....18 50
2	Anna Mundy and Widow So-per, $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 4 50	30	Daniel Kelly $\frac{1}{2}$ , Eph. Compton 1-6, Simeon Martin 1 sitting.17 00
3	Enoch Kelly, 2 sittings, 16s., Ab'm Long $\frac{1}{2}$ , 10s..... 5 00	31	Jacob Ayers $\frac{1}{2}$ , Lewis Ross $\frac{1}{2}$ ...18 50
4	John Laforge..... 5 00	32	Col. Robt. Ross.....18 50
5	Enos Talmage..... 6 00	33	Ellis Daniels $\frac{1}{2}$ , Widow N. Bloomfield 10s., Henry Noe $\frac{1}{2}$ , 14s..17 50
6	W.W. Ford $\frac{1}{2}$ , Widow Compton $\frac{1}{2}$ 6 00	34	
7	Benejah Campbell..... 6 50	35	Rich. Ross $\frac{1}{2}$ , W. B. Maning $\frac{1}{2}$ .14 62
8	Michael Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ , Melancthon Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 7 00	36	Manning Thornal 1-3, Jonah & Henry Rowland 2-3..... 8 00
9	James Randolph $\frac{1}{2}$ , Bloomfield Randolph $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 7 00	37	Hannah Martin..... 4 00
10	Widow Ayers $\frac{1}{2}$ , Jas. Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ . 7 00	38	Gershom Martin..... 5 00
11	John Campbell..... 7 00	39	
12	John Morris, Jr..... 7 00	40	
13	Zacheus Kelly..... 7 00	41	David Long $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 4 00
14	Phineas Mundy..... 7 00	42	Ellis Ayers $\frac{1}{2}$ , & Frazee Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ . 5 50
15	Sam'l Bloodgood..... 8 50	43	William Toppen $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 5 00
16	Dr. Martin $\frac{1}{2}$ , Abner Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ . 7 00	44	Aaron Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 5 00
17	Amos Noe $\frac{1}{2}$ , James Ross..... 8 50	45	John Smock..... 5 00
18	Joseph Clarkson..... 7 00	46	Michael Martin..... 6 50
19	Benjamin Thornal..... 8 50	47	David Morris $\frac{1}{2}$ , John Turner $\frac{1}{2}$ . 6 00
20	Widow Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ , and Enos Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 7 50	48	Widow Thornal..... 6 50
21	Abner Freeman $\frac{1}{2}$ , and Ezekiel Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 8 50	49	Azariah Martin $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 6 00
22	John Martin..... 8 50	50	Sam'l Morris $\frac{1}{2}$ John B. Wood $\frac{1}{2}$ . 6 50
23	Frazee Ayers..... 7 50	51	William Cool..... 6 00
24	Widow Van Tuyl $\frac{1}{2}$ , & Philip Morris $\frac{1}{2}$ .....10 00	52	Jonathan Rowland..... 6 50
25	Benjamin Crow $\frac{1}{2}$ , Sam. Ford $\frac{1}{2}$ . 8 50	53	Ephraim Thornal $\frac{1}{2}$ , Widow Aikin 1 sitting, 11s..... 5 50
26	Rev. H. Cook.....	54	John Hampton..... 6 50
27	Neil Campbell \$3, & Widow M. Ayers..... 8 00	55	Sam'l Compton, Jr..... 6 50
28	Simeon Mundy $\frac{1}{2}$ , Henry Campbell $\frac{1}{2}$ , Widow Maning $\frac{1}{2}$ ...19 00	56	Ephraim Compton, Sr., $\frac{1}{2}$ , A. F. Randolph $\frac{1}{2}$ ..... 6 50
		57	Widow Van Derhoven $\frac{1}{2}$ and Widow Elikim Martin $\frac{1}{2}$ ... 4 50

At the time of Mr. Cook's death the membership numbered about two hundred.

Capt. M. Freeman, one of the elders of the church, died about this period, and, beside the record of a most devoted Christian life, left a legacy of one hundred dollars to the church.

The Sunday collection in these times was taken in a silk bag or pouch, fastened to the end of a long handle and thus passed from pew to pew. It was generally a genuine penny collection, and the story is told that one good man who was quite annoyed by the



open silk purse, thrust each Sabbath the length of his pew, one day filled his pockets with coppers, and when the collector came along began to empty one pocket after another, until the bag broke and its contents scattered all around. "There now, said he, let that do for the year." The collector having, with some confusion, gathered up the pieces, plates were afterwards substituted, and the payment accepted as a discharge.

As we now deal in paper currency, and the plates will not break, no one need fear to put on of his abundance, and bestow that willing gift which is a part of acceptable worship as really as prayer or praise.

At the time of Mr. Cook's death the membership numbered about two hundred. Capt. M. Freeman, one of the elders of the church, died about this period, and beside the record of a most devoted Christian life, left a legacy of one hundred dollars to the church.

At a meeting of the congregation, held December 12th, 1824, Rev. Michael Osborn was unanimously elected as Pastor, at a salary of four hundred dollars, with use of parsonage house and lot. February 23d, 1825, he was ordained and installed as pastor, and so remained until June 26th, 1827, when the connection was dissolved at his own request.

The acting elders at the time of his call were Richard Ross, John Campbell, Simeon Mundy and Robert Ross. December, 1825, the following additional elders were elected: Samuel Bloodgood, Amos Noe, Melancthon Mundy, Enos Talmage. They were inducted into office February 26th, 1826. Mr. John Campbell died September 10th, 1826.

Rev. Mr. Osborn was a man of spare frame and medium size—of great activity, prompt and decisive; as a preacher clear, and faithful and punctual in all his duties as a Pastor.

Some twelve years since he visited us and preached in our church. Although he possessed but little of the style of modern oratory, he made impression upon me as one worthy of the church to which he had ministered, and as a faithful and able ambassador for Christ.

After leaving here he was pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in Schraalenberg, Bergen County, N. J., for four and a half years; but most of his subsequent life was spent at the South.

The following is from a notice of him in *Wilson's Historical Almanac*, (1866,) and from letters of his children to me:

"Michael Osborn, son of Abner and Rebecca Bonnel Osborn, was born in Essex County March 21st, 1796. He did not enter College, but received a fair academical training, and studied Theology in the Princeton Seminary, N. J. (1817-20.) He was licensed by New York Presbytery October 10th, 1822, and ordained by Elizabethtown Presbytery in 1825. He labored successively in Savannah, Ga., Metuchen, N. J., Charlotte Court-House, Va., Newbern and Raleigh, N. C., Briery, Cub Creek and Farmville, Va. He died of Consumption at his residence in Farmville, July 3d, 1863. He was married a few months before his settlement here, and was the father of seventeen children, ten of whom are yet living."



Rev. Richard McIlvaine of Farmville writes of him :

"He was no ordinary man. His judgment was sound and logical, his perception quick and accurate, and his memory retentive. His information was both minute and extensive. He was a first-rate classical scholar, and had an exact idea and thorough command of the English language. In the Bible and Theology he was a master. In the earlier part of his life his preaching was of the highest order of excellence, *being characterized by a depth of feeling, a pathos, a fire which, in later years, had somewhat abated.* He was eminently a man of prayer, and spent much time in secret devotion. Parental duties were discharged with great assiduity and faith. He was a man of unflinching moral integrity; of courage seldom equalled; of uncompromising honesty, and of a firm and persistent adherence to duty. His whole life was spent for God, and his end was peace. Said he in death: 'I am at peace—all is peace; the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruleth in my heart and mind.' When much tortured by pain, he said: 'My testimony is, that God is good; He is good, yes, very good. I have learned one lesson from this sickness, and that is, to distinguish between suffering and happiness; I never suffered more, and never was so happy in my life.' "

Our next pastor, the Rev. Holloway Whitfield Hunt, a descendant of Augustine Hunt, of Hunt's Point, Westchester County, N. Y., was born at Kingwood, Hunterdon County, N. J., March 31st, 1800. He was the son of Rev. Gardiner A. and Ruth Page Hunt, afterward of Harmony, N. J. Mr. Hunt was prepared for college and brought into the Church under the teaching and ministry of Rev. Dr. Finley, of Baskinridge. He graduated at the College of New Jersey, 1818, at Princeton Seminary, 1822, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Newton and April 23d, 1824, transferred to the Presbytery of Albany, to become pastor of the Presbyterian church at West Galway. After a pastorate of eighteen months he resigned, on account of ill-health, and spent the next year in South Carolina, laboring as much as he was able in the service of the Missionary Society of Charleston.

Returning the next year, he first preached in Metuchen, October, 1827, and after being a Stated Supply for six months, received a unanimous call, at a salary of four hundred dollars, with parsonage, and was installed April 29th, 1828. He was married December, 1829, to Miss Henrietta Mundy, of this place. His ministry here as Pastor and Stated Supply extended over a period of eighteen years.

He removed soon after to Newark, and organized the Church at Lyon's Farms, but in about one year was invited to the Congregational Church at Patchogue, L. I., whither he removed in 1850. After laboring there for about ten years, during which a new church was built and the congregation much enlarged, he resigned, with the idea of retiring from active ministerial work.

But with the maintenance of unexpected health and activity, he soon began to feel it his duty to continue stated and ministerial labor, and so removed to Centreville, Orange County, N. Y., where he still ministers to the First Presbyterian Church.

It is not for this pen to speak at length of his Biblical learning, his faithful preaching, and his long and efficient ministry, so blessed

in this church and elsewhere. He severed his connection here contrary to the wishes of a large majority of his charge, and in his occasional visits is welcomed by all his former parishioners.

Besides additions of membership at other seasons, two periods were especially marked by more extensive revivals. In 1831 about forty persons were added on profession of faith, and in 1843 fifty-five.

The plan of building a new church was first proposed in 1834, and was so forwarded by Stelle Manning, Wm. M. Ross, and others, that it was accomplished, and the new edifice (40x60) was dedicated January 30th, 1836. The next season about twenty were added to the membership, and the congregation continued to enlarge and prosper.

The members of the church session when Mr. Hunt settled here, in 1828, were the same as before mentioned, and July 14th, 1839, Stelle Manning, Daniel S. Voorhees, John Henry Campbell and Wm. M. Ross were added. After Mr. Hunt's resignation Simeon Mundy, Richard Ross, Melancthon Mundy and John H. Campbell, and a little after, Wm. M. Ross and Daniel S. Voorhees withdrew from the duties of acting elders.

After a vacancy of a few months, the Rev. Peter H. Burghardt was called to the pastorate—October 4th, 1847—was installed November 30th, and continued his connection until June 5th, 1850.

Mr. Burghardt was born in West Stockbridge, Berkshire County, Mass., graduated at Union College 1840, at the Theological Seminary, Auburn, in 1843, and was first settled for four years in Northville, Michigan. This was his next settlement. He then supplied the church at Greenport, L. I.; was afterward settled over the Reformed Church at West Farms, N. Y., for four years, and that at Glenville, N. Y., for six years, where about one hundred united with the church.

His Christian patriotism induced him, August, 1861, to accept the position of Chaplain to Col. John Cochrane's regiment of United States Chasseurs. He was with his regiment in nearly every battle that was fought by the "Army of the Potomac," and did most efficient service, both as a chaplain and aid.

His only son, Charlie, whom many of us remember as a bright and promising boy, lost his life in battle the evening before the fall of Richmond, aged about twenty.

Mr. Burghardt after his return labored a few months at Somers, N. Y., and is now settled at Painted Post, N. Y. He is a man of great activity and zeal, both in the pulpit and out of it; labors heartily in whatever he undertakes, and his brief ministry among us was not without its fruit.

December 26th, 1848, Benajah Mundy, John H. Campbell and David Bloomfield were added to the acting eldership.



Our next pastor was the Rev. Robert J. Finley, who was called October 7th, 1850, and installed November 14th, 1850.

He was the son of the Rev. Dr. Finley of Baskinridge, graduated at Princeton College in 1821, and commenced the study of law under Theodore Frelinghuysen. Soon after completing his legal course, he entered upon the practice of law in Cincinnati, but soon abandoned it for the ministry. He labored several years in Louisiana and St. Louis and its vicinity, and afterward traveled extensively throughout the South as the able and efficient agent of the American Colonization Society. From that service he was called to his charge in Metuchen, and continued as pastor until October, 1857, a period of seven years. During his ministry, the church edifice was enlarged from its former (40x60) to its present dimensions, and the pews were let August, 1856. A Parochial Academy was built in 1852, on the land now nearly opposite the Reformed Church, but was afterward moved to its present location. A parish school was organized in it in 1853.

May 28th, 1853, Smith Bloomfield and Albert Edgar were added to the Eldership, and J. J. Clarkson, John Watson and D. G. Thomas were appointed Deacons.

Mr. Finley was an active and laborious pastor; an accurate Biblical expounder and effective preacher; an ardent friend of education, and zealous in the promotion of Christian liberality.

Decided in his opinions, and impulsive and untiring in the accomplishment of what he conceived to be best, he incurred at length the opposition of a majority of his congregation, and after much conflict of opinion, Presbytery dissolved the connection October, 1857. Soon after, some twelve male members and their families, or about forty in all, withdrew and organized the First Reformed Dutch Church of Metuchen.

After leaving here, Mr. Finley took charge of the Presbyterian Institute at Talladega, Ala., where he remained until his death, July 2d, 1860. His remains rest there beneath a beautiful monument which his friends and pupils erected to his memory. He died in the fifty-seventh year of his age. In a notice at the time of his death, the Rev. Mr. McCorkle, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Talladega, thus speaks of him :

"As a preacher he was rich in Scriptural truth, plain and chaste in style, free from ostentation in manner, and often impressive and powerful. He was genial and profitable in his intercourse with others, and left on all around him the conviction that he was a good man. He took a deep interest in the religious instruction of the young by means of Bible-classes and Sabbath-schools, and gave great prominence to the Bible as the best book for pupils in our primary and high schools. For the instruction of the negroes he had rare gifts, and in preaching to them took great delight. We can not, need not speak of his closet history; of his family piety; of his liberality to the poor and to the cause of Christ. 'His works will follow him.' He closed a useful life by a peaceful, triumphant death. In view of his heavenly rest, he exclaimed with fainting voice, 'Oh! glorious day.'"



His wife, Mrs. Julia Finley, everywhere so beloved by all who knew her, died at Peoria, Illinois, October 5th, 1863, and is buried there.

In January, 1858, the Rev. Gardiner S. Plumley, of New York city, was called quite unanimously as pastor—was installed April 28th, 1858, and still continues to labor among us acceptably.

Mr. Plumley was born at Washington, D. C.; graduated at Yale College 1850, at Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1855; was Pastor of Bloomingdale Church, New York, for two years, and then settled here. As he is with us and of us, there is no need that we inform you of his social, personal and ministerial qualities. He has twice represented the Presbytery of Elizabeth in the General Assembly, and been active by word and pen in promoting the welfare of the Church at large. Many from time to time have been added to the membership during his ministry here. The winters of 1852-3, and of 1867-8, were seasons of special awakening. At the former about twenty, and at the latter forty united with the church.

Within the last few years the church property has been much improved. A spire was erected upon the church 1863, and the first bell procured June, 1865. The present number of communicants is two hundred and fifty.

In November, 1857, Wm. M. Ross, Ezra M. Hunt, M.D., John Watson and John V. P. Voorhees were added to the Eldership. Benajah Mundy still remains an acting member of session. Elder John H. Campbell removed to Illinois in 1860 and died there in 1861. Melancthon Mundy, so long active as an Elder and Trustee, died in 1859, and Simeon Mundy, who so long served in both these capacities, in 1865. Henry Redfield, who was elected Elder August, 1861, served but for a short time. Wm. W. Ross died June 10th, 1867, much lamented both by the church and the community. Either as Trustee or Elder, and often as both, he had served for many years with self-denying devotion and great usefulness.

In connection with this church, a Sabbath-school has long been maintained under the direction, from time to time, of Mr. W. M. Ross, Mr. Lewis Thomas, Mr. A. W. Marshall and others, and is an important auxiliary to the church.

Besides those who have ministered to us as Pastors, there have been a few from this church who have consecrated themselves to the service of the ministry, and whose names are therefore often recalled by us.

Rev. Joel Campbell, son of Benajah Campbell, united with this church in 1819, soon after the great revival before referred to, and soon turned his attention to the ministry. After graduating at Amherst College and Auburn Theological Seminary, he was licensed by the Elizabeth and Newark Presbytery. He has labored at Honesdale, Carbondale and other points, having organized five churches and

witnessed precious revivals in all of them. He now resides at Lafayette, in the vicinity of former charges, having passed his three-score years and ten, and being compelled by decline of health to resign active ministerial duty. "I am still," says he, "spared, but feeble. I attend a Bible-class of young men connected with our Sabbath-school, help a little in the prayer-meetings, and occasionally preach." Thus he continues to work so long as he can in that vocation to which he was called, and in which all who ever knew him can testify as to his affectionate earnestness and untiring zeal. His name and his memory will ever be cherished by us.

Charles Ross, the son of Richard Ross, formerly an Elder of this church, has devoted most of his life to missionary and colporteur work. For many years past Charlottesville, Va., has been the centre of his field of labor, and he has been permitted to be abundantly useful in his chosen work. Satisfied with this humble and self-denying position, it is but recently that he has been ordained a minister of the Gospel, in order to more fully occupy the territory of which he is the overseer. At about the age of fifty-five, he is still laborious and useful.

Rev. Ezra F. Mundy, the son of Melancthon Mundy, formerly an Elder of this church, was born in 1833; united with this church in 1851; graduated at Rutgers College, New Brunswick, 1852; at Princeton Seminary, 1855, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, 1855. He was ordained and settled as Pastor of the Presbyterian church at Smithtown, L. I., 1856, and after a useful ministry there, resigned in 1861. He supplied the Presbyterian church of North Salem, N. Y., from 1863 to 1868, and was installed over his present charge, Portchester, N. Y., March 1st, 1868. A clear and effective preacher, an active pastor, and often a teacher to some of the youth of his charge, may he long be spared as God's messenger, and as one of the laborers who has gone forth from amongst us.

Dewitt H. Thomas, son of Lewis and Rachel Clarkson Thomas, was born at Metuchen, October 20th, 1841, and was converted while at school at Bridgeport, Ct., in 1858. He graduated at Williams College with honor August 3d, 1864, entered upon his Theological studies at Union Seminary, New York City, in September of the same year, and died December 1st, 1864, of Tetanus, resulting from a slight wound. Early in his college course, the question of his future duty as to the ministry presented itself to his mind and heart, and after most careful, prayerful, and anxious inquiry, "he came to the full, unreserved consecration of himself to that service which characterized him ever after. He did not wait to begin his work after he should have finished his Theological training, but at once entered with zeal upon preparatory labor as well as preparatory study." By talent, by pleasing address, and by earnest piety suited



for his holy vocation, we had looked forward with pleasure to a life of long activity for Christ, and "in his early grave lie buried fond hopes and cherished affections. But he has gone to that service in heaven which is the reward of the service he intended to have rendered on earth." There are trees which have fruit while yet in their bloom, and we must not complain if some such are transplanted beside the river of the water of life sooner than our human wishes indicate.

Theodore Whitfield Hunt, son of Rev. H. W. Hunt, united with this church April, 1859, graduated with the highest honors of his class at Princeton College, 1865, and after two years of Theological study in Union Seminary, N. Y., and one in the Seminary at Princeton, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Elizabeth, April, 1869. He has thus far declined settlement, and been earnestly employed in his duties as a tutor in Princeton College.

Thomas Reeve, a member of this church, is engaged in preparatory study under the care of the Presbytery.

While we are conscious that too few of those united with us have consecrated themselves to the ministry, yet we cannot but rejoice that some have thus been counted worthy, and we will pray and hope that many more shall yet be found who will give themselves to this best and noblest of all Christian vocations, and labor zealously in word and in doctrine.

In thus reviewing the past history of this church, interesting to us all as so long the only church of our neighborhood, while we cannot but recognize that at times it has been in a "great fight of affliction," yet from the ancient days, and the days of our fathers, it has received great blessings, and a goodly number have been gathered into the fold. Not cherishing undue sectarian feeling, many of other denominations have worshipped with us until the way was clear for separate organization, and thus has been cultivated that harmony of feeling which we believe now exists amongst our different churches.

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#### *First Reformed Church of Metuchen.*

Next in order of organization was the Reformed Dutch Church of Metuchen, which was formed December 27th, 1857, by a colony of about forty from the Presbyterian church. Smith Bloomfield, Albert Edgar, David Bloomfield and David G. Thomas were chosen as Elders, and Martin Compton, Wm. F. Manning, Henry Weston and Charles E. Bloomfield as Deacons. The present church edifice was soon erected, on land given by D. G. Thomas, and the church dedicated August 5th, 1858, the Rev. Dr. Bethune preaching the sermon.

Rev. J. Bodine Thompson, its first pastor, was installed February 15th, 1859, and resigned November 6th, 1866, to accept a call to the Reformed Church of Tarrytown, N. Y.

Mr. Thompson was the son of Judge J. Thompson, of Readington, Somerset County; a graduate of Rutgers College and of the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, and having been prominently engaged for a year or two in promoting the educational interests of the public school system of our State, was called to this his first settlement.

He labored amongst us with great acceptance, and his removal was much regretted. He is at present the pastor of the Reformed Church of Saugerties, N. Y. During his ministry here there was a gradual increase of the membership and of the prosperity of the church.

Mr. Smith Bloomfield, so long identified with religious interests here, and the chief contributor to the building of the church, died May, 1865, full of years and of devotion to the service of Christ.

The second pastor, Rev. Nicholas J. M. Bogert, was installed August 14th, 1867, and resigned on account of his health February 1st, 1870. He is a graduate of Rutgers College and of the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, and entered upon his labors here a few months after his licensure. His ministry has been efficient and faithful, and the membership of the church has gradually increased. The number of communicants is now one hundred and fifteen.

The church parted with their former pastor with much regret, and have just called the Rev. E. Lord, of Adams, Jefferson County, N. Y., who is soon to settle amongst us.

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#### *St. Luke's Episcopal Church.*

The Protestant Episcopal Church of this place first held service in the house of Mr. H. C. Hardy, but soon after, in 1866, was offered the use of the Lecture-Room of the Reformed Church, where regular service and Sabbath-school were held. In 1867 Rev. Alfred Goldsborough, of Trinity College, Hartford, Ct., and a recent graduate of the Episcopal Theological Seminary, was appointed Rector, and Mr. H. C. Hardy and Nathan Robins, Wardens, and T. W. Strong and others as Vestrymen.

He labored with acceptance for a little over one year, but the number of Episcopal families resident here being small, and the prospect of building a church seemingly delayed, he sought another field of labor.

Soon after, however, by the liberality of Messrs. Strong, N. Robins, Thorn and others, and the faithful superintendence of Rev



Dr. Abercrombie, of Rahway, N. J., the present neat church edifice was erected, and the first service held therein June 30th, 1869.

The present Rector, the Rev. Stephen P. Simpson, was settled May 1st, 1869, and removed here from Newark, N. J.

The church is gradually increasing in membership and attendance, and now numbers about forty communicants.

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### *Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church.*

For several years there have been occasional attempts to organize a Methodist Church in this village, and services were had at irregular intervals; but it was not until 1866 that any well-grounded prospect of early success was entertained. In November of that year the Presbyterian Church voted the use of the Academy to this Society for regular service.

In October, 1866, the church was regularly organized as the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church of Metuchen, and Walter S. Petit, Robert Idell, Isaac M. Whittier, Henry F. Coon, Robert Petit, and Rev. M. Daly signed the certificate of incorporation. From April, 1866, Rev. J. S. Coit, of Woodbridge, became the Stated Supply, and the following Spring Rev. J. L. Gilder, of New Brunswick, succeeded him.

The church now occupied was commenced September, 1868, finished at a cost of between six and seven thousand dollars, and dedicated April 1st, 1869. A Sabbath-school was opened soon after.

Rev. E. G. Thomas, a recent graduate of Rutgers College, was at once appointed by the Conference as the first settled minister. He gave promise of efficient usefulness, but a bronchial affection of the throat compelled his resignation during the Summer.

Rev. J. J. Reed, a Professor in Pennsylvania Military Academy, was appointed as his successor, and settled here October 1st, 1869, and labored with much acceptance until recently.

New families have moved into the town, and the zealous efforts of the founders have been continued, so that steady growth has been secured, and the membership now numbers seventy-one.

Our respected fellow-citizen, the Rev. Edward Wilson, has just been appointed to the Pastorate.

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As the Piscataway Baptist Church is only a little over two miles from us, and is now included within our township, a reference to it is proper; but needs only to be brief, since a narrative of its interesting history is soon to be prepared.

Like the early settlers of Woodbridge township, its early inhabitants brought some religion with them, and although few were Baptists, these seem to have been more active than the rest.

A statement as to the old churches of New Jersey, which I have, makes the church there to have been established in 1680.

At a town meeting, January 18th, 1685-6, it was agreed "that a meeting-house should be built forthwith, the dimensions as follows: 20 foot wide, 30 foot longe, and 10 foot between joynts." This house, it is supposed, was erected at Piscataway town. The first house of worship built was erected in 1748, on or very near the site of the present house. Its size was 40x36. This house was taken down in 1824 and a new and more commodious one was dedicated in 1825. This stood till January, 1851, when it took fire and was burned to the ground. The present house was erected in the same year.

The Pastor for fifty years or more, and up to about 1739, was John Drake, one of the early settlers. He was succeeded in 1739 by Benjamin Stelle, of Huguenot ancestry, who remained as Pastor for twenty years, and was in 1759 succeeded by Isaac Stelle, who was Pastor for twenty-two years. In 1783 Reune Runyon commenced his Pastorate, which continued for twenty-eight years, or to about 1812. Vincent Rognion was among the early settlers, and the surname is the same.

The sturdy character of the manifold descendants of all the Drakes, Stelles and Runyons above named, who have from that time onward to the present formed so excellent a portion of the inhabitants of that township, help to contradict that proverbial slander, that ministers' sons and deacons' daughters have more original sin, and are inclined to more actual transgression than the rest of mankind.

As to its later ministers, and manifold items of interest in the history of this old and well-sustained Christian society, they will be found in a historical sketch soon to be furnished by Rev. James T. Brown, D.D., the present able and esteemed Pastor.

Thus, by the various churches and denominations in our midst, and by an active and efficient ministry, we are all provided with suitable means of grace.

Free from many of the embarrassments with which our predecessors have been compelled to struggle, we may all of us surely say: "The lives have fallen unto us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage." We have entered into fields where others have labored, and where fruit abounds; but there is fallow ground yet to be broken, seed yet to be sown, culture-toil to be endured and harvests yet to be gathered. The earnest suppliant, the willing worker, and a spirit-seeking, Christ-loving, God-trusting people will not fail to labor on for the welfare of Zion, and to co-operate together with Pastors and with each other for the training of the lambs of the flock, for the regeneration of sinners, for the upbuilding of each member, until all shall become, more and more, wit-



nesses for the truth, and illumined by Him who is the true light, each church shall be as a branch of the golden candlestick, lighting multitudes to the altars of our God.

The oldest, around which clusters the historic associations of two centuries, is glad, in Christian charity, to greet the younger as sisters, that one and all together may unite in affording spiritual privileges to our community, and in exerting that moral and Christian influence which is the surest pledge both of temporal and spiritual prosperity.

We have thus completed a review of over two hundred years, with facts and incidents having relation both to our general and religious history. It has not been without some pains-taking that I have collected from obscure and scattered sources the items which go to make up a reliable record of the past; but I have done it with the more patience because I believed, as I now already have reason to know, that it would be gratifying to you, and would rescue from oblivion memories of the olden time, and of men identified with it, worthy to be cherished and preserved by our present and future inhabitants.

It is an advantage to any place to be able to refer to historic associations and to honorable successes, which are a part of itself, and as such ought to be esteemed, and I take it not so much as a personal compliment as an evidence of your appreciation of your own worthy history and regard for the honor of our town, that you have so attentively listened to these addresses, necessarily dealing with some matters in detail and in a way not adapted for popular recital. And I am sure that, with myself, many of you have felt devout occasion of gratitude to God for the character of our early settlers, and for those civil and religious privileges and blessings which have been so multiplied.

I have presented to you a sketch of our actual past. It was kindly proposed to me since our meeting night before last, that I should speak of our possible future. It is a prolific subject for a whole lecture, and I would avail myself of the suggestion, but I have already occupied your attention as long as my judgment will excuse.

With a humble appreciation of our manifold, ancestral, material and moral advantages as men and women of the present, we will burnish anew the shields and ensigns armorial of our historic arsenal, and with liberality and unity of spirit worthy of our fair record, and worthy of those who with equal claims have settled amongst us, let us, with good feeling and good faith, here and now make good resolve that we will do what we can to add the present as an ornament to the past, and secure to our posterity a future that they can cherish and enjoy.

Thus in a humble degree may we hope to make worthy use of

those precious privileges which have been vouchsafed to us in this goodly land, and when this valley shall teem with larger population, and these hills be all dotted over with cottages and homes, the streets you have added, the trees you have planted, the adornments you have planned, the churches and schools you have supported, and all the refining and elevating influences which you have helped to cultivate, will still remain as a worthy inheritance for the coming generations.

And now let blessings be upon the spot which the Grand Sachem of the Raritans called Metuchen, or the Rolling Land, and where Metuchen, the chief of the rolling land, had his hunting-grounds, and smoked, amid his Indian group, the pipe of peace: upon the people who now inhabit the district where Puritan and Covenanter afterward made common cause for Christianity and liberty, and upon all hereafter casting in their lot with us, who are ready to help us maintain the honor of the past, and to aid by sympathy and co-operative zeal in whatever contributes to material, social and moral advancement.

METUCHEN, *April*, 1870.





# History of Metuchen,

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By EZRA M. HUNT, M. D.



SUPPLEMENT.

METUCHEN, N. J., August 7, 1888.

EZRA M. HUNT, M. D. :

DEAR SIR.—Desire has been expressed to preserve in permanent form your excellent historical address which was read before a Union Meeting in the Presbyterian Church, July 1st, 1888, I therefore ask your permission to gratify this general desire.

Yours truly,

J. G. MASON.

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TRENTON, N. J., August 9th, 1888.

Rev. J. G. MASON, D. D. :

MY DEAR DR. MASON.—As the address is a collection of facts of interest to the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen, and to all its churches and citizens, it seems proper that I should comply with your request. It is, however, to be remembered that this address is only an appendix to two historical addresses which I gave in 1870, and which were printed by the citizens of Metuchen. I shall deposit with the New Jersey Historical Society a MSS. in which the material of all these addresses has more orderly arrangement with the addition of much material as to persons and localities.

Very truly yours,

EZRA M. HUNT.



# History of Metuchen.

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I AM here this evening in response to your kind invitation to join with you in rehearsing the historical reminiscences which cluster around the ancient church, and for the purpose of putting on record facts as to its history which otherwise might not be gathered or preserved. It is meet that in the year of the Centennial Anniversary of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church we should gather up precious memories of an eventful past, and especially that those churches which had been formed long before the Assembly existed, and out of which it was organized, should declare and celebrate the gracious relation they bore, to what has since become a part of the precious inheritance of the whole country. The Pastor of this church at that time helped to form that first General Assembly.

It is not in any spirit of laudation, or from the mere curiosity of antiquarian research that we gather around the sacred hearthstone of our forefathers and foremothers to trace their trials and their triumphs in establishing Christian ordinances and institutions here. It is true of all history that it is philosophy teaching by experience. But Christian history, and such a history as that of the planting and sustaining of Christian order and worship under the circumstances under which it was begun and fostered in this wilderness land is more than philosophy, for it is Christianity tried in the fire and coming forth as gold well refined.

Nor is it, surely, in any spirit of merely denominational pride that we have occasion to speak. For is not this the common foster grandparent of us all? Whatever may now be our particular religious association here was the root of the ancestral tree, and even yet burying our departed ones in the same sacred enclosures, we hold fast to the cherished memories of our common lineage. What this church in its early history, and for about a hundred years was

to all this section, is the common inheritance of all our churches here.

In our review, I trust, we shall see something of the noble self-denial and faithful Christian courage of our ancestors, and find motive and inspiration to a greater consecration to the service of our Lord.

It would be impossible to give an intelligent conception of our local church history without a brief reference to the early settlements in this part of New Jersey, and to the mother church from which we sprung.

Philip Cartaret arrived at Elizabethtown from England in the summer of 1665, landing at Amboy and bringing with him a few immigrants. After six months his ship, *The Philip*, returned and brought out another company with farm implements, seeds, etc. For three or four successive seasons these were joined by others. As Sir George Cartaret, his relative, had been Governor of the Isle of France, so much a place of refuge for the persecuted Huguenots of France, some of these were among the earlier arrivals.

The next season after Cartaret came he went up to New England to induce some of the settlers there to colonize in New Jersey. He was probably led to visit Newberry and Haverhill, in Massachusetts, because a settler from there had established himself near Elizabethtown before Cartaret came. Newberry had been settled about 1640 by a company mostly made up of Scotch and English Dissenters.

By Cartaret's favorable offers he induced a few to come and these were soon after joined by others. Arriving at Elizabethtown and looking over the surrounding country they concluded to choose the Township which they called Woodbridge, after the good Pastor they had left behind whose name and influence they revered.

This early record is quite important to us, since Obadiah Ayres, the paternal grand-parent, and John Pike, the maternal grand-parent of all the Ayres family, Abraham Tappan, the ancestor of all of that name, Thomas Bloomfield, the sire of this lineage, and probably Israel Thornal were of that arrival.\*

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\*As showing how early some of the names now familiar were in this section I note as follows: John Conger came via. Long Island and joined as one of the Association in 1670. The Foards, Craigs, Edgars and Kellies were here in 1688. The first Israel Thornal died in 1688, and his son's will bears date

As they were a religious people, they of course at once had a place of worship. The school and church lands were located near the centre of the Township, but the larger nucleus of present population being at the village of Woodbridge the meetings were held there.

Besides the group from Massachusetts we know, from the history of the period, that in other parts of New England there was a tendency to removal, chiefly because of the rigorous policy of the Puritans. Some from the Connecticut colony came first to Long Island and afterward to our Township. The Crows, the Carmans and the Rowlands are traceable in this way. Also thus early we find Nicholas Mundy, first at Amboy as a blacksmith but among the first taking up a section of land near here from Governor Cartaret. All these settlers seem to have united in regarding the church at Woodbridge as their meeting place for public worship. As in New England at that time, town and church affairs were associated, the organization at Woodbridge was Congregational rather than Presbyterian.

The next important settlement was that made at Perth Amboy and in its vicinity by Scotch refugees, and especially the company that arrived in 1685. The most prominent of these was Lord Neil Campbell. His departure had been hastened by the failure of the invasion from Holland, led by his brother, the Earl of Argyle, who had returned from his retreat and had sought to rally the forces in sympathy with him. His standard bore the inscription, "Against Popery, Prelacy and Erastianism!" He was captured, beheaded and his head hung upon the Tolbooth in Edinburgh, June 30th, 1685.

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1698. E. Crowe came from New England, 1688. As communicants before 1710 appear the names of Foard, Ayres, Freeman, Dunham, Rolph, Crowell or Cromwell, Edgar, Campbell and Rosse. Peter Noe (Neaw) was a Huguenot refugee. His son, John Noe, was born in 1694. The following are dates of wills in Trenton :

William Compton, 1694.

Israel Thornal, 1698.

James Manning, 1724.

James Clarkson, 1729.

William Elston, 1730.

William Laing, 1730.

John Campbell, 1731 (?) no date.

Thomas Ayres, 1732.

Nathaniel Paine, 1733.

Nicholas Mundy, 1734.

We have the names of William Compton, John Conger, Jonathan Dunham, John Rolfe, Potter and Morris between 1670 and 1680.



The cause of the Covenanters seemed so hopeless, and their persecution for religion's sake had been so intense, that many were willing to leave home and native land to seek an abiding place across the great ocean if only they could worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. As they were poor and found that those worshipping at Woodbridge were of similar faith and a few of Scotch descent, they seemed naturally to have identified themselves with the church there. The Edgars, Crowells, Fords, Freemans, Kellies, Talmages and Martins were probably of this company, as well as several of the Campbell clan with their dependents.

From this time on, and especially at the time of the renewed Scottish troubles in 1715, there were more of these arrivals. The band of the old ship *Caledonia*, which arrived that year, was especially notable. The Ackens, one of the Manning families, and the McDaniels were probably of that arrival.

It has been said that America had some of the wheat of three kingdoms, the Huguenots from France, the Puritans from England and the Presbyterians of Scotland. All were represented in our early settlements.

It was not until about 1707-8 that the congregation at Woodbridge began to take steps towards a separation from its close relations to the town, and it was not until 1710 that it joined the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Dr. Charles Hodge states 1708 as the time, but although Mr. Wade, its minister, had joined the Presbytery at that time, it is quite evident from contemporary history that he had not yet carried with him all the congregation. From various causes he had become unacceptable and this step is believed to have been taken in order to win over a growing Scotch constituency. Dr. Hodge distinctly says that the Scotch portion of the congregation was opposed to Mr. Wade, and that he joined the Presbytery in order to conciliate them. The congregation joined the Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1710. March 28th, 1710, John Foard, John Pike and Thomas Pike were chosen its first ruling elders. There was still dissatisfaction with Mr. Wade and he withdrew in 1711. The change from town relations and congregational independency was not made without much agitation, and was probably not maintained by a working majority until about 1714, when the Rev. John Pierson was called as the successor of Mr. Wade.

He was a notable man ; the son of the first President of Yale College, the intimate friend of Rev. Mr. Dickinson, of Elizabethtown, afterward the first President of Princeton College, the father-in-law of Rev. Ashbel Green, also a President of Princeton College (1812-1822).

He ministered to the people from 1714 to 1852, and acted, we are told, both as pastor and session (Hodges). On the roll of his membership we find the familiar names of John Campbell, Crowell, Edgar, Ford, Freeman, etc. He may be counted as really the first Presbyterian pastor under whose faithful ministry our forefathers worshipped and by whom their children were instructed in the ways of righteousness. Besides his own able ministration the voices of Dickinson and of the Tennents were often heard from his pulpit. In 1740, Whitfield having on the Saturday previous preached in the open air to an audience of seven or eight thousand people in New Brunswick, on Monday, April 28th, at 10 o'clock, preached to a crowded assembly in the Woodbridge church and no doubt had for his hearers the people from all this section. That was 148 years ago.

The years from 1740 to 1750 were signalized by precious outpourings of God's spirit in the New England and Middle States. None were more favored than those of this region with Dominies Frelenghuysen and Tennent, of New Brunswick, another Tennent at Freehold, Dickinson at Elizabethtown, and our own Pierson at Woodbridge. It is computed that in that decade 50,000 members were added to the churches of the country. It was the great awakening with which the names of Jonathan Edwards, Whitfield, the Tennents and others are associated.

In the year 1755 the Rev. W. Whitaker succeeded Mr. Pierson as the Pastor of the Woodbridge church. His pastorate was not a very peaceful one. He was young, zealous, impulsive, brilliant, erratic. The session book of the Woodbridge church has but four records during his ministry. In a list of a few received into communion of the church in 1756 occur the names of Dugald Campbell and Phineas Carman. Dugald Campbell lived on what is now the Tait farm, and Phineas Carman lived at Oak Tree, or Metuchen proper. The real name of the little cluster of houses here was Metetunk.

The pastorate of Mr. Whitaker ended in 1759, and with it the

direct relations of our community to the old Woodbridge church. There were several co-operating influences that conspired to induce a separate organization in the year 1760. There were local dissensions and divisions in the church at Woodbridge and a few had gone over to the Episcopalians. So many of its families were scattered on the farms reaching from Woodbridge to Oak Tree, and on the Amboy Road and the Postroad passing through Bonhamton, that it was natural to think of a centre at a point where the principal roads met.

In 1760 the smallpox so raged at Woodbridge village that, we are told, "it was a time of deep affliction, for many estimable citizens fell under the dreadful scourge." No doubt this interrupted all church attendance there from the surrounding country.

Before noting more fully the evidence as to when a Presbyterian church was really organized here there is one other circumstance to which allusion must be made. Sometime near the year 1730 a plot of land had been designated as a burial place for this community. It was not that there was not room at the burying-ground at Woodbridge, or at the one already in use at Piscatawaytown, nor was it a private plot, since members of two distinct families were the first buried there within six months of each other. There is some reason to believe that, even thus early, some pious people had looked forward to a place of religious worship, and as was so common then, had consecrated the spot with the remains of their precious dead before they were able to build an altar and consecrate it as a church of the living God. I do not have an idea that before 1760 any church had been built, but there is one little fact that intimates some building stood on this spot which was used as a place of religious meeting. Miss Deborah Ayres, who was born in 1780, told me that when she was a little girl she had heard of a meeting house on that spot which had been moved away and made into a barn; that she remembered a lady coming one afternoon to her father's house to tea who playfully said that on her way there she saw the oxen in the church. This is also strengthened by the statement of the Misses Thornal, sisters of Manning Thornal, that they had heard of the Tennents and others as preachers before Parson Roe's time, and their grandfather had subscribed for twelve copies of Gilbert Tennent's Sermons, published in 1757, and was in the habit of bringing him and others over from New Brunswick



sometimes to preach at Metuchen. At any rate, there are precious and early memories that centre around that spot which, as early as 1731, was the sacred God's acre which our fathers had chosen for their burial place and on which, as we know, the first church was erected.

I have often, in imagination, joined those two funeral processions, one in the fall of 1731 and the other in the spring of 1732, which wended their way to the burials of two of the leading citizens. One, John Campbell, was probably the grandson of Lord Neil Campbell, an aged patriarch, leaving his eight children as the progenitors of all that name here; the other was a young man of forty, Thomas Ayres, having given careful directions as to the care of his little orphans and asking that his property be so guarded as to afford them an education. The wills of both of these men are on file in Trenton and show that, although not leaving large moneys, they bequeathed legacies of character which constitute the best of real estate.

But while all these years the families of this section may have had their own place for prayer upon this spot of ground, and have looked forward to the time when they might have a neighborhood church, they were faithful parishioners of the Woodbridge Church on the green. Distance of travel was not so much an impediment to church-going as now. A lady of the Carman family, long since deceased, has told me that she had often heard her mother speak of going to church on horseback or on foot, and of taking an extra pair of shoes to put on at the church door. Families would go in the early morning and hear the morning and afternoon sermons, enjoying the half hour of social intercourse and luncheon between the two services.

But now the time had come when various circumstances seemed to justify a separate organization. For an account of it we naturally turn to the records of the old Woodbridge church. But from 1756 to May 13th, 1788, no such record exists. The first light from this source comes from a historical page of notes inserted in the Sessional Book of Woodbridge, by Rev. Azel Roe, during or just previous to the year 1813. The part of it with which we are concerned reads thus: "About this time," that is the close of Nathaniel Whitaker's ministry, "a number of families in the upper or west part of the town withdrew and formed themselves into

a separate society, built themselves a house of worship and put themselves under the care of the Brunswick Presbytery and were duly organized." . . . "They were for some time under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Cummins, who lived in New Brunswick."

The only point in the memorandum needing explanation is that which refers to a Mr. Cummins. I have carefully traced the history of the only Mr. Cummins who was a Presbyterian minister of that period. He no doubt preached for the people a little about the time of their withdrawal, but his own chronic condition of ill health and the fact that we have official record of how the church was cared for very soon after, makes it clear that the words "pastoral care" are only used of him as a temporary supply and not as a settled pastor. We will again refer to him later on.

Fortunately, we are able to refer to a record made at the time (1760), which shows just when the church sought separate organization and placed itself under the care of the Presbytery of New Brunswick. The following minute appears on the books of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, October 28th, 1760: "Boundbrook, October 28th, 1760. An application for supplies was made by Mr. John Lyle, on behalf of New Brunswick and Metuchen, by the consent of York Presbytery (as he informs)." It thus becomes apparent that at the meeting of the New York Presbytery, to which the Woodbridge church belonged, the people of this section had signified their desire for a separate organization, and to be allowed to join themselves to the Presbytery of New Brunswick. This permission may have been given in April, or at an early meeting of the Presbytery in October. At any rate, it fixes the year 1760 as the year in which this church was organized. John Lyle was, no doubt, the worthy elder of that name, of New Brunswick, whom William Tennent in his will calls "the worshipful John Lyall, and whom, at his death in 1763, he left as one of the guardians of his children." From this date of October, 1760 to 1767, I have full record of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, so far as it relates to this church, and of the provisions made for its supply. Some reference to it and application for supplies appear at almost every meeting. I abbreviate from these minutes. October, 1761, together with the church at New Brunswick, Metuchen made application for a candidate for settlement instead of supplies, but they were supplied as before.

In October, 1764, a call was presented by the church at New Brunswick and Metuchen for the service of Rev. William Tennent, Jr., who had been supplying them since the last meeting of Presbytery. As he was not present the call was ordered to be held in retentis. The call was afterwards declined.

In April, 1765, the minute of the Presbytery of New Brunswick read thus: "A supplication from the united congregations of New Brunswick and Metuchen, for Mr. Kirkpatrick as a candidate, was brought in and read." Mr. Kirkpatrick at the same time had a call for White Clay and Christiana Creek, Presbytery of Newcastle. He did not accept the call and so supplies were continued. May 28th, 1766, a supplication was brought in from Metuchen for a candidate for settlement. It thus appears that the church then thought it could support a pastor without New Brunswick.

Mr. Enoch Green was appointed to preach two Sabbaths. He seems to have continued preaching to the churches at Metuchen and New Brunswick. At the meeting of Presbytery in October following, he was directed to preach at Metuchen each alternate month, until the spring meeting of the Presbytery.

Following the record of Presbytery as to the sending of Mr. Green to preach here in 1766 there is no allusion to Metuchen Church. The Clerk of Presbytery in writing to me says: "I find, after this, Metuchen drops out of our record and no cause assigned. We know from other records the cause, viz: That in 1767 Rev. Azel Roe, who had become pastor of the Woodbridge church in 1763, accepted also the pastorate of this church, as we shall more fully note hereafter.

We have here an exhibit of the early struggles of this church and of its noble perseverance in securing stated ministrations and sustaining public worship. Although it had not secured the services of a pastor, it had maintained a steady growth and had been prospered. This is apparent from the last request for a pastor of its own, and also from the fact that when it entered into arrangements with the Woodbridge church it was able to ask and pay for one-half of the services. Indeed, from records I have seen and compared as to both New Brunswick and Woodbridge, there is reason to believe that in 1767 the congregation here was as large as either of these.

Besides its aid from Presbytery, according to the custom of the



times, settled ministers extended their labors over large sections of country, preaching in every neighborhood where a few families had gathered. No doubt they were often visited by the pastors at Freehold, New Brunswick and Woodbridge.

Before passing to the settled history of our church we should briefly notice those who have been named as its supplies and those to whom calls were extended.

The Mr. Cummin who seems to have ministered to the people for a little time after the separation from Woodbridge congregation was no doubt the Rev. Alexander Cummin, the only one of the name on the Presbyterian roll of that period. He was born at Freehold in 1726, being the son of a Scotch elder there. In 1750 he had become the associate minister with Rev. Mr. Pemberton, of the only Presbyterian church of New York City, but because of the low state of his health resigned in 1753. "In feeble health and with little prospect of usefulness," says Webster, "he remained without charge till February 25th, 1761, when he was installed pastor of the Old South Church, of Boston." He was an instructive and excellent preacher, but took some very extreme views as to doctrine and duty. Because of this, and his feeble health, he did not remain long in any one place. He died August 23d, 1763. Dr. Sewell, his colleague in Boston, says of him: "He was full of prayer, with a lively, active soul and a feeble body."

William Tennent, Jr., to whom this church first extended a call, after a period of supply by him, was the son of the Rev. William Tennent, of Freehold, of trance memory and of godly memory. He was, therefore, the grandson of the William Tennent who had come from Ireland, and one of the four sons all of whom were such earnest pioneers in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of those days. William Tennent, Jr., then a young man, joined the Presbytery of New Brunswick in 1763. We hear of him at one time (1762), as assigned to some special work in the Presbytery of Hanover, Virginia.

"He was," says Dr. Archibald Alexander, "a man of superior character, who became pastor of the Independent Church, Charleston in South Carolina, and died in 1777, aged about 37 years." (See Sketches of the Alumni of the Log College, Alexander, 1845.)

William Kirkpatrick, to whom the next call was extended by this church, became one of the most prominent Presbyterian

ministers of that day. He became a member of the Presbytery of New Brunswick in 1760. He labored some in Virginia, and in 1761 presented an overture to send a missionary to the Oneida Indians and seems to have been much interested in the work to which David Brainerd was then devoted. "He was," says Chas. Hodge, "distinguished for his piety and usefulness."

Rev. Enoch Green, who was the last one sent as a supply on petition for a pastor, but as to whom nothing was said as to a call, also appears in the early records of the Presbyterian Church, having joined the Presbytery of New Brunswick in 1763. (In 1762 he is mentioned as being sent to the waste districts of Virginia to act as missionary within the bounds of Lewes and Newcastle, Delaware.) All of these last three were graduates of Princeton College (1760-63).

If we may judge from their subsequent prominence and usefulness, our Church, in its early formation and ministrations, was well supplied with an earnest and efficient succession of preachers. This brings us to the period of a settled pastorate.

It was August 5th, 1767, that the plan which had evidently been under consideration for some time was consummated, and the Rev. Azel Roe became the first pastor of this church in equal co-pastorate with the church at Woodbridge. It was agreed that the Woodbridge session should serve for both churches. This arrangement was the more natural because of the examination of candidates, as all other functions were chiefly exercised by the pastor. Indeed, Dr. Hodge says that Woodbridge Church had no acting session during the forty years ministry of Mr. Pearson. He was considered so competent a shepherd as not to need any counsellors.

It was not until 1793 that the first elder of this church was chosen. He was Mr. James Manning, and lived on the farm afterward owned by Mr. Wm. M. Ross.

As my design in this sketch is only to add to my former record as to this church, facts not then known, I shall pass over much of interest in regard to Rev. Mr. Roe and as to the church building, its pewholders, its enlargement, etc. No one can look over the names of pewholders of June, 1784, without recognizing how substantial were the families who compose the list, and how, without a single exception, the forty-two names have continued in our midst.

The ministry of Dr. Roe over this congregation continued a

little over twenty-five years, to the great spiritual upbuilding of the church. He was the pastor during all the trying period of the Revolutionary War, and was, as you know, noted for his patriotic devotion to the cause of the colonies. He was at one time seized by the British and carried off to the "Sugar House" Prison in New York. (See page 6 of my history.)

It is well for us to recall both the national and church trials of those days. Almost at the beginning of Mr. Roe's ministry the Colonies were beginning to suffer under the exactions of the Crown. So soon as the Revolutionary War began, our own section was involved in all the perils of the war. Besides the general impoverishment of the people and the absence of a goodly number in the armies of our country, ours was a neighborhood actually suffering from the anxieties, the foraging and the desolation which the presence of a foreign foe involved. At Bonhamtown was a place of rendezvous, and while a main division was at Amboy and the American army was encamped at points between Boundbrook and Elizabethtown, this whole intermediate region was the field for scouts and skirmishes, for plunder and violence.

Some personal examples of those belonging to the congregation will serve as an index of the general suffering and anxiety.

Israel Thornal, Sr., who lived on the same farm now occupied by his descendants, was carried from a sick-bed and placed in the Sugar House Prison in New York, where Mr. Roe had also been taken. Mr. Thornal's son, knowing his father's feeble condition, offered to be imprisoned in his place. The offer was not accepted, and the old gentleman died in the stockade. His son, Israel Thornal, died in 1819, and is buried in yonder yard.

Timothy Bloomfield, whose house was on the Amboy road, was also made a prisoner, and long detained in the notorious Jersey prison ship.

When the British were encamped at Piscatawaytown, Dugal, the father of Henry Campbell, Sr., was taken from his home on the Isaac Campbell or Tait farm, placed on horseback behind a Hessian, and carried to the camp. Just after his capture, several of the neighbors banded together and attempted his rescue. They were pursued by the British cavalry from Bonhamtown as far as Metuchen church, and made their escape by leaving the main road at the foot of the old grave-yard, where the British became mired in



their attempt to follow. During a skirmish at the crossing to New Brunswick, Mr. Campbell made his escape, secreted himself and finally succeeded in getting home.

Samuel Compton, who lived where Harrison Martin now lives, near Bonhamtown, was ordered out of his house and the building set on fire. Most of his household goods, all his cattle and horses, except one, were taken. He was allowed this horse, a wagon and a few articles, and his family being put on the wagon, started for the mountains back of Plainfield. He remained there for several months, until the British moved off from this section, when he ventured to come back. Hearing in a few days that the two armies were likely to come together somewhere between Brunswick and Princeton, he seized an old shotgun and told his wife he was going to see if he could not join the army. He started alone in pursuit, and got to Freehold in time to take a part in the famous battle of Monmouth. (June 28th, 1778.)

My own grandfather, Ezra Mundy, told me that he remembered a day when all the women, with their children, were gathered in an old barn which then stood on the Blackford place, the men being absent in the army, or watching the movements of the enemy. While there, playing with the other children, a cannon ball was shot through the building by a detachment of British soldiers. His attention was arrested by one woman saying to another: "How little these children know of the peril we are in." The old house on the Benjah Kelly farm was used for a time as a guardhouse. Noah Mundy has told me that his mother well remembered the day of the severe skirmish on the Ross farm, near Mt. Prospect school house, and saw a cart-load of dead bodies pass the house soon after. That was June 26th, 1777. About the same time one of the Noe family was shot and killed near Dog Tavern, beyond New Dover, while carrying letters to the American camp.

I might occupy some time with other similar narratives. But this is enough to show how sacred to us should be the memories of this section, of these ancestors, and especially because with the legacy of a free country they also sought to leave for us the precious memories and hopes which centre around a well-sustained Christian Church and Christian ordinances.

The Metuchen meeting house was at one time despoiled and occupied by British troops. When, many years after, a Committee

of Legislature was appointed to ascertain the ravages inflicted on persons and property by the war, we find in the records at Trenton that the amount of loss stated for the Metuchen meeting house was 14 pounds 5 shillings. The church at Woodbridge did not thus suffer.

During much of this period Mr. Roe, being a fearless man and fond of horseback riding, was, no doubt, found punctual and ardent in sustaining services whenever practicable, and in administering comfort and consolation to his afflicted and anxious parishioners. The prayers for King George III., who had been crowned in 1760, the year our church was formed, were soon discontinued, and ardent petitions ascended for the success of the patriots' cause. Mr. Roe continued our pastor through all the years of the Federal Union, and until after the Constitution had been formed and fully accepted in 1789, and so the United States had been made a Nation. He was our pastor one hundred years ago, a member of the First General Assembly; and so, it may be said, this church helped to form that Assembly. Surely, none has a better right to celebrate its centennial and to rejoice in what has been accomplished in this country by the Presbyterian branch of the Church.

Sacred is the spot, and sacred are the associations which bind us to the past. As we now recall these great self-denials of our Christian ancestry, what a great deliverance God wrought for us, the national and spiritual blessings we enjoy, and the progress of our Zion, let us give thanks in our hearts unto the Lord.

Mr. Roe ceased his ministry here, in 1793, only because the two churches, at their distance, were too much for his oversight, and were able to support a pastor of their own. There is a portrait of Dr. Roe in the possession of the family of Rev. Cornelius Edgar, at Easton. It is said to have been an excellent likeness. Some five years since, being in Easton, I called to see it. It was so noble and commanding, and recalled so many of the earlier associations of this section, that I offered \$50 for it, but was not able to secure it.

After the withdrawal of Mr. Roe, the church at Metuchen was not long in securing a new pastor. The Rev. Henry Cook became the pastor, and took up his residence here May 1st, 1794. He had graduated at Rutgers College in the class of 1789. He probably prepared for the ministry with Rev. Dr. Woodhull, and this was his first and only settlement. At this time Mr. James Manning was the only Elder, he having been chosen April 6th, 1793.

We shall not repeat the various incidents in the life of Mr. Cook, or relate the successes of his earnest and devoted ministry, as the details are to be found in my former address. He preached his last sermon, shortly before his death, from the text, "Thy word is very pure; therefore, Thy servant loveth it." He died September 17th, 1824. The following is the inscription on his grave-stone in the old church-yard:

"The grave of Rev. Henry Cook, thirty years Pastor of this Church, who died Sept. 17, 1824, aged 55 years. He was a man of unassuming manners and of a good and cultivated mind, a sound divine, a faithful and useful preacher and pastor, a Christian indeed, in whom there was no guile. His bereaved congregation, in token of their affection, have erected this stone to his memory. He was a good man."

There are abundant testimonies as to his ability and usefulness. In 1818 especially a great revival occurred. Ninety were received at one communion, and twenty-two at the next. The Rev. Joel Campbell and Wm. M. Ross were among those who made a profession at that time.

Although Mr. Cook did not keep a regular school, he taught the few youths of the congregation, who desired teaching, in the languages and higher mathematics. Rev. Joel Campbell, Dr. Jacob Martin and Nathan Ayres, the surveyor, were among those instructed by him. He was a man of spare habit, and when he first settled wore the continental breeches, which, no doubt, were exchanged for modern dress as the revolutionary period passed away. My mother always speaks of him as bearing a marked resemblance to Mr. Augustine Campbell. Although he was never of very vigorous health, he did his full share of pastoral duty in the pulpit and out of it.

His only printed discourse is in my possession. It was preached July 4th, 1811, to the assembled congregations of Metuchen, Samp-town, Piscataway and the Seventh Day Baptists, and must have been listened to by many who had seen actual service in the Revolutionary War. For instance, Capt. Matthew Freeman, 68 years of age; Joseph Randolph, of Capt. A. N. Randolph's Company; Capt. Robert Ross, aged 63; John Ross, M. Martin, Daniel Noe, David Stewart, from the Short Hill battle ground; Capt. Leonard, Israel Thornal, aged 66 years, and others on the army roll-call were still alive.



The sermon is a valuable relic, worthy of the man and of the occasion. As to-day, if not the Fourth of July, is the anniversary of the first motion and reading of the Declaration of Independence in the Continental Congress, and the discourse is brief, I think you will hear it read with interest :

A DISCOURSE ON AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, DELIVERED ON THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1811, AT METUCHEN MEETING-HOUSE, BY THE REV. MR. COOK.

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Agreeable to an arrangement, the Congregations of Metuchen, Samptown, Piscataway and Seventh Day Baptists met at Metuchen Meeting-House. when the services of the day were opened by an appropriate prayer by the Rev. Peter Smith, from the State of Ohio; Declaration of Independence read by Mr. Joseph Randolph—after which a Discourse well adapted to the occasion by the Rev. Henry Cook—the services of the day were then closed by a prayer by the Rev. Reune Runyon.

During the intervals, Music, conducted by Mr. William Lever.

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This day, my friends, completes the thirty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America. A day worthy to be long remembered on many accounts—and to be remembered with sentiments of fervent gratitude to our great Creator. It is a pleasing circumstance that we see on this occasion so many people of different religious opinions, and in some respects, of different political opinions, all uniting together to maintain the great principles of Independence, and to celebrate this day in the exercises of public worship. When this spirit of union shall become general through our country; and when our people shall all unite in giving to God the glory of our Independence, and of all our national advantages, then we shall have good reason to hope that God will indeed “open the windows of Heaven, and pour us out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

As a guide to the sentiments which may be expressed on this joyful occasion, you may permit me, my friends, to call your attention to a passage of holy scripture—the passage which you will find, *Exod. 20:1, 2, 3.* “And God spake all these words, saying, I am

the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me."

These words of God were at first addressed to the people of Israel just after he had freed them from their bondage in Egypt. In that country they groaned under the iron rod of oppression. They were subjected to cruel task-masters, and sighed by reason of their bondage. God looked upon them with pity, and sent Moses, with the rod of God in his hand, to bring them deliverance. By a mighty hand and an outstretched arm—by a succession of terrible judgments inflicted on their oppressors; and by many striking miracles, he brought them out of Egypt, and continued his merciful protection, till he had led them into the land flowing with milk and honey, and established them in their own land an independent and happy people. And what did he require of them in return for all his kindness? The answer is, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—Give to him thy supreme affection, thy entire confidence, and thy cheerful and willing obedience.

These words of God to Israel apply with peculiar propriety to the people of the United States. God hath done great things for us, for which we are now assembled together to rejoice. He has delivered us from subjection to a foreign power, and made us a free and independent nation—and he has distinguished us by peculiar mercies and privileges above all the nations of the earth. And now what does he require of us in return? His language to each of us as individuals, and to the whole nation as a body, is the same in which he addressed his ancient chosen people. "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." He requires of us to give him our hearts—to place our reliance on him only, and to adhere steadily to his commandments.

But let us briefly consider those peculiar privileges which are connected with our independence, and which may be considered as the consequence of that civil and political liberty which we now enjoy.

One of the most obvious of these is, that under a free government every man is permitted to enjoy in quietness the fruits of his own industry, and by diligence to improve his circumstances in life.

He sits under his own vine and under his own fig tree ; and no proud oppressor is able to deprive him of those enjoyments which he hath earned by the sweat of his face. Here is every encouragement to honest industry, and the opportunity of obtaining and securing all those comforts which belong to this imperfect state of existence. To this may be added that, under such a government, all classes of citizens are equal in their rights, and none exalted above others by any peculiar privileges of which the rest are deprived. Here are the weak guarded against the strong, the poor are protected against the violence of the rich—merit and virtue are suffered to receive that homage and respect which is their due ; and men in every station have encouragement to pursue the path of duty. Under such a government also, Christians of every denomination are protected in the invaluable rights of conscience. All are allowed to assemble freely when and where they choose ; to worship God in the manner dictated by their own conscience. It is in consequence of those principles of liberty which led to our independence, that we have the privilege of assembling to-day to express our thankfulness to God for all his mercies—and there are no cruel guards to drive us from his house. We may freely express all our opinions—we may give full scope to all our feelings, while we are recollecting the wonders of God's mercy, and sending up the breathings of our hearts to his throne.

But we have not time to recount the numerous blessings which are connected with a free government, and which have flowed in upon our land in consequence of that Declaration of Independence which has now been read in our hearing, through the smiles of our gracious God, The principal design of our coming to the house of worship on this occasion, should be to lead our thoughts to the Almighty Ruler of nations, by whom every blessing is bestowed. Let us then endeavor to trace the good hand of God in leading our nation to independence ; and in defending and preserving us in the possession of it.

In order to do this we must look many years back—to the first settlement of our country—for then the way began to be prepared. A great proportion of this country was first settled by persons driven from their own land by oppression and persecution. From their cruel oppressions they looked beyond the ocean for relief. Men, women and children cheerfully encountered the terrors of the



sea, and welcomed the gloom of the dreary wilderness, inhabited only by savages and wild beasts, that they might enjoy the blessings of liberty, and the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of his own word. God had provided a place for their first landing; and to ensure their safety, he had sent the pestilence before them, which swept off many of the savages; so that they were too weak to oppose the settlement of these fugitives, or to do them any material injury. Surely the hand of God is discernable in these things. Through his wisdom and goodness, this country has been from the beginning a refuge for the poor, the afflicted and the oppressed of all sects, and of all nations. And this circumstance early made strong impressions on the different colonies, in favor of equal rights and in opposition to tyranny. These impressions could never afterwards be effaced. Every event which a watchful providence suffered to take place, tended to enforce on the minds of the American people, a love of liberty and an abhorrence of oppression, until they were prepared to shake off all dependence on a foreign power.

The hand of God may be further observed in that union of sentiment and that ardent zeal in the cause of liberty which prevailed among all the different provinces at the time when Independence was declared. People coming from different nations, with various religious opinions, establishing different and unconnected colonies, in many things strongly prejudiced against one another, were, through the gracious interposition of Divine Providence, united in one great cause, and zealous to make every sacrifice, and to encounter every danger in a cause so glorious. In this respect the kindness of the Almighty towards us was peculiar, and such as perhaps no nation ever before experienced. Whenever other nations have attempted to overturn an oppressive government, and establish one more free and popular, the end has never been accomplished without a bloody civil war among themselves. Brothers have been arrayed in battle against brothers—parents have been armed to shed the blood of their children, and children that of their parents. So it was in the first great revolution in England. So it has been in France. The tender mercies of God spared us from these dismal scenes—Our struggle was only against the fleets and armies of a foreign nation. When the laws of that nation became oppressive, and when its armies began to shed the blood of our people; the resistance was unanimous in almost every part of our land. And

when no alternative remained but submission or independence, the representatives of all the provinces did, with the joyful consent of the people on the Fourth of July, 1776, declare them free and independent States—resolving in dependence on almighty aid, to support the Declaration at the hazard of their fortunes and their lives.

The interposition of Divine Providence may also be plainly discerned in directing the American people in the choice of their leaders in those trying times. Such men were chosen to direct the Revolution as seemed afterwards to be the only persons qualified for such a work. This divine interposition appeared especially in the choice of commander in chief of our armies. Notwithstanding all that emulation and rivalry which always subsists among independent States, yet when the name of Washington was mentioned there was not a dissenting voice. So wisely had God prepared the way that the vote for him to command the armies was unanimous. And the whole of his conduct through the arduous conflict was such as to fix the conviction more deeply on every heart—that he was the choice of God rather than the choice of man. The same divine goodness appeared in bringing all parts of the Union to agree in those measures which were best calculated to support the cause in which they were engaged. At the beginning of the Revolution all the bands of government were dissolved; there was no constitution, no law. And yet such a harmony of views, and such a concert of measures as could only be the result of some kind influence from above, such as led to a firm and lasting union.

But there is one point of light in which this subject is to be considered more humbling to us, and yet more clearly evincing the sovereign power and goodness of God. The good hand of the Almighty, in defending us from our enemies, is rendered more visible by His suffering us at times to be brought very low, so as to destroy our confidence in an arm of flesh, and then unexpectedly lifting us up again. A short time before the Declaration of Independence we were much encouraged by success and lifted up in a confidence in our strength. But quickly after this declaration we were brought to the brink of ruin. Our armies defeated, our commander deserted except by a small and feeble band, retreating before a numerous, triumphant and shouting enemy, saw the marks of despair all around him. Multitudes in that dark season totally gave up the cause and submitted to the conquerors. Many indeed continued

firm in the hour of peril; but all were convinced that help must come from God only. Then was pre-eminently the time of prayer. Those of you who lived in that day will bear witness that the hearts of all who were in any measure serious, were raised to God in humble supplication that he would interpose to save an afflicted and helpless people. He did indeed interpose; and it was not long before the same panic seized upon our enemies which had prevailed among our own people. They learned to tremble at the shaking of a leaf. And in some instances there was almost a literal accomplishment of the promise: "One shall chase a thousand; and two shall put ten thousand to flight." Thus did it frequently happen during a long and dubious contest that, when we were lifted up with a high confidence in our own strength, the sad intelligence arrived of some dreadful defeat. And, when ready to despair of all human efforts, we were again encouraged by some unexpected victory.

At length every enemy was driven from our borders, and our greatest danger arose from internal dissensions. Here, also, the merciful hand of God is plainly to be seen, in leading us to that happy form of government under which we now live, and which all parties so much admire. The convention that framed our present constitution were for a time unable to come to any agreement. Biased by strong prejudices, and distracted by different political opinions, the convention were several times on the point of utterly dissolving and retiring to their different States. The States were on the point of separating from each other, and being divided into a number of small and disconnected tribes, which would undoubtedly have been engaged in almost perpetual wars one with another. This was an awful crisis. But the eye of God was fixed upon that great assembly; and by suggesting a peaceful thought to one, and a prudent thought to another, so harmonized their councils that they were enabled to present the constitution to the acceptance of the people, sanctioned by this remarkable clause: "Done in Convention by *unanimous* consent."

Thus are we become a free and happy nation. And who, on a review of the scenes that have passed, can refrain from saying: "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." And let us remember, it is the same God, and He only who can still maintain our privileges and preserve our independence and peace. What then does this gracious



benefactor demand of us as His highly favored people? He speaks as a sovereign to us all, both rulers and people: "Ye shall have no other Gods before me." He expects that we should render him our grateful homage; that we should love and serve Him with fervent hearts, and that we should look to Him by constant humble supplication for every blessing. That we should set up no other objects of confidence in His place. We must not rely on our own wisdom, on our own strength; nor give indulgence to our sinful intemperate passions. If we put confidence in the wisdom of our ruler, or in the wisdom of our people, to the forgetting of God, we shall provoke Him to hiding His face from us. Let us remember that He turneth the councils of the wise to foolishness and disappointeth the devices of the crafty. If we think that our own arm can preserve us, if we confide in our own increasing strength, if we trust in our great numbers and glory in our 7,000,000 of people to ensure safety from foreign foes, or to ensure liberty and peace within ourselves, we rob God of His glory and may expect His frowns. Let me remind you, my friends and fellow-citizens, of that awful warning which the prophet Samuel gave to the people of Israel, when they had renounced confidence in God and set up an earthly king in His place. After plainly showing them their sin and folly in thus rejecting the Lord, and exhorting them to return to Him, he concludes by saying: "If ye shall do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, ye and your king." Let not these words be supposed to have no application to us. If we forget God, and glory in Independence, and in our power and skill to preserve it; if, in this confidence, we give the loose rein to our evil passions, and do wickedly, we shall be consumed, we and our Independence.

But, beloved, I hope better things of you and of our country. I trust that, after having done all these things for us, our God will not destroy us. I trust that He will not leave us to destroy ourselves, of which, indeed, there is most danger. To prevent this, let all who would bear the character of good citizens and of good patriots, fall on their knees daily before His throne of grace, and humbly entreat Him to save us from every evil; to preserve us in harmony; and to continue to us all our rights and privileges until the closing period of earth and time, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat and the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved.

May God grant unto us all such a spirit, and to our nation such a blessing, for His mercy's sake in Christ Jesus! Amen.

After the death of Mr. Cook, in September, 1824, the congregation was only a short time without a pastor. In the following December a call was given to the Rev. Michael Osborn, of Essex county. He had graduated at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1820, and preached for a little time in Savannah, Georgia. I heard him preach when on a visit here about 1858. He impressed me as a plain, interesting and earnest preacher. He accepted the call, and was pastor for only a little over two years, leaving somewhat suddenly because of the disaffection of a single elder. I have nothing more to add to my former record of him. I have a good likeness of him as of all the pastors who have succeeded him.

In October, 1827, at the suggestion of the Rev. Wm. Barton, of Woodbridge, the Rev. H. W. Hunt was invited to occupy the pulpit. As a young man he is described to me as spare and stately, of dignified presence in the pulpit, and as at once impressing the congregation by the earnestness and solemnity of his utterance and the clear Biblical method of his discourse. Noah Mundy and perhaps two or three others here present remember him as he preached that day. Mr. Stelle Manning was on a visit here from New York City and said, as he went out, "That is the man for you, but I don't believe you can get him." Ezra Mundy, on his return from church, as he sat at the dinner table, said, "I think he is a man that will suit us." His daughter startled him, by adding, "Perhaps he would suit me, too." He did suit the church, and the lady also. After preaching as a stated supply for six months, he was unanimously called as pastor and installed April 29th, 1828, just sixty years ago, the last Sabbath of last April.

The earlier ministry of Mr. Hunt was marked by the transition from the venerable old church to the then new building. The meeting house, as it was called, had become too straightened by reason of the increasing attendance. In 1831 forty persons had been added on profession of their faith. A few new families were forming or moving into the neighborhood, and more seating capacity was needed. In the plan of a new building there was general co-operation, and it was perfected in the Fall of 1834. The attachments to the old church location were very strong, and for a time there was opposition to any change.

On the last Sabbath of January, 1836, or about nine years after his settlement, Mr. Hunt preached the last sermon in the old church, so dear to all our ancestors, and on the first Sabbath of February,

1836, preached his first sermon here from the text Haggai 2:9: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

About twenty persons united with the church, by profession, the next season; and fifty-five more in 1843. It was not until in a recent review that I reckoned up, and found that between 1831 and 1843 the church must have added over one hundred and fifteen to its membership in three revivals, besides the other additions, no doubt occurring from time to time. These were days of great peace and prosperity, in which the borders of our Zion were greatly enlarged. My own memory as a child, and the memory of those older than myself, goes back to the picture of the church as it then was, to the frequent school house, neighborhood and revival meetings, and, in thought, to so many dear to us all, who now rest in our adjacent grave-yards.

As no other church existed here, the congregation was large and represented the whole community round about. Many families came three and four miles to meeting, and, after the habit of those days, services were held in school-houses, and often in private houses, at New Durham, Oak Tree, Uniontown, Bonhamtown and Ford's Corner.

Other facts as to Mr. Hunt and the church during his ministry can be gathered from the sketch of 1870 and from the brief memorial in book form, which contains one of his sermons and a part of the funeral discourse preached by the Rev. Mr. Cory in this house, May 1st, 1882.

In October, 1847, he was followed in this pastorate by the Rev. Peter H. Burghardt. As to his ministry I also refer to the former record, and have only to add that he spent the last few years of his life in a position in one of the departments at Washington, but retained his Presbyterian connection and engaged to the last in active ministerial service as opportunity offered. He died July, 1886, in the city of Washington, from a sudden apoplectic seizure, leaving a wife and two daughters. He was buried July 28th, 1886, with military honors, as a former army chaplain, and with the respect due to his memory as a Christian minister.

After a vacancy of four months, October 7th, 1850, the Rev. Robert S. Finley was called as his successor. As the chief object of this address is to supply additions to the former outline, I have



no need to enter into more detail as to the church during his seven years of active pastorate.

The Rev. G. S. Plumley was called to the pastorate January, 1858. In November, 1857, Wm. M. Ross, John Watson, John V. P. Voorhees and Ezra M. Hunt had been added to the eldership. These, with John Henry Campbell and Benaiah Mundy, formed the last eldership chosen under the permanent system.

As it has only been in our plan to trace the first one hundred years of this a separate, organized church, we thus leave the record with the former one, as presenting all known important facts as to it up to the year 1860. I have in manuscript carried the record up to 1880, both for the church and the township, or up to the time when the first weekly journal was started by Mr. Kempson. To other chroniclers I may safely leave all the record of more recent events.

I am sure that, as I have reviewed our past church and local history, and especially our first century, I have been led more and more to admire the Christian devotion and self-denial of our ancestors, and have felt our solemn obligation to hand down to other generations unimpaired the high standard of Christian faithfulness and piety which they transmitted to us.

Always may there here be maintained a true worship, founded on a faith that worketh by love, bringing forth the fruits of a sanctified life, and in the fullness of time adding ourselves, our children and our children's children through the generations to the glorious church triumphant in the heavenly home.

While the church has not been without its trials, its conflicts, its sins, it has not been without a holy record of godly men and godly women, without able and faithful ministers and without results, which have been eternally recorded in the salvation of sinners and the upbuilding of saints. As religion is the most important thing in all the world, a church is the most important presence in any community. It is the testimony of God, the witness-bearer for the truth. It may have had in its history differences of opinion, times of coldness and lethargy, times of pernicious activity and unholy cowardice, but so long as it has had and still has fealty to the truth, confession of sin, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire for sanctified growth in doctrine and duty, so long it is a Living Church of the Living God, a tree of the Lord's planting. So long it must expect great things from Him and attempt great things for Him.

It can bear to look back upon its eventful history with humble and grateful pride; it can bear to recall its shortcomings if only it repents thereof; it can bear anything, everything but an unfaithful and inconsistent membership.

This is a candlestick of the Lord, a light lighted by godly pioneers of the truth on this spot, when new settlements were being made, and by families whose devotion to civil and religious liberty and whose zeal for the service of God was like a white flame of pure, celestial light. Here they placed this Bethel, this house of God where his banished ones found a home for prayer, for praise, for holy convocation, for all that constitutes the true worship of the covenant keeping Jehov<sup>a</sup>h.

It is here to stay and, I trust, to increase its numbers, enlarge its borders and to multiply its graces through all the coming years of time. It is the most permanent and essential thing we can leave behind us when we depart. Around it centre and clustre the most precious memories of our lives. For it let our united prayers ascend, that to those who come after us it may be a precious Christian home, the spot where they will consecrate themselves and their children to the Lord, and bring forth the fruits of holy living in all faithfulness, godliness and sanctified sincerity. With a devoted and efficient pastor and with the earnest co-operation of all the members of the church and congregation, this second century of your life can be made still more to illustrate and exalt the precious inheritance of those who belong to the families of Israel.

For myself I can only say that I can never lose interest in all that concerns the welfare of this church. Bound to it, like yourselves, by ties of remote ancestral associations, by the service of my dear father, by the sweet memories of cherished and life-long friends, by a worthy lineage resting in the sacred acre on my right and parts of my very heart-life on my left, I can only beseech that God's blessing may be upon this His ancient heritage.

May we all, my dear friends, dedicate ourselves anew to the service of the sanctuary and of the heart, and this church ever prove itself an holy temple whose builder is God, whose corner-stone is Christ the Precious One, and whose upbuilding shall ever be by those master builders whose names are Faith, Hope and Charity.

Thus shall you become more and more that happy people whose God is the Lord.







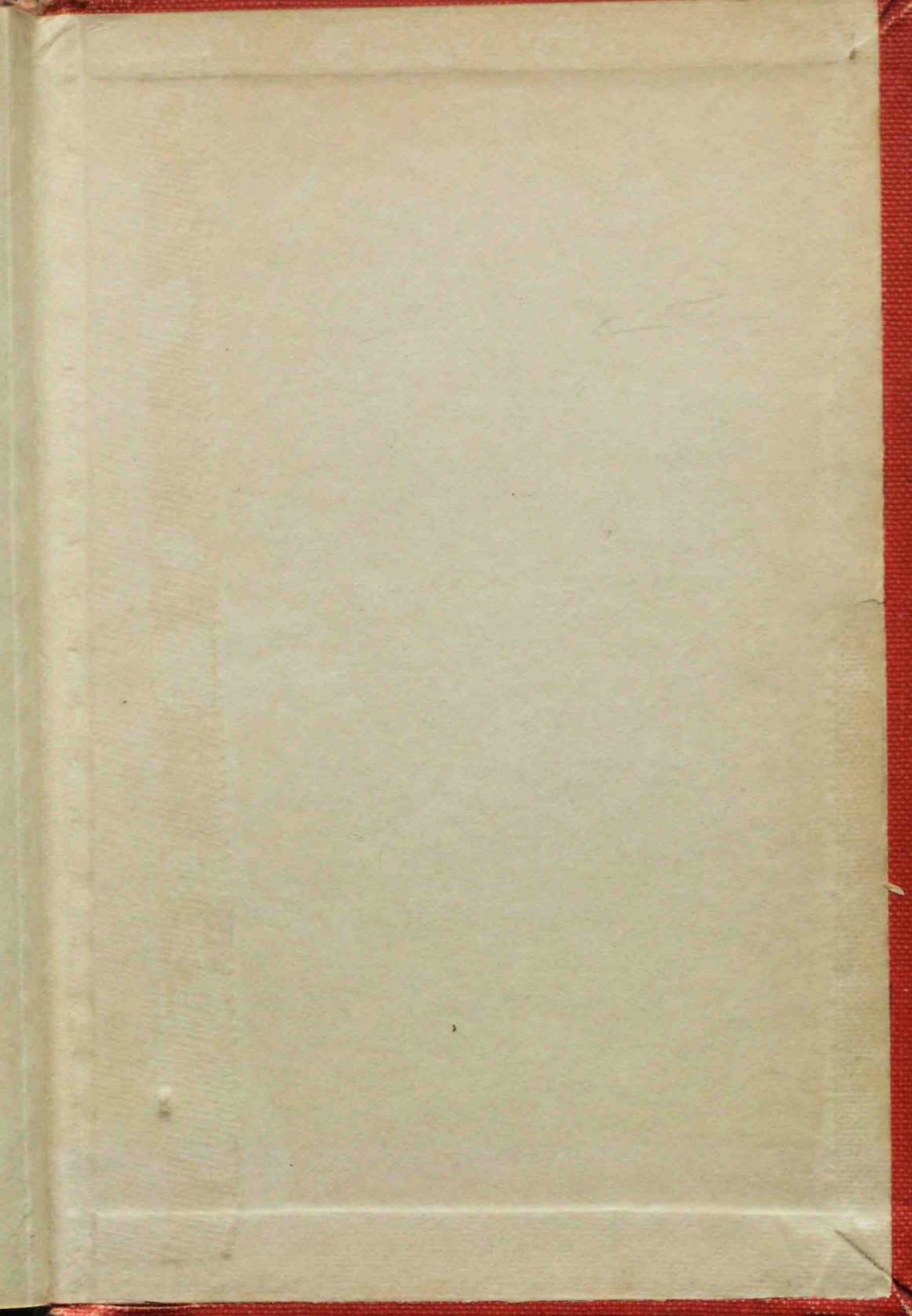


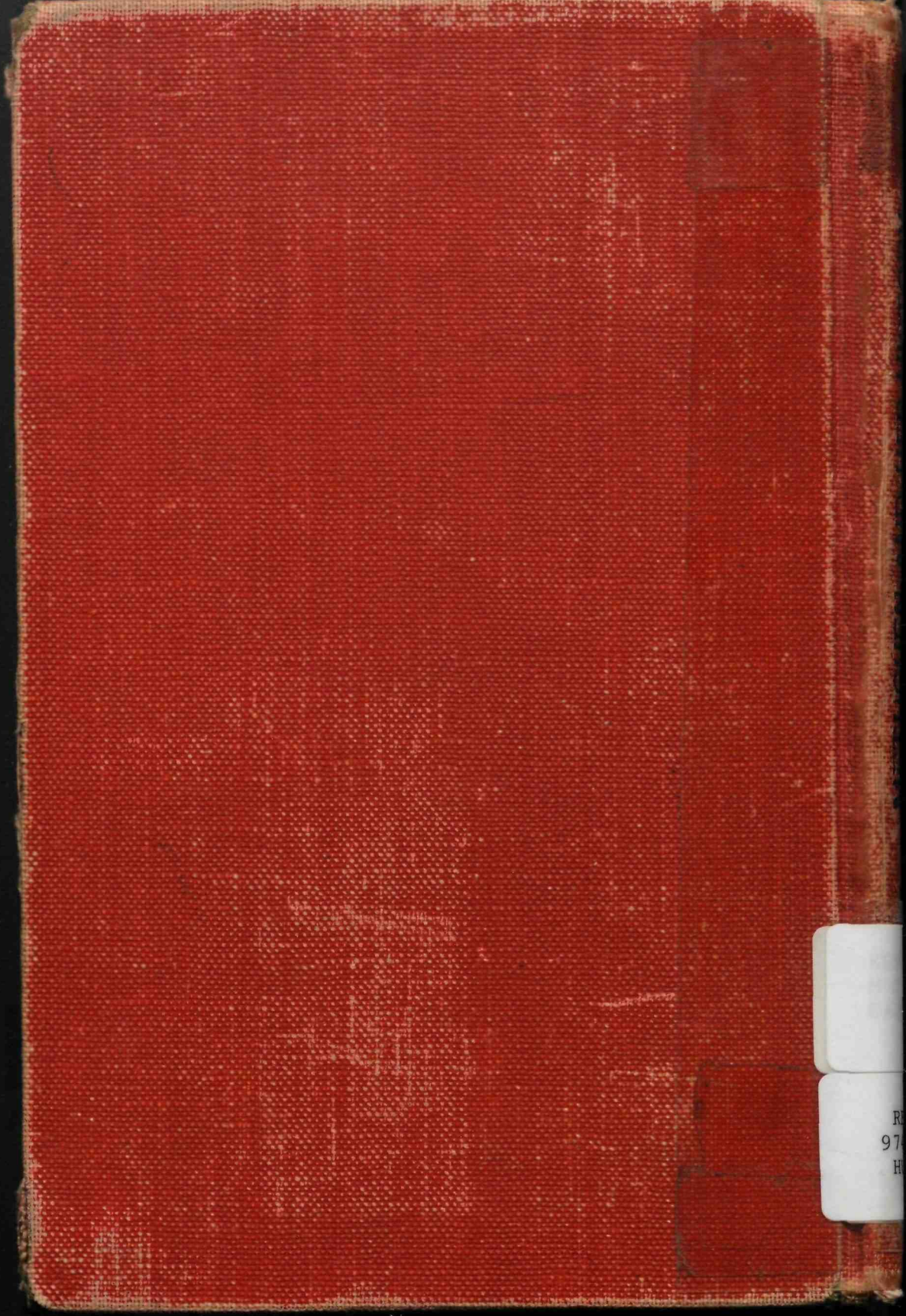
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