

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

by

Betty Gantz

Written from 1975 thru 1983 and on...

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

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House layout maps of 1875, 1887, 1890 and 1903 are available at the Hopewell Museum.

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PREFACE TO DIGITAL EDITION -- NOV. 2019

This is a digital reproduction of "Hopewell's Past" by Betty Gantz ("Elizabeth Reed Braunworth Gantz, Mrs. Robert Gantz"), which she began as a series of columns in the Hopewell Valley News from June 1976 through at least January 1986. Mrs. Gantz then edited the columns into this book, as of April 1987, and later added additional handwritten annotations.

This amazing body of work follows her exploration and discoveries of Hopewell history, including observations from visiting sites and houses (including exploring cellars), and ongoing discussions with readers to clarify and correct her conclusions.

The general structure of the book covers the first settlers and the growth of the town, the genealogies of the first houses, "Little Histories" summarizing changes over each decade from 1870 to 1950, and histories of other interesting houses.

Along the way, Mrs. Gantz quotes from and cross-references her work with earlier sources, and provides extensive references to deeds and other records to support her analysis. She also includes extracts from interesting sources, including the 1876 Hopewell Centennial speech, recollections of John Boggs, a Frog War poem, and advice for researching your own house. Plus, she kindly has provided multiple handy summaries, including Hopewell history, annotation of old maps, and tables of the early farms and houses.

Mrs. Gantz donated this material to the Hopewell Museum, writing "I want all my information to be in the Hopewell Museum for future researchers. ... Compiling these histories is so important to future home owners. ... The people of 2031 or 2076 will have some help from us."

Technical details:

Scanned from copy held at the Hopewell Public Library. The Library copy is a photocopy of a dot matrix printout, with handwritten annotations, but worn from use in a three-ring binder. The Hopewell Museum has what appears to be a clean original dot matrix printout. The copy was then scanned, processed with OCR software to perform text recognition, and then manually edited to clean up issues, but retain the original language.

This digital version maintains a close replication of the look of the original, with a typewriter-like monospace font. It also retains the original pagination, so that cross-references and the Index at the end are still correct. (Breaks at end of pages are adjusted slightly to avoid breaking in the middle of a sentence.)

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HOPEWELL 'S PAST

INTRODUCTION

The material in "Hopewell's Past" was researched and written by Betty Gantz, (Elizabeth Reed Braunworth Gantz), (Mrs. Robert Gantz) from May 1975 until the present time. She also wrote the dialogue on a Slide Presentation, with music and slides and voice explanation, which was presented locally in May 1976. It was redone-sticking to the July 4, 1876 information, updated and given to the Hopewell Museum in 1983. The latter was completed with the great assistance of the Rev. Burton S. Parry, then Assoc. Pastor of the First Presby. Church of Hopewell, N.J.

Mr. & Mrs. Robert A. Gantz live at 25 Blackwell Ave., Hopewell, N.J. 08525.

Personal Note:

I started my research in May 1975 when I became a member of the "Bicentennial and 100th Anniversary" committee of the Presby. Church. It started when I 'found' a handwritten copy of the speech read on July 4, 1876.

The church's 'historic walk' on May 16, 1976 and the slide presentation dialogue were due to my research and preparation. Since many church attenders asked for a written copy of the history presented, and jokingly asked me, "When was I going to write a book ?", I mulled over the idea. I want all my information to be in the Hopewell Museum for future researchers. I asked the Hopewell Valley News about its use of the historic material. Mrs. Luce, the editor, was most receptive. Publishing of same started in the June 24, 1976 issue. The July 1, issue contains the "Centennial Address" in full. My historical column called "Hopewell's Past started on July 8, 1976.

This completed copy would never have been finished without the time and devotion given by my son, Richard L. Gantz, as he typed and set-up, from my original columns with the multiple messy corrections! We appreciate it, Dick.

The weekly columns which we will now refer to as 'chapters', are now presented in their entirety having been corrected and updated, as of April 1987.

PLEASE forgive any errors you may find. I have always tried to be accurate. I have been proof reading so long that I have reached my physical LIMIT! !!

Betty Gantz

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PART 1

CHAPTER I - Background of Speech, and July 4, 1876 Celebration (HVN 6/24/76)

Background for July 4, 1876 Speech

Ten days from now (June 24, 1976), the United States of America will celebrate its 200th birthday. One hundred years ago on July 4, 1876, people who lived in and about Hopewell also celebrated a birthday -- the Centennial. A speech given that day in Hopewell (the "Historical Sketch" referred to below) will be featured in the July 1, 1976 issue of the Hopewell Valley News.

In preparation for this feature, the following is offered by Mrs. Betty Gantz of Hopewell, who has been doing extensive historical research.

The handwritten document entitled, The Historical Sketch of the Village of Hopewell was found in the cornerstone of the Presbyterian Chapel. This cornerstone was opened in 1923 because the Chapel had been sold to Herman Veidt, president of Hopewell Chocolate Company; he planned to convert it to a dwelling. Appropriate services were held revealing all of the contents of the box, that had been placed in the cornerstone ceremony April 17, 1877. In the October 3, 1923 Hopewell Herald was a listing of the contents of the box. On October 10, and 17, 1923, this above history was presented verbatim. The contents were placed back in the tin box, put in the church safe, and apparently mostly forgotten for the last 53 years. As research on the Bicentennial and 100th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Church began, this "Historical Sketch" was again 'found' and to Betty Gantz, seemed of great historical significance.

Another very similar but incomplete handwritten copy has been recently recognized in some of Jacob Weart's papers in the Hopewell Museum. It varies but slightly from the first mentioned one; its front and last pages were missing so that its significance and its authors were not known.

This speech was prepared by the following committee: Ralph Ege, James Ewing, William A. Weart, R.M. Rankin, G.M. Fetter, J.N. Golden, R. Slack, Mrs. Sarah Weart and Miss E.H. Boggs for presentation on July 4, 1876. It was uncertain who delivered this speech until we accidentally found a clipping in the Hopewell Museum; it was an excerpt from a Hopewell Herald of 1946. It was an article based on a copying from the diary of "the late Ralph Ege" contributed by his daughter, Mrs. Theo Fisher, regent of the D.A.R., Col. Joseph Stout Chapter. Ralph Ege is the author of Pioneers of Old Hopewell; for sale at the Hopewell Museum.

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JULY 4, 1878 Celebration

"July 4, 1876 -- The day was clear and warm, with a slight wind. Sunrise: salute 13 guns fired, ringing of bells, etc., etc. Soon after 9 o'clock, a procession formed and marched through the streets in this order:

Grand Marshal and aids with quite a number of men on horseback; Raritan Cornet Band; Carriage with Clergymen of the place; Carriage with speakers, including Mr. Ross Slack, and Ralph Ege; Large car beautifully trimmed, containing 39 ladies representing the States; Carriage with 11 girls representing the Territories; Sons of America in 10-mule wagon; Citizens in general.

Exercises on the platform were conducted by Ralph Ege, chairman:

Music by band; Prayer by Elder P. Hartwell; "America" played by the band and sung by several ladies and gentlemen; Reading "Declaration of Independence" by Rev. A.J. Hay; Music: "Historical Sketch of Hopewell from its Settlement to Present Days" by Ross Slack, Esq., editor of Hopewell Herald; Music: Oration by Charles A. Skillman, Esq., of Lambertville; Music: Oration by Jacob Weart, Esq., of Jersey City, brother of James Manners Weart; Music: Benedict ion by Rev. A.N. Dimmock; Had dinner at the hotel.

Quite a number gathered at the platform at about 4 o'clock and had some fine music from the band, and a few impromptu addresses from those present. Crowd dispersed about 6 o'clock... highly pleased with the day's entertainment."

So we learn that Ross Slack, the editor of the Hopewell Herald, delivered the speech.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER II - Centennial Speech of 1876 (HVN 7/1/76)

Centennial Speech of 1876 / 'Herald' Editor Speaks of Valley's Beginnings

[Reader, note that the capital letter divisions, as "SETTLEMENT", etc were NOT in the original written copy. They were added by the editor of the Hopewell Valley News, (Mrs.) Ruth Luce, for clarity in reading.]

Pretend it's 100 years ago and you're among Hopewellities celebrating the Centennial. Here is what you would have heard...

* * * *

The following is "The Historical Sketch of the Village of Hopewell, New Jersey", as delivered by R. Slack, editor of the Hopewell Herald, July 4, 1876.

"In preparing this sketch of the village of Hopewell your committee has endeavored to gather the facts, which can be proved rather than traditional history.

Two hundred years ago (1676) where now stands the peaceful village of Hopewell, with its quiet residences, happy homes and fertile valleys, the untutored savage roamed at will and enjoyed in the chase, or war, as best suited his savage inclination. The tribe of Indians which inhabited this portion of the county were a small division of or branch of the Leni Lenapes, themselves a branch of the Great Delawares. They had their camping grounds in many places in this vicinity, and the smoke from the wigwams curled heavenward in peaceful security. They were not so noble and commanding type of the red man as some other tribes, but were noted for their thieving propensities, which led them to steal alike from friend or foe.

At this time the face of the white man was comparatively unknown among them, and no hardy settlers had as yet forced their way through almost unsurmountable obstacles, to plant for themselves homes, and for their posterity an inheritance.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

SETTLEMENT

The first settlement of which we have an authentic record as having been made in the northern portion of what is now known as Hopewell Township, was made on lands purchased by Edward Burroughs, of Long Island, and settled in 1694, by his son Thomas Burroughs. The place is now owned by Stephen B. Smith.

The next settlement was made by one Roger Parkes in a tract of land of which a portion is now occupied by Messrs. Andrew and Ralph Ege. The land was purchased in 1697. Roger Parkes and his son Roger Parkes, Jr. who was also an Indian Doctor, lived on this tract for many years and both lie buried on the farm.

The next settlement was made in 1706, by Jonathan Stout, from Middletown N.J. on the farm where Spencer A. Weart now resides, and from what we can gather, the land through here, with the exception of those named, had not been taken up at the last mentioned date.

We have now accounted for the first settlement of the territory embraced in this immediate neighborhood. From the time the first settlement was made by Thomas Burroughs in 1694, to 1706-10, the country was rapidly settled up.

As to when the township derived its name it is not known. Barbour's Historical Collections of New Jersey states that as early as 1699, the tract was known by the name Hopewell.

The territory known as Hopewell was at that time included in Hunterdon County and the courts previous to 1719 were held at Maidenhead, now Lawrenceville, and at Hopewell. In 1719, they were removed to Trenton.

Quoting from one above mentioned authority, we find that the first court held in the county was at Maidenhead. The magistrates present at that time were John Banbridge, Jacob Billerjean, Philip Smith, William Green, John Holcombe, Samuel Green, and Samuel Fitch. William Green and John Reading were first assessors of Hunterdon, and Ralph Hunt, the first collector.

The first Grand Jurors were: William Hixon, Samuel Howell, Robert Lanning, Henry Mershon, Richard Compton, George Woolsey, Joseph Reeder Jr., Thomas Standling, Richard Scudder, Timothy Baker, John Burroughs, John Titus, Samuel Everitt, John Ely, and Richard Lanning. John Muirhead, of Hopewell, was the first sheriff of Hunterdon Co. The first Jail for the county was built of logs, and was located at the fork of the road leading from Trenton to Pennington, and from Pennington to the eight mile ferry, or Washington's Crossing as it is now called. Of the first prisoners confined in this jail, one was for stealing a cow bell, and the other for stealing a book called the new testament.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Hopewell continued a portion of Hunterdon Co. until 1838, when Mercer County was formed from Hunterdon, Middlesex, and Burlington counties, and the northern boundary of Hopewell Township was made the northern boundary of Mercer County. The township of Hopewell was incorporated as a township in 1798.

LANDOWNERS -- 1776

In order to make this more particularly a Centennial History we will now give the names of the land owners one hundred years ago:

The farm where Messrs. Ralph and Andrew Ege now reside was occupied one hundred years ago by James Larison.

The next farm east was owned by David Hunt, now occupied by J. S. Hoagland and John Moore.

The next farm was owned by Abraham Golden, now occupied by J. Golden, A. L. Holcombe, and J. V. Blackwell.

The next farm south was then as now, the parsonage farm, purchased partly from Moses Hart, and James Madison, January 9th 1773, and still owned by the church, and occupied by the pastor.

The next farm east was owned at that time by John Hart, one of those sterling patriots, whose name will ring in the pages of history for all time. The farm on which he lived is now owned by Joseph M. Phillips, Esq.

The next farm south was owned by Nathan Hixson, now owned and occupied by Mr. Charles Drake.

The next farm was owned by Stephen Blackwell, and a portion of it still remains in the family, being owned by Stephen Blackwell, a grandson of the first-mentioned.

The next farm was owned by Ebenezer Stout, now owned by Reuben McPherson, and William VanBuskirk, and a part of the farm occupied by Jonathan VanDyke.

The next farm east was owned by Andrew Stout, B. S. Hill, and D. W. Stout.

The next farm east was owned by David Stout, now occupied by Randolph Stout and Mrs. Doctor Baldwin.

The next farm now occupied by Spencer S. Weart, was one of the original three first settled in Hopewell.

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At the time of which we write there were but six houses in the village of Hopewell:

The first house stood on the west side of the first Baptist Church within a few feet of where the E. M. Phillip's hotel now stands. It was owned by one Hepburn and occupied by Nethebinah Stout and Joseph Hough, and was used as a cake and beer shop.

The next house of which we can get any account was on the site of the one now occupied by Dr. J. A. Miller, and will be remembered by many as a long one-story house.

The next was the corner house now occupied by Mrs. Titus and Mrs. Dalrymple, was occupied by Priest John Blackwell, who kept a small store there about 1780.

The next house was the one now occupied by Daniel Housel, and was occupied at that time by one Obediah Seeley, a manufacturer of spinning wheels, then as a hat shop, a still house, and then as a private residence.

The next was the one now occupied by Charles Drake, occupied at that time we believe, by Nathan Hixson.

The first school building was where Mr. J. N. Golden now lives. In after years one was located near the east side of the First Baptist Church. The present school building was erected in 1855.

REVOLUTION

During the war of the Revolution the citizens took a deep interest in public affairs, and were very steadfast in their desires for Liberty. Many are the incidents and anecdotes related by the older citizens in reference to that time, but we have not space to record them here. We give here-with a list of the officers and soldiers who went from this portion of the township, kindly furnished us by Rev. Dr. Hale, of Pennington:

Company 1st: Captain Henry Phillips, Lieutenant Nathaniel Hunt, Lieutenant Daniel Howell, Ensign Timothy Titus.

Soldiers: John Hunt, Hilliam Larrison, Daniel Campbell, Elias Golden, Jacob Moore, John Muirhead, Jonathan Muirhead, Godfrey Chamberlain, Henry Burroughs (owes), Joseph Smith, Andrew Smith, Joseph Smith, Jonathan Smith, Abram Golden, Col. John VanCleve, Moore Scott, Peter Scott, Edmund Phillips, Scott Phillips, John Knowls, Levi Atchley, Jonathan Stout, Andrew Stout, George Muirhead, Levi Hart, Roger Larison, Zepulon Burroughs, John Field, William Moore, Nathaniel Hart, Titus Hart, Noah Chamberlain, John Cornell, Samuel Ege, Jacob Ege, Andrew Hough, Jacob Hough, Jonathan Bunn, Ezekiel Rose, Uriel Titus, William Smith, Andrew Phillips, Thomas Atchley.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Company 2: Captain Joab Houghton, 1st lieutenant Joseph Guild, 2nd lieutenant William Parks, Ensign Timothy Brush.

Soldiers: John Herin, Gershon Herin, William Stout, Francis Vannoy, Samuel Stout, James Hart, William Jewell, Jesse Stout, Andrew Morgan, Thomas Gates, Jacob Blackwell, Andrew Blackwell, Benjamin Blackwell, William Golden, Daniel (David?) Hunt, Johnson Titus, Solomon Titus, Enoch Armitage, John Van Kirk, Josiah Van Kirk, John Hunt, Stephen Hunt.

Company 3: Captain John Hunt, 1st lieutenant Ralph Leming, 1st. lieutenant Henry Mershon, Ensign Stephen Burroughs (owes).

Soldiers: Ralph Hunt:, Elijah Moore, Edward Temple, Joseph Insley, Abram Hart, Edward Atchley, Moses Moore, Joseph Burroughs, Amos Leming, Nathaniel Temple, Timothy Mershon, Edmund Roberts, Levi Ketcham, Samuel Beakes, John Hunt, William Moore, Ephraim Woolsey, Philip Hart, Jesse Moore, Ely Moore.

General Washington's army occupied the heights north of the village two nights before the battle of Monmouth. The battle was fought June 28, 1778, and the army encamped here on Friday night, June 26. General Washington had his headquarters at the house occupied by the late Spencer S. Weart, and General Lee's headquarters were at the house now occupied by Mr. Randolph Stout.

The two armies occupied this vicinity by foraging parties alternately, and many are the tales of ruthless acts, of ferocity perpetrated by the British soldiery.

POST-REVOLUTION

We will now come down to a more recent period. The country enjoyed a season of tranquility at the close of the war, and no events of importance occurred that we can ascertain. The people returned to their peaceful avocations, and pursued the even tenor of their way.

The patriotic spark was however alive, as we find that a large and enthusiastic celebration of the "day we celebrate" was held on July 4, 1810 at the public house of Benj. Blackwell, where Chas. Drake now lives, and the account before us states that there was present more than a common assemblage of people.

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The morning was ushered in by the firing of cannon. At 12 o'clock the procession was formed in front of the tavern.

At this time James Madison was President of the United States and Joseph Bloomfield, Governor of New Jersey.

The first public improvement of which we have any record, was the laying of the turnpike through the village by the Franklin and Georgetown Turnpike Company in 1820. This turnpike extended from Lambertville to New Brunswick, and was extensively traveled for some time, but finally failed.

We have an account of a Fourth of July celebration in 1825, on which occasion the oration was delivered by S. R. Hamilton, and the Declaration of Independence read by Newton N. Boggs.

[Ed. Note : The HVN has a copy of the 1825 speech should anyone wish to see it, as has the library.]

We have no particular items of interest to record until the breaking out of the late rebellion. The people were as ready to defend their liberties in 1861 as they were to achieve them in 1776. It is believed that to one of Hopewell's sons belongs the honor of being the first to respond to the call for troops from New Jersey. We refer to the late James Manners Weart, Esq. He was studying law in Jersey City and when the call for three-months men was made, a meeting was held in that city, and Mr. Weart was the first to volunteer. Foster's History of New Jersey, in the rebellion gives his name as the first from Jersey City, and it is believed that this was the first opportunity offered in the State. The record of Hopewell for devotion to her country and her country's interest is clear.

The most important event in a patriotic point of view that has taken place since the Revolution, was the dedication of the monument to John Hart, on July 4, 1865. This monument was the first erected by the State of New Jersey to commemorate any of her sons. The legislature appropriated \$800 and the balance was made up by subscriptions. The commissioners appointed to superintend the work were: Jacob Weart, Esq., Chas. A. Skillman, Esq., and Zephaniah Stout. Governor Joel Parker delivered the oration on the occasion.

The first post office was established in 1825 and George Blackwell was appointed postmaster. The office was kept in the building now occupied by Mr. E. M. Phillips as a hotel. The village at that time was called Columbia, but soon after took the name of Hopewell again. Previous to this time people living here, obtained their mail from Trenton. From the time the post office was established until the spring of 1875, the mail was delivered by carrier. At that time (spring 1875) delivery was changed to the Mercer and Somerset Railroad.

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The means of public conveyance was very limited until February 1873 when the Mercer and Somerset Railroad was opened for travel, which opened direct communications with the great commercial centers, and improvements and enterprise seemed to spring up simultaneously with its opening.

From 1800 to 1840 there was but one building erected in the village, and that was a blacksmith shop where Mr. Philomen Waters' house now stands.

There is but one person now living in the village who lived here in 1800.

The national airline RR was located about the same time as the Mercer and Somerset RR. It was, as its name implies, to be an airline between New York and Philadelphia, but owing to the legal technicality it was abandoned after a portion of the work of grading had been done. It was finally sold to the Delaware and Bound Brook RR Co. who pushed the matter through to its final completion. Some difficulty was experienced in getting across the track of the Mercer and Somerset RR, about one mile west of the village, and on January 5, 1876 the Delaware and Bound Brook Co. quietly took possession of the ground and commenced operations for the laying of 'the crossing' or 'frog' as it was called; their intentions were speedily devined and the Pennsylvania RR Co., who operated the Mercer and Somerset RR, endeavored to stop the proceedings and sent in train load after train load of men, and the authorities fearing an outbreak, called on the Governor for assistance, and he ordered out a portion of the Seventh Regt., N.G.S.N.J. who were soon on the grounds, but all was amicably adjusted. On the first day of May 1876. The road was opened for travel, thus giving the citizens abundant railroad facilities.

Messers. Finney and Fetter located a steam saw mill in the village in the summer of 1874, from which lumber is shipped to all parts of the world.

In the fall of 1874 the Hopewell Herald Printing office was established by organizing a stock company of the citizens.

[Ed. Note: A paper has been printed in the office for 102 years.]

The Western Union Telegraph Co. established an office here in June, 1875. In reference to the mercantile interest, Hopewell has long been quite a business center, especially since railroad communication was opened with the outside world.

The store now occupied by Mr. Nelson D. Blackwell was established over one hundred years ago by one Gordon. He sold it to Mr. Stephen Blackwell's grandfather, since which time it has been in possession of the family. The store occupied by Mr. J.Q. McPherson was established in 1865 by J.V. Blackwell.

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At the time of the Revolution there were some five or six houses, with a population of about thirty. Barbour says that in 1842 the village contained a Baptist Church, and about a dozen dwellings. Today (1876) we have a population of 400 and eighty three families, and fifty-one houses, a good portion of them double. The spirit of Enterprise has become awakened and the village has fair prospect of becoming a thriving town.

Hopewell has been a place of learning from a very remote period. Rev. Issac Eaton had a classical school for young men during his pastorate of the Baptist Church. He lived where Mr. Charles Drake now does and his school house was located about the spot where Mrs. Monroe Stout's house now stands. The old schoolhouse stood a few steps from where we now stand.

About eleven years ago, Misses E.H. and M.J. Boggs established a seminary for the instruction of young ladies, in which they have met flattering success. The public school of the village is well managed, and is taking rank with the best.

Your Committee therefore submits this as their report, and while they regret its incompleteness, yet they assure you that every effort has been made to get what we have correct.

Ralph Ege, James Ewing, Wm. A. Weart, R.M. Rankin, G.M.

Fetter, J.N. Golden, R. Slack, Mrs. Sarah Weart, Miss E.H. Boggs - -- Committee 1876."

* * *

[Note: "The national airline RR " is an unusual description of the 1983 (AMTRAK) RR; the Reading RR for so many years. At the time, 1876, of the writing of this speech, the authors were not aware that the Mercer and Somerset RR was about to die. Betty Gantz. J

* * *

[Jacob Weart's museum copy had "where Susan A Weart now (1876) resides". Susan crossed the name out and wrote Algernon Weart. In the soldier's names: John Hunt, Cot, was identified as innkeeper in Pennington; J & A Smith were Timothy's sons; Joseph Stout, Jonathan's son; Francis Vannoy, also John Vannoy; Samuel Stout, weaver; John Hunt, Co2, Nathan's son; Ralph Hunt, son of Ed Hunt, died on a prison ship; Joseph Burroughs died of camp fever. J

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

George Washington occupied J.N. Golden's land, which is in 1986 north of Rt.518.

The one person of 1800 may have been Mr Charles Ewing.

The first H. Herald was printed on the second floor of F.F. Holcombes' store, 47 W. Broad St. The H.V. News office is in 1986 on Railroad Ave.

The stores of David, Stephen, and Nelson Blackwell were at 46 & 42 E Broad St.

The Hopewell Herald began in 1874. In 1/10/1881, VanDoren Taylor took possession of the Herald office, published only one paper, "The Astonisher" on 1/21/1881. Miss Susan Weart claimed that the H.H. editor, H.G. Carter never did any proofreading! The first H.H. under J.M. Leigh was issued 3/2/1831. The H.H. moved into its new office on Railroad Ave. on 1/25/1882.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER III - "Hopewell's Past" / Who Lived Here in 1876? (HVN 7/8/76)

"Hopewell's Past", New Feature

Starting today, a new column called "Hopewell's Past" will be running on a regular basis in the paper. It is being written by Mrs. Robert A. (Betty) Gantz of 25 Blackwell Avenue, Hopewell.

The finding of the Centennial Speech, read on July 4, 1876, and reprinted in the July 1 edition of this paper, so stirred her curiosity that she has been doing extensive and intensive research on it and on Hopewell Borough's earliest records.

Betty will share her research with Hopewellites through this column. Should anyone wish to talk with her, the number is 609-466-0523.

Who Lived Here in 1876?

Dear Reader,

You may wonder what more there is to know about Hopewell? Ralph Ege 'wrote' the book, Pioneers of Old Hopewell from 1901-1908; Margaret O'Connell wrote Pennington Profiles and Mrs. Alice Blackwell Lewis has written in 1973 Hopewell Valley Heritage. In none of these did I find a reference to the speech given July 4, 1876, which gave the five earliest houses in Hopewell, who lived there in 1776 and 1876, and the eleven farms and their owners in 1776 and 1876. Ralph Ege was on the committee in 1876 which prepared the speech. I can just imagine the interest it spurred within him, because later he started writing the articles which were printed in the predecessor of this paper, The Hopewell Herald. He elaborated on these eleven farms from Stony Brook Road area to Province Line (Road). These articles were collected and formed his book published in 1908.

Did you read the speech, "No"? Shame on you! Go get it so you know what I'm referring to. "Yes"---great! Let's go forward!

Do you know where E.M. Phillips hotel was in 1876? Or Dr. J. A. Miller? Or Mrs. Dalrymple and Mrs. Titus? Or Daniel Housel or Charles Drake? I may be a retired teacher, which means that I am not "39" any more, but I am not 100 yrs old! So I looked in Alice B. Lewis's book and there is no reference to five houses. She does mention several homes, but not these 'five'. (May I insert right here? I have the greatest admiration for the three aforementioned authors; nothing I say should ever be taken as a criticism. We would be at a great loss now and in the future if they had not written books.)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

I searched for information in the excellent Hopewell Museum.

In fact I searched far and wide this last year and have had so much fun that I want to share my findings with you. And I know some of you out there know much more about this little town than I do! So please, write me, phone me, correct me; Just let us get more written down about OUR TOWN --- facts --- and maybe some fun tales.

Do you realize how small Hopewell Village was in 1776? Everything, in town, centered around the Hopewell Baptist Church -that's the brick one on Broad Street to the west of that large graveyard right on Broad Street. Have you visited this graveyard? Look for the old settlers of early Hopewell; of course, many were buried in family plots. These five houses were close by; on the church side were three of them; across the street were the other two. Can you guess them?

Remember Moses Hart's parsonage farm, John Hart's home, the Blackwell store and home were not in the then Hopewell Village -they were farms as was even one of the five houses. But its 'farm house' was in the center of town!

This is a good place to leave you. More information next week!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER IV - Who Were Those People of 1778 and 1878? (HVN 7/15/76)

Who Were Those People of 1778 and 1878?

Did you know that the Hopewell Museum has for sale a map of Hopewell in 1875, and Hopewell Township in 1875 also? When I found the first one, I felt I'd found gold! There on are those mysterious names, E.M. Phillips, Dr. Miller, S.N. Dalrymple, Charles Drake and oh, no, there's no Daniel Housel!

[I did know that he had owned a farm outside of town - north of the present North Greenwood Avenue cemetery.] But in town???

E.M. Phillips seemed to be the owner of the hotel to the west of the First Baptist Church, which I will from now on often refer to as the **Old School Baptist Church**, Why? Later! But on reading Dean Ashton's unpublished history of Hopewell Academy, and talking to some Hopewellites, I immediately ran into an opinion that the above hotel, now the Hopewell House, was not this SITE, but considerably further west. I will just state that E.M. Phillips did operate a hotel on this Hopewell House site, #46 West Broad Street; that it seems logical that these speech writers would have named another house as it, if it had been there in 1876; and that this does not prove that the "Cake and Beer Shop" -- heavens what a combination! -- owned by a 'one Hepburn and occupied by Nethebinah Stout and Joseph Hough' was really the site of the No. One House. I have a considerable history on the owners of the hotel on #46 W. Broad Street. It will be interesting if we ever can find facts on a building of 1776 and possibly 1749 that was this 'tavern'.

[I have since learned that the title "Cake and Beer Shop" in that day, undoubtedly referred to pancakes Is that better?!?!]

Dr. John Albert Miller, the grandfather of Mrs. James Kettle (know as 'Billy' to many of us of the old day!) was easier to locate. This is the home today of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Edling, 14 West Broad Street. There is information that corroborates the idea that the front of the present house (added to several times) is the very oldest section and was built about 1830 when the 'long one story house' was torn down when Benjamin Price lived there.

The 'corner house' is the present home as of 1976 of Mrs. Donald Guinness, 2 W. Broad Street. This is the one occupied by Mrs. Titus and Mrs. Dalrymple in 1876, and Rev. John Blackwell and wife much earlier. The Rev. J. Blackwell, at one time, also owned the #14 W. Broad Street land.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Charles Drake's of 1876 is the lovely old home of Mrs. Newell Holcombe, #19 W. Broad Street. Hopewell's growth can be reasonably checked by noting the size of this farm as it passed from owner to owner.

The records of the Old School Baptist Church reveal that the Church bought this house and a few acres in 1749 from Joseph Disborow for its first permanent minister, Rev. Issac Eaton, who founded the Academy which Dean Henderson Ashton described so completely in his unpublished history. The Academy's dates are: 1756-1767, eleven years. Many of these academy students were some of the very influential leaders in the early days of Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. More about the occupants of this home and farm later.

But Daniel Housel !!! Mrs. Lewis gave me the clue in her book when she mentions that the Casual Shoop, 37 W. Broad Street, was occupied by "Obediah Seeley, a manufacturer of the spinning wheels ... " the same words as found in the Centennial Address.

Now we have the five houses tentatively located. But how accurate is the information? At the end of the speech it states "every effort has been made to get what we have correct." But even that cannot make it true. A look at the committee comes next week to see who they were, what they did, and we shall see how much we can rely on the information contained in the Centennial Address, presented July 4, 1876.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER V - Getting To Know You, 1878ers (HVN 7/22/76)

Getting To Know You, 1878ers

Who were these people who wrote the Centennial Address of July 4, 1876? Their names are: Ralph Ege, James Ewing, William A. Weart, R.M. Rankin, G.M. Fetter, J.N. Golden, R. Slack, Mrs. Sarah Weart, Miss E.H. Boggs. (Pardon me if I mix their order now).

Ross Slack was the editor and publisher of the Hopewell Herald, our town paper, the forerunner of this Hopewell Valley News. There is a possibility that he is a member of the Slack family, which started the community of Slackwood, N.J.

R.M. Rankin was a doctor and lawyer, he lived in the house on the south side of Broad St., three houses east of the intersection of Seminary Ave. and E. Broad Street. He (Rankin) had offices in several other places in town. A 'Mrs Laura Rankin' is listed as owning a property on the triangular corner of Louellen St and Hart Avenue.

James Ewing was postmaster in 1861, a shoemaker in 1859, and the man who lived on Lafayette Street in the fourth house west of the intersection of Hamilton Avenue and Lafayette Street, on the south side of the street, who had the distinction of being the first person to have a gas lamp installed for night lighting in front of his home. (A Ewing genealogy available??) There was a Rev. James Ewing, but he was here much earlier; he was a pastor of the Old School Baptist Church. The Ewing family goes back to at least the 1750's in the Hopewell vicinity.

G.M. Fetter was the son of Anthony Gabriel Fetter, the owner of the huge sawmill which was then at the corner of today's Model Ave. and Louellen St.

J.N. Golden was a member of a most illustrious family. Joseph Golden, an early ancestor of J.N. Golden, bought the Houghton tract in 1734 and 1750. The Houghton tract had been purchased in 1726 of Robert Tindall. The Tindalls had bought the same from Thomas Revell, the agent for the West New Jersey Society in 1696. This was one of the first farms in Hopewell Valley. This tract lay north of the present Route 654 or the Hopewell-Pennington Rd. It was also west of Hopewell, (going west out Louellen Street, crossing the railroad tracks, and proceeding farther up the hill on Rt. 518); you are now on Golden land, the area east of the intersection of 518 and Van Dyke Road.) Ralph Ege used about eleven chapters to delineate this Golden family!!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Ralph Ege was the author of Pioneers of Old Hopewell. There are criticisms of this book -- "He has some errors in it"! Well there may be. But I am extremely impressed with his material; he quotes first source information, and shows a remarkable store of information. The town would have lost so much history if the book had not been written. He must have had a great feeling for history; the Ege family had lived on Roger Parke's land for four generations! (Roger Parke purchased the land in 1697). Ralph Ege's wife, Mary E. Skillman, was the granddaughter of David Stout, Esquire. Some background!

William Alfred Weart was the second child of Mrs. Sarah Weart and Spencer Stout Weart. Spencer Stout Weart is a descendant of Richard and (the famous) Penelope Stout through his mother Susan Stout Weart, the wife of John Weart Jr. John Weart Jr. is the son of John Weart Sr. who bought the Jonathan Stout homestead area in 1799. Spencer Stout Weart's wife, Sarah Garrison Weart, is a direct descendant of the early settler, William Parke. Another son of Mr. and Mrs. S.S. Weart is James Manners Weart, the first volunteer in New Jersey in the Civil War; J.M. Weart is often referred to as an historian. Certainly a family "swelling with history-it is" !!!

The last member is Miss E.H. Boggs. Isn't it interesting that in 1876 two women were on the committee? Rev. John Boggs came to live in Hopewell in 1807 as a pastor for the Old School Baptist Church; he lived at the Parsonage farm, which is the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Hoge, 153 W. Broad St., today. Miss E.H. Boggs was his daughter. With her sister, Miss M.J. Boggs, they formed a female seminary in 1867 at the present brick home of Mrs. Van Arsdale, 23-25 East Broad Street. They built first the 'four story' right hand side. The left 'half' was added later. Elizabeth H. Boggs was regarded as a very intelligent lady. She had been in charge of many schools before 1867. The two sisters ran the female seminary for 32 years; 1867 to 1899!

Do you readers agree with me that this committee was most wisely chosen? I believe that their report (July 4, 1876 speech) certainly fulfills the last paragraph -- quote: "they assure you that every effort has been made to get what we have correct".

Some questions for next issue: Where is Nova Caesaria? Since our land obviously belonged to the Indians, how did settlers ever get title to their land? When was Hopewell Township officially incorporated? Mercer County? Hopewell Borough? Would you pay twice for the same land?

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER VI - Early Beginnings in This Area (HVN 8/19/76)

Early Beginnings in This Area

Did you notice that picturesque language in paragraph two of the Centennial Address: ... "untutored savage" ... "savage inclination" ... "smoke curled heavenward" ... "thieving propensities" ... The language of the 1876's is often much more flowery than today's.

Were you able to answer my last questions? Score yourself as we go along.

I believe that we must have a very quick survey of the happenings of 1664 and on, right now. The Hopewell Library has several excellent books on these early days of New Jersey. I want to do some highlights only. You know that the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620. Who came here? Generally speaking the settlers of New Jersey were children or children's children of the settlers from two (2) main areas---- Philadelphia area, and the New England area.

1664

Charles II, King of Great Britain granted a territory in America embracing Nova Caesaria to his brother James, the Duke of New York, who then conveyed the land to Sir George Carteret and Lord Berkeley, and it was called New Jersey for the first time.

HANDWRITTEN NOTES HERE

1676

The "Old Province line", a dividing northwest - southeast line was permanently fixed. The original plan, of building a road on its entirety in order to open land up to settlers, tell through. It was the boundary of West New Jersey and East New Jersey.

1685

In which part do we live? In this year, Sir George Carteret sold to John Fenwick as trustee for Edward Billings and others our area --- 'a 30,000 acre tract', divided it into one hundred parts, and distributed it among the proprietors; this '30,000 acres' is roughly Hope1uell Township. A part of Province Line is the east boundary of the township.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1688

On March 30, 1688 Daniel Cox obtained a deed from the Indians for this 30,000 acre tract. The deed named eleven Indian chiefs and noted that the land was given peacefully. (More on this in another issue.) Daniel Cox was governor 1687-1690.

1684---1687---1708

The first three earliest settlements in the area.

1713--14

Have you ever tried to find the deeds for a property? If so, you may be well aware of this date. Up to the above date we lived in Burlington County. It was one mighty long trip, by horseback, over trails, driftways, by water's edge, etc., from Hopewell to the county seat to record the sale of property! Often he sold the property on his return! It explains why there are (were) so many unrecorded deeds in those early days. And why it is so difficult to find facts on --- especially on, those five houses mentioned in the Centennial Address.

After 1713-14 we were called Hunterdon County. Deeds for properties 'now' are found in Flemington Court House. Did you see the Trenton Times article of July 8 locating the 1719 Early Hunterdon County Court House on Warren St. between State St. and Front St.?

1730/s ---1750's

This was a very tense time. It's too involved to go deeply into. But the settlers up through this time were practically accused of not having lawful deeds to the lands they'd paid for and been busy developing for many years. R. Ege gives some quotes from the trials arising on this issue. Reading these, one just cannot understand why they had to pay for their land over again! Many left to resettle further west. Those remaining had to pay again or be evicted !

1788

Hopewell Township incorporated with its boundaries as today. 1838

Now we live in Mercer County. [To research ownership deeds, we must go to Trenton to find 1838-and-on-owners of land. Heaven helo you if you know who lived on a certain property in 1850, but just can't seem to ascertain ownership around 1840, 1830, 1815 and you must go to Flemington to continue backwards.]

And, oh, yes, --- how important a first name becomes. A Mr. Hepburn, or Mr. Jones, makes your search such a problem. The 'system to find the recorded deed' needs both first and last names.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1881

Hopewell Borough was incorporated. Of course we were here before that but whenever you become provoked with 'City Hall', remember we are only 85 years old. (as of 1976)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER VII - Stout - burgers (HVN 8/26/76)

Stout - burgers

Before serving the main course today I have two items, closely related to last week's column. Did you know that in Trenton in 1719 there was the Hamilton County Courthouse?

A recent Trenton Times article disclosed this. The building was on South Warren Street between Front and State Streets; I use 'was' because there is only an historical marker there today.

After 1719, the homeowners of this area must have been happy because they no longer had to go to Burlington; in 1719 a trip to Trenton was quite long enough! Anybody know when Flemington became the county seat?

The second item has to do with Hopewell Township and Mercer County. Since there is now talk of 'realignment', I thought it important to present this information from a book by Joseph Snyder, Boundaries 1606 - 1968. In 1798 the Hopewell Township lines were determined. On Feb. 22, 1838 the more-or-less Mercer County was set up. Why? Perhaps one big reason was because then then Hunterdon was so large --- it extended practically to N.Y. State. People here must have felt that they could be served better in a smaller, more compact Mercer County. But did it satisfy everybody? (Does that ever happen?)

On March 14, 1839 there was a minor realignment. But for six years there must have been great discontent (and maybe difficulty because of several new groups of people trying to adjust to each other) because on March 13, 1844 the State Legislature placed Hopewell Township back in Hunterdon County. But for some reasons that action wasn't satisfactory. It must have caused quite a clamor! Eleven months later, on Feb. 5, 1845, the 1844 act was repealed. Hopewell Township was again in Mercer County. It has continued so for one hundred and thirty-one years --- 1845-1976. ['Realignment' is sleeping quietly as of 1985.]

* * *

The main course is now ready to be served. On Saturday,

August 14, 1976 at the Calvary Baptist Church, the Stout Clan gathered. So, let me now serve you "Stout-burgers". Oh, what an awful pun!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The two earliest settlements close to Hopewell Borough were:

In 1697 Roger Parke settled near Stony Brook, west of here; in 1706 (this is the, generally recognized date) Jonathan Stout settled in the northeast corner of Hopewell Township, east of Hopewell Boro. (Why do I repeat? I hate to admit it, but maybe there is someone who didn't read the other columns. What a shame!) There is much to read in Ege's and Lewis's books about these settlements. Recently Betsy Errickson, assistant curator of the Hopewell Museum and an acknowledged history researcher, 're-found' in a locked room on the third floor sheepskin deeds that intrigued and puzzled us.

One shows that a Col. Joseph Stout in 1761 bought from those Coxe heirs --- that's those early English owners --- land in that northeast corner. Horrors! What about Jonathan in 1706? I plotted all eight deeds. The answer wasn't there, only more mysteries. So I reread from the above books. Helped, but still confused. The 1761 certainly looked like the settlement farm of Jonathan in 1706 --- including the Hunt House area, historically well known. The next deed was one in which Joseph Stout (the 1761's son) sells to Wilson Stout part of the land in the 1761 deed, and it included the Hunt House. The third deed was from Wilson Stout to John Weart from the same acreage but excluding the family grave yard and including the Hunt House. I scurried through my Weart genealogy. Yessir! This John Weart was the one who bought it in 1799. It has to be Jonathan's land.

Something is still hazy. Who is Joseph? His son Joseph? Jonathan, David?

You just can't understand land ownership without genealogies.

I once believed I could not be bothered with long family 'trees'! This time I scurried some more --- through five authentic, unbelievably neat 'tablets' on the Stout family (the ones J. Russell Riley had a big hand in), placed on the wall of the corridor to the Indian room at the Hopewell Museum. (There comes another Stout!) Randolph Stout, who lived where Bob Moore does today (1976) on Province Line Road. On desiring to retire, Randolph Stout built for himself this lovely building called the Museum today. He did this in 1876.

Before I tell you who these aforementioned Stouts were, I must add that in each of the three sheepskin (and seemingly unrecorded) deeds the owner in No. 1 to the south is David Stout, Benjamin Stout on the west, Samuel Stout and Benjamin Merrill on the north and west of Col. Joseph Stout's in 1761; in the second the bounding owners are: east, Zebulon and Richard Stout; south, David Stout; west, Andrew Stout; north and west, Andrew Merrill and Daniel Stout. The third deed was like No.2.

And, according to Ege, David's land was on the southern boundary of Col. Joseph Stout's 1761 purchase. But Jonathan Stout died in 1732 and left in his will to his two sons the land on which he lived when he died; these 2 sons were David aged 14 and Samuel 17. These two boys divided the acreage so evenly that on the assessment records they were about equal.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Now, I'm confused by Jonathan's land which I'd thought was whereon the Hunt House stood, David's owning below this and Samuel even further south --- which gives so much more acreage than I'd been led to believe and Col. Joseph buying the first in 1761 from the Coxes. Also David is said to have owned on the present 518 from Amwell Road to Province Line.

Do you understand my predicament?

Jonathan Stout, the pioneer, had a brother David Stout referred to as the Amwell one because he settled just north of Jonathan but just over the Hopewell Township line and that's Amwell Township. Jonathan Stout, the pioneer, had a son David, as well as Benjamin, Jonathan, Joseph, Samuel, Zebulon, and two daughters. The aforementioned 14 year old David had a grandson, David. That clarifies some family relationships. I hope. Now the deeds.

I contacted the Bureau of Archives and History, a part of the State Library at Trenton. The Librarian, Miss Barber, furnished me with interesting material from recorded deeds --- seldom quoted.

There are fourteen deeds in their possession involving Jonathan Stout in the early 1700's. Of course there may be more somewhere else. The Archives could supply you with these reference numbers.

Jonathan bought land here and sold land he'd owned in Middleton, his home before here. On January 26, 1703, Jonathan Stout bought 300 acres from Robert Chapman; description vague as on most of these very old deeds --- this is in "the land in the 30,000 acre tract above the Falls of the Delaware". There is another deed of the same date practically the same.

On July 20 and 21, 1705, Jonathan Stout bought from William Crouch and others, "onesixteenth (1/16) of one full and equal share of a proprietary in the 30,000 acre tract". These show that he bought at least two large acreages - not 4 because the librarian feels the wording is too similar; three ?? J, in 1703 and 1705 in Hopewell Township. These deeds show J. Stout's ownership in 1703 and 1705. The settlement date is usually given as 1706. How can we know more precisely? Later deeds often will refer back as "this land was the same land so-and-so bought at such-and-such time".

Also, a very significant deed; Jonathan Stout sold on Dec. 30 1710, acreage to Joseph Stout; no better description. Looking up dates we find that Joseph Stout was twenty-four years old in 1710. This is a likely marriageable age; perhaps this is the background for the 1710 sale. So where does Jonathan go after this sale (presumably his farthest northeast acreage)? He owns plenty of other land below it. So that explains David's and Samuel's living on the land whereon Jonathan lived when he died.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The 1710, 1761 deeds are definitely the Hunt House land. Do you wonder about that 'Hunt House' usage? Jonathan Stout, the pioneer, had a son Jonathan, who married an Elizabeth Hunt; her brother John Price Hunt lived in this pioneer's homestead in June 1778, this time of Washington's famous Council before the battle of Monmouth.

But, you don't usually buy a piece of ground in 1703 AND in 1761 buy that land from 'the Coxes'! That's confusing! After the earlier Coxes died, their heirs held Thomas Revell's earlier sales of land invalid. The early landowners were notified to "pay up or move out." About 50 landowners including Joseph and David Stout brought suit against the Coxe heirs on April 20, 1731. Many hearings were held. Ege quoted some. But to no avail. The Coxe heirs were still the legal owners until the price was paid. Wow! and we think chicanery is modern? So Joseph must have received his legal deed on Jan. 1, 1761.

If that isn't enough on the Stouts, how about Captain David Stout, Jacob, Samuel H., Hezekiah, Richard, Daniel, Andrew, John, Benjamin, Sarah, J.Hervey, Zephaniah, Ebenezer Stout

I'll come back and give more details on those 8 deeds. Also that will give the Stouts time enough to tell me how many mistakes I've made today!

The next chapter deals with the question, "How much did the Indians receive for the deed to Hopewell Township?".

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER VIII - Indian, and English Landowners (HVN 9/9/76)

Indian, and English Landowners

The Centennial Address (in the July 1, 1976 issue) describes the Indians living in this area in 1676 as " ... a branch of the Leni Lenape ... they were not so noble and commanding a type of red man as some other tribes but were noted for their thieving propensities..." Penelope Stout certainly suffered at the hand of an Indian but was greatly helped by another.

R. Ege, in "Pioneers of Old Hopewell", Pages 91, 92; 182; 194-199, gives a thorough report on the Indians. Material in Col. Joseph Stout's folder in the Hopewell Museum, describes the amicable relations of the early Stout settlers with the Indians. Ege's book also speaks of the Indians being on very friendly terms with Dr. Roger Parke and his family. So it seems that by 1700, and the coming of more and more white men, and knowing that the Iriquois Indians had beaten the Indians in this area very badly, you can feel that the Indians almost welcomed the presence of the 'powerful' white men.

And what was the white man doing? On June 23, 1664 George Carteret sold his rights to the West New Jersey Society to John Fenwicke as Trustee for Edward Billinge. The Book of Surveys, P103, shows that on Oct. 20, 1685, this 30,000 acre tract 'falls' to Thomas Sadler and Edward Billinge. Dr. Daniel Coxe owned 22 shares of a proprietary. He was governor from 1687-1690. Dr. Coxe appointed Adlord Bowde (Bo de) as his agent to converse and bargain with the Indians living on the 30,000 acre tract (Hopewell Township). Dr. Coxe must have wished to have a deed for this land and wanted all to know that it was given peacefully. So reads the deed finally signed by eleven Indian Chiefs. A copy of this deed is in the book written by Rev. George Hale, July 2, 1876, called

"A History of the Old Presbyterian Congregation of People of Maidenhead (Lawrenceville today) and Hopewell" (really Pennington today)! The book is in the Hopewell Museum.

On March 30, 1688 these eleven Indian chiefs signed the deed in the presence of "four Englishmen and one interpreter." The Indians "acknowledged themselves fully contented and satisfied" with the following payment: (I'm keeping the exact spelling): 100 fathoms wampum, tenne stript Dutch Duffulds, 10 broad stealwater matchroles, 60 matchroles, 30 gunns, 20 kettles, 20 shirts, 40 pair of stockings, 80 hatchetts, 2 half anchors of powder, 100 knives, 120 barres of lead, 601b. shott, 1 anchor of rumme, 2 barrels of beere, 3 pounds readlead, 300 pipes, 300 needles, 3 anchors of tobacco.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Readers, think on these a bit. What would you, an Indian then, have wanted? Also, would someone who knows enough, tell me what an "anchor of rum" is? How much volume? How much value -then and today? And duffulds? and stealwater matchroles? Help --please. As of 1986, I have had no information supplied.

The Indians continued to live on their land. R. Ege describes what happened about 1725-1730 on Page 92: "the red man bid adieu to the Hopewell Valley forever and started on the long and weary pilgrimage toward the setting sun." Poetic.

The previous Indian deed was signed on March 30, 1688. In 1691 Edward Hunlock, deputy, "conveys the government of West Jersey and its territories to a company of proprietaries called the West New Jersey Society." It was this act that was used as a 'pretext' for selling land to settlers. Thomas Revell became an agent for the above society.

In 1694 Edward Burroughs buys land. (From Ege Pioneers of Old Hopewell), in 1697 and on, Roger Parke buys first 400 acres, then 100 acres for daughter Anne, etc. until he owns almost 1,000 acres east of Stony Brook. Andrew Smith bought 300 acres above Roger Parke for his son. Samuel J. Parke bought 300 acres near Thomas Twiggs. In addition to these, other large landholders by 1731 ---- the time 50 settlers sued the Coxe heirs to prevent the heirs from evicting the 'owners' from the paid-for-land were: Joseph Stout, 230 acres; David Stout, 250 acres; John Hickson, 100 acres; Nathaniel Moore, 300 acres; John, Thomas and Joseph Houghton; John Titus, 200 acres; John Hunt, 300 acres; Robert Blackwell, 250 acres; Benjamin Drake, 260 acres; Daniel and Francis Gano. Benjamin Merrell.

Another list of 138 taxpayers in 1722 gives also: Jemse Hide. (Hyde or Heide), Jabes Jarvis, 100 acres; T. Runyan, 150 acres; David Stout, 150 acres; Enoch Armitage, 250 acres; John Hart, 200 acres; Ed. Hart, 50 acres; Andrew Smith, 500 acres; James Melven, 500 acres; Thomas Burrus, 297 acres; Thomas Merrell, 260 acres; Wm. Merel Sr., 300 acres; Francis Hege, 600 acres.

Since some of you (I am!) may be anxious to get back to Hopewell Borough itself, I will give you the topics of the next few chapters:

Next: those old Stout deeds, etc.; then the Roger Parke area; then the Borough --- with A. Holcombe's house first.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER IX - The Early Stouts, and the Three Deeds (HVN 11/4/76)

The Early Stouts, and the Three Deeds

I promised you more on the Stouts. John Stout of Nottingham, England married Elizabeth Bee in the very early 1700's. A son, Richard Stout (1615-1705) married in 1644 Penelope Kent (or Lent) Van Princes (Princin) (1622-1732). Their children were many despite her earlier, cruel painful injuries. One was Jonathan Stout, the pioneer settler in northeast Hopewell Township in 1703 and 1705 'til his death in 1723. [State museum deeds give these 1703 and 1705 dates. Most information says J. Stout settled here in 1706. This is not necessarily contradictory. He may have come 'to settle in' a few years after he bought the land. J Jonathan Stout (1660-1723) married Aug. 27, 1685, Anne Bullen (Bollen). Jonathan and his brother, David Stout (Amwell David) were very familiar with this area in the 1690's. Jonathan Stout was a surveyor.

Have you been to visit the area? Here's how. Proceed east on 518 out of Hopewell Boro. Stop at Province Line Road; you'll see a power substation on the right corner. Get out and read the plaque about Province Line; I'll admit somebody did not plan an easy access to it! But step high, or follow the wall to the left for a low spot. When done reading it, get back into your car, turn left (north) onto Province Line Road. You have just left what was in the 1870's a very busy village of 10-12 houses and a hotel --- Stoutsburg.

Soon you will notice that the road turns sharply left. Province Line, the boundary between Mercer and Somerset continues straight ahead. It doesn't look like a good road. It isn't. So, do go left. On your right is the lovely 1888 farm home of Bob and Edith Moore. The house is not the original, which was once just a few feet east of it; in the original, General Lee stayed in June 1778. This was also David and later Randolph Stout's farm. In 1982 John Robert Moore, the 1980's owner of the farm mentioned in the third paragraph of this chapter, gave me some more interesting information on his farm. The present barn was rebuilt; the old one had the cornerstone marked 'J. S. W. 1855'; they used it in the new building.

Randolph Stout sold this farm to Moses Blew, a negro, who had escaped from the south. There is a cemetery on this property, to the far left, on the road-curve to the north; it is for blacks. After his death it belonged to the Moore family. The basement of the original home was marked 1757. Bob's mother was extremely allergic to hay and barn contents. In 1888 the original was torn down, it had been located very close to the lane. The new house was placed as today; you can see that it is many feet west of the old house, lane and barn.

HOPWELL 'S PAST

Edith and Robert Moore sold this farm April 24, 1985 to Bonnie & Lewis Arno of Colt's Neck, who must have loved the view for he immediately built a modern home on the north-west corner of this farm, in the woods and high above the 1888 house. Mr & Mrs Arno have the 20 acre field plus house, etc for sale in 1986. Mr Arno, as of July 7, 1986, has moved the 55 yr old barn, formerly next to the 1888 house, to his land in the fields below his newly built home. We believe there is a new owner of Bob's 20 acre house-and-land plot as of 1986..

The road now turns north up the hill. Stop and look back. What a marvelous view! How Jonathan, the pioneer, must have loved it. And the Wearts. And all the other owners of the home we're now coming to. About half way up is a lane, a lovely tree-shaded driveway to the Hunt House, or homestead later for six generations of Wearts, or the very early Jonathan Stout's homestead site.

Sorry, Private Property! I saw in a recent Princeton Packet issue, an advertisement offering this 190 acre farm and historic site for sale for \$1,000,000. Now, if you just have that little sum tucked away, maybe you'd consider buying it. (Late item. I just heard by the grapevine that it's been sold. Could that be true? Definitely sold. Price unknown.)

Continue a few more hundred feet. Far off to the right -- way back -- is a private graveyard I'll mention in deed three soon. Continue on this road to an intersection from your left of Amwell Road. Continue north. Jonathan Stout owned all the land to the right to Province line. Continue on this road until you find a Hopewell Township marker. How do you know? No big sign there. If you are as lucky as we were (9 tenths of a mile from the last intersection) just before "Lindberg's" ... lane to the left, you will find a gracious young man who lives on the right. He will show you the iron pipe with an orange ribbon. (Hopewell Township, can't you do better than that? Historically this is an important area.) That pipe marked the Hopewell-Amwell Township line. Do turn around if you are history bound; go back to Amwell Road, now turn right onto it. You have just traveled south; as you go west and south again you are on more-or-less the western boundary of Jonathan Stout's land way back in 1703. Earlier, going north on the first part of Province Line Road, going west and north again, you were on and along what we presume was Jonathan and David Stout's land. Jonathan Stout's land stretched on the west of Province Line to about Amwell Road, and perhaps south to 518, and even to the south side of 518.

Now for those old deeds. There are nine interesting ones, but I have insufficient information on some. The three closely related ones that started my recent inquiry of Jonathan Stout's land are the three old sheepskin deeds "found" by Betsy Errickson, assistant curator of the Hopewell Museum and a recognized historian of this general area. (Right here, I must mention the gracious curator of the Museum. Beverly Weidl (1986) conducts delightful tours on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, 2-5 p.m.).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

DEED ONE

Date: January 1, 1761; Price: 439 pounds, one shilling, 2 pence. Seller: Wjlliam Coxe (Daniel's son), Rebecca Coxe, Daniel Coxe (deceased) and Grace Coxe. Buyer: Col. Joseph Stout of Hopewell, County of Hunterdon.

"Col. Daniel Coxe deceased ... by his will, March 21, 1737. . . executors to sell . . . "Whereas Daniel Coxe, lately deceased, eldest son and heir-at-law ... on Aug.8, 1753 ... to Wm. Coxe and Richard Salter. Liber K P346, ... tract on which said Joseph Stout now lives ... situated in Hopewell, County of Hunterdon ... "

Just once I thought it fun to quote some of the interesting language on an old deed.

Now to benefit most, I ask you to do a little imagining and drawing. You certainly can't want all the angles, chains and measurements! But to see the shape of the plotted acreage, imagine the shape of a sock with the toe to the left.

On a large sheet of paper, draw in its center, something like a Christmas stocking hanging on a fireplace. From the heel to the top of the rib (right side) is Province Line. It is 84.61 chains. (To the uninitiated, a chain was a surveyor's measure in early days. A chain, literally, is 66 feet long. It was composed of 100 links. 84.61 chains means 84 chains and 61 links. Multiply the number of chains by 66 to convert to feet. Watch that decimal point! We know that there are 5,280 feet to one mile. We know now that the eastern boundary, a north-south line, is one mile plus 304 feet long.

Across the top of the sock, the Hopewell Township line, is 1,452 feet. The 'ribbed' part of the sock top downward is 3,960 feet long. By zigs and zags the part along the top of the foot to the toes, as it goes by Benjamin Merrell's, Samuel Stout's and Benjamin Stout's land is 3,400 feet. The 3,960 feet and the 3,400 feet conform 'roughly' to the road whereon you traveled south earlier. The furthest left boundary, a north-south line, -- the square toes -- is 2,277 feet. Benjamin Stout owns along all of that. Next, the bottom of the foot measures 4,554 feet. If you can follow my directions, you are now at the back of the heel -the place of "beginning" on Province Line. David Stout owns all the land on the south. Acreage, deed one is 369.5 acres.

I certainly hope you saved tile column of two weeks ago. If so, you can see what perplexed me so.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

DEED TWO

Time: May 18, 1789; Price: 1,000 pounds (inflation? From 439 pounds in 28 years, improvements of course, to 1,000 pounds for less than half the acreage. Of course, maybe the best part since we know it included the house, etc.).

Sellers: Joseph Stout and wife, Catharine. Buyer: Wilson Stout.

Whereas, Col. Joseph Stout bought 369.5 acres January 1, 1761 said Col. Stout died and left to son Joseph ... containing 262 acres ... sells 145 acres.

Take your sock from deed one. Tear out the right hand heel and about half the total sock; you have more-or-less the property sold to Wilson Stout. The measurements are: Start at lower right hand corner, proceed north anti-clockwise. Along Zebulon and Richard Stout's land (they were not there in deed one) and along Province Line about 2,389 feet; west 1,452 feet; south 297 feet; west 1,320 feet; south 2,508 feet; east about 2,624 feet.

It is interesting to note that Daniel Stout now owns the northern section of deed one. I have the deed for it. Benjamin Merrell's land now belongs to Andrew Merrell. The section of the "toes" in deed one is now owned by Andrew Stout; it measures about 2,000 x 2,500 feet.

DEED THREE

Date: February 4, 1799 (ten years after deed 2); Seller: Wilson Stout and wife Hannah; Buyer: John Weart; Price: 1,354 pounds; Acreage: 145 (same as deed 2).

The interesting thing is that they sell the same land as deed two "except the graveyard as it is now enclosed". The same people bound it as in deed 2.

DEED FOUR

Just interesting to note that the "top of the sock" owned by Daniel Stout plus 25 acres over the line in Somerset County were sold to Henry Lane; 160 acres plus 25 acres equals 185 acres on April 15, 1795 to Henry Lane. This was sold while Wilson Stout owned his 145 acres. It was sold for 680 pounds.

Deeds one, two and three seem to have been unrecorded. Alice Blackwell Lewis has a fine history of the Hunt House in Hopewell Valley Heritage. We now know that: Jonathan Stout bought at least 2 sites in 1703 and 1705. Joseph, his son, bought the upper land in Jan. 1710 (State library records) from Jonathan Stout. There was a dispute with the Coxe heirs about vacating; The Coxes won and the deed in 1761 was 'given' by the Coxe heirs to Col. Joseph Stout (same person as 1710 deed buyer). Future owners of 145 acres of the above were Joseph Stout, Col's son; Wilson Stout; and John Weart Sr.

HOPWELL 'S PAST

Just a little more on the Wearts. The John Weart who bought the 145 acres in 1799 had a son, John Weart (1777-1857) who married on Dec. 15, 1802 a Susan Stout (1780-1845). She was a daughter of Jesse Stout, who was a son of James Stout, who was a son of David Stout, who was a son of Jonathan Stout, the pioneer. John and Susan Weart had one child, Spencer Stout Weart (1803- 1868) who married Sept. 13, 1824 Sarah Garrison (1804-1883). Sarah's father was Major William Garrison, whose wife was Ose Roberts who was the daughter of Thomas Roberts who was married to Elizabeth Parke, William Parke's daughter.

Spencer Stout Weart's children were: John Guiney Weart, 1825- 1899); William Alfred Weart, (1827- ---); Jacob Weart, (1829- 1905); Charles Douglas Weart, (1831-1894); Spencer Algernon Weart, (1834-1898); George Washington Weart, (1836-1908); James Manners Weart, (1839-1874); Ose Garrison Weart, (1841-1934) married Andrew Larison Holcombe; her twin Susan Weart (1841-1910) married Jonathan Hunt Blackwell.

Why were these deeds locked away in a third floor room in the Museum? They are now safely filed in the vault room. The two daughters of Spencer Algernon Weart were the Misses Eleanor Lane Weart and Susan Stout Weart, known affectionately by many as Sue and Eleanor. They were the two women so influential in the early days of the Museum and Library. Their portraits are in the back room to the left of the corridor on the first floor. Is it so hard to believe that they may have saved them for posterity?

Just one more of the many important Stouts. Ebenezer Stout (says the Centennial Address) lived on the property of which a part was in 1976. Dr. Thomas Cortelyou's "Kings Grant Farm of 1732." [This farm is adjacent to Hopewell Boro on the east, on the north side of 518.] Ege states that this land was once a part of Benjamin Stout's land. In the 1761 deed of Col. J. Stout we also find Benjamin Stout as the western 'bounder' of Col. Joseph Stout.

An unverified advertisement recently said "that this 370 acre plantation predates the Rev. War; that Benjamin Stout was an associate of General Lafayette; that he built the house in 1755". It certainly shows evidences of its antiquity. As of 1986, the house and barns being excluded from the front acreage, John Sullivan of Jon Jay, Flemington, N.J. is planning to build over 20 large houses of 1-3 acre sites on the front acreage. This "plantation" extends also north of the present railroad track.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Ebenezer Stout was one of the two children of Zephaniah Stout who married Rhoda Stout; she was Nathan Stout's daughter. Zephaniah Stout died soon after the birth of the second child. Rhoda Stout married Rev. Burgess Allison of Bordentown. Ebenezer had a very advantageous childhood; he became an accomplished scholar and able lawyer. Ebenezer Stout advertised this property for sale, Feb. 10, 1880 thus: "A house large enough to be convenient for two families, to enable a farmer to live in the house and owner to conduct a business." He did not sell it immediately. Ebenezer married Ann Hopkinson. They resided on this farm, Nathan Stout's homestead; Dr. Benjamin Van Kirk of Stoutsburg worked it for a half share. It was sold in 1808 to Cornelius Skillman. If you're lucky enough to tour this home, you will understand and appreciate its age and beauty. A tour of the cellar shows immensely thick walls, very, very old. Other owners of this home were Reuben McPherson, great grandfather of Mrs. Mary Wagner; Mr. Edward Haynes, recently deceased; and Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Budinger's mother.

In the future, we shall talk more of other Stouts.

Soon we will visit around Stony Brook.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER X - Water and Parks (HVN 11/11/76)

Water and Parks

[You will notice that this chapter was printed Nov. 11, 1976. It was however written on a VERY HOT SUMMER day. Those with a sense of humor will enjoy the contrast!]

Will you wade or walk barefoot through some creeks today?

The first is Assunpink Creek which was in the early days of 1714 the southern boundary of Hunterdon County and Hopewell Township. In 1719 Hopewell Township was reduced in size and the southern part became Trenton Township; that's today's Ewing Township. "Where is Assunpink Creek?" you ask. You go to near Roosevelt, N.J., near route 571; get your map out! It's now a long walk as the creek flows westerly, then northwesterly near Edinburgh. Near route one it flows southwesterly through Trenton to the Delaware River.

Ready for walk 2? Go to New Egypt and find Crosswick Creek --- map needed again! Several miles north, Miry Run flows from the east into Crosswick Creek. (Miry Run's origin was near that of Assunpink's.) Crosswick Creek now flows westerly, and then a little northwesterly to the town of Crosswicks --- more on it later. Wander around; look it over. The creek now 'quiggles' until you get near White Horse, where it turns decidedly southward and flows into the Delaware River around Bordentown, N.J. While your feet dry, I'll give you some more data. Assunpink Creek, in Mercer County, today is part of the northern boundary of Hamilton Township. Crosswick Creek forms its southern boundary. Province Line is the eastern boundary of Hopewell, Lawrence, and Hamilton Township. Province Line is then the western boundary of Princeton, West Windsor and Washington Townships. Only Ewing and Windsor Townships and the city of Trenton, in Mercer County, do not touch this Old Province Line established in 1676.

The last wading water is Stony Brook. Surely you are familiar with it. If not, go to the Stony Brook Recreational Area just off Route 654, or to the Hopewell Valley Golf Course to the east of Route 654. The bridge goes over Stony Brook. The Brook is very visible as it flows southeasterly thru the green golf course. You are on your own now!

Back in 1690, a Dr. Roger Parfie lived in the area of Crosswicks, the town. But this man loved to travel! From this area about four miles south of Trenton, by horseback surely in that early day, he found his way to Stony Brook and especially to the part of the brook near the present iron bridge on Mine Road, just off Stony Brook Road. Stony Brook Road is a narrow road from 654 to 518.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

He visited the Indians there --- at Wissa Menson, a small Indian village. These Indians must have been different from those in other Indian villages because he came to Stony Brook very often --- so much in fact that some of his way or path on some old deeds was noted as "Roger's Road"! Other than friendliness, why his frequent visits? These Indians possessed much medicinal lore that he wanted to learn. Remember, no nearby Medical Center, no corner drug store, nor H.M.O.'s then!

He enjoyed these Indians so much that he sold out his land near Crosswicks. In April 1697 Dr. Roger Parke and wife Sarah bought 400 acres. On June 12, 1698 he bought 100 acres for his daughter Anne or Anna. On June 16, 1699 a John Parke (he had a son John) bought more land. Where is it precisely? In the early days the acreage, when surveyed later, was always considerably more than stated on the earliest deeds. The land of about one thousand acres, extended from Mine Road bridge east of Stony Brook, north to about Route 518. Measured today that road is nearly one mile long from Mine Road north to 518. From Mine Road to Route 654 is about 1/2 mile. That's a lot of land!!

As I 'got' into this history research, I wondered why we haven't heard as much about Dr. Roger Parke and his descendants as we've heard about the 'famous Stouts'. As we go on, you may get the reason(s). Dr. Roger Parke's children were born from about 1690(?) to 1711(?). His daughters were Anna, Grace, Sarah and Kesiah. His sons were John and William and possibly Roger, Jr. There were six Parke men on the 1731 petition to try to keep 'the Coxes' from evicting the earlier settlers: Roger Sr. and Jr., John Sr. and Jr., Joseph, and Andrew. It would seem to me that Roger Jr. was Roger Parke Sr.'s son! But if there's an error in the "Jr.", then it could have been a grandson by his son John; Joseph and Andrew were believed to be John's children. Dr. Roger Parke's daughter Sarah married a Thomas Schooley. This Schooley may be the originator of Schooley's Mountain area in North Jersey, a famous health resort once. When the Coxe trial resulted in "Pay again or Leave", Dr. Roger Parke and Sarah and undoubtedly others of the family headed north into Hunterdon County. We know that Dr. Roger Parke's son John married Sarah Smith, daughter of Andrew Smith the first settler of the Township; he had the first recorded deed in 1688.

[In my original column, I made a horrendous mistake following the 'date'. The following is the correct data which also raises some further questions!]

The Oldis farm was settled by the Burrowes in 1694. The Andrew Smith farm: P201 Ralph Ege's Pioneers of Old Hopewell: "A.S ... bought land in Hopewell in 1688 and his deed is the first recorded document bearing the name Hopewell."

P2. A.B. Lewis, Hopewell Valley Heritage: "this 200 acre tract was in the southwestern part of what would today be Ewing Township."

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Mr. George Hart called to say: "The A.S. farm is on the Woodsville-Harbourton Road and is the 1688 house."

The Hopewell Valley News of Nov 18, 1976 had a drawing of the Andrew Stout's house and said its cornerstone was 1712. I will leave this location up to someone else to determine. J

We know that Anna, the daughter for whom Dr. Roger Parke bought the 100 acres in 1698, married William Merrill Jr. and did live there at some time. A road survey gives his name in this location in 1723.

We know much more about the families of William, Grace and Kesiah Parke. Ralph Ege in Pioneers of Old Hopewell writes about all the Parkes from page 188 to the end of the book!

Dr. Roger Parke lived from about 1664 to 1755. His son William Parke, born about 1711, married Sarah Jewell, born about 1720. This family bought land and settled in 1755 north of Hopewell Boro, where Robert Brophay lived in 1905. Their eleven children (P204 in Ege), born from 1738 to 1762, married into the Stouts, Roberts, Larisons, Sextons, Rowland and Kirkendalls. I couldn't possibly know all their descendants, but in the early 1900's a few of them were: S.S. Wearts, Sutphins, Labaws, Phillips, Larison, Harts, Stouts, Skeds, Sheppards, Hills and Blackwells.

Dr. Roger Parke's daughter Grace Parke married Jacob Stout, son of James Stout of Amwell. Of their eight children, some married Drakes, Hutchinson, Brush, Van Kirk and Stout. Their descendants in the early 1900's were the Drakes, Hoaglands, Van Dykes and Savidges.

Dr. Roger Parke's youngest daughter Kesiah Parke (Ege, pages 222-226) married James Larison. (Remember his sister Elizabeth married the pioneer Jonathan Stout's son, David Stout. This James Larison owned some of the Parke tract --- more later.) Children now! Their ten children born from 1737 to 1757, married into the Peltons, Greens, Severnes, Andersons, Sextons, Runyans, Humphreys, Stouts, Smiths and Drakes! Their descendants were numerous in the early 1900's: Holcombes, Hunts, Jewells, Blackwells, Stillwells, Marshalls and Coles. Andrew Larison Holcombe was a very prosperous gentleman; he was the grandson of Andrew Larison, who was James Larison's son. Rev. Isaac Eaton's daughter married a J. Humphrey, Achsah Larison and J. Humphrey's son. The James Larison who married Kesiah Parke also had two sons Elijah and David Larison, who also owned the Parke-Larison tract.

No wonder strangers to this town say "everyone is somehow related to everyone else" ----- "Be careful, you'll step on someone's toes!"

HOPWELL 'S PAST

In Ege's book on P182 he says this original Parke tract was the farm of C.E. Voorhees in 1905. (C.E. Voorhees was an editor for the Hopewell Herald!) On Page 50, he states that the tract now (1902) includes the D.P. Voorhees farm, railroad quarry farm, and also Amos. Sked's, C.E. Voorhees, the Samuel Ege farm, and portions of W.W. Kirkendalls, W.C. Velit's and E.S. Titus. The Hopewell Museum has an 1875 (revised) Hopewell Township map for sale. You can find some of these names in the Stony Brook area. Of course 1875 is not 1905!

DOES ANYONE HAVE A TOWNSHIP MAP FOR 1900-1905? It would certainly be a valuable tool to help write a detailed history of the area from the early days. I hope SOMEONE does this; I know it is too much for me!

Now, I wish to present as chronologically as I can, the history of the houses and the land as gleaned from Ege's Pioneers of Old Hopewell and a little deed search of my own. Dr. Roger Parke must have built at first --- as usually done --- just a log cabin. But soon he built a more substantial home in which lived Dr. Roger Parke's family, grandchildren and great grandchildren. It was torn down somewhere in 1805-1850, a new house was then built on the homestead site. This newer house later became Ralph Ege's home. [Does this help the reader understand why Ralph Ege has so much information on the area? He lived on this property for much of his life !] The house is shown in the 1875 Mercer County Atlas at the Hopewell Museum. Mr. W. McMillan 'fancied' it up when he owned it. Now it is a delightful 'mansion'; in 1976 Mrs. Patricia Munn (Mrs Mark S.Munn) was owner; in 1985 it was owned by a Mr. White.

When Dr. Roger Parke decided to go 'north', he sold the tract in 1740 to David Stout (son of Jonathan, the pioneer Stout) who'd married Elizabeth Larison. David Stout owned land on Province Line; It is doubtful that he lived on Dr. Parke's land. However his wife Elizabeth had a brother James Larison who was married to Kesiah Parke, the youngest daughter of Dr. Roger Parke. This James Larison soon bought the above tract from David Stout. The 'rightful' deeds from the Coxes came into their possession in 1750, and 1765. James Larison built another home about 1600 ft. further north of the Parke homestead. This home, along Stony Brook, was the residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Dobbins Faussette from about 1919 to 1966. They lived there 47 years! Their farm contained 65 acres. This farm house is the home of W.M. Cooper in (1985).

Back to James Larison, husband of Kesiah Parke. Elijah and David Larison, two of their sons owned this Parke-Larison tract. James Larison died in 1800. Elijah Larison's daughter, Catharine born in 1789, married in 1808 a William Marshall. They owned this land before 1829, selling it then to their daughter Elizabeth who married in 1809, William Cool. In 1837 the "Cools" sold some of the (Ege, P10) land to John Ege, who was born in 1775 and was the grandfather of oft-mentioned Ralph Ege.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

James Larison's son, David Larison married Jerusha Smith. David Larison died in 1800, Jerusha soon married Nathan Drake. Nathan and Jerusha Drake in 1807 sold the land to Samuel Ege, who was born in 1750, and who divided the land between his sons John and George Ege. Ralph Ege lived in the 'Parke--second home'.

Some of this Parke-Larison land was sold to Benjamin Blackwell in 1814. I'll have much more to say about him in the next chapter as he owned "the Holcombe House" back in 1794. There is a deed to show that the administrators of his estate (Benjamin Blackwell died in 1831) sold the land he bought in 1814, to Stephen Titus in 1836.

Again, I hope someone does a research project in the complete details of the Parke Larison land from it's earliest owners to today.

[Perhaps, the Hopewell Township Historic Sites Survey Committee of 1985 and 1986 will have this (and other) historic data printed, ready for limited sale, and also on file, all research (especially that of Betsy Errickson done specifically for this committee added to her research of years before) on the Hopewell Township area to be kept (as of present knowledge) in the Hopewell Township Library located between Cenlar and the Hopewell Valley High School, near Rt 31 and on Pennington-Titusville Rd.]

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XI - # 19 W. Broad, 153 W. Broad- 1794 (HVN 11/18/76)

19 W. Broad, 153 W. Broad- 1794

I've got such good news that I must share it with you right NOW! In the Nov. 11, 1976 column, (Chapter X), I asked for a Hopewell Township map of 1900-1905. By Saturday I HAD ONE! Now, in a coming chapter I can give you the locations and names of the 1776 farms from the Centennial Address and a page by page correlation with Ralph Edge's Pioneers of Old Hopewell!!! The proving of this by deeds may still take years. But it is time to do it NOW from these references and my general knowledge of this immediate area. JUST THINK; WE can sometime have a 1700, a 1750, and a 1766 TENTATIVE MAPS of from "Stony Brook to Stoutsburg" !!!!!!

I new NEED a RECENT HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP MAP, particularly the sections showing Woodsville, Marshalls Corner, Mount Rose, and thus all properties north and east of these points.

[The Hopewell Township Historic Sites and Hopewell Valley Historic Sites Survey Advisory Committee 1984, etc. has been formed to do as its title says and is nearing the finish of its work. It's final information may be placed in the Hopewell Township Library on Pennington-Titusville Road, Pennington, N.J. 08534. They hired the firm of Heritage Studies Inc., and has also had help from many individuals, especially Mrs. Betsy Errickson, now of Florida. This library is just off Route 31, at the light, and adjacent to the Hopewell Valley High School. So, so much more historical information should soon be available. GREAT ! In my last chapter, I have lot and section numbers needed to find information.]

Now that we have our feet well planted in the land of the early settlers, Stouts and Parkes, we should now be ready for Hopewell Borough's homes. I will present what I have found on those five "Centennial Speech" earliest houses and some on the houses of the eleven farms also given in that speech, because some of those houses are in the 1976 Hopewell Borough.

I will start with the Anne Holcombe house at 19 West Broad Street. The older residents of the town know this house. But recently I saw a reference to "Old Hopewell" and it only referred to the John Hart home and the Old School Baptist Church --- as if there wasn't any other historic place here!! First -- why do we call it 'the Holcombe house' ? Why isn't it called 'the Eaton house' or 'the Blackwell house' or 'the Riley house' ? Anne Holcombe was a highly respected teacher and citizen of our community; she died just recently. "We" all knew her well and knew of it as her home.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Older people remember her husband G.Newell Holcombe. A few even remember his mother! (More later). Other names for this house could be the 'Drake house' --- the 'Disborow house' --- the 'Zebulon Stout house' --- and the Runyan (present 1985 owner) home --- but few people knew enough to know about any of the early owners.

It is sometimes referred to as the birthplace of Brown University. Brown does not --- according to Ursula C. Brecknell --recognize it as such. (I now have a history of Brown University. Further information will be given in Part II.) Until someone publishes the steps that may have been undertaken to start a college in this house in Hopewell, New Jersey, and proves it was here (I understand the movement failed), I believe we would be more accurate to say that Rev. Isaac Eaton's Academy (1756-1767) was the SEED from which came many of the early leaders in Brown University. Dean H. Ashton was working on a book Hopewell Academy and the Lives of Its Outstanding Graduates. Regretfully, he died before finishing it for possible publication.

His widow the typing and saw to it that 8-9 copies were made. Unfortunately there is no list of sources, and no publisher. Mrs. Ashton states that the publishers did not feel there were enough people interested in this subject. She lent me a copy. I found it fascinating, but I questioned several small segments of it. You may be interested in a few notes from it. (I returned her copy to her.)

A school building was built by Mrs. Eaton's father, the Amwell David Stout, about 200 feet south of the house. The Centennial Address says "this school was located about the spot where Mrs. Monroe Stout's house now stands." That's 1876 and unknown today. However there is a large slightly elevated, overgrown area behind the house, sort of in the circle, the driveway makes. I bet a "dig" would call this the site of the school and Mrs Monroe's house. Any "takers" ?? All his students, day or live in, were given for that day an EXCELLENT classical education. He divided them according to age, having three classes. Six were 21 or older on entering; one was 26! Two were 20; Two were 19; Six were 10-17 years. Eight to ten came from Hopewell "Boro", 12-15 from other places, as four were from eastern Pennsylvania and two from Delaware. Some of those from around here were: John Blackwell, Amos Hart, Jesse Hart, John Stout, 2 Nathan Stouts, Benjamin VanKirk, Sam Jones and Charles Thompson of Amwell. Twenty of the graduates became ministers even if only four had come from minister's homes, six became doctors, four teachers, five lawyers; twa enrolled in the college of Philadephia, 5-6 in Princeton University, and several in the college of Rhode Island. It is obvious that Rev. Isaac Eaton was a fine teacher!

I do not wish to take anything away from other historic homes, but I do believe it is past time for this lovely home to receive --- more widely --- its overdue recognition for what it is. I believe it is one of the most intact old houses in the borough; however, each 'wing' does not date back as far as the central part of the house. As I discuss others of the 'five', I'll say more about the age of each one.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The First Baptist Church records are in the hands of the Hopewell Museum. With too much handling, these valuable old documents, would soon be spoiled (they're awfully hard to read too!). Mrs. Betsy Errickson, the assistant curator thru 1983, made a type written copy of these early records which are now available for researchers. These records show that this Baptist Church bought the HOUSE and 10 ACRES in 1749 from Joseph Disborow (Disbrow) for a parsonage for Rev. Isaac Eaton, newly chosen as pastor. (Ege states: "in 1726 Richard Ketcham and James Mattison owned all the land on the south side of the Pennington - Hopewell road" --- that's our Broad Street. Also he later states that James Mattison owned in 1745-1750 the Charles Drake house of 1876; that's today's Anne Holcombe's. Miss Susan Weart wrote "In 1732 the land of the present Hopewell Borough was owned by John Hixson, Richard Ketcham and James Mattison (Madison)." As of 1976 I have been unable to find any proofs of ownership before 1749.) In July 1769, the Baptist Church sold "the house and ten acres" to Zebulori Stout. Rev. Isaac Eaton continued to live there after his Academy, after this sale, and till his death in 1772. His family moved away and with them went any records that might have shed light on his years at Hopewell except if you can pry any loose from The Baptist Association.

I will now insert information on the second 'farm', referred to as "the Parsonage Farm", since it is so closely related to the above. Of course the first parsonage should not be called a farm, with only 10 acres! At the present (1976) moment I have no record of who owned the rest of the about 180-190 acres of which #19 W. Broad is (was) a part.

The Baptist Church early ministers had to have more financial support than just the contributions of the members. Whereas Rev. Eaton supported himself by also teaching, future pastors also gained income from farming. The Church ordered inquiries to be made about the possible purchase of Ephraim Hart's farm, on March 19, 1768. In May, 1768, they had the 'refusal' on it. On October 17, 1772, they received the report that Moses Hart would sell this plantation for four pounds ten shillings per acre. On Dec. 19, 1772 they decided to buy the 95 and 1/2 acre plantation. In early 1785 the Church decided to buy more acreage. In Feb. 1785, Mary and James Mattison sold 37 and 1/4 acres, at five pounds per acre. This Baptist Parsonage farm then contained 132 and 3/4 acres. Neighbors in that early day were: William Jewell, Samual Jones, Aaron Stout, John Blackwell and Richard Ketcham. The farm extended from the border of the "Holcombe" farm to about Crusher Road. The Holcombe farm's west boundary (#19 W. Broad St.) is one property west of Ege Avenue (1985). According to Ege and a 1723 road survey, the owner in 1723 was Jabis Jarvis (also spelled Jabez Gervas). That name is intriguing. So 'fancy' for that day! Does anyone know the derivation?

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The Baptist Church in March 1915 sold this farm to John Corcoran. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. John Hoge of 153 W. Broad Street, showed me their deeds, which state: "Being part of two tracts of land conveyed to the said Baptist Congregation in Hopewell, one by Moses Hart, deed ---- Jan. 1, 1773, and one by James Mattison by deed --- Feb. 8, 1785."

--[There is an interesting story in Part II of this book about all the homes the Baptist ministers of Hopewell lived in; Feb. 9 and 16, 1984 date.]--

Now back to Anne Holcombe's house and land. With some gaps in proof, we are up to 1769 when Zebulon Stout bought the house and ten acres from the Baptist Congregation. Remember --- this is before the Revolutionary War! Mrs. Mary Evelyn Runyon (Mrs. Stanley), then living at 96 W. Broad Street, Hopewell, Anne Holcombe's niece, has been extremely kind and generous to me. She allowed me to copy and study all title deeds she had in her possession. Of course, they're not all the deeds connected with this house --- that might fill a closet!

The earliest is an apparently unrecorded deed on rolled parchment, brittle and hard to read, but it is very helpful historically! It states that Roger Larison sold this property --now 195 1/2 acres (1794 is now!) to Nathaniel Hixson 5-1-1792. On Dec. 8, 1794 Nathaniel Hixson and wife Elizabeth sell this same 195 1/2 acres to Benjamin Elackwell. He paid 1300 pounds of gold and silver coins for it. I have made a copy of this deed and have given it to the Hopewell Museum. It shows that it was four tracts of land: 150 acres, 3 1/2 acres, 1 1/2 acres, 40 1/2 acres. It was on the south side of the present Broad St. and extended south to the Hopewell Township line. A study of each and every available deed from 1794 would certainly give valuable historical information on a large segment of our town!

The next Chapter will start with this 1794 purchase, because now I'd like to talk a little about this HOUSE. It would be most unusual if this house of today were exactly the same house as the residence of Rev. Isaac Eaton in 1749. It is so very large for that day --- remember it was built before 1749 for they bought it then from Joseph Disborow. As far as I know, it has not been evaluated by historical authorities. But I'm going to make some 'educated surmises' to be proved or disproved some day! A tour showed me many interesting things. The cellar is enlightening. It says to me that the central part is the oldest part and that the wings --- right and left, were added --- when ? --- later-- Seeing the cellar and recalling a hand drawn house on a map in the early papers --- it wouldn't have to be actual but I guess that it is --- I can 'see' the earliest house. Still very large for its day.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The cellar foundations, walls, doors and fireplace support, seem to suggest a house having on the first floor front --- one window, one non-Victorian door, and two windows. The second floor front shows four windows, directly above the first floor windows and door. There was a huge fireplace inside and huge chimney outside on the (looking at it) right side, outside wall. The cellar supports are huge --- you'd almost believe it was a cellar fireplace until you 'lookup' the chimney. Stretched across are large, bark covered 'trees' ! Upstairs today is only a mantelpiece. The cellar foundation shows an 'outside' door, and steps as to the outside, IN this central part; but today it goes into another cellar on the left! But, I don't believe the wings were added too long after (maybe even before) the 1794 purchase because Benjamin Blackwell had many children, and he ran a tavern-hotel here. The roof supports may contain evidences of 'age', but I know how well kept this home has always been. The front roof is newer - 1970 or 1980's; the rear roof undoubtedly is not the original ... knowing that the left wing was added.

It is fascinating to study the front window and doors of the large section. The Victorian doors were added in the late 1800's. The three-fold window, first floor, was placed about the same time; they took out two single windows, so that "the families could have a better view out the front". Notice that the upper windows are different lengths. When? Why? ... later renovations ...

Another interesting feature is the staircase --- out of the ordinary as to placement for an old home. But knowing its use, seems to help explain it. In the oldest times, a stairway usually runs from the front door and then up to the second floor. This does not. The stairway goes from the BACK up to the second floor. Think back with me. From 1794, on it was a tavern. The front door was used by the local inhabitants --- and when I say 'door' I do not mean the "Victorian" double doors there now --they're a later change. This was still the day of the horseback riders and carriages. They would have driven in the lane and around to the back. They'd have entered through the really old central-back door. There'd have been a bar and 'registration area' near the door; now the logical entrance to the second floor is up-the-stairs --- from the back of the house. Well --- so much for my theories!

NEXT chapter ---- the history of this home from 1794 on.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XII - # 19 W. Broad - 1794 On

18 W. Broad

A short review of the History of what I've learned about the house at 19 West Broad Street --- referred to in the Centennial Address as "the next farm south" was owned by Nathan Hixson, now (1876) owned and occupied by Mr. Charles Drake, and as the fifth house. Perhaps James Mattison owned it in 1726 and 1732. (Rev. Ege and Susan Weart.) A Joseph Disborow sold it in 1749 to the 'Old School' Baptist Church. When they were done with it, Zebulon Stout bought it in 1769. Rev. Isaac Eaton's Academy was there from 1756-1767. Roger Larison owned more land than the 1749 or 1769 purchase, which was "house of ten acres"; in 1792 Roger Larison owned 195.5 acres. He sold it then to Nathaniel Hixson who on Dec. 8, 1794 sold it to Benjamin Blackwell for 1300 pounds of gold and silver. A copy of this seemingly unrecorded deed is now in the Hopewell Museum. The deed shows that it is in four tracts of land containing 150A, 3.5A, 1.5A, and 40.5A. Plotting these tracts was difficult; rechecking my copy still resulted in my being unable to plot them --- it's not too unusual in old deeds --- either being unable to read the bearings or sometimes an error in direction. So I left it and was thankful to find in these deeds and papers, graciously offered by Mrs Mary Evelyn Runyan, Anne Holcombe's niece, a map of Benjamin Blackwell's 195-1/2 acres --- made a little later but so helpful! This property lies on the south side of today's Broad Street -- known by many names in ages past; Great Road, Pennington to Rockahill (!) Rd., and Franklin and Georgetown Turnpike 1822. From Louellen Street east, the property extended along this street for almost 4500 ft. It clearly states where the corner is for the 'Turnpike' and that the road went to Lambertville. So the property lay about 1490 ft. west of the turnpike's turnoff (that's out West Broad) and 3100 ft. east of that point. I got out my Borough map and immediately got one BIG JOLT ! The deed clearly states that the 'end' is ... "corner of the road leading to Mount Rose" ... Princeton Ave? NO! Nowhere near enough feet. And then I remembered some long forgotten notes --could I find them? ... Yes. Miss Susan Weart wrote about the road to Mt. Rose used before 1825!! Today's Maple Street was once 'Factory Lane'. Why? Because it was the way to get to the factory! What factory? On the hill just above the site of St. Michael's Orphanage (built in 1900 and destroyed in 1975) on the 'Raceway' --- no, that's not a racetrack! A raceway is the waterway for a mill. The raceway was right ON the present road to Mt. Rose, Carter Road, which, was built in the early 1900's. (1920's?)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Mr. W. Ketcham had there a sawmill, a fulling and carding mill, and did some weaving, (Susan Weart said POOR weaving!!). In 1840 it was sold to G. Van Buskirk, who sold it to Bayard (Byard) Van Buskirk; it later burned. Incidentally, you'll be surprised when you see the industries here at one time! (Later Chapter) Next, I find that it is checking out on the borough map. That's always a pleasure. So that early property started on the east not too far from the Borough line and went west to -- past Ege Avenue by about 180 ft. That was certainly a lot of land --- practically everything on the south side of Broad Street!!

From Broad Street at Maple Street the property goes south to the Borough line, just south of First Street (do you know where that was?!), curves southwest and west to about the back of the houses south of the Elementary School, then south about another 800 ft. into the township.

Another early road from Hopewell to Mt. Rose was not on Union St., the present Princeton Avenue. The early road was Broad, and up Maple, going thru land of homeowners today --- along the back end of the present First and Second St., then westward along First St., (that's a bit north of the old Catholic Home back lane), crossing over our Princeton Ave. and down tile right hand road (to Veelenturf's) to a 'lane', up it to Crusher Road (at this exit the road is clearly evident); then eastward to Carter Road, then southward to the 'light' at Mt. Rose, the intersection of Rocky Hill-Pennington Rd. and Carter Road.

From West Broad Street, south it goes the 700 ft. in the Borough and slanting south east another 1400 feet. These two boundaries are joined by the most southerly boundary of about 2660 feet. This Benjamin Blackwell must have felt like a king as he surveyed his property from his home! And if ... he can see from the great blue sky ... how many individual properties are on his land today --- what wealth ... he had had

At about the same time I learned that in 1794 Benjamin Blackwell owned this Holcombe property, I began to get swamped with 'Blackwells'. The Centennial Address mentioned Stephen Blackwell and grandson Stephen Blackwell. Elsewhere I was running into J.V. Blackwell, Jonatlion H. Blackwell, Daniel Blackwell, Wilson Blackwell, Frances Blackwell, Nelson D. Blackwell, David Lafayette Blackwell, another Francis Blackwell, a John (the Priest) Blackwell, etc., etc. And of course there is Alice Blackwell Lewis, author of Hopewell Valley Heritage. And there is Blackwell Avenue and Lafayette Street!

The partial genealogy that Ethel Boice let me copy from was a great help. (This Blackwell genealogy I have copied and given to the Museum; it's very simplified to allow one to follow the line down to Hopewell Borough descendants today.)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

And I haven't been able to find out much more about Benjamin Blackwell, owner in 1794. I did find his will in the Surrogate's office in the Hunterdon County Court House. It was made out April 24, 1831; he was born in 1756 --- seventy-five years old when he made the will. He had "a beloved wife Permelia" (1757-1847). He left \$1000 to his "blackwoman Catherine". His children were Jonathan deceased before 1831, Andrew, Thomas, Jacob, Peter, Henry, Daniel, Eura (Polhemus), Hannah (Drake), and Mary (Perrine). Ten children. From another will, I know that Benjamin Blackwell had a brother Andrew, and a brother-in-law Isaac Dunn; this was from Andrew's will of 1815. Andrew died in 1818; he had owned much of the land on the western side, both north and south sides, at the intersection at Mt. Rose (Montrose). Some neighbors on the 1794 deed were Joseph Parke, Charles Morgan, Jesse Hart, and Gershome Mott.

Benjamin Blackwell left this land to his son Daniel (1781- 1857) who married Elizabeth Van Cleve, born 1782, died after 1857. In 1850, Daniel Blackwell and wife Elizabeth sold to James S. Blackwell (their son) [Vol. V, P357] 196.68 acres, except for the 2 acres which had been sold to the Lambertville to Brunswick Turnpike (today's 518). The selling price was \$8760.00

Elizabeth Van Cleve (Mrs. Daniel Blackwell), was the daughter of Elizabeth Moore and Colonel John Van Cleve. Elizabeth Moore was the daughter of Joseph Moore. The Van Cleves lived on the 'Poor Farm' of the Township (Ege P173). Col. John Van Cleve (1757-1814) was a wartime patriot. According to Daniel Blackwell's will of 1850, his children were James S. Blackwell, Jonathan V. Blackwell, Ira S. Blackwell and Permelia Blackwell (1807-1838) who was the first wife of Stephen Blackwell (1808- 1883), a very prosperous Hopewell merchant who was the grandfather of Mrs. Joseph B. Hill (1863-1963). The neighbors on this 1850 deed were the Baptist Parsonage farm on the west, and on the south George Van Buskirk.

James S. Blackwell died soon after making his will on Dec. 25, 1852. His wife, Elizabeth H. Blackwell and brother Jonathan V. Blackwell were executors of his estate. (Vol. 28, P439) shows them selling this 196.68 acre farm for \$11,499.02 to Patrick Riley in April 1854. The neighbors in 1854 were the Baptist Parsonage Farm and Byard Van Buskirk. In the deed the executors reserved .8 acre; this was later sold to Zephaniah Stout. It was a deed of Patrick Riley's time that had the drawing of what I think was the early house.

Patrick Riley was the first born son of Phillip Riley (1794- 1857) and Bridgetta or Bridget (1792-1853). He was the only son born in Ireland, the other brothers and sisters --- Roseanna, Elnor, John M., Wm S. and James F. Riley were born in America. Patrick Riley (1815-1869) married Catharine S. Hortman (see Ege P232). These Irish were Presbyterians. Patrick Riley was an ancestor of our J. Russell Riley of Hart Avenue who died recently, and Mahlon Riley living at 31 Hart Ave. today.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

[by the greatest of luck I was able to harrow J. Russell Riley's genealogical chart from his daughter, Mrs. Edna Sutphen Riley Summer, just before she closed out her father's house sale and went back to California.] J. Russell Riley was known as an historian, and one of the compilers of the Stout genealogy. We are very lucky to have those five Stout family charts in the Museum. The book costs \$25 *. I have also written up a simplified Riley chart, now on file in the Museum.

* See end of chapter.

There is now the first big change in the owner's use of the property. The Rileys lived there from 1854 until 1870. They lived at the time when the town was beginning to grow. People wanted to buy large and small lots. When later sold, there were 118.85 acres --- almost 78 acres sold off! In book 29, P207 and 209 there are two deeds showing land sold to Zephaniah Stout in 1850 and 1854. He bought a large section on the west --- from Louellen Street west, a tract of almost 34 acres. Further down the street, he bought about 1 acre with about 240 ft. frontage on Broad Street. He paid \$2029.20 for the large tract and \$683 for the small one. Patrick Riley sold about 1.5 acres on Broad St. to his father, Phillip Riley, about 256 foot frontage, the Howard Larison property in the 1930's. In 1855 Patrick Riley sold the land whereon the Columbia School District built its first public school; for \$75, three-fourths of an acre (Book 37, P336). This is 75 W. Broad St. today. On renovating one inner wall lately, the owner 'came on' an old blackboard! This was the Grand Army Hall after the school was discontinued.

Patrick Riley died, and his widow Catherine and Joseph Moore Phillips, exec., sold the land to Wm. (H. or S.) Riley (Patrick's brot1er) for \$13,667.75 (Vol.91, P29). On March 28, 1870, John A. Moore owned Zephaniah Stout's thirty-four (34) acre tract. The Parsonage Farm touches in the back about 583 ft. Byard Van Buskirk has bought considerably --- another 30 acres from this original tract on the south. Nelson D. Blackwell has bought about 500 ft. frontage on a lot across from today's museum 35 E. Broad St. By the 1870's the Benjamin Blackwell property was a skeleton of its former self.

Then Wm. H. Riley and his wife Fannie sell to Charles Drake on t1arch 8, 1873 (Vol. 94, P503) the property for \$12,909.05. The footage on Broad St. is about 800 ft. and further to the west about 426 feet. Benjamin Blackwell's frontage was about 4600 ft.! Hopewell was growing !!!

Dr. Robert Miller bought land on Oct. 3, 1911 on which is today (1976) the lovely home of his daughter, Mrs. James Kettle. (Vol. 339, P379) (#15 W. Broad St.) It was sold in 1985; after six months it's on the market again ! And sold immediately to C.S. Morehouse.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

In 1870 Jerome W. Morrell bought the land from Wm. H Riley which he sold on 10-3-1871 to ttle Calvary Baptist Church (Book 83, P2J4) and (Book 114, P37).

I stopped checking deeds because one-third of Hopewell is on this Benjamin Blackwell land of 1794!!! But now the family lineage becomes of importance because the land has passed down through the family --- whatever acreage may be today. Charles Drake, born in 1817, had a wife named Hannah. Their daughter Eusebia married John M. Dalrymple. Their daughter Sarah Dalrymple married Solomon Holcombe. Their son George Newell Holcombe (born on G. Washington's birthday !), married Anne McClellan. This is the Anne Holcombe who was the teacher in Hopewell Valley and died recently. Anne McClellan had two sisters Mary Evelyn and Bertha. Mary Evelyn Runyan is the daughter of the first named sister. The widow of Solomon Holcombe married Arthur King, whom many of us remember. As of 1986 Mrs Mary Evelyn Runyan is the owner.

[The Stout and Allied Families Vol. 1, 1970 by Herald F. Stout, 5183 Roxbury Rd., San Diego, California, 92116. In 1976 I paid \$25 for it. Invaluable!!!]

Goodbye to the HOLCOMBE home.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XIII - 2-4 W. Broad (HVN 12/16/76)

2-4 W. Broad

The last two chapters dealt with one of the oldest houses in Hopewell --- 'Holcombe' house, 19 West Broad Street. The Old School Baptist records show that tile house was here before 1749. Dean Ashton and others state that this house, plus the Casual Shop, and "a cake and beer shop" were here in 1749. Mr Ashton did not live long enough to finish his book or give the source of the previous statement. The Centennial Address of July 4, 1876, states that these three plus "Edling's" and "Guinness" were "here" in 1776.

It's time to get acquainted with a house given little or no acclaim --- and it deserves more historical attention --- No. 2 West Broad Street --- this is the property on the northwest corner of North Greenwood and Broad, the home of Mrs. J. Donald Guinness in 1982.

Someday, someone may PROVE that this land belonged to John Hart from 1749 to 1779. The State Archive Library has NO deeds for John Hart in Hopewell! Ege states that John Hart owned all the land in the borough west of North Greenwood and north of Broad Street. That's about one-fourth of Hopewell Boro! And his land 'ran' north into Hopewell Township. I KNOW that much of the above is true from my deed study I'll relate in a later chapter. The Old School Baptist records show that John Hart gave the land for this church and the smaller --- then present graveyard in 1749 and 1769. John Hart may have sold off small lots in this area in his life-time, or --- maybe after his death they were sold --- or maybe someone else owned some of the land nearer the corner --- doubtful --- . In John Hart's will (1779) there is a reference to the "recently sold lots of Benjamin Stout Sr. and also to Benjamin Stout Jr." Recently (1984) I read that a Merrell, who owned in the area of #18-22 W. Broad St. had bought it from Benjamin Stout !! A Benjamin Merrell bought land in this area in 1812, 198 ft. x 198 ft. More research needed.

The Centennial Address says "the next house was the corner house now occupied by Mrs. Titus and Mrs. Dalrymple, was occupied by Priest John Blackwell, who kept a small store there about 1780." Because of this statement I wish to tell more about Rev. John Blackwell. A Robert Blackwell in the late 1600's married Elizabeth Combe; of their seven children one was a Francis Blackwell (Sr.) (1713-1791) who married Elizabeth Cornell. They had at least eleven children. He married later Sarah Burroughs, they had at least five children all born in the 1780's.

HOPWELL 'S PAST

One child of the first marriage was (Rev.) John, who married Sarah Thomas. He was born Feb. 5, 1738. Two of his brothers well known in this area were Stephen (the J.B. Hill's forerunner) and Francis. Rev. John attended Isaac Eaton's Academy (that's the Holcombe house --- how intertwined all this history is!). John was called to the ministry Aug. 20, 1763 and received 'holy orders' July 23, 1764 from the First Baptist Church of Hopewell. He was a minister to the Hopewell Church but not a settled pastor. He was an owner of the Stony Brook Mills (that's at about the location of the Hopewell Valley Golf Course maintenance building) in 1779. Rev. John operated a store at North Greenwood and Broad St. The previous information was taken from Ralph Ege's, Pioneers of Old Hopewell p.133, 135-6. On Page 250, Ege quotes two advertisements showing that Timothy Brush Jr. and Major Peter Gordon, also were involved in a store at this site in April and November 1780. Rev. John Blackwell served the Freehold Church from 1782-1788. His wife (Sarah Thomas) received a large legacy upon the death of her father in 1788. This information came from a deed, Book 2, P117 Hunterdon Co.. On P135 Ege states that they returned to "go to Hopewell where he has a good plantation and a commodious new house where he lives comfortably with his wife Sarah Thomas, and their children John T. Lewis, and Sarah." On P113 Ege mentions a daughter Elizabeth who was either Sarah or another (?). We must not jump to the conclusion that this was (is) the #2-4 W. Broad St. I do have a deed showing that John Blackwell owned large acreage out back: of 153 w. Broad Street.

Don Guinness always felt that the foundation of one part of his home was very old. I think it is safe to assume that the central part of the house --- under one room of the apartment and the fireplace room (to the left of the then real estate office) could have been this old store --- and maybe the home of someone --- maybe Rev. John. The Old School Baptist records state that in 1802 and 1803 both Rev. and Mrs. Blackwell were "poorly". She died in 1803. Rev. John has a son John T. Blackwell. I have a deed (Book 10, P12 May 2, 1804) in which a John T. Blackwell and wife Susan or Sarah, sell to George Whitefield Case two pieces of land. However, it also says "sold to John T. Blackwell by John Blackwell and wife Catherine". How confusing these so nearly-like names can get! Rev. John's wife was Sarah unless he married again (no record). And another deed I have for this John Blackwell and wife Catherine shows them owning (living?) near the intersection of Honey Brook and Stony Brook (see 1875 Hop. township map). I also have a deed (Book 11, P75 Hunt. Co. 12-22-1804) which shows that "Rev. John Blackwell sells to Hannah Vannoy (who had lived in Maidenhead) an 82.5 ft. x 198 ft. lot which I am certain is Edlings #14 W. Broad St. This deed also states "conveyed by John T. Blackwell to Rev. John Blackwell on Sept. 4, 1795". The location of this will be clearer as I fully describe the land in Book 10, P12 May 2, 1804 Hunt. Co. which was sold by a John T. Blackwell to Dr. Case, and this very definitely is the Guinness house corner PLUS.

HOPWELL 'S PAST

The bearings give this information; Go from the light today up N. Greenwood Ave. about 554 ft. --- that's about at Cook Place, or just south of Model Ave. It goes west 1398 ft. If you draw an imaginary line starting at the intersection of Louellen St. and West Broad, and go north parallel to N. Greenwood Ave., you'll have the end of the 1398 ft. This northern boundary is the southern boundary of a piece of property bought by Thomas Phillips in 1790 and is from about Model Ave. north thru Hart Ave. (more later). The western boundary goes south towards Broad St. but 198 ft. short of it. Now the boundary goes east --- cutting through the then-old Grange Hall and the Somerset Farms store to the northwest corner of the graveyard (remember NOT today's size). Now comes the tricky part!! About 109 ft. west of the eastern boundary of today's graveyard, the line goes south to Broad St., east 350 ft., then north, east, and south around an 82.5 ft. x 198 ft. lot (#14 W. Broad) and touches Broad St. again for 155 ft. (the frontage of #10, and #2-4 W. Broad) back to the beginning. This is a 4.1 acre piece. The deed gives another 4A piece, which just doesn't seem to be adjacent, and I shall skip that now.

You'd better go back over that! Better yet, get a pencil and draw it. It's like one huge rectangle lying west of N. Greenwood Ave. with two large TEETH touching Broad St.

So Dr. Case owns on 5-2-1804 at least this 4.1 acre tract including Guinness's present lot. On Dec. 5, 1804 he sells the western part of that rectangle (about from the First Baptist Church west to Mrs. Robert Fetter's) to the same Thomas Phillips named just before. There is an interesting clause in this deed: " ... then strait to the place of beginning, but whereas the last mentioned (boundary) runs very near to a spring of water that has been stoned up ... and herein contracted spring shall not be fenced in ... and (other) fences are to be bent fairly so the said Case has free access to said spring". Today there is a brook running south from Model and west under Mercer St. to the brook behind the Wyckoff Country Deli, under the bridge on W. Broad, etc, etc.

Just a little information about Dr. George Whitefield Case. He was a bachelor. He was named after the famous evangelist George Whitefield (1738-1770). He had one colored woman slave. He charged 25 cents for a house call in 1810! He is buried directly behind the Old School Baptist Church. He died in 1842, about seventy years old. His will, in the Hopewell Museum, gives the executors as Wm. Stout and John Bellis (Bellows?) and directed that his properties (and he had many) be sold, one half to go to his brother Wheeler Case; the other half to be divided among Peter Howell, Titus Ege, and Samuel Cornell after some cash amounts were paid to George W. Smith, John Bellows, and George Kirkendall, son of Benjamin Kirkendall. This is the place to put in some more related deeds. Book 19, P245 shows John T. Blackwell on 4-1-1812 selling land 198 ft. x 198 ft. to Benjamin Merrell (carpenter).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The lot starts again at the northeast corner of the graveyard, "and was part of the same lot conveyed to John T. Blackwell by John Blackwell and Catherine on May 1, 1791". And since the 1875 Boro map shows a Merrell having a wheelwright shop at about 22 N. Broad St. (Carl Smith's) we might (!!) assume that a piece of "the big tooth" is no longer Dr. Case's.

Book 16, P104 May 3, 1809, and Book 17, P2 May 1, 1810, shows that Rev. John Blackwell owned 95 acres that he sold to John Thomas (which John T.? son? or not?) Blackwell in 1809, and John T. sold it one year later to Daniel Stout ("son of" or "and"??) Aaron Stout. Now maybe that's Rev. John's plantation.?? I'm not certain of its exact location, but adjacent land owners were Israel Hunt, Aaron Stout (formerly Stephen Blackwell) and Richard Ketcham. And "owning land" doesn't have to mean "living on it"! Again I'm guessing it might be on or near the Hoge farm and on or near that south ridge (about Crusher Road) below Hopewell.??

Let's proceed ahead! Book X, P576 Mercer County deed shows Zephaniah Stout on April 27, 1852 selling a piece of land to the Trustees of the First Baptist Church. It also begins at the northeast corner of the church lot! It is about 55 ft. x 197 ft. --- undoubtedly land to enlarge the graveyard. Also on this deed is this interesting quote "this is the same land conveyed to Zephaniah Stout by Phebe Cook by deed Jan. 21, 1802."

Deed Book X, P574 tells us that on Feb. 20, 1853 Daniel Blackwell and wife Elizabeth, (remember they were at the Holcombe House) sell this "same" 1804 lot of Dr. Case to Zephaniah Stout. If Case died in 1842, is it logical to assume that Daniel bought it then or soon after and before 1856! Also on this 1853 deed the BIG TOOTH has gone. The landowners given are James S. Blackwell, Enoch H. Drake, Zephaniah; then there's the graveyard, then on the west Enoch Phillips, and north Wm. Phillips (later, this last one belongs to Joseph Moore Phillips).

Mrs. Guinness was so helpful when I started looking into the history of her home about a year ago. She gave me a copy of all the data she had. It started with a copy of a survey map of Jan. 25, 1853 showing the Book X, P574 deed. The dimensions in 1853 are about 914 ft. on the north, 435 feet on the west, 806 ft. east to the frontage on Broad St., of 155 ft. on the corner. The name Mountain Road is where N. Greenwood Ave. is (it was also at one time known as Central Ave. and at another time as Rock Road). Broad St. is called "New Brunswick & Lambertville Road". (Remember the turnpike came through in 1822.)

By 1855 Wilson Blackwell owns the same general area. Just as in people's "reminiscences" of Dr. Case's house in 1830, so was this house of this time described as the "nicest house in town". Dr. Case rebuilt it in 1830. Sometime after 1855(?), I believe the left (apartment) section was added. Mrs. Guinness has a fine picture of the house somewhere in this time (when the house is double). The acreage in that 1853 survey was 9.39A --- so someone bought more land on the north.

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I just can't find out who this Wilson Blackwell was. Related to Daniel? Not a brother or son. Daniel's sons were James S., Jonathan V., and Ira S.; and a daughter Permelia who died before 1857. I know only his family --- and this from his will probated Oct. 12, 1864. Wilson Blackwell had a daughter Rebecca who was Mrs. Samuel M. Dalrymple. Another daughter Eura married Asa Titus and later J. Hill. So she was Eura Blackwell Titus Hill --- which solves a couple of problems. The three sons were Johnson T. Blackwell, Liscombe T. and William S. In the 1875 Boro map the two people living in the Guinness house were Mrs. Titus and Mrs. Dalrymple --- sisters! The will also gives a description of Wilson Blackwell's land he lived on. Elizabeth Blackwell, Doctor Hyde and J.M. Phillips were the land owners bordering "the Guinness land" in 1864.

Before 1906 we have (Eura) Eura Hill owning this same land. It's getting smaller. Book 286, P521 on April 2, 1906 we have Andrew T. Van Dyke and Sylvester Van Dyke buying this land from the Eura Hill estate. On Aug. 9, 1909 Wilson Blackwell and wife, and W.P. (S?) Blackwell and wife sell to Catherine A. Millette the lot, #10 West Broad St., roughly 60 ft. by 159 ft. by 92.5 ft. by 199.5 ft. A Mr. Millette ran a "hack" business on Railroad Ave. at the former Jack Blackwell's Garage. Mrs. Millette was Emma Slugg. Maybe Catherine was a daughter? I think of this as the Paul Cutter lot. I believe the house was built in 1914. Or maybe this is not this Millette. I have dates --- Stockton W. Millette 1895-1925 and wife Catherine 1889-1928 --- but that seems to place them as pretty young in 1909.????

On July 7, 1947 we have J. Donald Guinness (Book 982, P399) buying an irregular lot (corner area) from Lester Van Dyke (an heir of the above Sylvester) and other heirs of Andrew T. Van Dyke. On Jan. 17, 1952 (Book 1178, P581) Don bought a small piece of land in the rear, 60 ft. x 80 ft., on which had sat a small shop for some years before it burned, so the present property of Mr Guinness is a rectangle about 117 by 160 feet.

I hope I have added some facts to your knowledge of this corner area; there is still room for more research to clarify all the ownerships!

About 1982 Mrs Guinness sold this # 2-4 W. Broad property. Next chapter, we'll start out with the property of Richard Edling at 14 W. Broad Street.

[All references as (Book 1178, P581) are deed books (volumes) found in either Mercer County Courthouse, Trenton, NJ; or Hunterdon County Courthouse, Flemington, NJ depending on date of selling or buying, EBG J

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XIV - #14, #37 W. Broad (HVN 12/23/76)

#14, #37 W. Broad

This chapter discusses the history of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Edling, 14 W. Broad Street. The Centennial Address of July 4, 1876 recalls the first home as "long, low one story house in 1776, unknown owner. The earliest deed I could find in Book 11, P175, Hunterdon Co. tells of several owners. A John T. Blackwell and wife Susan or Sarah owned it before 1795; on Sept. 4, 1795 they sold it to Rev. John Blackwell (same one discussed at length in previous chapter on Guinness's house). Did Rev. John live here??? Rev. John sold it to Hannah Vannoy (who'd lived in Lawrenceville) for \$200 on Dec. 22, 1804. You will recall in the previous chapter on Guinness' that Dr. George Whitefield Case was the neighbor on all three sides of this particular lot in 1804 and on. Hannah Vannoy owned this 82.5 ft. x 198 ft. lot until 1813; Book 25, P264 shows that she sold it April 15, 1813 to Abraham Servis and wife Hezia, who on March 9, 1816 sold this same lot to Benjamin Price, who'd lived in Amwell Township. The price had gone up \$50.

From various recollections, we learn that Benjamin Price tore the existing house down around 1830, and built what seems to be the very oldest part of the present house --- the high walk-in cellar (on the front), the two rooms on each of the first and second floors. Careful examination of the internal walls show when future additions were made by a later owner. The only other information on the Prices I have is from the first census, 1830, available for research at the Hunterdon Historical Society, Flemington, N.J. He was in his sixties and she in her fifties in 1830. There was no record of children for them (or at least living at home then).

The next record I have, Book X, P574 is a deed of 1853, showing that James S. Blackwell, deceased, owned this lot. Another of 1860 shows that his widow Elizabeth H. Blackwell may have owned this lot then.

From a Hopewell Herald article I get the following information about a family greatly respected and loved by many Hopewell residents --- Doctor Miller. Dr. John Albert Miller (1841-1914) bought the practice of Dr. McDuffie. He "opened his office in the then residence of Ed. M. Phillips (the Hopewell House)". In Sept. 1865, he bought this house at 14 W. Broad St. John Albert Miller was born near Hightstown Sept 28, 1841. About 1853 the family moved to Burlington, N.J. He had an early liking for medicine; one of his best friends was a druggist.

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He was graduated from the Eclectic Medical College in Philadelphia in 1864 and took a P.G. in homeopathy. He moved to Rocky Hill in Jan 1865. In May 1865, he married Mary Rockhill. In July 1865, he came to Hopewell. Their children were George R. Miller, Miss Mary R. Miller, and Robert Patison Miller. Dr. Albert Miller enlarged the home to about the present square shape. A cistern in the cellar has a date of 1865 (presumably about the time the new addition was made). Dr. Alhert had his office in the full-height basement; one outside door opened immediately to this floor. The family led a highly social life; someone has told me about the many dances held there and you can imagine what it was like with the two boys and the girl! For five years at the end of his life, he was physically incapacitated; He died March 8, 1914, seventy-two years five months and ten days old. Since son Robert P. Miller also was a doctor, the town was well blessed with the services of these two doctors. Dr. Robert P. Miller (1882-1936) married presumably around 1911(7); at least he bought a 67 ft. x 156 ft. lot directly across the street (#15 W. Broad St.) on Oct 3, 1911 (Book 339, P379) from Sarah E. Holcombe (she was "Sally" Drake Holcombe, Charles Drake's daughter, the owner of the Holcombe house); on this was built the lovely home, now occupied by Bob Miller's daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. James Kettle (known affectionately as Jim and Billy!). Mrs. Edna Miller was born in 1884 and died in 1974. As of this writing (1985) this lovely home is for sale. Jim and Billy will be greatly missed by this town.

Back to 14 W. Broad St. After Dr. John Albert Miller died in 1914, his widow Mrs. Mary R. Miller continued to live here. There were then two apartments there, and "Billy" remembers Mabel Savidge and husband, and Ollie and Bill Wert living in them. In 1923 Oliver W. Titus became the owner. I believe he lived on Columbia Ave. then. His daughter Sadie Titus --- Mrs. Clifton W. Blackwell then, owned the property until 1943. Mr. and Mrs. Clifton W. Blackwell had three children, well known here today (Mrs.) Anne B. Edling, Mrs. Helen B. Hortman, and (Mrs.) Olive D. Abbott. Richard and Gladys Edling bought the property on July 29, 1943 and still have a lovely home there; their son and family has an apartment in this home. Richard was a druggist here for many years, and Gladys taught school in Hopewell Boro; when she retired I was hired to finish her year, and continued until I resigned to raise my children.

Just one more bit of information. Between Dr. J.A. Miller's home and that of the Blackwell's (Mary Blackwell was Mrs. Wilmer Moore who died recently) there was a lot which the two adjacent owners decided to buy. The owner was George J. Basco who sold the 'one half lot' to Mary R. Miller in Aug. 1920. This accounts for the large frontage today of the Edling's lot ----- "85.5 ft., actually 90 ft. plus 45 ft.", which was written by a surveyor on the back of a paper in one of Mrs. Guinness's deeds.

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Since this chapter is short, I will now add the little information I have on the house mentioned in the Centennial Address --- today's (1976) Casual Shoppe, 37 W. Broad St. Dean Ashton states that in 1749 Obediah Seeley occupied it. The Centennial says he was there in 1776, and that he manufactured spinning wheels there. It was then a hat shop. Then a STILL house --- more than likely that of Benjamin Blackwell; then a private residence. In 1876 Daniel Housel owned it. This man owned much property in and near Hopewell. It may be that during his ownership the style of the house became more Victorian than OLD. The present owner, just isn't convinced that the house is so old. Really, only the cellar construction, again a full story from the rear, shows immense thick walls that might date back to 1776. In the late 1880's Wm. Golden's widow lived here. A John Howard Dilts lived here a long time; I remember collecting his monthly newspaper bills there in his back office in the late 1920's and early 1930's. He was our town tax collector. On May 13, 1932 it was sold to Theo C. Veefkind, B695, P224.

The present owners (1980) are Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Vandewater. Betty owns and runs a delightful dress shop here; there is an apartment on the second floor. It's outside appearance is somewhat different from that of the 1920's. There are still inside the shop, beautiful fireplace 'fronts' of marble.

I am sorry that I do not have more deed proof of ownership; I simply have not gotten to it yet.

Also Mr. & Mrs. Vanderwater's deed to this property were destroyed in a fire in her home in Sargentsville and she had not gotten copies as of this writing. As of 1986 it has been sold by the Vanderwaters.

In the next chapter I'll disclose what I know about the history of the present Hopewell House.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XV - # 46 - 48 W. Broad (HVN 1/6/77)

46 - 48 W. Broad

We now travel to last of the five houses named in the Centennial Address of July 4, 1876. It is a more controversial location. The Centennial states: "the first house stood on the west side of the first Baptist Church within a few feet of where E.M. Phillips hotel now stands. It was owned by one Hepburn, and occupied by Nethebinak Stout and Josepll Hough, and was used as a cake and beer shop". Dean Ashton, Russ Riley, and many others in town believe that this is the house at 62-64 W. Broad St. on the west side of the creek. However, I believe the above refers to a house that stands (or one that might be gone but was on this site) at 46-48 West Broad St., the Hopewell House of today. First, I believe that the writers of this speech in 1876 would have stated the house at 62-64 as the one if it were here at that time and I am certain that 62-64 was standing there in 1876. Also, I believe we are very close to the ownership of the land for 48 W. Broad, as described --- 'a one Hepburn'.

'Within a few feet of Phillips Hotel'. Across the brook is much more than a few, feet! Ed M. Phillips' Hotel was very definitely the present Hopewell House. My very careful examination of the cellar of 48 W. Broad leads me to believe that this cellar IS the very early tavern. Remember there was no Mercer St. in 1776. I cannot find 'Nethebinah Stout' in the Stout history. And what a combination --- 'cake and beer' shop' It has been brought to my attention that "cake" may refer to pancakes. If so, the title just advertises food and drink. So this chapter is the history of the land immediately to the west of the 'Brick' Church (in an 1877 Hopewell Herald it was thus referred to).

Today, the lot has a frontage of 91 ft. and depth of about 254 ft., straight-edged on the Mercer St. side but on the east after going about 157 ft. north from the street there is an offset to the east of about 26 by 73 ft. The northern boundary (in back of the Somerset Farm store, etc.) is about 128 ft. wide. These figures were accurate in 1973; information so kindly furnished by Hopewell Enterprises Inc., the owners. (Deed Bk 1869, P582 Mercer Co.)

This above is considerably smaller than the 1909 plot, when owned by Abijah C. Mount, then sold to Hezekiah Mount Williamson (son of John and Lizzie Williamson). Other owners 1909-1940 and 1939-1940 were the Williamsons, John L., Lillie, Permelia (Mrs. Hervey Hill), H. Mount, and George. From 1940-1946 it was owned by Charles Ockleman. From 1946-1948 by Helen M. Palaschak, and 1948-1966 John, Lucy, and Helen Palaschak. Herman R. Espenhorst and Henry F. owned it from 1966-1970 when Hopewell Enterprises Inc., purchased it then or shortly thereafter. The five in this are: Wayne R. Lowe, Lee Weston, William R. Doremus, Margaret A. Henderson and Hendlow Associates.

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The above information was kindly given me by Mr. Lowe and Mr. Doremus when I first began 'to dig'. They were just as curious as I was to learn more about the early owners. They so kindly gave me a tour through the cellar. Again, it is fascinating historically. It is full height. Stone foundation. Some bark covered beams. Some rough hewn beams. A bricked and stone filled-in doorway that is next to what was undoubtedly a large cooking fireplace. It is obvious that that entrance was used in the earliest days. 'Old' glass in the cellar windows. 'Old' paint on window frames. A person with a vivid imagination could recreate many scenes of the old days here.

I wish to go back to the 1909 land. It had about 109ft. frontage on Broad St. The Trustees of the First Baptist were still on the east. Eure Hill did own on the northeast corner, in 1909 D. P. Voorhees's. The northern boundary was called "NEW STREET"; which would eventually become Model Ave., even though called Railroad Street for a time immediately after the Mercer & Somerset RR died and of course the tracks were removed and the railroad bed became the street. On the west from Broad St. there was: Mercer St. for 260 ft. and an offset (including today's (1977) Henderson's Real Estate office, etc.) and for 280 ft. along Mercer beyond the offset was written "N.E. corner conveyed by Wm. Hallowel to J.M. Ege and J.H. Titus" (that's, I think, Grange land and 66 W. Broad St.), then Joseph Moore Phillips (also Louis Lebow), then John Finney and Richard Savidge which is on Model Ave. You have to remember that NOT today's track. The M.&S.R.R. existed for a few years in 1870; someday I'll detail the deeds I have on it; it is said to have "run up" the present Model Ave. It is said that the former owner, John Blackwell, said that under his garage (on present Railroad Ave. right next to the Hopewell Valley News' office) were evidences of the railroad bed having been right there!! 1 Also, notice how much deeper a lot: 1973, 254 ft. depth as compared with 1909, 160 ft. plus 280 ft. plus the offset. It's about 18 ft. wider in 1909 than in 1973.

Let's Jump way back now. In a "Reminiscences" of 1810, this property (48 W. Broad St.) was spoken of as "rundown, owned by a Mrs. Gulick, who rented the best room to a Mr. Bull for a private school." Now we have our first deed (that we've found) of ownership. Bk 24, P323 Hunterdon County May 1, 1815, gives Edward Hepburn, wife Sarah, and Mary H., selling for \$300 to Ira Stout a lot 132 ft. by 165 ft. (deep) (2 chains by 2.5 chains) beginning at a corner of the Baptist Meeting House and on the Great Road (present W. Broad St.) to Princeton going along the road 132 ft.; then along Thomas Phillip's (remember I'll tell ALL about these Phillipses in the next chapter) land on west and north, and back along the Baptist Meeting House lot.

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This is the lot of the Hopewell House building and runs back to somewhere in front of (close to) the stores. Notice from 1973, 91 foot frontage; 1909, 109 ft. It is in 1815, 132 ft; so it includes the present Mercer Street. Hizea and Daniel Cook were witnesses; any connection to Phoebe Cook who owned land east of the 'Brick' church ??? Records show that Ira Stout got a tavern license at least in 1825 for this place. R. Ege in Pioneers of Old Hopewell describes on P276 and 277 material on this Col. Ira Stout who married Sarah Burroughs and lived on a farm east of Hopewell Boro, Gustav Johnson's farm (Keith Robertson's Book Knoll). He entertained lavishly there. When in 1821, the new turnpike (TURN-Spike) from New Brunswick to Lambertville was in the course of construction (that's 518 to Lambertville, and Broad St. east of Louellen St.) he (Ira) and his son, Simpson, fitted up the house in Hopewell now (1905) known as the Upper Hotel, and opened a 'public House'. I believe that either Col. Ira built this fine cellar or 'readied up' what may have been there, and they built the fine place that is shown in some very early pictures of the First Baptist Church at the Museum; it looks so different because it does not show the square-third floor as today.

In Book 32, Pt4, April 1A, 1821, Col. Ira Stout sells the same property to (son) Jacob Simpson Stout. At about this same time we have a deed for the purchase of land AROUND (north and west of) the 1815 or 1821 lot of the Stouts (Book 37, P381) showing Enoch Phillips (Thomas's son) as the owner. I also have a deed of 1795 showing this same land on the west 2 chains by 2.5 chains --- Hopewell House lot being owned by a Micajah Hart and wife Abigail. on the east boundary --- which IS this same Hopewell House lot --- is given "Sarah Hebron".

Putting together the Centennial "one Hepburn" in 1776; the 1795 formerly Sarah Hebron; and the Edward Hepburn of 1815 --- it seems that we may have the person(s) it took so long to find. It's almost impossible to find a deed for a person with no first name given. The deed of Ira Stout's gives us an Edward Hepburn. The 1795 deed gives "formerly Sarah Hebron" --- which according to Betsy Errickson, a lady of much more research knowledge and effort than I, is undoubtedly an old spelling for Hepburn. Sound it out; it is pretty close' Until someone proves this material wrong, I feel safe in assuming that "the one Hephurn" is 'found'.

Another deed Bk41, P385 shows Edward Hepburn buying land on 12-20-1820, in township of Trenton (Ewing today). Maybe this is where the '1815 man' moved??

The Centennial mentions "E.M. Phillips". This Edward M. Phillips is NOT related (closely) to Thomas or Enoch. Edward M. Phillips according to an old Hopewell Herald clipping, Aug. 28, 1916, was the proprietor of the West End House for twenty years. [This is the Hopewell House of today].

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He was respected by the congregation of the First Baptist Church. He bought the property in 1869, sold it in 1889. He made extensive alterations. He sang many times in the church choir. He closed the hotel during the time of a funeral. He donated money for the erection of the Presbyterian Church in 1876. He instigated winter horse races on the snow --- down Broad St.! He was instrumental in having a station placed there for the old Somerset Railroad by donating ground for this purpose. (southeast corner of Model and Mercer).

Mr. Phillips was born in 1832. Five years later he moved from Ewing Township, to Scudder Hoff's farm, Washington's Crossing. Early, he learned to handle horses. A Mr. McIlvaine (Ewing Station) gave him 55 acres; and he was a successful farmer at 17. He was a whistler, played violin, cello, viola, and the flute. About 23, he moved to Morgan Scudder's farm at Scudder's Falls. He married Mary Francis Lanning (soloist of the Ewing Presbyterian Church). He was the father of 'Mame' Phillips, a schoolteacher and later the 2nd wife of Louis Labaw, and Frankie, an organist and music teacher. Mr. Ed M. Phillips sold the hotel to Taylor Provision Co. in 1889 (when about 54 yrs. old) trading it for a farm in Germantown which four years later he sold to Taylor Provision Company, and became their salesman and general agent. In 1916 he was 84 years old and in good health. (This information is all from the clipping.)

However, my deeds show me some other dates; he could have been the proprietor of the other earlier owners?? Bk67, P287 shows that John Riley and wife Abigail sold the 2 chain by 2.5 chain lot to Vandermer Taylor and wife Anne on Mar. 21, 1866. The Taylors sold it then to Abraham C. Van Pelt on Mar. 1, 1867 for \$4200. A.C. Van Pelt sold it (Bk 93, P3821 to John Phillips and wife Mary, who sold it on Feb. 13, 1873 for \$6000 to Edward M. Phillips. Enoch Phillips was the owner on the west and north boundary. (Bk 81, P287) shows Enoch Phillips selling land in back of the 'front lot' on Mar. 28, 1871 --- land which extended to the land of the Mercer & Somerset Railroad. The late Wilson Blackwell bounded on the northeast. Joseph Moore Phillips and Enoch bounded on the west. On May 3, 1875 (Bk 96, P107) Zephaniah Stout and wife Abigail sold a small piece of land, 25-64 ft., to Edward M. Phillips --- this is about the same piece that is the northeast 'offset' today. This offset land had been owned by Rebecca Blackwell Dalrymple, Samual M. Dalrymple, Eure Blackwell Titus, and Asa Titus. The restrictions on this tiny piece were interesting. Edward M. Phillips was to maintain a "good and substantial seven foot (at least) board fence along the stone wall. Also on the east side there were to be no beast, animals, or fowl able to pass through ... if not done, this piece of land was to revert immediately to the (Baptist) Church." (during Zephaniah Stout's ownership of this land immediately to the north and east of this little lot.) Then (Bk 96, P109) Edward M. Phillips sells to Zephaniah Stout a 104 ft. by 12 ft. lot for a private road for Zephaniah Stout.

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So Edward got some land he needed to build his barn, etc. as he wanted; Zephaniah got a lane (road) into his house from Mercer St. (which street is there by this deed of 1873); this lane is the one to the rear of Somerset farms, it has often been used as the roadway into the graveyard. "It is owned by the Old School Baptist Church today (1986)", Priscilla Hunt.

Peter Van Fleet is said to have owned the Hotel about 1893. Mrs. Douglas Terhune, (Kitty Blackwell Terhune), remembers well that Peter V.F. indeed did run the H.H.; and her mother Etta Van Fleet (Golden), (Blackwell) did work there in the dining room. Martha Phillips Riley was said to have been born in 1863 in the Hotel; she was the daughter of John M. Riley (1823-1888) and Abigail (1823-1899). I'm sorry I have not found ALL the owners's deeds; but there are enough here for a beginner!

Next time --- John Hart and the Thomas Phillips family.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XVI - # 60 Hart Avenue, Hon. John Hart (HVN 2/24/77)

60 Hart Avenue, Honorable John Hart

Have you a TREAT coming ! Because in the 12-16, 1976 column (chapter XV), I was a little vague about a John Blackwell and wife Catherine, who had to have lived in late 1700's and early 1800's; and knew too little on Wilson Blackwell, who owned the Guinness house in 1855; two people called to help me out. When I visited one of them, I saw S apparently unrecorded deeds!! and learned so much about John and Wilson----- . SORRY---- You'll just have to wait.

How about investigating your attic? I'd be glad to see any old deeds you might find there! And if you have deeds going back some time on the house you own I'd love to get the information because my biggest aim to get a file card catalogue of EVERY house in Hopewell Baro, to be for public use in the library, and Museum. Just think how valuable that could be for researchers in 1990 and 2000! ! ! ! !

[I have just finished recording almost all my data in this card catalogue. Of course, I don't have every home in Hopewell ! But I do have a storehouse of owners and deed numbers on a large proportion of the older homes in town - at least enough names on many to get more deed research started. (1983)]

* * *

Honorable John Hart. The homestead at 60 Hart Ave. How are these intertwined with the Phillipses: Thomas, Wm. T., Joseph Moore, Esq., Wm. Imlah, Enoch, and Martha? The Centennial Address of July 4, 1876 says: "the next farm east was owned at the time i1776) by John Hart, one of those sterling patriots, whose name will ring in the pages of history for all times. The farm on which he lived is now (1876) owned by Joseph Moore Phillips Esq." Wm. Imlah Phillips (J.t1. Phillip's son) owned it in 1903. Harold, Marie and Herbert Farlee, owned in 1977, about 137 acres. This is now (1985) B.W. Johnson's and D.F. Bushnell's property; these people own Elmer Weart's old farm plus the 'heart' of the 'block' bounded by 518, Van Dyke Road, Featherbed Lane, and N. Greenwood Ave. extended north. These were once a part of John Hart's farm just north of the 'homestead' and in Hopewell Township.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

John and Francis Bealowski bought some of this land, including the home in 1942, selling seven acres in 1954 to Cleon E. Hammond, who in 1968 sold it to Kenneth W. Setton. Malcolm E. Dezner bought it in 1969, selling it to Carol S. and Robert B. Stewart July 31, 1970. They are the 1986 owners, owning just about 3 acres of this land. Perhaps you saw the recent full page magazine advertisement for the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow parked in front of 60 Hart Ave., plus the caption "The Hopewell, New Jersey John Hart Farmstead has been making history since 1742". Of course 'Hart Avenue' is more recent; Hart Ave was 'opened' in 1895. Access to the old home was through '**the castle**' land and/or from Broad Street; Lanning Ave. northward was the access road to J. Hart's home from W. Broad St.; then later access was from about Model Ave.

People of this area are generally very aware of this beautifully restored home where John Hart is believed to have lived --but what WAS THERE when he lived here? That's a million dollar question!!!! Ege in Pioneers of Old Hopewell states on P122 "the old mansion in which his large family was born and reared, is among the things of the past, not a vestige remaining except a few of the old hearthstones of the large fireplace ... " In 1876 and 1903 Ege was much closer to Hart's day than are we. The statement does not agree with the generally accepted concept of today!

In 1726 land was purchased from Robert Tindall and at this time "John Hixson owned the farm now (1901) owned by Mr. Wm. I. Phillips," who was Joseph Moore Phillips' son IP13 Ege). Hale's booklet, A History of the Old Presby Congregation ... (in the Museum) says that John Hixson owned 100 acres; this was given in the list of people who sued the Coxes on April 2, 1731. On page 108, Ege was presenting the petition concerning the need for improvements for the road from Marshall's Corner to Stoutsburg, 1723, and named Jabis Jarvis and Robert Tindall. The footnote on P107 gives this updating of the names "Jabez Gervas owned the Baptist parsonage farm (John Hoge's today), and John Parke and Robert Tindall ... (the land) ... lying between the mountain road (N. Greenwood Ave) and the road running from M. Montag's (corner of Pt.654 and Van Dyke Rd.) to the mountain. Wm. Merrill Jr. owned the railroad quarry farm ... (back of the Legion Hall) (1986)"

A footnote on Ege's P24 "George Corwine, father of Amos, born July 12, 1718, married Abigail, daughter of John Hixson, another of Hopewell's pioneers, who lived on the farm afterward owned by Hon. John Hart ... " There are no John Hart deeds available to show his purchase of this land. The Archives Bureau of New Jersey says that it has 14 deeds for a John Hart. But the only one for this area is for selling the mills, today's Hopewell Valley Golf Club.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

At the writing in 2-24-1977, I had not yet thoroughly investigated the significance of the properties belonging to Thomas Phillips (D 1820). Today, from T.P. and later deeds for his six children (1820) we do know, without doubt, of the majority of the land John Hart owned here (as Ege said), all the land from the light, on Broad St. and Greenwood, west and north, in the boro, and even north of same. These above deeds correlate with the lands mentioned in J. Hart's will of 1779.

The popular concept (and Ege also says it) is that Hon. John Hart owned all the land west of N. Greenwood Ave. and north of Broad Street. A word of caution on "popular". This word does not signify truth or proven; the information comes from stories circulated so long as to be assumed true. Cleon E. Hammond refers to this in the New Jersey Historical Commission Newsletter, Vol. 7, October 1976, No.2, in his article "John Hart, New Jersey Signer --- Setting the Record Straight". Quotes: " published misinformation. Errors being repeated, ... innocently enough from traditional sources, mostly written before 1850." These FACTS he includes "... year of his birth was 1713. He died May 11, 1779 .. [NOT 1780 AS ON THE MONUMENT east of the Old School Baptist Church.] . gave land for the Baptist Meeting House in 1747 and was never of that faith ... " " ... his sons largely carried on the operation of his three farms" (referring particularly to Rev. War times) ... "he did absent himself from the Assembly to attend flis wife. .ill for fully a week " " ... at this time his children were mostly married adults " "... He could not have hidden for several weeks in the Sourland Mountains in December without catching pneumonia ... several days at most ..." "... home ravaged by marauders 'and hunted like a noxious beast' are melodramatics" ... Cleon E. Hammond did live many years at #60 Hart Ave. He and his wife worked very hard to 'restore the home to it's former glory'. Because of the many owners before him, the place needed their loving care and hard work. Hammond is about to publish a book on the life of John We are looking forward to it eagerly and hope 'it will set the record straight'. [The Book, John Hart, the Biography of the Signer of the Declaration of Independence, for sale at the Hopewell Museum.]

Let's so back to "not a vestige standing ... few hearthstones ..." and "... John Hixson and at least Abigail lived there about 1726 ... " and think a minute. The Hixsons had to have a home to live in. Early homes were often log and often stone. If this were the Hixson's home, it seems possible to believe that the western stone wing COULD date from the earliest time. Today, the hearthstones are literally in the path to the spring (and the old springhouse). And a millstone, dug up by Cleon Hammond in the ground out back of the house, is now a part of the rear outside patio floor. And John Hart did own all or part of two mills (Golf Course and Rocky Hill). We do know that in 1905 there was an account in the Hopewell Herald of the one hundredth anniversary of the REBUILDING of the house.

That says that in 1805 the home was 'rebuilt'; I know Thomas Phillips did it then --- he owned this land then! The way the center brick walls are 'spliced' into the older stone wall --- the east side of the stone section --- 'suggest' that the stone part 'might' be John Hixson's.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

But because Ege says 'no vestige standing' we must be openminded and say: "perhaps it all dates to 1805".

The eastern wing of the present house was built much later (about 1877 ?) by the owner Joseph Moore Phillips for his son William Imlah Phillips and his growing family. There are six or seven small rooms in the west stone wing. You do wonder if this were enough for John Hart, his wife, and his twelve children; it seems logical to assume that he built a 'center' section for his growing family. BUT, it is amazing how small are some of the earliest houses. There is a fine picture of the 'Hart House' in the New History Atlas of Mercer Co., 1875, (in the Museum I think), which shows only the west wing and today's 'center house'. And one more detail --- Susan Weart accepted John Hixson's ownership of this John Hart land --- and she did not always agree with everything Ege said! Miss Susan lived in this house at one time, too!

The Hopewell Museum has a Hart - genealogy prepared by Murray. Some of its information is helpful here. A John Hart born about 1595-1600 lived in England, migrated to New England in 1635, then to Massachusetts, then to Connecticut where his sons were born. The Hart line goes BACK thirteen generations to Henry III (1216-1272). In 1650 John Hart moved to Newton, Long Island and died in 1671. A later John Hart (1636-1712) married Mary Hunt; their children were John, Ralph, Nathaniel, Joseph, and Edward. The last named son, Edward, married Martha Furman. (Hon.) John Hart was their son, as were Edward and Daniel; his sisters were Martha and Sarah. (Hon.) John Hart married Deborah Scudder about 1721. Deborah Scudder was the daughter of Richard and Hannah Peed Scudder. They (John and Deb) married about 1740. Could this be when (Hon.) John decided to buy land in Hopewell??? I believe he purchased land here in Jan. 1742.

I will name their children in order of their birth (1742- 1765) and then give each one's age at the time of the Rev. War (1776), and also his death in 1779. (All are approximate with no consideration given to months and days);

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AGE(1776)</u>	<u>AGE(1779)</u>	<u>MARRIED TO</u>
Sarah	34	37	Wickoff
Jesse	32	35	Martha Mattison
Martha	30	33	
Nathaniel	29	32	Elizabeth Stout
John	28	31	Catherine Knowles
Susannah	26	29	John Polhemus
Mary	24	27	died at 30
Abigail	22	25	
Edward	21	24	Nancy Stout
Scudder	19	22	
Daniel	14	17	Margaret Bunn
Deborah	11	14	

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

That's the twelve! I gave the above for several reasons. John Hart was a relatively (for that day) mature person when he married in 1740(?), 26 years old. His wife, Deborah was near 18 when married --- mature when you consider so many girls married before 16. In John Hart's years of working in this state for the development of a FREE nation, before the war, he was in his prime --- most of his children practically grown; even in 1776 only Deborah, his last child, was young --- eleven. Boys of fourteen and nineteen (Daniel and Scudder) would have been quite man-like.

John Hart traveled so much. Considering the condition of the roads (Ege P42, 117) "merely bridle paths winding through the forests" ... "horse path ... was often obstructed by fallen trees, streams not bridged and often impassable ... ", described thus for early 1700's but only a little better by 1760-1770's, even a healthy, hearty John Hart must have wearied greatly with this constant traveling. It must have begun to 'tell on him' by the time of THE WAR around Hopewell. In June 1778 when Washington's army spent a couple days on Hart's farm and "Golden's Ridge" .. Hon. John was 66 years old ! (depending on his given birthdate, 1712? If born in 1713, 65 yrs.) This was also less than one year before he died, May 11, 1779!

* * *

Between the printing of the above and the next chapter, I have received a letter from Cleon E. Hammond, which I appreciate as being wholesomely constructive. Cleon Hammond is the author of John Hart, the Biography of the signer of the Declaration of Independence, published by Pioneer Press, Newfane, Vermont, 05345, soon to be ready for sale at the Hopewell Museum (perhaps already --- since my writing date and printing dates are often far apart !).

I have the copy of the newsletter if anyone wishes to read the entire article. I was unaware that the previous Murray genealogy may be incorrect. We eagerly await his book. (published 1977).

A Hopewell Herald clipping, in a scrapbook belonging to Mrs Permelia Hill, dated 1905, is copied as follows:

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

"The residence now occupied by Wm. Imlah Phillips on (60) Hart Ave., is one hundred years old this year, having been built in 1805."

"In the way of a centennial celebration Mr. and Mrs. Phillips will entertain the Phillips' family on Thanksgiving. Prior to the farm coming into the possession of the Phillipses it was the homestead of the Hart family and Hon. John Hart, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, resided in a house which stood in front of the present substantial brick dwelling during the revolutionary times."

"The first Phillips occupant of the place was Thomas Phillips, the great grandfather of Wm. I. Phillips."

"The spot is indeed a historic one and worthy of an anniversary of magnitude."

.

* * *

I have a deed which shows that Thomas Phillips bought this land in 1785. His son (one of six children) Wm. T. Phillips owned this land; then his son Joseph Moore Phillips; then his son Wm. Imlah Phillips the one referred to in the above clipping of 1905.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XVII - # 60 Hart Ave., and The T. Phillipps Connection (HVN 5/5/77)

60 Hart Avenue, and The T. Phillipps Connection

Let us continue the "Saga of John Hart and the Phillipps family. We know that Thomas Phillipps rebuilt the 'homestead' in 1805; how much is original (J. Hart's home) is uncertain. The last chapter was Washington's armies 'occupation' of his land and the Golden's farm in June 1778. Then comes his death on May 11, 1779, after several months of 'decline'.

This brings us to his will. The Archives Bureau said that it is now so fragile that it isn't handled today! The abstract of John Hart's will can be found in "Abstract of Wills", N. J. Archives, Vol. 34, Vol. 5 1771-1780". (Hopewell Museum):

"April 16, 1777 (He died 25 days later). Being old and stricken in age ..."
(Those words say so much!) "... to eldest son Jesse, the house and lot I lately bought of Benjamin Stout Jr. with 79.25 acres including John Hobbs, the Meeting House, Benjamin Stout Sr.'s lot, out of which quantity their lots are to be subtracted. Also 10 acres and 39 perches of woodland joining the land of Widow Randle."

WELL, so far some brand new information --- and questions -- Where are these lots? The Meeting House is on Broad St.; doesn't it seem that John Hobbs and the Stouts are also in that area? One deed associated with the Guinness property history, gives one adjoining landowner as "Hoffs" --- maybe Hobbs??? - - southwest but closer to the church. "Widow Randle" we'll meet later. In the early day, many people owned a separate wood lot for obvious reasons --- WOOD - - to burn or build with.

Will continued: "His son, Nathaniel, was to have the plantation on which I live of 193 acres." [First concrete knowledge of homestead plantation. This land is about from the Amoco gas station on W. Broad St. to about #2 Louellen St. (1977 Mrs. Robert (Leona) Fetter).]

"Pay to Daniel when of full age ... 500 pounds."

"Pay to Deborah when 18 ... 300 pounds ... and she is to have the negro Hannah ..."

"Daughter Sarah Wikuff ... 100 pounds."

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

"to Edward, the one hundred acres whereon Nathaniel lives . . . and he is to pay 15 pounds a year to educate Mary Hart, daughter of son John til she is 18, in case the father doesn't provide . . ." [definitely Farlee land; north of #60 Hart Ave. house.]

[79.25 plus 10, plus 193 acres, plus 100 acres equals 382 plus acres for John Hart owned at his death ...]

"To sell his two-thirds share ... Rocky Hill mills ..." (his son-in-law J.Pollemus owned the one-third).

"The executors: Jesse Hart, Nathaniel Hart, Edward Hart, (three of his sons) and his brother's son, Levi Hart."

"Witnesses: Jared Sexton, Andrew Barton, Jesse Pettit" ... (Andrew Barton is mentioned as an easterly neighbor of the Homestead lot, later. The Sextons are numerous in Ege's book. Two Sextons ran the first drug store in Hopewell in about the same location as today. Two WOMEN, too! P247, Ege, tells of Susan and Sarah Sexton, daughters of Wm. Parke Sexton, a grandson of Judge Jared Sexton, who after selling the homestead" (the land is east of Stony Brook, north of Wm. Kirkendall's on Stony Brook, and west of Van Dyke Rd. north and south of 518) "removed to Hopewell and started the first drug store here, which they managed for some years before they were married" (in the late 1800's).

Will: "Inventory by Nathan Stout and Jared Sexton" (A Nathan Stout lived on the 1978's Dr. T.P. Cortelyou farm.)

From an inspection of the will, we learn of his owning almost 400 acres, and 900 pounds (money) left to some of his children. That indicates a 'man of money'. He leaves his children well cared for --- three sons each had a farm and others got money. YET, ALAS, the bronze memorial plaque in front of the homestead suggests he died "a poor man". HOW CAN THAT BE??

And the children moved from the area within 10 years. WHY, when left so well provided for? The deeds show that much of what we believe to be John Hart's land was sold "through the sheriff" --- thus it seems he may have had many debts when he died.

Let's go back to the land John Hart owned. How can we know what it was ? Ege has given us some clues. Ege says on P121 that Professor Edgerley's land was John Hart's. On P148 he says that Francis Blackwell Jr. (born in 1746) married Elizabeth Hart, the daughter of Ralph Hart and granddaughter of Major Ralph Hart. They bought it on June 26, 1786 from Wm. Seaman. This land lies north of Hart Ave., east of Farlee's farm, and west of N. Greenwood. Francis Blackwell sold 133A to Moses Hart on April 22, 1791. Moses Hart lived there until his death on June 3, 1812 (Ege P152). [In 1977, the 'castle' was owned by Craig Miller. In 1981 it was and is owned by Phillip J. and Sally Roberts, and is 74 N. Greenwood Ave. The 'castle' was built about 1905 by Webster Edgerley.]

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

And I know now that a Wm. Dallas owned much of Guinneses; That John Blackwell bought it. But when did Wm. Dallas buy it? Before or after John Hart's death?? There are many, as yet unanswered questions!

Let's get to the Phillipses. Remember that Thomas Phillips rebuilt 60 Hart Ave. in 1805. When did he get it? Who was he? You can find much more material on this family in the "The Genealogical and Personal Memorial of Mercer County, N.J. Vol. 1 & 2" by Francis Bazley LEE, P53. Phillips means fond of a horse from, "philos hippos"! The family can be traced back to the 1100's in Europe. Of importance now is; Theophilus Phillips (#25), born in 1695, had as his son (Capt.) John Phillips, born in 1721. This J. Phillips' oldest son was Thomas Phillips who married Catherine Phillips (not of the same family). His six children were: William T., John, Ephraim, Elijah, Enoch and Sarah. Other than material previously mentioned, I know that Thomas had a tannery somewhere on the Hart farm and near Broad St. And he died on June 20, 1820. Without A WILL! So we learn of what land he owned because it is written in every deed as his six children tried to settle his estate --- from 1820 to 1822. And we learn that sometime after John Hart's death, he becomes the owner of the homestead of John Hart, plus more.

Let's be specific: Information is recorded in Deed Book 32, P488, Beaver County, Pa. The same material is in Hunterdon County Court House, Book 30, P381, Book 32, P488; Book 33, P295, also P468, also P470 & Book 37, P381. The several early deeds show that Thomas Phillips owned SIX tracts of land which gave me one 'harry of a time' to locate. Eventually, after the six children 'jockey back and forth' with money for some and land for others, within two years time (!), we end up with Thomas Phillips' land in 'toto', joined together, properly THANK HEAVENS in one huge piece, and then --- divided between Wm. T. Phillips, Enoch Phillips, and Sarah Phillips, who is the wife of Joseph Moore.

Let's go back, just as I was when I learned of those six tracts, in deeds dated soon after June 1820. SUFFER WITH ME as I tried to put these six pieces in place.

Tract (Piece) # 1. It contained 194.74 acres. That's close to J. Hart's 193. It 'starts' on the north side of W. Broad St. on John Lamson's land or Amoco Station area, goes east on Broad St. 1386 ft. to about the intersection of Louellen and W. Broad. (Remember that location in Guinneses, Dr. Cases 1804 deed?) Now it goes north (about parallel with, N. Greenwood Ave.) for 6184.2 ft.! That's over a mile! That includes Louellen St., Model Ave. RR land, Hart Ave., 60 Hart Ave., and Farlees' Farm, and (maybe more). There is no question --- this is John Hart's homestead, which he left to son Nathaniel Hart!! The slight difference in acreage is easily accounted for: surveys in 1820 always showed a little more acreage than the same surveyed land of 1750 or 1779.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

This same tract one mentions a gully on the southeast corner. Once there was a 'small' stream running between 75 and 79 W. Broad St., across the road, and into the brook; even true in 1877; it must be gone or piped now. In this same southeast corner is a neighbor --- Jesse Hart! In 1822 it reads "to within Benjamin Blackwell's fences" and "late Jesse Hart" Another neighbor along the east is "Barton, formerly Wm. Simmons".

When the 6184.2 ft. side stops (along N. Greenwood Ave.), the boundary goes west 1351.68 ft. along Widow Randolph's line. (Remember Widow Randle in Hart's will?) Then it goes south along the Golden's land back to Broad St., which corner in 1785 is called David Stout's and in 1822 is the late Moses Hart (remember Hoge's land, 153 W. Broad St.?)

This tract was bought by Thomas Phillips from the High Sheriff of Hunterdon County, John Anderson, on May 6, 1785. How did John Hart's land get in 1779 from Nathaniel to a sheriff sale in 1785 --- Just six years after John Hart died? Two possible reasons --- either debts were owed to Thomas Phillips or debts were owed to others and these 'produced' a sheriff's sale.

Tract (Piece) # 2: Five years later, in 1790, Thomas Phillips again buys at a sheriff sale 35 acres. The bounding owners were John Blackwell on the south, Thomas Phillips on the west, Francis Blackwell on the north, and a 2 rod road on the east. This was hard to place precisely until I realized that the south boundary was exactly the same measure as the north boundary of Dr. G.W. Case in 1804!!! So, we could place this 35 acres. It extended from just south of Model Ave. to just north of Hart Ave.! and touched the 194 acre tract about 200 feet north of Broad St. and extended to about the Hopewell Township boundary line. The two pieces fit together and it took over one year to realize that!

Tract (Piece) # 3: Another five years later, 1795, Thomas Phillips buys a small tract, one and a half acres on Broad St. from Micajah Hart and wife Abigail. One tantalizing factor is that NO WHERE can I find a Micajah Hart. !! On one deed the owner at this spot gives Jesse Hart. Later deeds, give Micajah Hart and wife Abigail. It is so strange that I can NOT find any Micajah or Abigail in the Hart genealogy. Jesse was Hon. John Hart's son. Could it be Jesse's son and daughter in-law who moved away too quickly to get on records or deed, or any other relative strange but quite likely

Let's look at the land. It is where Jesse lived in 1785! It goes from the intersection of Louellen and W. Broad EAST to 'Sarah Hebron's land' --- Sarah Hepburn (?) --- and is the Hopewell House lot (!!) which Edward Hepburn sold in 1815 to Ira Stout!! 1 This tract was bounded in 1795 on the north by John Blackwell (remember Dr. Case in 1804), and on the west by Thomas Phillips. Now we've fitted two pieces to the east of the 193A. site!!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Tract (Piece) FOUR # 4: This is a three acre tract Amos Golden sold (left) to T. Phillips - a long rectangular piece which is up on the northwest corner of Elmer Wearts, and the Golden land.

Tract (Piece) FIVE # 5: This is an 1805 sale when George Case sold a piece of land near the graveyard to T. Phillips.

Tract (Piece) SIX # 6: This is a very long but thin stretch of land. At first I considered tracts 4 and 6 as completely separate pieces which I could not place. Then by luck as I started a little research on the Golden's, I came on a deed which looked like 'a cooking pan' with its long handle pointing eastward. And it was the union of tracts four and six! This union of four and six seems like the woodlot mentioned in John Hart's will !! This 'pan' fits somewhere near the northwest corner of the 193 acre tract and the east end is attached to Thomas Phillips' land. A distinguishing feature is a 'run' --- a stream on its entire southern boundary. Tracts four and six were obtained in 1805 and 1806.

This 'cooking-pot' land is now very clearly recognized on the pictorial representation in the deed book of the Elmer Weart's wife's sale of that property to Mr. Collins --- land west of town mostly north of 518 and is today the B.W. Johnson's and D.F. Bushnell's land --- where in 1982 & 1983 they have 'built' the most gorgeous Victorian mansion. The land borders also on Van Dyke Road --- once this part was Golden land.

Let's summarize: John Hart died in 1779. In 1785, Thomas Phillips buys the homestead and farm: 1790 the 35 acres; 1795, the one and half acre; 1805, the rectangle between the last two; and lastly some woodlot (perhaps the one mentioned in J.Hart's will) plus a long narrow rectangle joining the first woodlot and a piece Thomas wanted. Thomas rebuilt the Hart home in 1805.

Putting these six pieces together came about, only as I did the write-up on the Guinness (#2-4 W. Broad St.) property, and I happened about the same time on the deeds of 1822. Three deeds on April 15, 1822 show the total land that Thomas had owned --- how he had worked to make ONE unit! --- being divided thus: Enoch Phillips gets 23.08 acres --- bounding on W. Broad St. --- and 12.5 acres, this is the 'pan and handle' woodlots "up north".

Wm. T. Phillips purchases the "middle" lot. It goes about down Louellen St. thru Model to N. Greenwood, up to the Hopewell Township line, and includes 60 Hart Ave. It includes 75.36 acres. There is another 24.9 acre piece which Wm. T. Phillips gets; .it is the northwest corner of Farlee's farm, the rectangle, owned in 1941 by Edwin S. Boliton. A Hopewell Herald clip says Wm. Phillips bought the land at a sheriff's sale.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Sarah Phillips and her husband Joseph Moore buy the land, 109.58 acres, more or less the Farlee farm minus that northwest corner, Wm. T. Phillips wanted.

I hope you will try to draw these six pieces, put them together, and realize that through some 1822 deeds, we believe we have learned about a large part of the land Hon. John Hart owned.

Martha Phillips was Enact, Phillips' daughter. I believe Enoch "may" have lived at 86-88 W. Broad St. I know Martha lived there til her death in Sept. 1904. After Enoch's death, she spent much of her time buying back some parts of the land her father Enoch had sold after 18221 Particularly the land from the Presbyterian Church west to the borough line, and north to Louellen St. and 518!

Next time --- some TREATS I mentioned several chapters back about the Blackwells.

PHOTO clipping with caption - This was Corcoran's

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER VIII - Blackwell - Town ? (HVN 6/30/77)

Should our town be called Hopewell or BLACKWELL town? When I was growing up, I was aware of this family. After all, I live on BLACKWELL Ave. I knew Carrie and Alice Blackwell, who lived at 13 Blackwell Ave., the 1983 Carter's home. The side street is Lafayette; I recognized its significance only when I learned David L's full name --- David LAFAYETTE Blackwell, I knew the Hills and Blackwells. I knew Jack Blackwell, who had a fine garage on Railroad Ave. opposite the station. And there was the ticket agent at the station, Fred Blackwell, Norman's father. A girlfriend was Mary Blackwell (now Mrs. W. Peeck), David's daughter. And there was Kitty Blackwell, Leroy's daughter. But there were lots of 'non-Blackwell'; so I wasn't overly aware of the family.

BUT since starting the research, I've become increasingly aware of THE BLACKWELLS (not to take any glory away from the Stouts, Harts, Tituses, Drakes, etc.). Benjamin Blackwell owned practically all the land south of Broad Street. Stephen Blackwell owned practically all of Hopewell. John and Francis owned a long, narrow section just west of and abutting N. Greenwood Ave. --- all this in the late 1700's and early 1800's. Considering this I wonder why they didn't name this town, Blackwell. There are several towns of this name in England. There are: Lamberts -- ville, Trents -- town, Ewing -- ville, Stouts -- burg, Bernards -- ville, Phillips -- burg, Blaws --burg, and Furman's Corner. We were "Columbia" once, and unofficially "Baptist Meeting". I do wonder IF anyone ever gave it a thought?? Maybe, ... IF ... to "save the peace", a "safe, neutral name was chosen. You do know the silly story: Jonathan Stout calls loudly to his brother, "I HOPE YOU'RE WELL." From over the hill comes his brother's reply, "AM WELL." HOPEWELL, AND AMWELL.

You may wonder what brought on this attack of silliness.

Just this --- On Dec. 16, the column included a John Blackwell and wife Catherine, and Wilson Blackwell who were 'strangers' to me. Two readers, Miss Fannie Drake, a 92 year young lady in 1976, of W. Prospect St., and Alice Blackwell Lewis, the author of Hopewell Valley Heritage called with help I'll now explain to you.

I had a four hour visit with Miss Drake --- how the time did fly! --- two old Bibles, one 1811 and one 1818, a citation given when her grandfather, Enoch H. Drake became a Judge; two articles, one: the Drake family and its coat of arms, and the same for the Titus family --- and who was the author of these "clips" -- Alice Blackwell Lewis' AND FIVE perhaps UNRECORDED deeds!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Three related to the farm she was born on, owned by Johnson Titus Blackwell, shown on the 1875 Hopewell Township map (available at the Museum) as almost due east of Pennington, just south of the Penn-Mt. Rose Rd. Another related to the Stout land east of town. The BEST --- a deed for Guinneses 1789! --- that's the earliest we now know of, and now in the earlier column (chapter) --- and only ten (10) years after John Hart's death! All of these deeds are in remarkably good condition, especially considering their dates and age, 1775, 1785 and 1789. --- two hundred twenty-two years to one hundred eighty-eight years old!

Sometime after this and before her recent death, she gave most of these deeds to the Hopewell Museum.

The interesting features on the three deeds for the farm located "outside my territory": 132.5 acres which was owned by William Cornell Sr. before 1748; sold in 1748 to his son Wm . Cornell and wife Mary: sold in July 1755 to Francis Blackwell (his wife was Elizabeth Cornell); in 1774 they sell to Thomas Blackwell, their son. Eventually John Blackwell (who died in 1816) with wife Catherine lived there (the same John and Catherine mentioned in "the Guinness" chapter). One of their sons, Wilson Blackwell, lived there; as did one of his sons Johnson Titus Blackwell in 1875. His daughter Carrie (born there) married James Baldwin Drake, son of Enoch H Their daughters, Hillena and Fannie were also born there. The latter is the lady I visited. These three deeds are old, very well kept, but the most fascinating item was this: The May 1774 deed from Thomas Blackwell and wife Bethsheba, has at its end some important signatures. Most seeds when recorded in a court house have an extra paragraph stating that each seller has appeared before this 'Judge' and attest to the facts within the deed as being true. Routine procedure. BUT not this 'Judge'. The signature is "JOHN HART" ! And the two witnesses are his children ---- JESSE HART and SARAH WIKOFF ! They signed their signatures on this 203 year old deed --- very clear and readable today. Historically valuable. I was stunned when I read those names. I believe Fanny gave these later to the museum.

The Stout deed of 1785: Joseph Wilson, and Daniel Stout and wives sell to Richard Hunt and John Blackwell (D.1816) land that Col. Joseph Stout had owned. . will 3/29/1764 ... 32.25 acres . . . abutting land owners --- John Brinjon (Sp?) Daniel Stout, Drake, and a road; land up in the northeast corner of the Hopewell Township or just over in Amwell.

The BEST DEED I've saved for last. April 15, 1789. The owner of the land, William Dallas, had had a judgment against him in 1787. So, the sheriff of Hunterdon County, Joshua Corshon, advertised the land for sale. It included two tracts of land and was sold for 47 pounds on April 15, 1789 to John Blackwell. The two tracts are almost identical to Dr. Case's 1804 deed --- the large rectangle with "two front teeth" touching Broad Street.!!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Was this John Hart's land in 1779, at his death? At least we know that a William Dollas owned it in 1787; and that John Blackwell owned it in 1789.

And what is the difference? (Was this the land mentioned in the will of John Hart in 1779 with Jesse and the brick church and the Benjamin Stouts ? J. Hart died in 1779; W.D. owned in 1787 --- that's only nine years later that William Dollas had to sell this land !) The one-tract piece is larger, and the 'western front tooth' is much wider. There is still the gap between teeth --- that 82.5 x 198 ft. lot, now Edlings. That western 'tooth' is almost 200 ft. wider than in Case's 1804 deed! Checking this out with the Borough map --- I am certain we now have boundary of the early Baptist Meeting lot! Remember John Hart gave land for the building in 1747; the Church bought three-fourths of an acre more for the graveyard in 1769 from J. Hart. It is very possible that the east boundary of this 1769 purchase IS the west boundary of the 1789 John Blackwell purchase. Why is that so significant? This gives about 150 foot frontage for the First Baptist Church by 1769. You know --- or do you --- that there is no known copy of John Hart's deed of 1769 to the church? People kept telling me that Sam Hunt had it or knew of its whereabouts. Before his death, Sam told me that he had never seen it and did not know of its existence. I have found just two references to the deed, (it was the only one because J. Hart didn't 'give' it until the 1769 purchase): [See Cleon Hammonds book on John Hart for further info.] in the Church minutes of July 1769 at the Museum, and in a booklet, at the Hopewell Valley News and in the Hopewell Library, concerning the dedication of the John Hart Memorial, July 4, 1865. "... the invited guests went to the home of Joseph Moore Phillips (60 Hart Ave.) and at night were guests at Spencer Stout Weart's home (the Hunt House) ... where was displayed an old famiJy Bible used by John Hart AND THE ORIGINAL DEED from John Hart to the First Baptist Church ... in possession of Mr. Pascall, Philadelphia, a John Hart descendant ... " WHAT A FIND that would be if someone could follow that clue to the deed; it belongs in the Hopewell Museum with the rest of the Church records.

I need some help. These 1789 deeds (just 20 years after the Church deed and 10 years after John Hart's death) of John Blackwell and Case's 1804 --- each has a second tract I can't locate. Does anybody know where David Baldwin in 1789 and 1804 owned a four acre, very wide, but thin rectangler shaped plot, which was on James Hunt's line in 1789 and on David Hunt's line in 1804????

Let's now try to get some relationship clarified. Francis Blackwell (wife Eliz. Cornell) and Thomas Blackwell (wife Susannah Titus) were BROTHERS. They were two of the seven children of Robert Blackwell (wife Eliz. Combe); the only two to have children.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

This Robert (D1757) was the oldest of the twelve children of Robert Blackwell (D1717). He had two wives --- one was a Manning associated with Manning's Island --- Welfare Island --- Blackwell's Island. This Robert moved from N.J. to long Island in 1676. He was the ancestor of all (at least most of) the Hopewell --- "Blackwell settlers".

This makes Stephen Blackwell (1756-1831), Rev. John (1738- 1804), Francis Jr. (1746--) three brothers and also sons of Francis Sr., FIRST COUSINS to Benjamin Blackwell (1781-1857) (owner of Holcombe-Runyan home) and John Blackwell (D1816) owner of the "Guinness block". I can see clearly why Rev. John had the store there, and why he owned and sold "Edlings". Benjamin's son, Daniel, and John's son, Wilson, were also COUSINS. Daniel owned Guinnesses in 1853, Wilson in 1860. And Francis Blackwell owned the Edgerley tract in 1820.

* * *

I will now give as a help to genealogy searchers some direct Blackwell lineage.

Today's Hills, Wrights, and Boices: Robert Blackwell (D1717); Robert (D1757) wife Eliz. Combe; Stephen (1756-1831) wife Rachel Hunt (1752-1832); David Blackwell (1784-1883) wife Jemima Burroughs (1788-1832); Stephen (1808-1883) wife Permelia Van Cleve Blackwell (whose grandfather just happened to be Benjamin Blackwell); David Lafayette Blackwell wife Helen Baldwin Stout; daughter Francina married Joseph B. Hill, daughter Sarah married Harvey Boice. This Joseph B. Hill is our former mayor's grandfather. Hervey Hill wife Permelia Williamson, and Edward Hill, wife Leila Golden, are two of J.B. Hill's and Francina's sons.

The Sutphens: Rotiert Blackwell (D1717); Robert (died 1757); Francis (D1791), Rev. ,John (D1804); daughter Elizabeth married a Stilwell (much more in Ege's book).

Mrs. Jacques Voorhees: 95 years old in Jan. 1977, birthday in February: Robert Blackwell (D1717); Robert (D1757); Thomas Blackwell (D1777) wife Susannah Titus; Benjamin Blackwell (1756- 1831) wife Permelia V.C.; Daniel (1781-1857 ?) wife Eliz. Van Cleve; Jonathan Van Cleve Blackwell (1823-1883), wife Amanda Malvin Van Martin; Dora Malvina M. Blackwell married in 1880 William Edgar Jackson; Lillian Bain Jackson, born in 1881, married 1903 Jaques Voorhees. She lived with her son, Jackson, on a farm on Province line Road. She was a veritable gold mine of information on the "old days". (Their home now gone).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Fannie Drake: I will give the Drake line first. Captain Francis Drake (wife Mary Walker); Pastor John Drake (1655-1741) married 7/7/1677 Rebecca Trotter 17/5/16557); Isaac Drake (1687- 1756), wife Hannah; Isaac Drake (2/2/1718--- 1750), wife Ruth Martin; Isaac Drake (1744- ?), wife Susannah Hunt; Nathaniel Drake (9/8/1781 --- 1/3/18671, married 5/1/1803 Ufany Merrill (11/18/1784 --- 1/3/1832); Enoch H. Drake (10/31/1822 --- 4/8/1907), married 3/19/1851 Elizabeth Titus (more in Ege's book); their children were: Rachel Ufany Drake, Hallie Zeruah, Altha Adelia, Sarah Elizabeth; and James Baldwin Drake, wife Carrie Blackwell, children Hellena Drake and OUR FANNIE.

Her Blackwell line: Robert Blackwell (01717); Robert (D1757); Thomas (D1777); John (D1816) and wife Catherine Wilson; Wilson (1789-1864), wife Esther Titus (1788-1852; Johnson Titus Blackwell (1831-1913), wife K. M. Titus; Carrie Blackwell, husband J.B. Drake; Hillena and Fanny --- each named after a 'Hill' --- notice the first name, Fanny after J.B. Hills wife Francina. Miss Fanny showed me a quilt left to her; it had a center oak leaf design and a border flower and stem design. It had been made by Eure Blackwell Titus Hill (B1822-) and Rebecca Blackwell Dalrymple (1814-1895) two of Wilson Blackwell's children and residents in 1876 of #2-4 W. Broad St. It took them over two years to just quilt it! It must be about 100 years old.

Alice Blackwell Lewis: The first four of Fannie's are hers also. Wilson Blackwell's oldest brother was Thomas J. Blackwell who married Mary Polly Titus; Enoch Blackwell, married in 1831 Elizabeth Pierson; Joseph P. Blackwell married in 1858 Ada L. Drake; Fernando Blackwell III (one of eleven children) married in 1897 Jennie B. Cornell; they had eleven children who are all living at this writing (1977), one is Alice R. Blackwell, married Edward W. Lewis; their only daughter is Jane Cornell Lewis Grove, presently in N.Y. State. More information in Alice's book.

The genealogy of Mrs. Jayne Sked, Jimmy Blackwell and Mrs. Gerry Matthews, all living 1985 on Rt. 518.

*Robert Blackwell (01717)

*Robert Blackwell (01757) married Elizabeth Combes. *His son, Thomas (D1777) married Susannah Titus. *His son, John (D1816) married Catherine Wilson. *His son, Wilson (12/27/1789 --- 9/23/ 1864) married on 11/6/1813, Esther Titus. [Fannie Drake's bible said born 7/26/1788; Mrs Sked's 1786.] Incidentally great appreciation is due Mrs Charles (Jayne) Sked for this correct genealogy. Wilson's (1789-1864) son *Liscombe T. Blackwell (1815- 1895) married Susannah Drake (born about 1814-1898). This Liscombe T. Blackwell lived at Hogpen Corner (near Mt. Rose, Jack Rees' in 1977).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The last named Liscombe T. Blackwell had the following children:

Anna Rebecca (1839-1926), married Wm. B. Reed Esther (1841-1910),
married Jeremiah Van Dyke Elizabeth (1843-1847)
S.Emily (1846-1931), married Samuel B. Titus (D1886)
2nd marriage to J. Gilbert Leming
*Wilson (11/27/1848---7/25/1937),
married Emma Sutphen Nathaniel (1850-1865)
Susan Adelia (1853-1937), married Asa Leming
Eura U. (1855-1924), married F. Napoleon Reed
Wallingford P. (1860-1938), married Lucretia Herder
John P. , married Adelaide Anderson
Spencer , married _____

Wilson Blackwell (1848-1937), m Emma Sutphen 1851-1935
Their children were:

*James L. (B.9/5/1875---12/20/1963),
married Eva Van Dyke (b.?-1/20/1965)
George Wallinford (B.9/2/1877---12/17/1958)
*Elwood Purrington (B. 1/3/1879---11/1/1961)
married Mary Moore Servis (8/6/1882---1/16/1958)
Edgar Willis (B.7/6/1882---5/12/1960), married Ella Van Dyke,
2nd marriage Hannah Stout (widow of Harry Stout)
*John Sutphen (B.4/24/1884---3/19/1971), married Ruth Ann Sked
(he operated a garage on Railroad Ave.)
*David Spencer (B.2/11/1886--6/19/1970),
married Hellen Service (b.----6/23/1964)
*Mary Hopple (B.8/17/1888---),
married Wm. J. P. Sked (B.11/5/1886---6/20/1965)

Many of the above children were well known in the Hopewell area.

James L. Blackwell (1875-1963) had three children:

Clara B. (Mrs Herbert Rorer, Hardware store), Wilson B.,
and J. Liscombe B.

Elwood P. Blackwell (1879-1961) had three children:

Emma B.(Mrs Clarence Opie, Phillipsburg, N.J.), David S.,
and Edna B. (Funkhouser)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

John S. Blackwell had two children:

Pauline B. (Mrs George Voorhees) and Margaret B. (Chatten of Pennington).

David S. Blackwell had one child: Mary B. (Mrs William Peeck of Pennington). They once lived on Rt.518, and then W. Prospect St. Hopewell.

Mary H. Blackwell Sked had three children: Charles Wilson Sked, Herbert William Sked, and Robert Blackwell Sked. This Mary H.B. Sked, the only living child of the above, lives (1977) with her son Charles W. Sked, (This Mary has since died).

Charles has two children: Jo Betty Sked Johnstone, and Robert Garrett Sked. Charles' wife, Jayne, provided this accurate genealogy.

Please forgive me for not mentioning other descendants of the Blackwells; they'd fill a book --- one which a David R. Blackwell is contemplating!

The next chapter will be a listing of all 'histories' that I have of Hopewell. I guarantee you'll be surprised by one 1894 Hopewell Herald editor's description --- this was a mighty busy place in 1894 !

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XIX - Little Histories - 1664 - 1800 (HVN 8/4/77)

What was Hopewell Borough like in 1600? 1723? 1732? 1747? etc. I have several descriptions of the town to share with you.

Before the white man, the Indians had villages near here; I have read of no accounts of any village nearer than Stony Brook or Province Line. 'We' were such a small part of the 1664 Carteret sale to the West New Jersey Society; of the 1685 30,000 acre tract sale to Dr. Daniel Coxe; and the Bowdie purchase from the Indians in 1688. In the Pioneers of Old Hopewell, Ralph Ege names the first settler of the area (P141) ... but he lived just west of the borough on 'Golden' land!

1723

Ralph Ege describes a petition for a road in 1723, from Marshal's Corner to Stoutsburg --- so some of that is our Broad Street. Three of the signers' land may have been just-a-little in town; James Hyde (Heid, Hide) owned 200 acres -- - it is just on the east of town, south side --- East Prospect St., East Broad, and Keith Robertson's farm.

Jabis Jarvis (Jabey Gervas) owned 100 acres on the south side of Broad just west of Ege Ave. and was 153 W. Broad St.

Robert Tindall owned 300 acres, the later Golden farms, abutted by John Hart's land, and was on the north side of Broad St. west of the present Amoco gas station of Andy Monteleone. (1977)

1725-1730

Most Indians had left here.

1726--1732

Both Ralph Ege and Miss Susan Weart say that in these years the people who owned the land in Hopewell Borough were: John Hixson, James Ketcham, and Richard Ketcham. That doesn't say that they were the only three Families living here! And they don't say precisely what they owned. But Ege gives more clues. John Hixson owned the John Hart farm then. So that's much of the northwest corner of the town. James Mattison may have owned #19 W. Broad [the Holcombe house]; Mary and James Mattison did own land adjacent to the land of Moses Hart in 1772 and 1785, which land became known as the second Baptist Parsonage farm and 153 W. Broad St. S. Ketcham owned 'the ridge' southeast of town later, but I can't find clues about 1732.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1747

The 'Old School' Baptist Church was founded in 1715 by: Hannah Stout, Ann Stout, Ruth Stout, Jonathan Stout, Joseph Stout, Sarah Fitzrandolph, Rachel Hyde, Mary Drake, Also Curtis, Sarah Smith, Thomas Curtin and Benjamin Drake (copied from the Church minutes at the Museum). The organization was done at the Stout home. But in 1747 the decision was made to build the Church Building --- referred to as the 'Meeting House' --- on W. Broad St. at its present location. (Hon.) John Hart gave them the land (no deed available) which I believe had close to or less than 150 foot frontage on Broad St.

In Ege's book (P28) there is this description of the first church: "The meeting house is a square, old fashioned STONE building of some size ... there are hundreds like it ... plain high backed pews its square pulpit perched up high in one end ... its white washed walls and general air of rude and simple solemnity ... trees still standing before it ..." Notes from the church minutes: "Aug. 11, 1747 John Hart gave a lot of ground ... they went to work on the stones ..", ... "...by winter got it fit to keep meeting..." ... "Sept. 16, 1753, Zebulon Stout was appointed manager to finish the Meeting House ..."

So, we have one building in town --- a most substantial one! --- by 1747. There is a story J. Donald Guinness told his wife who related it to me:

"Whenever a First Baptist Church was built, a tavern was always built next door. They were 'WET' Baptists." (Hopewell House, #46-48 W. Broad, I believe was "the drinking fount" !)

1749

And there is at least one house in town, quote Baptist minutes "... 1749 the Church agreed to buy the house and a lot of 10 acres belonging to Joseph Disbrow for a parsonage ..." Rev. Isaac Eaton needed a home. The town is: THE CHURCH and THE PARSONAGE --- does it have a tavern?? Dean H. Ashton wrote in his unpublished manuscript that these three places were also here in 1749: the tavern (Hopewell House), a 'factory' (#37 W. Broad), a home (the above parsonage at #19 W. Broad St.). His wording is precisely the same as those in the Centennial Address. He gave no sources for the 1747 info; I have not yet found any. At present, I will "ignore" it.

With certainty we can say that in 1749 there was here: The Church and the Parsonage (No. 19 W. Broad).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1737-1750

Many early settlers left to go further north and/or west. Some would not pay the second time for their purchased land. From the information I have gathered, the Coxe heirs said that Revell, the agent, was supposed to have charged a yearly RENTAL and did not have the power to SELL the land!! That certainly was not the settlers idea!!

7/4/1776

The Centennial Address of 1876 states that there were in addition to the Church in the village: "a tavern", 46-48 W. Broad; "a home", 14 W. broad; "a house and store", 2 W. Broad; "a farm house", No. 19 W. Broad; "a factory and home(?)", 37 W. Broad. Also: a "farm house and Blackwell's store", 46 E. Broad St.; "Moses Hart's farm", 153 W. Broad; and "John Hart's homestead", 60 Hart Ave. That is eight houses plus Church in "TODAY'S Hopewell Borough". Figuring from 2-12 people per house, we have up to 100 people living in 'todays' town. In addition to the above there were three farms to our west: Ege's, Hunts and Goldens; four to the east --- all Stouts!

1779-1800

John Hart died May 11, 1779. He left his land to his three sons. Within six years, his homestead had been bought by Thomas Phillips. John Hart's son, Jesse, and a Stephen Barton had lived on the land just east of this --- therefore they lived somewhere from Broad St. between Mercer and the intersection of Louellen and Broad; north through Model and Hart Ave. Micajah Hart and Abigail lived in the area to the west of Mercer LIP to about Model. (Relationship of Micajah and Abigail unknown). On Jan. 13, 1779, Timothy Brush, Jr. advertised in the Trenton Gazette: for sale a store near Baptist Meeting. Could this be Guinnesses #2-4 W. Broad? Could Wm. Dollas have bought it? By 1789 Wm. Dollas "thru the sheriff" sold the Guinnesses-plus-land to John Blackwell, and wife Catherine. In 1795 Rev. John Blackwell owned and sold #14 W. Broad. In 1786 Francis Blackwell bought "the castle" land from a William Seaman; could W. Seaman have bought it from J. Hart's heirs? Moses Hart in 1791 bought this land (Craig Miller land in 1977) from Francis Blackwell, (our "Castle site plus").

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Stephen Blackwell (1756-1831) may have lived at this time in Ruggieri's, today's house (Ege P96: Chas. Durling in 1903 lived there) just on the north edge of the Boro., or in a house that once was at the "foot" of today's graveyard; just west of Ruggieri's brick house. In 1792 Roger Larison owned "lived(?)" #19 W. Broad St.; Benjamin Blackwell owned it in 1794. There was the school house in the First Baptist Church's yard --- about where John Ewing's grave is (Ege) and today that's about between those two huge buttonwoods east of the Church (cut down in 1981-2; only stumps left now --- too bad, but the long lack of sufficient rainfall undoubtedly led to their deaths in the 1980's.) The school dates vary 1782-1785 and/or 1790-1795. Between 1792-1795 the Church built a "WALL" in front of the Church --- better described today as a retaining wall from the church level to the very much lower road level. (incidentally Book 2, P179 Hunterdon County records show the incorporation of the First Baptist Church as 4/7/1798; trustees being James Ewing, John Blackwell, Nathaniel Hixson, Samuel Stout, David Stout, and Nathan Drake.) Hopewell Twp. was incorporated in 1798 and we were a part of it --- no borough yet.

What this period seems to show is a great deal of change in ownership, but no significant change in the size from 1776 information.

1810 - 1835

We do have an account of Hopewell Boro in 1810. A "J.B." --[see page 91, for identification of J.B. ---] but I'd bet on a Blackwell, (See page 91) [[wrong! John Boggs - later P_]] , wrote his 'Reminiscences' in a Hopewell Herald dated Jan. 25, 1894. These are the highlights: He remembers "the tavern on the hill, his uncle Benj. Blackwell's (#19 W. Broad), where he had a well stocked bar! He remembered "only one other house on that side, a small one occupied by one of Benjy's sons" --- (was that the Eaton's Academy schoolhouse, Monroe Stout's house, now gone OR #37 W. Broad, Seeley's of 1776 and Casual of 1976??). [incidentally I 'believe' that Monroe Stout's house and the Eaton schoolhouse MAY have been directly in back of #19 W. Bread's house. Within the circular part of the back driveway is a large raised, overgrown area. Foundation of these ??] "The house of Dr. George Whitefied Case (#2 W. Broad) was the best building in town. Next to it was Benjamin Price's" (#14 W. Broad) which he recalled was torn down about 1830, "then a building, a small dwelling, and a wheelwright shop owned by Benjamin Merrill". (Book 19, P245 Hunterdon Co., shows John T. Blackwell and wife Susan of Flemington (Rev. John's son) selling a lot on 4/11/1812 to Benjamin Merrill, carpenter, for \$105. The lot began at a corner of the burying ground, went east along Dr. Case's down to the Great Road leading from Baptist Meeting to Rockahill, back to the graveyard and up; being 198 ft. sq., containing 9 tenths of an acre (more or less #22 W. Broad St).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

It also states that John T. Blackwell had bought it from John Blackwell, wife Catharine in (5/1/1791). (Of course, B. Merrill could have been there in 1810 renting, or a person in 1894 can be forgiven for a slight error in time!)

"The old stone school was in the graveyard in 1816." He gave this startling statement. "In 1817 the First Baptist Church started SUNDAY SCHOOL in this schoolhouse, before the 11 a.m. church service. John R. Hagaman was superintendent". (This is 'startling' because we have been led to believe that this church did not believe in Sunday School.) [[annotation "X"]]

"Beyond the school was, of course, the Meeting House." "Next was an old rattletrap frame building" (#46-48 W. Broad). "A Mrs. Gulick'. rented her best room to Professor Bull for a private school." (The 1819 Baptist Church minutes show Mrs Gulick in charge of sweeping the church --- at \$11.50 a year! An Abraham Servis (lived at #14 W. Broad) in 1817, supplied wood --- \$4.)

"Beyond the 'rattletrap' was the creek. Beyond it was a tan yard," (Ege mentions one on John Hart's land???)

"And next a small dwelling of J. Phillips and family, and later Enoch Phillips" (since I know that Enoch Phillips did live at 86- 88 W. Broad sometime after 1822 --- could this be it OR is it nearer to Mercer St.?)

"There was a cider distillery erected by Benj. Blackwell on (is this Casual? 37 W. Broad) his farm just south of his tavern house". "There were 2 colored women as slaves, one at Benj's tavern and one at Dr. Case's" (Dr. Case was unmarried). He remembers these "children going to the graveyard school Isaac Golden's children, David Blackwell's children, S. and H. Stout, three Skillmans, four Stouts, Spencer Wert, two Jewells, James E. Leigh and his brother, Hannah Blackwell, and Elnathan Drake's younger children."

The town doesn't seem to have grown much --- Hopewell Village is small.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1822

Thomas Phillips died in 1820; his two children Wm. T. and Enoch Jive in town, His daughter Sarah Phillips, wife of Joseph Moore, owned just north of #60 Hart Ave. (part of Farlee's farm.)

This was also the year the First Baptist Church was rebuilt --- into the present BRICK building. I was curious as to why. Ege mentions the bricks being 'burned' (meaning made), at the Stout's house. But the Church minutes say SO LITTLE! "12/1822 the collection on the fourth Lord's Day ... benefit of Building committee" ... "2/15/1823 Mr. Boggs was appointed to circulate a subscription to raise money to pay for the building of the Meeting House..." "6/14/1823 ... arrangements ... building committee" "7/14/1823 ... paying for meeting house ..." and thus it goes until 1826!! Too bad the details weren't given. If you look at the back wall of this O.S.B. Church, you will see that it is mostly all old stone wall. It's quite surprising since a look at the Church from front and either sides shows BRICK walls.

1820-5

The Georgetown and Franklin Turnpike, 1820, (that's 518 West, Broad St., and 518 east) made condition of traveling more favorable. Mail now came by stage to Hopewell!! Before this each one went to Trenton to PICKUP his mail. The Post office was in 1825 at 46-48 W. Broad; Geo. Blackwell was postmaster. Up to this time the road south to Princeton thru Mount Rose was Factory Lane (Maple St. today). The only change seems to be some better roads and a post office. Things were slow in this area in the EARLY 1800's.

Let's continue with Hopewell Borough's descriptions next time.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Who is J. B. ? (AUG. 11, 1977 article.)

One correction on the column of Aug. 4, 1977. It seems that I should never bet! Find the section headed 1810. It was ages ago when I made my notes from "J.B. Reminiscences" from old Hopewell Heralds in the Museum. Recently, Mrs. Betsy Errickson told me that she believed "J.B." to be John Boggs, a son of Rev. Boggs, who was the Pastor of the Old School Baptist Church from 1807 for over 40 years. J.B. married Hannah Blackwell and moved west to Ohio and Kansas, Alice Blackwell Lewis in Hopewell Valley Heritage has a chapter on Rev. Boggs P80-83. [This adds a great deal of validity to all information in J.B. Reminiscences.]

Find Old RR Bed (Sept. 22, 1977 column)

E X T R A E X T R A

On Tuesday, Sept 20, 1977, in Cooks Alley, the sewer construction crew found the roadbed and ties of the Mercer and Somerset Railroad!! It lay directly in the sewer line path. It was about two feet below the surface of the road. The ties were about three feet apart, and were seen for about 180 feet, extending from the past edge of North Greenwood Ave. to about the western boundary of the Methodist Church. Thus, it was parallel to AND about 370 feet south of the present railroad tracks. For some reason it had been just covered over in this area of Cook's Alley.

In the 1870's, the depot for passengers was the building on the southeast corner of Mercer St. and Model Ave. --- the present 4 family apartment where Mr. and Mrs. Edward Lenz live. (41-43 Model Ave., 1977) The original depot was HALF of this building --the eastern half; the western half was built on later when Mr. Reid's residence. The 1875 Hopewell Boru map shows, and this finding indicates also, that this depot was BETWEEN the two railroad companies tracks. (correction page 92)

The Mercer and Somerset Railroad bought the land whereon these ties were just found, from Stephen Blackwell and wife Francis on Nov. 11, 1870! The land from North Greenwood Ave. east to Dr. Cortelyou's western boundary today is about 2000 feet and the price paid was \$1252! (Book 81, P123 Trenton Court House for this deed and many others relating to this shortlived Railroad.)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

** MORE CORRECTIONS **

About That R. R Bed (Oct. 6, 1977 column)

In the Sept 22, 1977's Hopewell Valley News in my news article about the digging into an old railroad bed on Cooks Alley was this statement: "Ed Lenz's house was the depot ... and was BETWEEN the two Re2ding and M&SRR tracks."

Mr. David R. Bellis, a former long-time Hopewell resident and very familiar with land surveying, etc., wrote me a letter saying that that was incorrect and gave me many reasons --- hearsay, from his own experiences, etc. --- which backed up HIS placement of the Railroad. He was correct; more facts, fun and surprises coming in a FULL report to be printed SOON! (mainly starting with chapter XXVI, page 115)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XX - J.B. Reminiscences 1810-1824

"1810" certainly did evoke some delightful response. A very lovely lady, Miss Dorothy L. Whitenack of Fairview Rd., Skillman, was extremely thoughtful; she sent me a copy of J.B. Reminiscences. The clippings were found in an old trunk that had been left to her mother by Dorothy's great aunt Phebe Leigh whose father was a brother of the James E. Leigh mentioned in the above writings. She sent these to me so that I could review them without going to the museum; how kind of her.

And I have received more material on the identity of "J.B.", whose descendants still live in Clyde, Kansas. Jon Danielson, the great-great-great grandson of "J.B." has given the following information on the author of the Hopewell Reminiscences of 1810.

Elder John Boggs was the pastor of the Old School Church from 1807-1846. The writer was his son, John Boggs Jr., who was born in Hopewell, N.J. on May 12, 1810. He married Hannah Blackwell in Sept of 1830. (The exact genealogy of Hannah is not yet clearly established.) Hannah was born Mar. 10, 1811 and raised in this area. There three children: John Newton Boggs (the great-great-grandfather of Jon Danielson), Wm. C. Boggs, and Charlotte Boggs. In the spring of 1835 they moved from New Jersey to New Burlington, Hamilton County, Ohio, where he followed the profession of teaching. In 1839 they moved to Columbus, Indiana, and there united with the Church of Christ. He began to preach at that time. In 1867 the elders in the Christian Church at New Bethel, Bartholomew County, Indiana, recommended that he be ordained as an Evangelist. By 1879 they were living in Kansas. There, he established the Clyde Christian Congregation at the Boggs schoolhouse in Oct. 1883. (He taught; remember that he was the brother of the two girls who taught our Female Seminary in Hopewell; three teachers in one family is outstanding.) He did this with the understanding that, when a church was erected in Clyde, the society would be transferred to that site; The Clyde Christian Church was built and dedicated.

Elder John Boggs, Junior, was an extensive traveler, also a voluminous writer, contributing many articles to the press. In 1888 (18 yrs. old) he made an extended missionary trip through Nevada, Wyoming, Oregon, California, Washington Territory, and Colorado.

He wrote four columns of Hopewell Reminiscences printed in the Hopewell Herald of Jan. 25, Feb. 1, Feb. 8, and Feb. 15, 1894.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

This was three years before his death on May 5, 1897. He and Hannah had been married for 66, years!! He lived to be almost 87 years old! Hannah died on June 22, 1905, ninety-four years old! They are buried in Mount Hope Cemetery, Clyde, Kansas. Jon Davidson further states "he is not sure who Hannah's parents were. There is an old family Bible that John had presented to Hannah, but we have never been able to locate it."

There is a possibility that she was David Blackwell's daughter. Maybe Benjy Blackwell was her uncle. Does anyone have material on this Hannah?

Because of the terrific amount of historical material in these four articles, we are going to print them. "J.B." had quite a sense of humor and a marvelous memory. Don't be misled by some information in the first paragraph; it will be seen as humorous by the end of the fourth article. He also states something I missed before: In 1814 (or thereabouts) Hopewell had twenty (20) white people living in this town, and two (2) negro slaves.

I hope you'll find his comments on cider drinking, etc., as humorous as I; same for horse racing at the track; the people who stopped July 4th celebrations; sneezing Jimmy Hunt; victims of intemperance; the progressive "singers", etc. There is really so much historical content in these four articles; we are so glad they were published in 1894 to help us understand our town.

HOPEWELL HERALD / Thursday, January 25, 1894

HOPEWELL REMINISCENCES

The first time the writer of this series of papers was at Hopewell, was in the spring of 1810. At that time the word indicated the name of a township, and the village now known by that name was town called Columbia. I did not stop at the tavern, although the sign was an inviting one, designed to commemorate Commodore Perry's victory on Lake Erie. I stopped half a mile west with Domine Boggs, who lived on the old parsonage farm and preached to the Baptist Church for forty years. The parson gave me a comfortable home while I stayed with him, and I found his wife the most motherly woman I ever became acquainted with. I found there, as part of a former family, two well-grown boys; their names were Wm. D. and Newton M. The former was born blind, and lived out his three score years and ten without ever seeing the light of the sun, or enjoying the manifold beauties of nature. He became quite a linguist, and was for many years an assistant teacher. His spiritual vision was all right, and he had very clean conceptions of the Son of Righteousness.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Newton, the younger brother became an intelligent young man and was married young to Miss Ann, daughter of Col. Ira Stout. His business was teaching, but his life was a short one and he died at his sister's, Mrs. Sarah B. Hagamans, in Stoutsburg. His disease was consumption; as also that of his wife a few years later. They, however, left two children, Joseph and Sarah, both of whom lived to have families, and decendents are still to be traced among the younger inhabitants. As the parsonage farm is to me kind o' headquarters, I may have occasion to refer to it several times.

One of the earliest remembrances I have of Hopewell is an occurrence which took place in 1814 at the close of the war. The people then, as now, had different views on that subject. As soon as peace was declared, the war party prepared to celebrate the event by a general illumination, of the town windows. The panes were usually 7x9 and never exceeded 8x10 inches. The candles were about half the usual length and tastefully arranged so as to represent different figures while burning. As the proprietor of the parsonage was a strong Jeffersonian Democrat, holding a chaplain's commission in the late army, he of course enjoyed the illumination to the full, especially as the Jewell and Golden families, who had houses in sight, were of the same political faith and order. "The Fourth of July" celebrations were usually of the most patriotic character: prayer, reading, song, oration, dinner, and toasts. The dinners were free to all who chose to partake. Sometimes the day was celebrated at Harlingen where the same order was observed, not forgetting the free dinner. They had a valuable educational tendency, teaching the people to set a proper estimate upon the liberties which had been won by their fathers on the battle fields of Monmouth, Princeton and Trenton and elsewhere.

The village then called "Columbia," had in it one tavern, owned and run by uncle Benny Blackwell, who on account of his gray hair, and the number of his grown-up children, was classed among the patriarchs. He had a well stacked bar in it, and the bar room was the place of resort for most of the neighbors. Only one other house was on the south side of the street, a small one, occupied by one of his sons. On the north side of the street, going west, the first house belonged to Doctor G.W. Case. It was the best building in the place. The doctor was a bachelor gentleman, somewhat eccentric in his manners, but quite distinguished in his profession. He was a great lover of good tea, and the ladies of that day knew exactly how to make it palatable. He was at that time considered a man of considerable means.

The next house was occupied by Benjamin Price who was about middle age, and taught school some of the time. He and his wife lived there a very retired life, neither of them attending church. The next place contained a small dwelling and a wagon-maker's shop, and was owned by Benjamin Merrill, wife and two children, James and Nancy Lennon. Mrs. Merrill was aunt to them and she raised them as well as circumstances would permit.

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Next came the old stone school house, which will be remembered by so many of your readers. I did not learn to say my ABC there, for I could read before I went to school, thanks to my home friends. But I do most distinctly remember my sense of mortification, when I had walked up to the teacher's desk and I said "Mr. Van Harlin, please to make me a quill?" The whole school laughed, and the teacher informed me that he did not make quills. That was in about 1816. About the same time, or perhaps a year later, the Baptist Church started a Sunday school, which was held in the school house in the morning, before the 11 o'clock church service. John R. Hagaman was the Superintendent, and I think it was well conducted, but for how long it was continued I am unable to state. Next came the old church house standing just where the old brick one does now.

West of the church stood an old rattle-trap of a frame building, which at the time was occupied by Mrs. Gulick, a poor widow with two children at home, Lydia and Priscilla. A little later the best room was rented for a select school to be conducted by Prof. John Bull, an English bachelor, who boarded at the parsonage, which had quite a commodious dwelling. Next came the creek, on the west side of which was a tan yard and a small dwelling, occupied by John Philips and family; afterwards, by his brother Enoch.

The white population was just a score, young and old, also two colored women still held as slaves, one at the tavern and the other by Dr. Case. One other institution or industry still remains to be noticed; that is the cider distillery erected by uncle Benny Blackwell on his farm just south of his large tavern house. The farmers supplied the apples to make the cider and took their pay in whiskey or brandy. Even the parsonage cellar sometimes had its supply of apple whiskey. Some of the people who ventured to sow to the wind, had the sorrow to reap to the whirlwind.

When my school days came around I found a little brother who was named Isaac Hopkins, and two sisters, Hannah and Harriet Ann; all of whom lived to be grown, and became heads of families. Isaac was the father of seventeen children, and the stepfather of two others. Hannah married Peter Garrison and has passed to that land where there is neither marriage nor given in marriage.

The only living child of J.B. Garrison, M.D., of New York, with whom his father now resides, Harriet Ann married James E. Leigh, and died without children. Among the scholars at the old stone school house who I remember, are the Isaac Golden family: John, Fanny, Phebe, Jacob, and James. The David Blackwell family: Stephen, George, Berris, Betsy, Rachel, and Hannah; Samuel H. and Helen Stout; Abraham, John, and Peter Skillman; Charles, Monroe, Susan, Mary, and Henrietta Stout; Spencer Wert; Charles M. and Sally Jewell; James E. Leigh, and his brother. There is also another red cheeked little girl who I have happened to meet several times since. Her name was Hannah Blackwell.

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The teachers in Hopewell did not average very high from either a moral or literary stand point, but what we lost in quality we gained in quantity. Eight hours made a school day, six days a school week, and thirteen weeks a school term, and four terms a school year. Of school mates I failed to name the younger children of Elnatthan Drake, Armintage and Bayard, and the daughters, Deborah, Sarah Ann, Hannah, and Etta. Other names may occur and be mentioned.

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CHAPTER XXI - J. B. 1824-----

J. B. 1824- - HOPEWELL HERALD - Thursday February 1, 1894

HOPEWELL REMINISCENCES

It is the present purpose of the writer to classify the population of Hopewell Township as known to him in his boyhood days; say in round numbers, seventy years ago. As I have already written something of the village, the parsonage, the schools, etc., I will now try to name the inhabitants of the township, taking them in the order of their location, a street or highway at a time.

First in order I will name those who naturally claim the designation of patriarchs. Starting at the Dr. Case corner and going north, the first of these was Stephen Blackwell, the father of David and two daughters; the eldest was the mother of Enoch Van Kirk, and for a second husband married John Green. Rachel married Enoch Phillips and lived at the tannery in the village. Uncle Stephen and his kind hearted wife lived to a good old age, and with their children and grandchildren around them, they had a comparatively large property for that day, and were people of respectability. Passing on to the north, we find another patriarch at the very next house, a small one, on the west side; uncle Joe Leigh was the owner of this unpretentious home. His family consisted of his wife, five daughters and one son. The parents were English, but the children were all born in America. All the family, except the son, were active members of the Baptist Church. One daughter married a Mr. Robinson and lived at Princeton. Another, Clavissa, died at Hopewell, in early womanhood, of consumption; the other three, Betsy, Ellen, and Mariah all remained single, and fought the bread and butter question with their personal industry. Betsy, who learned the tailoring business of her father, became an inmate of the Boggs family at an early date of its existence and remained there for almost a score of years. Ellen, was a dressmaker and went from house to house, whenever and wherever she was needed, preparing the girls to make a satisfactory appearance in the old church, on the next, and all following Sundays. Mariah used her needle much, but also assisted her mother in the housework. Evans Leigh, the only son, was a boot and shoemaker, and practiced on the go-around -plan. The reader will see that the family was a very important one as far as clothing the naked was concerned.

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Uncle Joe was not very careful about keeping up to the latest fashions, and consequently some of us boys who lived in Baptist families, had to wear very old fashioned garments. Uncle Joe was put in two different classes politically: by King George's kind, Loyalist, but by the citizens generally, Tory. The latter was very unpopular at that day, and very hard to get rid of.

At the next house north lived two ladies named Hart, both of them maiden ladies. They were supposed to possess more than usual culture and were in easy circumstances. They did not mingle largely in society. Next, on the east side, was the humble residence of Timothy Smith. His family consisted of Aunt Betsy, and his two sons and one daughter; at that time all grown and all at home. They were a pleasant family and life-long friends of the Boggs family, although only the mother was a member of the church. Charity, the eldest child, married Samuel Titus; Nathaniel, the older of the boys, married Susan Golden, one of our neighbors, and Ira, the younger, remained single while he staid in Hopewell. All the children moved West at an early day. The father and sons were all masons, and followed the trade many years. Mrs. Susan Smith was one of the most amiable women known to the writer, and raised one son and six daughters; all of them of the maternal type. Ira did not stop in Ohio near the residence of his brother and sister, but went on to Franklin Co., Ind., where he married, and after a few years died. Aunt Betsey made her home with her son Nathaniel, after she became a widow, on his farm near Mount Halthy, Ohio.

The next house, going north, on the west side was owned and occupied by John Van Dyke, his wife, a sister in the Baptist church, and two sons. Mrs. Van Dyke was a strong Democrat, or Jacksonian, and her husband was on the other side. They each patronized their own political papers. At that time I thought Mrs. V. was right, but long years ago I changed my mind. Jeremiah Van Dyke, Sr., is on the patriarch list, by age and respectability, and as standing at the fatherhood of the Van Dyke family in Hopewell. His son, Jeremiah occupied the homestead. Luke, the youngest, died at home, a young man and unmarried. The wife of editor Voorhees is a Van Dyke paternally and a Boggs maternally, coming down from the parsonage through Newton M. and his posterity --- good stock, I opine, on both sides, although there are some links in the chain with whom I was not personally acquainted.

Still going north, we find two houses, one on the east, the other on the west of the road. The former was owned by Philip Servis, the blacksmith. His wife was the mother of two children, David and Lucy. David went South when grown and became identified with slaveholding in its basest form. Lucy was a beautiful little girl, and in course of time married John Hart, a brother to the writer's stepmother. They were literally of the "children of Israel," as that was the name of grandfather Hunt. There were two other members of his family --- Hannah Vandervere, the oldest, and Wesley, the youngest.

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The other house was owned by Wm. Suidam, and was a regular farm. Mrs. Suidam and their son Christopher, constituted the family. The old people were zealous members of M. E. church, hut they had no church fellowship near them. Their only child became an Old School Baptist preacher, and held his membership at Hopewell. In May, 1831, he baptized the writer and his wife, in that natural baptistry, formed in the creek east of Col. Ira Stout's buildings. The regular pastor was at the time too sick to perform the service.

As the Baptist Church expected their preacher to live on a small and precarious salary, the growing family of the parsonage required that the most, possible, should be made out of the farm. Hence, father Boggs turned his attention, not only to tilling the soil, but also to raising horses, cattle, sheep and hogs; a large part of the land being better adapted to stock raising than for grain culture. In haying, a large number of men used to volunteer their services, not only as mowers, but as hay makers as well. The farm was usually well supplied with good blooded colts, both of Arab and Hotspur varieties. Of course there was enough of the old Adam in the boys, if they were preachers sons, to make them want to try their speed, especially when matched with those of some of the neighbors. Sometimes we landed in the stone fences as found there. They were thrown together in rows, so as to prepare the ground for the plow and afforded a grand harbor for the tree, destroying rabbit. Our Kansas hedges do the same thing here at the present time.

I must conclude this paper by saying that I have changed my mind on the fast hour question, and am opposed to the race track.

Clyde, Kansas, , J.B.

(To be continued.)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXII - J. B. Hopewell Reminiscences - 1815 - 1835 (HVN 11/24/77)

HOPEWELL REMINISCENCES - (continued) - Hopewell Herald - Feb. 8, 1894

J. B. 1815 - 1835

It is proper to state that the regular attendants at the Baptist church from 1815 to 1835 was by no means limited to the citizens of Hopewell township. On the north, some of the warmest friends of parson Boggs lived in Amwell, and were patriarchs, truly, in the sense in which the term is being used in these papers. Uncle Paul Hill lived there and had several sons with full averaged sized families. His children were, I believe, all members of the church, and all considered people of respectability.

The second of the parsonage boys, I.H.B. found his first wife among the Hills, and she was a granddaughter of uncle Paul.

Then came the Manners', the Wert's, Fisher's, and several other sets of families, all at least occasional attendants at Hopewell, and the pastor had regular monthly, Sunday afternoon appointments, either at the Harts school house or at some private dwelling in the neighborhood.

The road east from the village led first to Stoutsburg on the east line of the township. But there were more or less Baptist still farther east until you come to Blawenburg; although as you approach the latter place the majority were Presbyterians. They were supplied with regular Sunday afternoon preaching by the Theological students from Princeton. Their regular church house and meetings was a few miles north and called Harlingen.

One of the established customs of the church was to hold a three-days' meeting, commencing on the Saturday before the fourth Lord's day in July, annually. Extra speakers were usually provided, which drew large numbers of the more intelligent class of the community. But it soon became universally known as 'Hopewell Great Meeting', and was patronized by the very off scouring of the whole country for miles around, both white and colored. A large percent of the crowd never went within hearing distance of the meeting, but strolled back and forth on the street, mainly from the church house yard where the meetings were held, to the old tavern, where the landlord and the devil both did a large business on that day. In fact they had the church-going young men in training on almost every Sunday of the year. Besides this headquarters of drunkenness, and other wholesale sin, there were strown along the sides of the road, on either side, numerous wagons, which I cannot better describe than as restaurants on wheels.

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They sold root beer, gingerbread, candies, and some of them watermelons, etc., in public, and it was generally supposed some stronger beverages on the sly. It was not an uncommon thing to see persons fighting, especially in the after part of the day, when the fire water had taken effect on the brain of the drinkers. Every year increased the wickedness until the church was compelled to give up the annual July meeting in order to put an end to the carousal and drunkenness.

Another instillation growing up in Hopewell, and perhaps peculiar to that congregation, was known as the "spinning visit." It was held at the parsonage, and came once a year, when the weather got warm enough in the spring to occupy the barn as well as the house. The female part of the attendants usually spun a pound of flax, each, which they took as a donation, while the male part arranged that portion to suit themselves, oftentimes less in value than the sumptuous meal that was always provided for all who came. The large threshing floor was always swept and garnished, and the young ladies and gentlemen soon found their way to that temporary playhouse, after their arrival. The original design was to eke out the preacher's salary, but like the Indian's gun, it usually "cost more than it came to." Old sister Phebe, et al, were always brought into requisition, and sometimes "the light fantastic toe" was gracefully exercised. The church membership was not exactly a unit in regard to the dancing, especially in a barn belonging to the church. The preacher was not in favor of it, at any time or place.

Uncle Jimnly Hunt was one of the landmarks of Hopewell, and especially so of the Baptist church. He was an old man, a good man, a rich man (for that time and place), a jovial man, and a church going man. The one excentricity which he had was his love of sneezing. Anywhere and everywhere, even in time of the sermon on Sunday, he applied to his nasal organ a powder which caused him to sneeze long and loud. He was for many years a widower and had a bachelor son living with him named Elijah. He had a married son, Jonathan, who was noted as a great worker and a prosperous farmer. His third son spent his early manhood on the high seas, and was afterwards known as Captain Jimmy. There was one daughter, Mrs. John P. Blackwell, who for a number of years was clerk of the county, and resided at Flemington.

Going west on the main road, the first thing claiming notice was the mills, one at each end of the long bridge across Stony Brook; a grist and saw mill by Joseph Moore, who lived on a splendid farm adjacent. He was a popular man in the neighborhood. His wife was a daughter of uncle Thomas Phillips, of whom more will be said later. The children were: Mary, who married our near neighbor, John Golden, and died soon after; Emley and Charles were the boys, who were of "our sett," and both became businessmen. Grandmother Moore and her unmarried daughter, Sarah, kept house near the grist mill. They were all warm friends of my father and his family.

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The farm owned by father Phillips was known as the John Hart farm, from the fact that he was its former owner. He was a man of note, a Representative in Congress, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and one who, by his integrity, won the enviable epithet of honest John Hart. Men who signed their names to that document did not know whether it meant liberty or death, but fortunately they were Statesmen and not selfish politicians.

West of the mills is Marshall's Corner, comprising a store, blacksmith shop and two dwellings, John Simmons and Cornelius Larison, owners. The first was the smith, the other a man of leisure. Wm. Marshall owned the store and lived on a farm adjoining. The families named were all counted as of the congregations usually meeting at the Hopewell Church on Sunday morning. From that point south most of the people attended the Presbyterian church in Pennington, the only one there at the time. My recollection of the inhabitants generally is, that they were mostly a church-going and order-loving people. A few became the victims of intemperance, but the per cent was not large, when the general use made of intoxicants is taken into consideration. It was used on all special occasions on the farm, at haying, harvesting, butchering, sheep washing, corn husking, etc. It was found always at weddings and sometimes at funerals, and was offered to visitors in the family circle. One of the worst practices was that of young men treating each other at the tavern, where a few of them met, as they usually did, on Sunday morning before meeting. It would have been much better to have had them spend that hour in some properly organized bible training.

We find the Stout's scattered all over Hopewell and the surrounding territory, and it is the testimony of doctor Benedict, written about 1810, in his history of the Baptist, that more than half the members of that church were of that name, and that Jonathan Stout was the founder and early supporter of the cause there. He was one of ten children, seven sons and three daughters. Their mother's name was Anna Bullin. Of the fifteen original members nine wore the name of Stout. The following we copy verbatim from Benedict: "The origin of this family is remarkable, for they all sprang from one woman, and she as good as dead. * * * She was born in Amsterdam about 1602. She and her husband sailed for New York about 1620; the ship was stranded at Sandy Hook. The crew got ashore and marched towards N.Y., but Penelope's husband being hurt in the wreck, could not walk with them, so they tarried in the woods. They had not been there long until the Indians killed them both, as they thought, and stripped them to the skin, but she came to, but was badly crippled for life. Her abdomen was also cut so that her bowels appeared, which she kept in with her hands. She remained seven days, taking shelter in a hollow tree, and eating the excrement of it. * * * She saw two Indians appear and was glad thinking they would end her misery. One made towards her, but the other, being an elderly man, threw his match coat around her, carried her to his wigwam, and cured her of her wounds and bruises.

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In New York she married one Richard Stout, a native of England. She was then in her 22nd year and became the mother of seven sons and three daughters. The girls taking the names: Bounds, Pikes, Throckmortons and Skeltons."

It will take one more paper to conclude this series of reminiscence, and in it some of the Hopewell descendents of this remarkable woman will be noticed.

Clyde, Kansas, J.B.

(To Be Continued.)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXIII - J.B. Hopewell Reminiscences Finishes (HVN 12/29/77)

HOPEWELL REMINISCENCES - (continued) Hopewell Herald - Feb. 15, 1894

J. B. Finishes

Prominent among the Stouts of my boyhood days were the following persons, who, as heads of families, come within the patriarchal class:

1. Major Levi Stout, who lived several miles N.W of the parsonage, and was an active deacon in the Baptist church. His son David, just the age of the writer became a successful Baptist preacher. His wife was Miss Susan Brown, who, with her sister, mother and stepfather, lived on "Cherry Ridge." She was the eldest of a popular family of girls, all members at Hopewell. She did not live very long after her marriage and Bro. David, thinking it not good for man to be alone, soon married again into another Baptist family. Miss Jane Merrell being the name of the bride. The major was much respected in his day, and lived to a good old age.
2. Abram Stout lived adjoining the village of Stoutsburg on a farm as level and beautiful as the rich prairies of Kansas. His wife Anna, grew up in the large Hagaman family, living a few miles N.E. of Stoutsburg. Their oldest child, Miss Helen, married Dr. J. H. Baldwin. Their son, Samuel H., grew up at the same time with the writer. All three of us were schoolmates; and Holmes, with his future wife, Miss Deborah Drake, stood up by the side of John and Hannah while the Rev. Mr. Prutt was making them one. Father Abram was noted for his mirthfulness, and genial sociability. He was a constant churchgoer, and at one time represented the county in the State Legislature.
3. A short distance west on the north side of the road was another family of much larger dimensions, the head of which was familiarly known as Squire David. [David Stout of 'brick homes'] This family was largely represented both at the stone schoolhouse and the church. The children remembered are: Henrietta, Charles, Mary, Susan, Monroe and Lafayette. The Squire was noted for driving his business, instead of waiting for his business to drive him. Besides farming on a large scale, he made bricks, both for home use and for sale. He was a Justice of the Peace for many years. In addition to the members already mentioned was a mother, entirely helpless for years, and a niece, Miss Susan Hart, who came from what was known as "The Lake Country," in western N.Y.
4. In the very next house west was the beautiful residence of Col. Ira Stout, who lived on the hill, the clear placid creek running in the alley below, between the house and the road.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The children were: Phebe, Simpson, Ann, Margaret, Leticia and Burris; The last named, about the age of the writer. Four of the children: Simpson, Leticia and Burris remained single, and with Margaret died in New York. Col. Ira was a lover of fine horses, and at one time he suffered large pecuniary loss by the glanders getting into his well stocked stables. He was noted for his great hospitality, and in his prosperous days his house was filled with visitors. He was a man who always got there. No matter whether it was a vendue, an election, a training, or a school meeting. His wife, who was a Miss Burris, was one of the excellent of the earth. She was a member of the Baptist church, but owing to very poor health spent the most of her time at home. An inmate of the family for many years in the character of a help, was an old lady known as "Aunt Polly Prawl." She was unmarried, and of good report, and without relatives. She died during my boyhood, and I was sent to notify the people of the time of the funeral. From some cause the text is remembered: Job 3, 17 to 19.

5. Another of the Stout's was known as: Esq. John. [John Stout] He lived west of the road running north from the Sammy Hagan corner and two miles south of the Garrison school house. It was a rather retired situation, but a very pleasant one after you got there. It was one of Parson Bogg's regular stopping places when in that part of his diocese. The Esquire was a prominent member of the Baptist church and with his family, occupied a conspicuous position in the neighborhood.

The central business point was the Harrison store, from its proprietor, Wm. Garrison, also a prominent member of the Hopewell church. His first wife's children were Eura, Abby, John, Sally and Naomi, they were noted for their singing, and attended singing school at the Hopewell house every winter; the elder ones as long as the writer can remember. Mr. Garrison made merchandise a success while he remained there. Some years he dealt largely in shell bark hickory nuts. It was said that one young man (a preacher) gathered over twenty bushels one year. Merchant Garrison understood his business well, and always kept such a variety as would supply the demand. He had the great misfortune to lose his wife, who died suddenly in the prime of life. But like some others, he concluded it was not good to be alone.

He married again, a lady of PA., by whom he had a son, who was named Bennet. There were several small dwellings in the vicinity. One was owned by Jonathan Watters, still owned I believe by his widow, known as "aunt Chatty," a very estimable old lady. The writer remembers distinctly the spring of ice cold water where he used to go to quench his thirst while his father was dispensing the "waters of salvation" in the school house. The land was rough and rocky, but admirably adapted to fruit growing. Uncle Iority was noted as a tree grafter, and was largely patronized by growers.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Another man of the same name lived on a small lot at the south end of the parsonage farm. He was very small in stature, but of large spirit. A boot and shoe maker by trade; supported comfortably his mother and sisters. He was always ready to do his part in every public enterprise, and was a regular attendant at the Hopewell church. He was quite an admirer of young ladies in general, and of some of them in particular.

North of the parsonage, half a mile, lived a very estimable family, directed by Mrs. Betsy Golden; the widow of Amos Golden, who died many years ago, leaving her with a family of small children, and only limited resources. But she did her work admirably. She believed that Jehovah was the widows' God, and the father of the fatherless. The children were: Temperance, Aaron, Sally, George and Deborah. The last three only, were personally known to the writer. All three were excellent singers, and George especially so. In fact he headed the progressive portion of the congregation as leader of the church music; occupying the front seat in the gallery, Opposite the pulpit, with as many singers near him as possible. The tunes were usually found in Mason's Harp. The other portion of the membership preferred to have their chorister stand on the first floor just in front of the pulpit, and with nasal twang, give the pitch, dividing hymns into two-line sections. The sympathies of the pulpit, and of all the younger portion of the congregation, were with the upstairs singers. Sarah Golden married John Musgtode, a tanner, and moved to Illinois, where her husband and several children died of consumption. George and Deborah remained unmarried until death overtook them.

Immediately west, and adjoining, lived William Golden. His son Abraham, his daughter Esther, and a niece named Charity, always put in an appearance, both at school and at church. The two families were only distantly related, although living on adjoining farms. Mention has been made of Isaac Golden and family, in a former paper. They were not nearly related to either of the others, although the farm adjoined both the former. Grandma Vannoy, mother of Mrs. Issac Golden was an inmate of the household, and a most estimable old lady.

I herewith close these reminiscences. In looking back over am satisfied that the great conservator was the Baptist Church. The whisky manufacturers, the bar room, and the home drinks, would have demoralized the community, had not sinners, as well as saints, been regular church goers; and while in some respects the religious teaching may have improved, the fact that the church then presented an undivided front, gave it additional power, especially over outsiders.

Clyde, Kansas. J.B.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXIV - Little Histories: 1830 - 1860 (HVN 2/9/78)

On Aug. 4, 1977, I started a new series --- "little, recorded histories" of this town that I'd found in many different places; I felt that they should be presented to you. Then "1810" sort of exploded! John Bogg's "Reminiscences" of about 1810 - 1835 contained so much valuable history. Now, back to the series.

1830

"Hopewell Boro" was a small part of Hopewell Township --Just a few houses close to each other --- on Mountain Road (N. Greenwood Ave.) and on "the Great Road from Baptist Meeting to Rockahill" (Broad St.). The Census for Hopewell Township for 1830 is on microfilm at the Hunterdon Historical Society, Main St., Flemington. It lists people as to age, sex, and color; total was only 3154! Maybe we were the 54? 154?

Jacob Weart gave a speech on July 4, 1876; it included a description of Hopewell in 1830. "On the north side of Broad Street; David Blackwell, Dr. Case, Mr. Price's house soon to be torn down. B. Merrell's wheelwright shop, church, hotel, Enoch Phillip's tanney" (46 E. Broad, 2-4 W. Broad, 14 W. Broad, about 22 W. Broad, Baptist Brick Church, 46-48 W. Broad and from Ege P248, in 1905 on lands of E. W. Drake and Mrs. Sheppard) somewhere from Mercer St. west.

"On the south side: Benjamin Blackwell's 'hill house', a house or two and a blacksmith shop" (#19 W. Broad, #37 W. Broad; either east or west of the Casual Shop (Rorer's was a blacksmithing location) and/or it may have been just east of the Black Kettle Antique Shop).

1832

Miss Susan Weart said that there were eight houses in the town, but gave no further details. Either everyone knew all about them, OR nobody was as curious as I!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1834

According to Thomas F. Gordon's Gazetteer of the State of New Jersey, publisher Daniel Fenton of Trenton, Hopewell was in 1834:

Columbia, a post-town of Hopewell Township, Hunterdon County, on the turnpike road from New Brunswick to Lambertville, 10 mi. S.E. from Flemington, 17 mi. N. from Trenton, formerly called Hopewell Meeting House; contains: Baptist meeting, 2 taverns, 1 store, and 10-12 dwellings.

1842

There were the OSB Church + 12 houses.

1849

A Mercer County Survey Map, a large wall map type, hangs on the west side of the corridor or hall at the Hopewell Museum, very close to the front door. It shows these places in our town:

Stephen Blackwell's (46 E. Broad) store and post office; five houses on the northwest corner by our traffic light but names too difficult to read (from #2 to the graveyard); First Baptist Church; Hotel; Daniel Blackwell's (#19 W. Broad); blacksmith shop (Rorer's?); Baptist Parsonage farm (153 W. Broad); Wm. I. Phillips (60 Hart Ave.), close to town were: A.C. Van Pelt (J. Hart's; today Farlee's); Wm. Golden (G. Coles); Stephen Titus (Dr. Katzenback's). A. Waters and M. True on Crusher Road, Jonathan Van Cleve Blackwell (Just west of Lamson's and present Amoco gas station); L. Moore, on Van Dyke Road between Rt.518 and Rt.654; David Stout, northeast corner of Rt.518 and Amwell Rd., and J. Smith on the northwest corner of Rt.518 and Amwell Road.

1800 - 1850

"The village of Hopewell was called Columbia until the post office was established in 1825. From 1800-1850 the village contained eight houses exclusive of the Meeting House and the schoolhouse (in the graveyard)." Let's not forget that the Franklin and Georgetown Turnpike was built 1820-1822 (Rt.518 and Broad Street)¹ and that the Baptist Meeting House was in 1822 rebuilt --- originally of stone, the present rear wall is still stone, but the rest was of brick made at Esq. David Stout's (Ege P287).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1850 - 1860

WEATHER FLASH 1854

Hannah M. Drake's diary:

April 14th Started snowing.

15th continued snowing & rain. 16th (Sunday) Snowed, very cold.

17th Snowed until nite, wind NW, very cold.

April 23rd Snow 3 feet deep, much remained until after April 26.

Worst storm of the winter.

In Hopewell Valley Heritage by A.B. Lewis, p294 "1851, first railroad in Hopewell Valley started to operate. It passed through Washington Crossing and Titusville." Hopewell Orations, Sketches, and Exercises 1865 - 1926, in the Hopewell Library, "..... 1851 railroad going from Millstone to Somerset " AND described as a "..... Jerkwater branch of the Pennsylvania RR."! The 1876, July 4, speech "The national airline RR between N.Y. and Phila abandoned after a portion of the work of grading had been done. It was finally sold to Delaware and Bound Brook RR Co" this is today's present railroad bed.

The first (PUBLIC) school was built at 75 W. Broad St. It is often referred to as the 1855 school. The land was bought on Sept. 9, 1856 from Patrick Riley (who then owned #19 W. Broad) by the Columbia School District No. 6. When it became too small and a new school building was built on Model Ave., this 75 W. Broad became the G.A.R. hall. In 1918 it was remodeled as a home. Just recently the owners were remodeling, and in tearing out a wall found a slate blackboard in the wall. This home is thus (by 1978) at least 122 years old!

In 1856-7 the brick store was built, west of 46 E. Broad St. and is the present location of the Sunoco gas station; it was occupied by Nelson D. Blackwell; Farley F. Holcombe and Ed Titus; and in my memory Elmer Weart.

A Dr. Hyde lived in Hopewell practicing for five (5) years. I believe he lived in or near #14 W. Broad St., Dr. John Albert Miller succeeded Dr. McDuffee.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

1860

There are two descriptions of Hopewell for this time. A Dr. Blake, speaking at the 1915 dedication of the sanctuary of the Presbyterian Church, recalled the time when he came to this town as a seven year old to live. He remembered 14-15 houses, the First Baptist Church, the tavern, a blacksmith shop, a wheelwright shop, a general store, a post office, and the schoolhouse on the hill. There were as yet "NO TELEGRAPH, NO TELEPHONE, NO RAILROAD (he says), NO TROLLEY CARS! "Hopewell was practically cut off from the world." Millstone was the shipping point. Mails came by stage to the post office. "Everybody went to church on Sunday." The First Baptist Church was then the ONLY church in town. He remembers this interesting occurrence, "The young men, on a Sunday morning, congregated on the tavern porch next door (to the Brick church) 20 or more just as Elder Hartwell, pastor, was in the middle of the LONG prayer the young men would start off, single file, down the tavern steps, along the walk, into the church door on the right, upstairs into the gallery with a TRAMP, TRAMP, TRAMP heard quite a distance away when doors and windows were open but no one objected or took them to task for it!" He also said, "No Presbyterian ever went to the Old School Church," but I've heard that denied [there was a Presbyterian Church in Pennington]. Any Baptist who attended the Presbyterian Church was severely chastised and was referred to as a "Pseudo-Baptist" (quote from record of Old Baptist Church, in Museum).

Second, 1860 description next time (chapter).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXV - Little Histories: 1860 (HVN 3/2/78)

1860 - 1870

An 1860 large wall map is hung in the Hopewell Museum on the west side of the hall, but near the back 'office'. It shows in town Blackwell and Jewell Co. --- that's in the brick building west of 46 E. Broad --- with a store and post office there; Wilson Blackwell, (#2 W. Broad); Mrs. E. Blackwell, (14 W. Broad) whom I believe to be the widow of James Blackwell. Dr. D.Y. Hyde; a wheelwright shop; J.R. Hagaman; the Church; W. and A. Burrough's Hotel (46-48 W. Broad). (There's one more occupant to add to the Hopewell House History!) E. (Enoch) Phillip's was west of the brook. Out Louellen was a J.M. Phillip's house. On out Rt. 518 was S.R. Holcombe (Elmer Wearts in 1920's etc.); and Wm. Golden (G. Cole's today).

On the south side of Broad Street; Not one house is shown or named up to #19 W. Broad. Patrick Riley lived there in 1860. West of #19 were: Zephaniah Stout, W. Burroughs, S. Blackwell, school at #75 W. Broad, and the parsonage farm. Enoch Phillips lived on the triangular land between Louellen and Broad. J.M. Phillips lived at 60 Hart Ave. A.G. Van Pelt was at Farlee's. I counted 15-16 buildings in Hopewell. Dr. Blake's account and this map complement each other.

Outside of town was interesting. Why Stoutsburg was a big village: W.A. Simmons; a blacksmith shop; F.W. Pittenger's HOTEL! R. Wert was next door; A. Sutphen, A. Westcott, and S.H. Stout and several others lived down nearer to the brook. Dr. Baldwin lived on the northwest corner back at the end of the long lane (where Mr. and Mrs. Russell Holcombe lived for many years before building their new home close by but on Province Line Road). S.S. Weart was in the 'Hunt House', Jonathan Stout's residence in early 1700's. Randolph Stout lived on the land belonging to Bob Moore and Edith today (1978). Near Amwell Road were: C.W. Wyckoff, E. Weart, H.M. Abbott, H. Cray, J.S. Weart, A. Skillman, F.L. Van Dyke, A. Voorhees. A.G.V. Stout lived in the house on 518 and Amwell-David Stout's brick home.

West of town was: Jonathan Van Cleve Blackwell (today's W. Broad St. 'development' and in town, west of Lamson's). Out Van Dyke Road and Stony Brook were: R. McPherson, S.H. Titus, W.B. Sexton, W. Kirken Jall, Andrew Ege, S. Moore, J.S. Hoagland, Samuel Ege. A D.L. Blackwell lived on the south side of spur 518.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

North --- way out N. Greenwood---; I. Cray, J. Sutton, copper mines (!!), John Bellis, L.D. Servis, Rensallear Birch (Joab Houghtons 1776, Summovigo's 1976 -- - near Featherbed Lane, large white house), A. Sked, W.W. Abbott was far east on Featherbed Lane. P. Waters.

1860 - 1870

In 1861 James Ewing was the postmaster. In 1865 a BIG event occurred; the placing and dedication of the John Hart Memorial just east of the First Baptist Church. It was the first, state sponsored memorial of this nature. (It also has an inaccurate statement giving John Hart's death as 1780 when it was 1779.) In 1978, 47 W. Broad Street is the Black Kettle Antique shop of Mr. & Mrs. Moore; in 1865 J.V.C. Blackwell started his store here; in 1876 J. Ø. McPherson operated it. It also housed the Hopewell Herald and a barber shop. Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Moore operated 'the West End Market' there for many years in the middle 1900's

In 1866 Miss Elizabeth H. Boggs, daughter of the pastor of the First Baptist Church for 40 years (Elder John Boggs), bought land from Patrick Riley. She soon built (23 E. Broad St.) a FOUR story brick building for a Seminary for Young Ladies. She ran it with the help of her sister M.J. Boggs. Soon she built on the left a three-story addition. This is Mrs. Van Arsdale's home and apartments today. In 1978, this makes her home 122 years old! A little of Miss E.H. Boggs' life. She was born Feb. 2, 1829; she died in Trenton on her way to Hopewell, May 31, 1912, eighty-three years old. She was a great scholar. She taught at the Marshall's Corner School, at the Pennington Seminary, and in the 1850's at a private school in Haddonfield, N.J. She was the principal of a leading public school in Washington, D.C. She did all this before establishing her Seminary here! It was open from 1866-1890 --- 24 YEARS! In an 1877 recital at the Seminary the following performed: the Misses Miller, Drake, Rankin, Fetter, Blackwell, Dalrymple, Reid, Phillips and Dimock, the 'social register' of the day! Sometime I must give you their 1876, Centennial Dinner and celebration program!

In 1868 Charles Chatten was postmaster. The first harness shop was run by Stephen Blackwell, then Thomas Skillman, Wm. Pittenger, C.W. Sheppard, in 1872 J.C. Harrison, I have the deed showing Harrison's living at 64-68 W. Broad St.; Vol. 277, P491, 1898 J.M. Phillips estate, by Louis Labaw exec., Vol. 465, P111 to Mary V. Harrison, Joseph C. Jr., Ann V. Armstrong.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Mary V. Harrison owned land east of 64-68 --- possibly Hendrickson's Real Estate today --- see Hopewell Valley Heritage, P6 for the picture of the old farm-and-harness shop, also famous as Louie Gerharht's bakery. I do not know if J.C. Harrison's shop in 1872 was in this home 64-68, or on Mercer St., or ?. The date 1872 seems to indicate an earlier Harrison???

Feb. 22, 1876

No time like now to add:

Tee Drynke, Feb. 22, 1876, given at Female Seminary.

The "Billy Fair" was as follows:

Meal of 1776

Hastye Puddinge and Milk

Apple Sass

New England Johnny Cake

Baked Beans

Cowcumber Pickles

Pan Dowdy

Pumkin Pie

New England Plum Cake

Twisted Olykeoks

Tea, Coffee, Etceras.

The big feature of the 2/22/1876 celebration was the N. Eng. 1776 supper. The Pan Dowdy was an "apple" pie three feet in diameter! Add cream and sugar delicious Later there were refreshments: handsome cakes, delicious ice cream.

Music under direction of Wm. A. Weart assisted by E.M. Phillips.

* * *

The commencement of the Female Seminary was held June 14, 1882, in The Baptist Church. Musicales Wed., under direction of Lizzie Cook. Fifteen graduated.

1870-1880

This is the era of the Railroad being built in this town. The Saga of the Mercer and Somerset Railroad starts next column! (chapter).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXVI - The Saga of the M&S RR - Part I (HVN 3/30/78)

The Saga of the Mercer and Somerset Railroad - Part 1 of 5 - 1870 - 1880

"You mean to say that there were TWO railroads in this town?" asked young Tod Musso whom I met researching the Mercer and Somerset Railroad. With the present "Reading" Railroad so near extinction today, historians of 2076 may ask the question too !!

My material came from many sources: Hopewell Library; Railroads of N.J. Richard Hyer and John Zee, 1975; Railroading in N.J. John T. Cunningham, 1951. The files of the Hopewell Museum. American Railroad Manual 1873. The Roads of Home Henry Charlton Beck, P118-128. The National Railroad Historical Society, Hugh R. Gibbs' 1973 lecture on the subject.

In 1975, 19 Reading trains were operating from West Trenton to Phila. Two trains, the Wall Street and Crusader, and a few freight trains were running from Phila. to Newark.

175 years before that, in 1800, the word RAILROAD was practically unknown. In 1812, it took 6-8 months to travel to the west coast. It took one week to go by the best carriages from Phila. to Boston over the best turnpike and you thought turnpikes (turn-spikes) were new!

There were people extremely interested in finding faster means of travel. One was Col. John Stevenson. In 1812, he pleaded for a railroad charter from the N.J. Legislature. In 1815, they issued the first N.J. charter --- the first in the nation too --- but to no avail. In 1825 the first 'Steam Waggon', the first U.S. locomotive ran on a ROUND track in Hoboken! On Feb. 4, 1830, the N.J. Legislature gave Stevenson's Camden and Amboy Railroad a charter for the first commercial railroad to link the Delaware River and Raritan Bay. By now his son, Robert L. Stevenson was the active one; Col. John was 82. What lay behind this charter to the C & A R R was the need to link Phila. and N.Y.Cy. In 1830 the public was enthusiastic about the railroad; \$1,000,000 in stock was quickly sold.

The 'Canal Era' was in. The Erie was operating. The Moris Canal was being built. The canal promoters and stage line owners were VERY much against the idea of a railroad.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

This Camden and Amboy RR, backed very quietly by the Penn. RR soon became a MONOPOLY. This company built our Mercer and Somerset Railroad in the 1870's before and while the 'Reading' (Delaware and Bound Brook RR then) was building 1978's only existing railroad in Hopewell.

Let's back up to 1830's. Twenty-three ships brought to the United States 16 ft. - 36 ft. rails. On Nov.12, 1831, the John Bull engine ran. Sometimes the rails were laid on stones -- before the wooden ties were used!

The rails reached Hightstown in 1832. Bordentown was 'the center'. In Dec. 1832, the first passenger railroad ran in South Amboy. In Jan. 1833, there was the first freight service.

In 1840 the C & A Pennsy line completed ONE track service from Trenton to Jersey City and New Brunswick; and from Phila. to Trenton.

By 1845 the demand for COAL was very great. (In 1978 the cycle has been completed!) Railroads were much faster than coal barges on the canals. The Phila. Centennial was also being planned.

By 1860 there were three railroads operating in N.J. The only 'double tracks' in 1860 were: (1) N.J. RR, New Brunswick to Jersey City; (2) Jersey Central RR, Hampton to Elizabethport; (3) Erie RR, Paterson to Jersey City. J.T. Cunningham in Railroading in N.J. has an interesting 1860 railroad map on P39.

The Civil War, 1861-1865, pointed up the need for more railroads. On April 2, 1873, there was enacted a general railroad law giving ANY company the right to cross N.J. Of course this would foster competition which the C & A monopoly did not want. So, they devised a scheme to protect their original Trenton to New Brunswick line. It was: "to build a LOOP railroad about 15 miles north of the original". Thus, THEY would have complete control and ALL THE PROFITS of goods and people moving between Phila. and N.Y. !

BUT, as time passed from 1830 to 1870, the general public became displeased with this monopoly --- naturally! Others were just as interested in those same profits. One company was the Delaware and Bound Brook RR.

So --- begins --- the struggle --- of the present 'Reading' with the C & A RR. Each planned to GO THRU HOPEWELL!!

Susan Weart wrote: "Stephen Blackwell said that he could just sit on his front porch and get rich by SELLING land to the railroads! Why it took a farmer ONE WHOLE DAY to go and return FROM TRENTON. He could do the same very quickly; for a few cents he could ride in the 'palace cars' by railroad. (There were 50 houses then in town)."

HOPWELL 'S PAST

The directors of the Mercer & Somerset RR were ten --- two were locals: A. Van Zandt of Blawenburg, and Lewis Atchley of Pennington; the other eight were believed to be very closely connected to the C & A RR.

In 1865-1870 the Mercer & Somerset RR was surveying land here. Deeds for land purchased east, and west of here were signed late in 1870. Deed books in Trenton: Book 81, P115 on, and Book 127, P52 on.

According to H.C. Beck in The Roads of Home, the total cost was \$760,264.96, and the profit over EIGHT years was \$637.16! ! Other sources differ slightly on the cost. The planned route was from Millstone, to Somerset Junction (Jacob's Creek Road intersection with Rt.29, along the Delaware River), 22 to 22.75 miles. The planned stations were: West Millstone, 0; Hillsboro, 2mi.; Harlingen, 5mi.; Blawenburg, 8mi.; Stoutsburg, 10mi.; Hopewell, 13mi.; Marshal, 15mi.; Pennington, 17mi.; Woolsey, 19mi.; Burroughs, 21mi; Somerset Jct., 22mi.; (from descriptive material of the Penn. RR of 1876). The above cost is about \$35,000 per mile. The train stopped "wherever a passenger waved to the engineer"! (The book also said that there were 13 places in Hopewell when Billy Wyckoff and Homer Kise were born.)

The Delaware and Bound Brook RR was chartered to build from Yardleyville, Pa. to Bound Brook, N.J., AND from Yardleyville to Jenkintown, Pa. on May 11, 1874.

The Mercer and Somerset RR was operating somewhat as sections were completed, from 1872 on. The Delaware and Bound Brook RR was operating from May 1, 1876 on.

So much was to happen hereabouts between those two dates. Installment 2 next chapter.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXVII - The Saga of the M&S RR - Part II (HVN 4/27/78)

The Saga of the Mercer & Somerset Railroad - Part II of 3 installments

1870 - 1880 ctd

The Mercer & Somerset RR and the Delaware and Bound Brook RR were actively building their railroad beds through this area. The M&S RR started operating parts in 1872; it was operating over the 22.75 miles by March 1874. The D&BB RR was building its railroad from the east AND from the west of town. Sooner or later the D&BB RR would have to cross the tracks of the M&S RR. T-R-Ø-U-B-L-E.

But, before we get into 'trouble', let's find just WHERE the Railroad bed of the now defunct M&S RR was. In Sept. 22, 1977, Hopewell Valley News, I reported that railroad ties had been dug through on Cook's Street. I believe it to be the site of the M&S railroad Main Line. A letter from David Bellis, a long time resident of Hopewell and now of Waretown, N.J. and Madeira Beach, Florida set me straight!! These ties were a siding --- not main line. Dave gave me much information from his surveying information and suggested that I find a deed that might give "abandoned M&S RR". I did, and was convinced. Thanks, David, in keeping this writer accurate!!

Let's travel new to see what evidence we can find and 'see' exactly where it ran.

An excellent start would be the Hopewell Museum to buy their 1875 Hopewell Township map on which the routes of the two railroads are clearly evident. It will make the following Journey so much easier! [Of course, if you don't have the two old maps of Hopewell Boro, I'd suggest buying those too --- after all it's great to help the Museum --- and you!]

East of Hpewell Bora:

We'll startout on Springhill Road, a few miles east, off 518. Just a short way in, eastward, toward the large farm on Hollow Road, You'll see the 'tree-breaks' --- clearing along an area of overgrown brush and trees; this is the old railroad bed. In some places, the owners cleared away all signs of stones, ties, and rails; in much of the 'tree-breaks' they cleared off the last two, but let the area just grow up. To the west, over the meadow, project your sight to Province Line Road.

HOPWELL 'S PAST

Let's go there. About 100 yds. south of the existing tracks look east for the tree-break, and west to the cleared fields of Bob Moore, who has a 'souvenir', an old railroad tie. Project your sights to Amwell Rd. and go there. Again, just south of the present RR bridge, you can see on the east by the clearing, a 6-8 ft. width of 'tree-break' the old bed. Toward west, project yourself and thru much brush, over the brook, is Dr. Cortelyou's 1978 home; the railroad was to the north of the building. Private property! So continue on 518 to the end of Somerset St.; if a stranger turns right at the Sunoco Station on Rt.518 and Hamilton Ave., then 2 blocks north is Somerset St.; go east to the end! If you want to trek the eastward area, you'll need old clothes! Ed Schanck, 9 Hamilton Ave., recalls "remnants" of the abandoned M&S RR beds on Somerset St. when his childhood home was on the south side of the street. (He also remembers an old brickyard and its later remains on the north side of Somerset St. near the Hopewell Valley Oil Co. He was also very familiar with many of the abandoned bridge abutments and crumbling trestles so well known by David Bellis.)

In Hopewell Boro:

I find it hard to picture, but on the Hopewell Boro map, it is very clear that Somerset St. is on a straight line with Model Ave. The railroad bed was on these two streets AND between, which is just north of J.B. Hill's lumberyard building; past the brick chocolate factory; about up the sidewalks of the buildings opposite the RR depot; going further south to be UNDER the garage, and corner store!! (Rose and Chubby's in 1985). I found an old railroad spike, apparently bent and discarded in the sewer excavation just north of J.B. Hill's office.

"The corner store" --- I have some deeds on it. Mr. Bellis was certain that he remembered a story saying that its cellar floor was built directly ON the railroad bed. When this store was owned by D. Walter Ewing and wife Eva, there was a famous blue room in the basement where the men of the town socialized and played cards. The floor was so deep --- or the height of the room was unusual -- because it had been built ON the old roadbed.

We also must be made aware of this fact: About 1912-1915 the present N. Greenwood Ave. at 'this' location was raised 3-4 ft.! --- to enable the early cars to go up over the railroad bridge! With sidewalks then several feet 'below' the road --- what a mess when it rained hard! [[handwritten note: Bridge being built 1919.]]

Two 'fabulous', very concrete proofs of the old railroad: --- (1) a stone marker about 24-30 inches high, the marker for the "northerly side of the M&S RR right of way" is in the hedge of the property of Mr. Richard Kane, #6 Model Ave., and also in the line of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. A. Kintner, 10 Model Ave. --- the latter having been so helpful in this railroad research. (2) a similar marker on the northeast corner of Louellen and Model Ave. --- by a mail box.

HOPWELL 'S PAST

While we are on Model Ave., it's a good time to explain the M&S RR deed of 1895 which gave Model Ave. as "the abandoned M&S RR"; Trenton, Vol. 198, P564 on; it "nailed" down the location of this Mercer and Somerset RR. It showed a large piece of land which in 1891 had belonged to J.M. Phillips, 1892 J. Mason Ege and Levi Reed, 1892 also Abram S. Golden and Amos C. Bond, 1895 A.S. Golden (Vol. 176, P325; Vol. 167, P475; Vol. 186, P78, and Vol. 198, P564 on). A large part of that land is today 1986 Van Daren's Lumber Yard. In 1895 it was bounded on the north by the present railroad; 223 ft. southeast was the "Mercer & Somerset RR abandoned" !!! An interesting quote "the owner must keep the fences between this property and the railroad IN GOOD SHAPE o r!!!"

Westward but still in the Boro, at Louellen and Model, look across Roy Skillman's fields (Eaton place in the 1980's) toward the "development" on W. Broad St. Somewhere on, and, or between Charley Holcombe's property, 82 Taylor Terrace, and the lot south of him lies the location of the old railroad bed. We are getting very close to TROUBLE --- near the WAR site!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXVIII - The Saga of the M&S RR - Part III (HVN 5/25/78)

The Saga of the Mercer and Somerset Railroad, Part III of 5 installments.

1870 - 1880 ctd

In the last chapter we were retracing the route of the old Mercer and Somerset RR --- from Hollow Road to Somerset St., Model Ave., to the rear of "the development" west of J. Lamson's. We are now ready to travel west from the borough. The properties on the large northeast corner of Van Dyke Rd. and Spur 518, (two of the helpful owners Joseph Barna and Jerry Tomarchio), will be discussed in much greater detail in the next installment (chapter). At present, we'll just say that the old M&S RR was "in" the back near the present railroad.

So now we go to the bridge on Van Dyke Road for an "overlook". Eastward you see the present railroad and much overgrown bushes and trees south of it (back of the above corner). By sight, you can only guess the crossing of the two old railroads. The depth of the present railroad might lead you to ask, "Why all the fuss? Why didn't the D&BB RR just build a bridge?" We must be told that in 1876 this ground was all ON THE SAME LEVEL; since then, the present railroad has cut deeper and deeper to upgrade their bed. Look westward. You'll see the present railroad curving southward. The old S&M RR ran very close to it just north of this bridge. Very careful observation on the east but north of the present tracks will result in your seeing a triangular shaped lot touching Van Dyke Road --- again all overgrown; this was the RR's original location before it crossed Van Dyke Road. If you can extend the line westward, you can more readily see the westward continuation of the M&S RR. On the Hopewell Township map of TODAY all the above grounds of the M&S RR show more clearly -- on the west is a narrow strip of land, 4 acres, section 21-17, cutting across Wiersdsma's lower land and north of the Stony Brook Recreation Area. This strip Joined the bed that was on David P. Voorhees farm, Van Dyke Road.

Now to Stony Brook Rd. on which we'll find a GREAT leftover. You've just turned right from Rt.654; go north about 1500 ft., which takes you past the S curve and the GARBAGE PAIL! To the right, the treebreak --- that narrow strip mentioned above -- overgrown and not cultivated, is very evident. Look sharply to the left over the brook. You can see on the brook's edge the western abutment of the bridge that the M&S RR used. *(See page 123) But now bring your sight to the east bank, push aside some brush.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

On the road level you will find some HUGE STONES. The agile, adventurous ones must climb down to the brook. You'll marvel at these over 100 year old remains! From this site on Stoney (old spelling') Brook Rd., cast your eyes to the west; the railroad went across the lower part of Rosenthal's fields and across the township dump --- sorry, Hopewell Township Landfill --and across the Marshall's Corner - Woodsville Rd. The 1875 map shows a station located on the edge of Pennytown.

So, now that you've come to the above road, we're about ready to turn left onto route 31. Look first across on the upper left corner for a fence that shows that the field SLANTS --- again, that's the old railroad bed. Continuing south on Rt. 31, everwatching traffic and the right side --- you'll see the bed continuing to slant further and further away from Rt. 31. You'll see houses, a red one is built right on the old railroad bed; to its right where they have cleared the trees, you can easily see the elevated railroad bed. Now, back of the Police Station. Behind the Little league Baseball field. You can drive in here; in back if you don't mind sticky burrs all over your clothing, you can climb a little and be right on the old railroad bed. Have fun! Back on Rt. 31, you can see the "tree-breaks" around the base of the Quarry; also on Woosamonsa just west of the houses on the right; on Yard Road just past the little bridge. By now you can realize the everwidening gap between the present and old M&S RR. It has been meandering slowly westward over as level ground as possible.

BUT, the BEST is yet to come. At Rt. 31 and Delaware Ave., at the light, turn right but proceed slowly. Count 4. The fourth house on the left, 238 W. Delaware Ave., painted gray, is the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Smith Holcombe (1978). I bet you've seen their barn for years and never knew it's historical significance! Don't trespass! This gray barn with vertical siding conceals the Mercer & Somerset DEPOT!!! Viewing the barn from the south was such a delight -- as were the Holcombes. You can really SEE the old 1870's station with the wide-overhanging roof!! Inside, still to be seen is the same overhang, which has been concealed on its west and north by newer 'outsides'. The depot is 1.5 story, but with full standing room in the center of the 2nd floor of the building. Hand-hewn beams --- 5"x8" up to 7x7 and 8x8!, throughout. Wooden pegs. Outside, they've left the authentic curved tops to the windows. This building (1985 a car repair shop), was located just one property west in its lifetime. It was moved to its present location and placed on what Mr. Holcombe believes WAS the old railroad bed! Looking out from the rear, you can see that the railroad curved southwesterly across the field, across Dublin Road just north of the large white farmhouse of Mrs. R. H. Compton. Looking carefully at the Compton's north fence line, you will again "see" the path of the old M&S RR, just north of the fence in cultivated fields. Mrs. Compton has often taken her Girl Scouts hiking along this route, on back into the woods about a mile. There, they've camped overnight by the arches or embankments of this old M&S RR! This is the property of Grant Hoch and his daughter Catharine.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Miss Hoch told me that on far back land of their property are the ONLY TWO remaining TUNNELS of the M&S RR! "Tunnels" brings to mind "a railroad riding through"; these are about five foot high arches --- bridges --over which the trains actually ran. And in excellent condition! Which is just great if you've researching a railroad over 100 years old and GONE!

I hope you traveled through Dublin Road, are on Pennington Washington Crossing Road, going west. At the light, on Scotch Road, turn right. Slowly up the little hill. On the right look towards the easily seen elevated bed of the old railroad. In the S-curve, you "see" the bridge which must have been there to cross the road, because on the left of that S turn, on the south side of the driveway of Dr. Halloway's is the huge stone embankment STILL INTACT !! Without close inspection, you might take it for only a built-up part into the driveway, I have heard that his house sits directly on the old railroad bed.

Back to the light, turn right, go past the municipal building. Look towards it and on into the fields north and west of it --- there ran the old railroad. Slow Down! Because the railroad ran across this road! Jacob Creeks Road is the road bed!! Winding! Miss Oldis told me much of the above, and also said that the little "bridges" on Jacobs Creek Road over the many tiny streams that run UNDER the road, the M&S RR used --- amazing that they are still practically intact supporting today's road! As you travel down Jacob's Creek Road, you may sit in amazement if you can "put yourself into a railroad car of the 1870's" ! Eventually out to RT. 29 --- it was a long railroad ride, slow and winding--; now you see the present north and south railroad (it was the Belvidere then) with which the M&S connected. This was Somerset Junction!

One more item: Miss Oldis told me this but I ran out of energy! Just past the turn onto Jacob Creeks Road, on Pennington - Washington Crossing Road runs to the left the "old road". Somewhere up in there, she believes there was another depot (Woolsey Depot), perhaps still in existence having been turned into a home. If you live there, would you PLEASE write me? I have since learned that W.D. is gone!!!

Do have as much fun as I did tracing this abandoned M&S RR ... Let's shed a few tears it was only a child when it died

* [By 1987, due to the heavy rains this spring, this old abutment on the west side of the brook is washing away! Stone by stone! Too bad.]

More next chapter.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXIX - The Saga of the M&S RR - Part IV (HVN 7/6/78)

The Saga of the Mercer and Somerset Railroad, Part IV of 5 installments.

1870 - 1880 ctd

Now that we know that this railroad DID EXIST in the 1870's; know just about where it ran in our immediate area, know where at least 2-3 depots are (Lenz's, 41-43 Model Ave. Hopewell; Holcombe's Pennington; and Woolsey Station); know of those 2 "northerly right of way" stone markers on Model Ave.; know of many remains --- tree-breaks and abutments, it is time to get information from some of the deeds I have found.

Their wording is hazy! Certainly nothing like the precise language of today. Of course, to the landowners then, who'd seen the surveyors at work with their markers set, it was very clear.

Quotes: "along a certain boundary along the line of the said Railroad Company as located by the Engineer(?) thereof the center of the line of the railroad stakes set out extending 33 ft. on either side of the center total 66 ft" from one neighboring landowner to the next! The railroad ran N61 degree 48 degree E continuously through this town which provides at least a STRAIGHT line! This measurement is very close to that of today of Model and Somerset St. These deeds are found in Trenton in: Vol. 81, P115 on and Vol. 127, P52 on.

I'll give the owner of 1870's, dollar value paid for the land; and the 1978 owners:

Province Line to Stoney Brook:

Randolph Stout 11-07-1870 .. \$1026 .. Bob Moore (1978)

Charles Stout 11-30-1870 .. \$ 912 ..

Dr. Burchfield's property and south below the present railroad: (1978)

Reuben McPherson 11-30-1870 .. \$ 750 .. Dr. Cortelyou (1978)

All boro land east of N. Greenwood and north of Broad St.:

Stephen Blackwell 11-07-1870 .. \$1252 ..

West of N. Greenwood out to Louellen St.:

Joseph Moore Phillips 11-10-1870 .. \$1137 ..

Louellen west to Lamson's (1978), (about):

Enoch Phillips 11-26-1870 .. \$ 256 ..

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

About the development area:

Jonathan Van Cleve Blackwell ... 11-07-1870 .. \$ 735 ..

Up to Van Dyke Road (called then Moore's Road):

Samuel R. Holcombe \$ 615 ..

John Stout Hoagland \$ 870 ..

Between Van Dyke and Stoney Brook:

Samuel and Andrew Ege (\$\$ data not copied).

Whereas most of the deeds were for a routine 66 ft. strip across the property, there was one VERY different one. Book 127, P83 Joseph Moore Phillips who sold not only the 66 ft. but more --- and who, maybe insisted on those 2 stone markers --from the northerly corner on N. Greenwood, it went south 117 ft. which puts that corner about between Dr. Azzaro's and Mrs. Cataldo's, and opposite the south side of Cook Street. The railroad went to about the Dr.'s side of his house. This 177 ft. corner was also the corner of long ago owners of the land south to Broad St. --- 1789 deed showing Wm. Dallas before this date, J. Blackwell and Catharine, Rev. John Case 1805, Daniel Blackwell 1800's, up to Mrs. Guinness who owns (1978) just the southeast corner of the then large, about 8 acre lot. Back to J.M.P's deed: The line then went westward parallel to the railroad for about 1400 ft., where it angled sharply south (just past T. Fillebrown's, 53 Model Ave. and the old, gone blacksmith shop) for about 48 ft. then came back to the 'parallel' another 751 ft. to Louellen St.; then up Louellen back to that stone marker. This large area gives room for the Depot, siding, etc. The 1875 Boro map has to be wrong placing the M&S depot (Ed Lenz's house, 41-43 Model Ave.), southwest corner of Model and Mercer, BETWEEN the tracks of the M&SRR and the present one. Miss Weart is the authority for telling that this house was this depot and that she often went there to board the train. It would seem natural that an access street was needed to get easily to the depot --- Mercer Street. And the ties uncovered on Cook St. were the end of a siding.

An 1874 Hopewell Herald gave timetable of trains running connecting the Belvidere RR with the other end, Millstone. Same paper: "..... Main Street and 518, the toll road (long gone) were almost the only streets. So much DIRT, MUD !! Sidewalk were usually BOARD, although fine flagstone was available from Kirkendall's Quarry on Stoney Brook Rd. (by the S curve near 518). The town had fine wells ... gardens fenced in ... ornamental iron and paling fences" One resident told me that when cattle came in on the railroad, they were driven up Blackwell Ave. to the pens on Seminary. No wonder they had fences!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

And now T-R-Ø-U-B-L-E rears its ugly head. The Mercer and Somerset RR was in operation completely, one track, from March 7, 1874. These quotes are from the Railroad Gazette, Sept. 14, 1872, P408: "Work on the section between Pennington and Hopewell is going on. It has been in operation for some time from Somerset Junction to Pennington. The road was leased and operated by the United Companies of N.J., and was included in the lease to the Pennsylvania RR Co. In connection with the Belvidere on the west and the Millstone and New Brunswick Branch on the east, it will form a loop to the N.J. Division between New Brunswick and Trenton."

- Jan. 25, 1873, P39: "Nearly completed to Millstone";
- Feb. 8, 1873, P60: "Open to Hopewell";
- Oct. 25, 1873, P438: " ... track laid to Harlingen"; .
- Nov. 22, 1873, P475: "Track is laid to East Millstone, N.J., about 22.75 miles. The bridges over the river and canal at East Millstone are completed and connection made with Millstone and New Brunswick RR. Road is being ballasted will open in a short time ... when finished will form a second or loop line from Trenton to New Brunswick which is 39 miles long. It (M&SRR) has been opened from Somerset Junction to Pennington for the last 2 years, to Hopewell several months. It will be operated by the Penn. RR Co. It has thus far been attached to the Belvidere Division. It passes through well-settled country, and will have considerable local traffic."
- Jan. 10, 1874, P14: "Road completed, but only a portion open to traffic."
- Feb. 21, 1874, P67: "Extension from Hopewell east ready to be turned over to operating department. Trains will soon run the entire road."
- Mar. 7, 1874, P88: "Trains are now running regularly on the whole length. It is operating as a branch of the Belvidere of the Pa. RR."

The directors were elected Feb. 14, 1874. In Jan. 31, 1875, the Pa. RR openly acknowledges that the M&SRR was a part of that railroad. TROUBLE, TROUBLE, coming late in 1875.

The Delaware and Bound Brook RR Co. which was building its tracks from both the EAST and WEST of this town was due to cross the M&S Railroad tracks --- TROUBLE inevitable.

J.T. Cunningham in Railroading in N.J. says that the power struggle over the vital traffic between N.Y. and Phila., and an indirect control over the traffic at Hoboken and Jersey City waterfront led to THREE Wars:

- (1) Garbage war with Jersey City,
- (2) Tunnel War out in the Meadow,
- (3) AND OUR FROG WAR!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

What is a frog? Other than being a "leaping amphibian, a hoarseness, a horney pad in a horse's foot, a loop as on a belt, an ornamental braiding", it is "A DEVICE permitting wheels on one rail of a track to CROSS an intersecting rail"! (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary).

Several cartoons of that time were drawn depicting a live frog on intersecting tracks. But those showing right angle intersection were way off. It was a very slanted intersection. What was REAL was the struggle to build this FROG.

The DOUBLE tracks of the Delaware and Bound Brook was surveyed to cross the one track (M&SRR) about one mile southwest of the village of Hopewell. Through the help of David Bellis who did a survey of the large northeast corner of Van Dyke and Rt.654 (Spur 518), who also had available a June 1929 survey of this same land by David M. Voorhees, we can be VERY certain that the cross over was ON the north property line of this corner. Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Tomarchio kindly permitted me to copy their survey map done by Dave Bellis and David Voorhees. What Dave Bellis remembered so clearly, and what impressed me also, is the unusual slants on that back portion which is also the boundary of the present railroad. Generally speaking, you have just a long narrow strip to show the railroadland. Here is something different! From the western boundary of the estate of Edwin S. Titus of 1929, --- "the development" now --- there is a run of 264 ft. N84 degree E, then 184 ft. N62 degree E (almost parallel to the present tracks, then (going gradually westward) a HUGE curve inward and back to the tracks, and on out to the bridge. Getting out the Hopewell Boro map, lining up Somerset and Model and the first slant on the south side of today's railroad AND the slant on the north side of the railroad near Van Dyke Rd., I get a STRAIGHT line The thick underbrush is on railroad property on both sides of the present tracks. THIS IS THE SCENF OF THE FROG WAR --- the setting being laid by Nov. 18, 1875, when the D&PBRR was ready to cross by laying their FROG, and M&S RR certainly WAS NOT!



HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXX - The Death of the M&S RR - Part V (HVN 9/7/76)

The Death of the Mercer & Somerset Railroad - Part V of 5 installments.

1870 - 1880 ctd / THE FROG WAR

On Nov. 18, 1875 the Delaware and Bround Brook RR forces were READY to lay the frog. The Mercer & Somerset RR forces brought up a locomotive to be on THE 'spot' where it had to be laid. Uneasy quiet and tension continued through November and December. The opposing forces seemed quite content to do little but glare at each other. The attorneys for each were fighting it out in Trenton. Hopewell inhabitants knew a clash was coming.

The only time the engine was moved was when a train of the M&S was coming by.

I found a deed --- a STRANGE one --- that no one has ever mentioned. Perhaps this was the spark that was to end this period of waiting???? Jan. 1, 1876 a man holding a \$500,000 mortgage on the M&S RR defaulted! (Vol. 84, P78; Vol. 34, Mtg., P29).

On Jan. 4, 1876 the courts made an award to the M&S RR for damage up to \$325. The FROG of course would be laid as the court said the D&BB RR had a legal right to do so. The award was REFUSED! Routine continued one more day.

On Jan. 5, 1876 at 7:20 p.m. a train was due to pass over the Mercer & Somerset tracks. The locomotive of the M&S had as usual been moved to the siding to let the passenger train go by. It was dark. No one could see what the D&BB had planned. As soon as the engine went back to the siding, about 200 men, who'd been hiding in the bushes, sprang out of ambush, and by means of ties and rails blocked the locomotive 679. They chained it FAST to the siding rails! It wailed and wailed as soon as it realized its plight!! The D&BB RR men removed a part of the main line --- back at the frog-crossing. Work was begun on placing the frog. Orders were sent by the M&S RR to send Engine 336 from Millstone to RAM the D&BB work. Time elapsed. It finally came --- roared --- and rammed through the barricades --- and --- nosed INTO the MUD!

The Sheriff came to Hopewell sometime between the 7:20 p.m. Jan. 5 and Jan. 7, 12:10 a.m. By the morning of Jan. 6th 1500 people were out to watch the struggle. Most of the people seemed to be for the D&BB RR and against the monopoly --- the M&S RR. Both railroads brought in men. By Jan. 6, 11 p.m. the situation was becoming EXPLOSIVE!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Telegrams were exchanged thus:

(1) From Trenton Jan. 7, 12:10 a.m. to Sheriff Joseph L. Mount at Hopewell "Is there anything new in the situation?" Answer! W.S. Stryker, Adj. Gen.

(2) From Hopewell Jan. 7, 12:40 a.m. to Governor Bedle, Trenton: "Send 2 companies of soldiers immediately ... Am looking for a collision any moment." J.S. Mount, Sheriff.

(3) From Trenton Jan. 7, 1 a.m. to Sheriff Mount. "Governor has ordered out four companies and will dispatch as soon as possible". W.S. Strylier, Adj. Gen.

(4) From Trenton Jan. 7, 1:05 a.m. to Col. A.W. Angel Lambertville: "Four companies from Trenton ordered to Hopewell immediately. Go there at once and assume command on Sheriff's order". W.S. Stryker, Adj. Gen.

(5) From Trenton Jan 7, 1:40 a.m. to Col. A. W. Angel: "Send Lambertville company to Hopewell immediately."

The militia was turned out by ringing of firehouse bells and those on Trenton City Hall. They left on a special train at 4 p.m. Actually, they were not up to full strength, numbering only about 200. BUT what they had was important --- new Springfield breechloading rifles and plenty of ball cartridges. When they arrived, the campsite was a sea of MUD, which helped a little to keep some spectators away.

During the morning, the Delaware and Bound Brook company succeeded in finishing the frog laying after which they tore up the Mercer & Somerset track to prevent its operation! The latter made a desperate attempt to reestablish its right of way. A locomotive was driven at full speed toward the gap in a vain attempt to JUMP IT ! The engineer jumped because the engine overturned.

The next day the D&BB counsel went to Newark and received an injunction to prevent the M&S RR Co. from removing their frog! It was raced back to Hopewell. At 5 p.m. it was read to all "Peace is to be kept. Repairs are to be made." That afternoon the military were able to leave the scene on a 3:30 train (Jan.8).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Jan. 5, 6, 7, 8, 1876

Four Days of Excitement

"THE FROG WAR"

With the last obstacle out of the way, the D&BB was able to finish laying the present tracks. The first Delaware and Bound Brook train ran from Phila. to Jersey City, May 1, 1876.

The Mercer and Somerset RR could not make a profit especially now with this competition. The M&S RR DIED. In the same deed I mentioned before of the Jan. 1, 1876 foreclosure of the \$500,000 mortgage were given the facts that on Dec. 29, 1879 this railroad was sold to G. M. Dorrance for \$50,000! If there were no reverter clause in the original deed, the people who'd received money from the M&S RR in 1870 often bought back 'their' land for about one-tenth of the sale price! I'm assuming that the present railroad bought some of this land whereon the frog war had been fought; that could explain why their boundaries in back of Barna's & Tomarchio is not the usual straight strip. (There is another insert of land belonging to the railroad, showing on the township map, where the present railroad had bought a right of way into the old quarry back of the Legion and Charlie's Restaurant).

The present R.R. STATION was built --- I've been told in 1876 --- however another perhaps more reliable source says 1882. In 1986, a Mr. Bernard Fedor is planning an historical restoration of our R.R. Station.

The Women's Seminary on E. Broad St. had a paper called the Kaleidoscope. Quote: "The railroad company (D&BB) has just laid out a new street which might with propriety be called Railroad Boulevard. It runs from Rock Road Ave. (N. Greenwood) to the depot, and offers very fine building lots fronting on the railroad".

When the M&S RR beds were removed, Model Ave. was for a time called Railroad St. Today only east of N. Greenwood to Somerset St. is called Railroad Ave. The street from Blackwell to Hamilton was once called Park Row about 1900.

So ends the story of the Mercer & Somerset RR except for --- a humorous, quite imaginative, poem called the Battle of the Frog written by a railroad employee, William H. Johnson. There is a handwritten copy, and a newspaper copy of this in the Hopewell Museum. It will be printed in the next chapter.

After the publication of the poem, we will continue with other happenings of the 1870-1880 period.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXI - The Battle of the Frog

The Battle of the Frog, Jan. 1876

To end Betty Gantz's series on Railroad history in Hopewell Borough, the following poem is offered for interested readers:

THE BATTLE OF THE FROG

By William H. Johnson

The sun had thrown its last dull ray,
O'er Hopewell on a winter's day,
When a frog was heard these words to speak,
I went to lay me down to sleep.

For two long months I've waited here,
Through weather cold, through weather drear,
Watching a chance in my nest to creep,
I want to lay me down to sleep.

Will some one take my weary head,
And put me in my little bed,
And rob that engine of its keep,
I want to lay me down to sleep.

The driver of that horse of mail,
Did listen to that frog's sad tale,
And wore a grin as he thus did speak,
Lay where you are and go to sleep.

For two long months I've waited here,
Through weather cold, through weather drear,
With extra orders for to keep,
You where you are, so go to sleep.

A stranger, through the mist and gloom,
Did to this frog in silence go,
And to him in soft whispers said,
Just tell that fellow to go below.

That driver's task is nearly done,
His double pay has near run round,
For tonight while the regular train does pass,
I'll bind his engine to the ground.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Now silence reigns o'er Hopewell vale,
And naught is heard but the distant wail,
Of an engine's whistle loud and long,
Rushing like madness on to Millstone.

The watchdog from the crossing must fly,
To let the regular train go by,
So mounting his engine from the ditch,
He runs the monster on the switch.

The stranger to the frog now says,
I'll go and see that job is done,
I'll bind him strong, I'll bind him fast,
That trip he's taken shall be his last.

Keep up your spirits my old chap,
And ere another dawn we'll see,
Who's master of this cabbage patch,
The P. R. R. or D. & B. B.

The stranger left and through the din,
Of smoke and steam, was never seen,
The man who with ties and chains now bound,
That mighty engine to the ground.

The 7:20 nearer comes, to where soon,
Will be heard the beat of drums,
Where men will fight both hash and grog.

The train had hardly crossed the switch,
When a yell is heard from every ditch,
From every bank and from every glen,
Is heard the yell of the Bound Brook men.

They come numbering near 200 strong,
They come bringing ties and chains along,
Some lugging rails and others a log,
And now begins the fight for the frog.

The watchdog signals the train to stop,
To back down on them and murder their plot,
Tho' the title of watchdog he always maintained,
For once in his life he found he was chained.

Then in cars he packed them tight,
With tools enough, then all is right,
With a back to the driver and a graceful nod,
He tells them to fight for their company's god.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The engine sped towards Hopewell vale,
Like lighting it rushed o'er the iron rail,
They reach the spot, but for fight don't care,
For still three to one stood before them there.

The news had spread from ear to ear,
That Scott's reinforcements would soon be here,
He has made his boasts, let them do their best,
He'd have that frog ere the sun reached the west.

Then from every shop and every farm,
They rushed to save the frog from harm,
Till nearly 800 by nerved men led,
Did guard the frog in his little bed.

Then Scott's pups with a half savage laugh,
In an old caboose rigged a telegraph,
So Tom could know from the chain bound train,
"Ways that are dark and tricks that are vain."

Now another train from the westward stirs,
Bringing Boss O'Brien and a train load of cars,
He licks his chops at the feast far ahead,
He'll munch the frogs bones when froggy's dead.

The spot is reached, the train now slacks,
O'Brien Jumps off and his lips he smacks,
He runs to the front his courage to show,
Sees the breastwork of ties, and mutters "no go".

An order from Scott o'er the wires now comes,
Its "boys use your engines as battering guns,
And batter 37 long and well,
Only save a piece for the centennial."

But Scott gave that order a little too loud,
It ran through the ranks of the B.B. crowd,
With a yell under which the stoutest heart quails,
They run to disconnect the rails.

One driver of an engine great,
At 37 a dash does make,
He butts Scott's wrecked one full three feet,
Another foot, the frog he'll meet.

One more like that will be his last,
He tries to back, but lo! he's fast,
For the B.B. boys in the wheels did place,
Ties and rails in fond embrace.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

An engine at the other end,
The pile of ties now tries to rend,
And scatter them from east to west,
And on the frog his pilot rest.

All efforts are vain those ties to cast,
He tries to back, but finds he fast,
Then the Bound Brook boys gave a loud hurra,
For instead of two blocked, they now have four.

O'Brien with a dismal wail,
Swears he'll have them sent to jail,
But the frog still wearing that comical grin,
Yells out "O'Brien that too darned thin".

And again to destruction the boys set to work,
Rails are torn up with a single jerk,
And at either end of that frog so brave,
They dug for the curs a dismal grave.

Now evening throws its chilly shade,
And campfires through the ranks are made,
With stinging jest and comic song,
They strive to while the hours along.

But the Bound Brook boys didn't come to nap,
So they fixed the regular the very same cap,
And instead of backing down in the frog's bed,
He had only one way left, and that --- go ahead.

And now comes the clatter and the din,
The frog looks on with a comical grin,
Rails are torn up, ties displaced,
And Tom Scott challenged to his face.

Now the work progresses steadily on,
Not a man looks up till his task is done,
Till the bunk is made, then with stately tread,
They place the frog in his little bed.

They give three cheers for the Bound Brook road,
Three for that monster iron toad,
And as o'er the cot the cheers they gave,
They wrote on the headboard, Tom Scott's grave.

But hardly had their cheers been given,
When a light was seen in the eastern heaven,
Soon a sound was heard likes rumbling moan,
And at last was heard a whistle groan.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Nearer the headlight throws its darts,
Higher and higher fly the sparks,
Nearer and nearer on it comes,
Yelling destruction --- with vengeance it runs.

'Twas Ellis the great, and his engine true,
He came to show what Tom Scott could do,
I'll mount that frog one mile beyond,
And drive those devils off the ground.

He raises all steam and the whistle it screams,
To show to the world one of Scott's great schemes,
His engine plunged forward bent on blood,
Ran off the track and was stuck in the mud.

Three more cheers for the Bound Brook road,
Three more cheers for that iron toad,
And in all future time to come,
May it serve all foes as it did this one.

The rails are connected and all made right,
At mid-hour on that dismal night,
With a giant push and a yell to heaven,
They place on the frog old "37".

But, hark, a train comes from the west,
It's driving along at its very best,
Bringing in her cars 100 men strong,
To undo the work of the Bound Brook throng.

It arrives at last at the stopping place,
And meets the frog boys face to face,
And the frog with a look of a devil-may-care,
Yelled out with a grimace "come on if you dare".

But the 90 cent men were not so disposed,
They knew that fighting was bad for the nose,
So they politely declined the frog's request,
And he told them to tumble and give him a rest.

They then to their bunks in silence did creep,
And fearfully laid themselves down to sleep,
While the B.B. boys 'neath the garb of heaven,
Stood watch o'er the frog and 37.

Now word is sent to John Anderson,
To know what in the mischief can be done,
They're two to one, with picks armed strong,
Italians with knives near eight feet long.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

This news through John did send a thrill,
He rushed through the shops at Lambertville,
Sending all his men both grave and gay,
To fight for ninety cents a day.

Says John "the times are very tight,
And now you're called on for to fight,
And if you'll cause the foe to fly,
I'll raise your pay---next 4th of July".

But a shout and a rush in the camp beyond,
Caused the B.B. boys to spring to the ground,
And swear in the most bitter tense,
They'll die if they must in the frog's defense.

But soon they learn the cause of the crash,
The Scottites are answering the call to hash,
While the cry is heard in his fearful charge,
Why did you bring us here to starve?

Some say those fellows wouldn't fight,
Some say they couldn't from overfright,
But for that crowd I will explain,
Two thousand sandwiches that night were slain.

And through the chilly night so long,
Is heard the jest is heard the song,
One singing "Tommy don't you go,"
Another, "The regular army, oh."

But the dawn of day has hardly come,
When is heard the sound of fife and drum,
And the 7th New Jersey, with bayonets bright,
Now file in order to the right.

Now Sheriff Mount, who all night had been,
With eagle eye upon the scene,
Had sent for those troops six hours before,
For them to win glory on this field of gore.

The Captain to Mount in a voice most bland,
Says, "I place myself at your command,
And do with us what you think is right,
For at the moment we're ready to fight."

The Sheriff pointing through the fog,
Says, "take your men and guard that frog,
And give those boys up there a rest,
And do as they --- your very best."

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

And all day long was heard the drum,
Amid the captured engines' whizzing hum,
And the frog did listen to the martial tread,
Of the boys in gray round his little bed.

Scott's aid-de-camps gave up in despair,
They found the frog had hold of their hair,
But some one said, "don't give up too soon,
Chancellor Runyon may give back your boon."

So they stop'd their tears and wiped their eyes,
They hushed their groans and gulped their sighs,
And all day long with unsteady gait,
For the Chancellor's order in grief did wait.

It came at last, they rushed to hear,
What news it brings their hearts to cheer,
And these were the words that to them were read,
At the foot of that iron frog's mud stained bed.

"That frog in its bed in peace shall lie,
Whoever says no must surely die,
And all the expense of this little plot,
Shall be borne by the Rev. Thomas A. Scott."

"And now Sheriff see that this order's obeyed,
Keep the troops on this spot till the last rail's laid,
And wait here till all confusion shall cease,
Then each one and all to your homes go in peace."

The frog looked up with that same comic grin,
And yelled in strong accents "bully for him.",
Then they gave three cheers for the B.B. road,
And bid farewell to that monster toad.

Then the frog looked up with tears in his eyes,
Sends these words gloating on to the skies:
"Messrs. Taylor and Snook, Saylor and Boggs,
Receive the blessing of the king of frogs."

"While Bound Brook trains will o'er me fly,
While Tom Scott o'er my bed will cry,
While M. & S. trains will o'er me creep,
I'll lay me down in peace to sleep."

("Herald" Print, Hopewell, N.J.)

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXII - Little Histories: 1870 - 1880 (HVN 12/28/78)

I know SOME people shy away from reading poetry. I hope you didn't. That 64 stanza verse --- not really good poetry --is good "reading-aloud" material. I think it is important because it was the only 'story' written about the event -- the Frog War --- very near the time it happened. It was written by a man who worked on the railroad. He had a sense of humor! And it's good that it has been saved these 102 years. (This poem was in the Dec. 7, 1978 H.V. News)

On Aug. 4, 1977 this column started on "little histories" of our town. By March 2, 1978 these had been recalled through the 1860's. From March to now, we've had fun finding the old Mercer and Somerset RR and telling its saga.

We have seen our town grow from NO houses in 1723, to three owners in 1726 and 1732; to 1747 when the first stone church was built here --- the Old School Baptist Meeting House (now brick); to 1776 with The Church and six to eight places; by 1810 perhaps 10-20; to 1860 with about 15-16 homes and businesses. THE TOWN IS NOW GOING TO GROW MORE RAPIDLY.

There are three sources relating to the size of this town: in a town map of 1875 for sale at the Hopewell Museum; an account of this time in the Mercer County Atlas of 1883, in the Museum; and an account in the Fireman's Anniversary of Fifty Years, 1911 - 1961 booklet.

In the last named there is this description of Hopewell: "... on the Mercer and Somerset RR, 16 miles from Trenton, 2 general stores, a harness maker's shop, a shoemaker's shop, a millinery establishment, a carriage and wagon manufactory, a flour mill, three grain houses, a good hotel, a resident physician; 35 dwellings, about 200 people." This above quote is very similar to the material in the 1883 M.Co. Atlas.

The 1875 map shows: the M&SRR depot which must have been south of the two railroads, --[Delaware & Bound Brook (today's RR) and Somerset Branch of the Belvidere RR (M&SRR)]--, and not between them as shown thereon. On Model Ave., in addition to the depot, were only: the Finney and Fitter Saw Mill, the homes on the south of the tracks between today's Louellen & Mercer St., belonging to J.M. Phillips, I. Sullivan, C. Chatten, H. Sutphen, H.E. Brokaw and a Hay Press.

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[Bob Fetter, before his death in July, 1975, gave me some more information about this saw mill and his grandfather, Anthony Gabriel Fetter. A.G. Fetter, born in 1835 in Hohenberg, Wurttemberg, south of Germany and Bavaria, came to America 5/1/1849. He worked with this Mr Finney at Stockton, N.J. He married Bersheba Clark Reid, the ancestors of the Hights of Hightstown - in 1868. He became a partner in 1865. That business moved then to Hopewell in 1874. He later became sole owner. The mill later burned and was rebuilt. This mill then located at the corner of Louellen St., Model Ave., and Lanning Ave. (today's names of the streets) made many forms of timber for nearby use but also supplied much timber for boat building. This mill supplied the hardwood beams for the original ship, the Mauretania. From the trees of the land he owned, he made fellowes and whiffle trees used in the carriages of the Czar of Russia. The first telephone in Hopewell was placed in this mill. The second in the Hopewell RR station in 1876. The first water to be made available to the Hopewell Boro citizens came from the well at the saw mill, the source was a spring on the John Hart property. The saw mill made the church pews used in the Hopewell Presbyterian Chapel in 1877.]

There were NO houses in Hopewell Village in 1875 west of 86-88 West Broad Street, which had been the home of Enoch Phillips; when he died intestate, his son David 'sold' to his sister Martha Phillips a triangle of land, which started at the intersection of Louellen and Broad and extended to just past J. Lamson's western line! Martha lived at 86-88 W. Broad in 1875.

On the south side of Broad St. there was at 153 W. Broad, the HOGE'S FARM house, J. Hoge's today. The town but one home from #75 W. Broad, the school of 1855, to 153 W. Broad St.; in 1872 a home for its retiring minister, was built on the north east corner of the Parsonage farm, today it is #123 W. Broad. East of 75 W. Broad there were 17 buildings up to and including the Calvary Baptist Church. Opposite these on the north side of Broad were: home of C.V.D. Stout, B.S. Leigh's home and wheelwright shop, B. Blackwell's home (?) and harness shop, E.M. Phillips hotel, the First Baptist Church and its graveyard, Zephaniah Stout's home, blacksmith and wheelwright shop of E.D. Wood, the 3 homes of Mrs. E.H. Blackwell, Dr. J.A. Miller, and S.N. Dalrymple.

On the north side of East Broad St., there were NO homes except that of Stephen Blackwell who also operated a store in a separate building by 1875 (the family home and store were earlier in the one building, 45 E. Broad). S. Blackwell also had a Coal Yard --- back about where his later descendants had J.B. Hill's Lumber Yard.

On the south side of Broad --- opposite this large S. Blackwell farm --- and east of the Calvary Baptist Church were: today's Hopewell Valley Inn belonged to Mrs. C. Riley, Mrs. Van Arsdale's home was the Hopewell Seminary of Miss E.H. Boggs, the large home across from today's Museum was the home of Nelson D. Blackwell.

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At Ken Hullfish's home lived Mr. and Mrs. S.S. Ege --- he had a blacksmith shop out back (he also owned the one on "The Point" of 518 and W. Broad) and Mrs. Ege had a millinery shop in their home. Dr. O'Neilss was Mrs. E. Sutphen's. There was NO house on the southwest corner of Princeton and Broad.

There were 4 more houses on Broad east of Princeton Ave.: those of Mrs. J.S. Wyckoff, S.W. Taylor, W. Buckley, Mrs. S. Allshouse, A Mrs. M.J. Stout owned a house next but way back from the street. Nelson D. Blackwell owned three houses on the south side of Columbia Ave. east of Princeton Ave.

Thank heavens for that Centennial Speech of 1876. It states that there were 55 dwellings, some of which were double, 83 families, about 400 people. Much information can be obtained of these inhabitants by studying the old census books of 1870, 1880 at the Trenton Archives. (Someday I hope someone does this census research.)

Other items of interest in the decade: the manse of the Calvary Baptist Church was built in 1872; burned in 1893 but rebuilt soon. In 1873 John Q. McPherson operated a store at 47 W. Broad; the 1875 map shows J. Ewing there with also a printing office. In 1874 the Phinney and Fetter sawmill was operating at the corner of Model and Louellen. They had 16 of the best and largest mules! They were also used to smooth the muddy streets! No macadam, concrete, or even good stone streets then!

In 1874 the Hopewell Herald Stock Co. was formed. It is a big event when a town is large enough to have a newspaper! R. Slack was its first editor. The Presbyterian Church has a copy of the first Hopewell Herald published.

In 1874 Farley and Taylor had the first drug store here --location unknown. Incidentally the 1875 map shows NO building then between the historical home of Mr. and Mrs. S. Runyan today and the Calvary Baptist Church!! 1 NO drug store, NO grocery store, NO South Greenulood Ave. !!!

On May 1, 1877, there was a terrible fire --- out in today's development --- Just west of the Amoco Garage --- a huge home built by and for Jonathan Van Cleve Blackwell in 1857 costing \$17,000 --- a lot then! --- burned. From the fireman's booklet "... the house was too tall for the existing fire ladders" I was told by a descendant of J.V.C. Blackwell that the fire resulted from arson! Firefighting in those days, with what seems like practically no equipment to us today, must have been most frustrating. It was "rescue what you could of the contents and hope the bucket brigade would put out the fire."

On our purple house on the southeast corner of Princeton and Columbia: Jack Weart told me that it was built for his grandfather, and that they occupied it on May 1, 1876 when Jack's father was just a baby.

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The present Museum was built in 1877 as a home for the retired farmer Randolph Stout. In 1909, Mr. H.A. Smith resided there.

On #18, 22, 24 W. Broad St.: they were built by Ed Wood. #18 in 1874, #22 in 1875, each being then essentially the same house plan. John Blackwell bought #18 from the two Staples (Ege) sisters when he moved from Marshalls Corner to town. His daughter Mary, (Mrs. Wilmer (Tut) Moore) said that she came here when she was about 4-5 yrs. old. Since she was born in 1881, it suggests that J.B. bought it about 1885. (Wilmer A. Moore 1883 -1970; Mary Blackwell Moore 1881-1975.) The above material on #18 & #22 was told to me; I have not yet done research on these deeds. #24 was built by Ed Wood in 1882 (Hop. Herald of 1882).

In 1877 two churches were built here. In October, the Roman Catholic Church was built on Princeton Ave.; in December, the Presbyterian Chapel at 79 W. Broad; the latter is now a home.

The operation of the Delaware and Bound Brook RR by 1876, the telegraph here by 1875 --- so many things were taking place in this decade!

You can see how much the town did grow from 1860-1880. Even more rapid growth was ahead.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXIII - Little Histories: 1880 - 1890 (HVN 2/22/79)

ONE --- issue of the town paper --- "Hopewell Astonisher" was published in 1881. It was said that the editor of the H.A. could not stand the poor proofreading of the Hopewell Herald, which had started in 1874!!

---[The Hopewell V. News has many years of papers bound, useable, but fragile.]---

The Hopewell Museum has a bound copy of the Hopewell Heralds for the year 1882. Fascinating reading. Quotes: "In the course of a few years we will have good solid streets in town provided 50-100 loads of dirt are scooped into them each summer" "Butter 25 cents a lb." "There are a few rude boys in this town ... girl sent for milk, rudely pushed off the walk offenders before the justice of the peace, if necessary ... " ... "The tingle of the milkman's bell was heard for the first in our streets great accommodation brought to the door." "One hundred years ago, 1782, in Dec. the snow was 15 ft. deep here" A.G. Fetter keeps Mercer St. well leveled down with a scraper pulled by 8 mules" "Whitewash formula: .5 pail of lime, water ready to add., gill of wheat flour, mix well in very little cold water. Pour boiling water over it till it thickens. Stir all together well " "A large lot of heavy paper, suitable for putting under old carpets, is for sale at the Herald office". ... "Milk is 2.5 cents per quart" "too much garbage is being thrown into the stream that runs through town " "Hopewell needs a bank " "Butter is high! Eggs are too high ... Meat is 3-4 highs."

J.M. Leigh was the editor of the Hopewell Herald in 1882. J.M. Dalrymple, owner of the Holcombe house, had a carriage and harness shop where Mr. and Mrs. James Kettle live --- NO --- not in their house, but on this same land. (The Kettle's home was built about 1912.) Miss Martha Phillips, 86-88 W. Broad, had just bought the new wheelwright shop, on land she'd recently sold to J.M. Phillips - -- said land was, a lot between her home and the blacksmith shop at "the point". A.W. Ketcham operated this wheelwright shop. The Presbyterian Church has a very clear picture of this area.

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1882 - FLOOD!

From the 7/22/1882, H.H.: "It rained hard most of the day, but about 4 o'clock it began to POUR. Main St., was flooded F-O-U-R F-E-E-T in front of the hotel. The current was so swift NO ONE could cross the street for an hour!! The tying posts in front of F.F. Holcombe's store (47 W. Broad) were completely submerged! Water was within six inches of his floor. The cellar had 3.5 ft. of water in it. John Wyckoff's home (the Jewelry shop) had water 18 in. high and forced the family to the second floor. Harrison's harness shop (Henderson Realty of 1979 on Mercer St.), was flooded 18 inches. Sidewalks, yard fences, rails, boards, boxes, and barrels were carried downstream. Mrs. B. V. Leigh's (back of Jeweler's) yard fence was damaged and her yard was defaced by surface washing. About one-half of Mrs. Wm. Golden's garden (Casual shoppe) was washed away nothing but solid rock was visible! E.M. Phillips' (46 - 48 W. Broad) wine cellar was well flooded. Sidewalks floated up against the porch. These places were all completely surrounded by water. By 6 p.m. there was still two (2) ft. of water on Mercer St. Summary: Hopewell had a thorough washing out ,"

One reliable source says the Reading RR depot was built in 1882.

In the 1883 Burlington and Mercer Co. Atlas (Alice Blackwell Lewis' copy) is the statement that 402 people lived in town. That says that the town doubled its size of 1876 --- in only 7 yrs. !

1887 MAP

On the lowest floor of the Hopewell Museum, on the wall, is a huge wall map of Hopewell in 1887. In much smaller size, it was reproduced recently by the Boy Scouts. It is now for sale at the Museum. The growth, as shown in the earlier 1875 map to this 1887 map (only 12 years), is fascinating. The old M&SRR right of way has become Railroad Ave., (Model now). Princeton Ave. was then called Union St. NO South Greenwood Ave. NO Hart Ave.

Only street shown north, of the railroad is Front Street BUT no name had been given it. Ruggieri's lane is there. NO today's --- Railroad Ave. NO Cook St., Lafayette, Hamilton and east! NO Prespect St., etc. Seminary went only to Columbia Ave. 86-88 W. Broad, and 79 W. Broad, the most western buildings on Main St. This map can be examined by homeowners for the purpose of determining if a place was built between 1875 and 1887. The 1875 map has 'blocks' or squares for homes with each named. The 1887 map has 29 properties plus 11 businesses, etc., named at the bottom. Also the buildings are drawn showing quite clearly their appearance in 1887.

We are so lucky to have these two maps!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

July 7, 1888 marked the completion of the four room school (the core of the present apartment house) on Model Ave. The land was purchased from, J.M. Phillips; the land cost \$776. The total cost of the 4 room school was \$5,500!

In 1890, the "Cook Block" was built on the northeast corner of Broad and N. Greenwood. Mr. Cook lived at No. 1 Bank Plaza --the "red" victorian, which house was in the 1887 map. The "Cook Block" building extended a little less than ONE-HALF the width of the block."; Broad St., N. Greenwood, today's Railroad Ave. and Blackwell. The Cook Blocks disappearance is another fascinating story.

Here is some extra information printed in 1981 ON 1893's life. Since the next chapter of April 19, 1979 is on 1890 - 1900 Little Histories, this seemed like a fascinating addition.

\$500 Supported Family In - 1893

Parents, Two Children Could Live On \$10 Month Rent

By the Associated Press

Imagine trying to live in the United States on \$500 a year, spending 55 cents a day to feed yourself and family and paying \$10 rent a month.

It was possible in 1893.

An Article in American Heritage magazine says an exhibit at that year's Chicago World's Fair showed how a family of five could live --- and live comfortably -- - on \$500 a year.

Today, the U.S. Department of Labor says it takes a family of four nearly \$25,000 to maintain what is called a moderate standard of living. That family of four spends in a single week what the 1893 family of five spent in a year.

Inflation is pushing 1981 costs higher. The Labor Department said the Consumer Price Index rose four-tenths of a percent in October. For the first 10 months of this year, the index has risen at an annual rate of 9.6 percent.

The \$500 budget was part of an exhibit at the 1893 Chicago exposition. The exhibit was called the New York State Workingman's Model Home and was prepared by Katharine Bement Davis of Rochester, N.Y.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Joseph W. Barnes, city historian for Rochester and the author of the American Heritage article, writes that the \$500 figure was a little generous; the average industrial worker of 1893 earned between \$444 and \$480 a year.

Like a person on a fixed income, Miss Davis started with a set sum and looked for ways to stretch it to cover the necessities.

She decided the family could spend 40% of its income --- \$200 --- for food. (Today's family spends about 18% of its income on food.)

Miss Davis drew up menus --- a typical dinner was: corned beef, cabbage, boiled potatoes, bread and butter. Then she went 'shopping'. A pound of beef was 6 cents to 8 cents; a head of cabbage was about a dime. Her actual costs worked out to 54 cents a day --- a penny under budget.

Rent was calculated at \$10 a month --- 24% of the family's income in 1893 compared to the more than 40% which the typical family allocates to housing today.

What did the 1893 family get for its \$10? A two-story house including a living room which was 13 feet square, a small kitchen, a bath with tub and water closet and three upstairs bedrooms.

Fuel for the 19th century was \$30 a year, a sum which Barnes writes "appears ample for a period when anthracite coal was less than \$2 per ton."

The rest of the \$500 went for clothing --- \$100, with almost all items made by the woman of the house --- and miscellaneous expenditures --- \$50.

The exhibit included an actual, life size house, built for the fair, and an experimental "family", consisting of a guard who worked at the exposition and a widow and her three children.

The purpose of the exhibit --- and of much of the fair --was to show what could be done with social planning.

Barnes says Miss Davis had been a science major in college and had studied what was then the new field of nutrition.

"She was ... convinced that the application of sound natural science could help solve economic and social woes."

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXIV - Little Histories: 1980 - 1900 (HVN 4/19/79)

SO-SO-MUCH occurred in this decade!!

It seems appropriate to begin with the incorporation of this town, March 21, 1891. The town VOTFRS numbred 178 --- only men voted then! Wm. W. Drake was the first mayor.

The Presbyterian manse was built in 1892 at 83 W. Broad St. The large brick building at 53 Railroad Ave. was built in 1893; it has been a nightshirt factory, candy factory, organ builders factory, part of Rockwell's, in 1979, T.R. Royal's warehouse with retail-manufacturing units; a home and studio for 3 artists. In 1893 the Methodist Church was organized. Its cornerstone was laid in 1894 --- that's the white wooden church, now called Burton Hall.

FIRE ----- JULY 31, 1893

Conrad Behre, the owner of the oyster saloon and also a tinsmith, had his saloon about where the drugstore is on the present southwest corner of S. Greenwood and Broad. Mr. Behre had just about finished with his new FOUR story building behind the saloon. At 12 noon a fire was discovered in a barn behind these buildings. And the New Truck and Ladder truck house was also behind that! The newly organized Fire Co. of 1877 did its best. Water was scarce. The heat was intense. Means of wetting the growing fire were ineffectual --- a bucket brigade could do little! Soon all were burned --- the truck-house, W.W. Morrell's meat and vegetable market, Merz's Jewelry store, and the new hall. The building had been 46x90 ft., four story, plus basement. It was partially occupied by a hardware store, plumbing and tin shop, and a residence. John Whitehead occupied the basement with a tobacco and cigar store and a pool room.

THEN the Calvary Baptist manse caught fire; the fireman's efforts were futile; the manse was completely demolished! There was a one-family water hydrant in front of A.S. Cook's house (10 Bank Plaza). With this, they were able to wet down the Calvary Baptist Church, Cook's large set of stores --- across the street! --- the roof of Cray's Hotel (Hopewell Valley Inn), Dalrymple's tenement houses, the Church sheds, and Mrs. Hill's and Mrs. Dalrymple's house (2 W. Broad). Any other small fires they kept under control. In the 'Cook Block' they removed the contents of the post office, A.F. Naylor's furniture store, and household goods of Herbert Davison. The dollar damage was: Behre's \$12,000; Whitehead, \$1,000; Farsonage, \$1,500; fire truck \$200; Morrell's market, \$275; Merz's new one story building, \$400; there was partial damage to others. This material, from the Fireman's Anniversary booklet 1911-1961.

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After that catastrophe the town tried to get more hydrants. Our water came from a reservoir on the old Mt. Rose Road (located between today's S curve on the hill on Carter Road, AND the OLD road, past Veelenturf's to Crusher Road and Mt. Rose. The Union Fire Co. was formed in 1895. The rivalry between the two companies was intense. The engine for this latter company was housed in Dr. T.A. Pierson's barn --- that was on our property, 25 Blackwell Ave.; where our concrete garage is today. It was from this same barn that the town lights were turned on each night in those early days. Dr. Pierson was mayor at one time.

The editor of the Hopewell Herald, March 1, 1894 wrote this very complete description of our town: " .. 1000 people. Governed by a Board of Commissioners. Well lighted. Stone sidewalks, (slate or concrete?) Main street macadamized. City water works. Phila.-Reading PR has 7-8 daily trains to N.Y., Phila., & Trenton. There are FIVE mails per day. Yearly commuter tickets, \$125, monthly \$16.50. Trip books at reduced rates. A handsome depot --- a two story brick structure, mansard roof, well kept grounds --- grass, shrubbery, and flowers. (Shame on you 1979!) The town is located in a valley; the people are healthy, and better class. Most homes are owned, attractive, and kept up in repair. Large freight business. Large grain houses, 2 large hay presses. Two lumber and coal yards. A large steam saw and grist mill hires twelve people and has several teams of mules. Canning factory hires about sixty people (old tomato factory on Railroad Ave.). A shirt factory in the two-story brick building. Good newspaper circulation about 1200, plus a well-furnished book and Job office. Steam trains. N.Y. & Phila. papers available daily. Lawyer, Dentist, Veterinarian, Tailor, Dressmaker, Milliners. Boarding houses, Express and telegraph office, Post office, two drug stores, 2 large general stores. Good grocery store, Clothing and furniture store. Fancy store. Furniture dealer. Manufacture of mattresses. Jeweler. Harness maker. Shoemaker. Variety store. Hardware store. Tin and sheet iron works. Plumber. Cigar and tobacco store. Bakery, Meat and Vegetable dealers. Creamery. Fish and oyster store. Poolroom. Carriage factory, Wheelwright and blacksmith shops. Agricultural warehouse. Carpet weaver. 2 Barbers. Undertaker. Carpenter, Builders, Contractors, Masons, Painters, Paperhangers. Marble yard, brick yards. Stone crusher near Boro line. Three cemeteries. Fine public school with 200 pupils. 4 Churches. 2 Building & Loans. Hopewell National Bank, capital \$50,000. 2 good hotels. Depot, Freight & livery stables, hack to meet the trains. G.A.R. Post, Sons of Veterans, Masons, Knights of Pythias, Grange, Order of American Mechanics, 2 Ladies Aids, 2 Christian Endeavors. Social Clubs, Brass Band. Hook and Ladder Co. large circulating Libray. 2 Public Halls. A JAIL. Over 12 houses built in 1893."

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY !

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXV - Little Histories: 1890 - 1900 (HVN 9/20/79)

What a town we'd become as shown in the Hopewell Herald editor's description 3/1/1894.

In 1894 Main Street became Broad St. In 1895 Hart Ave. became a public street. Columbia Hall (on the Gallup's building site) was built in 1895, 35' x 50', cost \$2100. It was a fire hall, a movie house ... why I even had study hall there when I attended the high school in the present firehouse.

Webster Edgerley started buying land for our 'castle' and his Ralston Heights in 1895. More on it in a coming chapter.

In 1896 there were fitting ceremonies to commemorate the death of another Hopewell great --- Col. Joab Houghton, who'd died in 1796 one hundred years before. It was also 120 years after 1776.

When the news of Lexington reached Hopewell in 1766, on Sunday morning, after the service, Col. Joab Houghton mounted an old stepping stone in front of the church and said, "Men of Hopewell who will follow me to Boston?" It is said that EVERY man did.

Joseph Moore Phillips insisted on raising a subscription for a memorial to the soldiers who had died in the War of 1776, AND to Joab Houghton! Thus Houghton's 120th Anniversary Memorial came to be. They took the First Baptist Church's old "stepping-stone", placed it on a suitable pedestal and placed it to the (east) right of John Hart's Memorial of 1865; this is in the Old School Baptist cemetery. Of course, elaborate ceremonies were planned for the whole day of July 4, 1896. The booklet may be found in the Museum and Library.

1897 BOOKLET

In this year was published 'the first of the T-H-R-E-E small booklets extolling the great advantages of living in Hopewell. Each was written after a period of "panics" --- economic depressions. Many old timers have a copy of one or more of the three similar booklets. Since these have never been entirely reproduced I'll describe more of the 1897's contents. The Library and Museum each have a copy.

The booklet Healthful Historic Hopewell was written in 1897 by Normer Gray, Ph. D.; printed by C.E. Voorhees, the Hopewell Herald editor.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The first picture is A.G. Reed's country residence. This is the house built on the land just east of "Charles's Brother" on Rt. 654. The first house burned; its chimney (1985) still stands to the rear of the present house. The owner of this first house was A.G. Reed who married Sadie V. Moore; their permanent residence was Brooklyn. This had been their summer home. Other owners of this ground were Col. Ira Jewell, C. Montag and M. Montag, and Mr. Secor.

The next picture is of the Old School Baptist Church, built of stone in 1747, rebuilt with brick in 1822. On the right is an excellent photo of John Hart's monument. On the left is the present Hopewell House. The Museum has a very similar picture, but the view of the hotel is fascinating --- how it looked before the mansard roof was built thereon.

Quotes: "Hopewell is unlike most progressive towns in two important respects: It is free from debt, and has a low rate of taxation" "half-dozen factories which have been run steadily during the recent panic" "the fact that there is not a vacant house in town and that there is a constant demand for more"

A picture of the four (4) room Public School --- the core of today's Model Ave. Apts. The two rooms on the west end were added 1899, \$2500; the two rooms were added on the east end in 1907, \$4600. A three year high school course was started there in 1906. In 1910 the present Fire Hall on Columbia and South Greenwood was built, and equipped as a High School for \$20,000. By 1912 the four year High School was approved, 8 students were graduated in June 1912. The two room annex on Model Ave. was added in 1915, \$4,400; it's the building to the west of the apartments. [In 1979, this was a decrepit building. It then changed ownership and its exterior appearance improved.] In 1925 the present Elementary School, a 14-room building, was built on Princeton Ave.; \$155,700; dedicated in 1926. I was graduated from this building!

A picture of the Victorian house on 8 Louellen Street, residence of Louis Labaw; the recent owners Mr. and Mrs. Ludwig Gerhart (Louie), and the Rev. Robert Beringers. An excellent showing on outside paint colors in 1897, and the gazebo, still intact but moved back; also of the old house at No. 14 Louellen, same torn down, and present house a Sears Roebuck pre-cut house Alhambra style built by Edgar Labaw in 1929. Louis Labaw had two sons, Edgar and Joseph. Each son built on either side of this Victorian house. No. 14 is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Orion Labaw today. The Gerhards were kind enough to let me see their deeds. The triangular lot area belonged once to John Hart; To Thomas Phillips; Enoch Phillips sold it in 1847 to Daniel Housel for \$65 (!); in 1855 he sold it to Joseph M. Phillips, \$800. [It is quite possible that #8 Louellen St., the large Victorian home, was built soon after 1855.] His daughter married Louis Labaw. Louis Labaw owned the Victorian house by 1897.

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The L. Labaws sold the 'Mrs. Robert Fetter lot' to John II. Fetter in 1912. They (Labaws) sold the lot on Mercer St. to the Grange in 1923. His son, Joseph Lahaw, bought the lot for his house in 1921. No. 4 Louellen St; in 1949 the Gerhards acquired this Louellen St. land and built their own home., No. 6 Louellen St. Louie and Martha will be long remembered as the owners of a marvelous bakery on Mercer St.

A picture of the New Catholic Orphan Asylum and Industrial School, destroyed because unfit in 1974, because it might have cost \$1,000,000 to renovate it. The stone and brick shell was complete as of 1891 but they must have been working on the interior finish as you can see lumber placed against the first floor windows.

A picture of A. S. Golden's Lumber and Coal Yard on Model Ave., J. H. Dilts also had a furniture store in the building used now as an office of the Van Doren lumber Yard today.

A picture of the present library and hotel. The brick building, No. 13 E. Broad, was the home of the Hopewell National Bank, capital \$50,000! Deposits \$72,000! On a later page is a picture of this same Central Hotel, proprietor Andrew Cray, corner of E. Broad and Seminary (today's Hopewell Valley Inn).

A picture of the Philadelphia and Reading Railway Depot, built in (1882?). This picture shows the 'widow's walk', the iron railing on the roof. Wm- H. Slugg, agent.

A picture of the Hopewell Valley News building, then it was the office of the Hopewell Herald, and office for the gravestone office, Seville & Co., later W. I. Reid's.

Pictures of the Shirt factory, the tomato cannery, the Creamery, Blackwell & Hill's lumber yard, A.G. Fetter's Saw Mill, E. S. Well's several Stock Farms at Glenmoore, the Holcombe Block, Cook's Block; the Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches; farms of David P. Voorhees, A.C. Bond, C.S. Durling, E.S. Wells; residences of L.H. Reed (Douglas Terhume's No. 19 N. Greenwood), A.S. Cook (No. 1 Bank Plaza), Nelson D. Blackwell (across from the Museum), S.V. Van 7andt (No. 14 Blackwell Ave., Mrs. Zwaaf's), Lawyer John S. Vari Dyke (just east of VanArsdale's apartments), and Farley F. Holcombe (just west of the Black Kettle).

What has amazed me most about the 1894 and 1897 descriptions of Hopewell are the many factories and businesses. It hasn't been too many years since the only factory was Rockwell's, today Kooltronics. It is a good thing we now have more small businesses operating in our town.

Next 1899.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXVI - Little Histories - 1899 - 1947 (HVN 2/7/80)

1899 --- FIRE

Six years after the disastrous fire of 1893, on July 12, 1899, about 1 a.m., fire spread quickly through 'Cooks Block', a huge group of stores on the N.E. corner of N. Greenwood and Broad. It burned like a furnace --- because it was made of wood but covered with a sheet metal covering; it was a self-contained fire. T.F. Sheppard's baby's cries awoke them; the smoke alerted them to a small fire in A. Zanelli's basement --- but it was out of control before the firemen could get a stream of water on it! The occupants were: T.J. Sheppard, grocer; Matt di Puglia, barber; a telephone office; A. Zanelli, fruit store; James Smith, tailor; F.F. Holcombe, postmaster; E.S. Brewer, warehouse supply; Jr. O. U. A. M.; Knights of Pythias; John S. Van Dyke had a one story law office in the rear. From a picture in the 1911-1961 fireman's booklet, the sidewalk level of this property at that time was at least two-three feet above the road! Why, today it's practically even with the street, or one might say that the road has been brought up close to the level of the sidewalk!

John Corcoran owned the Central Hotel (corner Seminary and Broad) in 1899. Dr. J.A. Bayless was a dentist. D.B. Cox an auctioneer. John G. Burton and Johnson Naylor had a Sash and Blind Factory here (on Burton Avenue) Marion Voorhees was a plumber. James E. Pierson was a stock dealer. Wm. Skillman became the RR ticket agent; he built his house on 23 Hart Ave. (Sal Asaro's). Wm. Milliken was a harness maker. Chas. A. Durling was the manager of Pleasant View Poultry Farm (Ruggieri's). (I have some old pictures of this home when Durling lived here and had some famous fighting cock birds.) F.F. Holcombe and E.S. Titus were in business. Nelson D. Blackwell had the oldest established business in town. Morrell Bros., were grocers in the Cox building (s.e. corner Seminary and Broad). Did you know that there was once an A&P store there? And that there was once also an Acme in town (next to the drug store building on the west side)? Dr. George Fetter was D.V. M., as was also Dr. L.P. Hurley. Practising physicians were: Dr. Geo. V. VanNeste (34 E. Broad), Dr. John A. Miller (14 W. Broad), Dr. T.A. Pierson (25 Blackwell and later #10 E. Broad Street).

I.G. Howell, a local undertaker, invented the bicycle kick stand. # 12 N. Greenwood and also later he lived on Front St. by 1904 in 3rd house from N.Greenwood.

Today's Railroad Ave., north of 29 Blackwell, was called 'Park Row'. We have a picture that shows how lovely it did look then!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

A Hopewell Herald quote of 6/9/1897: "The average wage was \$354 a year; of which about \$100 went for DRINK." WOW !

There is no date given on this old Hopewell Herald column.

"RECALLING MIDWINTER RACING IN HOPEWELL"

The success of the Firemarn's Carnival held recently has revived memories of the Midwinter Racing Carnivals held here ... "In the old days every man here abouts owned a horse and sleigh ... there was no course better adapted for miles around ... than that offered by BROAD STREET, the main village thoroughfare ... and great even after the trolley intruded

Mr. Edward M. Phillips ... acted as starting judge in the old days. He was known far and wide as a fair and impartial judge and lover of horses. He could size up the "points" of a horse well; he owned several good animals at different times. As a youth, with about 30 other boys of the neighborhood, they would line up at the Ewingville Hotel (Ewing Township). As soon as complete election returns were in, the boys would start on a gallop for the old True American office, Front and Warren St., Trenton. E.M.P's mount would usually lead the field.

Back to snow racing here:

The whole town and the country folk for miles around lined up on Broad St., Hopewell to see the fun. Self-appointed guards were placed at all the cross street to warn regular traffic that the races were on.

"Bessie Miller" Dr. John A. Miller's horse, could fairly melt the snow with her speed when she had a cool head at her end of the reigns and the steady hand of Will Green at the other end. Some days she wasn't 'in trim' and then the others showed her the way!

Jo Hill's 'Honest John', with young Dr. Dave Hill in the sleigh kept them all guessing. If the late Paul Arnold's "Little Allen" managed to avoid a beating in the first quarter mile, he would call it a winner, otherwise it was an 'off-day'. Not every horse was allowed in the running. They had to show a three-minute gait, or better. Some were better than 2:40, and most were blooded stock. Other "racers" were Dr. George Van Neste, T.B. Jackson, Dr. T.A. Pierson, N.D. Blackwell, and many entries from the stables of the late E.S. Wells.

The races would be started early in the afternoon and only when it had grown dark would the contestants cease their efforts. The events would be conducted day after day as long as the snow remained in fit condition. Refreshments at Van Fleet's Hotel (today Hopewell's House) usually brought the afternoon to a close.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

On one occasion, during the absence from home of the family of a highly esteemed Hopewell clergyman the mounting stone in front of his home was utilized as a starting point for the races. When the dominie returned he learned with mingled feelings of what had taken place. He reproved the race officials for having done such a thing and he was naively reminded that "When the cat is away, the mice will play." He took the whole affair good naturedly.

1900

Electric lights were here by 1904 --- even if that meant one dangling light in a room! The trolley went from Hopewell to Pennington to Trenton by 1904.

Webster Edgerley's era was from 1895 to about 1925 (in the next chapter). He certainly stimulated the life of this town! "In 1901 the Old School Baptist Church had a thorough renovation. A new furnace cost several hundreds of dollars. The old stove had been used for over 40 years. Chas. H. Blackwell saw to the new registers, etc. The old chandeliers were taken down to be replaced by handsome side lamps. The square corners had been taken off the ends of the seats, curved arms were substituted; moulding on the back seats also changed. Aisle in the center filled up with seats, aisle made in rear, side aisle made. New windows and sashes with small window lights have been put in and hung with weights. On examination it was found that the window casings or frames had been constructed for weights but never used. Handsome cherry pulpit has taken the place of the old one. Seats and woodwork were painted ivory; roll on back of seat --- a cherry color. New carpet was laid. New furniture will follow. The vestibules have been constructed of St. Louis glass panels in the doors." --- (Info, old clipping of H. H.) It had been repainted in 1874. It also was very beautifully repainted in 1976 for the Bicentennial.

1909 BOOKLET

By 1909, a third booklet had been published (W. Edgerly's was the 2nd) -- another effort to attract people to this town. It gave in 'glowing colors' what was here. Copies are in the Museum, the Library, and some older residents may have one; I have; again, since it has not been reprinted, I will give some highlights. It was compiled by E.S. Fry, issued by the Young Men's League of the Calvary Baptist Church, photographs by E.R. Whitehead, printed by Race & Savidge.

There are two pictures of W. Edgerley's estate --- a magnificent place, an absolutely unbelievable HUGE brick home, WHITE MARBLE porch stairs, a porch across the COMPLETE FRONT which faces SOUTH --- not east from the lane, porch-FLOWER-covered. Again, I have two 1976 for sale advertisements showing these porches, etc., as renovated.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

There are pictures of many of today's older homes: Mayor T.A. Pierson, MD (25 Blackwell Ave), Wm. N. Skillman (23 Hart Ave), G.A. Thatcher (15 N. Greenwood), S.V. Van Zandt (14 Blackwell), Wm. K. Kesler (33 W. Broad), A. Holcombe (19 W. Broad), H.A. Smith (Museum), Louis Labaw (8 Louellen), John G. Burton (22 Front St.), Amos C. Bond (97 W. Broad), Dr. L.P. Hurley (23-25 W. Broad), Parsonage Calvary Baptist Church, E.V. Savidge (46 N. Greenwood), C. Herbert Fetter (96 W. Broad), J. Henry Stout (35 E. Broad), J.A. Hageman (1 Bank Plaza)*, Ed Haynes farm (Dr. Cortleyou's King Grant Farm in 1980). J. Baldwin Drake (just east of Charley's Brother), Geo. E. Pierson (29 E. Broad), Purington Stout (14 E. Broad). 1909 Broad Street shows DIRT street with trolley tracks in the middle.

* 'Bank Plaza' is front block of East Broad St.

And just too many other buildings, advertisements, etc. I hope the above will help some home owners.

We are so fortunate to have the 1875 map (more info on these people can be obtained in Trenton in the census books of 1870 and 1880), the 1887 pictorial map, the 1897 booklet, Edgerley's booklet, and the 1909 booklet.

1910

The Second Calvary Baptist Church was organized in 1910. . Its first Church was Just off Second St. The present building is on the southeast corner of Columbia and Maple.

1914

There is in the Museum a "Progress Edition" of this year -- an excellent source for the important people in this town -- then.

1939

Another Herald "Progress Edition" in the Museum.

1947

Dean Ashton's book Be It Ever So Humble was published. It discusses the era of 1940-45, and World War II as it affected Hopewell people, in Hopewell Library.

The "CASTLE" next.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXVII - Our "Castle" (HVN 12/25/80)

I just wish I'd lived a little earlier to have been here when Webster Edgerly, author, teacher, wealthy man with a BIG DREAM, came to town! What excitement he and his home and his dream must have stirred! He built the large home on the western side of N. Greenwood Ave. just over the Boro. line, that many of us call THE CASTLE. In the Hopewell Library you can find one copy of the book he wrote --- it won't get high raves today! He wrote under the name of Edmund Shaftesbury. (Shaftesbury Ave. was to have been the main driveway up to the front of his residence; never finished.)

The title:

Cultivation of Personal Magnetism in Seven Progressive Steps.
The Exercise Book of the Magnetism Club of America
Organized to exemplify in Public and Private Life
the Principles of Personal Power as taught by:
Edmund Shaftesbury
Eleventh Edition, 1925
Ralston University Press,
Meriden, Conn.

He says that 600,000 copies had been sold by the ninth edition! Eight books cost \$60; \$5 or \$10 if bought separately.

I have two (2) copies of the For-sale advertisement, Jan. 1976. It states that it was renovated by owner Craig Miller, a nationally famous decorator. The asking price in 1976 was \$210,000! Fulper Realtor, Yardley, Pa. In the spring of 1978, it was bought by Phillip and Sally Roberts of Princeton, N.J.

Webster Edgerley wrote and published a booklet --- Description of Ralston Heights, containing a description of the Building Lots, Estates, and Little Farms at the proposed FUTURE CITY of RALSTON.

No publisher nor date is given in the front. However, a copy of the city-layout was included in the booklet; but not in mine. Upon inquiry, I found that I could obtain the development plan for \$5 from the Trenton Court House Deed Room. It is called "Plan of Ralston Heights, Hopewell, N.J., Webster Edgerly, Owner, 1907." So that gives us one probable date of the booklet. I have done some deed search on the land he owned. All of this I wish to share with you.

He planned a CITY to the north and east of the castle 1,000 small lots --- if grouped together there would be small estates, little farms, etc. Generally speaking, the lots were 50' x 100' or often 150 feet deep.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The east - west roads were --- starting just opposite his home and from south to north: Parkland (Washington St.), *Midland Ave., *Highland Ave., *Grand View Ave. (only east of N. Greenwood), *North Star, Hillcrest Ave. (only west of NG), Floral (only east of NG), Orchard (only east of NG), Pacific Ave., opposite the eastern-northern property boundary (only west of NG), and Sunset Ave., the most northerly street (only west of NG).

The north-south streets, starting near where Farlee's boundaries are today: Western Ave., Atlantic Ave., Washington Ave., Shaftesbury Ave., Stratford Lane. Central Avenue was the present North Greenwood Ave. Continuing to the east were: Walnut Ave., Forest Ave., Ralston Ave., *Eastern Ave., Morningside Ave., and *Sunrise Ave.

What really astounded me was to find that SOME of these streets are on the Hopewell Township map of TODAY!

* Those streets above with an asterisk, are THE ones remaining today!

As near as I can figure, HIS CITY went from our Washington St. (or very close to it), and his castle, NORTH to (over the hill and down to) the Janaitis property west of the main road (6-10), and into the land on the east of the road of Strauss, and Reynolds (8-15, 8-16 Hop. Twship map).

As of today, except for the "castle" and the remaining roads, W. Edgerley doesn't matter much. But as of that day --- think what he planned. Here was Hopewell sitting mainly south of the tracks, mostly in the valley. His Dream City -----Ralston Heights --- was to be a complete unit up there on the "mountain" ridge --- or plateau. The tragedy --- for him --- was that it FELL FLAT. He sold some lots. From 1907 to about 1920, he must have had high hopes. But in the 20's he built a large home on the West State St. in Trenton to which he moved in "about 1925"; I believe he only lived a short time after that.

Webster Edgerley, his wife Edna (monied from Ralston products), and his two daughters lived in Washington, D.C. before and during his residence here. "From May 4 - Oct. 17, he lived here; after Oct. 17, his residence is 1223-1231 G Street, Washington, D.C." Quote from his booklet, as are many other to follow. "Ralston Heights is not an accident. It is a chosen land. We searched ... not one year, but many ... everywhere ... to find this exact location ... This is a land for fruits, flowers, pure air, pure water, health, home and happiness."

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

He gives 12 reasons for that decision. "It is not a hill, or steep incline, but gracefully sloping upland crowned with a magnificent plateau of more than 50 acres ... It is the battle of humanity for a more exalted plane of existence" ... "He has already spent more than \$100,000 " ... "soil fine black loam thousands of flowers... fruits unlimited 32 varieties of grapes ... 40 varieties of pears 45 varieties of peaches ... 71 of apples .. etc." "This year 1904." AH! AH! So he must have written this in 1904, but his city plan was 1907.

His purchases of land: The "castle" land of today is only a few acres, but back then W. Edgerly bought land starting in 1895. The castle is on land presumed to have been John Hart's; there are no deeds to prove this (Ege P148). After J. Hart's death in 1779, we know that on June 2, 1786 Wm. Seaman of New Brunswick sold this land just north of the Boro Line and west of N. Greenwood. Francis Blackwell, Jr. is presumed to have been living on it --- for quite some time. His wife was Elizabeth Hart, second cousin of Hon. John. Seaman sold it to F. Blackwell Jr. These Blackwells sold it five years later, Apr. 22, 1791, to Moses Hart, wife Jerusha. M. Hart died June 3, 1812. Eventually Joseph Moore Phillips owned this land. I do not have any deeds to prove that his father, Thomas, ever owned this section of land. On Jan. 31, 1883, J.M.P. sold 133 acres to Isaac G. Waters for \$9,975. Isaac's wife was Cornelia A. Reed; his father Philomen Waters; his mother Nancy Golden Waters, the great granddaughter of the first Joseph Golden through Jacob Golden, and Isaac Golden.

For twelve years Isaac Waters owned this land. Then along came W. Edgerly. On Dec. 19, 1895 he bought from Isaac Waters three "lots" --- about 15 acres for \$3,500. I believe that this is the "castle" site. (Book 135, P271; V205, P388 Mercer Co.) But Webster had his dream of a CITY --- needing more land. By Feb. 27, 1899 Isaac sold to him practically all the rest of the 133 acres for \$8,674.82. And Scott Kise sold him some more land bordering on the above northerly edge. Vols. 210, 221, 232, 233, 234, 275 tell of other purchases.

By 1904 he was able to buy the land on the EAST of N. Greenwood Daniel W. and Sarah E. Housel sold him 92.33 acres for \$5,539.80; this was formerly land of Cornelius Van Dyke (Book 275, P153, Vo. W P 428, 1852). He buys and sells other land to J.C. Fisher (B 212, P 178, 1897 and p, 205, P 388 lot 3). Also, Theodore M. Hall, at one time a cashier of the local bank, bought a 3 acre lot just south of the castle (B 234, P 317, 10/10/1899). This had belonged to Mrs. Edgerly. The 3A had belonged to Adelia and Jacob C. Wilson (V. 225, P 409, 12/10/1898) and also Dorothea Behre had bought it earlier from Isaac Waters, who'd bought it from J.M. Phillips in 1/31/1883.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Webster Edgerly "spent over \$100,000 to buy land and build thereon. His boat pond held 80,000 gal. of water. He had a reservoir of 32,000 gal. At his time, the water from the Mt. Rose reservoir did not suit him. His well was 80 feet deep. He got electricity from Princeton. He had 125 electric lamps in his home! (and cottages). An average mansion 30' x 60' x 30' high would use 100,000 bricks. Laying them would cost about \$750! HIS HOUSE used 200,000 bricks!!!"

I have a few deeds of some who bought lots: Flora E. Hadsell, Rhode Island bought 4 lots for \$543. (V 291, P550, 1906). L.W. Kling, Illinois paid \$493 for 2 lots (B 293, P199, 1906). G.P. Ellis, Norwalk, Conn. bought six lots in 1907 for \$288. M. D. Offutt of Midway, Ky., in 1906 bought 12 lots for \$1226. J. Smith, Lawrence, N.Y., in 1908 bought one lot for \$430.

I have two deeds of sadness. In 1918, a party in Illinois sold back to W.E., for \$50, his earlier purchases; in 1921 a Conn. person sold his land back to W.E. for \$1. (V 410, P 175; Vol. 510, P135). If any of the present residents know of similar purchases from 1904 to 1925, I'd be glad to receive the information.

And so, sadly, the dream of the city, Ralston Heights DIED - leaving only memories of a few oldsters who remember with delight their visits to the castle; leaving his home which "took a beating" for many years; and leaving a few streets in existence which were part of his proposed 1907 development.

And so his era ended. The recent property of the Craig Millers, now Phillip Roberts of about 4.4 acres; J. Palaschak's of 34 acres, 21 acres of S. Smoyer, 76 acres of Jean Smith, and possibly others further north; on the east of N. Greenwood, the land running from the Cemetery, J. Palaschcks, all the homes of the hill up thru David Smiths, A. Cataldos, S. Strauss, and L. Reynolds All these places are beautiful areas in which to live today --- BUT NOT RALSTON HEIGHTS.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXVIII - A History of Hopewell Borough (HVN 6/15/85)

I wrote a short history of our town for the game sold June 6, 1985, Community Day. I'm including this as I feel it is a good SHORT history.

"In 1676, our land was inhabited by the Leni Lenape Indians, a branch of the Great Delawares. By 1730 most of them had left the area.

The first white settlers near town were two. Dr. Roger Parkes bought land near Stony Brook in 1697. East of town Jonathan Stout bought land in 1703 and 1705, settled in 1706.

In 1713 Hopewell was in Burlington County, then our town was in Hunterdon County until 1838 when Mercer County was formed. Hopewell Township was incorporated in 1798; Hopewell Boro in 1891.

In revolutionary war times The Village was tiny, located between today's Mercer Street and North Greenwood Ave. There were six buildings in it. On the south side of West Broad Street were two buildings at #19, Newell and Anne Holcombe, Newell being one of Hopewell's past mayors, and #37. On the north side were three buildings at 2-4 (Guinness's), #14 (Edling's), and #46-48 W. Broad (Hopewell House), plus the red brick church, the Old School Baptist Church. It was founded in 1717; the church was built in 1747. The church's establishment was due in great part to the Stout families; the land was donated by John Hart.

Within a radius of three miles of the church were several large farms of: James Larison; David Hunt; Abraham Golden; the Baptist Parsonage farm (153 W. Broad St. - now the Hoge farm); John Hart (60 Hart Ave); the farmhouse in the 1776 Village at #19 W. Broad; Stephen Blackwell (41 E. Broad St.); and the many Stouts: Ebenezer, Andrew, David W., and Jonathan.

The two great heroes of that day were the Honorable John Hart, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Col. Joab Houghton. East of the church, is a memorial to each. John Hart's was dedicated in 1865. Joab Houghton's in 1896, was the 'stepping stone' monument with his story 'printed' thereon, becoming obliterated with time !

Our village grew very slowly. Many retired farmers moved into town. After the Civil War and in the 1870's this little sleepy town awoke ... two railroads were being built on the north edge of the then village! The Mercer and Somerset Railroad had a very short life!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Today's railroad was very active and greatly used for over 100 years; now, the one track (once there were four) used for freight hauling and the Station are the only relics of the once great Delaware and Bound Brook Railroad, also called the Reading Railroad, Conrail system. (Currently plans are being made to restore the station to its former glory.) The influx of new people led to the building of new churches. The Old Baptist had reigned supreme for about 160 years. From 1872 - 1883 the following churches were built: Calvary Baptist, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist. The Second Calvary Baptist Church followed. At this time transportation was mainly horse - and - buggy or your own feet. It amazes one to read that many people did walk to worship in the church of their choice ... up to 9 miles! So the building of the four new churches did reflect the great diversity of the newcomers. Many more homes were built at this time as evident by the many large Victorian homes still intact today.

Good education of the young was important to people of this area. There was a Classical School of Rev. Isaac Eaton from 1756 - 1767; it was held at 19 W. Broad; for boys. The first Public School was built in 1865 at 75 W. Broad Street. A private school for ladies, at 23 E. Broad Street, was run by the Misses Boggs, 1866 - 1890. A later public school was built on Model Ave.; today the small building is a business and the large one is apartments. Next was built the present Elementary School on Princeton Ave.

In 1776, the population was about 30 people. In 1876, there were about 400. By 1985, there are about 2200. We are still a small town. Most of the newcomers seem to love it as much as do the oldtimers."

This history was taken mainly from research "The Historical Sketch of the Village of Hopewell N.J." It was written by nine of its prominent citizens. It was delivered on July 4, 1876 by the editor of the local paper ... the Hopewell Herald ... he was Ross Slack. A copy is in the Hopewell Museum.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XXXIX - The Past: The Future (HVN 7/16/81)

Can you imagine living in 2076 and trying to get information on previous centennials, 1976, 1876, 1776, etc.? With the help of our Hopewell Museum, our Library, and the various books:

R. Ege's - Pioneers of Old Hopewell.

Alice B. Lewis's - Hopewell Valley Heritage.

Cleon E. Hammond's - John Hart.

Genealogies of the Stouts, and many others; many others referred to in my columns; and this chapter ----- people should have a good start.

This chapter is a summary of the past, and a look toward our needs, and a look to the future.

My interest in the area's past was stimulated when, in May 1975, I was appointed to our church committee celebrating the Bicentennial in 1976 and our hundredth anniversary in 1977. When I saw the hand written speech of 1876, delivered on the Centennial, my curiosity led me to intensive research. First, I wondered why I'd never heard about it. Second, I was disturbed when some 'oldsters' (that's anybody one year older than I!) didn't accept some of its information. Third, I became determined to get acceptable proof of the truth; deed search was my most acceptable evidence.

On May 15, 1976, the United Presbyterian Church presented a "slide-dialogue" a history of Hopewell --- and an historical walk of the earliest places. The slide-dialogue was revised and given to the Museum.

The H.V. News printed the Centennial speech of 1876. "The Historical Sketch of the Village of Hopewell N.J.", on June 24, and July 1, 1976. It generally was a comparison of the area in 1776 and 1876. "Hopewell's Past" was printed first on July 8, 1976, and has run intermittently to December 25, 1980.

SHARE has been the keynote of this column. I was not interested in a BOOK; but I did so want to share my research with YOU. I have been as accurate as possible; corrections were in the next issue. So much information known only to you readers was given me; we shared it with all. Knowing ALL the info was impossible; I wrote whatever I knew up to that time of writing. A funny thing happened once: It was a HOT, STICKY day on which I was starting a column. So I wrote "Will you wade barefoot thru some creeks ... today?"
Publishing date: NOV. 11! Sorry about those frozen toes.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Historial needs:

I must rewrite all the columns, and clarify the corrections made. Then it should be typed; any offer of help? Then it should be dittoed so the complete story may be available to any who needs it.

Then R.Ege's book, Pioneers of Old Hopewell, needs some clarified info to be helpful to today's readers. The book is a bound edition of his H.H. articles, from 1901-1908. It is very difficult to read it and know where his places of that time are today. Thanks to Betty A. Errickson, we have a 1903 map. I have correlated each place with the **present day** land in Hopewell and Hopewell Township. These correlations need to be available. HOW? In his book he gives the farms, etc., of 1776; and then 1876; and then his time 1901-1908; how about 1976; 2076?

Thankfully, Mrs. Betsy A. Errickson and Dr. D. Stanton Hammond are researching the first earliest owners of all of Hopewell Township. What a mammoth Job. (See 2-1979 H.V. News asking for help.)

More research can be done on the early inhabitants of this town as found in census records of the State Library Archives Section, especially in the 1870 census book, and on 1880 microfilm.

I have provided names and sources, a reasonably good history from 1776 through 1900; 1895-1906; 1910, 1914, 1939 and 1947. Much research in the 1900's is readily available; I lost interest when time came too close to my birthdate!

The future columns:

I've become increasingly aware of the interest and need for more information on the houses (any buildings) in the borough. Just looking at a map of Hopewell in 1875, 1887; and at the various descriptions and booklets of 1894, 1895-1909, 1897, 1909, 1914, 1939, etc., I am amazed at how many old places are here today. Each source has some newly-built after the last one. New owners of homes here are often provided with very little information on all the owners of their homes.

So, I have become interested in recording the history of each home in town. I NEED YOUR HELP. It's a mammoth job but with your cooperation, it can be a fun job. And how important these records could be for owners in 2076!

Because it will be the easiest. I will start with the history of our home, 25 Blackwell Ave., in the next chapter. And we will call anything written up to now Part I. Part II will be on the Homes.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PART II - HOPEWELL HOMES

CHAPTER XL - 25 Blackwell Avenue

This is the first house history, thus starting PART II. Compiling these histories is so important to future home owners. Many of our houses were here and shown on the 1875 map, the 1887 map, and in the various booklets. The deeds of new owners seldom go back more than sixty years! If that! The people of 2031 or 2076 will have some help from us.

I WILL NEED YOUR HELP. I can not "live-in" in the deed room of Trenton or Flemington! Will you please SHARE your home's information on your deeds with us?

[Phone 446-0523; 25 Blackwell Ave.]

Our home is by no means the oldest. However, it was an easy one to start with! I think you will find its history, and physical changes interesting. We are lucky to have deeds back to 1876.

The ownership of the land is tied up with the Blackwells.

Their descendants today are well known --- J.B. Hills and the Wrights.

Pertinent Blackwell genealogy:

Robert Blackwell married Elizabeth Combs and settled about two miles east of Pennington. Their son, Francis (Sr.) 1713-1791 married (1) Elizabeth Cornell, (2) Sarah Burroughs. Their son, Stephen Blackwell, 1756-1831 married Rachel Hunt 1754-1832; I'll now call him "Stephen 1."

Their son, David, 1784-1883 married Jemima Burroughs 1788- 1832. "David 1."

Their son, Stephen, 1808-1883 married (1) Permelia Van Cleve Blackwell 1807-1838, (2) Francina A. Hunt Jewell. "Stephen 2."

Their son, David Lafayette Blackwell, 1832-1936 married Helen Baldwin Stout 1834-1915. "David 2."

Their daughter, Francina Permelia, 1863-1963 (5 mo. short of 100 years) married Joseph Bloomington Hill 1861-1945.

Their children were: David B., Helen B. (Wells), Hervey S., William, and Edward U. The second, third, and fifth children remained Hopewellites. This shows us how the "Hill" name came into the Blackwell family.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The old deeds of the Blackwells here in Hopewell, have not been researched; a job for someone else. Their ownership of one-fourth of early Hopewell is acknowledged, thus:

In the 1876 Centennial Address---"The next farm was owned <in 1776) by Stephen Blackwell and a portion of it still (1876) remains in the family" Stephen 1 owned all the land north of Broad St. that was also east of N. Greenwood (Mountain Road in early days). The land extended far north of the present boro. J.B. Reminiscences of 1816 .. state that Stephen Blackwell owned this land.

An 1853 search drawing shows Stephen 2 as the owner of the above lands. (Book X P574 Trenton.)

In Ralph Ege's book Pioneers of Old Hopewell ".. Rachel ... married Stephen Blackwell ... They resided on the farm now (1903) owned by Charles Durling, Esq. near the borough, the farm of that time also including the farm of D.W. Housel." (Stephen 1). Chas. Durling and Daniel W. Housel of 1903? C.D.'s farm is more or less that of Anne and Joseph Ruggieri now. We have pictures of the Durlings in front of Ruggieri's brick home.

On the Hopewell Township map of 1875, north of C.D.'s is this: "D.W. Housel #5 (house). D.W. Housel #92 (land). I have the deed whereby D.W. H. and Sarah sell their farm to Webster Edgerley on Sept. 17, 1904, 92.33 acres (B275, P153, Trenton). Using the 1903 map and the present Hop. Twp. map, I can ascertain this farm: N. Greenwood Ave. borders it on the west. Starting just below the present Highland Cemetery, it extended North 2400'. One exception: land NOT owned by D.W.H. about 481 feet south of the most N.W. points, there was a long rectangular piece of ground bordering the road, 660' by 330'; it belonged to Oliver G. Woodward. 1903 (spelling, O.G. Woodard).

The southern boundary of D.W. H. farm zigged and zagged easterly and northerly; I can find very similar property lines today - --- roughly all of J.Ruggieri's western boundary lines. Beyond J. R.'s property, it still goes further North, roughly following the Escheville Road, 290ft. N to a corner of the then (1904) property of Lewis Burd.

The D.W.H. farm was bounded on the north by land of Lewis Burd, and nearer the road George Wyckoff.

In 1904 the farms eastern neighbors were: from the north to south, A.I. Holcombe, W.B. Van Pelt, and George Stilwell; the latter's land is generally that of the D. Chafeys and T. Richards today, the latter bordering Amwell Road.

The deed also states that D.W.H.'s farm was part of that of Cornelius Van Dyke and wife in Mar. 2, 1852, 97.17 acres (Vol. W P 428).

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Now we have a good idea of how far north of Broad Street Stephen 1 undoubtedly owned in 1776. It would be interesting to know of "before 1776".

I have deeds showing Stephen 2's ownership in 1853, and 1876 south of the present RR tracks (V 139, P595; V 140, P161; V 177, P14; V 207, P246; V387, P79; Vol. 1043, P335,339, Trenton).

David 1 was a storekeeper and lived in 1820 at 42 E. Broad St. (Corcoran's until recently). Stephen 2 lived there in the 1870's. David 2 lived there until 1936' Good stories of these merchants are in Alice B. Lewis' book.

In the early 1870's Stephen 2 sold some of his farmland to TWO different railroads, the present one, and the Mercer and Somerset RR. The last RR actually was built WHERE the today's foundations are laid for some homes on Railroad Ave. between N. Greenwood and Blackwell Aves. It then veered more along the north edges in the next block: along 29 Blackwell (W. Potts 1981), the Chocolate Factory, and J.B. Hill's lumber and hardware business. Then it ran down the middle of Somerset St.

After the Frog War of early 1876, the M&SRR died! The lands came back into the ownership of Stephen 2 by Mar. 29, 1876. In 1883 Stephen 2 died. Very few lots had been sold from 1876 to 1883 on this southerly section. These had been sold: the Cook Block (from North Greenwood to Blackwell, to the RR); Randolph Stout, from "Hamilton Ave." to the western boundary of his home, today's present Museum; lots of Zephaniah Stout, and Wm. J. Purrington (the N.E. corner of Broad and Blackwell).

Our deeds now start: (We were so fortunate to have these passed on from the original owners). On Jan. 28, 1884, a 62.7 acre tract was sold to James Hervey Stout (a brother-in-law of David 2 and Nelson D. Blackwell) by the heirs of Stephen 2 (his children):

David Lafayette Blackwell and w. Helen Baldwin Stout.
Nelson D. Blackwell and w. Anna Stout.
Charles H. Blackwell and w. Sarah E. Moore.
Willis Blackwell and w. Kate Manners.
Jonathan H. Blackwell and w. Susan Weart.
Elizabeth B. who was the wife of Wm. Dolton.
Stephen 2's widow, was Francina A. Hunt Jewell Blackwell.

The 62.7 acre tract:

Along Blackwell Ave., from W.J. Purrington's, north 773 feet to the present RR land. Roughly 2400 ft. east along the above: 560 ft. to about the S.E. corner of the Tomato Factory, 176 ft. north to closer to the tracks, 1677 ft. east to Reuben McPherson's farm, today T. Cortelyou's farm, and roughly to the Boro line.

Along the farm, it went 1560 ft. south to Broad St. Then along the above, 2511 ft. back to the beginning with the exception of the lots of R.Stout, Z. Stout, and W.J. Purrington.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Important: this land included the home of David 1 at 46 E. Broad!

The above deed was apparently one of "convenience". One month later J.H. Stout sold the same land to David 2, on Feb. 26, 1884. Now, he owned his house!

Soon after this David 2 must have sold the lot at 13 Blackwell Ave. (Carter's today) to Chas. H. Blackwell. (His house is on the 1887 map.)

On Mar. 3, 1890 David 2 sold two lots to John W. Ewing and wife Elizabeth: these were 25 Blackwell Ave. and 14 Lafayette St. [J. Ewing built his first home at 14 Lafayette, which he sold after building #25. At #25, John W. Ewing built his second home. Hopewell Herald quote Nov. 1891: "Hoppock and Hart are painting J. Ewing's house". This house was built in early 1891. This house was NOT today's size; it was about one-half of the present 1981 size and was the southern side. Mr. John Ewing owned it for six years.

There's a funny story I've been told about the change of ownership. Dr. Theodore A. Pierson, wife Clara Sutphin, and one year old son Theodore II rented the house at 12 N. Greenwood Ave. The landlord came to collect his rent, raising it. Doctor did not like that!! He proceeded to talk to John Ewing, bought his house, and moved full wash tubs and all in that same day! The Piersons are of Scotch, Irish, English, and French descent; they are quick to react to seeming injustices!

Thus, Dr. T.A. Pierson bought 25 Blackwell Ave. on Mar. 31, 1896. The lot had cost J. Ewing \$200. The house and lot sold in 1896 for \$2050. A description of the house he bought: A cellar but no central heating. Porch, about one step up extended from the front door south, across in front of the living room and around that side to a door, entrance to the dining room. There was a front hall with a hallway to the rear room, the kitchen. All rooms had their wood stoves. The stairs behind this front door went up to a landing and up again to the second floor with its three bedrooms. There was insufficient space for the doctor's office, waiting room, and living quarters. There was extensive remodeling. The house was RAISED to have central heating. The huge "beams" are still evident in the south cellar. The entire north half was built on a newly-added-on cellar, 2 rooms to each floor, and attic.

His son, Theodore, has hazy memories of walking the plank, holding onto his mother's hand as they went out the front door to the sidewalk; the present porch not yet finished. The present porch is only across the front, and is four steps down. The cellar walls are interesting evidence of the raising of the walls. A fireplace, with huge brick support in the cellar, was built in the doctor's office. The fronting of the fireplace was small tiles; now brick. There was above it a mirror to the ceiling; gone. The waiting room was the front hall and right front room as needed.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

There were two (2) rooms on the south side, first floor. A bath was installed on the second floor. There were four (4) bedrooms and large front hall room --- often used as a sewing room. We also have pictures showing the large-frame-storm-porch used in the winter time. The cellar and attic are under and over the entire house. The tower and bay windows in the front were additions. On the second floor, there was a large corner open porch, often used by Theo IJ as a sleeping porch; this was recently changed to a flower room. The columns of the front porch are interesting in that few other houses in town have them. J. Ewing (the owner of #25 in 1891), built a double house on Lafayette St.; it has similar columns. Few other houses in town have quite the same use of large arches and these columns supporting the roof. How long it took for these additions is unknown. Undoubtedly done and finished externally in 'spring to fall'. There is an excellent picture of the enlarged house in the 1909 booklet. The people are Doctor --- then mayor --- and his wife Clara on the front porch; Theodore II and J.Reginald are sitting in or by a pony-buggy cart. Joseph and Keturah Pierson, doctor's parents who lived at 29 Blackwell Ave. by 1890, are in the background.

An interesting neighbor conflict came to light many years ago. At 16 Lafayette St. lived a Mr. Mershon. He didn't like the rain water flowing from doctor's lawn onto his! He raised his ground. Doctor did the same! Again!! Finally, doctor put in a 2- block retaining wall well within the boundary line, and filled in with much dirt. Apparently, the feud died. We "ran" into this wall. Amazed that it was in our lawn. I went to talk to Doctor who lived at 10 E. Broad St. He told me the above story, and about the source of brick for the sidewalks, the raising height of the old cesspool, the base for the driveway, etc. There were at least three brick yards in and near town; one large one, between Somerset St. and the present railroad tracks, all in the area of Hopewell Valley Oil today. As these companies went broke, doctor bought out their bricks. Even our driveway has crushed brick fill!

In the back, Dr. T.A. Pierson had a two story barn. Theodore II remembers it and the room for the two wagons, 2 stalls, and box stall for horses and his pony, harness room, and manure heap. We have an excellent picture of these buildings, including the huge barn adjacent to it at 29 Blackwell Ave. I have a very vivid memory of a fire in October 1922. I was nine years old and at the library --- present Museum ---when the alarm sounded. The barn at #29 Blackwell was on fire! The women at #29 and #25 were coming home from shopping in Trenton --- on the trolley. The wind was blowing strongly. #29 was well charred but saved. #14 Lafayette's grape arbors were destroyed; the rear of the house was charred. Everyone had removed furniture from the three houses.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Lucky for us and the surrounding area, about two years before, my parents had torn down the remains of the barns at #25, and built a four (4) car concrete garage with slate roof. Debris flew from the fire to a barn behind the present Museum; it was levelled. The barns at #29 had been full of hay and cardboard boxes, and that smoldered and burned for many days. My bedroom faced the scene; undoubtedly why it is so etched in my memory.

Back to the barn behind #25. The town street lights were once turned on from here, the switch being in the wagon house.

Eventually the property changed owners. My parents, Rachel A. Pierson and Wm. J. Braunwarth, three teenage daughters and the little 3 year old "me" lived in Mrs. Van Arsdale's third floor apartment, 23 E. Broad Street. It must have been a little crowded! Dr.T.A. Pierson on Jan. 21, 1916 sold this house to my parents. Doctor had lived there 20 years. My father had a grocery, etc., store at 17 Railroad Ave. My parents laid hardwood floors throughout, took out all gas facilities, and opened up the first floor (Lafayette Street side) into one large living room. We lived there comfortably. After my three sisters married and established their own homes, the house seemed a little large. When I was married to Robert A. Gantz in Nov. 1936, we established our home with my parents, living thus until the eventual death of my father, and then my mother. We bought the house from the heirs of my mother's estate: Louie (Van Dyke), Carolyn (Stout), Keturah (Bodine) and "me"; this occurred in Nov. 1948.

We made another change in the physical appearance of the internal house --- a two-room apartment and bath on the first floor. We rented it until about 1969 when we changed partitions and had a single house again. We lived here with our three sons, John R., Richard L., and Robert D. The first two married and moved away. Again the house was "large". When Robert D. began to think of marriage to Nancy Eglewski, our thoughts easily turned to more changes for the house. A major internal rearrangement took place on the first floor. We "split" the house so that we each have two floors; they the southern side; we the northern. The main stairway was on their side. We built another from the dining room, breaking through the small rear tin roof. We made two small rooms into our one large bedroom.

The interior of the attic was improved by adding floors and walls. Way back under the eaves, Robert D. found a box of treasures! In 1916, Dr. Pierson when moving had missed one cardboard box: many negatives, the town booklets, and a floor plan of the original house. Immediately, we had pictures made from those old negatives --- scenes of 1896-1916, over 200 of them.

Other changes: the open 2nd floor porch was "filled in" --to a flower room for Nancy --- our green thumb expert. Because of their dear St. Bernard, "Bernie", a fence was needed.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Bob and Nancy bought hairpin fencing from an old estate. After much wire brushing and many coats of paint, Bob built the posts and, even if they are wood; it now looks like iron, fencing was built around #25 Blackwell Ave. These fences "cried" for flower beds; these Nancy made. She raises all flowers from seed. She's become an expert in drying flowers and arranging formal bouquets.

Just this summer of 1981, Robert A., Robert D., and Nancy repainted the whole house in two months! The house is back to its more appropriate Victorian colors.

P.S. Upon repair of the front porch in July 1986, writing of great importance was found on the BOTTOM of the far circular post, "John Ewing July 28, 1898".

This information tells us two new things. The former owner, John Ewing, was the builder of the newer half added on by Dr T.A. Pierson. After buying it in 1896, Doctor must have very quickly started the raising of the original house to its present four and/or five 'Steps' porch height and then building on the 'north' side of our home.

This is the first time there has been any proof of when our house 'grew'. The original porch was one-step high, extending across its then front and around 3/4 of the way to the present bay - window then-door. This original 1891 porch must have been dismantled before the "raising". This also indicates that the house with its new porch was almost finished rebuilding by the summer of 1898.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PHOTO

EARLY 1900 AUTO (or horseless carriage): Betty Gantz, who begins her accounts about the old homes in Hopewell in Hopewell's Past --- Part II this week, has come up with some old photos, this one depicting what she believes to be Dr. T.A. Pierson's car going up Blackwell Avenue. In the background is the Hopewell Methodist Episcopal Church, the old church building now named 'Burton Fellowship Hall', in honor of Charles Burton, formerly of Burton Ave.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PHOTO

PIERSON'S DRUG STORE: This photo was taken about 1909 on the inside of George Pierson's drug store, which was located at the corner of Broad and South Greenwood. It's Hopewell Pharmacy today.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PHOTO

AUNT CARRIE RACE: stands in front of George E. Pierson's drug store in 1909. The Gantz family found this and other old photos in the eaves when they were making changes in the house at 25 Blackwell Avenue.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PHOTO

KETURAH BRAUNWORTH: sister to Betty Gantz stands in front of the Ice Cream Parlor (now Rose and Chubby's) in the early 1900's. Behind her is the Hopewell Herald Office (run by Race & Savidge), which is today the Hopewell Valley News. Notice the porch and upper deck which were removed by Harry Richard, when he made changes in the building in the mid-fifties, when the HVN started.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PHOTO

DECKED OUT FOR A CARRIAGE RIDE: Two Pierson ladies, dressed in the finest fashions of the day (early 1900's), are about to leave the 25 Blackwell Ave. home, the residence of Dr. T.A. Pierson (now Gantz), for a carriage ride. The lady to the left carries a camera. Those hats certainly would protect even the most involved hairstyle.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PHOTO

25 BLACKWELL AVENUE--Home of The Robert Gantz Family:

Recently repainted in what Betty Gantz terms more proper Victorian colors, this house was built during 1891 and is shown here in a 1909 photo, part of a booklet called 1909 -- Hopewell, N.J. The book was printed by Race & Savidge and was issued by the Young Men's League of the Calvary Baptist Church. Judging from Mrs. Gantz's account in this week's "HOPEWELL'S PAST---Part II", the Pierson family, of which she is a part, was quite prominent in Hopewell's early days, as well as today.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XLI - The Six Old School Baptist Parsonages (HVN 2/9&16/84)

It has been a long time since I talked to you in this column.

My research activity into deed ownership has slowed to a crawl ... but not my interest in it! A short time ago, a Mr. J. Phillip Johnson, 123 West Broad St., asked, "Do you know when my house was built? It seems to be quite old. Somebody told me that it was once a parsonage." My answer was "NO" to the question. I was astonished at the last sentence. Anyone who knows me realizes that by now my "curiosity antenna" was a flutter!

This house was not on the 1875 or 1887 maps. I did recall that my sister had often spoken of Gladys Titus and Maude (Titus) Butcher, who'd lived there. Also, Mr. Hoge's deed (he's at 153 W. Broad) showed a neighbor as Edwin S. Titus on the easterly boundary. But PARSONAGE --- Mr. Titus was not an OSBC minister. I also knew that Mr. Hoge's had been the OSBC farm. There was one place to go for HELP. The Museum has the old records of the Church. Those minutes are revealing for what they DO and DO NOT say!

Because I knew that John Corcoran had bought the 'Hoge' farm in 1915 from the Church, I looked first for clues of the time of 1912 to 1918 ... No mention ... except Elder C. Vaughn was the pastor then. So I jumped back to about 1830 in the minutes ... My eyes became mighty weary, but I was so afraid I might just miss some vital clue.

I read of a very strange occurrence starting in 1845 when Elder Curtis was hired. Everything seemed to be going along well between minister and congregation. Suddenly (it seemed to me) they in 1851 asked Elder William Curtis to try to find some other house to live in (he was at 153 W. Broad)!! Why? Because they wanted to rent the parsonage farm! He reported back that he could not find any house; he couldn't afford it if he could have ... The upshot was that he left in 1851. The minutes gave no information as to why this came about. Oh, yes, he said that if the church would give him \$400 he could retire and then find a house. The church did not agree to this. You could read a great deal into this occurrence! There was no clue as to whether they rented the farm and, if so, to whom.

The Church called Elder P. Hartwell to serve them in 1853. When he came, there was no house in which to live (so apparently someone was renting the farm). They immediately sought to find him a house. The minutes mention that maybe the Church could buy a small house on the lot of Daniel Blackwell nearby to the Church. Zephaniah Stout immediately bought it. The minister could live there; he'd come to Hopewell in Jan. 1853.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

In Oct. 22, 1853 minutes: he "removed himself to the Parsonage (153 W. Broad) in the spring of 1854." Twelve years go by. He's farming and preaching; every O.S.B.C. minister was expected in the early days to serve the Church and provide some other way to make a living --- in this town, farming. By June 23, 1866 minutes: "Elder Hartwell desires to be relieved of the care of cultivating the farm. Could they build a house for a tenant farmer? They said that would cost about \$800!! They raised \$400." Not enough. He still farms. Dec. 20, 1870 minutes: "he suggests that a tenant farmer live in this Parsonage farmhouse (153 W. Broad) AND that he be allowed to buy of the church 2 acres on the northeast corner of the farm." NOTHING said in the minutes ... yes or no ...! Minutes Jan. 21, 1872: "the Church expressed a willingness to sell a portion of land to Elder Hartwell for the house." Foundation soon ... [[p.s. Elder Hartwell started idea to "net farm"]]

Absolutely no other information given in minutes. But, for the first time we learn that a minister of the O.S.B.Ch. builds a home for himself! I learned something else very valuable --- the exact location of the northeast corner of the farm back in the first days they bought it. (P. Hunt gave to the museum a map of this early farm.) The farm then bordered on Charles Drake's farm. So now I have the exact boundary line of the early owners of 19 W. Broad and 153 W. Broad. I'd always said 'about Ege Ave.'; the line was now known to be about 150 ft. west of Ege and in line with 'the end' of West Prospect St. I was now certain that Mr. Johnson's was built from 1870 to 1872; and that it had been a parsonage.

For the moment, I could not get the property into the Titus's hands. In a conversation with Mrs. Anne Casey, 97 W. Prospect St., I got a big clue ... she remembered on her visits to the Titus's, that there had been an older lady, a Mrs. Hartwell, who rocked and rocked in the back room. I should have looked in Ege earlier! From Pioneers of Old Hopewell I learned the rest of the story. Edwin S. Titus married a Mary Hartwell. Mary was the daughter of L. Hartwell. L. Hartwell was the son of Elder Philander Hartwell who'd been a minister from 1853 - 1878.

Now we have to Jump back in time. In 1747 the O.S.B.C. bought 10 acres and a house (19 W. Broad St.) for their first pastor --- the Rev. Isaac Eaton. This minister supported himself by teaching --- the first at the 'Golden' school at 518 and Van Dyke road, northeast corner; long gone. And then an Academy was established at his home, 19 W. Broad St. [that becomes a later chapter.] The church sold this to Zebulon Stout in 1769; Rev. Eaton lived there 'til his death in 1772. So that was Parsonage #1.

In 1768 the Church was beginning to make inquiries as to the purchase of Ephraim Hart's farm (153 W. Broad). They received 'the refusal' (meaning consent) 2 months later. Things went slowly in those days!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Four years later, 10/17/1772, Moses Hart tells them that he will sell them 95.5 acres. The Church buys it in Dec. 1772. In thirteen more years, they desire more land and buy 37.25 acres, Feb. 1785, from Mary and James Mattison. Total 132.75 acre farm. I do remember that later they bought some more acreage from 19 W. Broad owners. Parsonage #2.

Elder Hartwell's, 123 W. Broad, Parsonage #3. Could there be more?

Since ELDER Hartwell served 'til 1878, and the Church owned the Parsonage Farm until 1915, did any more Elders live at #153? ... or were there now only tenant farmers.

By 1879 the Church had called W. J. Purrington to be their minister. He served until 1894. The minutes give no clue as to where he lived! I do have deeds to show that he did live at 14 E. Broad St. during his time of ministry; that his widow continued to live there after his death. The deeds show that this property was in their name; we can safely assume they built it. Parsonage #4.

It looks as if what with rental of the farm, contributions from more church members, and maybe more 'wealthy' pastors (?), the Elders were not required to support themselves with outside jobs as earlier.

Next comes Elder Farris Chick, 1896 - 1914. From his granddaughter, Barbara Johnson Earl, I learned that he had bought the land from a Dr. Lanning, and built his home at 93 W. Broad. She also said that this 93 W. Broad home is an almost replica of his great uncle's home!!! and who was his great uncle? Elder Wm. J. Purrington!!! who immediately preceded Elder Chick! Parsonage #5.

The last permanent minister was Elder Chas. W. Vaughn. This time it would seem as if they --- the church --- built a parsonage at No. 127 W. Broad, again a northeast corner lot of the farm. The minutes do not come out and say so. So until we learn differently, I will accept the word of Mrs. Annie Casey and Miss Edna Van Dyke who believe that the Church did build this for Elder Vaughn, who apparently did not have the funds to do it himself. Parsonage #6.

If you will permit the use of the term "parsonage" in the sense that it was the home in which the minister lived --- we now have six very fine, beautiful houses that served as parsonages for the O.S.B. Church, and all six on Broad Street. To repeat: (1) No. 19 W. Broad; (2) No. 153 W. Broad; (3) No. 123 W. Broad; (4) No. 14 E. Broad; (5) No. 93 W. Broad; (6) No. 127 W. Broad. I hope you find this as surprising and interesting as I did.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

For your information I will give you all the ministers or elders of this First Baptist Church in Hopewell:

* 1748-1772	--- Rev. Isaac Eaton,	24 yrs.
1775-1779	--- Elder Benjamin Cole,	4 yrs.
1780-1795	--- Elder Oliver Hart,	15 yrs.
1796-1806	--- Rev. James Ewing,	10 yrs.
*** 1807-1845	--- Elder John Boggs,	38 yrs.
1845-1851	--- Elder Wm. Curtis,	6 yrs.
1853-1878	--- Elder Philander Hartwell,	25 yrs.
1879-1894	--- Elder Wm. J. Purrington,	15 yrs.
1896-1914	--- Elder Ferris Chick,	18 yrs.
** 1914-1949	--- Elder Chas. W. Vaughn,	35 yrs.
1953-1958	--- Elder H. M. Bennett,	5 yrs.
1958-1974	--- Elder A. Warren,	16 yrs.

** A bit of subtraction will show you that Elder John Boggs served the longest, 38 yrs; I believe that he was one of the most influential of the Elders in reference to the life of the church. His family - the two daughters - thru their Female Seminary --also greatly helped the town; there were several teachers in this family - rather remarkable!

** After the term of Elder Chas W. Vaughn (1914-1949), so many factors changed the attendance, membership, and scope of this O.S.B.Ch. The last 2 elders were mainly visiting elders.

The old brick church --- often called Baptist Meeting "lived" a long life; 259 years as an official group; or, 227 years of service were regularly held within.

Also of interest may be the burial spots of those we know. Rev. Isaac Eaton's tombstone is encased in the east wall. Rev. James Ewing's is to the east of the church but near it. Elder John Boggs, that brick crypt; the bricks came from the torn-down school in the graveyard. Elder Philander Hartwell, close by that of Rev. Ewing; and nearby is that of Elder Wm. J. Purrington. Ewing's, Hartwell's and Purrington's are all easily seen from the front sidewalk. I had to search a long while for Elder Vaughn's. Its way back in the 'Newer' part, in the far northeast area.

This church was called the First Baptist Church of Hopewell in the early days. Somehow I was surprised to see the words "pastor of the Old School Baptist Church" engraved on Elder Vaughn's gravestone. I'd always thought it was an unofficial name, a sort of loving designation. Another unanswered question in my mind!

* * * * *

Answers, do usually come sooner or later. Mrs. Priscilla Hunt (Mrs. Samuel Hunt of E. Prospect St.) explained that the change in name resulted from "changes throughout the church as to basic beliefs ... so that those holding the same beliefs as this group in town became The OLD SCHOOL Baptists."

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XLII - Cenlar (Centennial) Savings and Loan (HVN 2/16/82)

Cenlar (Centennial) Savings and Loan Association History

Ed. Note by Ruth Luce:

Betty Gantz could be called Hopewell's historian.

Mrs. Gantz, who lives in a lovely Victorian home in Hopewell Borough, has been writing 'Hopewell's Past' columns, which the HVN has been pleased to publish on an irregular basis, for some years now. Now long ago, as you shall read, Mrs. Gantz came upon a find that revived again her interest in 'Hopewell's Past'. Please read on.

Betty's info:

Have you ever unknowingly sat on a gold mine? Historically, this happened to me May, 1985.

Mr. Christopher Bannister, had been searching futilely for a large black photo album with old pictures of the area. When he called me, I suddenly realized I had something. There were three albums and a scrapbook given to me about eight years ago. Two were scrapbooks compiled by the late Russell W. Holcombe, giving a history of our Savings and Loan; the other was THE collection of old photos that Chris was glad to find. At the time, it was presented to me, the giver suggested that I could use it to write up the history of the S & L. I was much too busy then; and then I completely forgot it! So, now I will write a brief history of 'our' Centennial Savings & Loan. Some fascinating old photos accompany this history.

Ralph Ege's diary says that there was a Building & Loan Association in 1883: President, G.W. Snook; Secretary, John S. VanDyke; Treasurer, Joseph M. Phillips. The directors were: Ralph Ege, Randolph Stout, A.G. Fetter, E.D. Wood, J.S. VanDyke, W. Phillips, E.H. Snook, W. VanPelt, J.A. Miller and F.F. Holcombe.

The 1897 booklet, Healthful Historic Hopewell gives a picture of the building at 13 E. Broad St., now the Hopewell Library, labeled as the Hopewell National Bank. It says that in addition to this are "two Building & Loan Associations" ... for "those wishing to build homes".

There was a Columbia Building and Loan Association in the early 1900's, but few records exist.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

There was a People's Building and Loan; its meetings were held in Harrison's Harness Shop (Mercer Street, old Eagle Bakery), March 9, 1893-1905.

There was a Hopewell Valley Building & Loan Association starting in March, 1902 and liquidated in 1909.

People did need money to build a home; some few others had the extra money to lend - thus a group was formed. As you can see, several were formed prior to 1900.

But the LASTING one was the result of a meeting of the Business League (like a Chamber of Commerce) that expressed a need for a good one. Canvassing the area, they were able to get 113 shareholders. On February 24, 1914 in the Firemen's Hall on Seminary Ave. in Hopewell (directly behind Hopewell Valley Inn - red building next to "Your Aunt's Attic" today), the first meeting was held and the Association formed on March 11, 1914.

Note: There will be pictures if feasible in final production. However, they were shown in various H.V.N. columns.

PHOTO

FIRST OFFICE of Hopewell Building & Loan Association was on the second floor of the Fire Department headquarters on Seminary Ave. The town's firefighting apparatus is shown in the only picture available of the building, complete with faithful horse and four firemen.

One of the first mortgage loans was for \$600; but \$100 of it was withheld until one coat of paint was put on the house!

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Another early mortgage was on a property on E. Prospect St. near Elm St what was interesting was that then it was considered FAR OUT IN THE COUNTRY!

Russell W. Holcombe, living on Lanning Ave., was an officer from the 1914 start. He continued active in it in one capacity or another until he retired - partly - in Oct 1958 - 44 years!

The first year produced an income of just over \$8000. When Russ retired, it was over \$2,000,000!

The first president was J. Mason Ege, serving 1914-1919. Joseph B. Hill (Joe Hill's grandfather) and Raymond S. VanDyke were the only two other presidents serving during the first fifty years - until 1964. The only three secretaries in that time were Robert Zulauf (a dentist), Russell W. Holcombe and J. Kenneth Dorey.

This Hopewell Building and Loan Association held its first meeting on the second floor of the Firemen's Hall on Seminary Ave. By 1922, they were at the Hopewell National Bank Building, second floor, corner of N. Greenwood and E. Broad St. They did have a "payment corner" on the first floor of the bank - to save people the trip up those stairs! In 1951, they were in the 'old' telephone building, 13 East Broad Street on the first floor. Meetings were held at the home of Mrs. George E. Clarke, #32 E. Broad St. (F. Klett's today) for a short time. The last move was to the present building on East Broad St. at Maple Street.

In 1915, the Association paid its secretary \$75 a year; the rent was \$10. They had receipts of almost \$12,000. By 1921, the secretary received \$200; treasurer, \$50; rent still \$10. By 1926, the rent was up to \$12; secretary, \$350; assistant secretary, \$120; treasurer, \$60. By 1928, the rent was \$62 and by 1929, their assets were almost \$300,000. By 1935, the officers were paid and David L. Smith was appointed counsel. By 1939, the rent had gone up to \$350.50. The Association became, in 1951, a member of the Federal S & L insurance, up to \$10,000. In January, 1954, the name was changed to Hopewell SAVINGS and Loan Association to emphasize the idea of thrift and home ownership. The year, 1954, was the first over \$1,000,000 in assets.

The permanent home was announced, with ground breaking on June 1, 1958; finished with formal opening December 6, 1958 at today's East Broad at Maple St. When Hopewell S & L merged with Pennington S & I_ on January 1, 1975, a new name was chosen - the Centennial Savings and Loan Association. In May, 1984, Larson Mortgage Company acquired Centennial, but the name was not then changed. As of May 30, 1985, the Larson Mortgage Company and Centennial S & L formed a holding company. Its plans to seek a federal charter and change the name to Cenlar Federal Savings Bank has just been approved.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

PHOTO

HOPEWELL SAVINGS & LOAN once occupied an office in this building that is today the Hopewell Library at 13 East Broad St.

PHOTO

HOPEWELL SAVINGS & LOAN in its new building, 1958, at East Broad and Maple Streets. Note the sign that bears the name Centennial Savings & Loan that now has become Cenlar.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

The one thing that was so different from today was the use of the monthly savings idea. We'd buy into one of the series offered at different times, pay each month the agreed amount (as \$1 or \$5, etc.) This was a SAVING practice. The series would last about 12 years. At the end, you'd get back your payment with interest. It was a great idea - to promote the concept of saving. It could be a small amount, but people believed in thrift. It seems like such a small amount now - but then, it was a way for the 'small' man to save toward a goal.

Centennial S & L Receives Approval To Convert To Federal Bank Status

Ruth Luce's article: 7/4/1985

Centennial Savings and Loan Association has received approval from the Federal Home Loan Bank Board to convert from a state chartered capital stock savings and loan association to a federal = chartered bank.

Michael W. Young, President and Chairman of the Board of Cenlar Federal Savings Bank, the new name for Centennial Savings, announcing the conversion, noted, "In addition to functioning as a depository and lending institution as authorized for federal savings banks under federal law and regulations, Cenlar Federal Savings Bank will offer new products and expanded services to its customers in many new directions."

Cenlar Home Funding, Inc., has been formed as a subsidiary of Cenlar Federal Savings Bank. Founded in 1958 by Robert W. Larson as Larson Mortgage Company, and servicing over a billion dollars in home mortgages, Cenlar Home Funding will continue to act as a mortgage banker, making first mortgages on residential properties. Larson Financial Services, a sister company of Cenlar Home Funding, offers Real Estate Investment banking services for developers and owners of commercial properties. Another Cenlar Federal Savings subsidiary, Cenlar Consumer Funding, Inc., will originate consumer loans.

Other subsidiaries are planned for the near future.

Larson Mortgage Company acquired Centennial S & L, then an 90 million dollar thrift with 5 branches in May of 1984. Two additional branches have since been acquired and assets have grown to 250M, Plans were recently unveiled for the building of an 11 Story, 155,000 Sq.ft. office building on West State Street in Trenton, with parking for 400 cars, to serve as Cenlar's new corporate headquarters. Cenlar and DKM Properties of Trenton are joint owners of the new project. (Plans cancelled.)

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Cenlar Federal Savings Bank maintains its present headquarters in Pennington. Other offices are in Hopewell, Lambertville, Ewing, Whiting, Trenton and Hamilton Square.

Cenlar Home Funding is an approved FHA/VA lender and is authorized to originate, process, own, sell and service FHA, VA and conventional loans. Cenlar Home Funding is also an approved seller/servicer for the Federal National Mortgage Association, Government National Mortgage Association, Federal Home Loan Mortgage Association and the New Jersey Mortgage Finance Agency.

Cenlar Home Funding's residential mortgage division has 45 representatives working with real estate brokers on the production and sale of mortgages for one-to-four family residences.

New Jersey Cenlar Home Funding offices are in Pennington, Plainfield, Freehold, Cherry Hill and Verona. Out-of-state offices are maintained in Baltimore and Ellicott City, Md., and Paoli, Pa.

Ed. Note: Ruth Luce.

Chris Bannister, to whom Mrs. Gantz refers at the outset of this account, was largely responsible for the photos used by the HVN in its 1966 special section on Hopewell Borough's 75th anniversary. At that time, he gathered many old photos from various sources and worked them up to sufficient quality to be used in a newspaper. The HVN and Bannister, who is a world-know harpsichord maker and a former Hopewell Township Committeeman, had been wondering where all those old photos had gone. When Chris called the HVN back in May, we directed him to Betty Gantz, who then recalled what she had put aside in her home. The photos accompanying this story are just a few of those Mrs. Gantz has lent to the HVN. Watch for more as the summer progress.

I have saved the pictures from this article. All the other albums were thankfully taken by his son Russell Holcombe of Province Line Road. Altho' these contained his father's scrap book which made it possible to gather the information herein, these Albums also had much of a personal family interest and belonged more appropriately to the family. (EBG note)

[[Handwritten note: Cenlar has been bought by Savings & Loans had some tough years the last 3-4 before this - 1989-90. Cenlar was bought by present owner - Core States New Jersey National Bank when? at least by 1990..?..]]

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

CHAPTER XLIII - Hopewell Academy and Brown University (HVN 1/2/86)

The Hopewell Academy and Its Relation to Brown University

You may have heard or read that Brown University began here in Hopewell with the establishment of Rev. Isaac Eaton's Academy, 1756 - 1767, at #19 W. Broad St.

W R O N G

The sign, apparently placed in N.J.'s tercentenary (300th) celebration (1664 - 1964) in front of #19 W. Broad Street:

"HOPEWELL ACADEMY
founded here in Baptist parsonage 1756.
Alumni James Manning and Hezekiah Smith
Developed Brown University."

We do know that Rev. Isaac Eaton had an Academy, and an excellent one, at #19 W. Broad from 1756 to 1767, eleven years. He died 5 years later.

We know, also that J.M. and H.S. named above were students at his Academy. James Manning was the first president of Brown University; Hezekiah Smith was a very close friend.

A fine friend recently gave me an old book, copyrighted 1896, Early History of Brown University, and the Life, Times, and Correspondence of Pres. Manning, 1751 - 1791, by Ruben A Guild, A.M., L.L.D. Librarian Emeritus. In addition it contains a copy of the "History of the Charter", and a copy of the original charter.

This seems like an excellent source. We should be able to learn whether Brown Univ. started here.

First we shall learn more of the author.

The college was founded in 1764; renamed 1804 as Brown University. In September 1844 the Corporation of Brown Univ. passed a resolution requesting "an adequate history of the origin and progress of the University".

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In 1847, Reuben A. Guild upon graduation became assistant to the then Prof. C.C. Jewett. In March 1848, he became head librarian. He completed a file of the annual catalogues, and gradually accumulated a collection of pamphlets, manuscripts, etc. illustrative of the history of the College.

In 1864 R.A. Guild published a history; second volume in 1867. 310 copies were made, the stereotype plates were destroyed, so the works were out of print soon. R.A. Guild resigned in 1893 having served for 46 years! In these above volumes he included the correspondence of Pres. Manning.

In 1848 R.A. Guild was given voluminous portfolios containing the surviving letters of Pres. Manning. This acquisition stirred a desire within R.A.G. to do the research necessary to produce his later volumes. Since the 1864 and 1867 books were old and new material had come to light, this history was written as of 1896. Certainly this author was well qualified to present the information accurately, as of 1896.

I will present from this 600 plus page history, the events most clearly pertaining to Rev. I. Eaton and the evolving of the "University of the College of Rhode Island", for this was the first name for the college! The charter was signed Oct. 24, 1765, with mention that they would like a more appropriate name. Let's go back to The Beginning.

The Philadelphia Association (the oldest Baptist Assoc. in America), founded in 1707, desired to secure for its churches an educated ministry, but without the restrictions of denominational influence or sectarian tests.

In 1756, there was founded at Hopewell, N.J. under the auspices of the Phila. Assn., an academy "for the education of youth for the ministry" under the leadership of Rev. Isaac Eaton who was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Hopewell N.J. His was the first American Baptist seminary for the literary and theological training of young men. Many were the eminent men who received some of their education at #19 W. Broad. James Manning was his first pupil. His successor at Brown, Samuel Jones was another student. Many became ministers. Many of the students became doctors or lawyers.

Altho' the Academy existed for only 11 years, its success inspired the denomination to establish a college. Remember these dates: Rev. Eaton's 1756 - 1767 Academy. Brown was founded in 1764 in Rhode Island. All this was before the Revolutionary War. Now, the question was, "Where would this college be founded?"

Many places in the South and in the North were considered. Eventually, the selection of some spot in Rhode Island occurred. The Rev. Morgan Edwards was a prime mover for Rhode Island. On October 12, 1762 was passed the formal motion for the establishment of a Baptist College. Some laughed at the idea as impracticable. As usual there were hard reasons against it --- the war with the Indians, the incessant struggle just to make a living, roads had to be built, and few of the Baptist were men of means.

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There were fewer than 70 churches and perhaps 5000 members.

But there was another side. The Academy at Hopewell was successful, even tho' but a preparatory school. Harvard and Yale were controlled by the Congregationalists. The College of N.J. (Princeton); by Presbyterians. Columbia, William and Mary, Univ. of Pa; by Episcopalians. In those 70 Baptist Churches, there were many pastors of strong faith and determined will.

Mr. James Manning took his first degree in the College of N.J., in Sept. 1762. He was deemed the most suitable leader for a Baptist College, which was to be free of any sectarian religious tests. By 1774, a plan was approved for raising funds.

Great mention is made of Rev. Isaac Eaton's influence --the man and the Academy at Hopewell ----- of James Manning's conversion and education. During the year 1762-3, he traveled extensively; he was soon to be called to Warren, R.I. as the pastor. In July 1763, he was in Newport, R.I. where he met with 15 men who were all Baptist Trustees and were present at the first meeting of the Corp. in 1764. Although R.I. had been selected as the site for the College, no town had yet been selected. When the charter was enacted, there was no building ready, no teachers ready the Charter expressed THE IDEA for a college. There was great rivalry as to its final location. Some towns which wanted it were: Warren, Newport and Providence. Some thought the college would be best located where its leader was a pastor.

In 1765 James Manning was officially appointed as President of the R.I. College.

Up to 1769 the College was for the most part friendless and moneyless, insomuch that a college building was hardly thought of. However, there was no lack of faith on the part of the guardians and friends of the College.

The first commencement of the R.I. College was held Sept. 7, 1769 in the meeting-house erected at Warren, R.I.! Pres. James Manning had been conducting school; four years previous there was just one student! Seven men received B.A's in 1769. They were young men of great promise. This first class may have exerted as much influence as any later larger class. The book contains a short biography of each of these graduates. To me, it is fascinating to learn that 4 of these first graduates had been students at the Hopewell Academy ! One of these 4 was Rev. Isaac Eaton's son Joseph, who became a doctor.

By 1769, Providence had become the chosen site, due largely to "The Browns". The brothers, Nicholas, Joseph, John and Moses Brown, were leading citizens of Providence, which had about 500 dwellings and 2000 people. Newport was larger but would have been more vulnerable to invasion or attack.

In May 1770, the cornerstone of the first college building, University Hall, was laid in Providence, R.I. The original site contained 8 acres, which included the 'home-lot' of Chad Brown, the great ancestor of the Brown family in Providence. This first building was modeled after Nassau Hall in Princeton, which was considered as the finest building and largest of its kind. Nassau

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Hall was 54ft. x 176ft., and a projection of four feet in front and twelve feet in the rear; three stories and a basement; the middle was surmounted by a cupola. Nassau Hall was built in 1754-5.

Brown's first building was voted to be 46'x150', the projection 10x30 on each side and 4 stories high.

Pres. James Manning continued his presidency at Providence, necessitating his resignation from Warren. At Providence, he had the help of Rev. Messrs. Edwards, Smith, Stillman, Backus, Gano and others.

The Revolutionary War interfered with the progress of the College; studies were suspended from Dec. 7, 1776 -- May 27, 1782. The Freshman building was used as a barracks and hospital. In 1786 the Freshman class of 1782 was graduated.

You might be interested in a Memoir of Prof. Goddard: "I shall never forget what Dr. Manning, in great good humor, told me were among his 'trying experiences'. His salary was only 80 pounds per year, for that he performed all the duties of Pres. of the College; heard two classes recite every day; listened to complaints, foreign and domestic, from undergraduates and their parents, of both sexes, and answered them, now and then by letter; waited on all transient visitors into College, etc," PLUS "I made my own garden and took care of it, repaired my dilapidated walks, went nearly every day to market; preached twice a week or oftener; attended funerals; visited the sick; etc." WOW ! ---

The attendance at the college gradually, slowly increased; in 1785 there were 37 students. By April 1791 he felt he must resign from pastoral duties.

On July 29, 1791 he was seized with a fit of apoplexy and died.

* * * * *

Stories long after the fact often are different from the actualities. There were people in Newport who disputed any connection of the College with the Hopewell Academy and the Phila. Ass'n. All of this is refuted with great evidence on Page 512-13 of Guilds book.

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* * * * *

In a catalogue issued by the College before 1896, it said that Brown University owed its origin to the happy convergence of two separate lines of influence. One was the Phila. Ass'n under whose auspices the Hopewell Academy had already been established.

50 % isn't bad !

* * * * *

The Charter

It dictated that the Corporation should be made up of two branches: the Trustees and Fellows. Thirty-six trustees; 22--Baptist; 5--Quakers; 5--Episcopalians; 4--Congregationalists.

There were twelve Fellows, 8--Baptist; rest---any denomination.

The following people were mentioned in the Charter: Rev. John Gano; Rev. Isaac Eaton, Rev. Sam Jones, Rev. James Manning --all connected with Hopewell and/or the Academy.

Rev. Isaac Eaton was named as one of the first and present Trustees.

Rev. Sam Jones and Rev. J. Manning were two of the first Fellows.

Rev. Hezekiah Smith was a life long friend of James Manning; much of the time they were involved in the same activities. However, they branched out in their individual interest.

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Conclusion:

Rev. Isaac Eaton's Academy, 1756 - 1767, sponsored by the Phila. Assn existed here in Hopewell. For at least those eleven years he had a profound influence in the excellent education of his students. This Academy was like a 'Prep' school. His students generally went on to college.

There may have been a move, under the Phila. Association's influence, to establish a college here in N.J.

The College of Rhode Island, named Brown University 40 years later, was founded in 1764. Isaac Eaton's students were very active before and after its founding. Its first graduation ceremony was held at Warren, R.I., 1769. Soon after, Providence, R.I. was designated as the site for The College. James Manning was its first President until his death in 1791.

There were too many other mitigating circumstances that make it impossible and inaccurate to say that Brown started here at Eaton's Academy.

How wonderful that the first President of Brown University had been a student at 'our' Academy. Let's just be proud that Rev. Isaac Eaton was of such great stature that he had a great influence on the future lives of his students.

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CHAPTER XLIV - Hopewell Celebrates 90 Years (June 1981)

Hopewell Celebrates 90 Years (March 1891 - June 1981)

Although Hopewell has been around for a long time, it didn't become an official borough until March of 1891, when the townspeople voted to establish an official government. On Saturday, June 20, 1981 the people of Hopewell Borough (Mercer County) celebrated Hopewell's 90th birthday with an old-time country fair, "Hopewell Community Day." The day long event took place primarily on the grounds of Princeton Bank, East Broad Street (Route 518), Hopewell. Homes and buildings that existed in 1891 were marked by signs all over town ... so maps were made for a walk or around town. One of the more famous homes in the Hopewell area is the John Hart House, the home of the signer of the Declaration of Independence, on Hart Ave a street that did not exist in 1891. We are marking those identified on the 1887 map in this week's HVN.

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Format Given People on 6/20/1981 - Buildings Existing when Boro Inc. March 1891

- A. HOPEWELL SEMINARY - 23 East Broad Street
 - B. PUBLIC SCHOOL - 75 West Broad Street
 - C. OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH AND CEMETERY - W. Broad St.
 - D. CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH - East Broad Street
 - E. PRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL - W. Broad St. (built, 1877)
(house, now turned around)
 - F. ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH - Princeton Ave. ;(built, 1877)
 - G. RAILROAD DEPOT - Railroad Place; (built, 1882)
 - H. CEMETERY - North Greenwood Avenue
 - I. MISS M. PHILLIPS - 86-88 West Broad Street
(just past Presbyterian Church)
-
1. Nelson David Blackwell - 46 E. Broad St.;
(brick store) General Merchant
 2. David L. Blackwell - 46 F. Broad. St.; (Corcoran's) Grain Merchant
 3. F.F. Holcombe & Bro - 47 W. Broad St.; (coal yard 1891)
General Merchant, (Moore Antique, 1981)
 4. Jas. L. Manning - 45 E. Broad St.;
Bakery, Confectionary and Toy Store. (oven still in cellar);
Rob Holcombe,1981
 5. Mrs. M.A. Carter - 15 E. Broad St.;
Hopewell Library and Fancy Goods; Hopewell Inn;
 6. J. Thomas Gandy - S. Greenwood & Broad St.; Druggist
Building not there then
 7. Conrad Behre - W. Broad St.; Oyster & Eating Saloon
Plumber and Tin worker (building burned down, 1893)
Holcombe Block, drug store, grocer's, etc. 1981.
 8. J.M. Dalrymple - 15 W.Broad St.; Carriage & Harness Repository
(J.Kettle's land,whereon house is now);
J.M.D owner of #19 W.Broad St.
 9. Paul Arnold - 27 West Broad Street; Barber
 10. Israel G. Howell - 12 N. Greenwood Ave.;
Undertaker and Furniture Dealer
 12. J.H. Piggott - Mercer St.; Agricultural Implements
(Henderson's Real Estate former office)
 13. The Hopewell Herald - Mercer St. 1874 - 1955
(Now the Hopewell Valley News)

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14. J.C. Harrison - 62-64 W.Broad St.; Harness Manufacturing
15. S. Smith Eye - ?? W. Broad St.; Blacksmithing and Wheelwright
(corner of Broad and Louellen), also on E. Broad just west
by 4 houses of #4 (Manning), Mrs. Ken Hullfish 1981.
16. George Staples - behind 24-26 W. Broad St.
now Center Street, Blacksmithing and Carriage Making,
now home of James Hall.
17. William F. Drake - (can't find on map)
N.E. Corner Col. and Princeton; Carpenter and Builder
18. Harry D. Suthpen - 22 Front St. ;
Carpenter & Builder (Mrs. Stryker)
19. D.J. Wyckoff - 31 Columbia Ave. ; Carpenter & Builder
(Edith Cromwell)
20. Lebbeus H. Titus - 29 Columbia Ave. ; Carpenter & Builder
(Boughner 1981)
21. William M. Drake - 23 N. Greenwood Ave.; Mason & builder
(Mayor in 1891)
22. S.S. Carver - 60 Model Ave. ; Bucher
23. Cray & Pierson Livery Stable - 10-12 Princeton Ave.;
Pierson 1890, 29 Blackwell Ave.
24. Finney & Fetter Steam Mill & Saw Mill
- corner of Model & Louellen Sts.
25. John S. Van Dyke - 29 E. Broad St.; Lawyer - his office was at '
24-26 W. Broad St., small building where 3 story house is.
26. Joseph M. Phillips - 60 Hart Ave.; Justice of Peace
JOHN HART HOUSE.
27. John A. Miller - 14 W. Broad St.; Doctor (Medical)
28. E.P. Hawke - 19 N. Greenulood Ave.; Doctor (Medical)
29. Louis P. Hurley - 51 N. Greenwood Ave.; Veterinarian
30. West End Hotel - 48 W. Broad St.; Hopewell House now
31. 25 Blackwell Ave. - building in 1891; (R.A.Gantz,1981)
32. 29 Blackwell Ave. - Jo.Pierson, livery stable; (W.Potts,1981)
33. 16 Lafayette St. - John Ewing's home, one half today's size;
owned this before building # 25 Blackwell Ave.

Also: There is an 1890 map of Hopewell Boro, altho it does not include quite all the town, it is a help for what it does show.

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1887 MAP Information (Prepared for June 20, 1981 celebration)

Victorian Structures Dominate Hopewell's Late 19th Century Architecture

Thanks to our historian, Betty Gantz, we are able to present readers with a picture of Hopewell as a town in 1891 ... 90 years ago, the year that Hopewell voted to become an incorporated borough. using a map of the town in 1887, Mrs. Gantz has been able to identify a good number of buildings that were here in the late 19th century. The text follows the letters and numbers on the map. (1887 Map available in Hopewell Museum, also 1890.)

A. **Hopewell Seminary**, which existed from 1867 to 1899, was located at 23 Bast Broad Street.

B. **A Public School**, built in 1855 or 56 could be found at 75 West Broad Street.

C. **The Old School Baptist Church**, on West Broad Street was organized in 1715, built in 1747. Next to the church, which is now open only on special occasions (and will be on Sunday, June 21) is the cemetery in which the John Hart monument can be found.

D. **The Calvary Baptist Church**, on East Broad Street (in those days ... Main Street) has been at that spot since 1871 or 1872.

E. **The Presbyterian Chapel**, (which is now a house that was turned around) was at 79 West Broad Street ... until later years when the Presbyterian changed their address to the other side of the street. That chapel was built in 1877.

F. **St. Alphonsus Church**, on Princeton Ave. has been there since 1877.

G. **The Railroad Depot**, was built in 1876 or 1882 (with a widow walk) and a person by the name of A DeHaven was agent. That historic edifice is still there on Railroad Place, but its condition is sad.

H. **Cemetery**, location of Highland cemetery off N. Greenwood Ave. on the east side, on the hillside.

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I. **Presbyterian Church Building**, where Rev. Burt Parry lives today --- in the late 1800's it belonged to Miss Martha Phillips. 86-88 West Broad.

#1. At 46 East Broad Street, **Nelson David Blackwell**, a general merchant, a brick building was built just west of the home. John Corcoran's Liquor Store is Blackwell's home in the early days. Blackwell bought land in 1875 and built the house at 35 East Broad where he lived. He owned many houses in town. This brick store was still there in the 1900's but was destroyed when the Sunoco Station was built. Many businesses were at that location before its demolition.

#2. **David Lafayette Blackwell**, a grain merchant, lived at 46 East Broad. His business was at 46 E. Broad and also another business near the railroad, and eventually it became J.B. Hill's.

#3. **F.F. Holcombe and Brother**, General Merchants, were at 47 West Broad. Holcombe owned many operations, but it was a coal yard in 1891. His brother, Solomon Holcombe, was the owner of the house at 19 West Broad (A. Holcombe home). The store was built in 1865 by J.V. Blackwell. John Q. McPherson had it in 1876 and "F.F." bought it in 1887. Mrs. Elizabeth Moore (owner) says there was a sign "F.F. Holcombe and Titus" on her big barn. The partnership dissolved in 1891-92. "F.F." also lived in the house far back from the street, just west of 47 W. Broad (just west of the 3 apartments in back also).

#4. **Jos. L. Manning Bakery**, Confectionery and toy Store, was in the building at 45 East Broad, Bob Holcombe's house. It's been reported that ovens can still be found in the cellar.

#5. At 15 East Broad Street, the home of the present Hopewell Inn, was the home of Mrs. C. Riley according to an 1875 map. In 1887, the name **Mrs. M.A. Carter** appears, along with the title, "Library and Fancy Goods".

#6. **Thomas Gandy**, druggist, was on the present intersection (there was no South Greenwood Ave. in 1891.) of S. Greenwood and Broad in those days, but the building no longer exists. It was burned in an 1893 fire. The "Holcombe Block" was built after 1893, when the Behres sold the land back to the owners of the Holcombe land.

#7. **Conrad Behre** (wife, Dorothea) was a plumber and tin worker and for the years he was here, a very prosperous business man. Oyster Saloon was here also. Behre was building a 4-story hall hereon, but the 1893 fire ruined it all and the Behres (as noted in the preceding paragraph, sold the land back.)

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#8. **J.M. Dalrymple**, Carriage and Harness Repository, 15 W. Broad; came to Hopewell originally to work as the R.R. Station agent. He married Mr. Drake's daughter, Eucebia, and therefore got 19 West Broad and came into the money! This building was on the lot where Bob Miller bought land in 1911 to build the large home which did belong to Jim and Billy Kettle.

#9. **Paul Arnold**, had a Barber Shop at 27 West Broad. The house is still there, just east of Hopewell Village Hardware parking lot. Arnold was Spanish and he married a black. Allena Arnold, their daughter, was a fine hairdresser; Mrs. Gantz was one of her customers. Allena remembered the 1899 Cook block fire burning and watching it as a child.

#10 **Israel G. Howell**, Undertaker and Furniture Dealer, lived in the blue house at 12 N. Greenwood. He invented the bicycle - kjckstand and was a very ingenious man. There was no Center St. when he lived there.

(There's no #11 on the map.)

#12 **J.H. Piggott Agricultural Implements**, on Mercer Street is the place where Henderson Real Estate was until they recently moved to Pennington. John H. was the father of William, Hazel, and Robert. Hazel Chatten McCoy lived on Seminary Ave. Robert's widow is the mother of John Piggott of View Point Drive, Hopewell Township; she lived on Model Ave. with her other son, Bob. Son John was a member of the School Board and was an active member of American legion Post 339.

#13. **The Hopewell Herald**, now defunct (as of 1955) ... now the Hopewell Valley News (started 1956) was at 47 West Broad Street in 1875 (second floor). The present Hopewell Valley News building did not exist in 1891, however it was present in an 1897 booklet at the Railroad Ave. location. P.W. Hartwell was the editor of the Herald in those days. He had quite a way with words.

In one of the 1891 Heralds one reads: Fashion note --- 11/4/91 --- "The winter petticoat will be handsome, but what odds does that make, we can't see them." Foresighted ... 11/4/91 ... thinking of a huge fire at Clinton, N.J. destroying 19 buildings ... "Is there a warning in this for Hopewell, when, while we have water running through the street, it cannot be used" ... Funny --- 1/6/92 "The elements were at war Monday. Did you hear the snow squall?" Interesting --- 12/30/91 ... "no sidewalk leading to Presbyterian Chapel, but there is an excellent opening for one. It tries one's Christianity severely to wade through the mud such as there was Thursday night." On the 1887 map, The Hopewell Herald was on Mercer Street ... on the same side as the present pizza shop, etc.

#14 **J.C. Harrison Harness Manufactory**, was at 62-64 West Broad. He rented this house because J.M. Phillips owned the house in 1891. The Harrisons bought it from his estate in 1898. This house has always been a 'thorn', many claiming it to be older than it seems to be. The house was on the property in 1898.

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It is very possible that Enoch Phillips (brother to J.M.) may have built the house, Enoch owned the land after his father's death in 1820. Enoch planted apple trees in 1823 on the present property of the Hopewell Presbyterian Church.

#15. **S. Smith Ege, Blacksmithing and Wheelwright** was at the corner of Louellen and Broad. He lived at 37 East Broad, and also had a shop in back of that. His wife was a milliner and many remember her hats on display in the front window of the house.

#16. **George Staples, Blacksmithing & Carriage Maker**, was a very large building behind 24-26 West Broad. In a smaller version, Mr. Nolls made its remains into a home which is now the residence of Councilman James Hall of Center Street. Staples' sisters lived in 18 West Broad. This was sold to Mr. J. Blackwell. His daughter married "Tut" Moore and they lived there ... she died recently.

#17. **William F. Drake Carpenter and Builder**, Although Mrs. Gantz was unable to find this on the map, she knows that in the 1890's he did live at 16 Princeton Ave. (corner of Columbia and Princeton --- n.e. corner)

#18. **Harry D. Sutphen, Carpenter and Builder**, was at 22 Front Street ... that street had no name then. John G. Burton, Charley's father, owned this house. Mrs. Stryker lives there.

#19. **A.J. Wyckoff, Carpenter and Builder**, (not on the 1875 map) had the house on the southern side of Columbia, between Princeton and Seminary. It's Edith Cromwell's at 31 Columbia, originally small, with the entire east end added on.

#20. **Lebbeus H. Titus, Carpenter and Builder**. This is believed to be 29 Columbia Ave., the house was originally small and added to later.

#21. **William W. Drake, Mason and Builder**. Drake was mayor in 1891 and lived at 23 N. Greenwood (corner of Cooke Place and N. Greenwood). Today this is the home of Jeff and Marlene McCollum and their three children, Brian, Timothy, and Amy. Jeff was a former award-winning reporter for the Hopewell Valley News and is on the Board of Health.

[Drake's name was inscribed on the back of the mantelpiece in Norman Blackwell's home.]

C.I_. Williamson, dry goods merchant, (was in the old 5 & 10, part of drug store now), lived in this house, as did his children, Ken and Joseph Williamson (Sr.).

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#22. **S.S. Carver, Butcher**, was at 60 Model Ave. There was a small building on that property. There is speculation that he might be the "Uncle Sam", who sold oysters and advertised in the Herald in Nov., 1891.

#23. **Cray and Pierson Livery Stable**, was located at 10-12 Princeton Avenue. (Pierson was at 29 Blackwell Ave. in 1890 tax map.)

#24. **Finney and Fetter Steam Mill and Saw Mill**, was at the corner of Model and Louellen, Finney was from Lambertville. Soon after, A.G. Fetter was the sole owner. The mill burned several times and was rebuilt. The "business" was sold out in 1894 to J.M. Phillips.

#25. **John S. VanDyke, Lawyer**, lived at 29 East Broad Street. His office, in 1887, was in a small building at 24-26 West Broad. He also used a small building in back of Cook's Block in the 1890's.

#26. **Joseph M. Phillips, Justice of the Peace**, lived at 60 Hart Ave. This is Bob Stewart's home (the famed John Hart House). He (JMP) was the son of Thomas Phillips, who from J. Hart's death, did his best to own all of John Hart's lands and almost succeeded. Eventually Joseph and Enoch owned the same. Thomas Phillips died in 1820.

#27. **John A. Miller, Doctor**, lived at 14 West Broad (Dick Edling's). He had his office on the basement level. The house has been enlarged. His son, Dr. Robert Miller, of 15 West Broad, is well remembered.

#28. **E.P. Hawke, Doctor**, 19 No. Greenwood Ave., was next to W.W. Drake's (the Mayor) and is today the home of Hopewell Borough Clerk, Douglas Terhune. Doesn't look the same 1981, now open porch on S.W. corner.

#29. **Louis (Lewis) P. Hurley, Veterinarian**, lived near where Hart Ave. starts on N. Greenwood Ave.

#30. **Hopewell House**, was sold in 1889 to Taylor Provisions of Pennsylvania. In 1891 it was the "West End Hotel". Peter Van Fleet was there in 1893.

The 1890 tax map shows the Joseph Pierson Livery Stable at 29 Blackwell Ave. A road was built to the station, so Railroad Ave. became longer and later that former section was named Model Ave. The tax map showed more houses on Columbia Ave. 16 Lafayette Street was built (Ann Dow's house). 25 Blackwell Ave. land was bought and the house was built in 1891, (that house is the home of historian Betty Gantz and Bob Gantz).

Cook Block was built in 1890 and advertised in the Herald in 1891-92. It burned down in 1899.

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The Tomato Cannery was in the thinking process and was built in 1892.

The people, etc., who were involved in the 1893 Behre's fire, discussed earlier, included: Hook and Ladder, W.W. Morrell Meat Market, Merz Jewelry, John Whitehead's Cigar Store, and the Parsonage of Calvary Baptist Church.

In Cook's Block by 1893 were: Post Office, A. Naylor Furniture Store, home of Herb Davison ... A.S. Cook owner 10 E. Broad (red house corner of Blackwell and Broad). Cray's Hotel was at 15 East Broad. Of course, 'Cook Place' didn't last too long, just till the 1899 fire.

Other people of importance in 1891, as mentioned in the Herald of 1891-2 were: John Fox, butcher ... at Sam Carver's; D.B. Cox, auctioneer; Collings & Hoagland, painters; Hoppock & Hart. The "purple house" was here in 1876 and was the home of John Wert. The Creamery was started in 1887 and was here in 1891. Mason Ege had a hardware store ... Hopewell Valley Hardware ... old Rorer's. The second floor of this building was used by the Calvary Baptist before 1871-72, until the church was finished.

The Casual Shop at 37 West Broad was a home in 1891 and was probably occupied by William Golden's widow.

By 1891, there was a public school with four rooms on Model Ave. apartments, built in 1888.

The earliest places in Hopewell are: A. Holcombe's, 19 West Broad; Edling, 14 W. Broad; Guinness, 2-4 West Broad; Hopewell House, 46 W. Broad; Casual Shop, 37 W. Broad, and of course, the Old School Baptist Church and cemetery.

The museum on East Broad was built in 1877 by Randolph Stout, who lived there in 1891. There was a coal yard next door, 1890 map.

NOTICE

The purpose of identification, Mrs. Betty Gantz and the HVN have used the only map available that close to 1891, the 1887 map. We are showing only those houses or buildings that were labeled in 1887. We are aware that many others exist, as is obvious when looking at the map. Mrs. Gantz has asked that any home owner who knows that his/her home existed in 1891 and has information to support the claim, call her at 466-0523. [Editor, Ruth Luce]

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CHAPTER XLV - Historically Speaking

How Do I Do The Research To Find Out How Old My House Is?

On April 2, 1981, a very fine answer was given to this question in an article in the H. V. News by Peter G. Maurer. Since this may help you Hopewellites, I've reprinted this article.

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING: Just how old is my house, anyway?

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING is a regular feature dealing with topics of general historical interest to the residents of the Hopewell Valley and is sponsored by the Hopewell Valley Historical Society, whose membership is open to anyone with an interest in the architectural and cultural heritage of the Valley.

By Peter G. Maurer

Many residents of the Hopewell Valley have gotten involved with local history as the result of asking the simple question, "Just how old is my house, anyway?" With a little common sense, some ingenuity, some time off during the day --- court houses, regrettably, are only open from 8:30 to 4:30, Monday thru Friday --- and a whole lot of perseverance, anyone can start on what often leads to a kind of love affair with the Hopewell Valley.

The first place to start in searching out the past of your old house is to look at the end of your deed, where you will find a statement that reads: "... being the same as was conveyed by so - and-so to so-and-so on such-and-such a date and recorded on page such-and-such of book such-and-such" This statement tells you from whom the previous owners bought it, and the book and page where the deed to that transaction can be located in the county clerk's office. If you are lucky, you can easily and quickly chain your way back to all the deeds to your property, provided your house is less than 100 years old, was not foreclosed upon, or passed down through inheritance. If this is the case with your old house, not to worry: this is where the real detective work begins!

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In searching your deed, you may come across the phrase, "was seized of," or "died seized of." This means that the person who sold the property did not have a deed to that property recorded with the county, or that the seller no longer has a valid deed in his possession, which frequently happens when property is inherited. When you can no longer chain through the deed books by volume and page number, then you have no choice but to turn to the index of grantors and grantees.

Very simply, the "grantor" is the seller, and the "grantee" is the buyer. Deeds, wills, and mortgages are indexed and filed in a very clever and efficient manner by "key letters." Any of the personnel on the staff of the county clerk's office will be able to explain the systems, or you can read about it for yourself in the instructions found on the front page of each volume of the index. Once you work out the key letters and find the page number, any instrument recorded under that surname will be found on that number page in any volume of the index. As long as you know the family name in which the property was transferred, you can use the grantor/grantee index to narrow down the deeds which may refer to your piece of property. If this strategy does not work then your only recourse is to search the deeds to adjacent properties, since very often a deed description will refer to "so-and-so's line" or to "so-and-so's corner" or to "so-and-so's lot", formerly such-and-such's." These clues can often help you circumvent the missing link in the chain of ownership and give you another point of entry into the grantor/grantee index.

In deeds executed over 100 years ago, you will have no choice but to resort to the type of strategy just outlined, relying on family genealogies found at your local library, or wills, which are indexed in much the same way as deeds, to complete your chain of ownership. If you live in Mercer County, you can only use the Mercer County Clerk's Office to trace your deed back to 1838, the year Mercer County was created out of portions of Hunterdon, Somerset, Middlesex, and Burlington counties. Despite local Hopewell Valley lore to the contrary, deeds prior to 1838 for Hopewell area are still to be found at the Hunterdon County Court House in Flemington. If you are fortunate enough to live in a house dating back to the days of the proprietors of West Jersey you can find the deeds of the West Jersey Society on microfilm in the Archives of the State Library in Trenton, which just happens to be open Saturdays! But do not get your hopes up too high; remember, 200 years ago recording a deed was a convenience, not a legal requirement. Sometimes, deeds executed at an earlier date are not recorded until a much later date. In doing research on Titusville, the 1725 deed conveying the southern half of the village from the Andersons to the Vannoys was recorded 150 years later in an 1865 sale of a small building lot.

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If you find that your property was sold at foreclosure or some other court ordered sale, the grantor will be the county sheriff or a court appointed commissioner, with no information about any previous sale or transfer. While this could be a dead-end, it can sometimes prove a blessing in disguise, since these **fieri facias**- type sales had to be advertised and the deeds for such sales will often list the newspaper in which the sale was announced. Oftentimes these advertisements give colorful, detailed descriptions of the building to be sold and may provide the name of the person being foreclosed on. The back issues of many of the newspapers published in the Trenton area are on file in the Archives of the State Library and are a complete topic in their own right. If you cannot locate information from the advertisements, then you can always try the mortgage records which are filed and indexed like the deeds. Mortgages often provide invaluable clues as to when a property was improved or when a property may have suffered from neglect or diminution.

One caution, be sure to note carefully your acreage and lot sizes, as well as the purchase price. These points can be indicative of the date improvements were made, or when a property was subdivided. If, for instance, in 1860 an 120 by 80 foot lot sold for \$1200, you can be sure there was some kind of structure on the lot. If five years later, the same piece of ground sold for \$150, then something must have happened to the building in the interim. Sometimes a deed will refer in passing to the existence of a tavern or other commercial enterprise on the property. This kind of information can lead to research into old tavern licenses or census records, which can offer further insight into the evolution of your house and the families who once lived and worked where you do now. HAPPY SEARCHING!!

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CHAPTER XLVI - 1778 to 1875, Tracing ownership of the eleven farms of Hopewell Township and the 5 houses of Hopewell Boro (7-4-1878 speech).

An easier-to-read chart form I will give YOU, especially future researchers: homeowners of 1776, 1876, Ralph Ege's Pioneers of Old Hopewell of 1903-1908 and the Hopewell Township 1903 map correlated, 1975 homeowners, and their section and lot number. The voluminous deed research done by Betsey Errickson for the recent (1985-6) professional research will be available in the West Delaware Ave. Hopewell Township Library filed by section and lot numbers. H.B. will stand for Hopewell Boro. H.T. for Hopewell Township; if no Capitals it is H.T.

One note: as I did the 1975 owners, I found helpful this knowledge in Bn given section of H.T. those with the smallest lot numerical value usually give the location of early settlement as in these: 6-5, 6-6, 6-7, 6-8, 6-23, 6-20; they are all adjacent lots but those of 5, 6, 7, & 8 were the homes of the earlier settlers while 20 & 23 were later subdivisions of one of the first four earlier homesteads. However 1-4, 1-5, 1-6, and 1-8 are relatively not indicative of any one of these as the earliest; here you need more owner information.

[[At present, all these numbers are preceeded by 1105]]

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

HANDWRITTEN ??

Eleven Farms:

[[All nos. preceeded by 1105]]

General location	1776 or thereabout	1876 ---	Ege and 1903 map correlated	1975 owners and section-lot nos.
on the eastern side of Stony Brook and mostly north of Mine Rd.	James Larison	Ralph Ege Samuel Ege	C.E. Voorhees W.W. Kirkendal	Patricia Munn 21-7, 22-2, 21-31 Wm Cooper 21-38 Wm G Pritchard 21-8, 21-18 Frederick Wierdsma 21-6, 21-17 , 21-16, 21.6M
not researched possibly just east of, above, or wet of lower Van Dyke Road	David Hunt	J.S. Hoagland	D.P. Voorhees	John Pierson 21-1 Legion Hall 21-3
generally east of Van Dyke Road	Abraham Golden	J. Golden Andrew Larison Holcombe Jonathan Van Cleve Blackwell	W.F. Golden A.L. Holcombe Chas A Holcombe A.T. Van Dyke M. Van Horn	George E Cole 6-16, 6-16g Wm T Collins 6-17, 6-17Q Cemetery (Golden) 6-18, 21 acre Mario Tomarcio 7-11 Joseph Barna 7-12 Geo Spencer 7-8 Russell Lake 7-10
generally south of 654 & is #153 W. Broad or 222-236 Hopewell Road. In the boro it started after 2 houses west of Ege Ave & south of 654	Moses Hart James Madison [[old deed book 2 P213 10-10-1797 land to Moses Hart, who later sold to OSBC]]	The Parsonage Farm owned by the Old School Baptist Church	The Parsonage Farm owned by the Old School Baptist Church	John Hoge - HT 18-2, HB 30-1 HT 18-3, HB 30-2 HT 18-4, HB 30-21 HT 18-5, HB 30-24 HT 18-2, HB 30-1 HB 30-25, 30-27 Judson Timm HT 18-15
"all" land north of W. Broad St & west of N. Greenwood Ave and extending far into H.T. 68 Hart Ave	John Hart	Joseph Moore Phillips Wm B Van Pelt	Wm I Philips Harold Farlees HT 6-8, HT 6-8A	Robert Stewarts 28-1 HB Craig Miller HT 6-7, HB 21-10 Harold Farlee HT 6-8, 6-9, 6-18 cemetery
# 19 W. Broad St south of 518 and W. Broad St. to Maple St	Nathan Hixson (?) Benj. Blackwell (1794)	Chas Drake	Chas Drake	Newell and Anne Holcombe Stanley and Mary Ellen Runyan HB 12-56; HT 18-8, 18-13
# 46 E Broad all land north of E Broad St and east of N Greenwood Ave and into H.T.	Stephen Blackwell	Stephen Blackwell-2	C.S. Durling 48 E Broad The Highland Cemetery D.W. Housel	All that section of Hopewell Boro - 46 E Broad HB 4-32,37,44,41 Highland Cemetery HB 1-1, HT 8-45 Dave Smith 8-30 J. Ruggieri 8-41, 41Q, HB 1-28

HOPEWELL 'S PAST

Eleven Farms: continued

General location	1776 or thereabout	1876 ---	Ege and 1903 map correlated	1975 owners and section-lot nos.
generally east of H.B. line	Ebenezer Stout	Ruben Mc Pherson William Van Buskirk Jonathan Van Dyke	Estate of Ruben Mc Pherson -- not researched	Dr. Thomas P Cortelyou 8-56, 8-62
These Stouts can become confusing. We'll just say they all lived on or near Amwell Road over to Province Line	Andrew Stout David Stout Jonthan Stout	B.S. Hill D.W. Stout Randolph Stout Mrs. Dr Baldwin Spencer S Weart	Stout and Van Dyke C. Sheppard S.W. Moore S.D. Stout P.O. Vorhees J.B. Blackwell	Jocelyn Burchfield 14-40 Jerome Webster 15-15 J Robert Moore 1-6, 14-9 14-17 Alan Collins (Estate) 1-5, 1-8, 1-4

Five Houses - Hopewell Village 1776 - Hopewell Boro 1891

location	about 1776	1876	Ege & 1903 map correlation	1975 owners, section & lot nos.
north side 46-48 W. Broad St.	Hepburn or Hebron	Edward M. Phillips	Peter Van Fleet	Hopewell Enterprises HB 28-55 Wayne R Lowe Lee Weston Marg. A, Henderson Hundlow West Assoc. William R. Doremris
14 W. Broad St.	unknown "small long house"	Dr John A. Miller	Dr John A. Miller	Richard Edling 28-25 HB
2-4 W. Broad St.	Rev John Blackwell called Priest John Blackwell	Mrs Eurie Hill Blackwell Titus & sister Mrs Rebecca or Mrs Samuel Dalrymple	Eurie Hill estate sells to Andrew T Van Dyke Silvester Van Dyke	Mrs John D. Guinness (Jeanette) HB 28-29
south side 19 W. Broad St.	Zebulon Stout 1769 Roger Larison 1790 Nathaniel Hixson 1792 Benjamin Blackwell 1794	Charles Drake 1873	George Newell Holcombe	Anne Holcombe Estate to Mrs Stanley Runyan (Mary Evelyn) 12-56 HB
37 W. Broad St	Obediah Seeley no research done	Cornelius Van Dyke sold to Daniel W. House about this time	Mrs Wm Golden	Mr & Mrs Gerald Vandewater 'Betty' 12-18 HB

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This is not a complete index. It is intended to help you find some item more quickly than by using the Table of Contents.

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