



Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

Vol. 34, NO. 1

Published by Hunterdon County Historical Society

WINTER 1998

Annual Meeting, Sunday, March 29 2 p.m. Flemington Womens Club

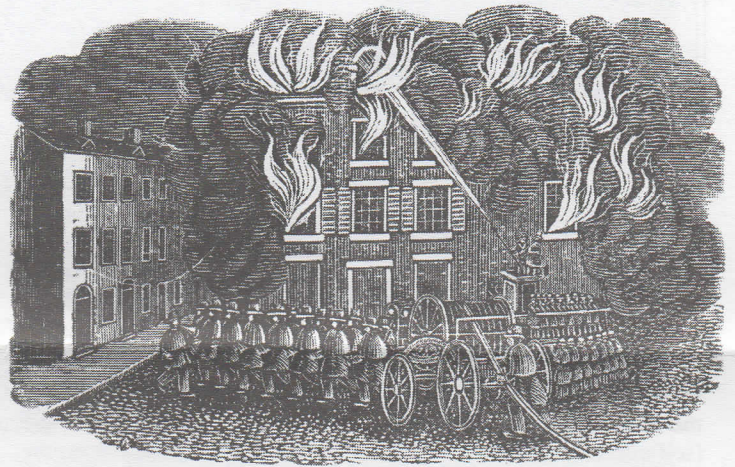
FIRE! FIRE! The cry causes much excitement. Imagine the fear it *ignited* in the past without manpower and means to combat it.

Early residents of Hunterdon needed some form of protection — some organized effort to battle a fire. The idea of a neighbors providing mutual help and assistance evolved into volunteer fire companies which today serve numerous communities. When the first Hunterdon County Court House burned in 1828, without a fire company, the records stored inside were saved but the building was a loss.

Our Annual Meeting guest speaker, Charles R. Higgins, will share the early history of fire companies in Lambertville, Flemington, Raritan Township, Frenchtown, Ringoes, Stockton and Sergeantsville and discuss the highlights of the big fires in Hunterdon through the years.

Mr. Higgins has served his local fire department, Sergeantsville for 32 years and is a past president of the Hunterdon County Fire Chiefs Association. He is Fire Protection/Prevention Engineer, Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., Princeton, NJ.

Historical Society meetings are open to the public. Join us on Sunday afternoon, 29 March at 2 p.m. at the Flemington Womens Club for a brief business meeting, Mr. Higgins' illustrated talk and refreshments.



An illustration from a Mercer County Mutual Fire Insurance Company's [Pennington, NJ] fire policy, 1846. The actual policy from which this was reproduced insured Daniel Rittenhouse Senior's property "situated in Locktown, Hunterdon County. . . and occupied by A. Horner as a Public House," insured for \$880. [Rittenhouse Papers, Accession # 0008]

1998 Calendar

March 29 ANNUAL MEETING

April 22 9th Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

April 25-26 Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Museum
Opening, 1-4 p.m. Saturday & Sunday.
Every Sunday and second Saturday thereafter, Rte. 29 north from Lambertville

May 10-26 National Historic Preservation Week

May 16 DORIC HOUSE OPEN
featuring Spanish American War Centennial Exhibit
Paul Robeson's 100th Birthday Exhibit

June 6 7th Annual Stangl/Fulper Auction
sponsored by the Stangl/Fulper Collectors Club, St. Magdalen Parish Center, Flemington 1-4 p.m.
Bob Perzel, Chair (908) 782-0631

June 6-13 FLEMINGTON VICTORIAN DAYS

June 7 DORIC HOUSE OPEN 1-4 p.m.
featuring Spanish-American Centennial Exhibit, Paul Robeson's 100th Birthday Exhibit

November 15 Fall Meeting

November 26 Thanksgiving — Library closed

HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER

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Historical Society, 114 Main St., Flemington, NJ 08822**PUBLICATION COMMITTEE**

Roxanne K. Carkhuff, Editor

— Library Hours —

Thursday, 1-3, 7-9 p.m. and by appointment

TELEPHONE: 908 / 782-1091

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NOTES AND QUERIES

Address correspondence to Genealogical Committee. One query listing of ten lines free to members, 25 cents per line over ten; non-member rate is 25 cents per line. Remember to enclose a SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope) with genealogical correspondence if you expect a reply.

RITTENHOUSE, SCHNEIDER/SNYDER, SMITH: Seek info re Snyder line: Peter Schneider of Lancaster Co. PA; his son, Peter Snyder of Hunterdon Co. NJ, his son Christopher Snyder of Hunterdon Co. NJ; his son Daniel who m. Amy Smith, Hunterdon Co. NJ (prob. Amwell Twp.); their son, David W. Snyder who m. Ruth Rittenhouse of Hunterdon Co. NJ. ADD: Sharon Saunders Curtin, 609 Parker St., Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526.

BERGEN, CLAYTON, HOFFMAN, MEYER, MOORE : Seeking any info on the following six Hoffman siblings, esp. who their parents were. The family resided in Trenton NJ in the 1810s and 20s. Males: Britton, b. 1815, never married; Elijah, b. 1820 m. Margaret Clayton, liv. Phila.; John L. (poss. Lafayette), b. 1824, apparently never married, bur. Trenton w/bro Britton. Females (birth years unknown): Lucretia, m. Mr. Meyer; Margaret, m. Mr. Bergen; and Mary Ann, m. Mr. Moore. ADD: Ginny Garber Owen, 525 E. St Kitts, Meridan, ID 83642. E-Mail: ginnyo@juno.com.

COX, HAGEMAN, SUYDAM: Seek desc/o Peter Suydam, bpt. 1767 Six-Mile Run, m. Cornelia Cox. Son Henry bpt. 1794 New Brunswick. Is this the Henry Suydam that Peter Hageman Suydam was living with in 1850 in North Brunswick Township? ADD: Shirley Suydam, 354 E. Central St., Farmington, IL 61531.

BLAIR, CASTNER/GASSNER, HAZLETT, MOORE, VOSELLER/VOSLER/FUSLER, WILLSON/WILSON: Seek par/o George F. Vosseller, b. 1807 NJ, d. 1890 PA, m. 1829 Lebanon Twp., Hunt. Co. NJ Susannah Moore, b. 1805, NJ, d. 1859 PA. Would like to corres/w anyone researching Vosseller/Vosler/Fusler, Moore, Castner/Gassner, Hazlett, early Lebanon Twp. families 1700-. Also seek par/o John Wilson b. abt 1790 Warren Co. NJ, m. 1809 Mary Blair. ADD: Rose A. Vosler, 2475 Bunker Hill La., VA. Bch, VA 23462 E Mail>Pokeadell@AOL.COM

BURD (BIRD): Seek info re Elisha Burd, b. abt. 1740, d. 1820. Member of Kingwood Baptist Church, Hunt Co. NJ. Chil: Reuben, b. 1760 d. 1815, Henry, Jonathon, John, Anna, Susannah, Sarah, Mary; Reuben's chil were Jonathon b. 1784 (settled in Pennington, NJ), Elisha b. 1787, Moses, Phebe, Nancy. If you have info on this family or their descendants please contact Richard Burd (descended from Jonathon). ADD: Richard Burd, 2505 Morgan Hill Road, Easton, PA 18042. Phone (610) 515-0325.

TITUS, WYCHOFF/WYCKOFF: Seek info re par, sib/o Abram S. Wychoff [1842-1932] and Amanda Melvina Titus [1851-1903], m. 20 Dec 1871 by Rev. J. C. Soule, Mt. Christian Church, Hopewell Twp., NJ. They are bur. Highland Cem., Hopewell. ADD: Susan Lynch, 24 W. Walnut Ave., Merchantville, NJ 08109.

Deats Memorial Library News

The Society's Deats Memorial Library is open Thursdays 1-3, 7-9 and other times by appointment (908) 782-1091 and is staffed by volunteers with the librarian or manuscript curator also on duty.

The N. Burr Coryell Papers, donated by Mr. Coryell last summer [Hunterdon Historical Newsletter 33:Fall 1997] have been processed and are now available for researchers. The collection was transferred to acid-free folders, placed in a separate lateral file in the Library, with an index and other accessory Coryell family data to assist in using it.

The Emley-Race Papers [Accession 0026] is probably the most used collection in the Library. John Emley was agent for the

West Jersey Society *circa* 1760s, overseeing rentals and sales of the farms within the Society's tract in the northwest portion of Hunterdon County. His accounts, correspondence and farm surveys are invaluable for the information therein regarding leasees whose names appear no where else in other records. The collection is now available on microfilm and the original papers are closed as a preservation strategy following heavy use. The card catalog and inventory may be used to determine which folders contain information pertinent to patron's research and the appropriate films may then be viewed. A reader-printer is available in the Library for patrons' use. The Papers are on six rolls of film:

Roll 1 - Index A - R	Roll 4 - folders 311-400
Roll 2 - S - Z, Inventory, folders 1-133	Roll 5 - folders 401 - 437
Roll 3 - folders 134 - 310	Roll 6 - Oversize deed folders 477-482

DORIC HOUSE 1998 EXHIBITS

Spanish American War Centennial

"Remember the *Maine*." In 1898 that was the slogan on everyone's lips when America declared war on Spain following the destruction of the ship, *Maine* in Cuban waters. In commemoration of the centennial of the Spanish American War this year the Society has planned an exhibit featuring a local hero of the War, John Lewis Purcell.

Mr. Purcell, a Flemington native and Reading Academy graduate, was appointed to the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis in the Spring of 1873 by his congressional representative Robert Hamilton. By 1898 Lieutenant Purcell was in charge of the receiving ship *Vermont* at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. When the war was declared he commanded the gunboat *Osceola* that was actively engaged in and around Cuban waters in that conflict. He conveyed and successfully landed at Port Baynes, Cuba, in May 1898, the first body of troops of considerable number that landed and remained there. The *Osceola* was one of the vessels that conveyed and accompanied the United States Army to Daiquiri, Cuba in June 1898 and assisted in the landing. Following this came blockade duty in the vicinity and he was commended for his conduct in battle on this occasion.

He retired 23 October 1911, with more than thirty-eight years in the Navy. His service experience took him on an exploring expedition to North Alaska and his work in the Antarctica brought him a letter of commendation from the Secretary of the Navy. For his conspicuous conduct in battle at the engagements of Manzanillo and Las Tunas he was advanced two numbers in grade as a reward of merit.

Captain John L. Purcell, died at the Naval Hospital in Philadelphia on Monday night, 15 April 1912, in his 56th year, where he had been ill since January. He was born in Flemington 31 May 1856, to William and Julia [Neville] Purcell. Two sisters survived him: Miss Mary N. Purcell who died 12 February 1940 and was buried in Flemington at Prospect Hill cemetery, and Mrs. Elizabeth P. Norris, who died 2 October 1939,

Mrs. Norris was survived by one son, John P. Norris who bequeathed to the Hunterdon County Historical Society his uncle's artifacts from the Spanish-American War which the Society is pleased to exhibit.

Paul Robeson 100th Birthday Memorial

Paul Robeson was born 100 years ago, April 1898. His indirect connection to Hunterdon County is via Miss "Bessie," Elizabeth Vosseller [co-founder of the Flemington Choir School], who was his music teacher at Somerville and who encouraged him in his vocal endeavors. He always stayed in contact with her and it is from Elizabeth Vosseller Papers that material, letters, photographs, etc., for the exhibit will be selected.

Acquisitions

Artifacts, manuscripts, family Bibles, and other material representative of the history of Hunterdon County and the families who resided here are welcome additions to the Historical Society's collections. To the donors of recent acquisitions the Society expresses its appreciation.

50+ portraits of various dimensions, including George Hall Large and Josephine [Ramsey] Large, their son, George K. Large, Abram Brokaw "Great Grandfather, Grandmother Ramsey's father," E. R. Bullock "John B.'s father," Dr. Sullivan, Kate Landis, and other unidentified persons. Marcus LaRoe's agreement with Eliza Large to rent space for a general store, Whitehouse Sta., 1892. Donated by Edwin K. Large, Jr., Flemington, NJ.

The Early Dutch Ferdon/Perdun/Verdon Families in America, by Jesse Perdun, 1991. Donated by Mary Jo Willis, Fairview, IL.

Microfilm reels, *Hunterdon County Democrat*, July-September, October-December, 1997 and *Delaware Valley News*, January-December 1997. Donated by Hunterdon County Democrat, Flemington, NJ.

Lawrence Emery Crampton: December 31, 1894 - May 18, 1968, compiled by F. Lawrence Rush, 1997, as a memorial to his uncle. Donated by the compiler, Guilford, CT.

The American Revenuer Volume 51, Number 8, September 1997, "Hiram Edmund Deats." Mr. Deats amassed a fabulous collection of U. S. revenue material, was known as a stock broker, philatelist, and he coauthored the *Boston Revenue Book*. Donated by Carter Litchfield, Arlington, VA.

"The Van Syckel Family, Milford, N. J." by George W. Van Syckel, two loose-leaf binders. Donated by the compiler, Oil City, PA.

The Covert Family, compiled by Carl W. Fischer, William V. Covert, and Maruice L. Patterson, published 1989 by Interlaken Historical Society, Interlaken, NY. Donated by Margaret Covert, Alpha, NJ.

"The First Century of the Sunday School of the Presbyterian Church at Flemington, New Jersey" compiled by Elias Vosseller, 1924. Typed and photocopied by Glenn Hooper in March 1997 on the occasion of the 180th anniversary of the founding of the Sunday School. Donated by Mr. Hooper, Flemington, NJ.

Typescript, "After The Story: a partial genealogy of the Melick family, supplementing and adding to the one appearing in Andrew D. Mellick, Jr.'s *Story of an Old Farm*, compiled by Jonathan T. Mellick, August 1997. Donated by the compiler, Dorchester, MA.

Photocopy of a drawing, "Flemington, N. J. — 1800" copied in 1947 by John Schenk from a photograph made in 1893 of the original drawing of 1800. Donated by Barbara Charles, Flemington, NJ.

Bicentennial - 1798-1998

This year Lebanon Township will commemorate its bicentennial. The township has existed more than 200 years so why a Bicentennial? Let us reflect on the present commemoration and its roots!

Two hundred years ago, 21 February 1798 to be exact, the New Jersey Legislature passed "An Act incorporating the Inhabitants of Townships, designating their Powers, and regulating their Meetings." [P.O. 1798, p. 289] All 104 townships in New Jersey were affected¹. At that time the Hunterdon County townships were²:

Alexandria, formed in 1765 by Royal Charter

Amwell, formed in 1708 by Royal Charter, which spawned Delaware and Raritan townships in 1838 and the borough of Flemington in 1910 and East and West Amwell townships in 1846,

Bethlehem, existed in 1730, details of formation uncertain, and spawned Union township in 1853 and the boroughs of Junction, Bloomsbury, Glen Gardner and Hampton

Kingwood formed in 1749 from Bethlehem township, spawned Franklin Township in 1845

Lebanon existed in 1731, details of formation uncertain, and spawned Clinton Township in 1841 and Junction borough

Readington formed from Amwell in 1730 by Royal Charter

Tewksbury had first township meeting in 1755, formed from Lebanon by charter of uncertain date

and the townships formerly part of Hunterdon, divided off 22 February 1838 to form Mercer County:

Hopewell formed in 1700 from Burlington County

Maidenhead formed in 1697 from Burlington County

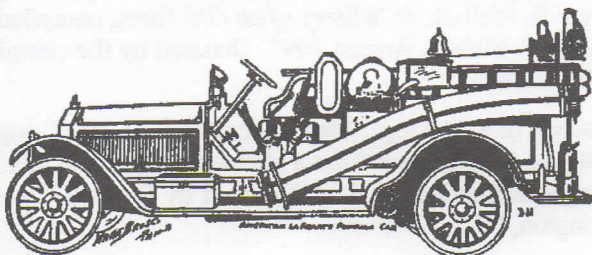
Trenton formed 1719, no boundary recorded

Thus, other townships may choose to celebrate this Bicentennial of incorporation this year just as Lebanon Township is doing.

Happy Birthday Lebanon Township!

1 Acts of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey, commonly called "Session Laws."

2 John P. Snyder, The Story of New Jersey's Civil Boundaries 1606-1968, Bureau of Geology and Topography, 1969, Trenton, NJ.



Lorena Cole Vincent

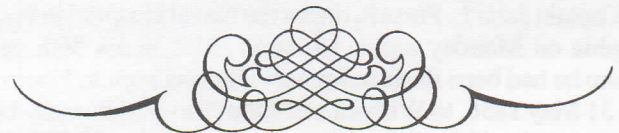
With deep sorrow we learn of the death of Society member Lorena Cole Vincent on Tuesday, the tenth of February 1998 in New York City. Survived by a daughter, Claire Vincent, New York City, Mrs. Vincent was a Readington Township native, daughter of William B. and Lilly M. [Hoffman] Cole. Memorial services Saturday March 21, at 2 o'clock at Readington Reformed Church.

Membership Report

A warm welcome is extended to these members who have recently joined the Hunterdon County Historical Society or upgraded to Life members.

Mary Lou Bartunek, Homosassa, FL
Wyatt Evans, Califon, NJ
John Gantz, W. Trenton, NJ
Richard L. Gantz, Telford, PA
Elaine Hand, Flemington, NJ
Gorden & Kimberly Judd, Whitehouse Sta., NJ
Michael I. Kelly, Chicago, IL
Susan Lynch, Merchantville, NJ
Timothy Rockafellow, Manchaca, TX
Mary Russell, Bethesda, MD

*Mrs. Shirley V. Favier
Membership Chair*



HOW TO JOIN

Hunterdon County Historical Society
114 Main Street
Flemington, NJ 08822

Please enroll me as a member of your Society

Annual	\$15.00 per year
Family	\$18.00 per year
Contributing	\$25.00 per year
Sustaining	\$50.00 per year
Institutional	\$50 and up per year
Life	\$250.00
Patron	\$1,000.00 or more
Student	\$3.00 per year (18 years of age or less)
Century Club	\$100.00

for which I enclose my remittance in the amount of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Successful Quilt Discovery Day

The rainy day of 25 October 1997 did not deter Hunterdon County quilt owners from bringing their treasured family quilts for documentation at the Doric House in Flemington. A continuation day was held the following Saturday to accommodate those unable to attend on the 25th. Documentation assistance and expertise was provided by Heritage Quilt Project of New Jersey, Inc. and Hunterdon County Historical Society volunteers.

A total of 79 quilts were documented and photographed, including five Friendship quilts, two Fundraiser quilts, four Crazy quilts and Feedsack quilts.

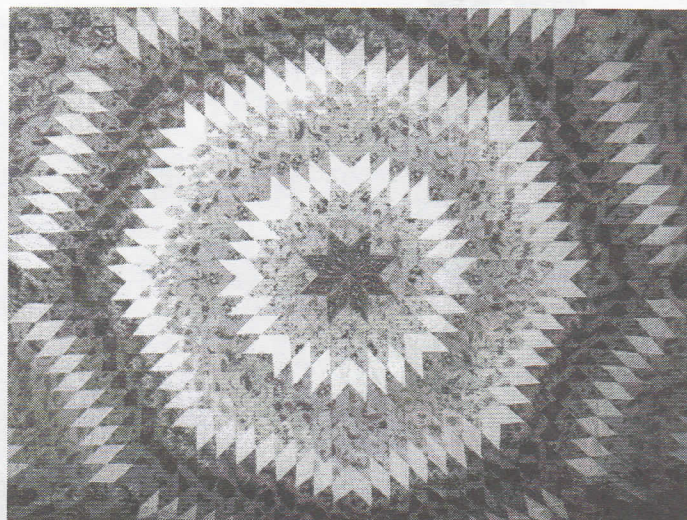
One of the oldest quilts documented was the Kregar quilt, [see right, center medallion] a beautifully preserved, *circa* 1830-40s quilt, made in Frenchtown and donated to the Hunterdon County Historical Society in 1991 by Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Kregar (great grandson of the maker). The pattern is Blazing Star and special interest is added by the dating of the fabrics which include a pillar print and glazed chintz from the 1830s and the 1833 date of birth of one of the quiltmakers. Further information will be sought to confirm the nativity of both quiltmakers and their fabric collection.

An exciting highlight of the day was bringing together the two Lambertville Friendship quilts which bear the Lambert and Coryell families' names. This was made possible by the two museums the Hunterdon County Historical Society and the Lambertville Historical Society — present-day caretakers. Side-by-side placement revealed the same pattern, fabrics, date, and signatures in both quilts except for one block. Further investigation will hopefully reveal more history on these "sister" quilts.

Another noteworthy quilt brought in by Shirley Favier and owned by her cousin, was an 1870s Square Within A Square Fundraiser quilt made by the Cherryville Baptist Church Ladies Society inscribed with dates and many Hunterdon names. One month later I was documenting a private collection in Sergeantsville and the quilt owner had an 1840s Fundraiser Quilt made by the Cherryville Baptist Church Ladies Society bearing names and quotations in the blocks. The quilt was won by the owner's great-grandmother Ruth Gary Philhower. Interestingly, the names of Gary and Philhower also appear on the 1870s quilt. Continued study will be done on both these quilts.

The Quilt Discovery Day was a great success, bringing to light a part of Hunterdon history stored for generations in attics and trunks as family heirloom collections. I am grateful to the Hunterdon County Historical Society for their assistance in the Hunterdon County Quiltsearch Project and providing the Doric House as a fitting historic setting for the documentation.

Roni Mitchell
(908) 996-3385



Quilt Care Suggestions

GENERAL

1. Sunlight causes fading.
2. Sitting on quilts breaks stitches.
3. Do not dry clean or machine wash ever.

STORAGE

1. Store quilts in the temperature and humidity you live-in. Damp basements cause mildew. Hot attics can make fabrics brittle.
2. Store quilts in fabric or acid-free paper, not in plastic, regular tissue paper or cardboard boxes. Old pillow cases or sheets are ideal.
3. Fold quilts off the center line to prevent fabric from breaking down the center. If possible pad fold with fabric.
4. Do not allow quilts to touch raw wood.

CLEANING

1. Vacuum is the preferred method. Cover the vacuum cleaner hose with a nylon stocking, a square of screening, etc., so loose pieces are not pulled in.
2. Before any cleaning, re-sew any loose seams and sew nylon net or other transparent material over areas of shredding fabric.
3. Crazy quilts and other non-cotton quilts should not be washed.
4. Cotton quilts that are in tact may withstand washing, but there is always some risk of damage.
5. If washing is undertaken:
 - a. Test all fabrics for colorfastness with a wet Q-tip.
 - b. Vacuum first as described above.
 - c. Wash in a bath tub which has been lined with a sheet to aid in lifting the wet quilt. Never use washing machine.
 - d. For washing use "Ensure" or "Orvis" - not Woolite.
 - e. Press out excess water gently and dry flat. Wet quilts may break if dried on a single line.
6. Museum textile cleaners are available for valuable pieces.
(Courtesy Heritage Quilt Project of New Jersey)

Quilters Keep Us In Stitches

Images from the Past



HCHS Photograph Collection Px 84-002

Stockton's Devastating Fire of 1905

This is the southwest corner of Bridge Street at the intersection with (then) River Road in Stockton following the devastating fire of 22 January 1905.

The Beacon, issue of 26 January 1905, goes into great detail about the fire: "With a blizzard raging, with the snow flying and the wind blowing at the rate of fifty miles an hour, fire broke out in Davison's general store at Stockton, about 4 miles above this city [Lambertville] at about 1 o'clock, on Thursday morning, an overheated stove being the supposed cause."

Stockton, without its own fire company, called upon Lambertville Chief Cornelius Arnett who sent the Columbia chemical engine on a special train. Lambertville's Union and Hibernia steamers dared not leave Lambertville unprotected, so Chief Allen of the Trenton Fire Depart-

ment spared a steamer and hose which, did not arrive before the flames were subdued.

Fire destroyed the buildings of: "A.L. Davison's store, John F. Sherwood's restaurant and dwelling, the store of Smith Cottrall, dwelling houses owned by Edward Foss, Alfred Wilson, Samuel Horner, William Durling, Mrs. Cornelia Wood, Willis Dilts and Spencer Dilts, the building occupied by Tony Suozzo, shoemaker, Fisher's barber shop and other small buildings. The newspaper account reported, total loss is estimated at from \$25,000 to \$30,000.

The streets near the fire-swept section are almost filled with household goods and the Presbyterian church was used for storage of things hastily removed from the endangered dwellings. The residents rendered homeless were assisted by kind-hearted neighbors."