



Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

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Spring 2009

Open House June 14 At New Archives Building

The public is invited to an Open House at the Hunterdon County Historical Society's new Archives Building, 67 River Road in Raritan Township on Flag Day, Sunday June 14 from 1-4pm. Refreshments will be served.

In a salute to Hunterdon's rural landscape, the 5,200-square-foot steel and concrete building looks like a red barn. It has state-of-the-art rolling shelving that almost doubles its storage potential and is expected to serve the Society's archival needs over the next 50 years.

Guests can explore the two-story building and see a few artifacts moved to the new building including pastel paintings of Mahlon Fisher (1810-1874) and his wife Mary (nee Stein), among the Society's newest acquisitions. Mr. Fisher was a self-taught architect and builder who built Greek Revival houses on Main Street in Flemington, including The Doric House, which was his private residence and is now a museum maintained by the Historical Society. For Flag Day, a special exhibit featuring various flags also will be on display.

The transfer of archives from the Society's Hiram E. Deats Memorial Library at 114 Main Street in Flemington to the new storage building is expected to take several months. Genealogical and historical researchers will continue to find what they need at the



Archives Building, May 2009

Deats Library, which is open at no charge on Thursdays from Noon to 4pm, the second and fourth Saturday from 10am-4pm, or by appointment.

The Historical Society was founded in 1885 and will celebrate its 125th anniversary next year. Several celebratory events are planned. County residents are invited to join and fully experience Hunterdon history. Single membership dues are \$15 and family dues \$18 for 2009. The Society has more than 500 members located in 41 states and five other countries; 272 live in New Jersey with 156 of those based in Hunterdon. Call 908.782.1091 or email hunterdonhistory@embarqmail for more information.

CALENDAR

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| June 14 | HCHS Archives Building Open House |
| June 21 | Antiques Fair, Hunterdon Co Fairgrounds |
| Aug 8-9 | Civil War Reenactment, Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Museum |
| Aug 19-23 | Hunterdon Co 4-H and Ag Fair, Hunterdon Co Fairgrounds |
| Sep 19-20 | Farmstead Festival, Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Museum |

HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER

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Terry A. McNealy, Editor

Library Hours

Thursday, Noon to 4 p.m.
2nd and 4th Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
and by appointment

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Membership Report

A warm welcome is extended to those members who have recently joined the Hunterdon County Historical Society.

Erin Brennan, Three Bridges, NJ

Thomas E. Case, Royersford, PA

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Tiffany Rittenhouse, Eureka, CA

Karen Shuman, Denver, CO

Tim Taylor, Deer Park, WA

Donna Weeast, Bangor, PA

Harold O. Van Fleet, Membership Chair

Acquisitions

Materials 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.*

Leigh, Freeman, *Outlines of the History of Potterstown, 1730 to 1922* (photocopy of typescript) Gift of David J. Riley.

Fleming, David Butler, Family Record (1941) (photocopy of large chart). Courtesy of Joan Mathews, Quakertown, NJ and the Franklin Township Archives.

Stevens, Stephanie B., *Beneath These Waters, A History of Round Valley Hunterdon County, New Jersey* (2009). Gift of Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission.

Hunt, John, and Anna Van Doren, *Family Record, 1767-1884*, manuscript, 1 page. Gift of Stephanie Stevens.

Readington Township, records of payments for road work, ca. 1878, manuscripts, ca. 38 items. Gift of Stephanie Stevens.

Sherblom, Donald E., *The Vought Family, Loyalists in the American Revolution* (2009). Gift of The Vought House, A Revolutionary War Loyalist Homestead.

Industrial Directory of New Jersey, 1938. Gift of Richard Stothoff.

Prall, Terry D., Prall, McHugh, Faucett, *Crail and Allied Families: The Story of My Ancestral Heritage* (2009) 2 v. Gift of Terry D. Prall.

Franklin Township Board of Education, Financial Record Book, 1920-1929. Gift of the Volk Family, from the Franklin Township Archives.

"My Autobiography," by Jim Smith, mimeograph poem written 1929. Gift of Ann and Russell Lamendola. Smith, born about 1873, worked at a Flemington pottery in the 1920s.

The Echo (yearbook of Flemington High School), v. 3 (1932, 2 copies); v. 4 (1933); v. 5 (1934, 2 copies); v. 6 (1935); v. 8 (1937). Gift of Dennis Bertland.

Manuscript letter, Maria ---- (Edgerston [Round Valley]) to Miss Catharine (Kitty) Livingston (Clermont, N.Y.), July 23, 1780. Gift of Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission.

"Morgue" (newspaper clipping file) of the Courier-News, with information on subjects and localities in Hunterdon County for much of the 20th century. Approx. 11 cubic feet. Gift of the Courier-News, courtesy of John Kuhl. This material will not be available for research until it has been processed.

NOTES and QUERIES

Address correspondence to the Genealogical Committee, or to our email address. One query listing of ten lines free to members, 25 cents per line over ten lines; non-member rate is 25 cents per word. Remember to include a SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope) with genealogical correspondence for the courtesy of a reply.

POTTS, DALRYMPLE: Seek information about Hiram Potts and Mary Jane Dalrymple, married Feb. 22, 1847, in Hunterdon County. Mary Jane was born Nov. 28, 1827, in NJ. Her father's name was William, mother's was Mary. I have marriage record but any other info is appreciated. Alonzo G. Paul, RR 1 Box 76A2, New Albany PA 18833 or email gp_999@hotmail.com.

RITTENHOUSE: Seek info (especially proof) of parents and where buried of my great-grandfather William R. Rittenhouse, b. 9/10/1821, d. 8/24/1862, of typhoid in Hackettstown. Tiffany Rittenhouse, 5855 Myrtle Ave, Eureka, CA 95503 or email tiff@humboldt1.com.

FAMILY REUNIONS

CASE: The Case Family Reunion will be held Sunday, August 30, 2009, 12 noon, at Dilts Park, Sergeantsville, NJ. Bring a covered dish to share. For more details, contact Mary Elizabeth Sheppard at 609 397-3868.

HOW TO JOIN

Hunterdon County Historical Society
114 Main Street
Flemington, NJ 08822

Please enroll me as a member of your Society

Annual	\$15 per year
Family	\$18 per year
Contributing	\$25 per year
Sustaining	\$50 per year
Institutional	\$50 and up per year
Life	\$250
Patron	\$1000 or more
Student	\$3 per year (up to 18 yrs old)

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

ph # _____

email _____

I want to volunteer! Y or N

Archives Building Campaign Donors

The following gifts have been received since the last newsletter was published, and are gratefully acknowledged.

Platinum Club, \$5000 and up

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Trustee's Club, \$1000 - \$4999

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Courier News

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Charles Samuel Stewart (1795-1870), Navy Chaplain

by John W. Kuhl

A fortunate purchase recently of a carte-de-visite of the senior U.S. Navy Civil War chaplain who had local origins prompted this biography for our society newsletter. But other members of this prominent local family deserve at least some brief mention as well. A Charles Stewart was a Scottish dragoon officer awarded an estate in County Donegal, Ireland, for his services in the victory of the Protestant forces in the 1690 Battle of the Boyne. Stewart's grandson of the same name was born there in Ireland in 1729 and arrived here in Hunterdon at age twenty-one in 1750 with a good education and a grant of land from the English proprietors in today's Franklin Township. Five years later he married Mary O. Johnson, a daughter of Judge Samuel Johnson who owned area land including a plantation called Sydney in the area of Landsdown. The small nearby village of Sydney takes its name from this Johnson tract. Stewart built a house on his own several hundred acre estate. Though many believe that today's house on the property is the original, Hunterdon historian Hiram Deats corresponded long ago with family descendants who claimed that the original building was torn down in 1800 and today's grand stone house was erected in its place with several additions attached through the next sixty years or so. This imposing house now sits on a road along the South Branch of the Raritan River, abandoned after a car hit and demolished the nearby bridge over the river at Hamden in the fall of 1978. The bridge was never rebuilt and the road remains closed to through auto traffic. A foot bridge has been placed there for the use of local pedestrians and hikers.



Stewart Mansion, off Hamden Rd., Franklin Township. Photo from Hunterdon County Historical Society.

Amongst other activities here locally, immigrant Charles Stewart served also as a deputy Surveyor-General in Pennsylvania before the Revolution. In 1774 he was a member of the first convention in New Jersey that issued a declaration of rights against the crown and in 1775 was a delegate from New Jersey to the first Provincial Congress. Stewart took on a major military role in the Revolution, first as Colonel of the 2nd Regiment of the Hunterdon County Militia that served in Washington's failed attempts to keep the British out of New York. Stewart was later permanently attached to General Washington's staff as the army's Commissary of General Issues.

He undoubtedly worked hand in hand with another local supply officer, Moore Furman, Deputy Quartermaster General and Forage Master of New Jersey, who operated out of a complex he owned at Pittstown. One account has Stewart stealing draft animals and wagons that he could not otherwise obtain, in order to get supplies to Washington at Morristown. He remained with the army throughout the war and was present when Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown. Stewart had in the meantime become known for his grand parties at Landsdown for his fellow officers. Men such as Baron Von Steuben, the Marquis de Lafayette, and even Washington himself were reported to have been among the attendees. During one of these sessions, Stewart's close friend, the noted General William Maxwell of Greenwich Township (today in Warren County), took sick and died.

After the war, Stewart leased the portion of the Allen and Turner tract outside of Clinton known as the Union Farm which had once been owned by his father-in-law. There he lived until 1797 when he retired and moved to a home in the north part of Flemington near the old J.C. Hopewell residence on Main Street. Stewart died there on 24 June 1800



Lead USN Chaplain Charles Samuel Stewart in his clerical robes. Carte-de-visite from the John W. Kuhl collection.

and was buried in the cemetery of his old church, Bethlehem Presbyterian, at Grandin beside his wife, Mary.

Colonel Charles Stewart and his wife Mary Oakley Johnson had eight children before she died in 1771. These included sons Robert and Charles who both died at a young age and a third son, Samuel Robert born in 1765. Genealogical notes on Samuel R. are contradictory and puzzling. Hunterdon County marriage records indicate Samuel R. married an Anna Smith on 9 April 1799. The problem is that their oldest son (our subject) Charles Samuel Stewart was born on 16 Oct 1795 and Robert Samuel Stewart, the second son of the family was born on 15 June 1799 just ten weeks after the reported marriage date. The actual facts are left to the determination of the reader.

We get finally to the intended subject of this sketch, Charles Samuel Stewart, born the son of Samuel Robert Stewart, on 16 October 1795 at what available records consistently list as "Flemington, New Jersey". There is insufficient evidence found to determine the actual birthplace. Had his father already moved to Flemington to be followed several years later by his grandfather? Or was he born at Landsdown whose postal address would have been the only office then in the area, Flemington? He graduated from the College of New Jersey (Princeton) in 1815. While there, he was swept up in the great revival movement in 1814-1815 and joined its Presbyterian Church in the latter year. He went on to law school in Litchfield, Connecticut, but felt called by religion and returned to Princeton to enter the Theological Seminary there. Whether it was a search for adventure or a sincere wish to enter missionary work, he sailed with his new wife, Harriet B. Tiffany, in 1822 from New Haven bound for the Sandwich Isles (Hawaii). The illness of his wife forced their return three years later but not the abandonment of his work. For several years he toured the northern states advocating support of the foreign missions until he gained an appointment as a Navy chaplain in November of 1828 aboard the frigate *Guerriere* at New York. From June 1829 until June 1830 he was aboard the sloop *Vincennes* as it sailed westward around the Horn and became the first U.S. naval ship to circumnavigate the globe. Subsequent assignments included the 74 gun ship-of-the-line *Delaware* in 1834, the frigate *United States* in 1835 and the New York Naval Shipyard in 1836. Over the ensuing years he was stationed at Annapolis and at various Navy Yards such as New York and Philadelphia where he had many friends.

Chaplains are not subject to the watch-standing or detailed administrative duties of line officers aboard ships.

These cruises afforded Stewart the source material, the time, and opportunity to write a series of books on the foreign lands he visited. Some of these included: *Residence at the Sandwich Islands, 1823-1825*, published in 1828 and *Visits to the South Seas in the U.S. Ship Vincennes with scenes in Brazil, Peru, Etc.*, 2 vols., published in 1839. He served as editor of the Naval Magazine in 1836 and 1837. Later works included *Brazil and La Plata in 1850 & 1853*, and *Sketches of Society in Great Britain and Ireland in 1832*, 2 vols., published in 1834. Some of these went to multiple printings in both the U.S. and England. His Army/Navy Journal obituary would remark: "Agreeable in style as well as interesting for their descriptions and information, his work met with general favor, and probably we have never had an officer who made the United States Navy better known by extra-official labors."

Chaplain Stewart finished his last cruise in June of 1862 when failing health forced his retirement after thirty-four years of service. While he was in active service, chaplains were not accorded military rank nor did they wear the insignia of same. He had become by the time of his retirement, the Navy's senior chaplain. The Navy did not create the rank of Admiral until after he retired, nor did they yet have the system of relative ranking for non-line officers. If they had, he would have held the relative rank of Rear Admiral which was in late 1862, the senior rank in the Navy. Stewart died on 15 December 1870 at Cooperstown, New York. Burial was in the Christ Church cemetery there overlooking Lake Otsego and near the monument of fellow New Jersey native, writer James Fenimore Cooper, with whom Stewart was acquainted and had corresponded in the past.

Harriet B. Tiffany, the chaplain's first wife had died by the early 1830s. Their children had been Charles S. of the following paragraph and two unmarried daughters who had died as young adults. On 24 September 1835 the chaplain had married his third cousin, Mrs. Sarah A. Stewart Skillman, the widow of John Skillman. This second marriage took place at Cooperstown, N.Y., and that may explain the family move to Cooperstown. She and her former husband had had two young children, both of whom the chaplain legally adopted.

The chaplain's own son, Charles Seaforth Stewart, was born on 11 April 1823 at sea during his parents' missionary travels. He graduated first in his class from West Point in 1846, ahead of classmate and future great, George McClellan, who ranked second. As was the custom for the higher ranking graduates, he was commissioned an engineer and it was not long before Stewart was back at West Point as

an assistant professor of engineering from 1849 to 1854. He was superintending engineer of the fortifications in Boston up to the Civil War and then in the Chesapeake & Delaware Bay regions before finishing the war as chief engineer of the Middle Military Division in 1864 and 1865. After the war he worked on significant engineering projects in California. He retired as a Colonel in 1886 with his home listed as Cooperstown, New York. The retired Colonel remained much interested in the Hunterdon area and the history of his family here, and was on the rolls as a member of our Hunterdon County Historical Society until his death in 1904. Charles Seaforth Stewart had a son named Cecil who graduated from West Point 15th in his class of 1882. He served his career in the mounted service, rising in time to be Colonel of the 4th U.S. Cavalry.

Though parcels of the Stewart land at Landsdown had been sold off over the years, the elegant old house remained in family hands until 1924. Rather secluded since the road has been closed, it was for a time disturbed only by the sound of the huge pumps in the river opposite it that were installed to move excess river water up into the Round Valley Reservoir. Today, even they are mostly silent. But the history and the Stewart name most assuredly and deservedly live on.

Sources

Army/Navy Journal, 24 Dec 1870.

Thank You, Volunteers!

On Wednesday, April 29th, the Trustees hosted the twentieth Annual Volunteer Luncheon to express appreciation for the individuals who serve in numerous capacities vital to the daily operation of the Hunterdon County Society. These individuals staff the genealogical library, catalogue documents, serve as docents for the Open House and greet visitors to the Society's table at the Hunterdon County 4-H and Ag Fair in August.

After introductions noting their area(s) of assistance, the Trustees and Volunteers enjoyed a wonderful meal in the main dining room of the Perryville Inn. Wide windows overlooked a picturesque gazebo and peaceful woods. Of the thirty individuals in attendance, some were new to the group, including neighbors to our new Archives Building, while others have been members of the Society since the 1950s and have volunteered for as long.

Trustee Doug Martin brought several items about

Callahan. *List of Officers of the United States Navy & Marine Corps*. [1901].

Deats, Hiram. *Hunterdon County Marriages 1795-1875*. [Hunterdon County Democrat Press, 1918].

Deats Genealogical File, Stewart Family, Hunterdon County Historical Society.

Fricke, Kathy. *The Hunterdon Observer*. [newspaper clipping, title and date unknown].

Heitman. *Historical Register & Dictionary of the U.S. Army*. [Gov't Printing Office, 1903].

Hunterdon County Democrat, 28 Dec 1870.

Lequear, John. *Traditions Of Our Ancestors*. [Flemington, NJ, 1957].

On-Line Sources

California Surveyors, search for Charles Seaforth Stewart, (retrieved 12 Apr 2009 from <http://www.californiasurveyors.org/>).

Civil War Days and Those Surnames, search for Charles Samuel Stewart, (retrieved 8 April 2009 from <http://civilwarhosesurnames.blogspot.com/>).

Ships' History, U.S. Naval Historical Center (from <http://www.history.navy.mil/branches/nhcorg9.htm>).

Virtual American Biographies, search for Charles Stewart, (retrieved 9 March 2004 from <http://famousamericans.net/charlesstewart/>).

Who's Who in America, search for Charles Seaforth Stewart, (retrieved 12 Apr 2009 from <http://www.marquiswhoswho.com/products/WA63Featureonline.pdf>).

the Inn, including a picture of the sign that had hung out front, which is now in the Society's archives. A history of this beautiful Federal Style building was distributed. Legend has it that as the final timbers were being put in to place, messengers sped past with word of Commodore Perry's dramatic victory at Lake Erie during the War of 1812. The carpenters, swept away by patriotic zeal, nailed the last roof beam in to place, doused it with whiskey, and christened the area Perryville.

The building thrived as a tavern until 1912, when it was purchased as a private residence. In 1955 it was restored. In 1980, the Perryville Inn was relocated 100 feet to the south to escape demolition by the construction of Interstate 78. Today, it is recognized as a meeting place for good friends and fine cuisine. Trustee John Matsen led a tour to an upper room where the original woodwork remains intact.

Thank you to everyone for making this a very pleasant spring afternoon with friends.

FROM THE CURATOR'S DESK

When I first started writing this column two years ago (has it been so long already?), I envisioned it as a space in which I could keep our members and other interested folks apprised of the doings within the Society's Archives. I intended to use it to highlight our great collections, inform the members of our activities, and, most importantly, to introduce newly processed collections as available to the public for research. I have (I think) succeeded with the first two goals, but I admit that the arduous process of prepping our archives for movement to the new facility, and then actually moving the collections, has dominated my activities for the past year and more. Frankly, I have not been able to work on as much of our historical material as I would like.

With that in mind, it gives me great pleasure to announce the release of three new collections of bound manuscript materials that have been processed and that reflect three different representations of local history. Because of the meticulous work of Shirley Wydner, one of our archives volunteers, Society members and the general public now have access to the financial records of a Clinton area banking institution, a Frenchtown merchant operation, and a Flemington watch repair and jewelry business.

The first collection that Shirley has completed is the records of the Clinton Town Building and Loan Association. This collection is comprised of 12 volumes, and covers the financial and other records of the organization from 1924 to 1973. Included amongst the volumes are Cash Books, Roll Books, Dues Records, Shareholder's Ledgers, and Cash Journals.

If the inner financial workings of a banking institution do not interest you, then perhaps you may wish to take a look at the records of the R&H (Roberson and Huff) general merchandise business. As the name implies, this was a general merchandise and dry goods store that operated out of Frenchtown, NJ. While the actual dates of operation for the business are unknown, we do have 15 daybooks (general account ledgers) that cover the time frame of 1868 to 1875. The daybooks are fairly clear and well organized, are filled with the names of many local customers from the Frenchtown and greater area (including many common Hunterdon County surnames), and they also detail the merchandise

that was purchased or delivered and the cost.

Standing in stark contrast to the general merchants named above, the third collection recently made available is a series of Flemington Jeweler's Ledgers. This collection is a group of 19 bound volumes from the business of Charles Godley, of Flemington, NJ. The ledgers document the activities of the business from 1889 to 1954. The ledgers are divided into four distinct types. Watch repair ledgers record the name of the person leaving the watch, its maker and serial number, the type of repair and the amount of the service. Clock repair ledgers duplicate this material for larger timepieces. Stock books record the jeweler's inventory on hand, with prices. Daily sales ledgers include every item sold, its original cost in code, the customer in some situations, and receipts for repairs.

Once again, I would like to thank Shirley Wydner for her dedicated volunteer service to the Society and its Archives. It is her volunteer service that has made these collections available to the public, and helped me to feel like we are at least getting some new material out in the midst of our much needed relocation. In the coming months, Shirley will continue to work on new bound manuscript materials, and I am sure that we will have a new list of things available in the next edition of "From the Curator's Desk."

In other news, we continue to move items into and settle into our new Archival Facility on River Road. Up to this point, we have moved quite a few materials already: a large amount of excess and duplicate library books, our collection of published books for sale, our back newsletter collection, our original Bible Record Collection, and almost 100 boxes of historical manuscripts and material just waiting to be processed at a future date. In addition to these, we have moved in a huge number of historical county newspapers donated to the Society by John Kuhl, one of our Trustees.

Over the summer, we will continue to move the rest of our manuscripts and historical documents, as well as a large amount of historically significant museum objects. If anyone out there feels like pitching in, I am sure we could find a box or two for you to carry!

Donald Cornelius

Curator of Manuscripts

Images from the Past

Glen Gardner's Chairs

Five Gardner brothers, William, Oliver, George, John and Joseph set up a business manufacturing picture frames in 1863 in the quiet community of Clarksville. Local competition forced the company to expand its product line, which led to the development of the 'Gardner Chair'. George Gardner was granted a patent for the three-ply veneer chair seat.



Gardner Factory, Glen Gardner, NJ, ca. 1880s. Photo from Hunterdon County Historical Society.

His design gave the chairs the same 'open, airy quality' of the hugely popular cane chairs of the 19th century, but Gardner chairs were cheaper, stronger and more durable.

The pressed wood chairs became an instant success and earned numerous awards. The factory, located on Sanatorium Road, employed 700 people at one time, and brought such prosperity to the area that the community was renamed Glen Gardner. Eventually, the business was moved to New York City to meet growing demand. Its departure started the end of Glen Gardner's industrial era. Today,



Note the perforations on the seat and back which were done in geometric designs. Photo from Hunterdon County Historical Society.

little remains of the site of Gardner & Company.