



# Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

VOL. 23, NO. 2

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SPRING 1987

## Discover the Secrets of Flemington

GUIDE BOOK TO FLEMINGTON, NEW JERSEY  
SPRING MEETING JUNE 28  
FLEMINGTON WOMEN'S CLUB

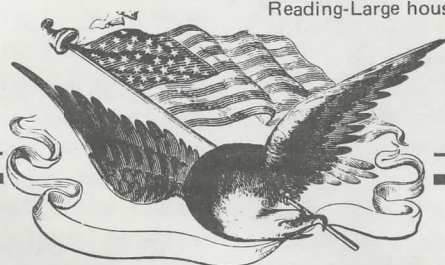
An in-depth guide to Flemington is nearing completion and the co-authors, Barbara Clayton and Kathleen Whitley will be talking with us at the Society's Spring Meeting at 2 p.m. June 28, at the Women's Club on Park Avenue.

Their previous guide books were on areas in New England. The latest one will follow a similar format but is about Flemington. It will give the reader historical data about the town and adjacent Raritan Township, explaining the architectural development, and take them on a tour of Flemington via text, maps and photographs.

Join us and meet Barbara and Kathleen on Sunday, the 28th. They'll share with you their experiences, interesting facts, photographs and anecdotes discovered in their research. Perhaps some of you can answer a question or two they have.



Reading-Large house, 119 Main Street, built ca. 1846 by Mahlon Fisher.



### We the People

*of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*

The New Jersey Delegation to the Convention played a significant part in the formulation of the United States Constitution 200 years ago. One of these men was David Brearley, of Hunterdon County. The events leading up to the Convention, what transpired in Philadelphia two centuries ago during long hot months of debate, the outcome of the Delegates' labors, and the man from Hunterdon County and his family are featured in this issue of the *Newsletter*. Brearley was born in Maidenhead Township, Hunterdon

County where three generations of his family had resided since the late 1600's.

Did you know New Jersey's Ratification Convention was convened in Hunterdon County? The Fall issue will have articles about the Convention at Trenton in December 1787, and Delegate Joshua Corshon. While much has been written about John Stevens and David Brearley, the other two Delegates, Corshon's life and varied public career has not previously been studied.



**HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER**

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Roxanne K. Carkhuff, Editor  
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**NOTES and QUERIES**

Address correspondence to Genealogical Committee. Listings of ten lines free to members, rate per line over ten lines is 25 cents; non-member rate is 25 cents per line.

**ROUNSAVILLE, HEATON:** Des info re Rounsaville/vall/vell fam who left NJ ca 1750. David Rounsavall M Brigida Heaton. David, Isaac, Josiah, Amos, James & Wm. found in TN 1780's. Who was their NJ ancestor? Also des info re Rounsaville family history compiled by Miss Katherine Rounsaville, Silver Springs, MD. ADD: Mrs. Betty Rounsaville Miller, Route 2, Box 39, Grenada, MS 38901.

**PROBASCO:** Sarah Griffith Probasco, b 30 Aug 1809, dau/o Jacob Probasco & Ann \_\_\_\_\_, had sis Drusilla, b ca 1813, & Susanna, b ca 1820. Need birthdates for Drusilla & Susanna & if there were other siblings, their names and dates; Ann's maiden name & most of all which Jacob Probasco. ADD: Mrs. Edna Barnes Prokop, 1028 N. 31st Rd., Hollywood, FL 33021.

**SNYDER/SNIDER/SCHNEIDER:** Des info re any/all Snyder fams liv Alexandria, Amwell, Kingwood Twps., Hunterdon Co. ca 1750-1800. Object: to learn anc/o & establish line of Martin Snyder who, with Jacob Snyder, bought Lot 20 of James Parker tract in Alexandria in 1797. ADD: James W. Snyder, 705 Catalina Way, Modesto, CA 95350.

**CALVIN/COLVIN:** Need birth, marr, court, cem records, etc. for updated history of the CALVIN/COLVIN families, descended from John Calvin of Dartmouth, MA & Luther Calvin of Hunterdon County, NJ in 1725-1780. ADD: Gordon O. Calvin, 12280 Canfield-Lisbon Rd., Salem, OH 44460.

**GULICK:** Seek info re desc/o Peter C. Gulick, who d. ca 1860. Known chil: James C., John L., Sarah E., and Mary M. Of

particular interest the genealogy leading to Clark Gulick, former miller at Parry's Mill (now Hunterdon Art Center), and dau Corrine Clark Gulick, former Grandin librarian for 42 years who d 22 Aug 1962. ADD: Arthur Snyder, III, 60 Center St., Clinton, NJ 08809.

**ABBOTT, APGAR, ATKINSON, BARBER, BEATLEY, BELLESFELT/BELLIS, BISHOP, BRITTAN, BUCKALEW, CASE, CHAMBERLAIN, FARLEE/FARLEIGH, FAUSS, GARRISON, GRANDIN, GRIGGS, HAGEMAN, HART, HAYES, HILL, HICKSON/HIXSON, HUFF, HUNT, ILIFF, JOHNSON, KIRK, LAMBERT, LANING/LANNING, LARUE, LONDON, LOWE, MATTISON, MELDRUM, MESSEROLE, MOORE, MUNDY, NELSON, PHILLIPS, POST, PRALL, REID, RISLER, RITTENHOUSE, ROGERS, ROSE, SCHENCK, SCULL, SHEPPARD, SIMONSON, SLOCUM, STOUT, SUTPHIN, THATCHER, TOMLINSON, TRIMMER, TROUT, WARNE, WHITEHEAD, WHITLOCK, WHITSELL, WILLIAMSON, YOUNG:** Seek & will exch info on above families who married Pralls. ADD: Prall Family Assn., 8020 Eastern Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20012.

**HOFFMAN/HUFFMAN, LARUE, READ, STRYKER, VANDERBILT:** Seek info re Abraham Stryker, d 22 May 1805 in 33rd yr, bur Mt. Airy Cem & his w. Jane & their chil. Seek par/o William P. Vanderbilt [1794-1873] bur Milford Union Cem. Seek par/o Isaac Huffman/Hoffman of Amwell Twp. d bef 16 Jan 1824, & wid Catherine Read. ADD: Henry L. Pitts, 1063 Wexford Ct., Wheaton, IL 60187.

**AKERS, CARPENTER, FURMAN, HART, TINDALL:** Need data, incl. dates, for Major Ralph Hart who lived ca. 1670's to mid-1700's in Trenton; & w. Sarah Furman; & known chil: eldest son Ralph, Benjamin, Samuel, Josiah, Mary Carpenter, Sarah Akers (my ancestor), Martha, Mercy, w/o Joseph Tindall, Elizabeth; may be more. ADD: Michael S. Caldwell, R.D. 1, Box 205, New Florence, PA 15944.

**EMERY/HUMMERICK, REED:** Who were parents, siblings of Mary Reed who m John Emery in Lebanon, Hunterdon Co. 28 Nov 1765. John Emery, b 1742, was s/o Conrad Emery/Hummerick. ADD: Helen E. Tucker, 1313 N. 200th St., #10, Seattle, WA 98133.

**RAUSSER/ROUSER/ROUZER:** Seek info & ancestry re Rev. Gideon Rausser, b Germany?, liv Amwell Twp., Hunterdon Co. from ca 1750 until death in 1783. Wife unknown. Known chil: Martin, Catherine, Elizabeth, John, Hannah, Jacob. ADD: Jack Mount, 664 N. Citadel Ave., Tucson, AZ 85748.

**CORNELL, DUER, MILLER:** Seek par/o Margaret Cornell, b 1785, who m. Jonathan Duer ca 1804, liv Fayette Co. PA. Is she d/o William Cornell, b March 1763 NJ who mov to Fayette Co ca 1789 from Hunterdon Co? William serv in Hunt. Co Militia under Capt. Adam Hope 1779. Jonathan & Margaret (Cornell) Duer mentioned in Power of Attorney Sept. 1823, Hunt. Co. estate of Agnes Miller which lists heirs John, Mary, Margaret & Peter Miller and John Joseph, Mary, Miller & Peter Cornell. ADD: Clara E. Duer, 1928 Winston Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80909-2104.

**FURMAN, GREEN(E), HALLOCK:** W. Furman, b Nov 1757, poss NY, d 1818 Bradford Co. PA, bur Troy, PA; m 1778 Abigail Hallock [1757-1849] d/o Peter & Anna [Green(e)] Hallock, Jr. Des corres/w anyone having these same ancestors. ADD: Mrs. Ann E. Hilles, 191 W. Bayton St., Alliance, OH 44601.





## WITTWER MEMORIAL FUND

On behalf of my Committee, I thank all of you who made donations to the Norman C. Wittwer Memorial Fund. We have received \$8,500, so are near our goal of \$10,000. If you meant to send a contribution and have not yet done it, it isn't too late.

Investigation for a versatile microfilm reader-printer which will serve the Society's needs for years to come is under way. Within a short time a selection will be made and the order placed. We will announce our purchase in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

Thank-you notes were sent to Fund donors but we want to publicly thank each one of the donors here, too.

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## Membership Report

We welcome the following new members to the Hunterdon County Historical Society.

Mrs. Margaret S. Bryce, Morrisville, PA  
Gordon O. Calvin, Salem, OH  
\*Mr. & Mrs. George T. Deats, Berkeley Heights, NJ  
Clyde W. Downing, Kent, WA  
Miss Clare E. Duer, Colorado Springs, CO  
Frances E. Feighery, Flemington, NJ  
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Carol M. Greene, Corco, CA  
Anne E. Hilles, Alliance, OH  
Mr. & Mrs. James Pedrick, Flemington, NJ  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Plesher, Stockton, NJ  
Richard L. Porter, Ringoes, NJ  
Mrs. Edna Barnes Prokop, Hollywood, FL  
John Sine, Cumberland, MD

*Mrs. Frederick Stothoff*  
*Membership Secretary*

\*LIFE membership



# Acquisitions

Ingham Coryell [ -1986] Collection, Accession #0044 Coryell Papers, 5 boxes, 168 folders, 19 oversize folders, \_\_\_\_ items. Manuscripts, printed material, collections of Camille Erisman (Mrs. Ashbel W.) Bryan, [ -1954]. Donated by Mr. Coryell before his death last January.

Framed oil painting of Lewis S. Coryell [1798-1865], husband of Mary Van Sant, 19½" x 16½".

Framed charcoal drawing of Col. Ingham Coryell [1821-1884], 20" x 24".

Unframed lithograph, "Coryell's Ferry 1776," Joseph Pickett, artist.

*Oliver Wiswell* by Kenneth Roberts

Silver drinking cup engraved "ACE", in leather holder

Two silhouettes, one marked Mrs. Coryell, one unidentified female.

Round wooden box containing wooden tools and assorted mementoes, including silver cup inscribed "E" 1879, silver napkin ring engraved with the name "Sylvanus", Lewis S. Coryell's notary seal inscribed New Hope Bucks Co. 1820, compass in 2" x 2" square wooden inscribed "Presented to Lewis S. Coryell by Joseph Hopkinson, Esquire Judge of the United States Distric Court and Author of 'Hail Columbia' 1833"; under side of lid carved "Martin Coryell 1817" and "Ingham Coryell rec'd in 1958"

Four copies of *Emanuel Coryell of Lambertville New Jersey and His Descendants* by Ingham Coryell

One copy *Genealogy Via Newsletter* by N. Burr Coryell

Tray engraved with "Coryell", 15 inches oval silverplate

Photograph by John Anderson of 111 North Union Street, Lambertville, NJ, home of Martin Coryell

Miscellaneous collectibles

Silverware including twelve dinner knives, twelve dinner forks, six luncheon knives, twelve luncheon forks in embroidered linen holders; jelly spoons; bone-handled fork, knife and wheel. Donated by Mrs. Ingham Coryell, Philadelphia, PA.

Hunterdon County Public School Directories, 1951-1968. donated by Wesley Lance, Clinton, NJ.

The *Runyon-Woolverton House* prepared for Paul and Lisa Shields by Marfy Goodspeed, 1987. Gift from the author.

*Ringo Family History Series*, Volume 1, part 2, author David Leer Ringo, published by Freeborn Family Association, Alhambra, CA, 1986. Donated by James J. Ringo, Miami, FL.

*History of the Rockaway Reformed Church of Whitehouse New Jersey*. Donated by Mrs. Kenneth

Volk, Whitehouse Station, NJ.

*Somerset County Historical Quarterly*, Volume III, 1914, reprinted 1987 by Hunterdon House, Lambertville, NJ. Purchase.

Family Bible inscribed "William Dalley", published 1883, recording the family of William Dalley [1845- ] and his wife Eliza Ann Green, whom he married in 1875. Gift from Mrs. Bertha Dalley, Flemington, NJ.

Two framed photographs, 13" x 13", one of Miss Elizabeth Van Fleet Vosseller and the other of the 1902 children's choir of the Flemington Presbyterian Church; Miss Vosseller's silver-tipped baton in acrylic display case; undated Christmas greeting signed by Elizabeth Van Fleet Vosseller. Donated by Mrs. Elizabeth Swartley, Englewood, NJ.

Marriage certificate of Osias P. Thatcher, Everittstown who was united in marriage to Eliza Ann, daughter of Edward Hunt of Mt. Pleasant on 24 December 1844 by Henry B. Elliott, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Alexandria; receipts and legal documents of Isaac B. Anderson and the Anderson family. Donated by Mr. Frank Cregar, Flemington, NJ.

*Down Along The Old Bel-Del*, by Warren F. Lee, 1987. Donated by the author, Albuquerque, NM.

*The Life & Time Of A Country Doctor & Dentist, the Story of Dr. Morris H. Leaver*, by J.E. Stout and J.B. Lee Hollingsworth, published 1987 by the Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead, Inc. Gift from J.E. Stout, Pittstown, NJ.



## Form of Bequest

(This form is recommended for use in making a bequest of real property, in a Will or otherwise, naming your society as beneficiary)

**ITEM:** I bequeath the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Hunterdon County Historical Society, Flemington, N.J.

**ITEM:** I bequeath to the Hunterdon County Historical Society, Flemington, N.J., without restrictions title to and full possession of historical materials and objects, (real estate, account books, diaries, Family Bibles, documents, papers, photographs, programs, newspapers, clippings, books, records.) etc.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_



## We the People

commemorate our democratic heritage as we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution. In doing so let us realize and appreciate the privileges granted to us because of our democratic form of government and recognize the sacrifices and struggles made so we can enjoy a democratic government. Drafted by a young and struggling nation, the Constitution has survived to meet the needs of successive generations.

Creation of the country's Constitution by the delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 has often been called a "miracle." During that hot summer in Philadelphia, these men debated, argued and compromised — eventually formulating what is now the oldest written constitution still in use.

Who were the men who created this extraordinary document? The delegation was made up of white males, half of whom were lawyers or government leaders and college graduates; more than 2/3 had served in the Continental Congress; eight had signed the Declaration of Independence. The average age was 42, the age span from the youngest, Jonathan Dayton, at age 27, to the eldest, Benjamin Franklin, age 81.

The Continental Congress and the Articles of Confederation had remained a symbol of union. They also prepared the way for a better national government and put in place government agencies in good working order and various substantial acts of legislation.

### ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Independence, national standing, confederation and State rights were conjoined in a resolution by Virginia's delegate, Richard Henry Lee, which was adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 2, 1776. His State's legislature instructed him to agree to "whatever measures may be thought proper and necessary by the Congress for forming foreign alliances and a Confederation of the Colonies, . . . *Provided* That the power of forming Government for, and the regulation of the internal concerns of each Colony, be left to the respective Colonial Legislatures." His resolution also proposed that a plan of confederation be prepared and circulated in the respective Colonies for their consideration and approval.

The Articles of Confederation were agreed to and submitted to the States in 1777 with ratification by Maryland, the last State to do so, in 1781. On March 1, 1781 all 13 states having ratified the Articles of Confederation, they went into effect as the plan for government of the United States. The Articles gave each State one vote and nine votes were necessary for any action by the Continental Congress. However, Congress had no control over commerce and no power to impose taxes or raise an army.

The United States passed its eleventh year of independence in 1787. The British form of government had been replaced by the confederation but in spite of the achievements, all was not going well. The country suffered a lack of national purpose and direction resulting in economic depression. There was no uniform currency, foreign trade was regulated by individual states and trade barriers were being erected between states. The aftermath of the Revolutionary War brought financial burdens, social unrest and political uncertainties that threatened our young and fragile government. The Confederation Congress, the sole governing authority of the *United States*, lacked the power to effectively deal with these problems.

One of the events which highlighted the flaws in the Articles of Confederation occurred Feb. 4, 1787 when the Massachusetts Militia crushed Shays' Rebellion, a rebellion of poor farmers sparked by economic problems. Two weeks later the Confederation Congress gave official approval for a convention in Philadelphia "for the sole purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation." It was within this context that fifty-five delegates gathered in Philadelphia for a series of closed meetings that have come to be known as the Constitutional Convention.

### THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

The Constitutional Convention convened in Philadelphia May 12, meeting in Independence Hall. The group organized and began their work 25 May 1787. Delegates from eleven of the original states were in attendance; the New Hampshire delegation did not arrive until late July and Rhode Island declined to participate.

By resolution of the New Jersey Legislature on 23 November 1786, Judge David Brearley, William Churchill Houston, William Paterson and John Neilson were assigned their commissions and appointed by Governor William Livingston. Subsequently, on 8 May 1787 the Council and Assembly elected Jonathan Dayton, Governor Livingston and Abraham Clark to the delegation going to Philadelphia. Neilson declined and Clark, one of the New Jersey signers of the Declaration of Independence, did not attend. William C. Houston, Professor of Mathematics at Princeton, was probably absent after July 17, 1787. Jonathan Dayton arrived June 21 and the others were present at the start.

#### ★ NEW JERSEY DELEGATION ★

William Livingston, 64, lawyer, Governor of New Jersey

David Brearley, 42, lawyer, Chief Justice of New Jersey

Jonathan Dayton, 27, lawyer

William Paterson, 42, lawyer and merchant

William Churchill Houston, 41, lawyer



The Convention was called to order on May 25 and the delegates unanimously elected George Washington to serve as President of the Convention; William Jackson was named Secretary and it was agreed at the outset to pursue their task in completely closed sessions. "[Ruled] That nothing spoken in the House be printed, or otherwise published, or communicated without leave." The mandate of the Convention was to *revise* the Confederation but the journal records the decision to replace it with a more centralized plan "... because a union of States, merely Federal, will not accomplish the objects proposed by the Articles of Confederation. ...".

Although the Congress recommended the Convention take place it made no provisions to fund it. Subsequently, on June first, the New Jersey Delegation offered a resolution requesting the State fund a portion of the expenses anticipated to be about five shillings a day for the estimated two to three months the Convention would be in session. These funds were necessary for wages to employ a Secretary, messenger and door-keeper and for expenses such as stationery.

In informal talks during the days the Delegation awaited a quorum, James Madison outlined a proposed system of government. His so-called Virginia Plan was introduced to the Convention on May 29th by Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph. Its proposal called for a strong national government to replace the ineffective government under the Articles and suggested creating a constitution. The plan envisioned three branches of government — legislative, executive and judicial and called for two houses of Congress whose members would be in proportion to the population. Quick agreement was reached on the three branches of government.

The Delegates formed themselves into two groups—the Federalists vs the Nationalists. The smaller states, including New Jersey, favored a continued loose federation with only minor changes while the larger states, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia, sought a strong national government. After agreement was reached on two houses of Congress, the issue of membership in the lower chamber became a heated issue. The Federalists sought equal representation by each state but the Nationalists pushed through representation proportional to population.

By mid-June the Delegates were pursuing their task with a growing sense of purpose, meeting five hours a day, six days a week. In an attempt to halt the big states' drive, on 15 June 1787 William Paterson introduced the New Jersey Plan as an alternative to the Virginia Plan. This Plan sought to maintain equality of representation and voting power for all states, regardless of size and population and called for fewer changes in the central government. The delegates defeated Paterson's plan after three days' debate and continued to discuss a central government of the kind proposed by the Virginia Plan.

By early July Delegates from small and large

states were divided on how many votes each state should have in the Senate. With the Convention on the verge of breaking up over this issue, the delegates chose a committee to find a solution. After ten days the Convention agreed to the 3/5ths clause which included slaves in counts made to determine representation in Congress and state tax burden. But slaves were not to be counted as whole people. Rather, five slaves would count as three free people. The north was against counting slaves in population counts determining representation while the south wanted to count them in order to gain a greater number of representatives in Congress. This set the stage for the "Great Compromise" four days later on July 16, 1787 which resolved the conflict between smaller and larger states by providing for equal representation in the Senate (two per state) and proportional representation based on population in the House.

During the next week, July 17-26, the Delegates continued discussing and modifying the Virginia Plan and passed 23 resolutions to a "Committee of Detail" who on 6 August submitted a rough draft of the constitution to the Convention. A full convention debated the draft, article by article, for five weeks. Debates on some points continued and in late August the Convention reached a major compromise on slave trade which prohibited Congress from interfering with slave trade for 20 years. In return for this concession, delegates from the South agreed Congress could regulate all other commerce. A five-man Style Committee was named to produce the final draft of the Constitution.

On Monday, September 17, 1787 the Convention met and Benjamin Franklin maneuvered the forty-one Delegates present to sign the constitution in witness of "the unanimous consent of the states present". The ceremony took place in the East Room of Philadelphia's State House — the same room where the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. The Convention was formally adjourned.

*Wm. Livingston*  
*David Brearley*  
*John Paterson*  
*Jona: Dayton*

*New Jersey* {

Our constitution was a compromise among great idealists. James Madison's inspired leadership guided the convention toward the principled compromises that created the document. On one side, delegates such as William Paterson championed a weak plural executive and a strong legislature. Others, such as Alexander Hamilton favored a strong single executive and a strong judiciary. Madison's commitment to sep-



aration of powers and checks and balances provided the basis for a strong government which was safe for liberty and which won the support of the convention.

This was a document designed to serve with flexibility. The philosophy behind it a philosophy of free people, framed by people who were students of the past — had studied history and the humanities.

Citizens of New Jersey may well be proud of the part their State played in the making and ratification of the Federal Constitution. William Paterson, David Brearley, William Livingston and Jonathan Dayton were outstanding leaders in the Convention which labored in Philadelphia from May 12 to September 17, 1787. The New Jersey delegation presented most forcefully the viewpoint of the small States in opposition to a national government dominated by the large States. The so-called New Jersey Plan included many ideas which were later incorporated in the Constitution.

### AFTER THE CONVENTION

On September 20, 1787 Congress received the convention's proposed constitution and a week later voted to send it to the legislature of the states, asking each state to convene a special ratifying convention to either approve or reject the constitution. Ratification by nine states was necessary for establishment of the Constitution.

A unanimous resolution, passing the New Jersey Legislature on October 29th, designated the "fourth Tuesday of November for an election by the People of the State of the delegates to the State Convention for Ratification of the Federal Constitution and the meeting of those delegates," three from each of the then existing counties, "on the second Tuesday in December 1787 at Trenton."

Roxanne K. Carkhuff

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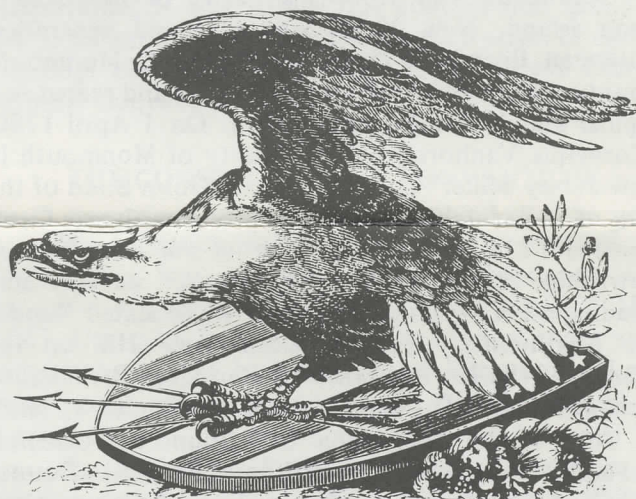
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## 1987 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### INCOME

Interest	\$ 7,666
Dues	6,245
Publication Fund	1,765
Books & Maps for Resale	2,848
Contributions from Large	12,345
Foundation and individuals	
Hunterdon County Cultural &	3,500
Heritage Commission grant	
Xerox fees collected	578
Miscellaneous	233
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$35,190</b>

### EXPENDITURES

Wages	13,150
Taxes	1,426
Insurance	2,595
Newsletter & Postage	3,934
Utilities	3,206
Office supplies	2,292
Publication Fund	2,844
Copier & File purchase	2,385
Repairs	365
Museum artifacts and books	536
Miscellaneous expenses	457
Loss on investment redemption	599
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$33,789</b>
Excess of income over expenses	\$1,401



# CORNELIUS VAN HOORN HOUSE DESTROYED BY FIRE

The ravages of time can destroy the most wonderful works of man, but the deliberate act of man can do it in the span of an hour. Such was the ignoble fate of one of Hunterdon County's most splendid landmarks. On the night of Friday the 13th, of February 1987, a satanic gathering of young cultists were celebrating one of their rituals in the ancient Van Hoorn house of the Whitehouse area of Readington Township. Before this black day had completed its course, the venerable stone house was but a gutted shell.

The Cornelius Van Hoorn home was to Hunterdon County as a Frank Lloyd Wright home is to the area of its locale. It was one of a kind: a singular structure, unique to its maker and construction. For the Van Hoorn home was the handywork of Caspar Berger, a skilled German stone mason, whose talent was to be found in but three structures of Hunterdon County.

Cornelius Van Hoorn, a native of Breuckelen, Long Island, New York, was a second generation American. Born in 1695, he was brought to Monmouth County, New Jersey before he was five, and reared in a typical Dutch farming community. On 1 April 1730, "Cornelius Vanhorne of the County of Monmouth in New Jersey Miller" purchased from "John Budd of the City of Philadelphia and province of Pensilvania Gent[leman]" 228 acres of land in what was then Amwell Township, Hunterdon County, however, later became Readington Township. The tract was located "under the Northeasterly End of Coshetunck Hill on the Branch of the North Branch of Rarington River called Rockawayock." The property was surrounded by lands of those of the same ethnic background as Cornelius: David Pottman, Symon Wyckoff and Benjamin Rounsivell. Not far away, Cornelius' younger brother, Abraham Van Hoorn, also owned a large tract of land (*West New Jersey Deed Book DD*, pages 59-60).

To this virgin land in Readington Township, Cornelius brought his second wife, and an assortment of children. They no doubt first resided in a rude structure which temporarily served their needs. However, as Cornelius' family and his wealth increased, he decided on building a larger and more substantial home. Toward this goal he went to the port of New York City in 1744, where he purchased for a term of years a German stone-mason, who was being sold by the captain of his ship to repay the costs of his passage. Accordingly, the German, Caspar Berger, left the old country on an involuntary basis: he, with a group of others, was enticed on board a ship by its captain, who then set sail for America. On reaching the New World, the deceptive captain announced the arrival of the skilled stone-mason, and Cornelius, intent on constructing his new home of stone, came to the ship, and submitted the highest bid for Caspar.

The redemptioner, or indentured servant (as they



The Van Hoorn home as it appeared at the turn of the century, showing the rear, or north, portion of the house, with the Cushetunk Mountain in the background.

were called in Colonial America) was brought to Readington Township, and over a period of three years Caspar built three magnificent stone houses, two in Hunterdon County, one for Cornelius Van Horn and the other for Abraham Pickel. The third structure was the home of Johannes Moelich, in Somerset County (*The Story of an Old Farm*, by Andrew D. Melick, Jr. [1889], pages 146-148). The three stone houses were built in three successive seasons, and therefore the Cornelius Van Hoorn house dates from 1744-1745.

Caspar constructed a remarkably well built and substantial stone home for the Van Hoorn family. He did not use ordinary field stones but rather split stone. The walls were over one and one-half feet thick. The main floor consisted of four sizable rooms separated evenly by a center hallway, leading from the front to the back door. Each room had its own corner fireplace. There was a large second floor, or garret, surmounted by a steep roof, with eaves projecting a considerable distance beyond the plate on which the rafters rested. It was a home well suited to Cornelius Van Hoorn, by now married to his third wife, as well as his many children.

Unfortunately, Cornelius did not live to enjoy his new home, for he died the year it was built, and was buried in the family burial ground located not far from his new stone "mansion".

The stone home came into possession of Cornelius' son, Cornelius, Junior. The younger Cornelius died in 1783, and by the provisions of his will, left the homestead to his son, William Van Horn. The home in turn was bought by Abraham Pickel, and eventually sold to one V.G. Simkhovitch. Dr. T. Arthur Pearson owned the home in the 1960s, at which time he "restored" the old stone house by adding leaded windows, inverting the dormers, and installing fancy chimney stacks.

(Continued on page 522)



# ONE DELEGATE'S FAMILY

## THE BREARLEYS

JOHN BREARLEY

John Brearley was born about 1645 in York, England and migrated to America, arriving September 28, 1682. He was one of three servants travelling with Quaker George Pownall and family on the ship, "Adventure". Brearley was indentured to serve four years for which he was to receive 50 shillings and 50 acres of land. The Pownalls settled on 550 acres on the Delaware River in Makefield Township, Bucks County, a short distance south of where Center Bridge is now located.

Completing his term of servitude in 1686, Brearley joined other settlers in Maidenhead Township who had come up the Delaware northward rather than overland from Long Island as later ones did. His earliest recorded land purchase, dated 22 June 1695, describes him as of Hopewell Township and a miller by occupation. The land, which he purchased from Mahlon Stacy, on the Shabakonk Creek, he called "Spring Grove Farm". It was located on what is now the Lewisville Road. The house, believed to have been built prior to 1700 was constructed of brick and still stood in 1964 with a "new" part built about 100 years earlier.

The name of John Brearley's first wife is unknown but she was the mother of Mary Brearley who married John Olden. Mary [Wood] Biles, widow of Charles Biles and daughter of John Wood [ -1692] of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, became Brearley's second wife. Biles had moved his family to Maidenhead after buying 200 acres from Joseph English in November 1695. Within a short time he died, leaving his widow with four children, John, Alexander, Sarah and Ann. Widow Biles and John Brearley were married prior to March 1787 when she signed a deed as Mary Brearley, widow of Charles Biles, transferring property between herself and Joseph Wood. She and Brearley became parents of five children who survived to maturity.

Brearley was appointed Overseer of Highways for Maidenhead in 1694 and held other numerous offices during his life — Constable in 1697-98, Assessor in 1701. He was one of the men who bought the town a meadow lot in 1699. The Presbyterian congregation at Maidenhead was the earliest one organized in the area, serving the area within several miles at the village church after the land on which to build was obtained by Brearley and others in 1710. At the annual Maidenhead Township meeting on January 1, 1712 John Brearley was one of the residents who unanimously agreed to support and promote the creation of a county in the upper parts of the province above the Assunpink Creek where the population was centered in Maiden-

head and Hopewell Townships. Thirty-six men, including Brearley, pledged funds to accomplish their purpose and John Bainbridge was chosen to appear before the Governor on their behalf. They were successful in their campaign for in March 1714 the County of Hunterdon was created by setting off the townships of Amwell, Hopewell, and Maidenhead from Burlington County.

Brearley died in the latter half of 1722 as his will was written 7 May 1722 and probated before the end of the year. His widow Sarah survived him, as did his six children. At his death he owned considerable property, including the home farm near Five Miles Run (Shabakunk Creek) bought of Joseph Reader, a farm on the Delaware River, and 1/16th and 1/40th shares of a whole propriety of the Western Division of New Jersey. He named Sarah, his wife, and John Olden, his son-in-law executors. His estate, appraised by William Hixson, Benjamin Clarke and Joseph Worth on 16th day, 8th month 1722 was valued at #343.15.11. The manner in which the date was written indicates a clear Quaker influence. Possibly Brearley, who migrated with Pownall, a Quaker, was too a Quaker. The Meeting at Stony Brook was in close proximity to his holdings in Maidenhead.

His widow, Sarah Brearley, made her will leaving clothing to her daughters, Sarah Watson, Ruth Gumly and Ann Biles. To David Brearley she devised her "thirds of the plantation up the River". Her personal estate she divided between her children John Biles, "Elicksander" Biles, John Brearley, David Brearley, Joseph Brearley, Sarah Watson, and Ruth Gumly. Mrs. Brearley's will was probated in October 1731.

Issue of John Brearley and his two wives.

i. Mary Brearley, born 1694, married John Olden. They resided in Windsor Township, Middlesex, when he wrote his will in January 1757. He was survived by his widow, Mary and children, William [eldest], John, James, Thomas, Joseph, David, Mary, Benjamin [youngest]. David Brearley, his brother-in-law, and John Clark were executors of his estate and probated his will in May 1757.

ii. John Brearley, Junior, married \_\_\_\_\_, died 1777 leaving sons John and David

iii. Benjamin Brearley married 1732 Elizabeth Cook [ -1759]. He died 1757 naming David Brearley, Sr. and their brother-in-law, George Rozell to settle his affairs. His children were Benjamin [under age], Rachel, Sarah, Rebecca and Elizabeth. Property included his home farm of 60 acres adjoining Alexander Boyles (Biles) and Jasper Smith; land on Five Miles Run (Shabakonk Creek) situated between David Brearley and Alexander Boyles which he bought from Thomas Green; 5 acres of meadow along the Assunpink Creek; and 375 acres in Morris County.

+ iv. DAVID BREARLEY, SENIOR married Mary Clark.



v. Joseph Brearley, married Phebe \_\_\_\_\_, who survived him when he died in late 1740. She renounced her right to administer his estate in favor of his brother, Benjamin. He was also survived by a son John who later lived in Sussex County on land inherited from John Brearley, the elder. Joseph may be the Joseph Brearley interred in the Lawrenceville Presbyterian Cemetery who died November 17, 1740. His age given as 16 years in the published record of tombstone inscriptions there could have been misread, which occurs occasionally, especially in distinguishing between "1" and "4" on worn stones.

vi. Ruth Brearley, so named in her father, John's will in 1722, is called Ruth Gumly in her mother's will in 1730.

### DAVID BREARLEY, SENIOR

David Brearley, Senior, was most likely born in Maidenhead Township where he lived his adult life. He married Mary Clarke, daughter of Benjamin Clarke, Sr. [ -1743] of Stoney Brook, Middlesex County. David, Sr. succeeded his father on the family farm in Maidenhead Township and served for many years on the Maidenhead Township council.

Anger reached open rebellion in Maidenhead in the early 1740's and riots began over the land titles. Dr. Daniel Coxe, of London, having acquired 15,000 acres in Maidenhead Township in the 1680's, had conveyed his holdings to a group of Quakers, the West Jersey Society. The Society, in turn, appointed agents to sell land to prospective settlers. In 1701 Coxe's son arrived in the colony and informed the Maidenhead men they had purchased only the right to use the land and now he was collecting additional money in exchange for clear titles to their homesteads. The settlers met with Coxe and Thomas Revell, the elder Coxe's agent to negotiate the additional charge. Of the men assembled, a number refused to pay and were prosecuted and driven from their holdings.

Riots occurred and David Brearley, Sr., and other of Maidenhead's leading citizens, were charged with high treason and jailed at Trenton in Connection with these riots. A mob rescued him but he was later re-arrested and taken to Somerset County for trial. Governor Belcher, sympathetic to the colonists' cause refused to take any action to punish the rioters. Finally he worked to pass an Act of pardon absolving the rioters with the stipulation they take an oath of allegiance and post a bond to refrain from further violence. David Brearley, Sr. would have been labelled an activist in today's sense of the word.

David Brearley, the elder, died in Maidenhead Township and administration of his estate valued at #389.1.9, was granted to his eldest son, Joseph Brearley on December 6, 1785.

Issue of David Brearley, Senior and wife Mary Clarke:

- i. Joseph Brearley, born August 6, 1742.
- + ii. DAVID BREARLEY, JUNIOR, born 1745
- iii. Esther Brearley, died unmarried before 1785
- iv. Abishai Brearley, died unmarried before 1785
- v. Zerujah/Jerusha Brearley, married as his second wife \_\_\_\_\_ Pierson.



DAVID BREARLEY, JUNIOR  
Soldier, patriot, jurist, statesman  
1745-1790

David Brearley, Junior, was born in Hunterdon County on 11 June 1745 at Spring Grove, Maidenhead Township. He read law at Princeton, was admitted to the New Jersey Bar on May 15, 1767 and settled at Allentown in Monmouth County to begin his law practice.

Some history books say he married Betsy, a daughter of Abraham Cottnam and while this may be correct, Mr. Cottnam's 1776 will excludes any references to her or Brearley grandchildren. Other historians identify his first wife as Elizabeth Mullen, one of the daughters of John Mullen [ -1749] of Amwell Township. This is more likely correct as there is documentary evidence to substantiate the fact.

They were married and resided in Allentown during the time he served as a Deputy Surrogate, of both Monmouth and Hunterdon Counties in the 1770's. On February 26, 1771, their house was "entirely consumed by fire, together with all his Books and Furniture; the Family with Difficulty escaped with their Lives." [*Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 7, 1771].

Elizabeth [Mullen] Brearley died August 3, 1777 at Allentown; "after a long and painful illness. . . this Lady. . . was eminently beautiful. . ." [*Pennsyl-*



vania Gazette, August 13, 1771]. She was the mother of William, Elizabeth, Mary and Esther Brearley.

Judge David Brearley's second wife was Elizabeth Higbee, of Trenton. She was a daughter of Joseph and Rachel Higbee. She survived him and died August 20, 1832, at age 81. They were the parents of David, III, George, and Joseph Higbee Brearley.

When the Revolution began, he soon earned the reputation as an outspoken Whig to the obvious annoyance of some of his more conservative neighbors. He was outlawed by the British government and a reward of one hundred pounds offered for his apprehension because of his activities. He was arrested for treason but was quickly freed by a mob of patriots. He entered the military service, being commissioned Captain of the Second Regiment of the New Jersey Continental Line on October 28, 1775. In November 1776 he was promoted to Lieutenant-colonel the Fourth Regiment and transferred to the First Regiment January 1, 1777.

He resigned his commission as Lieutenant-colonel in Maxwell's Brigade of the New Jersey Line in June 1779 to become Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court. While he presided over the Supreme Court Judge Brearley had a reputation of a faithful, reliable and highly esteemed judge. At Commencement in 1781 the College of New Jersey at Princeton conferred on him the honorary degree of Master of Arts. He became a Justice of the United States District Court in 1789, a position he held until his death the following year.

Judge Brearley was a member of the Convention that framed the Constitution of the United States 200 years ago and that same year served as a member of the Convention of New Jersey that ratified it. As a member of the Constitutional Convention he was notable primarily for his regular attendance, and his support (along with all the other delegates from New Jersey) of the rights of small states. He was the only delegate to the State Ratifying Convention who had also attended the Philadelphia Convention that produced the Constitution. Undoubtedly, because of his support for the new constitution, he was chosen as a presidential elector in 1788.

At the first regular convention of New Jersey Masons, held in 1786 in New Brunswick, those in attendance agreed to establish a Grand Lodge in the State and so proceeded. Grand Lodge of New Jersey was formed and Chief Justice David Brearley was selected as the first Grand Master with Joshua Corshon, Grand Treasurer. Trenton Lodge No. 5, the first lodge in the city, was formed under his grand mastership and he subsequently became a member. It will commemorate its two hundredth anniversary this year on December 27, 1987. Brearley Lodge No. 9 was formed at Bridgeton in 1791 and so named as a memorial to the recently deceased Grand Master.

An Anglican, David Brearley was a member of St. Michael's Church in Trenton where he served as a

Warden from 1785 until his death and participated in the Episcopal Convention of 1786. He was also present at the Convention that set forth and ratified the Book of Common Prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America in 1789.

Distinguished as an early New Jersey justice, his career was cut short by his death in the summer of 1790. He died on August 15, at age forty-four, leaving his widow, Elizabeth and children. He was interred at St. Michael's Churchyard in Masonic ceremonies attended by a large group of Masons and citizens. Other family members were interred there, too.

Issue of David Brearley, Junior and his wives, Elizabeth Mullen and Elizabeth Higbee.

- i. William Brearley
- ii. Esther Brearley, born 1775, died February 1819, aged 44 years, buried St. Michael's churchyard
- iii. George Brearley, born 29 January 1775, died 1844; married January 7, 1791 Ann Gillingham [1775-1792]. They were the parents of Samuel Brearley [1792-1848], who married on 2 March 1814 Elizabeth Smith [1791-1817], daughter of Israel and Keziah [Smith] Smith. Samuel and Elizabeth Brearley were the parents of Elizabeth Brearley and Jane Brearley who died September 21, 1817 at age ten months. Elizabeth became the wife of Thomas R. English. Samuel Brearley married second 16 Dec. 1818 Sarah Smith who died 18 April 1829 aged 48.8.26. He married third 15 October 1830 Mary Ann Smith. She died 9 March 1882, having survived him and married second Charles Parker.
- iv. David, born 1786, died at Blakely, Alabama 8 November 1820 age 34 years, buried St. Michael's churchyard
- v. Joseph Higbee, born 1783, died 2 April 1803 aged 20 years, buried St. Michael's Churchyard
- vi. Elizabeth

Roxanne K. Carkhuff



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## 1873 ATLAS OF HUNTERDON COUNTY NEW JERSEY

Beers, Comstock and Cline

The Hunterdon County Historical Society is pleased to announce its second reprinting of the *1873 Atlas of Hunterdon County, New Jersey*. Increased interest in local historic sites — houses, schools, mills, etc. and the heritage of our County makes this reprint a valuable addition to your library.

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

Name .....

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.....



Ruins of Van Hoorn house April 1987. Photo by Michael Scott Kuderka.

### VAN HOORN HOUSE (continued from page 518)

Upon the death of Dr. Pearson in 1967 it was proposed that the home, and 93 acres, be purchased for \$268,000 by Readington Township for use as a county park. This was not done, and ultimately the old home and property came into possession of Arthur Burgess, who, leaving it unoccupied, made it a marked target for the Friday the 13th ritual.

This account was written by Fred Sisser III, a lineal descendant of Cornelius Van Hoorn, in association with Mrs. Roxanne Carkhuff, whose husband, George, is a lineal descendant of Caspar Berger.