



Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

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Lafayette Recuperated in Hunterdon

LAFAYETTE AND THE REVOLUTION IN HUNTERDON

The Marquis de LaFayette [1757-1834] traveled to America in 1777 at his own expense to join the struggle for America's independence. He became a Major-General in the Continental Army. He later returned to France and successfully secured military aid for us.

David Ringo, guest speaker at the Annual Meeting on March 20, 1988, will discuss "Lafayette and the Revolution in Hunterdon." Mr. Ringo is a descendant of Philip Ringo for whom the village of Ringoes is named and he has done considerable research over the last 50 years and co-authored the Ringo Family History Series, a 13-volume publication recently completed. During the Revolutionary War Lafayette spent some time recuperating at the Henry Landis House in Ringoes. Mr. Ringo's talk will include original research discovered in his pursuit of information about the Tavern at the Crossroads (Ringoes) which his ancestors John and Philip kept.

The Annual Meeting will be held on March 20, 1988 at 2 P.M. the Womens Club on Park Avenue in Flemington. Preceding Mr. Ringo's talk there will be a brief business meeting.

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1988 Calendar

- March 20** ANNUAL MEETING "Lafayette and the Revolution in Hunterdon," David L. Ringo, guest speaker, in Flemington Womens Club.
- May 1** SPRING MEETING "The Palatine Families of New York and New Jersey or How to Trace 847 Families Here and Abroad and still stay *Relatively Sane*," Henry Z (Hank) Jones, guest speaker, Zion Lutheran Church, Oldwick.
- November 20** FALL MEETING "The NJ Constitutional Convention," Wesley Lance, guest speaker, Flemington Womens Club.



Lafayette recuperated at Henry Landis's home in Ringoes. The 1906 photograph includes a north frame wing subsequently razed.



"At the very instant that I heard that America was fighting for her independence I enrolled for service."



HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER

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CONGRATULATIONS MERCER COUNTY 150 YEARS OLD 1988

A new county, to be called Mercer, having been proposed in the New Jersey Legislature, became law in February 1838. The creation of this new county, from parts of Hunterdon, Burlington and Middlesex, naturally reduced the size of Hunterdon County.

The townships of Trenton, Ewing, Lawrence (formerly Maidenhead), and part of Hopewell were annexed to Mercer as were East and West Windsor Townships from Middlesex County and Nottingham Township from Burlington. Interestingly, the term "Old Hunterdon" immediately came into use referring to our county before the 1838 division.

From the 7 February issue of the *Hunterdon Gazette* we read, "The New County Bill has passed the assembly [31 to 20]. We have not seen the line but we understand it takes from us all of the Township of Hopewell with the exception of that fertile district which skirts Sourland Mountains, which may have been left to us for the purpose of becoming our County seat of Justice in case the removal of our court-house shall ever become a question. This was very considerate and kind to *Old Hunterdon*."

After the division in February 1838 Hunterdon County was left with a population of 24,208 and was allowed 3 State representatives. The people of Hopewell were irate at having the township divided and would have preferred to remain as one township in either the old or the new county. Within the year another bill restored Hopewell Township and placed the entire township within Mercer County.

Congratulations to Mercer County as it celebrates its 150th Anniversary.

Membership Report

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

Mrs. Shirley M. Barnes, Springfield, VT
Mr. & Mrs. George B. Gelman, Frenchtown, NJ
Beverlee Hower-Felkner, Langhorne, PA
Robert A. Feters, Chillicothe, OH
Mrs. Elise V. Hill, Vista, CA
Olive W. Richardson, Solana Beach, CA
Tim Lewis Rue, Bangor, PA
Mrs. Bette Turner, Randolph, NJ
Oscar Van Lieu, Jonestown, PA
George W. Van Syckle, Ellwood City, PA
George Wylder, Clinton, IL

Mrs. Frederick Stothoff
Membership Secretary

* * *

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.

CHAMBERLIN, McCLARY, MAXWELL: Desire info re par/o Sarah Maxwell, b 2 June 1798, died 27 June 1828, m to Mahlon Chamberlin 13 Sept 1819 at home of George Maxwell. Who were par/o Elizabeth McClary, b 7 June 1781, died 21 Dec 1863, bur with husband Samuel Chamberlin (1780-) Bethlehem Baptist Churchyard near Pattenburg. Was she a dau/o Andrew and Phebe McClary? ADD: Clyde A. Chamberlin, 1228 West Saginaw St., East Lansing, MI 48823.

CASTNER, CROT/CROTZLEY, MOORE, WEAVER: Seek par/o Elizabeth Weaver [1862-1933] m Casper Castner [1862-1928]. Also seek par, anc/o Elizabeth Moore who m John S. Castner 5 Sept 1823; and Sara Janet (Jeanette) Crotzley/Crots who m Peter Castner 13 Mar 1830, grandpar/o Casper Castner. ADD: Tim Rue, Rt. 4, Box 4180, Bangor, PA 18013.

AGIN, BUNN, LIVERTON, ULMER: Need proof John & Elizabeth Liverton of Amwell were par/o Rebecca Liverton who m Wilson Agin s/o Rev. Soldier James Agin [1759-1836] and his wife Ann? Need marriage date and parents of James and Ann. Roseanna Bunn, b ca 1824, m William P. Ulmer of Alexandria Twp. 2 Mar 1853. Her father was John. Who was her mother? Was he s/o Henry & Mary Ulmer of Nockamixon Twp., Bucks Co. PA? ADD: Donna B. Evans, 3 Papps Drive, Yardville, NJ 08620.

DOTTERER/DUDDER, JANSEN, LOW: Seeking anc/o John Low bapt 1752 North Branch Dutch Reformed Ch, NJ. His second wife was Elizabeth [1758-1837] dau/o Phillip Dudder/Dotterer. He died March 1813 Muncy Valley, PA. Was he s/o Cornelius Lowe and Johanna Jansen? Need name of first wife and both marriage dates. ADD: Paula Radwanski, R.D. #4, Box 232, Tunkhannock, PA 18657.

CORNELL, STRYKER: Seek par/birth date of Antje Stryker, w/o Albert Cornell of Readington who died 1790. ADD: Mrs. George D. Cornell, 3524 S. 293rd Place, Auburn, WA 98001.

POWEL(L), REEDER/REIDER: Would like to know par, sib/o both James Powell and Mary Reeder who wed 7 Oct 1780 in Kingwood, Hunt. Co. They migrated to VA and beginning in 1787 paid taxes in Hampsire Co. VA. ADD: Robert A. Feters, 215 Dun Road, Chillicothe, OH 45601.

CORYELL, FLAGG: Des info re par & chil/o Abraham Hoagland Coryell and his wife Abigail Flagg who were married by Rev. Jacob Kirkpatrick 29 April 1815 in Amwell Twp., Hunt. Co. and migrated first to NY, then to Oregon. Coryell Pass on the Oregon Trail is named in his honor and he was a resident of Oregon Territory by 25 Oct 1847. Two known sons, Lewis Stillwell Coryell, b 1820 NJ and George Matthews Coryell, b 1829 Seneca Co., NY. ADD: N. Burr Coryell, Editor, Coryell Newsletter, P.O. Box 662, Santa Barbara, CA 93102-0662.

BURROUGHS: Des info re anc/o Ephraim Burroughs, b 1773 Hunt. CO. NJ, d 1838 Dearborn Co. IN. Wife Elizabeth _____, b 1775, died Aug 1840 Dearborn Co. IN. They removed from NJ 1795 to KY, then to OH, finally to IN. Par/o Thomas Newton, Jonathan, Nancy, Mary, James C., Jesse, Ephraim, Elnathan, Elkanah, and William Burroughs. ADD: Vernie Hubert II, 433 B New Jersey Avenue S. E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

EMERY/HENRY: Can anyone identify the George Henry buried in Old Lebanon cemetery who d. 7 Aug 1830 in 77th year? If he was s/o William and gs/o Conrad, William could not have been born ca 1750 as suggested in the Emery family book. ADD: Richard Henry, 5266 W. Farrand Rd., Clio, MI 48420.

PAR(R), ROSE: To complete 1888 partial manuscript by James E. Rose, need marriage date, place for David Rose, b Long Island NY & w Hannah Par(r) b 1724 Long Island NY. When, where did they remove to NJ? Chil: Mary d young, David Jr., Rhoda, Robert, John, Mary, Jesse (my 4 ggf b 2 Apr 1757), James, Ann, Catherine. Jesse settled bef 1813 in Mecca Twp. Trumbull Co OH. Siblings mov to PA, IN, NY, or remained in NJ. Need info to complete ROSE manuscript and OHIO ROSE reunion book. All help greatly appreciated. ADD: Mrs. Ann E. Hilles, 191 W. Bayton St., Alliance OH 44601.

HAWK, INGLE: Seek lineal ancestors of Jacob D. Hawk and Mary Ingle, b. NJ 1808, m. Hunt. Co. 1825, remained in NJ until 1836. ADD: Dorothy L. Pearl, 1275 Beach Park Blvd., Foster City, CA 94404.

FORMAN: Seek info for a biography of David Forman [1745-1797] of Monmouth County, was Colonel during the Revolutionary War, brigadier general of NJ militia, common pleas justice, chairman Monmouth County Committee of Retaliation and a zealous patriot. In particular, the location of primary material such as correspondence is requested. Also seeking info on his kinsman Col. Samuel Forman of Monmouth County militia and other members of the Forman family in the 18th century. ADD: Dr. David J. Fowler, P.O. Box 18, Washington Crossing, PA 18977.

DAR Dedicates Soldiers Markers

On Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11, 1987 the Old White House Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution held a dedication ceremony for the government issued stones and markers recently placed on the graves of seven Revolutionary Veterans buried in the Old White House Memorial Park.

The park, located at Washington Place and Route 22 in Whitehouse, was the site of the first Rockaway Dutch Reformed congregation organized 10 January 1792. Church services were held in Abraham Van Horn's barn until the first church was erected nearby in 1807. The cemetery where 125 early settlers are buried, was deeded to the Old White House Chapter in 1931 by the heirs of Harriet Van Horn Traphagen.

The stones were installed by members of the Daniel Bray Chapter, Society Sons of the American Revolution who participated in the ceremony. The program was led by Chapter Regent Virginia Smith, Vice Regent Judy Dell and Chaplain Violet Navatto.

Information on all those buried in the cemetery is available from Virginia Everitt, Chapter Historian at 347 Old York Road, Neshanic Station, NJ 08853. The soldiers honored on Veterans Day were

Matthew Adams, died 1 April 1838 age 81 years 7 months 21 days

Adrian Johnson, died 20 November 1844 in his 89th year

Cornelius Messler, died 28 November 1843 in his 85th year

Edward Mitchell, died 26 June 1840 aged 84 years 11 months

Abraham Van Doren, died 17 April 1823 ages 72 years 6 months 9 days

Dennis Wyckoff, Esquire, died 6 December 1830 ages 70 years

George Wyckoff, born 2 June 1745, died 1826

Richard Stillwell, 1742-1826, Captain, 4th Regiment has a field stone with a DAR marker

Abraham Van Horn, 1740-1817, Forage Master, Commissary Department during the Revolutionary War; and host to General Washington at the Old White House has a DAR tablet on a boulder.

NEWSLETTER INDEX FOR SALE

The new index to the *Hunterdon Historical Newsletter* covering Volumes 1 through 23, may be ordered by mail from the Society or picked up at the Headquarters during Library hours, Thursdays and Saturdays 1-3 p.m. Member Marion O. Harris prepares annual revisions of the index to include the previous volume entries. The Society offers the Index for sale for \$5 plus \$1 postage for mail orders.

Blizzard of '88 - It Beat the Record



Memories of the Blizzard of 1888. Even after several days the roads in Flemington were barely passable.

Business as usual prevailed at the office of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* on Monday, March 12th, 1888. The first two pages of the paper, obviously set in type days in advance, carried general interest articles of national and state news. Two weeks previously the front page had reminded readers of the events of the capture of Jemima Boone, "daughter of the brave old pioneer" and her two companions, Elizabeth and Fanny Callaway on the afternoon of Sunday, July 14, 1776. Dr. Mathieu Williams announced that "the practice of taking tea or coffee by students, in order to work at night was downright madness, especially when preparing for an examination." It was announced that Democratic caucuses were to be held on Saturday, March 10 for the purpose of nominating tickets that would be supported at the Town Meetings. Locally, milk at Frenchtown was selling at 3¢ a quart when 5¢ was considered a reasonable fee. Seemed that there were four milkmen "butting against each other" for the door-to-door service.

Mr. Robert J. Killgore, the Editor and Proprietor, commented that signs of spring were everywhere. The small boy was "out in force with his marbles, the bluebirds making their presence apparent ...and Brother Runkle

talking of going 'a fishin'." Ironically, Mr. Killgore, noted that the "vernal equinox falls on Wednesday, March 21 when spring commences. At that time heavy storms prevail on sea and land."

One wonders if he remembered those words when he proof-read the last paragraph. L.R. Runkle added to the end of his "Local Department" news as he finished up his column for the press on that fateful Monday. "Brother" Runkle wrote – "a faint idea of the severity of the Western blizzard is given in the fierce wind and snow storm that rages here this Monday morning as we are getting our forms ready for the press. The snow, which began falling about 11 o'clock, is piled up on the sidewalks as high as the fences, and the roads are almost impassable. The winds ride high and strong, carrying the fleecy crystals into every crevice of our houses. It is presumable that railroad travel will be greatly impeded for a day or two." Little did he know how long train service was to be delayed.

Still not front page news as we consider it today, the headlines of page 3 of the March 20th issue of the local paper related the events of the week between publications. The editor of the paper told the story so well that the entire article is reprinted here:

THE WORK OF THE STORM KING IN HUNTERDON

**Everything Out of Joint For a Week –
Death and Destruction Mark the Path
of the Storm – Travel Stopped, and a
General Cut-off of Communication**

All old residents can recall memorable snow storms – snows that have blockaded roads and cut off communication between city and country, but none are there who ever experienced such a wild, furious, driving snow storm accompanied by such extreme cold as that which set in over the region at 11 o'clock on the night of the 11th instant and continued until sundown on the 12th without the least cessation. And even then, though the snow ceased falling from the clouds, the high winds continued to blow, filling the air with the sharp crystals that were not for an instant allowed to find a resting place. For twenty-four hours longer the winds roared and sped on, ever on, twirling the dry, loose snow here, there, and all about, adding grotesqueness to heaps that may have caught somewhere, and driving in firm and tight into every flat place in wagon roads and filling deep railroad cuts as solid as ice fields.

It is impossible to stop and attempt a description of the myriad of huge snow banks and great drifts that met the eye in all directions, nor can we begin to give an account of half the disaster, and inconvenience, and worry caused by the universal blockade. Nothing like it was ever known here before.

Our three railroad trains got away Monday morning at their usual hours. The Lehigh Valley Branch train returned after touching at Flemington Junction, but upon making her second trip she got fast near the Junction, and there she remained until Wednesday afternoon. At that time a large, powerful engine named "Metuchin" was sent to her relief, together with a great number of snow shovellers. After much hard work the Branch engine was freed from her snow prison, and the two engines began the seemingly impossible task of pushing through the wonderfully deep and solid drifts toward the Flemington depot. Some of those drifts near the Fair Grounds were fully ten feet deep, and packed so hard that men stood on top of them watching the interesting proceeding. It was a grand sight to see those two engines plow through these massive banks making the snow fly with as much apparent ease as though nothing but heaps of feathers. In one place, the side of Abner Peterson's residence, the banks of earth each side the track prevented the free scattering of the snow and the consequence was that the two engines stuck fast. The snow shovellers were set to work and in about an hour and a half they were loosened and run back. Soon they came bounding on again, and before you could count fifty, they had cut their way through the remaining tons of snow and had reached the depot, thus opening the road for travel. Perhaps three hundred of our citizens were present and witnessed the uncommon spectacle, several ladies being among the number.

The Monday morning train on the Flemington Railroad reached Lambertville on time and from there, it was sent to Trenton to make a special trip for a train that had not reported. Another train was started for Flemington in place of it, but was stopped short below Ringoes by the drifts that by this time had become serious. This train could not be got loose until Tuesday afternoon and only then by the aid of two other engines, and all put back to Lambertville. The road

was opened on Thursday morning, and Conductor Stryker ran his train back home and on his return from the afternoon trip delivered the first city mail that Flemington had received since the previous Saturday night. The post-office was soon besieged by a voracious crowd who looked upon the mail bags with eager eyes as they were lugged in, for, as may be readily imagined, our whole population was well-nigh famished for news.

The Central, or South Branch train, fared worst of all. Engineer Joe Case pulled out at 6:55 Monday morning for New York, whistling gaily "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and she never beheld his jolly face again until a full week later, for at Flagtown he ran into a drift that fastened him fore and aft. He didn't whistle so much after that, but it is said that he did some tall work with his meerschaum pipe. It took two hundred men and three engines to clear his road back to Flemington and they got the track so that Joe was able to get here at about 10 o'clock Saturday night and he came in whistling: "Sally is the Gal for Me!" The first New York mail for the week came with this train. It was a heavy one, there being 22 bags full.

As the mails are carried on the Pennsylvania and Central roads it will be seen that the blockade effectually shut out Flemington from the outside world. The wagon roads, too, were impassable, and conveyances did not begin to show themselves in town, until Thursday afternoon, and even then but very few... In a word, all trains on all the roads throughout the State were locked fast for the greater part of the week.

In the Lambertville vicinity there was the same trouble and inconvenience experienced as at other places. Three funerals appointed for the first days of the week could not be held and had to be postponed from day to day until the roads were broken and made passable.

The saddest incident of the awful storm – in this vicinity – at least, occurred on the Lehigh Valley Railroad on Wednesday afternoon, about two miles below Three Bridges, near opposite Woodfern station, by which Engineers Theodore Apgar and Conrad Derr, both of South Easton and Conductor John Bullman of Easton, lost their lives, and two firemen named John Pixley and John Rogers, the former of Easton and the latter of South Easton, received serious injuries. Besides these, several laborers were also badly knocked about... In less than half an hour after this accident occurred, Doctors Ewing, Parish, Shannon and Bartles, of this place, were hurried to the scene of death and destruction, and rendered all the aid possible... Theodore Apgar was the son of George A. Apgar of Lebanon and was very popular on the road. He last summer ran the peach train from this place over the Lehigh Valley...

Just such reports of ruin and disaster are wafted in from every part of the country. Even yet, as this paper goes to press, many leading wagon roads are impassable and people are either obliged to make long, circuitous drives through fields to reach near-by points or remain home.

News of the storm came from all places. In Clinton about 10 o'clock Monday morning a large chimney on the house of the Corson estate occupied by Messrs. R. Laquay and H.N. Gallagher fell with a terrible crash, tearing a great hole in the kitchen roof and walls... but fortunately, hurting no one. About an hour later, the tall spire of the Clinton Presbyterian Church was swept from the belfry and fell to the ground a mass of splinters. The steeple was

blown off the Lutheran Church at New Germantown on the 12th inst., during the great blizzard. Large limbs were twisted from many trees and at time nothing could be seen but the driven snow and flying debris. About thirty passengers were on board a stranded train of the Clinton Branch railroad. They were hospitably cared for by the few families in the immediate neighborhood of Landsdown until the Branch was opened. "Mr. Joseph Van Syckel of Union, had to make a tunnel some ten feet in length in order to use a certain door of his house. Farmers' stock in many instances suffered for water, and considerable poultry was frozen to death." Thomas Butler, an old man living alone, near Sidney, supposedly went out during the storm to feed his pigs and chickens, and was found dead in an orchard near his residence on Wednesday. J.S. Cramer's large grain house, near Annandale, was blown down Monday night. John Eversole, a fireman on the Central Railroad, had his spine injured at Bloomsbury Wednesday by the wooden cab of his engine caving in while passing through a snow drift. He was taken to his home in Phillipsburg.

On Monday morning "while the great storm was raging in all its fierceness, Jacob Todd started from Clover Hill at the usual time with the mail for Flemington. He had not proceeded a mile on his way before he found that it was utterly impossible to drive through the roads. Therefore, he put up his horse at John P. Case's place, and bravely started on foot for Flemington with the mail bags over his shoulders, he having been informed by some extra smart persons at Clover Hill that it was obligatory upon him to deliver the mail. And so he trudged on for Flemington five miles away, floundering through the great drifts and laboring hard to reach his destination. Strong and vigorous as he is, he found his strength almost exhausted time and again, and was obliged to lie down in the road at short intervals to rest his over-taxed muscles. At last, after five hours spent on the road, he struck the Flemington Post-office and his work was done. It was the only mail that reached this place last week up to Thursday afternoon." No wonder the editor entitled this article, Brave Boy was He!

"Sylvia Dubois, the famous negress of the Sourland Mountain died in her cabin from the effects of the blizzard. Her age was authenticated to be 122 years and she was the oldest person in the State when she died."

Not all the news of the area was bad. Despite the deep snow, the wedding of Howard V. Hortman and Anna M. Runyon, both of East Amwell, was performed as planned at Wertsville on March 14, by Rev. H. A. Chapman.

Beyond the limits of Hunterdon County, the news was just as shocking and devastating to men and beasts. The northeast wind, laden with moisture, colliding with a northwestern current of colder air, was blamed for the unprecedented snowstorm. The Western Union Telegraph Company in New York said that the storm was of comparatively local character. "It did not extend further south than Alexandria, VA; west, further than Pittsburg and Buffalo; north, further than Saratoga, and east, further than Boston."

The coastal cities suffered as well as those inland. Atlantic City's weather began with a fierce hailstorm followed by the heavy snow and 60 mile an hour winds which drove a large schooner "on the bar at the end of the iron pier but it floated off by Tuesday morning." Near Baltimore and Wilmington, many vessels were blown ashore and some men drowned. Thirty tons of mail were on postal cars stranded at Broad Street Station in Philadelphia. A partial resumption of business in that city began finally on March 19th, a week after the storm. Snowdrifts 25 feet high blockaded the roads of the Pocono Mountains near Scranton and ice accumulations in the Delaware River above the Water Gap were over 40 feet high at one point. The spring freshet in the river must have been tremendous.

In New York City, Broadway and other great north and south thoroughfares were "well nigh" impassable with mountains of snow shoved from the sidewalks. The cross streets were quagmires of soft snow. No milk was received for 36 hours. The milk famine was becoming alarming. One hotel in New York paid 50 cents a quart for the last 50 gallons a dealer had. A far cry from the 3¢ a quart in Frenchtown. Coal was at a premium. What coal there was was being "carried in thousands of places by bag, basket and bucketfuls."

On Tuesday it was discovered at the Pennington Seminary that there was just six hours supply of coal on hand to warm the three hundred students. Fifty students turned out and cut their way through a number of snowdrifts eleven feet deep and made a road three-quarters of a mile long to the railroad station. The last hod of coal was in the furnace when the fresh supply arrived. During the storm milk sold in Pennington at forty cents a quart.

"A pathetic feature of the late paralysis in New York was the inability to get medical help for persons dangerously sick and the impossibility of burying the dead." Dr. E.L. Welling, 52, of Pennington, did not lose any patients during the snowstorm but his business was much impaired. He saw 21 patients on March 11th including Edward Hankins, Mrs. Elizabeth Bellis, Andrew A. Braasch and John Smith to whom he administered on March 12th. In his daybook, he made these comments about March 12. "The terrible snow storm of 1888. Roads blocked - trains stopped - U.S. mail (held up) until Thursday, March 15th, frightful loss of life." On the 13th he saw no patients but apparently administered some medicine. By March 18th, his patient load was back to normal but "awful traveling" conditions of melting snow, cold, and mud must have made his task an unpleasant one at best.

Some of the comments made by Editors Killgore and Butler after the storm are fun to read just as they printed them.

There was scarcely a "female form divine" seen upon Flemington's gay promenades for two and a half (2½) days last week. This is a very remarkable circumstance, indeed, and proves what a long, cold spell it was.

Robinson Crusoe was tolerably isolated a good many years ago, and for several days last week while our town was shut

in from the world outside we felt that Robinson was entitled to all the pity he ever received.

The late storm was such a "corker" that it rather knocked the "old timer" off his base. He raked over the ashes of his memory and tried hard to recall one of the storms of 1816, '23 or '31, that beat the 12th of March, '88 but it was of no use. It beat the record.

The only place where "news" could be had was at "Doc" Smith's cigar store. It was dispensed there as usual – in all its variant forms."

The *Phillipsburg News* reflected "The oldest inhabitant half a century hence will cite his experience in the great storm of 1888 to prove that it does not blow so hard, freeze so hard, or snow so deep as it did in his youth. It is because such storms as this one make a lasting impression, and survive the memory when much else is forgotten, that nearly all old people are profoundly of the conviction that the country enjoys a much milder climate than it did in their youth when the snow drifts used to overtop the fences and people even perished of cold so late as the middle of March." Why, I can remember when I was much younger that the snow drifts were over my head, can't you?

Phyllis D'Autrechy

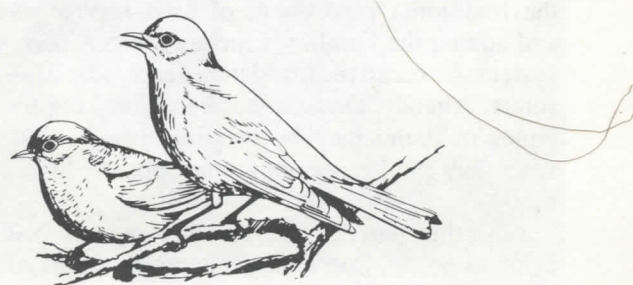
Hunterdon County Democrat, Mar. 6, Mar. 13, Mar. 20, Mar. 27, 1888.

Dr. Welling's Medical Book. Property of Hopewell Valley Historical Society.

SPRING MEETING 1 MAY

The Hunterdon County Historical Society and the Genealogical Society of New Jersey are pleased to present Henry Z (Hank) Jones in Hunterdon County. Mr. Jones has contributed greatly to the knowledge of the Palatine migration to America with the publication of his two volume, *The Palatine Families of New York 1710*. Many of those emigrants, or their children, came to Hunterdon County.

Mr. Jones will be speaking at the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oldwick at 2 p.m. on Sunday, May 1, 1988. The location is significantly fitting as that Congregation, composed mostly of Palatine families, held its first service in 1714 and will be celebrating its 275th anniversary next year.



James Falvo - Bicentennial Essay Winner

Your Historical Society was pleased to present James Falvo, essay contest winner with the Hiram Deats Best of Show award and a check for \$250.

A South Hunterdon High School senior, James Falvo of West Amwell Township was the grand prize winner in the essay contest sponsored by the Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission. The contest was entered by students from each of the high schools in Hunterdon and was one of the events in the Bicentennial of the Constitution celebration. First place winners from the other schools were Tonya Ellis of Holland Township from Delaware Valley Regional, Thomas Pluhar of Readington Township from Hunterdon Central, and Jennifer William of Clinton Township from North Hunterdon Regional. Their topic was "The Constitution: A Living Past."

Falvo was presented with the Hunterdon County Historical Society's \$250 Hiram Deats Award at the Fall Meeting of the Society last November. The prize was named in honor of Mr. Deats who chaired the Sesquicentennial of the Constitution Committee for Hunterdon County in 1937.

James Falvo's winning essay is printed here with his permission.

* * *

Suppose for a moment, that you are engaged in the delicate process of completing your will. Suppose, too,

that you have accumulated a great deal of wealth and property which must be allocated among several inheritors. You are sitting quietly in your bedroom, sipping your morning cup of coffee, making a leisurely inspection of the first draft, when you suddenly come across this clause:

...The beneficiaries will have the exclusive right to assemble for the purpose of revising his will at any time...

At this point, you probably spill your coffee and make a hasty telephone call or dash off an angry letter to the surrogate's office. After all, what is the point of leaving a last will and testament if it can be casually altered after your demise?

Preserving the result of one's hard work, whether it be a personal accomplishment or part of a great collective effort, is a natural tendency among human beings. Throughout history – with one important exception – the architects of major social change have taken great pains to insure the longevity of their carefully-laid plans.

Consider one well-known period of social change, the French Revolution. It began in 1789 when the governmental body representing the common people, called the Commons, declared its sovereign power as the National Assembly. After peasant revolts erupted throughout France, the National Assembly established a constitutional monarchy with a Declaration of Rights, which in truth removed

all power from the king.

Following the resulting social strife and a second revolution in 1783, the militant minority created the Revolutionary Tribunal and the Committee of Public Safety, largely under the control of Maximilien Robespierre. Under the repressive measures adopted by these emergency bodies, innumerable aristocrats and political dissenters – eventually Robespierre himself – met their deaths at the guillotine during the Reign of Terror.

In the end, feudal monarchy was abolished in France, but at the grisly cost of hundreds of human lives.

Consider, as another example, the revolutionary government that arose in China in the 1920s under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yet-sen. Although Sun wanted to expel foreigners from his country, he wanted to reorganize China's government along the lines of western democracy.

He proposed a government of five branches, retaining the traditional department of civil service examinations and adding the familiar branches of the American political system – executive, legislative, and judicial – and a censorate. Already, Dr. Sun was compromising the very principles of democracy by creating a body designed to silence any public opinions that opposed his new government.

After his party – the Kuomintang, or Nationalists – came to power, Sun took yet another step to guarantee the survival of his government: he picked his successor, a military leader named Chiang Kai-shek.

For all of his good intentions, however, Sun could not prevent the collapse of his government after his death in 1925. Chiang proclaimed himself a dictator, and a civil war began between the Kuomintang and the rebel forces of Mao Tse-tung's Communist Party. In 1949, the Communists were victorious, and the autocratic avatar of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's government was driven to the island of Taiwan, never to return to the Chinese mainland.

What, then, was the single exception of the pattern of safe-guarding a revolutionary government against future revision or overthrow? The answer is the plan of government that resulted from our own American Revolution: the Constitution of the United States of America. The 55 delegates who braved the sweltering weather to meet in Philadelphia in 1787 could have easily taken the path that other revolutionaries had taken – or would take – by creating a powerful central government. Instead, influenced by the writings of Montesquieu, they designed a government in which power would be divided among three governing branches and would rest in the hands of the people.

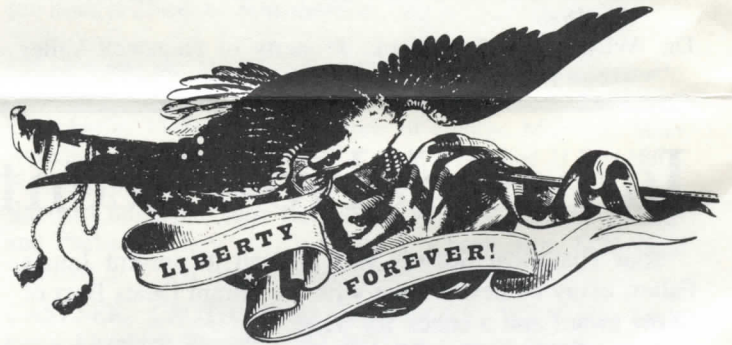
In place of the provincial legislative assemblies that effected the Reign of Terror, the Founders of our Constitution created the Congress of the United States. More than any other branch, it would be responsible to the people because its members would be elected by popular vote. The states would receive two seats each in the Senate, the upper house of Congress, while differences in the population of the states would be accounted for in the lower house of Congress, the House of Representatives, in which each state received a number of seats proportional to its residents.

In addition, the Congress contained the mechanism for changing the Constitution itself through the amendment process, which required a two-thirds vote in each house and approval of three-quarters of the states to add or delete parts of that document.

In place of an autocratic leader with an indefinite period of authority, the Founders created an elected chief executive, the President of the United States, whose term of office would be four years.

Finally, the unjust revolutionary tribunals and censorates were replaced by the Supreme Court and as many other courts as were deemed necessary by the Congress, whose members would be appointed by the President with the Senate's approval.

Thus, the political mechanisms designed 200 years ago by the Founders of our constitution continue to function today because they were not fixed and arbitrary, but subject to change by the people. Just as the proverbial oak is toppled by a strong wind while the reed sways and remains intact, so our Constitution endures change over time by remaining flexible rather than rigid. In this, the United States has achieved the perennial government that was so eagerly sought by countless revolutionary movements, a living past that we continue to shape today.



Book Review

Forgotten Mills of Readington, Stephanie Stevens, Scotch Plains, NJ, 1987, 62 pages, soft cover, illustrations, photographs, maps, no index, bibliography, \$5. Available at Hunterdon County Historical Society headquarters. If ordered by mail add \$1 postage.

The author of *Forgotten Mills of Readington* presents a view of Man in time with this folksy booklet. She provides the reader with a general background on mills which explains the types of mills, the mechanics of their operation, and their extreme importance to colonial life before getting into the specifics of Readington Township mills.

Time has not been kind to some of Readington's early mills. Mrs. Stevens, who is the official Readington Township historian, presents her research, bringing these mills back to life in the reader's mind.

Roxanne K. Carkhuff