



HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 1992

PROGRAM ON THE HISTORY OF PEDDIE SCHOOL AT NEXT GENERAL MEETING

The Society's next general meeting will be held at 7:30 P.M. on Monday, September 21st, in the auditorium at Meadow Lakes Retirement Community, located on Etra Road in Hightstown. The evening's program will consist of an illustrated talk on the history of The Peddie School, presented by Dr. David Martin, the school's archivist and a past President of our Society. The Peddie School, founded in 1864, has a rich and varied history as one of the town's oldest and most noted institutions. Dr. Martin will discuss the school's leaders, buildings, and plans for the future as well as its close relationship with the town and community. The program will run about an hour, and refreshments will be served.

The next general meeting will be held at Ely House on Wednesday, November 18th, featuring a program given by Kathryn Dennis.

JOSEPH J. ELY DEFENDS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The society wishes to thank John W. Orr, Jr. for the following information.

"I felt that you might want to share with the Society (or through the newsletter) a letter I discovered in an 1855 issue of the Village Record. The letter to the Editor was written by Joseph J. Ely, the man whose portrait hangs in the Ely House Museum. It gives us a little insight into the measure of this man, the great-grandfather of the schoolteacher, Huldah Ely, the last Ely to own the Ely House.

During the years immediately preceding the Civil War, anti-Catholic sentiment was on the rise. It was because of an article, posed in the form of a mathematical puzzle, that caused Joseph Ely to respond with the enclosed letter. He not only solved the puzzle, but then, through this letter, he went on to make it clear that he did not condone the inflammatory nature of the question. So that you may appreciate what I am saying I will set down for you the way in which the puzzle was written:"

"Mr. Editor: It is a well-authenticated, historical fact, that the Church of Rome, since its establishment, has, by the spirit of persecution alone, shed the blood of 63,000,000 persons! Now, allowing each individual to have lost but one gallon of blood, how large a vat, that is just six feet deep, might be filled with this innocent blood, and how many cardinals, bishops, priests and monks, including the Pope himself, might take a royal bath therein at the same time, allowing each individual to occupy a space of nine cubic feet? An answer is desired. C."

"Joseph J. Ely did not get any public

support (at least none that I have been able to find) for his stand on religious freedom. Indeed, he was attacked by others through the columns of the Record, for his unpopular, although Constitutional, stand. Joseph J. Ely was a man of unusual abilities, and of many accomplishments, but this public stand setting forth his interpretations on the freedom of worship, emblazoned for all to see, shows the true character of the Man."

(Village Record, February 2, 1855)

THE RIGHTS OF FREEMEN

"No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." Constitution of the United States, Art. VI, Sec. 3. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, Art. I.

You see my text and the documents from which the words are taken; documents and authority dear to every true lover of his country.

It is to be lamented that too many of our youth are growing up without duly considering who we are and what we are in these United States.— Those who read but little either of the history of the past or the history of despotism in the old world at present, do not realize the blessings which we as freemen enjoy in our country. Were it not for the contrast of night or darkness, we would not fully appreciate the ben-

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 16 Executive Committee (8 PM)
- 21 General Meeting (7:30 PM)

OCTOBER

- 7 Executive Committee (8 PM)
- 11 Community Fair (11 AM - 5 PM)
- 18 Second Historic House Tour (1 - 5 PM)

JOSEPH J. ELY

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efit of light. By contrasting sickness and health, we come at a proper estimation of the boon of health. Just so in regard to our legal and constitutional rights—it is only by comparing them with the rights, or rather absence of rights of the masses under despotism or tyrannical governments, that we are able to set the true value upon the rights we enjoy in this country. The generation of men who bared their breasts, and braved the cannon's mouth,

“Who firmly stood amidst the dire alarms Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms;”

who sacrificed their present comforts for the establishment of those glorious privileges we enjoy; these men, our illustrious ancestors, have gone the way of all the earth. Scarcely any remain to tell the tale; it has become the history of the past. And it now remains for us to say whether these inestimable rights shall be perpetuated for our children's children—or whether we shall prove degenerate sons of those sires. Forbid it Heaven! forbid it Humanity that we should mar their noble works! Stay thou those ruthless hands, and tear not from this glorious superstructure its main foundation pillar—the free right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of conscience. St. Paul, the great Apostle to the Gentiles, said 1800 years ago. “Let everyone be fully persuaded in his own mind.” And the New Testament had proclaimed in substance the doctrine that men should worship God according to the light and talents given them, and that the sincere though ignorant worshipper should be accepted of him; yet the tyrants of this world had set up certain formulæ and creeds of their own, and compelled men to bow down to them under pain of imprisonment, torture and death. Century after century rolled along, and the voice of souls under the altar cried out, “How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth!” Pass on, dear reader, and look down, down the stream of time till near the close of the fifteenth century, and what do you see? A poor but enterprising man is struck with the fancy of discovering a more expeditious

route to the East Indies. Who is he? Christopher Columbus, a Roman Catholic in religion. He is confident that far over the great western ocean there is a vast body of land. But what can he do? He is without money, without means to fit up an expedition. He makes known his impressions, and thousands are ready to laugh him to scorn. At length he is fitted out by Ferdinand and Isabella, Catholic sovereigns of Spain. After encountering great difficulty, suffering from the mutiny and ignorance of his men, the Atlantic is crossed, and land is discovered by Columbus and his crew. He takes possession of the continent, and calls it theirs “in the name of the Holy Trinity, by authority of the keeper of heaven and the great grantor of the empire and domain of earth.” This plea, valid of old among all christian powers, became our title to the north-eastern and north-western boundaries.—This country thus taken possession of in virtue of Catholic majesty, began to be settled by Puritans, Huguenots, Cavaliers, Catholics, Quakers, etc. Intolerance began to grow up and do its diabolical work in the colonies.—Nor was the persecution of those days the work of Catholics alone; Puritans, or Protestants were carrying on their internal butcheries in the name of God—when shortly a new era commences, the era of the liberty of conscience, the era of the American Revolution. Then Catholic, Protestant and Infidels fought side by side, and achieved our freedom, and in 1787 established that Constitution from which our text is taken. Under that constitution we have lived happily every man worshipping God under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and none to molest him or make him afraid. And now for the first time within our history as a free people, we hear the cry of down with the Catholics! down with their churches! And efforts are now being made to stir up opposition against these Christians because they hold fast to their old creeds and old opinions. Who are ye, ye modern Reformers, that thus step in between the consciences of Catholics and their God? Are ye inflexible? Has God commissioned you to rid this land of Catholicism by brute force and violence? By what authority do you proscribe these men, declaring them unfit to hold any office of trust or profit

merely on account of their religious opinions? Are ye misguided, infatuated, and ignorant of what you are doing? If so, our prayer is that you may be speedily enlightened! Are you endeavoring to overthrow religious freedom in this country? Then we hesitate not to class you with Benedict Arnold, and hold you as unworthy of the name of independent American citizens. I am not a Catholic myself. I call no Pope, no priest, no man my spiritual father on earth, but I will to the utmost of my feeble ability, endeavor to preserve inviolate and sacred the inestimable right of every man and set of men to worship the Great Father of all according to the dictates of his conscience. Here the believers in any and every religion (and, if there be such men, the believers in no religion,) have equal constitutional and political rights; and the men who would attempt to reverse this order of things, are guilty of trampling under foot the hallowed institutions built up by the blood of our forefathers. E.

SECOND HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR

The Society will hold its second historic house tour on Sunday, October 18th, between 1 - 5 P.M., rain or shine. Seven homes will be featured. An architectural and historical profile will be provided on each home. Ely House will be open during the tour where tickets and refreshments will be available. Tickets will also be available at the Society's booth at the Community Fair. Two tickets will be raffled off during the Community Fair. Tickets for the tour will be \$8.00 each. A map of the tour will be provided. Antique cars will be parked in front of each home for the tour. Hostesses will greet you as you enter each home. The owners will discuss their homes highlighting the architecture, history, restoration, and decorating. This will be an excellent opportunity for anyone seeking tips on restoring and decorating a home. Please don't miss out on learning more about your local history! If you would like further information or to serve as a hostess please contact Chris Stults (443-6864) or Robin Smith (448-8487).

(continued from May-June, 1992 issue)

HISTORIC SITES IN HIGHTSTOWN AND EAST WINDSOR

(The Seventh Installment in a
Continuing Series)

WINDSOR HOLLOW & WINDSOR MILL PREHISTORIC SITES (One Mile Road)

Jacob H. Stults and Isabella, his wife, purchased the farm on 10/15/1887. John E. Allen and Charles E. Stults, trading as Allen & Stults, purchased the farm on 4/6/1903. Ross Greene, Elias Dick, and Marcus Kressel purchased the farm on 7/29/1907. Elias Dick and Jennie, his wife, sold their 1/3 interest in the farm to Ross Greene on 3/5/1908. Ross Greene and Rosa, his wife, sold their 2/3 interest in the farm to Louis Juris and Rebecca, his wife, on 9/10/1908. Abraham A. Juris and Sarah, his wife, purchased the 2/3 interest on 6/2/1910. Saul Hand purchased the 2/3 interest on 3/25/1912. Apparently, the owners ran into financial difficulties and the farm was sold at public auction to Sarah Juris on 3/30/1914. Natale, Santo, and Antonio D'Anna purchased the farm on 12/6/1927. The D'Anna's also ran into financial difficulties and the farm was sold at public auction to the Federal Land Bank Of Springfield (located in Massachusetts) on 6/13/1935.

Philip Slapack and Sarah, his wife, purchased the farm on 9/10/1935. On 2/14/1939 the Slapacks sold a 14 acre lot fronting on One Mile Road to Rose Freed (now Block-6 Lot-4 Windsor Commons Luxury Apartments). On 5/15/1941 the Slapacks sold a 9.6 acre lot fronting on One Mile Road, adjoining the 1939 lot, to Sam Feinstein and Ethel, his wife (now Block-6 Lot-2). Sarah died on 3/14/1960 leaving her husband and two daughters. On 9/27/1966, Philip sold the farm to Philip Slapack, Inc. On 12/30/1968, Philip Slapack, Inc. sold the farm back to Philip. He died on 8/11/1969 leaving his two daughters Hilda Beytas and Beatrice Wolf. Hilda lived on the farm and Beatrice lived in Stamford, Connecticut.

John B. O'Hara and Ruth M., his wife, purchased the farm on 2/17/1970. The O'Haras subdivided the farm on 10/22/1973 carving out the land later to become the Windsor Mill Condominiums (Block-6 Lot-1.01) and leaving the remaining land at 61.7 acres. Princeton Land Partnership purchased the remaining land on 10/1/1976. Early in 1983, Toll Brothers, Inc. submitted a site plan application (#SP83-1C) to East Windsor Township Planning Board for 346 condominium units to be built on this land. The Planning Board issued a resolution of memorialization approving the final site plan application on 9/10/1984. Windsor Hollow, Inc., a subsidiary of Toll Brothers, Inc., purchased the land on 3/3/1988.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

The 1992 membership renewals have been sent out and the majority of you have responded—thank you for your continued support! However, many of you have forgotten to renew your membership. Please take this time take care of this important matter! If you have any questions regarding membership please contact the society's new membership chair: Joel Larsen (609) 448-4304.

MORE INFORMATION ON THE WILLIAM & ANN HUTCHINSON FAMILY & FARM

In 1930, William Everett did move to a house on Park Avenue in Hightstown where he provided a home for his father, Edgar Everett, and his stepmother, Edna, who was the daughter of David Baird Applegate (correctly Applegate). Benjamin and William Everett farmed this land on a full time basis until 1950. At that time, Benjamin and Lenora Everett moved to a house on Summit Street in Hightstown. The farm house was then rented to the Tindalls. One half of the farm, on a rotating basis, was rented for cropping to Peter Nurko who lived across Cedarville Road. Benjamin and William Everett continued to raise wheat and soybeans on the remaining half of the farm until 1958 when they retired fully and rented the entire farm to Peter Nurko.

The society wishes to thank Harold E. and Alice (Everett) Applegate for this additional information.

IN MEMORY

The society extends its condolences to the families of Gordon E. Hutchinson, Josephine H. Coates, and Cora V. Heyer (life member).

NEW SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES ELECTED

<i>Robin Smith</i>	<i>President</i>
<i>Dr. David Martin</i>	<i>Vice President</i>
<i>George Dubell</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
<i>Clifford Pullen</i>	<i>Recording Secretary</i>
<i>Lois Groendyke</i>	<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>
<i>Bernard Busb</i>	<i>Trustee</i>
<i>Milton Cunningham</i>	<i>Trustee</i>
<i>Irene Dey</i>	<i>Trustee</i>
<i>Charles Stults III</i>	<i>Trustee</i>
<i>Dr. Edgar Thomas</i>	<i>Trustee</i>

20TH ANNUAL HIGHTSTOWN- EAST WINDSOR COMMUNITY FAIR

The 20th annual Hightstown-East Windsor Community Fair will be held on Sunday, October 11th, rain or shine, at the Hightstown High School between 11 A.M. and 5 P.M.

The society will be represented and needs your help to put up our booth. In addition, volunteers are also needed to man the booth throughout the day. At the end of the fair help will be needed to take down the booth.

This is an important fund raiser for the society and provides an excellent opportunity to meet people from the community. Please volunteer when you are contacted to help!

??QUERIES??

1.

Information is wanted on Orlando Barksdale who ran a gasoline station/garage around 1939? in the Hightstown-East Windsor area. He was born in 1920 in Pennsylvania County, Virginia and married Getrude? and they had two children. If you can help please contact: Francis Parker, 4112 Walnut Grove, Rosemead, CA 91770.

2.

Information is wanted on the history of the site now occupied by Coca-Cola Foods in Hightstown-East Windsor. It is known that Farm Fresh Packing Company preceded Coca-Cola and that Garden State Canning Company preceded Farm Fresh. More information is needed on Farm Fresh and Garden State. Was Garden State the first manufacturing facility at this site? If you can help please contact: Linda Lavalley, Coca-Cola Foods, 480 Mercer Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520 (609) 448-5100.

**Hightstown-East Windsor
Historical Society**
164 North Main Street
Hightstown, New Jersey 08520

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