

HIGHTSTOWN



EAST WINDSOR

# HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

MAY-JUNE 1996

## THE BLIZZARD REALLY HELD US UP

by Richard Hutchinson

The recent blizzard really caused us problems in completing our everyday routines. It was the biggest snow storm to have occurred in this section of the country in many, many years. Luckily, it hit over a weekend. It began on Sunday morning and continued until late Monday afternoon, practically isolating Hightstown. We were stuck in our homes for several days. Many of us had to fight the door just to open it and get out of the house. In some places, the snow drifts were eight feet high. Shoveling away the snow in order to move about once we got out of the house was probably the most strenuous task that

*Cont. on page 4*



*Passengers awaiting the train at Hightstown Station.*

## A HIGHTSTONIAN'S WESTERN TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

In 1857, the June 13th issue of the *Hightstown Excelsior*, carried the following letter which may have been from a relative of the Editor, Charles M. Norton, as it was simply signed "N".

WESTERN CORRESPONDENCE - LEBANON, OHIO - MAY 25, 1857

"After parting with you at the Station, on Monday morning, five days' travel with my face to the westward brought me to this beautiful village, where I was landed on Friday evening. It need not have taken so long a time to come here, but being in no great hurry, I concluded to spend a longer time on the road and see and learn more; the route being a new one to me.

Passing over the Camden and Amboy Railroad to Philadelphia, I left the latter in the afternoon. I cannot brag of any pleasure of the trip from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, being run from half past four P.M. to half past seven A.M. the next day. In crossing the mountains in the night, it was cold, dark and stormy, and the cars being crammed full, I could not get a very comfortable seat. I had a mind to stay in Philadelphia over night and start at half past seven, next morning, but this would have brought me in Pittsburgh at midnight. On the whole I believe that the best time to leave Philadelphia is in the 11 P.M. Express - by doing so you cross the mountains in the day time, having the advantage of some splendid scenery, and likewise arrive in Pittsburgh by daylight, which to a stranger is preferable. Also, if you have a through railroad ticket, you are passed by

*Cont. on page 2*



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### MAY

6 Business Meeting, 7:30 P.M. (Ely House)

15 Annual Meeting

#### JUNE

No meeting will be held in June unless it is necessary.

## WESTERN TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

the omnibuses at the points of railroad connection without care of baggage or charge. On Tuesday morning I took passage on a first class Ohio river steamerboat for Cincinnati. We did not leave, however, until the next day in consequence of the storm. The passengers and freight were mostly bound for the "Far West" - from Leavenworth City, Kansas, to St. Paul, Minnesota, being Free State settlers.

The expense of traveling by river is about the same as by railroad, but after riding all day and night in a cramped car, and arriving tired and sleepy; then the easy cabin berth, the pleasant promenade deck and most of all the well-spread table; do not leave so bad an impression on the mind. But the pleasures of a boat trip do not end with these exactly, for we glide along the "banks of the pleasant Ohio," nearly five hundred miles. The appearance of this panorama of nature was not what I anticipated, for instead of the "sweet fields beyond the swelling flood, all dressed in living green," there was much of the [page torn - word missing] on both sides, wild mountain scenery [page torn - word missing] with ghastly rocks and scraggy [page torn - word missing] This mountain scenery never wholly disappears, though oft times it recedes a mile or two from the river- [page creased - line missing] you probably might expect to [word missing] pleasant towns and dwellings, and not be mistaken, and those given to a romantic "home beside the hills," could certainly suit themselves along here. I was pointed to a place of this kind selected by some European nobleman, great in sentimental writings, and where, it was told me, nearly half the novels flooding the country have been written ... Beyond these hills or mountains lining the river, I am told there is generally a fine country.

The river, for all I can see, is as wide at Pittsburgh as it is at Cincinnati, and exceedingly uniform in width all the way. The waters are so smooth a sheet that they never beat over the deck of the steamer except when passing another of the same craft; then the waves rising eight inches flow two inches too high for the sides of our vessel, being loaded within six inches of the water; but as the deck is tight, stillwater sets us all right again. Perhaps you may form a strange opinion of our

craft. Well, to a Jerseyman it is a queer one, though like nearly all the rest of them. Don't be surprised when I tell you our steamer is 150 feet or more in length, with about 40 feet beam, containing four steam engines with paddlewheels behind, and often runs over sandbars where the water would not run in the tops of a man's boots if he should jump in - at least so the engineer told me. Now the water is "high," by which I suppose we draw four or five feet - getting aground only once. Being "grounded," by the way, is interesting to the uninitiated - to see how confidently the captain goes to work to get her off - doesn't wait for high water, not he. Two pieces of timber about thirty feet long by about one foot in diameter, are continually suspended, one on each side of the vessel; these are quietly let down beside the vessel then a tackle runs from the tops of the logs to large rings on the sides of the vessel ... a special engine of about ten horse power - then the logs sink in the sand a little, next the steamer rises clear of the sand and by the set of the logs it swings off and away we go again. This may account for the anecdote of the captain who said he thought that he had the smartest boat on the river and could run with an inch of water, but in a little time one was put on that it would run if the bed of the stream was a *little moist*. In times of low water, however, this kind of travel becomes tedious and uninteresting.

The passenger saloons on those river crafts are on the second deck, running nearly the whole length of the vessel, with state rooms fitted up in the neatest possible manner. The next deck above gives a splendid view, and here I passed much of my time. I am not satisfied to leave this subject until I speak of the boatsmen, from the captain down to the waiters. Never have I seen such a set of men for good nature, and who endeavor to render passengers comfortable and contented. You are at perfect liberty to go anywhere on the boat - set as you please, bespatter the newly blackened stoves with tobacco juice, unmindful of the regimental of spittoons surrounding them, or commit almost any breach of property without a word or a frown. "No admittance" can't be found aboard, and if the engineer wants to go about the engine, he goes among the curious throng that usurp his place as if he was

the intruder. Each state room is fitted with two berths, and I did not know until night, that I should have company. So you can judge of our unusual surprise, when on retiring, I found a fellow Jerseyman from Trenton, a brother of Mr. Eldridge of Hightstown. Being mutually acquainted with the same places and persons our chance meeting was very pleasant. He, like many others, is for the west to put out money. Some he has left in Ohio, at 19 per cent, and expects to get 30 per cent, for the rest he can spare in Minnesota.

The first night we lay at the wharf in Pittsburgh. The second night the Rev. Mr. Perkins and a lady from Allentown, N.J., were aboard without a room. I gave them mine and slept on a mattress on the floor of the saloon. He thanked me so kindly and heartily, that I gave him the room again the next night, taking my mattress, and felt quite as well as if I had enjoyed the room myself. Altogether my ride down the river was very pleasant.

Lebanon, which is a county seat, is very pleasantly located in rich and highly improved country. The village is about three times as large as Hightstown, and the buildings are, almost without exception, commodious; many truly elegant, forcibly reminding me of the residences along Staten Island.

I shall leave here in a few days, and if I see anything noteworthy I may trouble you again, but for the present, adieu." [Signed - "N"] ♦

## THE LAW OF THE LAND IN 1684

by Richard Hutchinson

The early settlers coming into New Jersey had to overcome many trials and tribulations when faced with their everyday existence in this wilderness. In what later became Monmouth County, many of them coming from Rhode Island and the other colonies, began to establish a foothold in the area of what is now known as Shrewsbury and Middletown, through their trading with, and buying land from, the native Americans. After establishing homes, a little "community" began to take

shape. They then created their Court system to rule based upon the laws which they brought with them and under which they lived their everyday lives. This early Court of Sessions was held on a quarterly basis for two days.

In reading some of the early court records, it would appear that everyone was suing everyone else primarily due to the limited number of people in these early communities. They sued for various things such as debt, allowing swine to run free, theft, and failure to follow the common law. Because of the small number of people in these communities, it was not unusual for the jurors of the Court on any one day to literally find themselves as defendants the next. Take the example of juror John Slocum, who had been a previous juror, but who on the 25th of June 1684, found himself suddenly on the other side of the docket in this early Court of Sessions, after the Court called one Mary Ong before it. The Court calls Mary Ong:

"Mary Ong single woman being questioned by the Court concerning her having a child, and being examined who was the father of the said child and her engagement given her did declare & affirm that John Slocum was the father of the sd. Child upon which she was delivered in to the Constable's hands & a letter sent from the Court to John Slocum requesting his appearance at Court too morrow morning at eight a clock."

On the 26th, Mary Ong was again brought before the Court: "Mary Ong being again called and examined who was the father of her [child], she againe declared John Slocum to be the father of it."

"John Slocum being called & examined concerning the same strongly denied it and delivered a testimony from the mid-wife & some other women yt were at ye woman's travill which the cause was delivered to ye jury."

The Court then asked for the verdict in which the jurors stated: "Wee Jurors find John Slocum Guilty of ye fact laid to his charge by Mary Ong ... That John Slocum shall pay to Isaac Ong in consideration of the charge & trouble he was at with his Daughter & her child the sum of ... [50 shillings & 10 shillings for Court costs to be paid by tomorrow] ... and to

give sufficient security to be of the good behav' for six months ... or to goe to the comon Goale ... for the space of ten weeks."

The jury continued with its verdict: "Mary Ong shall be had from this place to ye whipping place, and there to be stripped downe to the waist and to receive five lashes on the bare back with a Rod or whip and to give sufficient security to be of the good behavior for six months ... or to goe to the common Goale, there to remain for the space of ten weeks."

There was no dely or appeal when the Court pronounced its sentence and on Thursday, the 26th of June 1684, John Slocum paid to Isaac Ong 50 shillings, plus the Court costs, and then gave sufficient Bond to stay out of the Goale. Meanwhile, the Court's record indicated that Mary Ong received "her five lashes on the bare back & Isaac Ong became bound" for her good behavior.

On March 24th 1685, John Slocum was again appointed a juror and later gave evidence where he was further identified as Capt. John Slocum. ♦

## POMPEY UPDIKE UPDATE!

by Richard Hutchinson

While doing some research for a client, I found another reference apparently to the Afro-American, named Pompey Updike, who along with his family, was featured in an article in our Jan-Feb 1996 issue.

In August 1827, Pompey Updike was baptised and received into the Hightstown Baptist Church. If this is our Pompey Updike, he would have been 24 years of age at the time of his baptism. Strengthening the position that this reference is to our Pompey, is the fact that he owned land here in East Windsor Township. At some time prior to 1840, Pompey moved to West Windsor Township. On the 23rd of November 1852, he and his wife sold the East Windsor Township property and were at that time described in the deed of sale as "Pompey Updike and Lucy his wife coloured of the township of West Windsor ..." ♦

### HIGHTSTOWN EAST WINDSOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

founded 1971

Serving Hightstown Borough  
and East Windsor Township  
609-371-9580

#### Officers for 1995-96

- Dr. Edgar Thomas ..... President  
448-3533
- Joel Larson ..... Vice-President
- Shirley Olsen ..... Recording Secretary
- Lois Groendyke ..... Corres Secretary
- Frank Brennan, Jr. .... Treasurer

#### Committee Chairs

- Frank Brennan, Jr. .... Finance  
448-2527
- Shirley Olsen ..... Grounds  
448-8388
- Bernard Bush ..... Historic Preservation  
443-8654
- Robert Craig ..... Library  
584-1806
- Richard Hutchinson ..... Membership  
448-4252
- Richard Hutchinson ..... Newsletter  
448-4252
- Edgar Thomas ..... Program  
448-3533
- David Martin ..... Publications  
448-6355
- Bud Perrine ..... Property  
448-1376
- Warren Olsen ..... Train Station  
448-8388
- George Dubell ..... Museum  
448-2285

Typeset by Cori Hutchinson Quinlan  
Quinlan Processing 609-888-4028



Cont. from page 1

many of us have undertaken in many years. All attempts at travel around this area of New Jersey were virtually impossible for several days. And, there was really nothing anyone could do other than to slowly dig ourselves, and our neighbors, out from under the blanket of snow.

This storm was generally considered to be the worst in this section of New Jersey since the blizzard of 1888. The high winds caused the drifts to be so high that the trains were not able to come into Hightstown until Tuesday afternoon. The wires of the Hightstown Electric Company were down in many sections of the town by early Sunday night. Superintendent Wetherill and his men were on the job trying to repair the system and have the lights turned back on, as soon as possible, to those sections without power. Many locations in various sections of the town had to wait a little longer until the repairs could be made. Repairs on both the telegraph and telephone lines moved forward at a snail's pace but communications with the outside world was partially restored through the telephone. It took nearly a week before the telegraph service was back in full operation.

Oh, yeah. I forgot to tell you that I have been talking about the blizzard of March 3rd, 1914; not the little snow storm we had this past January. The following storm details were reported in the *Hightstown Gazette*:

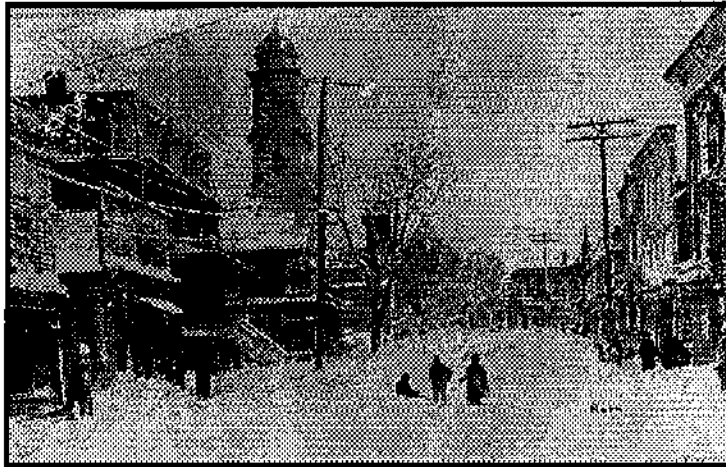
"The country roads were banked high with snow. One party, travelling from Hightstown to Allentown, reported twenty-one men shovelling snow to clear the road between here and Eiler's Corner. Progress was very slow in travelling over these roads, it being impossible to proceed faster than a mile an hour on an average.

One of the largest snow drifts in this section was near the P.R.R. water tower, at the woodsheds. This big drift of snow occurred beside a line of freight cars standing on a siding. After a cut had been made

## THE BLIZZARD

through the snow on the main track, the banks, on either side, were in many places about eight feet high, and extended for a quarter of a mile.

Crews from Bordentown and South Amboy were at work all day Tuesday, clearing the snow from the tracks. They were assisted here by the local crew. A large snow plow, to which were attached five locomotives, was used to cut through the big banks.



*Main Street, Hightstown, New Jersey*

Train No. 486, due to leave at 6:40, for Jersey City, conductor H. G. Van Marter, engineer Reed, made a start Monday afternoon, but it was impossible to proceed more than half a mile from the station. Tuesday morning, Van Marter's train left at 10:50. He arrived back here Tuesday night, at 8:45, having made the run to Jersey City. The train brought in the first mail since Saturday night. The train had two carloads of snow shovellers, which were taken to Camden. The return to Hightstown, from Camden, was made at about 11 o'clock Tuesday night. H.M. Van Nest took a train out at 4 o'clock, Tuesday afternoon. This train, running as the one which is due here at 6:03 p.m., came in at 6:44, after making a run to Jamesburg, Monmouth Junction and Helmetta. Edward Caine was the engineer.

Although the tracks were well cleared over this division, Wednesday, trains were running behind on account of the interrupted telegraph service. They are now running again close to scheduled time.

Several Hightstown persons were among the fifty passengers on the train, due here from Philadelphia Sunday afternoon at 5:33, which was tied up at Windsor until 11 p.m.; after proceeding slowly until about halfway to Windsor station. About 20 telegraph poles which had been blown down, had been removed from the track during the progress of the train. The water supply in the boiler of the engine gave out and snow was used until the train was pulled onto the siding at Windsor.

The passengers were accommodated at the hotel at Windsor. The food supply was getting quite low, Monday night, when an employee, John Beaver, walked from the hotel to Hightstown and back taking a supply of cakes, bread and rolls, which he obtained from Schaffer's bakery. Conductor Duncan of New York was in charge of the train. The passengers were a good natured lot and everyone seemed to try to make the best of the unusual experience.

Monday afternoon, a train from Trenton took the passengers on to their destination, this train arrived here about 2:30 ... Later two extra locomotives brought the train through.

A number of green houses in this vicinity were damaged by the snow storm this week. One of Charles J. Roszel's houses ... contained 7000 cabbage plants and many violets ... A carnation house at Joseph Johnson's ... One of Wilson Peer's violet houses, near Etra, ... A few glasses in the roof of one of Tracey Norton's houses were broken.

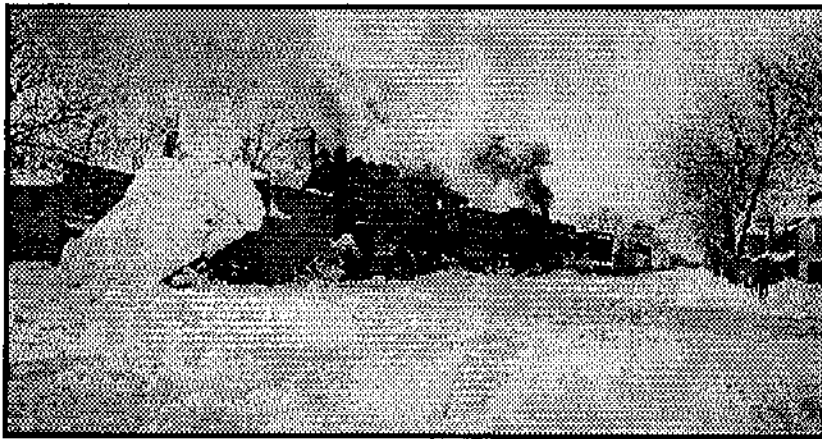
Food supplies have been in such demand that there is still a shortage. Owing to non-arrival of trains, the local bakery was the only source of supply for bread. On Wednesday they ceased baking as they ran out of fuel oil. The supply of kerosene oil was exhausted and the Standard Oil Company is not expected to make further deliveries until next week.

Meat markets ran out of meats. Deliveries of coal were not made until Tues-

day. Orders which have been placed for coal have only been partially filled. The milk men were not able to make deliveries until Tuesday morning and afternoon. Some places of business were not opened on Monday. In some instances no efforts were made to transact business. Many persons were compelled to stay at home and shovel snow. The weather moderated Tuesday night and on Wednesday the sidewalks about town were generally well cleaned. The snow commenced to melt fast and without freezing weather most of the snow will have disappeared by the end of this week.

## U.T. TRAIN LOST

The U.T. train which left here, over the Pemberton road, Sunday evening at 5:20, the scheduled time, has not at this writing, been located by anyone here. Those on the train were: Oscar Hopkins, baggage master; John Compton, engineer; Joseph Dubell, fireman, and Albert Powell, an engineer, who went as a passenger. Five men walked from here to Sharon Wednesday. They could not learn anything definite, except that the train arrived at Sharon, Sunday afternoon, 12 minutes late, and that it had passed the station at Davis. Two of the party who walked, proceeded on toward New Egypt and the others came back here.



*A huge snowplow clears the tracks at Hightstown.*

## PASSENGERS' EXPERIENCE IN SNOW STORM

Miss Florence Schoen, L.W. Pullen, William Skyrn, F.V. Jemison, Kenneth Bailey and LeRoy Archbold, the latter two students at Peddie, were passengers from Hightstown on train No. 689, which left Jersey City, Sunday afternoon, at 4:47. This train had great difficulty in reaching its destination, and its passengers suffered much inconvenience; although, as one of the Hightstown party stated, the railroad company was in no way to blame and handled the situation in the best way possible.

There were sixty passengers on the train, among whom were also Mr. and Mrs. Kirkpatrick of Jamesburg, and J.C. Kalleen, superintendent of the Reform School for Boys at Jamesburg. The conductor of the train was Daniel Blizzard; engineer, Jesse Quigler.

Between New York and South Amboy much difficulty incident to the blizzard was experienced. During this interval, 60 telegraph poles were removed from the track by a wreck crew on train running ahead of the passenger train. Nearly all of the poles along the line were down and about half of them were across the tracks.

The train arrived at Perth Amboy at 9:30 p.m., and on signal proceeded to South Amboy, but was later halted in the middle of the Raritan River bridge, between Perth Amboy and South Amboy. Here, with the wind blowing at 90 miles an hour and

tracks, having remained on the bridge 5 1-2 hours.

At 9 a.m. Monday morning the train was pulled out of South Amboy by four locomotives, with fifty men shoveling the snow from the tracks ahead. The drifts along the line were from 8 to 15 feet deep, and as the tracks had to be cleared of this amount of snow before the train could proceed, the progress was very slow. Another hinderance to progress of the train was the great mass of wires which had been blown across the tracks from the telegraph poles.

## SENSELESS IN SNOW

Great suffering was caused by the snow storm in the Hopewell section. Louis Savage, proprietor of a general store at Mount Rose, accompanied by his wife, left their home Sunday in a sleigh to drive to Hopewell. After covering a mile and a half, the horse became exhausted in the drifts and the couple abandoned the sleigh to walk to Hopewell. They could make little progress in the blinding storm, and the man, wrapping his wife in a heavy driving robe, left her partially sheltered behind a corn crib while he went forward in search of help. He reached Hopewell almost exhausted and a party started out immediately to find Mrs. Savage. The searchers, blinded by the snow, became separated and were compelled to return. The husband organized another party and again took up the search at daybreak Monday. They found the woman a short distance from the corn crib and unconscious. Her hands and feet were frozen and she was suffering from exhaustion. She is in a serious condition." ♦

the temperature somewhat below freezing, the cold was intense. The men, who had taken off their overcoats and given them to the children to protect them from the cold, exercised by walking to keep warm. A quantity of food had been secured at Perth Amboy, where the men passengers bought out the bakery.

While on the bridge over the river, the high winds which were equal to a gale, drove the snow against the cars and through the crevices around the windows, this adding to the discomfort of the passengers. After making several unsuccessful attempts, the baggage master reached the South Amboy end of the bridge, and sent a signal for the train to proceed, and at 3 a.m., the train came into the Central

♦

## CELEBRATE HIGHTSTOWN!

A chance find at a local antique show started the ball rolling for Hightstown's 275<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration scheduled for the Memorial Day Weekend, May 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>. Hightstown residents Jerry & Jackie Hart happened upon four turn-of-the-century postcards featuring scenes of Hightstown, which included South Main Street, Wilson Hall at Peddie School, and the Ward Street Bridge. Curious about the actual age of the bridge, at one time known as the "Lover's Lane Bridge," the Harts discovered it was erected in 1896, making 1996 its centennial. At the time the bridge was built, by the New Jersey Iron & Steel Company, the lake was known as the "Hightstown Pond" and the school was called "The Peddie Institute."

Interested in history and active in the community, the Harts presented a proposal to both the Hightstown/East Windsor Historical Society and Borough Council encouraging the community to plan a celebration of this prominent Hightstown structure. This year also happens to be the 275<sup>th</sup> birthday of the town's founding. Council soon rallied behind these landmark dates and tapped the Memorial Day Weekend of 1996, for **CELEBRATE HIGHTSTOWN!**; the borough's 275<sup>th</sup> birthday festival.

On January 1, 1996, Mayor Scott Caster kicked off **CELEBRATE HIGHTSTOWN!**, officially sponsored by the borough, by presenting a special proclamation recognizing John and Mary Hight and the borough's 275<sup>th</sup> birthday. Mayor Caster also appointed Jackie Hart and Shirley Van Hise Olsen, a longtime Hightstown resident and HEW Historical Society secretary, as co-chairs of this special event.

Avid historians will recognize that **CELEBRATE HIGHTSTOWN!** is planned for a different month than when the town was actually founded. As the committee began its research, it discovered each of the community's significant dates occurred in different months. The town was founded in October, 1721, with the Borough being formed on 5 March 1853, and with the bridge being erected in July, 1896. Other significant dates for 1996 in Hightstown's history include the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Friday Club formed

in April, 1896; the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Hightstown VFW Post 5700 and Hightstown Memorial Library; the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of American Legion Post 148; and the HEW Historical Society joins the Delaware Raritan Girl Scout Council in celebrating 25 years. As a result, the committee decided on May 1996, as a compromise date whereupon the borough could celebrate all of the above with Memorial Day in grand style.

The steering committee has announced tentative plans for the three-day festival. Activities for Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, begin with the annual Children's Fishing Contest, sponsored by the Greater Hightstown/East Windsor Improvement Project. The contest will be held at Peddie Lake from 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon. Following the Fishing Contest, the Borough of Hightstown will sponsor the Ward Street Fest, which will occur directly on Ward Street, between Main Street and Maxwell Avenue, from 12 noon until 4:00 p.m. Activities include a bridge rededication ceremony, boating on the lake, food and information booths, a vintage clothing fashion show, children's games and events, antique cars, musical performances, and other demonstrations. Also included will be school project displays from the students of both the East Windsor Regional School District and The Peddie School. Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, will feature a 5K Run sponsored by the East Windsor/Hightstown Chamber of Commerce. It will begin at 10:00 a.m. and offer prize money for first, second, and third place finishes. And, the Anniversary Memorial Day Parade, also sponsored by the Borough and coordinated with local veterans groups, will be held on Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. This year the parade will include numerous floats, marching groups, and walking units comprised of many citizens and organizations in the Hightstown and East Windsor communities.

The planning committee has representatives from all segments of Hightstown and East Windsor, including new and longtime residents, school and borough officials, and those simply interested in preserving the history of this area. In addition to Mrs. Hart and Mrs. Olsen, steering committee members and their areas of responsibility include: Skip Cox (Bridge

Rededication), Jennie Lindbloom (Children's Fest Activities), Eileen Stys (Fest Booths), Anne Willis (Vintage Clothing Fashion Show), Cathy Simmons (GEWHIP Fishing Contest), and Amy Aughenbaugh (Memorial Day Parade). Other active steering committee members are Viki Vercelletto, Warren Olsen, Chris & Cappy Stults, Annie Blake, Peg Sabo, Ken Boardman, and Scott Caster.

The steering committee is eager to collect anecdotes, as well as old pictures, relating to the lake, bridge, buildings and homes, special events, Peddie Institute, our community's development, and most importantly, our early citizens. These items are planned for insertion into news articles, displays, and special supplements planned by the *Hightstown Gazette* and *Windsor Hights Herald*. As an example, a local resident recently found a copy of a July 17, 1896, *Hightstown Gazette*, which contained an article about the building of the bridge. The newspaper stated the New Jersey Iron & Steel Company erected a "superstructure" bridge over the "Hightstown Pond" at a cost of \$10,000. Another resident recalled cutting blocks of ice from the frozen lake with her father and taking music lessons in the old Wilson Hall on Peddie's campus. Discoveries such as these, as well as personal memories and stories passed down through the years, will add a unique touch and bring personal significance to this event.

Every piece of the puzzle helps our town understand its heritage more clearly. No story is too insignificant to share, no piece of vintage clothing is too old to display, and no contribution is too small to make.

If any reader would like to share special memories, volunteer time, or participate as an individual, family, or organization; feel free to call **CELEBRATE HIGHTSTOWN!** co-chairs, Jackie Hart (371-1353) or Shirley Olsen (448-8388). Help us **CELEBRATE HIGHTSTOWN!** ♦



## Society Donations

### TWO DRAWINGS OF HIGHTSTOWN HISTORY DONATED TO SOCIETY

During our February meeting, Dr. Edgar Thomas exhibited to the members present, two framed drawings having historical significance within our community, which were presented to the Society by Miss Josephine Dawes.

The first item was a lithograph of a drawing completed by artist John Collins while at the scene of an accident on the Camden & Amboy Railroad, near Burlington, New Jersey, on the 29th of August in 1855, in which 21 persons were killed and 75 "wounded".

The second item was an 1854 pencil drawing, in a period gold leaf frame, depicting the First Baptist Church of Hightstown. The drawing was done by a local artist, James Marlatt. This fine drawing shows the architecture of the church, the associated buildings, and the slender steeple spire of the church as it looked in the past when it stood overlooking our community.

The Society also received for its genealogy collections, *The History of the Joseph Van Doren Davison Family*, from Mr. Herbert Davison of Meadow Lakes. We also received a donation of the genealogies of New Jersey Applegate families from the work of Howard Applegate of Canutillo, Texas. Both items will be valued additions to our library.

**Editor's Note** - The society is always interested in receiving local materials of historical value. ♦

## WILLIAM STULTS INN, CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY

by Richard Hutchinson

While working in our manuscript collection, I found an 1870 land survey in the Joseph J. Ely collection, showing the south side of Scott Avenue and North Main Street, in Cranbury, New Jersey. On the survey, the location of a couple of buildings are depicted and identified; one as the William Stults Inn. The little building on the survey was identified with the words "tavern" and "Wm. Stults Inn" and shows it as standing at the present location of 10 North Main Street, Cranbury, New Jersey. A photocopy of the survey was made and given to Peter Wise of the Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society. It appears that the exact location of this inn had not been identified prior to this document coming to light from our collection.

The William Stults Inn has some significance for Cranbury residents. On March 7, 1872, Cranbury Township was created from parts of both South Brunswick Township and Monroe Township. It was at the William Stults Inn where the first Cranbury Township Committee held their early township meetings. ♦

**Join today,  
become a member!**

**Individual  
Membership  
\$15.00\***

**Family  
Membership  
\$20.00\***

Individual Membership     Family Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail the completed application, along with a check made payable to the Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society to:

Membership Committee  
Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society  
164 North Main Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520

\*For first class delivery, please add \$1.00 to subscription price.

## HUMOROUS READING

From time to time, you find some humorous stories published in the early local papers such as the following items which appeared in the July 16, 1857 edition of the *Hightstown Excelsior*:

### FORBIDDEN KISSING

The *Sussex Herald* says it is rumored that a certain person who had been bailed out of Morris County Jail, upon his avowal of innocence of the charge of kissing a woman illegally, has recently been shot in Sparta for a similar offense. His wounds are not dangerous, but have doubtless made him *smart* enough to avoid such another scrape.

### ALIVE IN THE COFFIN

At intervals we learn from our exchanges, that indecent if not unfeeling

taste has been manifested in the burial of the dead. A remarkable case in point has occurred in Hamilton county, Ohio, where one Wat Eckman, a wealthy man, was taken violently ill on the morning of the 15th, and died, apparently, on the afternoon of the same day. The very next morning the body was coffined and jolted in a market wagon to a church, where a funeral service was preached. The choir was about singing the last hymn, when they were interrupted by loud sounds and kicks going on inside the coffin. Great consternation prevailed among the congregation, and a stampede was made for the door. The clergyman came down from the pulpit, ordered the coffin to be opened, which was speedily done, when it was found that the supposed deceased was not only alive but kicking, and struggling manfully to free himself from his - to him mysterious confinement. The blood was flowing freely from his mouth and nose, but in a very few minutes he was

able to speak. At last accounts, he was able to walk about his room.

### A NOVEL APPROACH TO A STICKY PROBLEM

A lady up town cleared out her house of flies by putting honey on her husband's whiskers when he was asleep. The flies stuck fast, and when he went out of the house he carried them off with him.♦

### Extra, Extra!!



On April 16, 1996 we were notified by the National Genealogical Society that our newsletter, *Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society News*, won fourth place in the National Newsletter Competition.

Further details will follow in the next edition of our award-winning newsletter, September-October 1996.

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

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Hightstown,  
New Jersey  
Permit No. 11