



# HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2000

## The Rest Of The Story

by Richard Hutchinson

The following is the "final" chapter in the lives of those subjects who were associated, either as the accused or as the accuser, in Hightstown's Central Bank scandal in the 1850s - 1860s. None of those accused in the scandal were ever tried in that case as all had their cases dismissed due to a lack of prosecution over a 10 year period. And, throughout, that entire episode in newspaper reporting and criminal trial papers, Thomas Appleget was always referred to as Thomas Applegate.

James M. Cubberley was the only person to testify on behalf of the bank

against the accused due to the deaths of other principals. Cubberley, who died in 1889, owned and lived in Ely house, which is now the home of the Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society and the Sara Hutchinson West Educational Center.

14 Feb 1889 - " On Tuesday morning, Mr. James M. Cubberley died at his residence on Main street, and thus closed a life that has been fully identified with the progress and business of Hightstown. He had entered his seventy-first year, and his death resulted from paralysis, with which he was first stricken just a year ago. Mr.

Cubberley began a most active business life as a clerk for the late John P. Hutchinson when a mere lad, and was identified with the mercantile business in this place, in firms and alone, about 30 years. He then became cashier of the Hightstown Bank, having been a director previously, and for another thirty years has been in official connection with our financial institutions, holding the position of director of Cranbury National Bank at the time of his death.

Although a very quiet man, his conservatism and un-impeached integ-

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## The Basket Maker

The last of a dying breed passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 1894 in Etra, New Jersey. His craft being replaced by the mechanical inventions of the time. He was Dey Stults and his craft was basket making. He was the area's basket maker and here is how the *Hightstown Gazette* reported on his passing in the paper of 29 November 1894.

The basket maker sitting in front of his shop, or within, among the material and products of his craft, has been a familiar sight to the people of Milford (Etra) and to the traveler riding its single street for half a century past. In later years few ever thought of the man and the village apart; the one suggested the other; the man by his handicraft connected with a fading past, and

the village aloof from the rails and wires of the hurrying world.

Not many men made fewer complainings or looked forward more hopefully. At the end he made a stout fight for life, ignoring pain, talking cheerfully with the neighbors who dropped in to see him, inquiring now and then when the scenes became a little confused. "How far along are we now?" At the very last he dropped out of the present life as gently as a child falls asleep. If prayers were needed for the dead, the whole village would offer them for the passing soul of the old basket maker.

Dey Stults, one of the oldest and best known residents of this section,

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### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### NOVEMBER

- 6 Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Sara Hutchinson West Educational Center

#### DECEMBER

- 3 Christmas Tea, 1-4:00 p.m., Ely House
- 4 Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Sara Hutchinson West Educational Center

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rity were continually leading him into positions of trust and responsibility, and as Mayor and Councilman, as well as in lesser offices, he has frequently given good service to the Borough, and as Committeeman and Treasurer has proved his value to the township. He was a true friend to Temperance and was at the head of the first 'Reform' ticket in the Borough election in 1874. There has not lived in this community a man who had more entirely the confidence of all who were thrown in business relations with him. As one who knew him well said, 'Every dollar that James M. Cubberley had was white.' He was indeed an honest man. He was also kind and benevolent, and manifested a mild and amiable disposition in the family and social circle which made him truly beloved.

He married early in life Miss Hannah Chamberlin, who, with their only child, Mrs. Wm. S. Jemison, survives to mourn a good husband and kind father. Mr. Cubberley was one of the finest friends and supporters of the Baptist Church and his funeral tomorrow will bring together a large circle of sympathizing friends. The services will be held at the church at 12 o'clock. The casket will only be opened at the house."

[**Editor's Note** - From gravestone inscriptions and newspaper accounts, the following information comes to light: James M. Cubberley, born 6 Jan 1818, married Hannah M. Chamberlin, daughter of Joseph Chamberlin, born 28 Oct 1825 and died 5 Mar 1906. They had several children, who didn't survive. - Addison (1853-1854), Ella (1855-1857), James (no dates).

James M. Cubberley died at Ely House.

According to newspaper wedding announcements "Miss M.A.

Cubberley", was the only surviving child, and she married Wm. S. Jemison, at what is now known as Ely House, on 6 April 1887. Yet, we subsequently find "Anna M. Cubberley (with her name spelled as Cubberly on her gravestone), born April 4, 1861, as the only daughter of James M. and Hannah", and it was reported that she married to Elmer J. Rogers on 4 June 1895. Her marriage to Rogers is further confirmed as she is identified on her gravestone as "Anna Cubberly Rogers - 1861-1946" and is one of six persons buried in the James Cubberley plot at Cedar Hill Cemetery.

So, the question remains; what happened to Wm. S. Jemison? Well, it took a while but that question was answered in September 1892, when the town was "alive" with rumors regarding his mysterious disappearance from the town and his business. But, that is another story that will have to wait till another time.]

**10 Oct 1889** - "Joseph S. Ely, Esq., died at his residence near this place, on Friday last, aged 76 years. He was formerly a prominent man in business here, and was the teller of the first bank of this place. For thirty years he has carried on the farming business, but of late years has been very feeble. He leaves two children, Mr. H. Judson Ely, who resides on the farm, and Mrs. Helen A., wife of J.P. Hopping, Esq., of Middletown. The funeral services at the house on Monday were attended by a large concourse of relatives and neighbors."

**14 June 1888** - "Thomas Appleget - On Monday night, June 11<sup>th</sup>, Thomas Appleget, one of the best known citizens of this borough, closed a good life in a calm and peaceful death. He was born in Old Church, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1816, and was therefore in his seventy-second year. His parents were Thomas and Sarah Appleget, the lat-

## HIGHTSTOWN EAST WINDSOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hightstown, New Jersey  
founded 1971

609-371-9580

**To educate, while preserving for  
future generations, our people and  
our community's history.**

Editor, Richard S. Hutchinson

### Officers for 2000-2001

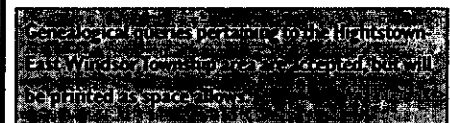
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Typeset by Cori Hutchinson Quinlan  
Quinlan Processing 609-888-4028

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ter living to be over a hundred years old. Of their children the only survivor now is Anthony Appleget, who is 86 years old. The subject of this notice never married, a fact that was always a matter of surprise as he was even up to an advanced age possessed of a rare social nature and courteous demeanor. He first embarked in the mercantile business in South Amboy, and afterward in Hightstown, and was the first Cashier of the Central Bank. His connection with that institution closed at the time of its serious trouble in 1857, but with no suspicion of his responsibility for that calamity. He afterward re-engaged in the store business but for

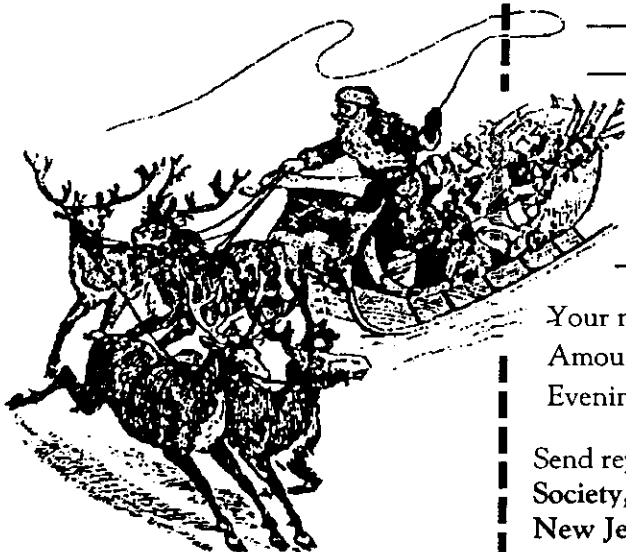
the past eighteen years has lived a quiet and retired life. He never took an active part in politics, but no man held a firmer devotion to or deeper interest in the welfare of the Republican party than he. He was an Ancient Odd Fellow, and for a long term of years was treasurer of Hightstown Lodge of the Masonic Order. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1858, he united with the Hightstown Presbyterian Church, and has long been one of its most active trustees, contributing liberally to the support of the Church and its institutions. He has literally grown up with the place and his familiar form, one of the trademarks of the town, will be sincerely missed

by many who have prized his companionship...He fought a good fight and triumphed to the end. Today his pastor will conduct the funeral services in the Hightstown church and he will be laid to rest with his parents in the old church yard at Cranbury."

[Editor's Note] - Jacob Stults recalled Appleget as a friend and stated that in 1849: "He was then engaged in the dry goods and grocery business with his brother, at the stand more recently occupied by the late Alfred Perrine. The brother died soon after my return to Hightstown, and after his death the business was conducted for



# The Holiday Greeting Card



Each year at this time, the Society sponsors a Holiday Greeting Card, which is one of the ways we hope to spread a little good cheer during the holidays.

To cover our costs and to raise needed revenue for the Society, we ask our subscribers to contribute a small amount for their names to be inscribed on the card.

The monies received for the Greeting Card help in meeting our regular expenses.

Please contribute \$12 for an individual name and \$15 for a family. Checks may be made payable to H.E.W.H.S.

To have your name(s) added to the Holiday greeting card, please list your names (as you would like them to appear) on the form below.

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Your name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Evening phone \_\_\_\_\_

Send replies by December 1st to **Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society, c/o Dr. Harold C. Cox, Jr., 183 E. Ward Street, Hightstown, New Jersey 08520.** Please be sure to include your full return address and write "Holiday Card" on the envelope.

## The Basket Maker

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died on Tuesday at his residence at Etra. Death was due to general disability and old age. Mr. Stults was seventy-five years of age and was a basket-maker by trade. He was brother of Rev. E.D. Stults, of Manasquan; Frederick I. Stults, railroad foreman, and Mrs. Harriet Applegate of South Amboy, and Mrs. Sarah Clayton, of Brooklyn. The funeral will be held tomorrow (Friday) at 12 o'clock at the residence of W.W. Swett, near Etra.

### Society's House Tour a Success

The Society wishes to thank everyone who contributed their time and effort in making the Society's House Tour a successful and fun event. So much credit goes to the homeowner's who graciously opened their homes to the public. Lynn Wallace, chair of the tour, should be congratulated in organizing and enlisting so many people from the Society and the community to make this a great event. The Society made over \$5,000.

Many thanks go to Frances and Michael Pane, who opened their home, and with their committee, prepared a delicious supper for all of the tour workers. The Society is grateful in having so many friends and local businesses, dedicated in making this biannual event such a credit to our community.

## "Christmas Tea" at Ely House

The Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society will hold its annual "Christmas Tea", at the Ely House, on Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 1- 4 PM. All members and the public are invited to join us for a pleasant afternoon of good conversation, food, and entertainment.

Guests will be greeted on the front porch of Ely House, by a brass ensemble, "The Certain Sound", composed of musicians Dr. Edgar C. Thomas, Jr., Mrs. Pat Bohrs, Ed Szczepanik, and Roger Suttmeier. Other highlights of the afternoon will be "The Madrigals", local a choral group, led by the Rev. Fred Doscher of the First Presbyterian Church. A local Brownies troop has agreed to decorate our Christmas tree, and members of the Rocky Brook Garden Club will be decorating the Ely House and the Sara Hutchinson West Educational Center for the holiday. Ladies from the historical society dressed in period costumes will be serving delicious homemade Christmas cookies and hot apple cider to add to the holiday celebration.

We hope to see you all. If for some reason you can't make it to the festivities, we wish you all Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

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

