



HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

MAY - JUNE 2001

THE ORIGINS OF THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF HIGHTSTOWN

by Richard S. Hutchinson

In the early 1990's, I had the good fortune to purchase a book, "Century of Universalism in Philadelphia and New York with Sketches of its History in Reading, Hightstown, Brooklyn, and Elsewhere," by Abel C. Thomas (1872), which turned out to be the personal copy of Joseph J. Ely, Esq. Throughout the book, in his own hand, Ely made many notations in pencil among its pages concerning Bible selections, notations of his being at certain meetings, reminiscences made to him by others within the community, newspaper clippings, etc. Also, within the book was a personal letter to him and a published letter of his, dated 11 April 1835 and he signed his name in ink inside the cover.

This book not only gives us a glimpse of the struggle of Universalist Church to establish itself within our community in the late 1700s but, more importantly in my view, it gives us an inside perspective of some of the people within our community who were involved in that struggle, what our community looked like, what the attitudes of the people were, and other interesting insights into the people and the Universalist Church within our community.

Here are some of those insights:

"Relly's hymn book, reprinted in Burlington, N.J., in 1776, has an appended list of subscribers. Among these I find Michael Mount of Imlaystown set down for nine copies, Peter Imlay and Barzello Grover of the same place for two copies each, Joseph Lawrence of Allentown for three copies, and Dr. Hezekiah Stites and Benjamin Ward, both of Cranberry, for two copies each...In a list of subscribers to...a Universalist periodical.. Commenced in New York in 1793, I find the name of Captain William Barton of Hidestown. Also the ... names [of others] at points distant...In the front part of a copy of the *Everlasting Gospel*, Philadelphia edition of 1807, is the autograph of Daniel Johnes, May 20, 1813, in a bold, beautiful hand, written with his own blood. On the next leaf, dated 1819, appears the same autograph, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, also written in his own blood — these being the sign-manual, bright and clear this day, of the

earliest avowed Universalist, residing in Hightstown or vicinity, of whom any of the present generation has knowledge. If, however, we include the New Egypt section, we must except Alice Brown, converted in 1784, died in 1810. Also, Robert Lawrence, who preached or exhorted in 1800 and later, and died in 1834. Even the latter cannot be considered an exception, if the Daniel Johnes of whom I write, born in 1741, was the Daniel Jones of Middlesex, set down in the list of subscribers aforesaid, in 1793.

An old Welsh Bible in possession of Bergen Johnes, and another book in possession of John C. Ward, both once belonging to the ancient believer, have marginal commentaries ... [that attest to the glowing earnestness with which the owner held the doctrine of Universal Restitution]. Richard Norton's earliest married life was on a farm adjoining the premises of Daniel Johnes. In the close intimacy which ensued, the old man, full of light and love, often entangled his young neighbor in controversy, and the latter set himself diligently at work to convert the former. It was a pity, he thought, that so good a man as *Uncle Daniel* should be in gross 'delusion.' — How long he was about it, does not appear, but the conversion went the other way!

July 5, 1823, Daniel Johnes died ... in the eighty-first year of his age, leaving only his son, Samuel C. Johnes, and Richard Norton as the representatives of

Continued on page 2

MAY - JUNE 2001



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY

- 7 Business Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Sara Hutchinson West Educational Center
- 17 Program - East Windsor Regional School Students, 7:30 p.m., Meadow Lakes

JUNE

- 4 Business Meeting and Election of Officers, 7:30 p.m., Sara Hutchinson West Educational Center

UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

Continued from page 1

Universalism in the neighborhood. The son was constantly true to his convictions and their utterance, but the duty of controversy rested chiefly upon his co-worker, who had become well-nigh proverbial as a disputant. Neither of them had in the first instance the sympathy of his wife. Both these faithful women had been educated in the Presbyterian communion, but they gradually outgrew the olden creeds, and were heart and hand with their husbands ... Rev. Symmes C. Henry preached the funeral sermon of Daniel Johnes in the Presbyterian Church in Cranberry ... and it was long remembered that the clergyman appeared to be embarrassed, either by the text, or by a church creed as applied to the case of a man who, though a life long Universalist, was everywhere honored for personal and social qualities.

About 1826, or somewhat earlier, two young men, William and Hiram Upham, established themselves in what may be considered the neighborhood, as teachers. They taught in several different school-houses, Perrineville, (then called Jacksonville,) Clarksburg, and at the old brick meeting-house near William R. Hutchinson's, in Millstone Township, Monmouth County --also in other localities in the region...Their home for about fifteen years was in the family of Samuel Vaughan, a farmer near Perrineville...These young men were from New England, and were open, fear-

less advocates of Universalism, Hiram being more prominent than his brother William...William died on a farm purchased by Hiram near Clarksburg. The survivor sold the property and removed to the West. A letter dated Nov. 15, 1848, addressed to Joseph J. Ely, is the last heard from or of him. [Here Joseph J. Ely made a penciled note stating: "J. Mount says Wm. Upham came in the neighborhood in the fall of 1824."]

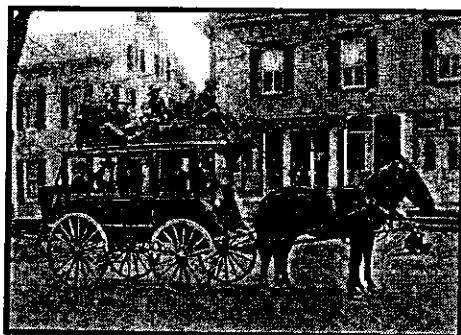
About 1828, a number of people residing within certain limits, feeling themselves not-well accommodated with educational privileges, decided to erect a school-house on the south-west corner of Col. Johnes' farm — which happened to be a central point for several Universalist families.

Opposers, fearing it might be used as a Universalist meeting-house, succeeded in passing a resolution that no sect or denomination should be allowed to worship in the premises--a resolve strictly enforced until a few years ago, when the Baptists organized a Sunday School there, and occasionally held an afternoon meeting for worship. As a decree had been broken, the Universalists thought that sinners might lawfully do what saints had done. To cut off the reasonable plea, the Baptist Sunday School was dissolved, and meetings for worship discontinued. This is known as

Continued on page 4

Early Transportation

By the early 1800s, Allentown, Crosswicks, Perrineville, Milford and Cranbury had long been bustling towns. They were the business centers at which the farmers gathered to buy and sell. Hightstown was on the stage route between New York and Philadelphia, but beyond being a relay station and a place for nearby farmers to carry their grist and get their blacksmithing and wheelwrighting done, in addition to doing a little trading at the country store, it was "no great shakes" of a village.



Here, in Allentown, we see one such stage coach, with all of its passengers "safely" loaded, ready to depart for their destination.

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

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Genealogical queries pertaining to the Hightstown-East Windsor Township area are accepted, but will be printed as space allows.

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



ACQUISITIONS

- 1.2000-22- East Windsor History and Recollections of Beth El Synagogue. Lew Meixler, East Windsor Township.
- 2.2000-23 - "Twin Rivers, The town that came out to the country," brochure. Anonymous.
- 3.2000 -24- Original minutes, correspondence, press releases, newspaper clippings, and report of the HEW Consolidation Committee (1969). Gift of Carol and John Sprout, Monroe Township, NJ
- 4.2000-25 - Five cancelled checks from Joseph J. Ely to various parties, funeral announcement for Mary E. Woodward (12/30/1928) who had lived with Kath. (09/1984) and Wm Davison (d. 04/1985). Gift of John Orr, Wilmore KY
- 5.2000-26 - Obituaries and tributes for Dr. Harold C. Cox, two 1960 Hightstown Directories, report on HEW Consolidation by the Jaycees, including survey results (1969), additional reports, brochures, and 15 photographs for copying of the Cox family. Gift of Dr. Harold C. "Skip" Cox.
- 6.2000-27 - "Burlington County, New Jersey, Deed Abstracts: Books A, B and C," by Richard S. Hutchinson, Heritage Press, 2000. Purchase.
- 7.2000-28 - Two laser copies of photographs of Main Street, Hightstown, ca. 1936, one show theatre marquis w/ Jolsen/Keeler "Go Into Your Dance", two views southwest from lake. Gift of Art Shapiro, Roosevelt.
- 8.2000-29 - "The Story of Molly Pitcher," by David G. Martin, Longstreet House, Booklet, 145 pp. Gift of David G. Martin.
- 9.2000-30 - Video of Hightstown 1999, financial records of the Hightstown Gazette, letterhead, photographs, etc. Gift of Kathryn Dennis.
10. 2000-31 - Township of Neptune, one postcard mis-labeled "Hightstown."
11. 2000-32 - NJDOT C&Amboy Railroad Historic District Study, Vol. 1, (1/2000), copies of selected pages reviewing Hightstown and East Windsor. Gift from John Kilbride, East Windsor.
12. 2000-33 - Three deeds for property in the 5th ward of Manhattan; involving the Taylor, Cunningham, Doty, and Hutchinson families, one ad for the Scott Medal, one DAR certificate for Jos. Van Denburg Daws (sic) (1/9/1908). Gift of Estate of Josephine Dawes.
13. 2000-34 - Voter list for East Windsor during "Edwards for Gov" race, (includes names, ages, phone, address, registration date), correspondence & records of the EW Historic Preservation Comm., as well as related ordinances, Copy NJ

Continued on page 4

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Annual Membership Application (January - December)

Individual Family Booster/Patron Sustaining

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



Jill Marcusa 3rd grader, who is doing research on a project on Hightstown's history, visited the Ely House Museum, along with her brother, Zachery.

ACQUISITIONS

Continued from page 3

- DEP Historic Landmark Nomination Report for EW (c 1991). Gift of Barbara Rothstein.
14. 2000-35 - Laser copy of C.D.V. taken in EW (though says "Hightstown") by GH Auxer; purchased on E-Bay 09/00. Gift of Gayle Fisher, St. Petersburg, FL
 15. 2000-36 - 17 volumes of the American Cyclopeda (1884-7). Gift of Paul C Szewczyk, Lane, Hightstown.
 16. 2000-37 - One faded, torn copy of R.M. Stults' song, "Sweetest Story Ever Told: Tell Me, Do You Love Me," dedicated to Miss Mirella MDCCCXCII. Transfer from the Museum Committee.
 17. 2000-38 - "Abstracts of the Deaths & Marriages in the *Hightstown Gazette*," (4/18/1861-12/28/1871) by Richard Hutchinson, 127 pp, paperback; full name index, 2000, Heritage Books, Inc. Purchase.

UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

Continued from page 2

the Cedar Grove School House. [What we know as the Cedarville School House.] Though unsectarian, that school-house had for years the ill or good repute of Universalism, partly because a reasonable representation of the liberal order was always among the trustees, and because some of the early teachers were well-known Universalists. Hiram Upham was the first teacher in that school-house, and William Upham afterwards taught there, while the brothers kept store at Perrineville.

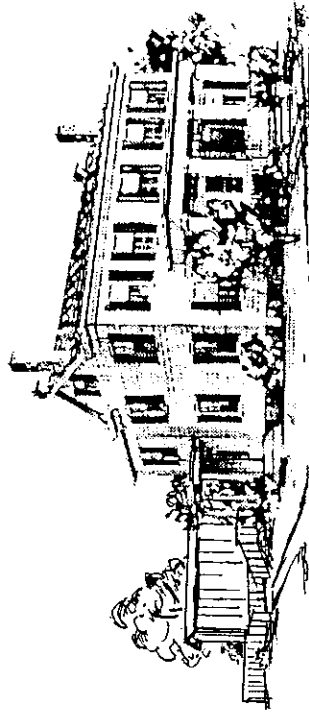
TO BE CONTINUED _

**Hightstown-East Windsor
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Spring 2001

The Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society is a registered non-profit organization. Sales of the books in this catalogue will help the society fulfill its mission, which is to educate the public about the history of Hightstown and East Windsor and preserve this history for future generations.

**Hightstown and East Windsor:
Reflections from the Shrine**

by John Orr

Although Mr. Orr modestly describes this book of short essays as an "anecdotal history," it provides a valuable overview of the history of these two communities during the past two hundred years. Mr. Orr originally researched and wrote these essays for friends, schoolchildren, and newspapers. They will be of interest to historians, genealogists, and anyone who enjoys a good story. Longstreet House, 408 pp., 1998.

Item #20 \$40.00

Images of America: Hightstown and East Windsor

by Peggy S. and Frank J. Brennan, Jr.

Using images from a variety of local collections, this pictorial history examines what day-to-day life was like in these two communities between 1834 and 1950. The Brennans use many of these photographs to document the importance of agriculture for both communities. Other images trace significant changes, such as the shift from wagons to automobiles. From floods and fires to schools and churches, the images on these pages help us reimagine what life was like for area residents in years gone by.

Arcadia Press, 128 pp., 1996.

Item #50 \$16.99

**Abstracts Of The Deaths And Marriages in
the *Hightstown Gazette*: 18 April 1861-28 December 1871**

By Richard S. Hutchinson.

Since April 1861, the *Hightstown Gazette* has published a weekly edition of the news from central New Jersey. In the nineteenth century, the *Gazette* devoted a full page to "Local" news, which included information about deaths, marriages, illness, buildings, and businesses in Hightstown and surrounding communities.

Other pages of the *Gazette* carried news from other states, with a special focus on families from central New Jersey who had relocated. The *Gazette* exchanged most of these out-of-area news items with papers from other states. Many of these "exchanged papers" have not survived; the items in the *Gazette* are the only record of these publications.

Mr. Hutchinson has reviewed all the surviving issues of the *Gazette* from 1861 to 1871 (the issues from November 1862 to September 1865 have never been microfilmed and are presumed lost). He has meticulously abstracted all the information about marriages and deaths appearing in the paper, then chronologically arranged his abstracts for this volume.

These abstracts will be of interest to genealogists and local historians. The marriage abstracts include the names of the bride and groom, and often their guests. The death abstracts include the name of the deceased, the date of death, the place of death, and sometimes the surviving relatives. All of these names are included in an index. Heritage Press, 127 pp., 2000.

Item #100 \$16.00 (*first time offered*)

Available Summer 2001:

**Abstracts Of The Deaths And Marriages in
the *Hightstown Gazette*: 4 January 1872- 27 December 1877**

By Richard Hutchinson. Heritage Press, 157 pp.

**Burlington County, New Jersey,
Deed Abstracts: Books A, B and C**
by Richard S. Hutchinson

This book presents Mr. Hutchinson's abstracts from the recorded deeds at the Burlington County Courthouse, established 1694. The deeds appear in the order in which they were recorded at the courthouse.

While most of these deeds date from the 1750's through the 1790's, they also contain valuable genealogical information from the early 1700's, such as the names of wives, children, siblings, and parents. Many include the names of previous property owners, adjoining property owners, and witnesses. All of these names appear in the index at the end of the volume.

Mr. Hutchinson supplements the deed abstracts with abstracts of other useful documents such as Releases of Dowers, and Divisions of Property. The records of slave manumissions document the significant influence of Quakers on Burlington County. Heritage Press, 135 pp., 2000.

Item #90 **\$27.00**

**Middlesex County, New Jersey
Deed Abstracts --Book "1"**

by Richard S. Hutchinson

This useful book provides abstracts of the Middlesex County clerks's handwritten recordings of deeds in the order in which they appear at the Middlesex County Court House in New Brunswick. Most of these abstracts date from the 1720's through the 1780's.

Mr. Hutchinson also includes abstracts of other important documents from his extensive research at the courthouse, such as Releases of Dowers, Divisions of Property, and divorce decrees. Of special interest are the abstracts for lost deeds after the American

Revolution and deeds of sale by the Commission of Forfeited Estates of Fugitives and Offenders.

Mr. Hutchinson has preserved all the original spellings of names, noting whether people signed the documents or "made their mark." His index includes every readable name he found in the recorded documents. Heritage Press, 141 pp., 2000.
Item # 70. **\$27.50**

**Monmouth County, New Jersey, Deeds
Books A, B, C and D**

By Richard S. Hutchinson

This indexed work provides abstracts from the county clerk's copies of the recorded deeds at the Monmouth County Court House in Freehold, New Jersey. As in the original documents at the court house, the abstracts are grouped by the deed book in which they appear: Book A (1669-c.1680); Book B (c.1685-1690); Book C (c.1691-1696); and Book D (1697-1714).

Monmouth was one of the state's original counties, and these early deeds give the names of its first European settlers, many of whom were persecuted Quakers from Long Island, Barbados, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. These abstracts offer a wealth of information about these families.

The abstracts also record how these settlers worked to create Monmouth County in 1683. Of special interest are the minutes of and orders from the settlers' first "Assembly."

Mr. Hutchinson includes abstracts of other important documents he found at the courthouse, including elections, appointments, court cases, juries, Letters of Attorney, Powers of Attorney, business transactions, marriages, recorded ear marks, arrest warrants, and notes. Heritage Press, 156 pp., 2000.

Item # 80 **\$26.88**

Heritage Books Archives:

Mercer County Genealogical Quarterly [NJ] Volume 1-6
by Richard S. Hutchinson

This CD-ROM duplicates the 627 pages of the *Mercer County Genealogical Quarterly* published between March, 1992, and December, 1997. With the help of this CD, viewers may see the pages on their computer screens just the way they appeared in the original issues—including the indexes.

Each of these volumes provides a rich assortment of historical and genealogical information from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Besides giving Mercer County wills, deeds, and applications for probation, these volumes also give a large assortment of estate documents, letters of administration and guardianship. Viewers will find everything from James Smith's account book to Court of Appeals cases, genealogical queries, and abstracts from the **Hightstown Excelsior**.

Anyone with Windows or Macintosh system may view this CD, for it includes a free Adobe Acrobat reader. Mr. Hutchinson has added electronic bookmarks to help viewers move through the text easily. The CD is best viewed with monitor resolution 800x600 or higher. Heritage Press, 2000.

Item # 60 \$20.00

Battle of Monmouth

by Samuel Craig Cowart

Samuel Craig Cowart (1854-1943) wrote this fascinating history of the Battle of Monmouth in 1914. This reprint also includes one of Cowart's poems about the Revolution, "Patriot Sires of Monmouth." Longstreet House, Rpt., 32 pp., 1998.

Item #30 \$8.00

Clara Barton and Hightstown

by Dr. David Martin, Grace Norton Rogers,
and Maurice Schuman

This booklet focuses on Hightstown's influence on Clara Barton. Before she moved to Bordentown, Miss Barton lived in East Windsor with the Norton family and worked as a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse. This book documents the importance of her experiences during this period (1851-1852). It also examines the significance of her lifelong friendship with Mary Norton of Hightstown. Longstreet House, 32pp., 1994.

Item #10 \$6.00

General James Longstreet and his New Jersey Relations

by Dr. David Martin

This booklet examines the families and common ancestry of Confederate General James Longstreet and Jonathan Longstreet of Holmdel, New Jersey. Longstreet House, 32 pp., 1998.

Item #31 \$8.00