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The

# BULLETIN

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

By

A. G. YOUNT

*Minister*



*Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.—Deuteronomy, 32:7.*



Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

--Romans 15:13

"O God, as thou hast opened thy hand upon us for a covering, so also enlarge our hearts with thanksgiving and fill our mouths with praise. And Grant that what thou hast sown in loving-kindness may spring up in duty done, and let thy grace so strengthen our purposes that we may sin no more, but walk in the paths of thy commandments; in the light and truth of our Saviour."

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The prayer meeting to night will again be held at 6:30 and all are invited to come.

There will be a business meeting of the ladies at the home of Mrs. Carroll Meyers, next Tuesday, December 17.

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A note from Mrs. A.M. Weston is always welcome, and the one at hand is too short, but she gives the reason in saying "I have not been very well and was much dissatisfied not being able to come to the annual Fair, but am glad the ladies were so successful." A dollar for the Bulletin was enclosed.

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Mrs. Naomi Poole writes that Mr. C.E. Weston's recollection about her is correct, and that she did wear "Black curls at that time. And that I also won the 2nd prize at the Spelling Bee. Miss Inness (another teacher) won 1st prize-- Webster's Unabridged. Reading of Dutch Hill brought to my mind Mr. Terwilliger, teacher of that section of Oxford; and we lived next door to them on Dutch Hill--nice people they were. I remember the Barlows. Mrs. Barlow wrote in my Autograph Album--nice lady. I would like so much to attend the next reunion, but the distance is too much."

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The Sunday School Christmas Exercises will be given Monday evening, Dec. 23rd. The music will be led by the young people in uniform, and a good program rendered.

The Editor was in Trenton last Wednesday to join the State Commission on Historic Sites in a conference with the Advisory Budget Committee of the State Assembly to secure appropriations for the historic properties in their care.

They asked for \$500, for Oxford Furnace and we hope it will be allowed if the other objects are provided for at the next Assembly meeting.

But the Budget Committee would not commit themselves because of the great quandary they are in to provide for the \$25,000,000. Relief money to be raised by taxation, because of the repeal of the sales tax law. However the Commission on Historic Sites will continue to press the matter before the Budget Committee and the Assembly. Mr. Clee, Chairman of this committee was reluctant to promise anything. But the purpose is to meet him privately in Newark, next Friday for further conference. The Editor has been asked to attend this conference also.

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While in the State House we had the pleasure of a visit with Mr. Charles S. Aitkins, a former Oxford School teacher, who is assistant Secretary of State,

He very kindly helped us in looking up some old colonial deeds relating to Oxford properties. He has a warm place in his heart for Oxford and recalled some persons and events of his life here.

We hope to have him with us at the Reunion next year.

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We were much interested in studying the Rev. Mr. Clee, as we sat about the conference table for an hour. He is a forceful personality, and there is not a question as to his energy and ability.

He is serious and a hard worker, and his great influence in the Assembly is easily understood. His wisdom as a statesman can not be properly estimated at this time, but it is encouraging to find a man of such character in the Assembly.

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Mr. George Haycock has been celebrating his eightieth birthday. He looks much younger and is enjoying life with a keen mind and a happy disposition.

May he with Mrs. Haycock enjoy many happy returns. He remembered the Bulletin with a dollar for the fund, for which we are grateful.

Letter of Dr. William Shippen, Sr.  
July 27th, 1776.

(Three weeks after the Declaration of Independence Dr. Shippen, sole owner of the Oxford Furnace, wrote this patriotic letter to his oldest brother, Edward, of Lancaster, P.

Dear Brother: I was at Princeton when your note of the 22nd came to town... We have nothing new from N.Y.'k, of much importance; now and then a small skirmish between the troops from different shores, Lord Howe's fleet not yet arrived. Our troops swarm from every quarter. I am very impatient to be at them, but the Gen'l [Washington] has prudence enough to keep them from running into imminent dangers of every kind.

I give you joy of the late declaration of independence, and it will now give not only more Union but more force to the measures of defence while they may be necessary for all the while it was delayed there was some danger (notwithstanding almost every Province has shown great zeal for the common interest) that some unhappy circumstance might turn up and through human weakness or passion prevent the finishing so desirable an event in which we now have in our power what never happened before to any people in the world.

I mean an opportunity for forming a plan of government upon the most just, rational and equal principles; not exposed as others have heretofore been to caprice and accident or the influence of some mad conqueror, or prevailing parties or factions of men---but full power to settle our government from its very foundation, de novo, by deliberate council, directed solely for public good, with wisdom, impartiality and disinterestedness, having before us the experiences of past ages, pointing out clearly the advantages and disadvantages of all former governments to assist us in our choice of each particular; and then we may look forward, Numine Juvante, [with divine favor] to a more flourishing country than ever we have had, and I think in a short time may establish a more mutual and lasting peace with Britain than ever, as they may be sure of our trade, if they treat us as well as others, and if not they don't deserve it.

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The above letter of Dr. Shippen reveals great wisdom as well as ardent patriotism, which he carried out through the war. He was a member of the Continental Congress for two terms, chosen by the Pennsylvania Assembly, and in letters written later, now preserved in the Penn. Historical Society, he displays the same zeal for the country

preserved in the Penn. Historical Society, he displays the same zeal for the country's cause and the deepest respect for the "noble General," Washington.

Moreover his son, Dr. William Jr., was chief surgeon in Washington's army.

Thus being a patriot and a leading financier of Philadelphia, he would have every motive to use his furnace in Oxford for the success of Washington's army, and also for his own financial benefit. These facts should serve to correct false statements made by historians of Oxford Furnace, that the owners were Tories and unwilling to use the furnace to help the war.

Another error of historians is due to the delusion that the furnace owners were Quakers, and so for conscience sake opposed to helping any war.

But Dr. Shippen was a prominent Presbyterian, one of the founders, and a life long member of the 2nd Presbyterian Church of Phila. and also a trustee of Princeton College. His son Wm, Jr., was educated there and his son-in-law Rev. Samuel Blair was once chosen president, and his older brother Edward was a trustee also.

The only Quaker owners of the Furnace were the Robesons, Jonathan the original builder from 1741 to 1749, and his grand son Morris, from 1809 to 1831.

The brothers Joseph and Dr William Shippen bought the largest part of the furnace and lands from Jonathan Robeson before the French Indian War, 1755 to 1763, and the furnace belonged uninterruptedly until 1809 to the Shippen family. Thus they owned the furnace in both the French-Indian and the Revolutionary Wars. We give but one more proof that that the furnace made war munitions for the Revolutionary Army. In his Will, made in 1783 Dr. Shippen lists a judgment of 800 pounds -- \$4000. against the estate of Jacob Starn who operated the furnace for him.

Starn had died about 1781, and presumably had made remittances to Dr. Shippen before his death, but the large sum still due to him after Starn's death indicates the enormous profits made by the furnace in the years preceding his demise. Only war munitions could account for such huge profits.

We find no evidence that Dr. Shippen's son Joseph W., who lived in the mansion house, ever owned or operated the furnace, but if the son had out lived Dr. Shippen, he would have inherited all the furnace and lands in Jersey by Will.



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