

The
BULLETIN

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

By

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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.

Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.-----Haggai 2:4

This was the ext of the famous puritan minister, John Cotton, of Boston, in 1634, before the General Court. The occasion was a fast day appointed for the colony on account of a difference that arose in the General Court of the Colony under the governorship of Dudley. The cause of the differences was the desire of a number of colonists to move to Connecticut. So great was the effect of Cotton's sermon that the matter was dropped for the time but two years later it was renewed successfully.

Cotton divided his sermon into heads as follows:

- "The strength of magistrates is their authority.
- " The strength of ministers is their purity.
- " The strength of the people is their liberty.

" O God, by whom the meek are guide in judgment and light riseth up in darkness for the godly; Grant us, in our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldst have us to do; that the Spirit of Wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light we may see light, and in thy straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The annual Halloween Social will be held in the Chapel next Friday evening. Refreshments and amusement will be in order. The popular "Cake-Walk" will be given. The Sunday School has charge, and the money is to be spent for coal for the church

The Thanksgiving Union service on Thanksgiving morning should be kept in mind.

Mr. Wm. C. Pittenger, son of Elder Abram Pittenger, is now in Oxford visiting his father and old time friends. He lives in Joliet, Illinois. He was kind enough to visit at the Manse, and to talk over old times and other historic matters.

He brought an old and most interesting picture of the Burglar who was shot in trying to rob the Store Bank of a \$10,000 pay roll. The picture was taken soon after he was killed by the night watchman, Wm. Searing, and Mr. Pittenger got it from the Company Office, when he was employed there as a time-keeper. He thinks that was about 1899. He left it here to be deposited in the museum when that is ready for it, and the many other mementoes already collected.

In this connection it may be of interest to repeat that Mr. E. B. Foss has a picture of the Burglar's tool kit, which was kept for years on display in the company's office;

it was a good sized valise, and the tools are shown in detail as they were carefully placed on the inside of the top and bottom.

The Burglar's name was Hughes and he had three helpers: one was shot through the shoulder, but escaped with the other two; but all were captured and sent to prison.

This took place in 1875, and made a great sensation here and was head line news in the papers all over the country. "Uncle Billy" Searing, though small in stature was more than a match for the four bad men, and became the outstanding hero of Oxford history.

Joseph H. Docker of Bound Brook and his brother Herbert C. Docker of St. Paul Minn. spent the week end in Oxford on the 10th, visiting old time friends and relatives. Herbert has been away from Oxford for many years, and was impressed with the great changes in the town and the people. Their father was Joseph H. Docker, and they were born and bred in Oxford. We were very much gratified to meet them, and to talk over things of mutual interest.

The Shippen Family "Gentleman Joe"

Joseph Shippen (2) was born in 1706, and was 35 years old when his father, Joseph (1), died in 1741.

He was a great traveler, and spent many years in the West Indies, where in the island of Barbadoes he met and married his wife Mary Kearney. She was a woman of extravagant tastes in dress and pleasures. But Joseph himself was a spendthrift, and was known as "Gentleman Joe." Here is the official statement in the family biography (by Thomas Balch): "Joseph Shippen, brother of Edward Shippen of Lancaster, Pa. was a subscriber to the First Philadelphia Assembly Dances in 1748. Owing to the gay, luxuriant life that he led, and which as appears from his brother's letters wasted his patrimony. He was known in the family by the name of "Gentleman Joe."

We have read many of his older brother Edward's letters, and they contain many references to Joseph's financial difficulties. He was always in debt and borrowing money to meet them. The news papers of the time contain frequent advertisements of land for sale by him. Oxford lands owned by him were offered thus in the years 1753, 1755 and 1764.

Most of this land was bought by his younger brother Dr. William, who had doubtless advanced him money on several occasions, and in 1766 bought from him all his interest in the Oxford Furnace lands.

But our interest in Joseph (2) is due to the fact that he was for over 20 years the chief owner of the old Furnace tract of 578 acres. In 1745 he sold one half interest in to Jonathan Robeson, who had leased it from Joseph (1) at first, and again from Joseph (2) after his father's death.

The rental for it must have been substantial, and that is probably the reason he held on to it long as he could. He was recognized as the head of the firm as late as 1755, when the company sued a certain Henry Slatery for damages. The suit was in the name of Joseph Shippen and Company, and the complaint gives the names of the company in the order of,
(over)

Joseph Shippen, Jonathan Robeson, and William Shippen. The complaint is on file in the Sussex County Records.

As stated in former article, at the death of Joseph Shippen (1) in 1741, he left his properties to be divided by his three sons, Edward, Joseph and William, in equal shares among them selves, and Joseph (2) got the Oxford lands; but he also got other properties in Phila. Pa. We found a deed in Phila. Court records of a transfer, or sale, of some Phila. lots, from Edward to Joseph (2) in 1741, only three weeks after their fathers death. We mention this fact for an interesting reason. It was offered for record before Jonathan Robeson, Justice, and the latter added this note: "On the 11th of Dec. 1746, before me, Jonathan Robeson, one of the Justices and C. (erk) came Edward Shippen, the Grantor and brought this conveyance... to be recorded. signed, Jonathan Robeson."

Robeson then lived at White-marsh, about three miles north of the home of Joseph Shippen in Germantown. This shows that Robeson and the Shippens were near Neighbors and well acquainted.

We may add that the title of "Gentleman Joe" was applied only to Joseph Shippen as above, and not as some historians of Oxford Furnace have done by mistake, to Joseph W. Shippen, son of Dr. Wm. Shippen, who married Martha Axford and lived in the mansion house.

Joseph Shippen (2) lived to advanced age and died in 1793.

We believe that he was often in Oxford, and that the tradition that he in summer periods entertained his aristocratic friends from Phila. and New York here for hunting parties, may be based on facts. But when he sold out in 1766, Joseph W. Shippen took possession of the house.

Frederick Potts died on Thursday Oct. 15th in the hospital, where he was operated upon for a large goitre. He failed to recover from the operation, and passed away suddenly.

His brother John died two years ago, and they had lived long in the old home in Jonestown.



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