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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.*

Bulletin No. 334, November 8, 1936

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.-----I Timothy 1:15

" Increase, O God, the faith and the zeal of all thy people, that they may more earnestly desire, and more diligently seek, the salvation of their fellow-men, through the message of thy love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen"

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The time for the Thanks-giving union meeting has been set for the evening before. It is thought that a larger number would attend at that time than on the holiday itself.

The Halloween Social held in the Chapel was a pleasant occasion with very good attendance. Nearly all came in masks, and the three prizes were awarded to the Misses Jean Anderson and J Ruth Seiple, and Master Ralph Detweiler.

About \$20. were realized with which two tons of coal were purchased. Several dollars were given by members of the church later, and it is hoped that \$25.00 may be donated for the winter coal.

This would enable us to put in enough for the entire winter.

The money may be sent to the S.S.Supt. Elder Foss, or the Pastor or church treasurer L.E.Green.

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We are grateful for the following contributions to the Bulletin Fund  
W.C.Pittenger \$2.00 ; Miss Minnie Griffin \$1.00 ; C.E.Weston \$5.00; Miss Gertrude Lukens \$2.00; and William Schweikert \$1.00

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The Manse was honored last Tuesday by a most pleasant call of Miss Gertrude Lukens and her brother-in-law. Mr. Harvey. Miss Lukens came to vote, as she has always kept Oxford as her legal residence. We wish she might visit here more frequently.

The first T shaped railroad rails made in America were made in Scranton in 1846 or 1847 by the Scranton brothers, who had just erected a rolling mill there. How they came to make them is explained by an article in The Dairymen's League News, a clipping from which has been sent us by Mr. Cooper.

To state it briefly:- the first Rail road in New York was the Erie from Goshen to the Hudson river built in 1841. Later the state Legislature appropriated three million dollars to a firm to extend the road from Goshen to Port Jervis.

But all this was exhausted before it was completed, and the State was moving to foreclose the mortgage when the company got more money and had the foreclosure postponed, but on the strict condition that the extension be completed by December 31st, 1847. The work was pushed desperately. "At length, December 31, came. Rails had been laid at both ends. These were the first American T rails ever made; before that time rails had been imported from England. The Scranton brothers proposed to try it at a much reduced price and they were successful."

All was completed but the trestle across the Minesink. "A locomotive and two flat cars loaded with rail road men and citizens left Otisville in the afternoon. Late at night the woodwork on the bridge was finished but the rails had to be put down.

A little before eleven o'clock the track was laid except one rail that had to be cut... It took an hour to cut and spike that rail. Then a tremendous shout and all who could clambered on board and the train started for Port Jervis. They crossed the Minesink and reached Port Jervis seventeen minutes before January 1st, 1848."

The first rail road was laid through Oxford in 1856 or '57. Mrs. William Hornbaker has a section of one of the first rails laid at that time--about four inches long--a T rail, doubtless made by the Scrantons at Scranton.

Mrs Hornbaker got the relic from her mother, and there is no question of its authenticity.

Historical accounts of Oxford Furnace during the Revolution contain two errors. First that it was owned by several persons, and second that the owners were Tories, and sided with Britain. These mistakes are based purely upon tradition.

We have found overwhelming proof of just the opposite. Dr. Wm. Shippen was the sole owner from 1766 to 1801 (deeds of 1749 and 1762 with Jona. Robeson, and 1765 and 1766, with his brother Joseph, all recorded in Book H Sussex County Records; and the Will of Dr. Shippen, in the Historical Society, Phila., Pa.) The deeds have been described in former issues of this paper; and in the Will, dated 1783, Dr. Shippen states:- "I give, devise, and bequeath unto my son Joseph all my lands in Sussex County, in New Jersey, which I purchased of Jonathan Robeson and my brother Joseph Shippen, called Oxford Furnace lands with all improvements thereon containing about five thousand acres of land more or less..."

There is equally strong documentary evidence of Dr. Shippen's ardent devotion to the American Revolutionary cause.

He was a member of the Continental Congress chosen by the people of Philadelphia, in 1778-1779.

His home was the social center of all the Revolutionary leaders, from Washington down, and his daughter-in-law, was a sister of Richard Henry Lee, who made the motion for the declaration of Independence. His son Dr. Wm. Junior, was head of the hospital system of Washington's army, and his son Joseph W., husband of Martha Ax-ford, was paymaster in the army hospital at Bethlehem, Pa. Dr. Shippen also gave much of time, though in advanced age, to surgical work in this hospital. When the British, in September, 1777, entered Philadelphia the Dr. Shippen family, father and son including the latter's wife and daughter (Nancy Shippen, Her Journal) all fled from the city and did not return until the next summer, after the British army left. A letter of Dr. Shippen shows that he took refuge in Oxford when he fled from Phila.

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These facts make clear the patriotic conduct of Dr. Shippen, but we have a remarkable letter written by him to his brother Edward, of Lancaster, Pa. on July 27th, 1776, three weeks after the Declaration of Independence, which shows the state of his mind and heart on the subject.

He wrote:- "I was at Princeton when your note of the 22nd came to town. We have nothing new from New York 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 defense 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 to any people before 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 foundations de novo, by deliberate council, directed solely for public good, with wisdom, impartiality and disinterestedness, having before us the experience 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, 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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