

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.



And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even his Son Jesus Christ.

This is the true God, and eternal life.-----I John 5:20

" O Lord, we beseech thee, to keep thy Church and household continually in thy true religion; that they who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace, may evermore be defended by thy mighty power; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Mr. Charles Axford Shaffer died suddenly last Thursday morning, Jan. 7th. at his home in Oxford

He was born 73 years ago in Sussex County. When he was young his father of the same name, lived on Farm No. 1, West of the Furnace.

The fact that his father bore the name of Axford indicates that he too was born in this region, and that his family had friendly relations with some member of the Axford family.

In 1887 he married Miss Alvina Tanger. In a few months they would have celebrated their Golden Wedding. Mr. Shaffer has been a

resident of Oxford over 50 years, and ever won and kept the respect of all the citizens. He was an upright man and honest in all his dealings; friendly and genial to all in his personal associations with his fellows. He worked for the Company and in spite of his age was re-employed lately at the Mine. He leaves a Widow, and a daughter, Mrs. Evaline Snyder, also a sister, Mrs. Susan Brown of Newton. The funeral was from his home Sunday, Jan. 10, 2:30 P.M., with burial in Hillside Cemetery.

Mrs. John Price (Mary Thomas) has been visiting in Oxford the past week, and worshipped with us last Sabbath. She had not been in the Church for forty years. Her home is in Newark.

Boys will be Boys
By Cortland F. Cook

A recent article in the Bulletin by Mr. John Zulauf about Mrs Poole recalls to my mind a boyhood incident which may be interesting to some of our readers; also it may tend to recall some other incidents which might be presented through these columns and which, I feel quite sure, would be welcomed by "Ye Editor."

I was living at Jonestown at the time and, as was quite often the case, after supper would meet with some other boys of the neighborhood for whatever might turn up.

On this occasion which happened in late September, the "gang", consisting of Ernest Lukens, Fred and Charles Raddatz, Ishmael Woodruff and myself, was lounging around one of our favorite places, Gardner's Gate, and in some manner, probably peculiar only to boys, we got to talking about "eats", and Ernest informed us that some pears on one of the many trees in the yard next to their house (Mr. William Jones') were looking ready to pick. "Nuff sed." Our mouths were already watering. Across Numie Jones' lot we went, into Lukens' back yard, around the house, along the line fence, "keep low fellows", now over the picket fence, first tree in the second row, -- Oh boy! go to 'em.

And just at that time we heard the stentorian voice of Mr. Poole, who had been enjoying the evening together with Mrs. Poole out on their spacious front porch just across the road. "Mr. Jones, The Boys are Stealing Your Pears!"

Exit boys, and How? No pears.

We have to thank Mr. James Kearney for \$1.00 for the Bulletin.

Also Mr. Charles Schiller, Jr. \$2.00 to have it mailed to him at his home in Brooklyn N.Y.

Mr. Schiller is the grandson of Mr and Mrs Wm. Hornbaker. He is only 18 years of age, but has become so interested in the Bulletin, especially the historical articles that he wants it weekly. Our youngest Subscriber.

Our former articles on the history of the Shippen ownership of the Furnace brought us down to 1801, the year of the death of Dr. Wm. Shippen, who had been sole owner from 1766, and part owner since 1749; by far the longest period of any owner in the entire history of the Furnace. In fact with one exception, he was the only single owner the Furnace and lands ever had. That exception was Morris Robeson, from 1809 to his death in 1823. These facts we have fully established by official documents.

But the period from 1801 to 1809, that is from Dr. Shippen's death to the purchase of the Furnace by Morris Robeson from the Shippen heirs, is a full of difficulties, some of which we are not now able to clear up.

This will appear by citations from two historians of the period.

Col. Charles Scranton, in Snell's History of Warren and Sussex Counties states that the "furnace was carried on in turn by Messers Roberdeau, Showers & Campbell for a number of years, and then by Conrad Davis, Esq. Of this county, for three years, from 1806 to 1809." And Mr. George S. Humphrey in his chronology of the furnace history, says, that from 1806 to 1809 "Nicholas Biddle of Phila., David Roberdeau and Conrad Davis were operating the Furnace."

No definite dates are given here but from 1806 to 1809, and these conflict somewhat, and until we have documentary evidence on these points we must not try to straighten them out.

But we are on a position to give some account of this period.

First we may state that from 1806 to 1809, the furnace and lands belonged to the heirs of Dr. Shippen, his son, Dr. Wm. Jr. and his daughter Mrs. Susan Blair both of Phila. Pa. who were also appointed executors by Dr. Shippen's Will. The complicated situation resulting from the entailment of the Furnace properties to provide annuities and farms for the children of Joseph W. Shippen and his wife Martha Axford, necessarily made the settlement a matter of years, in which there was much litigation, and this was further involved by the death of Dr. Wm. Shippen, Jr. in 1808.

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was The next year however this was cleared up by the sale of all the Oxford Furnace properties to Morris Robeson, grandson of Jonathan Robeson, by the heirs of the Shippen owners. Doubtless Morris Robeson got the property at bargain prices, because of the entailment which amounted annually to \$1200 to the four daughters alone, besides three farms to the sons, of Joseph Shippen.

In this period of 8 years the furnace evidently was operated by lease. We have however no sure information about these except one person, Isaac Roberdeau. The first reference is from the Journal of Wm. Johnson, who in February 1804 was a visitor in the Mansion House. He wrote:—"In the afternoon Mrs. Roberdeau, accompanied by Major Roberdeau with a German flute, played on the piano forte and added her vocal powers thereto." (Quoted from the History of Warren County, by Dr. G. W. Cummings, P. 65., whose comment was this: "The first piano mentioned in the county was played by Mrs. Roberdeau, in the Shippen Mansion, at Oxford, in 1804)."

This Mrs. Roberdeau was the granddaughter of Dr. Wm. Shippen the Elder, the daughter of Mrs Susan (Shippen) Blair, her own name being Susan Shippen Blair. She was married to Major Isaac Roberdeau, a prominent Phila. family. He was afterwards known as Col. Roberdeau, concerning whom the official Shippen historian (Balch) relates that he "was asst. engineer to Major L'Enfant and Col. Elliot, when they planned and laid out Washington (D. C.) in 1791.

"He was topographical Engineer in the Army during the war of 1812, and at its close was with Col. Hawkins to report the boundry line between the British possessions in Canada and the U. S. He organized the topographical Bureau in Washington and was its head until his death in 1829." Another notable name to add to Oxford's citizenship!

His residence in the Mansion house is confirmed by the report of Mr. Hartmann, the Guardian of Miss Abigail Shippen, to which reference was made in Bulletin No. 338, Dec. 6, 1936.



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