



*Annual Report of Delaware  
Indian*

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.*



11111111

Old Oxford Legends  
The Burial Place of the Delaware  
Indians.

By George S. Humphrey

While the development of the great iron ore deposits in the Colonies, which afterward became the United States, was very slow nevertheless considerable progress was made in a few localities, notably in Virginia, parts of New York and Northern New Jersey; pig iron having been produced on what was then a considerable scale at Andover and Oxford Furnace as early as 1743, or more than thirty years prior to the War of Revolution.

In those early days the smelting of ore was considered a "mystery" and only those who had received instruction from, and had worked under the supervision of the furnace men of Europe, were considered capable of carrying on the industry in this country. One can readily understand that this must have been the case, for there was at that time no literature on the subject; the theory of chemical reactions in the blast furnace was not even thought of; all knowledge of the subject being obtained by experience and transmitted orally by the experts of one generation to those of the next. Consequently there were gathered around those early iron works artisans from the forests of Germany, Spain, Sweden and other parts of the old world, where the ores had been worked for centuries.

In addition to the manners and customs of their native lands, these men brought with them the legends and superstitions which have from time immemorial been associated with the working of all metals; and they also were of that trend of mind which made them susceptible to the influence of the wilderness in which the few American iron furnaces were located, and quite ready to absorb the traditions relative to the aborigines, which were prevalent in those days. Indeed the appearance of an old Indian at these primitive establishments was by no means a rare occurrence, and such visitors were always made welcome by the hospitable iron-worker. (see page 4)

Bulletin No. 386. November 21, 1937

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?.....Micah 6:8

"O God, who hast in mercy taught us how good it is to follow the holy desires thou hast put into our hearts, and how bitter is the grief of falling short of whatever beauty our minds behold; strengthen us, we pray thee, to walk steadfastly throughout life in the better path which our hearts once chose; and give us wisdom to tread it prudently in thy fear, as well as cheerfully in thy love; by the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

-----  
The Annual Fair and Oyster Supper will be conducted by the Ladies of the Church on Thursday December 9th.

The ladies were gratified by the interest taken in the sewing party last Tuesday. The good attendance encouraged them to think that they have the hearty co-operation of the members and friends of the congregation. They plan to hold another soon.

-----  
Charles Otto Laue and Dora Vreeland Staples, both of Belvidere, were united in marriage last Sabbath afternoon at the Manse.

Mr. Laue was born in Germany but has spent his life in this region. He has an interest in Oxford because his son, r. Fred Laue, was formerly the much loved Principal of our Public School.

Mrs. Laue was born in Great Meadows, her mother being a member of the Cummins family.

The good wishes of their many friends will be with them for a happy life together.

-----  
We are reprinting Mr. Humphrey's fine story. It first appeared five years ago, when our readers were comparatively few in number.

Hillside Cemetery  
By Clinton E. Weston

(From Page 1)

4

Certificate of Incorporation for the Hillside Cemetery Association of Oxford, New Jersey, was filed and approved on October 27th, 1937, and the Association therefore has been a legally constituted body of that date. It is now possible for plot-owners and others to arrange for care by the season, or for perpetual care, if preferred.

At the Trustees meeting held on October 31st, committees were appointed in By-laws, Cemetery and Finance.

These committees have been diligently working in their lines, and it is plainly evident that there is a serious and conscientious effort being made to put this movement over.

The By-laws committee has completed a draft which will be taken up at the next meeting. The cemetery committee is carefully working out details for care and improvements, securing estimates, systematizing the old records, mapping and plotting the cemetery.

The finance committee is devoting its efforts towards securing funds, and giving information.

The Bulletin has been an invaluable help in the stimulus given to the movement by its publicity; and through the excellent work of the committees, progress far beyond expectations has been made, considering the short time since the movement was started.

Meeting Saturday 2:30 P.M. Oct. 20th, at N.E. Church

All those interested are invited to attend the Trustee's meetings.

The next will be Sat. Oct. 20th. at 2:30 P.M. Colonial M.E. Church.

At these meetings reports are made by the several committees and plans discussed.

We are asking all those who are in sympathy with this movement to send contributions towards the general fund. Hand or mail same to A. Edward Badrow, Treasurer, Oxford, New Jersey.

All this led to a habit which to this day continues to some extent.

On cool nights, after the iron had been cast and the furnace filled, the workmen gathered about the warm hearth; refreshed themselves with such food as they had provided, not omitting a liberal allowance of 'grog' of various kinds, and gossiped over the every day events of their lives; quite frequently one of their number would relate his own experience in the 'Old Country' or repeat one of the legends which he had learned in his youth. These gradually merged into a body of lore, partly fact and partly imaginary, most of which has unfortunately been lost, having disappeared when the crude furnaces were abandoned or replaced by more modern establishments, operated on entirely different lines.

The old furnace at Oxford was operated more continuously than any of the others; charcoal was used for fuel and the blast was supplied by a quaint water wheel and leather or wooden bellows until about a century ago. It is not many years since there could be found, here and there, an old man who had worked at the furnace when a boy, and who was familiar with the tales which used to be repeated before the genial fire-hearth. It is a distinct loss to our American literature that so few of these legends were committed to writing before they perished with the generation which could have furnished the material for putting them in permanent form.

The Oxford stories or legends were often connected with Sykes Gap, a pass through the mountain range perhaps a couple of miles east of the furnace, which even at this day is thickly wooded, and suggests the wilderness that characterized it 150 years ago or more.

There are several versions of the story of old Seyport, who fell asleep there one night and was carried away by the gnomes, and this I believe, with one exception is the only that has ever been put into writing. The one I am about to relate was told me by an old man at Oxford when I was a boy and has, I am quite sure, never been made public. (over)

About 1760 there was employed as charcoal burner a Swede named Linstrom, who had come to these shores to join the Swedish colony near Wilmington, Delaware. But being of a roving disposition had found his way up the Delaware River and finally to Oxford. Like many of his countrymen he was of fair hair and complexion; he always wore his shirt open at the throat, and constant exposure had given his face and his breast a deep red color; so among his associates his real name was forgotten and he was known only as 'Red Swede'. Upon his breast there was indelibly tattooed the figure of a tortoise; this of course was the occasion of great interest and curiosity among his companions. And though they often importuned him to give them the history of the decoration and to explain its significance he always refused to enlighten them even in the slightest particular.

Some of the men however, who remembered the time when he first appeared at the furnace said that there was no such mark upon him then, and that they had first noticed it after he had mysteriously disappeared from among them one night, and that when he returned, after an absence of several days he was wan and exhausted, and that soon afterward they discovered the strange device on his breast. They wagged their heads and said that the evil spirits which dwelt in the forests of Sweden, and from which he had no doubt wished to escape when he crossed the seas, had followed him even here; and that they had placed this mark upon him for some crime committed in his youth. So, although they all liked him, they felt a certain dread of him and believed that he had secret dealings with the under world. This they thought accounted for his being the best charcoal burner in this region; for the evil spirits in placing their mark upon him gave super-human skill in this mysterious alchemy of transforming green smoking wood into radiant clear-burning coal.

One cool night late in the month of June, the usual gathering had taken place in front of the furnace — the Red Swede being one of the

party. The talk seemed to lag and had settled into petty gossip of their personal affairs. Some of the men had nearly fallen to sleep and others had gone outside in the glorious moonlight which flooded the whole landscape. The Swede had sat smoking his pipe in silence, his expression showing that he was paying no attention to the loose talk of the others and that his own thoughts were far away from present surroundings. At last the furnace-keeper called to him saying, "Come Red, don't sit there glum as an owl, but wake up and tell us how you happened to have that picture on the front of you!" "Yes, yes!" said several others, "We've left you alone about it for many months; now out with it." The Swede took his pipe from his mouth; walked out of the cast house; looked up at the moon; walked further away where he could see the pole star and the great dipper, and coming back to the furnace said, "Yes, boys, I will! The time is up." With that he filled his pipe, sat down on the cinder run and began to talk. The men outside quickly returned; the drowsy ones shook themselves; grog was passed; pipes relighted and all were eager with attention. And this is what he told them.

"You think this is a mark made by devils. I think it is the greatest honor which any one living in these woods can possess, and now I will tell you how it came to me.

Ten years ago tonight the moon was like it is now, and the air was cool. I was burning coal at the old camp in Sykes Gap with two or three others; some of whom are here still, others have gone. It was my turn to watch, and the others having gone to sleep in the hut, I sat near the pit with my back against a tree and my thoughts wandered to my boyhood life in Sweden, and the old mother and father I had left there long ago.

Through an opening in the tree tops I could see the sky, and although the moon was bright the northern lights were playing; and I remembered how the country folk at home thought they saw in the waving streamers the wraiths of their fathers and grandfathers, and their ancestors."

(continued next issue)

CHURCH OFFICERS

The Session

A. G. YOUNT, Moderator

Elders

ABRAM PITTENGER  
EDWARD T. GREEN

ELISHA B. FOSS  
LEWIS BERGENBACK



Board of Trustees

JAMES RADEL  
GEORGE DOCKER, JR.  
FRED K. SARSON  
EDWARD SHARPS

HARRY MILLER  
CHARLES RENNER  
LEWIS E. GREEN  
CHARLES DUX

BENJAMIN GREEN



Church Treasurer

LEWIS E. GREEN



Sunday School

Superintendent .....	E. B. FOSS
Assistant Superintendent.....	CHRIS SEIPLE
Secretary .....	ALVIN RENNER
Treasurer .....	MERRILL FOSS
Organist .....	MISS RUTH SNYDER
Assistant Organist .....	MISS ALICE BELL



Ladies' Aid Society

President .....	MRS. A. G. YOUNT
Vice-President .....	MRS. BENJAMIN GREEN
Secretary .....	MRS. RAYMOND RUSH
Treasurer .....	MRS. LEWIS E. GREEN

Choir

Leader ..... MRS. E. T. GREEN