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The
BULLETIN

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

By

A. G. YOUNT
Minister



Oxford Historical Record

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For the kingdom is the Lord's;
and he is the governor among
the nations. ---Psalm 22:28

"Almighty God, who hast given us
this good land for our heritage; we
humbly beseech thee that we may al-
ways prove ourselves a people mind-
ful of thy favor and glad to do thy
will. Bless our nation with hon-
orable industry, sound learning and
pure manners. Save us from violence
discord, and confusion; from pride
and arrogance, and from every evil
way. Defend our liberties, and fash-
ion into one united people the mul-
titudes brought hither out of many
kindreds and tongues. Endue with
the spirit of wisdom those to whom
in thy name we entrust the author-
ity of government, that there may
be justice and peace at home, and
that, through obedience to thy law,
we may show forth thy praise among
the nations of the earth. In the
time of prosperity, fill our hearts
with thankfulness, and in the day
of trouble, suffer not our trust
in Thee to fail; all which we ask
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The annual picnic of the Sunday
school will take place on Saturday
July 15th. The bus will leave the
church at 10:30.

The Sunday School will not
hold sessions during August.

Mrs. E. N. Godschalk asks to send
the Bulletin to her in Maine this
summer. "I missed it while away; and
as we shall be there until after
the fifth of September, it is a
long time." The request will
be most willingly granted. And this
will apply to others if they so
notify us of their desire.

Mr. Cortland Cook sends check of
\$3.00 for the Bulletin, and pinned
to it the terse message: "I missed
the last reunion, but don't want to
miss the Bulletin."

We also received one dollar each
from Madams Jennie Fichtel and
Hilda Courtright.

Old Stone Houses

For several years the Editor has been interested in the old stone buildings, homes, mills, and stores, which are so common in this region.

They are in fact the most conspicuous old land marks in the county.

Most of them are quite old and belong to the 18th century, and some nearly 200 years old, erected in the colonial period. Oxford has the old manor house, 1754, and the original John Axford house, 1758.

For many years in the past stone houses were not built here, probably because they were considered old fashioned, and because frame houses could be erected more cheaply and quickly, when material and labor were inexpensive. But now conditions have changed; the cost of frame houses has become almost prohibitive, while the stone lies every where about us, to be had almost for the transportation, and this stone is well fitted for constructive purposes, as this granite is the form of Gneiss which splits evenly, and leaves various colors of red and brown, and moreover it becomes more beautiful with age.

Some stone houses have been built in this neighborhood lately, and one in Jackson Valley that is very fine and beautiful.

But this change is not merely local, for old stone residences throughout the east are being sought for by persons who like old and solid things that do not alter with the styles and fashions of a day.

An editorial in a N.Y. City paper states that many N.Y. business men are buying the old stone farm homes in Bucks County, Pa. for week ends and summer homes and some commute from them the year round.

Jersey has even older stone homes and many have already been taken up by city men who like the quiet air and restfulness of them.

The editorial remarks that "Stone makes a very strong appeal to the sentiment of continuity that grows stronger year by year in a world where there is so little to nourish it that it amounts almost to a famine.

"The rock of ages employed in building farm houses one or two centuries ago makes a strong sentimental appeal in an age of uncertainties."

Extracts from Centennial Address of Col. Charles Scranton, 1876.

(In Bulletin No. 468, a brief note was made about Col. Scranton's fine address, and a promise to make some citations from it. As next Tuesday will be the 163rd anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and 63 years after Col. Scranton's address, his remarks will be of special interest. The speech was largely of historical make up, but we shall omit this part and give instead some extracts relating to the conditions of life and industries of colonial times in Warren County.)

"I must in the brief time allotted pass rapidly over the history of that part of Sussex County embraced in Warren, for the period of about twenty years from 1756 to 1776.

"The population steadily increased, churches were few and widely separated, school houses were small and books were few. Mills were rude and far apart. The few iron works at Oxford, Andover and on the Musconetcong river seemed to have given more life to the whole scene, according to tradition, than any other cause then existing. The sound of the ponderous forge hammer at the forges on that river, made a sort of music to the early settlers; while the carting of pig iron from Oxford, Andover, or Durham, to the forges or to the shipping point at Foul Rift, or the cartage of bar-iron in exchange for cattle, grain, flour, and the necessaries of life, gave animation to the quiet scene.

"The house-hold furniture of that day was primitive indeed. The farming utensils and artisans tools, crude, unwieldy and difficult to use. The wooden plow with wrought iron share, and harrow with wooden teeth.

The flail to thrash the grain, and the oaken bucket to draw water or to milk the cows in. The flax and wool spinning wheels, their hand cards and flax dressers. The huge old clay oven outside the house, and the dresser to expose to view the dishes for the company. With these and other crude utensils, our ancestors, though hemmed in by forests and surrounded by Indians and beats of a ferocious (over)

nature, were contented and happy, so far as tradition goes to show. And by industry in their homes and valor on the field of battle, in the defence of right, have transmitted to us what we enjoy this day in civil and religious liberty.

No post coach, of mail, or daily news paper, railways, bringing news and visitors. No telegraph, no mowing or reaping machines, no hay rakes or forks, no sewing machines, spring carriages nor easy chairs, nor any of the thousand other inventions, comforts and improvements of this age, were even dreamed of by these early settlers. Perhaps the stillness of the air was occasionally broken... by the sharp crack of the old flint lock musket in the hands of some keen marksman bringing a wolf to grief; for the fact is set forth at large that in two years, 1754 and 1755, the old County of Sussex paid out about \$600 dollars for wolf scalps... These were the days of privation and hardship, as well as moral and physical courage."

(A reference to Oxford Furnace is evident in the following)

"Then the blacksmith pounded out by day light and candle light, working the long evening at his forge to make 35 or 40 pounds of nails per day. Now by the appliance of steam, machinery and science, a boy can make one ton per day.

Then the 13 colonies did not use as much as 175,000. kegs of nails of every kind in one year.

Now a single factory in your County under the superintendence of Mr. Weston, can produce far beyond that quantity. Then all the castings made from iron in one year did not exceed 5,000 tons, and now a single foundry in our county can produce over 30,000. tons of castings yearly."

"As a nation from 13 colonies with about 800,000. square miles of territory, and about 3,000,000. of people, one half of whom lived within 80 miles of the the coast lines, and 600,000 of whom were slaves, we have grown to 38 states and ten territories, having a population of nearly 45,000,000. and a territory of over 3600,000. square miles."

(This statement of course was made 63 years ago).



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A. G. YOUNT, *Moderator*

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