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*The*  
**BULLETIN**

**SECOND PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**

**OXFORD, NEW JERSEY**

By

**A. G. YOUNT**

*Minister*



**Oxford Historical Record**

Letter from Mr. Leonard Peckitt,  
President of the Warren Foundry and Pipe Corporation,  
11 Broadway, N.Y. City.  
November 2nd, 1939

"Dear Mr. Yount: I have been away from home a great deal for some time and this is the first opportunity I have had to study a copy of Bulletin #482, which you kindly sent to me early in October.

What is said about the old Oxford furnace is, of course, most interesting to me and anyone else who knows about Oxford; and the author is to be congratulated in bringing out such a clear statement.

The Ladies of the P.T.A. are certainly working hard and I am sure the supper mentioned was interesting and enjoyable.

I am enclosing herewith a check for \$10.00, which please turn over to these good ladies with best wishes and a personal remembrance from me, in full appreciation of what you are all trying to do.

In the old days, with the furnace and mines operating under my directions, the frequent visits to Oxford and vicinity were most enjoyable and, although circumstances prevent a continuation of it, I shall not forget the good old times, and with high personal regards to your goodself, I am, sincerely yours."

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Mr. Humphrey wrote Nov. 3rd, saying;

"I have just read the Bulletin of October 29th, with much interest.

I am glad that you are going to devote the next issue to a history of the publication which has become a real 'household necessity' to so many of us; and please do not be too modest in referring to yourself as the 'creator and benefactor' of this paper, and the great amount of physical labor which has been required on your part. And more especially the hours and days of research which have been back of your interesting and valuable historical articles. All of this should be appreciated."

Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,  
Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Ephesians 3: 20, 21

( This text was used as the motto on Bulletin covers during the first year).

"Almighty God, our heavenly Father, whose mercies are without number, and His treasure of goodness is infinite; we render Thee thanks for all the gifts Thou hast bestowed upon us; evermore beseeching Thy compassion, that as Thou grantest the petitions of them that faithfully ask Thee, Thou wilt never forsake them, but prepare them for the rewards to come, in Thy everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

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Mr. and Mrs. Herbert H. Cox of Winchester, Mass. recently visited friends in Oxford and made a brief call at the Manse. Mr. Cox was the Bookkeeper for the Iron Company for many years when the Empire Company was operating the plant. They have not lost their keen interest in Oxford and the people here. They are expecting to attend the next Reunion in May, 1940.

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This is the tenth anniversary of the Bulletin and the Editor is devoutly thankful to the Providence that has made possible his efforts to do his part in publishing it for so long a period, and to keep up the regular weekly issue with comparatively few omissions.

In the 520 weeks there have been 485 numbers published, missing only 35 weeks, during vacations and illness. He has done all the work of editing, and publishing, and of writing many articles and most of the items. But he has had a faithful proof-reader in his good companion. It has all been a labor of love, and a privilege of rendering a service to God and His people.

## Ten Years of the Bulletin

The first Bulletin was printed on November 16th, 1929, ten years ago on next Thursday. And as it has had a rather unusual career in connection with the Church and the town of Oxford, it seems proper to give in some detail an account of its rise and development throughout this period of its history.

It had a very humble beginning, with no other purpose than to keep in weekly touch with the scattered families of the Church, and serve the needs of the ordinary church Calendar together with a readable record of the church activities and various local occurrences.

It continued in this simple way for a little over a year before an innovation was started that grew steadily through the next nine years.

It was in January 1931, that the Editor in reading a County History, found an account of the founding and early growth of our church, in which was a list of the charter members and the date of the dedication of the present church building, which was January 31st, 1866.

It occurred to us that we might profitably emphasize that event on the last Sabbath of the month, and the Bulletin carried an account of its organization and dedication of the church.

This was how it all began so far as we had in mind at the time.

But a number of copies of this issue got into the hands of various former members, and some of them wrote interesting letters which were published in the Bulletins.

The news seemed to have spread mysteriously to many other former members and letters continued to come. In the meanwhile, we sought to introduce some important work of our Missionary Boards, and then we found a number of persons had long ago been sent out as Missionaries from this Church, and we gave such facts about them as were available. In a number of the letters reminiscences were related which soon became the most attractive reading to the many new friends.

Mr. George Humphrey, The Rev. Mr. Maxwell, writing for Mrs. Perry, began this feature. But the first full

and distinctive article of this type came from Mrs. Ellen Scranton Belden at that time one of the surviving charter members (Mrs. O. N. Perry being the other one). It was written for her by her daughter Mrs. Ellen Belden Taylor, and attracted wide attention. From thence this feature of it grew in interest through subsequent years, and remains to the last the most appealing contribution to the Bulletin.

But we must take up another thread of our story. The articles in the Bulletin suggested to our Elders that it might be wise to plan for a general Reunion to celebrate the anniversary of the organization of the Church in May, 1863.

At a Session meeting in February 1931 it was decided to put the matter up to the Congregation, which was done the next Sabbath, and it was in this way the first of our Reunions originated. Word was sent to all the former members as far as we could learn of them. And to our amazement on May 3rd, 1931, there was a great multitude of people in attendance, most of whom to the Editor were strangers, but proved to be former church members and one time citizens of Oxford, forty to sixty years before.

Mr. Maxwell preached at Morning Worship, and after luncheon in the afternoon a platform meeting was held, many former members taking part, and this was followed by an eloquent and stirring Missionary address by Dr. L. S. B. Hadley, at that time one of the General Secretaries of our Mission Board.

The Bulletin for this occasion carried a lengthy historical account of the Church, of which 300 copies were printed, and these were all taken away and spread far and wide.

These Reunions held each year in May have grown in attendance and interest until one wonders when this flood tide will reach its crest and the ebb set in.

This first reunion launched the Bulletin on a much wider field of usefulness, the mailing list was more than doubled, and it has kept all who have attended the reunions informed of each year's gathering of Oxford's former citizens.

(over)

The Bulletin has printed from almost the beginning, a great deal of historical matter.

The last half of the 19th century, the greatest period in Oxford history, has been written up in every manner and detail by persons who lived in that busy and interesting time. It forms an authentic record for future historians such as very few if any similar communities can boast.

But the most distinguished service has been rendered in connection with the Old Blast Furnace, built in 1741-1742.

In 1932 Mr. Humphrey wrote for the Bulletin a chronological history of it, and this was followed by many similar articles, and selections from histories of the Furnace.

In one of his letters Mr. Humphrey suggested that it should be repaired and preserved as an historic relic.

This was taken up in earnest and in 1934 the Editor communicated with the State Commission on Historic Sites, which in time became interested and accepted it by deed for the State.

The Editor then began a long research for documents on which to base an authentic history of the Furnace; which he had been requested by the Commission to prepare.

The remarkable results of this enterprise have been recorded in this paper from time to time so that historians may have the data for future reference.

The Bulletin was also able to help in the movement to reorganize and improve the Hillside Cemetery.

It was first launched in August 1937, and by October the organization was perfected. Mr. Weston, the first chairman and permanent President, with his faithful officers and Trustees, has in two years accomplished wonders in the way of improvements and financial arrangements for the future.

During the past ten years the Bulletin has been devoted to the betterment of Oxford in every way, religiously, morally and materially,

and is comforted with the thought that its labors have not been in vain, and that Oxford's historical merits and attractions have been published far and wide.

But we now see that our history of the Bulletin as promised is only a sketch, a bare outline of a great number of interesting events and personalities connected with its career of ten years. But our readers generally know the details we have had to omit.

However, we take this opportunity to repeat what has been told in the Bulletin many times that the success of this enterprise has been mostly due to the many who have contributed articles and letters.

We cannot name them all but a few should be mentioned who have been more or less regular contributors.

Mr. George S. Humphrey has for nine years written regularly articles of value and interest, besides often assisted the Editor with his wise counsels. Mr. Clinton E. Weston is the most prolific of our writers

His memory is marvelous, and his versatility equal to any subject he undertakes to write upon, and there seems none that he has overlooked. His good humor is ever evident in his papers, his love of fun has lightened the hearts of our readers in most of his contributions

All the year round he keeps at it steadily, sending us articles, when the supply gets low, he always has something to help out.

Mr. Edwin C. Perkins is a splendid writer when the "mood" is on him, to use his own word. We all wish it would come more often. Several years ago he wrote the Editor saying, "The half has not been told," about the interesting things in old Oxford times. So we know his well is not dry. Likewise Mr. Samuel J. Cooper has sent us many of our best papers in the past years. We must not forget to mention Mr. George R. Searing

with gratitude, for during the first years when not many wrote for the Bulletin he faithfully sent articles of great interest, and above all a great quantity of documents and papers he and his good wife had saved up while living in Oxford.

A multitude of others who wrote letters or papers have also helped in making the paper the success it has been. May God bless them all!



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