

496

The
BULLETIN

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

By

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Minister



Oxford Historical Record

Bulletin No. 496. Jan. 14th, 1940

The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him: to all that call upon him in truth.

He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry and save them.

---Psalm 145: 18, 19

"We beseech The, O Lord, to behold us with favor, gathered together in thy name, weak men and women subsisting under the covert of Thy patience. Be patient with us still suffer us yet a while longer; with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavors against evil, suffer us a while longer to endure and help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when they shall be taken from us, brace us to play the man under affliction!"

Miss Florence Bennett writes:-

"When my good friend, Mrs. Hummer wrote me that a year's subscription to the Bulletin, was to be my Christmas present from her, it made me very happy. And when I opened the first copy and read your tribute to my father, I was deeply touched and especially grateful to you for your kindness. That you should have taken the trouble to look up the record means a great deal to me and my family. My father loved the Oxford Church; and the two ministers Mr. Kline and Mr. Maxwell, he counted among his closest friends, and kept in touch with them for many years after leaving Pequest.

"I was very glad to be present at the reunion last spring, and was greatly impressed by the interest shown, from the beginning to the end of the celebration; and by the great work you have done and are doing to make such a gathering possible and practical.

'We went with joy, but empty handed, We returned with greater joy and hands full of blessings.'

"From the heart of each one present come, I am sure, a fervent Amen to this sentiment."

The Company Store
at Christmas time
By Edwin C. Perkins

The Christmas holiday season was probably more generally celebrated in the early Oxford days than any other season of the year, and the longest and greatest activity used to be centered at the Company Store.

This is to be accounted for by the fact that it was well stocked and was the nearest and most convenient place to purchase Christmas presents.

The interior of the Store was shaped like an elongated narrow U. Here were displayed the toys, article of clothing, finery and many eatables which characterized the season. Christmas trees from the Pocono mountains were on exhibition and sale on the front porch; and as one entered the store on the right, the Post Office was located for many years, and Uncle "Billy" Searing was the Postmaster--later Louis Stinson. Then came the long hardware counter where boots, shoes and rubbers were to be found, and a great variety of toys, wagons, wheelbarrows, etc., all presided over by George Searing, Jake Zapp and William (Bill) Gray. The clerks were all called by their first names or an abbreviation and the young people so called them among themselves.

If one wanted a special favor such as handling some toy or touching some special object, it was always Mister.

Next came the Office of the Store Manager; Mr. Kingsbury, D F Brigham, Elias C Allen and Charles Creveling in the above succession. They made monthly trips of several days to New York where thousands of dollars worth of merchandise was purchased.

Next came the stairs leading up to the second floor, underneath which were the stairs to the Cellar.

And now we find ourselves at the entrance to the grocery counter. The clerks were Hicks Jay, Fred Sigelow, Henry Scharrer, George Wilson, James Wilson, Fred Angle and Harry Stout.

The Counter was semi-circular and extended around the full width of the store. Here was stocked a great variety of groceries, fruits and vegetables; and at Christmas time a wonderful supply of candy, Christmas and otherwise, tree-ornaments, fancy cakes and cookies, dates, figs, nuts, etc,

The last section of this counter was the tobacco and patent medicine stock (We are now on the opposite side of the building from which we entered, walking to the front). Next came the Book-keepers desk where at different times we find employed, Jim Loder, Lou Holcombe, Theo. Quick, Chas. Hobbs, Clin Weston, Vic. Thompson, Rev. Apgar, Chas. Creveling and Sam Cooper. There were always two at this desk, as were also the cashier and weighmaster, the scales being at street side of this office. Adjoining the office

was the counter where stationary, bibles, religious and other books and cards were sold; presided over by Sadie Lukens, Carrie Apgar and other young ladies at Christmas time.

This was a part of the long Dry goods counter which extended to the front of the store. Here was carried a most complete line of Dry goods, including underwear, ties, dress goods and fancy articles. The department was in charge of Fred Fowler and assisting him were Robert Gray and Luther Godschalk. In the middle of the main floor was lined up a long row of carts, wheelbarrows, doll carriages, snow shovels, express wagons, etc., for

more complete exhibition. It was a well stocked store and it was interesting to see the goods disappear; for by Christmas Eve there were few holiday goods remaining. On the second floor the extra supply of groceries were kept, also boxes of raisins, one usually partly open where it was easy to grasp a handful as one passed, going and coming. The front part of this floor housed the carpets, oil cloth, some furniture and other larger articles. In the cellar was located the meat market, and a good one, presided over by Thomas Kempsey, and he was a good meat cutter. Also here were stored barrels of molasses, pork, lard etc.

The store was visited almost daily by the young people, after school and on Saturdays, seldom to purchase, and before Christmas probably every article was indelibly pictured in the memory of each one.

Conversations were brisk and many reservations were made, speculating as to whether Santa would bring them this or that object of admiration.

The clerks were sometimes told to tell father or mother that "we" wanted a particular article, (just to (over)

mention it quietly): Frequently a "nice" kindly clerk would "slip" a small boy a piece of candy, some figs or nuts, experiences brightening the whole day--and he went back for more.

The entrance to the Company Office was at the right of the store entry and here were employed at different times; Isaac Ward, George Humphrey, S. Brown Hill, Edmund T. Lukens Harry Perkins, Andrew Ryan, William Sparrow, George Searing, Edwina Perkins, Jr. Jennie Radel, and John and Harry Myers--the latter office boys.

The Manager's office adjoined in the rear and was occupied successively by William Scranton, John Schoonover and Edmund T. Lukens. The second floor of the office building was a taylor shop operated by Joseph and Benjamin Walton. The extreme end of second floor was the drafting room and laboratory. The latter was previously located in the second floor of the old Stone Post Office building, and Mr. Langdon was the chemist at one time. The Company Store idea seems to have been an institution in those days and was pretty generally adopted in most small manufacturing towns; primarily for the convenience of employees, as was the building and renting houses.

One can readily see, however, that here was an opportunity to compel patronage, and make unfair profits, if the Companies were so disposed.

It is probable that similar criticisms were made of Oxford. It is very doubtful if this could have been justified or proven, since the Company's books definitely indicated that over a period of years it was with difficulty that these departments paid their way.

(In a note to the Editor Mr. Perkins says: "A list of these names ought to be built up--that is, a correct list. You might ask others to make any changes or additions. The facts and names are nowhere recorded. We must record what we want soon, for the years are passing, memories grow dim, interest lags, the dear people pass on.")



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A. G. YOUNT, *Moderator*

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