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The
BULLETIN

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By

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Pastor

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH



Oxford Historical Record

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

----- Psalm 37: 23-25

"Almighty God, who art the Giver of all wisdom; enlighten our understandings with knowledge of right, and govern our wills by Thy laws, that no deceit may mislead us, nor temptation corrupt us; that we may always endeavor to do good, and to hinder evil. Amidst all the hopes and fears of this world, take not Thy Holy Spirit from us; but grant that our thoughts may be fixed on Thee, and that we may finally attain everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

(Dr. Samuel Johnson, 1750.)

The Pastor conducts services to-day in the Watchung Presbyterian Church, North Plainfield, N.J.

There will be no services in our Church next Sunday, Sept. 1.

But on Sunday Sept. 8th, there will be regular Sunday School and Church services.

The President of the U.S. has set Sunday Sept. 8th. to be observed by all the churches as a day of prayer for world Peace, and urges all the people to attend the Church services on that day.

The Manse had the pleasure of a visit, on August 13th, by Mr. Albert R. Mount, of Palmyra, who was the guest of Wesley Burd. He was a resident of Oxford some years ago, and came to visit old friends and to view old scenes in Oxford.

We acknowledge receipt of the following for the Bulletin fund:-

Mrs. Mary Jones and Mrs Henry Zulauf, \$2.00 each; Mrs. R. J. Collins and Edward Scharrer, \$1.00 each.

"National Camp" visits Oxford

On August 8th, we got a letter from Prof. William G. Vinal, written from Lake Mashipacong, Sussex County, where he is the leader of a group of students in training for professional leadership in Camping.

He wrote:- "On Saturday, August 10th I am planning to bring twenty-five students from National Camp to visit the Oxford Iron Furnace. I understand that you are very much interested in the history of the furnace.

If it so happens that you are in the neighborhood, I am wondering if you would tell the students some of the lore of the furnace. Since we are visiting many other localities I do not believe we could spend more than fifteen minutes at that point.. We are traveling the Old Mine Road that forenoon and I would expect that we would arrive in Oxford in the early afternoon."

The party duly arrived and we met them at the furnace, and explained its history and importance, and the method of smelting iron. Then we took them to the Shippen Manor and gave them an account of its age and history. But instead of fifteen minutes they stayed here forty-five!

They listened intently, and seemed delighted with the old structures and their stories. We found them to be eager students of history and nature. There were 25 students besides their leaders. They came from 15 States and Canada, and are preparing to become leaders of Camps for city children. This Camp School is conducted by the "Life Magazine" which supports four children camps annually and is planning for more in the future. The students are young men and women, mostly the latter, in the twenties. Prof. Vinal is an attractive gentleman, highly educated and able to explain to the students all natural objects; the names of the trees and flowers, the various rocks and their geological formation.

These intelligent visitors will, we feel assured, spread far and wide the name of Oxford and its history!

The number of visitors to view the Furnace increases weekly, and what it will become in time no one can now fully comprehend.

The Cornwall Furnace

Several readers of the Bulletin have sent us copies of the Phila. Bulletin containing a picture and an account of the old Cornwall furnace, five miles south of Lebanon, Pa.

It was built in 1742, and is the only rival of the kind of Oxford Furnace in the country. We have for years had knowledge of this furnace.

We read in "Iron in all Ages," by James M. Swank (1882) this statement:

"In 1880 it (Oxford Furnace, Ed.) divided with Cornwall furnace in Pennsylvania the honor of being the oldest furnace in the United States that was then in operation." Later we learned from Mr. A. T. Keller, of Bethlehem, Pa. more details about the furnace. From the clipping we learn that a sign in the Cornwall furnace claims incorrectly that it is the "Oldest cold blast furnace in the U.S. 141 years in operation from 1742 to 1883."

But Oxford furnace was in operation until the fall of 1884, and the erection of began in 1741. Besides Oxford built a new and larger furnace in 1870 which was in operation until 1921. Besides its age Cornwall furnace lays claim only to the fact that it made cannon and balls during the Revolution, and that it has proof that Washington and Lafayette visited it in 1778.

The latter claim cannot be made with certainty for Oxford, but it is possible when Washington with his army wintered in Morristown, that he would visit Oxford, only 40 miles away, to encourage its production of war materials. We expect that some time this will be proved by old documents.

But Cornwall never used hot blast which Oxford furnace was the first in this Continent to install and improve; and Cornwall did not found a great city as Oxford founded Scranton, Pa. Nor did Cornwall develop a great iron works as did Oxford furnace here in the 1860s and after. Besides Oxford supplied munitions for the French-Indian war, which is not claimed for Cornwall. Yet Cornwall is widely advertised by Pennsylvania, while Oxford is hardly known in New Jersey. This reflects on our great State. (over)

It is an odd co-incidence that both Oxford and Cornwall furnaces were deeded to their respective States in the same year, 1935.

But the conditions were very different in the physical state of the buildings. This has been due to the care or the neglect of them.

Cornwall has been very fortunate in its owners, a wealthy family which took good care of it, and kept it in repair through all the years since 1883, when last in operation.

While Oxford furnace has been utterly neglected since 1884. And in the 1890s it was largely dismantled. The brick top taken down, and all but the old original structure destroyed, excepting only the old engine house.

The owners of Oxford furnace have apparently in the past never appreciated the historic value of it, and so no effort has been made to conserve it for the future honor of the State and country.

But we know that the State Commission on Historic Sites, and Mr. Leonard Peckitt, President of the Warren Foundry & Pipe Corporation which deeded the Site to the State, are genuinely interested in it, and are anxious to have it restored and properly preserved as a monument of the industrial progress of the State and country, as well as for its remarkable historical merits.

The article in the Philadelphia Bulletin also makes the claim that the ore mines at Cornwall "before 1908 had produced more iron ore than any other single property in the United States." The writer was unaware of the history of the Oxford ore mines, which have been operated for more than 200 years, and are still producing a daily output of 800 tons of iron ore, which is being shipped to the Alan Wood Steel Co. in Conshohocken, Pa.

It is plain that the friends of Oxford and the State of New Jersey are not giving to this rare historic property the advertising that it so richly deserves.



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