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TRADITIONS OF OLD EVESHAM TOWNSHIP

A Paper Read Before the
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TRADITIONS OF OLD EVESHAM TOWNSHIP

THE history of the present is written every day; the local newspaper reporters are only too anxious to collect all the items of news in different neighborhoods for the many newspapers now published and daily events as they transpire, the doings of the people, whether they are spending a summer at the seashore or at the mountains or touring the country in automobiles are all chronicled and may be found in the files of the local papers by the writer who wishes to prepare a local history of modern times. Go back sixty years, and beyond that period many incidents occurred that would be of great interest to the people of the present day, but of these we have slight record, except in the traditions of the past. Before the days of railroads and the telegraph, news traveled very slowly and the local reporters were mainly the school teachers who boarded around, and the shoemakers who went out cat-whipping. These were said to have been great distributors of news in early times, and from their fireside tales many traditions have come down to us, and around these the light of a romantic history ever seems to glimmer.

In my early days a number of elderly men lived in the neighborhood, who were familiar with events that occurred many years ago, and the tales they used to relate sometimes flash across my memory even at this late day. I have written this article in order that the old traditions may not sink entirely into oblivion, and having compared them

with the local history that has been written at different periods, it is safe to presume that many of these traditions are founded on facts, and contain elements of truth, made perhaps a little romantic by the hands of time.

“Gordons History of New Jersey” published in 1834, describes Evesham Township in Burlington County as a tract of country fifteen miles in length, ten miles in breadth, with an area of 67,000 acres. The tax raised in the Township in 1832 was only \$4,226.36 including State, County and Township tax, not enough in these days to build a single mile of Macadam road for an automobile to run on and the people of that period had not even dreamed of such a luxury but fully appreciated the horse as a mode of conveyance and the young people of that period rode with an ease and grace in the saddle not surpassed even in these days of higher civilization.

To show the modes of conveyance that accommodated the people of Evesham in 1832 (then a very large Township) I quote from Gordons History, “there were three chaises, one two horse stage, forty dearbornes, thirty-nine chairs or curricles, eleven gigs or sulkies, and two hundred and twenty-one covered wagons.” The covered wagons were general purpose wagons without springs, used to go to mill and to market, and to take the family to Meeting or Church, when there was no dearborne owned by the head of the house. The three chaises were no doubt elaborate for the rich can ride

in chaises. 'But the dearbornes; I wish I had the pen of Dickens to describe them. I think my father must have owned one of the forty many years after 1832, for away back in memory's waste, there is a picture of a carriage that we used to ride in about 1848 that had great wooden springs which looked like racks, upon which the body was hung with great leather straps; the vehicle had the appearance of an immense grasshopper on wheels, the only redeeming feature being the fringe and trimming in the top, which impressed me in my youthful days as being very beautiful.

The old Township of Evesham, once large enough for a small principality, has been shorn of her glory, Medford Township was cut from her original boundaries in 1847, and in 1872, by an act of the Legislature, Mount Laurel Township was formed from the remaining part of Evesham, and took 13,000 acres more from the parent Township.

The traditions of this paper are mostly confined to Mount Laurel Township, though in a few instances they may go a little beyond its borders.

Mount Laurel is known through its early history as Evesham Mount. Neither Gordon's History nor Barber and Howe's Historical Collections mention Mount Laurel. The villiage was called Lower Evesham. A school house once stood on the East side of the Mount, nearly opposite the meeting-house; a teacher by the name of Hannah Gillingham taught school there and admiring the laurel that grew in profusion on the hill, said it should be called Mount Laurel. Her suggestion seemed to meet the approval of the neighborhood, and when the Post Office was established in the village

Jan. 13—1849 it was called Mount Laurel Post Office, and the stage line that started to carry the mail to Philadelphia and passed through the towns and villages on its route; was called the Mount Laurel Stage. Nearly fifty years ago the timber on the Mount was cut, then a beautiful growth of Laurel came up that, gave the hill the appearance of a flower garden, when the laurel was in bloom, and permanently fixed the name of Mount Laurel which has been given to the village as well as the Mount.

By a Deed bearing date 10-20-1688, and recorded in the Secretary of State's Office at Trenton, in Book B of Deeds, page 506, William Evans became possessed of three hundred acres of land in the Township of Evesham, at a place called Mount Pray. Judge Clayton Lippincott, in an account written by him of the early settlement of Mount Laurel, says, "There may have been and no doubt were white persons here before William Evans came, and some way wanderer may have given the Mount that name, but we have no record of it. Since then it has gone by the name of Mount Evans, Evesham Mount and Mount Laurel."

George Fox and his companion were on a religious visit to Friends in North America in 1672 and most likely passed over this place in their journey from New Castle in the State of Delaware to Middletown, near New York City. George Fox says in his Journal, "They traveled sometimes a whole day without seeing a man or woman, house or dwelling place, and their entertainment was mostly from the Indians who treated them kindly."

Although they traveled a long distance, there is nothing left on record to show to any certainty the route they

took, but it is the only account we have of any persons traveling through West Jersey until after the road from Burlington to Salem was laid out in 1682. One thing that seems to strengthen the conclusion that George Fox and his friends passed over Mount Laurel is the fact that a road is mentioned in some papers of an early date called the great road running from Haddonfield to Mount Holly, it passed over the north side of this Mount; it was very crooked to avoid hills, streams and swamps and the soil generally sand, which made it better to travel in wet weather. There is no doubt but that this road was an old Indian trail cleared out and used by the public, as there does not seem to be any official record of it. Traces of this old road may still be seen in the woods and on the hill sides.

William Evans and Elizabeth, his wife, came from Wales about 1685. They landed at Burlington and walked to Mount Laurel, mostly through unbroken forests, inhabited only by Indians. Their first habitation was a cave to the east of what is now Mount Laurel village, near a small, swift-flowing stream.

The fact that the first Friend's Meeting held at Mount Laurel was held at the house of William Evans in 1694 is proof that William and Elizabeth did not live in the cave until William's death in 1728, as stated by one writer; they probably built their log house as soon as it could be conveniently done.

The Indians were very friendly to these early settlers and furnished them with such provisions as they had for moderate compensation, and, the kind feeling being reciprocated, it soon became a flourishing settlement. There was an Indian path that started from the Delaware River, near where How-

ard Taylor now lives, and passed over the East side of the ridge on which Moorestown now stands and over the East side of Mount Laurel, thence on to the sea shore. This trail was much used by the Indians during the summer season, and would have made the new home of William Evans and his wife rather unpleasant if the Indians had not been friendly. That part of their path between Moorestown and Mount Laurel was used as a private road until 1765, when it was laid out for a public road and used until 1795, when the present straight road was laid out." *Judge Lippincott's Reminiscences.*

Not long ago, at the home of Ezra and Marianna Darnell, I was shown the Bible that William Evans brought with him from Wales, when he settled in the cave at Mount Laurel. This Bible was printed in 1572, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and known as the Bishop's Bible. The book is in a remarkable state of preservation, the printing clear and plain, all of the leaves appear to be intact; the original cover had worn out a number of years ago, and been replaced with a new one. William Evans died 12-25-1728, and probably left this Bible to his son, Thomas Evans, who had written this inscription upon the fly leaf:—"Thomas Evans, his Bible, which I give to my sons and grand sons and not to be sold but to go from one family to another as they may have a mind to read in it. Then to return it to the oldest son or grandson and to be kept in good order." The request of the ancestor seems to have been faithfully carried out by the succeeding generations of his family. The Bible is now in the care of Henry Evans, eldest son of Joseph Evans, not long since deceased.

William Evans was evidently a man

who did justly and loved mercy; he treated with the Indians in the spirit of truth and justice and not with a sword and fire water; no wonder his descendants have cherished his memory, for he helped to plant the Province of West Jersey with liberty and law. We have a record of a Friend's Meeting being held at his house in 1694, which Meeting was probably continued until the first Meeting House was built at Mount Laurel, about 1698. The old part of the present Meeting House was built in 1760 and one record says enlarged in 1790, but the date on the west end is 1798.

On the 10th of the 1st month, 1717, William Evans and wife conveyed one acre and 32 perches of land to John Haines, John Sharp, Frances Austin, and Samuel Lippincott trustees appointed at a Monthly Meeting of Friends, held at Newton in the County of Gloucester West New Jersey to be held by them in trust, for the benefit, use and behoof of the said people, called Quakers, at Evesham and thereabouts, "and for a place to bury their dead."

Several purchases were made subsequently.

Evesham Monthly was established by Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting in 1760, and the preparative Meeting in the same year.

Whoever will take a view of the old Meeting House on the north side where the ivy grows luxuriantly will see that a wing must at some time run out at right angles to the present building; there is a depression in the ground near where this wing must have stood which tradition says was where an old well was filled up.

Both the British troops and the Colonial Militia are said to have occupied the old Meeting House at different

times during the Revolutionary War. It is said that the wing that has been torn away was used by the British as a commissary department for a short time.

From inquiries that I have made of very reliable people, in reference to these traditions. I have every reason to believe them true. There is no doubt that when the British left Philadelphia and marched to Monmouth that a detachment of troops came by way of the Great Road spoken of as running from Haddonfield to Mount Holly, and recalling incidents I remember to have heard some of the old people relate, the troops visited the houses then standing near their route of march, and plundered the inhabitants. There is an incident connected with an old brick house on the White Horse Road, about one mile Southwest of Fellowship, just over the Mount Laurel Township line, in Camden County. The kitchen part of this old mansion is not far from the road as it now runs, while the larger part of the house, built much more than a hundred years ago in the Colonial style, fronts what is now the back yard; it is said it fronted the road when it was built. Whether or not the Great Road passed in front of this dwelling I cannot tell, but the old part first spoken of was standing at the time of the Revolution. The British troops came there to plunder; an officer ordered a colored man, belonging to the place to hold his horse while he went into the house, the colored man hated the British and refused to obey the command, upon which the officer drew his sword and would have run it through the negro if another officer had not prevented him.

The Historical Collections of New Jersey, published in 1844, give an ac-

count of Jonathan Beesley, a Captain in the Cumberland County Militia, who was mortally wounded by the British in the march across New Jersey, in June 1778. The Historian writes as follows:- "Arduous in the cause, and guided by a sense of duty, he paid little regard for his personal safety. He was in the neighborhood of Haddonfield, reconnoitering with two other officers, when they were fired upon by a party of British, secreted in a rye field. He fell mortally wounded into their hands. He was conducted to the enemy's camp and questioned respecting the situation and probable movements of Washington's Army, but peremptorily refused to give them any information. Finding that neither entreaties or threats would prevail in extorting anything from him to the injury of his country, the British Officer in command ordered his own surgeon to attend him, and take proper care of him, remarking that so brave a man should not be treated with indignity. The British took him with them on their march, and left him at a house, owned by Hinchman Haines, about half a mile southeast of Mount Laurel, where the gallant officer soon expired and was buried by the British with the honors of war. The house referred to was a very old one when I first knew it, and stood on ground late the property of T. Clark Haines. It was torn down about thirty years ago. There is a legend that after the officer's death occurred at the old house, a phantom horseman was seen to emerge from it, whose appearance always meant death to some of the British, if any were in the neighborhood, but this phantom apparently disappeared at the close of the Revolution, feeling its mission was ended after the country's freedom was

gained. Not very far above Cox's Corner, on the road to Medford, and close to the old brick house now owned by William Jones, a man was killed by the British and buried in the yard, but few of the farm houses on the line of their march escaped a visit, and at least one detachment of the British army must have marched by the Great Road from Haddonfield to Mount Holly, then on to meet their fate a little later upon the field of Monmouth.

The following account of the Signal Code that was established between New York and Philadelphia was given to me by Edmund Darnell, who when a boy assisted his older brother, Charles Darnell, in operating the signal apparatus in the tower erected upon Mount Laurel.

In the early forties a firm of merchants, known as Wm. C. Bridges & Co. conceived the idea of establishing a line of signals between New York and Philadelphia. This was done by erecting signal towers upon the highest hills across the State of New Jersey between the two cities. The towers were built higher than the tallest trees growing around them, so that a fair view could be obtained. Near the top of the tower there was a small room for the operator, and in this room were the wheels, ropes and pulleys that regulated the signals on the top of the tower. The signals consisted of a long finger, very much like the Railroad signals now in use. The raising of this finger in a certain position was one signal, then it worked in conjunction with a signal board something on the order of a blind shutter, the finger and the signal board could be placed in many different positions, and every position had its meaning. The signals were started at a certain time in the morning, or

if it happened to be foggy, as soon as the mist cleared. The operators were furnished with powerful telescopes, and copied the signals from whichever point they started. If from New York, Mount Laurel Station got its signal from Arney's Mount, Philadelphia took its signal from Mount Laurel. If the message started in Philadelphia, Mount Laurel got it from the top of the Stock Exchange, and the other stations all the way to New York copied in quick succession. One man in the tower looked through the telescope and worked the machine that set the signals. The other man kept the signal code book before him, and noted every signal made. The note book was submitted to the Inspector, when he came round, and operators were held responsible for any mistakes they made. The signal code was not understood by the men who worked the machinery. It was their duty to copy accurately and quickly. Sometimes it would take the operators several hours during the day, and if business was very brisk, different colored lights were burned as signals in the night. A certain position of the finger told the operators when the last dispatch had been sent, and they could leave the tower. While the operators were not supposed to understand the signals of the Company, they had signals of their own by which they sometimes talked to each other. An amusing anecdote is told of a Hotel keeper at Medford who turned this circumstance to his advantage. The Presidential election of 1844 was an exciting one, and in those days the result of the election was for sometime a matter of doubt. When the returns from the country had to be carried by men on horseback, and newspapers did not circulate as they do now. The Hotel

keeper above mentioned came to the operators of Mount Laurel Signal Station and asked if they could in any way ascertain how New York State had gone. They sent their signals over the hills and word soon came back that it was pretty certain New York had gone Democratic. Furnished with this information, the Hotel Keeper went home, made a number of bets and it was said made a large sum of money by obtaining his information in advance. The signal code worked satisfactorily until the invention of Morse's Telegraph in 1844, which soon led to a telegraph line from New York to Philadelphia, and the usefulness of the signal code was at an end. The line was discontinued, the telescopes were taken away, the tower stood on Mount Laurel until time and the elements caused its decay.

Edmund Darnell endeavored to preserve the finger and signal board by storing them in the loft at Union Mills, but they were destroyed by fire when the mills were burned.

It could not have been long after the signal code Station was discontinued that Mount Laurel became the rendezvous of a class of men quite as objectionable to the peaceful, orderly and freedom-loving friends of Lower Evesham, as the British or the Hessians. These men were kidnappers from the South. In a little house now on the farm owned by Charles Gardiner, just below the Northerly side of the Mount, dwelt a colored man named Johnson, with his wife and three children. Johnson was a free negro, but his wife had not been freed. The family worked on the farm owned by Edward L. Godfrey at the present time. I think at the time the incident occurred that I am about to relate, it belonged to Dr.

Page, and was occupied by a tenant. The kidnappers watched their opportunity from their concealment and swooped down upon the poor colored woman as she was milking in the barnyard of her employer, capturing her and her three little children. They hurriedly started with them toward the South.

The good Friends around Mount Laurel and surrounding country were highly excited and indignant at such proceedings, and hastily subscribed one thousand dollars with which to buy the freedom of the colored family and restore them to their home. The capturers had gotten a good start, and the question arose, who should be sent in pursuit, as the undertaking was a very dangerous one, and it required a man of nerve to venture across the border of the free State on such a mission. There was a man, however, equal to the occasion. Thomas Haines Dudley was raised on a farm not far from Mount Laurel, and had left his early home to study law. The following account I copied from his biographical sketch:—"Disguising himself in the character of a slave trader, who were often Northern men from the borders, Mr. Dudley procured a large broad-brimmed hat, a whip, and taking a pair of pistols, he followed the track of the fugitives, and was so fortunate as to discover them near the Head of Elk, in Maryland. He gave out that he was from a distant part of the country, buying slaves to take South. The sale was not accomplished without its dangers, for presuming he must have a large sum of money with him, he overheard a plot to rob him, and sat up all night in a hotel, with his pistols before him on the table. Keeping up the character of a slave trader, he behaved so

roughly to the woman and child that they did not recognize him, and took him for what he pretended to be. He ordered them to be locked up safely until he could take them away in the morning. The poor woman, overcome with fear, reluctantly followed. Making a detour South to deceive the kidnappers, it was not until on the boat at Wilmington, Del., that he asked the poor creature if she did not know him, and received for reply—all she wanted to. Her fears turned to joy when he said, "Don't you remember Nancy Dudley's little boy, Tom, who used to play pranks upon the cows you milked at Evesham, and make them kick the pail over?" And when he told her she was going home, her happiness can be imagined. The price paid for the woman and child, sixteen months old, was one hundred and fifty dollars. Of the other children, a boy and girl, it is said the boy was advertised for sale in Baltimore, and was bought by Mr. Dudley for ninety dollar before the sale came off. The girl was purchased by a lady in Baltimore.

We will now leave Mount Laurel and move down the road towards Evesboro. About a mile from the former place, we come to two small streams of water which cross the road near together. In the early days the high land along these streams, south of the Evesboro Road, must have been a famous Indian camping ground. I know of no place in the County where so many Indian relics have been found. The largest collection I ever saw from one locality was in the possession of the late Waters B. Hurff. When the sandy slope above the streams was covered with the primeval forests, it must have been an ideal place for an Indian encampment. These Indians

must have been friendly with the white men, as there are no traditions of massacres. As far back as I can remember, there was an old Indian, called Joel, who came occasionally among the white people, and I imagine he was one of the last of the Leni Lenape Tribes that remained in this neighborhood.

The farm house near Evesboro, now owned by Aaron L. Collins, was once a hotel, but who dispensed apple whiskey to thirsty travelers, on that sandy road, I have not been able to ascertain.

Coming down the Churh Road from Evesboro, you soon come upon lands now owned by Horace Roberts. More than a hundred years ago, William Stockton, inherited from his father, about the year 1780, a large tract of land, including with other lands, most of Horace Roberts' homestead farm. William Stockton deserves mention here. He was a large land owner; a prominent citizen and business man, and I sometimes come across old documents to which his name is affixed. He was a member of the New Jersey Legislature and was appointed to remove the last of the Indians from Burlington County in 1802. William Stockton sold his plantation in Evesham to Samuel Roberts, the great grandfather of Horace Roberts, in 1888.

Passing on to the farm, now owned by Charles D. Jones, we have now come upon ground where many different scenes have been enacted. This place was owned, at the time of the Revolution, by a plain Friend, Nathan Haines, of Evesham. His tombstone is South of where old Coles' Church stood in the old ground of Colestown Cemetery. There is no military prefix to the name on the tombstone, although

Nathan raised a company of soldiers for the Revolution. Nathan was opposed to war, and convinced that it was at variance with his Quaker principles, no doubt would have lived up to his convictions had he been a bachelor, but he was not a bachelor. In fact he had his second wife, who was formerly Dorcas Pendegrast, she came from the West Indies, and at the breaking out of the Revolution, she had the conviction that a man with the wealth and influence of her husband should be patriotic enough to use his influence for the benefit of his country. The convictions of Dorcas prevailed. Nathan raised a company, and marched with it to Amboy. Uniforms in those days were not plenty among the militia and Nathan wore his Quaker garb. There is an old story that they passed by a place where a parrot was in a cage, hanging by the roadside. The parrot noticing Nathan's dress, called out "Quaker, Quaker, a fighting Quaker!" But Nathan was not a fighting Quaker. He differed in that respect from some who went to the Army, who declared, "That in the cause of Freedom's Day There was a time to fight and pray."

Nathan got back home as soon as possible, where he was captured by the British, and taken by them to Haddonfield, but finding there was not much harm in him, it is said they soon let him go, but took good care to plunder his place of everything that was, in any way, valuable to them, driving off the cattle and horses. None of the stock was recovered, excepting one fine, spirited horse that broke away from its captors, and was found the next morning, after the British took their departure, standing at the farm yard gate.

Fifty years ago, there was a piece

of timber standing on land adjoining the Nathan Haines Farm, where it was said the Haines' family buried their silverware and other valuables before their place was visited by the British. Many years after Nathan Haines' death, the farm passed out of the Haines family, and came into the possession of Allen Jones, who planted large peach orchards on it, with great success, the fruit grew large and fine, and brought the highest market price in those days. Horace Roberts' famous crops of peaches on the adjoining farm seems like history repeating itself in that neighborhood.

Passing on down the Coles' Church Road, with cultivated fields on each side, you would hardly realize that within my recollection the greater part of the ground was covered with timber until you came to the County Line Stream.

There was an old farm house standing on the west side of the Church Road, some distance in the woods, at that time, to which the British paid a visit. Marks of their visit were still visible on the framework when the house was torn down many years ago. The Place is now owned by William W. Cook, but the timber that stood between the house and the road was cut more than fifty years since. Passing a little further along the Church Road, you will see back in the field on the east side, a very ancient looking house; it was old sixty years ago. In the house tradition says a poor boy lived, who was suffering with a disease which necessitated the amputation of one of his limbs that his life might be saved, and money was contributed by the people of the neighborhood to pay a skillful surgeon from Philadelphia to perform the operation. That surgeon was Dr. McClellan, the

father of Gen. George B. McClellan, so well known in the history of the late war. Go with me a few hundred yards further on, and you will come to a house, on the same side of the road, the front of this house is stone, the remainder of the structure is wood. There is nothing remarkable about this construction, but could these stones speak, they could tell a most interesting history. They were once a part of the wall of the famous "Fountain Hotel" that was situated not more than half a mile distant. We will walk across the fields in a northeasterly direction to the spot, we will come to a winding road that runs mainly in a northeasterly direction from the Fellowship Turnpike, and crossing the south branch of the Pensauken Creek, comes out into the Haddonfield Road near the Cemetery. Start from the Southwest side of the bridge over Pensauken Creek in the crooked road and walk to an angle where the road turns toward the Fellowship Turnpike, and you will have passed through the Main Street of what was formerly Colestown. It is now as quiet and dreary a place as Sleepy Hollow, excepting when the Italian pickers, who live in a dwelling recently moved on the site of the old town, remind the passer-by that ancient Colestown is sharing its honors with the remains of the Roman Empire. But go back one hundred years and walk over the same route, Westward from the bridge an immense Mill pond, almost a lake, extends across the meadows nearly to the Church Road, the water power drives a large Saw Mill, and its operation gives employment and brings people to the place. This pond is said to have been a famous place for skaters, and no doubt was a great attraction

to the boarders at the Fountain Hotel, which stood but a short distance away. A mineral spring, noted for its health-giving qualities, attracted guests to this famous hotel a hundred years ago, the place was easy of access from Philadelphia, and became a great summer resort. The chemical constituents of the water in the spring were given in an analysis, made, if I have been informed correctly, by S. Benezett, M. D., and T. Cutbush, Chemist. This analysis, with the chemists' names, was chiseled on the stone near the spring, but the stone has been gone for many years, and the spring has entirely disappeared. Several dwelling houses helped to make up the town. Of these but one remains. It is on the Camden County side of the stream, not far from the bridge, and is fast falling into decay. It was once a residence of George Risdon, a noted Justice of the Peace of his day, who married many couples in this house, and his services were so well performed that I have never heard of any couples being divorced, who were married by him—but times have changed.

The crooked Colestown Road was once a part of the stage route from Mount Laurel to Camden, and the merry blast of the driver's horn has many times reached across the hills and vales. It is five o'clock in the afternoon and the Mount Laurel stage coach is coming down the hill on the Camden County side of the stream. We will get in and ride up to Fellowship. This village started with fair prospects. At one time it contained two stores; five mechanics shops, where the tradesmen with their apprentices pursued their different occupations, and for several years a boarding school was kept there by

Samuel Smith, a famous mathematician of his day. The first Catholic Church in that part of the country was erected at Fellowship in 1854, and services held in it on Sundays until a Church was built in Moorestown, about 1867.

The young people of the present generation hardly realize how the rural population lived up to the time of the Civil War. The country was dotted all over with small towns and villages; each one the center of a small rural community, and containing at least one store which was often the post office, besides the different shops of the mechanics, who supplied the requirements of the neighborhood. Most of these small places were connected by a stage line with a large town or city, the stage driver being the general express agent of the community.

After the close of the war in 1865 Railroads were rapidly built, connecting many of the more important towns, but leaving many a promising little village out in the cold. Fortunate indeed were the places that happened to be located on the lines of improvement, for other changes came, detrimental to the villages, distant from Railroad Stations.

The Rural Free Delivery took away the post office from the small town, and the mail coach that formerly connected the town with the outside world retired from business. The Farmer no longer goes to the small village for his mail. The store and the shops miss him, the little trade of the place languishes, no new houses are being built, people are moving into larger towns located on the main lines of travel, and you cannot help recalling some of the lines of Goldsmith's Deserted Village,-

“But now the sounds of population

fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the
gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown foot
way tread;
But all the bloom and flush of life is
fled."

We will pass through Fellowship and turn toward Moorestown, stopping to look at the brick house on the corner, occupied by Charles Andrews. The date on the northwest end tells us the house was built in 1800, and is in such a good state of preservation, it looks as if it might round out the present century. A little further on near the gravel hole is an old house that, many years ago, was the residence of the last surviving soldier of the Revolution, from that neighborhood. Further on in a field, east of Aaron L. Collins' residence (where his orchard is now growing) a trial was made in the summer of 1853 of one of the first mowing machines brought into the old Township of Evesham. I think the machine was a McCormick. It was a heavy, clumsy affair in comparison with the mowing machines now in use, and was drawn by three horses. Many people came to see the trial. Mowing Machines were very expensive in those days, and sometimes two or three farmers would own one in partnership. It was several years later that they came into general use, and cutting the hay crop by hand became a thing of the past. Harvesting machinery was not popular with the working people when first introduced; it seemed to them like taking from the farm hand the labor for which he was best paid.

It might be well to mention some of the customs prevailing from early times until about 1860. It was the practice of the village mechanics to

take apprentices to teach them trades. You found apprentice boys in all the shops over the country, for in those days there were no manual training schools, and the boy was supposed to serve five years' apprenticeship to become expert in his chosen occupation. The country boy's indentures mostly stipulated that he should be allowed a week's harvest every year while serving his time. This gave the boy an opportunity to earn some money for himself and the farmers a chance to procure help during an important season. The boy considered it a good outing to mow or reap all day, to try his strength and skill in competition with other boys, and dance at night with the girls, going from one place to another, his week's harvest was his summer holiday. The apprentice boys required neither physical culture nor base ball, nor foot ball to develop their muscle or to train them to be quick in action, and when the call came for men in 1861, some of the best soldiers came from the plow and the work shop, and

"Many fell where shrapnel roared and
bullet sang."

At the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893, there was among the relics exhibited from New Jersey an old sickle in good state of preservation. This sickle was used by my father in the days of his apprenticeship. He was at the time of the Exposition, the only one of a band of reapers of former times that had not been gathered in the harvest of death.

The Township of Evesham, described in Gordon's History (embracing then the Township of Medford) was famous for its deposits of marl. How this was dug at one time and used as fertilizer will soon be but a memory of the past. Any cold winter morn-

ing in the fifties, when the ground was frozen hard, the continuous hoof beats of the horses, and the rattle of wagons going to the marl diggings for their loads could be heard from four o'clock in the morning until about eight, then there would be a lull until about ten, when the loaded teams would begin to return in long lines as they happened to fall in together. Most of the teams would return in the afternoon for the second load, and this hauling would be kept up continuously, when the roads were good. Marl was the great fertilizer in the olden time in Evesham Township. Its judicious use, with the fertilizing material of the farm, and the application of lime at certain periods, kept up the fertility of the land, as it was farmed at that time.

We are admonished not to look backward, but after all it is comforting to remember the time when you would raise potatoes with marl, without the interference of the bugs; when apples grew without spraying; when cows did not know about tuberculosis, and microbes had not appeared in the milk, or if they appeared, were not recognized, and the people grew up strong and healthy, and took not thought of the perplexities that would appear to annoy a future generation. But I am pausing by the wayside, and will proceed on, past Aaron Collins' farm and come upon a tract of land that formerly belonged to the Hugg family. They were very extensive land owners at one time, the old house on the farm, now occupied by Eber Haines, was built by one of the ancestors of the Hugg family and must be one of the oldest mansions in the neighborhood. I regret that the year of its erection could not be ascertained. The first of the Hugg family who settled in this

country came from Castle Ellis, County of Wexford, Ireland, in 1683. He was a Quaker, who had suffered for his principles, and sought the freedom of the new world, where he became a leading citizen. His grandsons were officers in the Revolution and members of the family seem to have been very prominent in military and civil life down to the present time. My first recollection is of Richard M. Hugg, who lived on Elbow Lane Road, on the farm now owned by Frank P. Pierson. He was one of the leading citizens in the old Township of Evesham, in my boyhood days, was chosen to fill positions of trust and retained the respect and confidence of the community during his long and useful life. One of his sons took an active part in raising troops for the Union Army, at the commencement of the Civil War but died in the early part of the struggle for the Union. Another son became a surgeon in the Navy, the last male descendant of the family, in this neighborhood, our lamented townsmen, Charles F. Hugg, passed away a few years ago. The women in the family married prominent citizens, and their descendants bid fair to keep up the reputation the family has maintained for the past two hundred years,

Having made quite a circuit of the neighborhood, I must go back to Mount Laurel through Chester Township, and turning toward Moorestown, will take a short cut by way of Prospect Avenue, to pass by the house famous in the ancient history of the town, and rescued from oblivion by my friend, John C. Hopkins. I will only stop long enough to repeat a verse written for another place, but will apply with truth to the house on the hill, a venerable landmark,

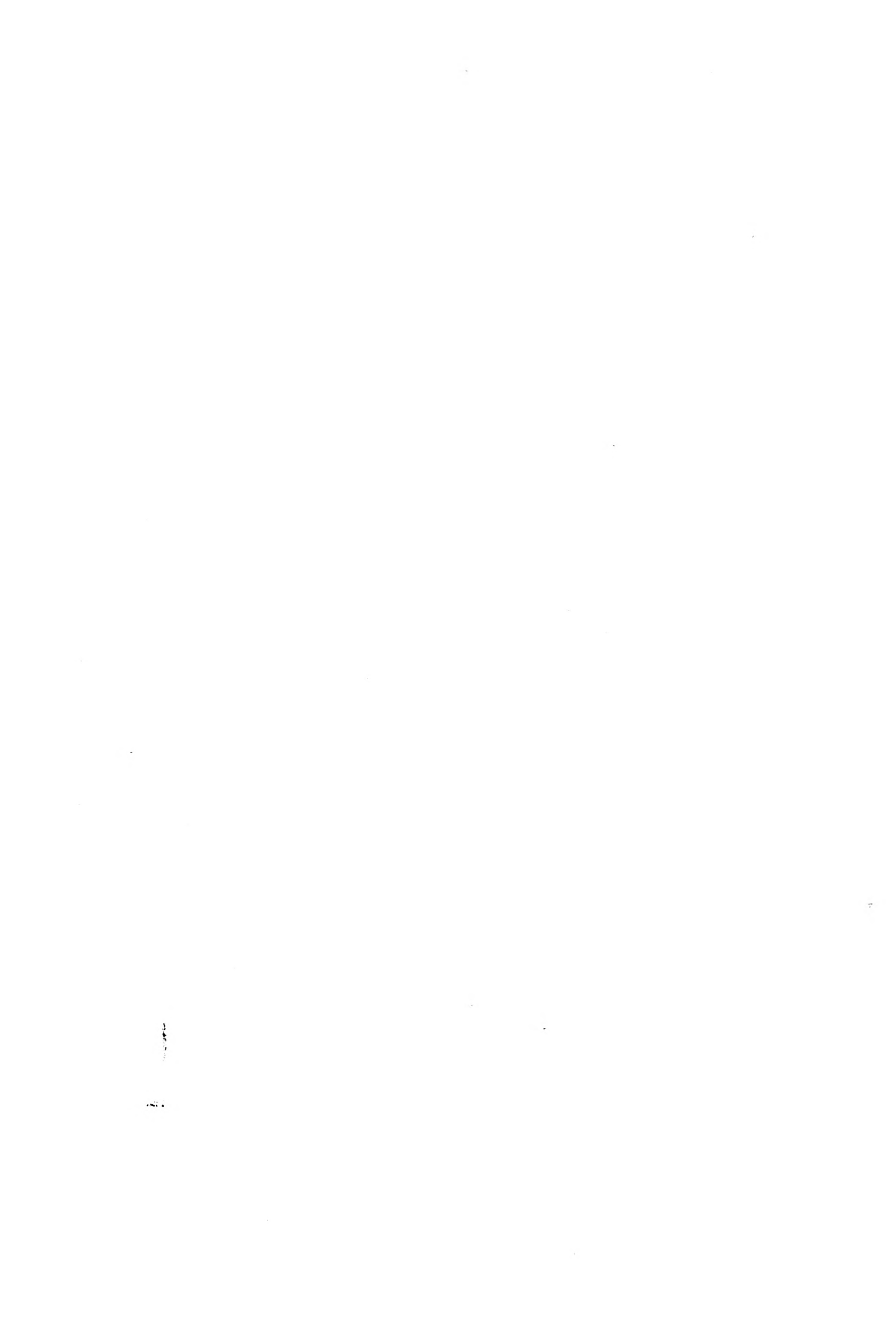
“Ancient place preserved so well,
Thou couldst many a legend tell
Of the chiefs of ancient fame,
Who to share thy shelter came.
Heroes brave, whom duty calls,
Have gathered in thy spacious halls,
Patriots, true, with Lafayette
'Round thy plenteous board have met.
Here with kindred minds they
planned
Rescue for an infant land.
When the British lions roar
Echoed 'round our leaguered shore.”

Passing on up Main Street, I look
over toward Mount Laurel, across the
valley southeast of Moorestown.
Rising high above sea level, it is a
conspicuous landmark, and can be seen
for many miles on the other side of

the Delaware River. The greater
part of the Mount now belongs to the
State as a forest reservation, owing to
the generosity of many citizens of
Moorestown and vicinity, who subscrib-
ed half the money, the State paying
the other half for its purchase, in
order that the trees growing there on
might not all be cut at once, and that
time should not mar the beauty of the
view.

The aged love to wander over old
places connected with early history to
awaken recollections. The young
people should be encouraged to take
an interest in such places to awaken
feelings of patriotism, to create a
love of home, and a higher appreciation
of the blessings we now enjoy.





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