

A HISTORY OF LITTLE FALLS

Centennial Edition

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*A History Of*  
*Little Falls*

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*Centennial Edition*  
*1968*

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by  
ROBERT R. BECKWITH  
Professor of History  
at  
Montclair State College  
Montclair, N. J.

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Edited and published by Louis J. Vorgetts, Wayne, N. J.,  
under the auspices of Little Falls Centennial Celebration  
Committee. Mrs. A. J. Banks, Chairman and Mrs. Raoul  
Barton, co-chairman.

# Centennial Year Highlights

The kickoff of the centennial year on April 2 at the municipal building on Stevens Avenue, would hardly have been the successful event it was without the huge anniversary cake fashioned by four of our eminent Little Falls citizens.

The four are Joseph Farnese, owner of Farnese Pastry Shop, 82 Newark-Pompton-Turnpike in Singac; John Pullara, executive vice-president of the Little Savings & Loan Association at 86 Main Street; Mr. Joseph Pullara, John's father, of 41 Ridge Avenue and Larry Melone of 52 Main Street.



**BIRTHDAY CAKE TEAM**—It was a festive occasion on April 2 when 100 candles on the huge Little Falls Centennial Committee's birthday cake were lit by Jacob DeYoung and Edward Lawler, the township's two oldest living mayors. Baker Joe Farnese, lower left, puts the finishing touches on giant "cake" marking the 100th birthday of Little Falls while members of the centennial celebration committee look on. Clockwise from left are Joe Pullara, Larry Melone and John Pullara. (Herald-News Photo)

Farnese designed and decorated the huge cake which was 9½-feet tall, weighed about 200 pounds and had three tiers and 100 candles on top. Farnese used about 300 egg whites and pounds upon pounds of sugar to make the icing for the anniversary masterpiece. The cake, made out of masonite, was lit at the anniversary kickoff by the township's two oldest-living mayors, Jacob DeYoung and Edward Lawler, who today still is the superintendent of the township's sewer system. It was the most spectacular events in Little Falls' history as hundreds of township residents and dignitaries, many of them garbed in clothes worn in 1868, solemnly watched the two elderly statesmen light the candles.

Pullara helped Farnese decorate the cake in white, green and chocolate brown with "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LITTLE FALLS," clearly written on it. Pullara actually co-ordinated the fashioning of the huge cake which looked good enough to eat. However, Pullara and his committee prayed for fair weather, which they got, because if it had rained there would only have been masonite left.

The fourth man on the cake-making team was Larry Melone of 52 Main Street. He actually constructed the framework of the cake in his basement, with the help of Mr. Joseph Pullara. After it was put together, it was moved to John Pullara's garage where the finishing touches were accomplished.

Then the road department team of four headed by Walter Romaine, superintendent, slowly moved the finished product to the municipal building by truck. They crawled the short distance in 45 minutes, holding their breaths and ever on the alert to prevent the fragile pastry giant from falling apart. His road department helpers were Ralph Gambuti, Dan Gianduso and Jim Vitorito.

All concerned took turns being on guard at the town hall to keep away small fry, who had a grand time plunging fingers into the pastry wonder and coming out with the sweet mouth-watering icing. After the celebration the cake was moved back into John Pullara's garage by the road crew and much later dismantled by Pullara.

Through the efforts of Representative Charles S. Joelson in Washington, the Little Falls 100th anniversary was marked by special stamping of outgoing mail. At the special ceremony at the local post office on Warren Street were, from left: Congressman Joelson, Mayor John Kosachook, Mrs. Grace Banks, Centennial chairman; William Fylstra, postmaster and Mrs. Raoul Barton, Centennial co-chairman.



# Centennial Year Highlights



**CENTENNIAL BALL COMMITTEE** — Here are the committee members who arranged the centennial ball at the Westmount Country Club. They are: standing, from left, Mrs. William (Marge) Donato, Miss Katherine O'Brien, Mrs. John (Elsie) Curreri, chairman and Mrs. Charles W. (Shirley) Hood.

**A SPECIAL AND HONORED GUEST** — Mrs. James E. (Elizabeth) Young, third from left, is one of Little Falls oldest living residents and one respected by all. Others in photo are Mayor John Kosachook, Mrs. Elsie Curreri, chairman of the ball committee and James B. Young, former Little Falls mayor and committeeman and Mrs. Young's son.



**SCENE AT THE BALL** — Shown above are one of the many groups at the centennial ball at the Westmount Country Club, at which there were many guests from out-of-town. Included in photo are Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Ball (his father for many years published the Little Falls Times Herald, a local weekly newspaper) seated at left; Mr. and Mrs. Duggan, seated, center; Committeeman and Mrs. Charles Dorman, center, standing.

# Members Of The Little Falls Centennial Celebration Committee

Mrs. Albert (Grace) Banks  
General Chairman

Mrs. Raoul (Barbara) Barton  
Co-Chairman

**STEERING COMMITTEE** — Secretary, Mrs. Charles Dorman; Treasurer, Mr. Robert Grohol; Finance, Mr. John Pullara; Publicity, Mrs. L. Rhinesmith; Picnic, Mr. John Scilliri and Mr. Len Rhinesmith; Purchasing, Mr. T. W. E. Bowdler, Mr. Aftan Romancak and Mr. James B. Young.

Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. R. Harrison and Mrs. H. Brychta; Attorney, Mr. Wm. Hengeveld; Decorating, Mr. Robert Steffy, Mr. Thomas Dawson and Mayor John Kosachook.

**GENERAL COMMITTEE** — Passaic Valley High School, Robert D. Steffy; Little Falls School, J. Nash; Home & School Association, Thomas Dawson; Little Falls Methodist Church, Mrs. Wesley White; First Reformed Church, William A. Foos and Charles Aymar; Our Lady of the Holy Angels Church, Virginia Hewitt and Marilyn McGlynn; Woman's Club of Little Falls, Elsie Curreri, Jane Pinadella, Mrs. Donato and Miss K. O'Brien; Little Falls Junior Woman's Club, Mrs. John Hull; Business & Professional Dept. Woman's Club, Jean Belding and Dorothy Morehouse; Boy Scouts of America, Mr. T. Sisti.

Also, Ladies Aux. Enterprise Fire Company, Mary Bulas and Adeline Crane; Great Notch Fire Auxiliary, Millie Francisco, Florence Hastaba and Marge Eichert; Eagle Rescue Squad Auxiliary, Shirley Nowak and Lucille Tuvasik; American Legion Singac Memorial Post No. 108, John M. Riley and Henry Ruffalo; V.F.W. Post No. 7506, A. Collins and M. Zailo.

Daughters of America's Star of Little Falls, Orva Coryell and Lydia Zarida; Knights of Columbus, Council 3835, Anthony Sisco; O.E.S. Chapter No. 224, Jane Flannagan and Frances Stackpole; Passaic Valley Moose Lodge No. 1787, J. L. Neopolitan.

Little Falls Recreation Commission, Harold Hendershott and Madeleine D'Alleinne; Girl Scouts of America, Mrs. H. Brychta; Little Falls Jaycees, Guy Milne and Barry Hughes; American Legion Post No. 121, Paul Lisach; Little Falls Athletic Club, Finn Shaw and E. Johnson.

The Centennial Celebration Committee wishes to thank the following for their help and contributions.

High school students that worked on the Centennial Signs:

Dutch Boy, Chris Symialowicz and Jackie Fitzwater; Lincoln, Wayne Hyde and Dan McFarlane; Russian Man, Neal Guimmarra and Mike Moltane; Indian, Keith Giffin, Sandy Conti and Reg Barbieri.

Dutch Girl, Mary Ellen Fletcher and Janet Heinis; Mary, Donna Iandoli, Greg Noordyk and Rich Scholer; Russian Woman, Denise Saraceno and Maryann Montone; Drummer Boy, Nancy Avolio and Lorraine Romaniello;

Mr. Kubiora, teacher.

Printing the signs: Roger Farkask, Chairman; Art Katz, John Gallaway, John Lombard, Ken Heinis, Steve Spiak, Bob Holmberg and Richard Volpe.

Woodworking: James Worden, Teacher; Charles De Robbio, Paul Gallo, Dan Pardine, Bruce Fusco, Steven Simon, and Martin Abramovitch.

Superintendent — Dr. Edward T. Schneider; Mr. James Barresi, Mr. Townsend, Mr. Joseph Mooney, and Mr. Ernest Smith, and all of the students in the Band and Choir.

To the local merchants who made donations to the Centennial Celebration: Juhlin's Paint, South Paterson Trucking, Snack Time, Little Falls Laundry, Farnese's Bakery, Rolling Coffee Shop, Falls Metal Works, Trudy's Bakery, Little Falls Florist, A-Beta-Tube and Paper Co., Metros Bakery, Carlocks Florist, N.J. Bank & Trust Co., L. F. Delicatessen & Bakery, Rainbow Florist, Village Bakery & Delicatessen and Jon Bell Electric Co.

Serving the Refreshments: Mrs. Alton Krom, Chairlady, Singac P.T.A., Home & School Assn. of School No. 1, Great Notch P.T.A.

Use of Parking Lot, Chairs, Typing: Little Falls Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Carroll Thayer, Mrs. T. McCole and Mrs. Peter Hackes.

Special Thanks for all Their Help: The Little Falls Road Dept. and The Little Falls Police Dept.

Making & Decorating the Centennial Birthday Cake: Joseph Farnese, Larry Melone and Joseph Jullara and Sr. Girl Scout Troop 69.

## Events And Committees of Centennial Celebration, 1968

1. January 1, 1968 — through the efforts of Congressman Charles S. Joelson we were able to obtain a Centennial Celebration cancellation stamp to be used on all mail leaving Little Falls Post Office. This is now in progress and will continue for the year.

2. Centennial Emblem Contest — School Children. Date of March 1 for judging. Mr. James Nash, Chairman, Miss Linda Reed, Assistant.

3. February 12 - July 6 — Beard Contest. Judging at picnic. Aftan Romanczak, Chairman. Tom Fazio, Barber in charge.

4. April 2, 1968 — Birthday Celebration — Town Hall — 8:00 p.m. Beards, Costumes, Buggies, Horses. All State and Federal officials were invited. Street were blocked off. Band selections followed by cake and coffee. Steering Committee in charge.

5. April 5, 1968 — Teamster Hall, Route No. 46 — choir sponsored by Little Falls Office. New Jersey Bank & Trust Co. Tickets were available from New Jersey Bank & Trust or from Steering Committee.

6. Historical Society — First meeting, February 1,  
**(Continued on Next Page)**

# Events And Committees Of Centennial Celebration 1968

(Continued from Preceding Page)

1968. Next meeting, March 14th. By-Laws, incorporation papers, election at this time. Mrs. Eva Thayer, Chairman Pro Tem., Mr. William Hengeveld, Attorney and Trustee. All historical items collected were in the Little Falls Library under lock and key. Available by appointment for research by various centennial committees or residents.

7. History of Little Falls — Dr. Robert Beckwith, Mrs. C. Godley, Mrs. B. Ruthkoff, Mrs. M. Eaton, Mrs. B. Barton, Mrs. A. J. Banks, Mr. Lou Vorgetts. Publicity: Mrs. Barbara Lang, Consultant.

8. Decorating Committee — Mr. Robert Steffy, Mr. John Pullara, Mr. Kuziora, Mr. Ward, Mrs. Charles Dorman. Signs were made by P.V.H.S. students.

9. June 24 — A Block Dance was planned for the teenagers, namely, a "Battle of the Bands." Held at Our Lady of the Holy Angels parking lot. Arrangements were by various Church Youth Groups. Father McVeigh and Mr. Tom Dawson were in charge.

10. Souvenirs — were ordered. China plates, bumper stickers, balloons, and buttons.

11. June 29, 1968 — The Recreation Commission arranged for Little Falls Day at Yankee Stadium. All arrangements were through them. However, television requested town talent for a half hour, so all thespians reported to Mr. Robert Irvine.

12. July 4, 1968 — We had the High School grounds and we got insurance reasonably and we found the money, so . . . we had fireworks at night! ! !

13. July 6th — a.m. — Parade — Bands — Floats, Judging, etc. Chairman, Mr. James E. Marston.

14. July 6th — Family Picnic — Several organizations in charge of this. Jaycees — Mr. Barry Hughes, Coordinator.

15. Ball and Dinner Dance arranged and sponsored by The Woman's Club of Little Falls. Held at Westmount Country Club, West Paterson, November 9, 1968. Tickets — \$25.00 per couple. Dress optional.

## Members of The Little Falls Official Family

MEMBERS OF THE OFFICIAL FAMILY — Mrs. Merrill Montgomery, township clerk-registrar of vital statistics; Mrs. Olympia Canfield, Treasurer; Mr. Philip Stainton, tax collector; John Evers, township attorney; Richard P. Browne, township engineer; James J. Abbate, township auditor; Mrs. Mae Bracken, secretary to the township committee; James Capalbo, building inspector; Richmond E. Holley, administrative assistant; John Sweezy, plumbing inspector; Peter Bongiorno, legal assistant; Mrs. Margaret Burke, violations clerk; Mrs. Irene Benes, court clerk; Cyril Gielen Jr., dog warden; Edwin Vreeland, civil defense director; Arthur Meletta, custodian.

BOARD OF HEALTH — Charles Pullara, Mayor; Anthony M. Barbieri, Committeeman; T. W. Edward Bowdler, Committeeman; John Kosachook, Committeeman; Benjamin Kuruc, Health Officer; Dr. Jack Brown, Board of Health physician; Mrs. Mae Bracken, secretary; George Tossi, attorney.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS — Martin Van Ostenbridge, James Morano Jr., Mrs. Margaret Poster, Mrs. Jane Pinadella, Clerk.

PLANNING BOARD — James Cochran, chairman; Charles S. Dorman, vice chairman; Charles Aymar; Franklin Koss, minor subdivision committee chairman; Pat Haste; Lester Nelson; Richmond Holley, official family member; Mrs. Carol McElroy, secretary; George Tossi, attorney; Mayor Charles Pullara; Committeeman Anthony Barbieri.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT — Fred De Furia, chairman; Rudolph Wasvary, vice chairman; Robert E. Moore; Julius Schonhoffer; Victor Talerico; George McClure, alternate member; Robert D. Steffy, alternate member; Mrs. Doris Brady, secretary; Ronald B. Sokalski, attorney.

RECREATION COMMISSION — Albert Spaak, chairman; Natale Giancola, Anthony Sisti, John Ambrosio, Timothy Donohue, John J. Danilack, Kenneth Verbeck, Mrs. R. Lane, secretary.

LIBRARY BOARD — Mrs. B. Belding, president; Dr. Bertram Boucher, Rev. John Nyitray, Carmine J. Conti, treasurer; Mrs. Ada Ruffalo, secretary.

LOCAL ASSISTANCE BOARD — Mrs. Emmabe Wychman, director; Mrs. Eva Kolanich, Mrs. Ruth Fisher, Angelo Agnes, Charles Pullara, Mayor-ex-officio member.

INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION — Edward Ydo, chairman; Nicholas Bayda, Richmond E. Holley, George McClure, John Turner.

PARKING AUTHORITY — Raoul G. Barton, chairman; Charles Alario, James E. Marston, Robert W. Moncrief, John Pullara.

SHADE TREE COMMISSION — Robert Windeler, chairman; Albert Capalbo, Steve Levitsky, Mrs. Charles Dorman, John Kosachook, Committeeman.

MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY — Anthony Barbieri, William Jacobus, Angelo Talerico, John Pinadella, James T. Capalbo, Mayor Charles Pullara.

POLICE DEPARTMENT — Charles Dorman, Committeeman-Commissioner; John W. Berghorn, chief; John Suchorsky, captain; Steve Benio, lieutenant; Irving Vanderberg, sergeant; Bernard Terranova, sergeant; Elmer Cole, sergeant; Alexander Wytik, sergeant-detective; Arthur Herrmann, sergeant; and Patrolmen William Hengeveld, Edward Capalbo, Edward Oswald, Frank Capalbo Jr., Joseph Coyle, Robert Warcholik, Louis Frolich, Kenneth Campen, William Evans, James Dowd, Robert Riker and Special Policemen Arthur Turpstra, Angelo Ferraro, James Stewart, Paul Calandra, James Kaminiski.

FIRE DEPARTMENT — John Kosachook, Committeeman-Fire and Water Commissioner.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS — John Anderson, president; Edward LaSala, vice president; Robert Bradell, secretary; Robert Aemy Sr., treasurer; Gerald Wassil, sergeant-at-arms; John Meisberger, sergeant-at-arms.

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS — Raymond A. Seug-

# LITTLE FALLS OFFICIAL FAMILY

(Continued from Preceding Page)

ling. chief: Carmine Conti. first assistant chief: John H. Sweezy. second assistant chief: Donald Blackman. third assistant chief: Pat Viterito. fourth assistant chief.

FIRE ALARM OPERATORS — Robert Frey, Edmund Pomponio.

ENTERPRISE CO. NO. 2. DEPARTMENT LINE OFFICERS — Robert Conti, captain: John Porter. first lieutenant: Edmund Pomponio. second lieutenant.

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL — Albert Osborne. Garrit Jaasma. Carmine Conti. Frank Conti. David Herman. Ralph Dodd. Richard Peoples. Leo Ward. Mario Marino. William Conti. Robert Henchy. Fred Frontz. Paul Irwin. Carl Fritsch Jr.. Douglas Ferdes. Wayne Organ. Robert Frey. John Meisberger. Eugene Capalbo. Richard Bertani.

EAGLE CO. NO. 1. DEPARTMENT LINE OFFICERS — James A. Stewart, captain: Raymond Martin. first lieutenant: Frederick Sykes. second lieutenant.

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL — Jacob DeYoung. John Anderson. Wilbur Jaasma. John Shaw. William Flystra. George Jaasma. Adolph Nigra. Donald Gieb. George N. VanderMay. William Gerber. Donald Blackman. Richard Norris. Fred Landspurg. Randy Nigra. Timothy Donohue. Leonard Marsh. John S. Bell. Paul Calendra. Fred DeFuria. Nathan Connizzo. Nelson Romaine.

SINGAC CO. NO. 3. DEPARTMENT LINE OFFICERS — Harry Seebode, captain: Walter Krieg. first lieutenant: Robert Sweezy. second lieutenant.

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL — Wilbur Stinson. John Hawthorne. John Kramscak. Alfred Walker. Michael Zailo. Vincent Dransfield. Charles Pellock. John Burke. Steve Sardinsky. Edward LaSala. George Mirabelli. Robert Bradell. Fred Bodmer. John Sweezy. Leonard Shark. John Kosachook. John Sokalski. Frank Dumchowski. Martin Abramovitch. George Nutting.

GREAT NOTCH CO. NO. 4. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS — Frank Marshall III. captain: Ralph Ritacco Jr.. first lieutenant: Kenneth Haycock. second lieutenant.

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL — Raymond Seugling. Pat Viterito. Robert Moore. Pat Alessio. Bernard Teranova. Robert Mace. Joseph Frucci. Robert Aemy Sr.. Karl Grimm. Clifford Davenport. Frank Capalbo. Albert Capalbo. Bruce Dacey. Richard Hughes. William Blomquist. Albert Alfano. Donald Andrews. B. Everett Jones. John Citarella. Gerald Wassil.

ROAD DEPARTMENT — Anthony M. Barbieri. Mayor — Roads and Park Commissioner: Walter Romaine. road superintendent: Robert Conti. assistant superintendent.

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL — Raphael Gambuti. John Burke. Theodore Kamenetz. Louis Ruffalo. Frank Tascano. Robert Silvers. Diego Ginduso.

SEWER DEPARTMENT — T. W. Edward Bowdler. Committeeman-Commissioner: Edward F. Lawler. superintendent: Anthony Lukowiak. assistant superintendent.

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL — Demetry Bayda. John Goodrich. William Matson. John Viterito. Louis Springstead. Joseph Ruffalo.

## BOOSTERS

Deputy Chief Wilbur Crane  
Adeline Single Crane  
Ella Carlock Ries  
Mr. and Mrs. C. Leonard Rhinesmith  
Miss Jean Belding  
Mr. and Mrs. William K. Carlock  
Mrs. Marguerite Davidson  
Robert D. Steffy  
Iris J. Steffy  
Cynthia D. Steffy  
M. Daniel Steffy  
Guy K. Steffy  
Walter S. Tripp  
Charles R. Sigler  
F. M. Haskins  
Jack Shaw  
William Yoder  
Mrs. Lillian M. Donato  
Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Ruthkoff  
Mr. and Mrs. W. Dumeau  
Mr. and Mrs. L. Romaine  
Leonard and Nelson Romaine  
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Bennett  
Jonathon Hearle  
Jennifer Hearle  
Robert Hearle  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. Dutko  
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Elias  
Edward J. May  
Mr. and Mrs. C. Galofaro  
Mr. David Douma  
Mrs. David Douma  
Mr. Joseph Patruno  
Mrs. David Patruno

Christine Marzano  
Carl Marzano  
Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Edward Bowdler  
Kathy and Karen Bowdler  
Thomas and Ted Bowdler  
Tom Bowdler  
James B. Young  
Naomi F. Cory  
Raoul G. Barton  
Mr. and Mrs. Raoul G. Barton  
Mrs. John J. Curreri  
Little Falls, N.J.  
Mrs. James M. Lane  
Little Falls, N.J.  
Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Garvey  
Little Falls Historical Society  
Chartered during the year  
of the Centennial, 1968  
James B. Young, president  
Mrs. John Curreri, v.-president  
George Eaton, treasurer  
Mrs. T. W. E. Bowdler, secretary  
Mrs. A. J. Banks, historian  
Compliments Of  
Little Falls Woman's Club  
Little Falls Junior Woman's Club  
The Business and Professional  
Woman's Club  
John P. Citarella  
A. E. Voorhees  
Antoinette Pullara  
Joseph Pullara  
John P. Pullara  
Loretta Pullara



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, CIRCA 1868

Opening day dress of our 100th anniversary shown above by three former Township mayors and their wives. From left, Committeeman and Mrs. T.W. Edward Bowdler, Committeeman and Mrs. Charles Dorman and Committeeman and Mrs. John Kosachook.



Governing bodies change. This is the 1967 Township Committee. Committeeman Charles Dorman (see above) replaced Committeeman Charles Aymar second from right. Committeeman Dorman and Mayor Charles Pullara (right) are not seeking election for 1969. Meanwhile, from left, Veteran Committeemen Anthony Barbieri, John Kosachook and T.W. Edward Bowdler continue on.

# Introduction

Captain James Gray settled in Little Falls at least as early as 1763. His advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in that year mentions his estate here as the point from which an indentured servant ran away from him. From his "ownership" of that servant, we also know that Gray was a man of means, for it took considerable wealth to buy a man's body and services for a period of years.

Captain Gray was also a man of prominence and influence in what was then the Royal Colony of New Jersey. He moved in circles which included John Schuyler, owner of the copper mines in the area which is now North Arlington, Theunis Dey, later host to George Washington at his mansion in Breakneck during the Revolution, and Lord Stirling, "the mapmaker of the Revolution." In those circles, too, was the last Royal Governor of New Jersey, William Franklin, son of the Patriot Benjamin Franklin.

Along with his affluence and his influence, Captain James Gray was marked by intelligence and imagination. He was among the first to recognize the possibilities in the use of the water power available at Little Falls. In his building and operation of an iron forge at Little Falls, he was among the first of a long line of entrepreneurs to exploit that source of energy.

Without question, Gray deserves to be ranked among the handful of most distinguished citizens in the history of our town. Yet his experiences here were not altogether happy ones. When our Declaration of Independence was proclaimed in 1776, he chose to reaffirm his loyalty to King George III. After the war, rather than spend his last years on the pleasant ground beside the Passaic River, he fled instead to the company of more congenial souls in Montreal, Canada.

*People* – The Little Falls Pageant celebrating the New Jersey Tercentenary in 1964 had as its theme "The story of Little Falls is the story of people." This thread runs all through Leonia Charrier's script. Our history reaffirms that theme. There were outstanding individuals like Captain James Gray, and obscure others like the indentured servant who ran away from him. In the dimming past was Thomas Seigler who fought with the Patriot New Jersey Militia during the Revolution, and more recently there emerges Franklin E. Sigler, one of his descendants who won the Congressional Medal of Honor in World War II. Our history includes Robert Beattie who channeled the waters of the Passaic into one of the earliest units in a newly developing American

factory system, and along with Beattie, Mikhail Markov and his many fellow Ukrainians who in turn helped transform the energy of those waters into articles for the home and weapons of war. We see Nicholas Vander May and James Shepherd who used the water of the Peckman River to wash clothes or to bleach cloth. And in nearby pages of our history we note the workers who labored for \$1 a day for Shepherd in the 1820's and the other workers who struck for union recognition by the Vander Mays in the depression days of the 1930's.

These are the *people* who make up the history of Little Falls – these and many more. Not to be neglected are the Irish who labored on the construction of the old Morris Canal and our railroads; the Italians who built most of our roads and sidewalks; the Dutch who cultivated the soil of our farms from early in the eighteenth century and who supplied our milk well into the twentieth century; the Poles and Jews from Eastern Europe who replenished our labor forces and founded local retail establishments. Neither can we overlook those Americans of black skins who have been a part of our town's history, perhaps from the very beginning.

The history of Little Falls is the story of people, and our main focus will be on who they were and what they did. It is also true that Little Falls was no island unto itself. The reasons why these people came here, and the things they did after they came, were reflections of events on the broader stage of this colony and state, these United States, and even the world.

*The Historical Setting* – Captain James Gray was a Tory during the American Revolution, and so also was Thomas Ryder of Weaseldrift Road whose farm was occupied by troops under Washington's command. Other men living in this place, it seems probable, chose to fight for American Independence. The same decision faced residents throughout the American colonies. If men in this area decided in the same proportions as did Americans generally, we could expect about one-third to have been Tories, one-third Patriots, and one-third as uncommitted to either side. In areas of heavy Dutch settlement, the proportion of uncommitted was commonly very much higher. Such was probably the case in Little Falls.

Our earliest European settlers – the Speers, Doremuses, Sips, and Posts – spoke various Dutch dialects. In the manner of most Dutch in this New World, they devoted themselves to the cultivation of the soil and the

**PARK LANE** *Garden Apartments*

171 Main Street

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**GREAT NOTCH CORPORATION**

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raising of cows. The presence here of those Dutch men and women reflects the settlement by their countrymen on Manhattan Island, at Pavonia (now Jersey City), and in the Hudson valley in the five years after Henry Hudson's first visit in 1609. By 1644, those same Dutch had already made an important treaty with many leaders among the Leni Lenape Indians who then inhabited northern New Jersey. Subsequent treaties opened our area to settlement.

English-speaking people came later to settle and to work, but only after a British military force compelled Governor Peter Stuyvesant to turn over all of New Netherlands to British rule. The land which Stuyvesant yielded stretched from Albany to Cape May. It included New Amsterdam (New York City) and also the land upon which our story unfolded.

The various events and developments we shall note in this brief history were almost always related to events and developments on a wider historical scene. Robert Beattie's newly-established carpet factory in 1844 was only one unit in the beginning of a new American

approach to business and manufacturing. The trend that began then ended with the United States as the greatest industrial producer in the world. The Poles, Dutch, Italians, Russians and others who settled here in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century were only elements in the great waves of migrants who came to these shores at that time. The building and operation of the Morris Canal, which holds the center place in one of the most colorful chapters of our history, is only an episode in the "Transportation Revolution" which transformed America in many ways from 1815 to 1860.

Wars (beyond the borders of New Jersey and even beyond the oceans), economic changes (boom times and depressions), and social changes (the development of the American public school system and the coming of the age of the automobile) — all these touched us and we touched them. In a sense, the history of America is the history of Little Falls, and vice versa. In one very important way, however, there is a distinctive and unique quality to our story. This lies in our geographic setting. We are concerned with what happened *here*, and what did occur was determined in large measure by our unique physical setting.

## BETWEEN THE RIVER AND THE HILLS

Picture a crescent of land with hills to the south and to the east forming the outer rim, with the Passaic River marking the inner boundary. This is the scene upon which our history unfolded. Compared to a crescent moon, the outlines of our setting are a little ragged, and we will need to add a dimension of slope or elevation to the moon's two-dimensional appearance. Nonetheless, such a portion of a circle or sphere best describes our physical setting.

Sometimes our actors and their activities spilled beyond the limits of our crescent, and political changes have at times altered the boundaries of our locale. Yet, in the main, our history took place between the river and the hills, a natural and congenial place for settlement and development.

The northern point of our arc of land is located where the heights of Garret Mountain look down upon the nearby Great Falls of the Passaic River at Paterson. The outer rim then leads southward along the ridge of First Mountain of the Watchung Hills. West from this ridge, the land slopes down to the banks of the river in an ever-broadening sweep.

About three and one half miles south of the Great Falls, there are two marked changes in the landscape. Down on the inner rim, the course of the Passaic River is changed by a nearly ninety-degree turn. For the most part flowing in a northeasterly direction to the rim of the Great Falls, above this bend the river flows generally toward the east. The turn in the course of the river is

fairly accurately reflected by the angle of the intersection of Paterson Avenue and Main Street in Little Falls center. That intersection is just up the slope from the river turning.

Up on the outer ridge of our oversized amphitheatre, at a point roughly corresponding to the bend in the river, the line of the rim also turns to the west. Ordinarily the ridge of the Second Mountain of the Watchung Hills (the hills which extend down through Caldwell) is quite separate and distinct from the ridge of the First Mountain. Up from the bend in the river, however, several little spurs from the east and from the west form something of a link between the two. The course of the Peckman River prevents the link from being complete, but the land climbs steeply on both sides from the banks of the Peckman. The outer rim of our crescent now continues and it can be traced around to the point (the intersection of Grandview Avenue and Main Street) where the edge of the hills extends almost to the banks of the Passaic River.

In this year of 1968, the boundaries of the Township of Little Falls enclose only the southern half of this natural unit of land. In the recorded history of Little Falls which goes back 266 years, it is only during the last 54 years that we have been so restricted. In this history now being presented, we shall be concerned at first with what happened in the whole area, and then narrow our focus as political boundaries are established and contracted.

Compliments

of

**MOONEY BROTHERS CORP.**

195 Paterson Avenue

Little Falls, New Jersey

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**NORTH JERSEY FOUNDRY CO., INC.**

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The geographic elements within our area may be classified as "important," "distinctive," and "unique." In the first category we can note that for the most part the soil is well-drained and fertile. Since our first white settlers came mainly to till the land, this was an important factor in their coming. In contrast, the area of Paterson was generally swampy and settlement did not begin there until almost a century later. Two newspaper advertisements in the Paterson Intelligencer of March 8, 1826, illustrate the important differences. One advertisement described a homestead in the Little Falls area:

Will be sold at Public Vendue [auction], on Saturday, the 1st day of April next, on the premises, the FARM, late of Moses Gould, deceased, containing about 33 acres, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Passaic, in the Township of Acquackanonk, about 2 miles from Paterson, on the road leading to the Little Falls. This farm is well watered, well proportioned into plough and meadow land, and excellent for grazing. There is a young orchard of the best grafted fruit, a good Stone Dwelling House, with 2 rooms on a floor, and a good cellar.

The second advertisement described a stone house for sale situated up on the rocky slopes of Garret Mountain in Paterson. The location, it was noted, was in "the healthiest part of the city."

Further indications of the healthy and attractive character of the land here is found in the fact that Leni Lenape Indians dwelt here before the white man came. We can guess how they lived, for there are many excellent studies published on the tribe generally. In our area, the only direct evidence we have of their presence is in the stone arrowheads and tools which have been found

by farmers and gardeners and in the remains of the "weirs," or traps, they used for catching fish in the Passaic River. The stone artifacts have been turned up around the whole sweep of the lands sloping from the hills down to the river. They have been uncovered near Rifle Camp Road, on the farms that formerly lay east of Peckman River, by farm workers beside Lindsley Road, and in backyard farms in the sandy loam along the Passaic River in Singac.

Weirs were wedge-shaped traps which were built by Indians in shallow water from shore to shore across the river. These were constructed of brush piled up from the river bed to above the water level. The brush piles were weighted down and held in place by large stones. Stretching in a line across the shallow water, the Indians would beat the water and stampede the fish into the trap where they could be captured by hand. There were favorite spots for these weirs, where the waters were shallow and the fish plentiful. One student of the local Leni Lenape claimed that one such spot was located in the Passaic River near where the High Bridge of the Lackawanna Railroad stood and where the Route # 80 highway bridge is now under construction. While the

brush which helped form the trap would easily be washed downstream by the next freshet or flood, the heavier stones would drop to the riverbed and remain there. This student asserted that the characteristic wedge of rocks could still be seen there well into the second quarter of the twentieth century.

## THE RIVERS

The Passaic River and the Peckman River were other important geographic elements. In addition to the fish which they harbored, each river was also the source of pure and clear water throughout most of our history. Many still living in 1968 will recall not only fishing in both the Passaic and Peckman Rivers but also swimming in the two streams.

As long as man has used woven textiles for clothing and home uses, the bleaching industry has been important in making these textiles more attractive. From its beginning, too, the bleaching industry has been dependent upon sources of large quantities of clear, pure water. That both of the major streams within our area supplied such needs is seen in the fact that bleaching has been an important part of our industrial past.

The following advertisement appeared in the *Paterson Intelligencer* of November 23, 1825:

### WANTED

Five or Six good men, at the Washington Bleach Works, Little Falls. Wages are one Dollar a day, and constant employ through the winter.

James Shepherd

On May 30, 1827, Shepherd advertised for another three men, promising them "Constant employment and nine shillings per day." In that same year, he gave evidence of his success in the bleaching business by his advertised search for a handyman and servant to work within his household at Little Falls.

In the beds of both rivers were an important shell fish widely used for food which has become extinct by the middle of the twentieth century. This was the freshwater mussel which flourished in the two streams and also in the smaller brooks which flowed into them. In addition, particularly at the falls in the Passaic, there was another denizen of the waters, attractive to the food-gatherer and the sportsman alike. This was the eel.

In 1869, a physician was summoned all the way from Newark to refracture and reset a leg of an inhabitant here, a leg which had "united badly and imperfectly." The doctor was so impressed by several aspects of our village that he sent a long letter of comments to the *Newark Courier*. The newspaper published his observations and thus helped to preserve part of our record of the past. Included in the doctor's comments were the

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Plants in Little Falls, New Jersey and Lewisville, Arkansas

---

### *Greetings and Salutations*

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**Manufacturers of Equipment for the Chemical Industry**

following:

The Passaic, at Little Falls, has long been celebrated for its eels; and queer stories are told by residents, of the way in which the animals, pushed by a powerful instinct, interlaced with one another wriggle up the descending sheet of water. At certain seasons they come down the stream, and Mr. Beattie one morning found in his flumes channels or pipes carrying water to turn the machines thirty-four hundred pounds of them.

These eels may still struggle up over the falls in 1968, but it seems likely that the present pollution of our rivers makes them highly dangerous for dietary purposes. Yet as late as the fourth decade of the twentieth century, this author observed anglers casting for the snakelike fish at the same spot described by the Newark doctor.

## THE PECKMAN RIVER

Quite beyond the clear pure water which they supplied and the living things they harbored for food and recreation, the Passaic and the Peckman were distinctive because of the water power potential they offered. Though the Passaic obviously had a far greater potential, the Peckman River was also exploited. Over the greater part of our history, it was the Little Falls of the Passaic which was more important, yet through the years the more gentle force of the Peckman did yeoman work in turning the wheels of mills.

In 1765, John Brower erected a saw mill on the Peckman River. In the same year, David Brower erected a grist mill on the stream. It was this family which gave its name to a section of our area, a name which persists in the present "Browertown Road." The exact location of the Brower mills is not now known. Details in a property deed dated November 8, 1809, indicate that by that date the Browsers owned property where the Passaic Valley High School now stands — at the corner of Main Street and Browertown Road. It seems likely that "Browertown" was in much the same area, and that the Brower grist and saw mills were near the spot where a more recently built dam still stands across the Peckman — just south of the Little Falls Laundry plant.

The powers of this gentle-appearing stream have not always been benign. The *Paterson Daily Guardian* of August 13, 1875, reported a flash flood down the Peckman valley two days before that date. The destruction started with the carrying away of the bridge on the Newark-Pompton Turnpike in Cedar Grove. The flood crest then dashed the remnants of the bridge against the dam of the Cedar Grove cotton mills, and destroyed that barrier. (The ruins of the Cedar Grove cotton mill still stand at the bend of Little Falls Road, about one hundred yards east of the Newark-Pompton Turnpike in Cedar Grove.) The bridge at Stanley's dam in Little

Falls proper withstood the onslaught without crumbling, but the dam itself was reported as badly damaged by the waters and the debris they carried. At the Notch Road (now Main Street), the iron bridge proved less sturdy and it collapsed into the river bed. Before the flood waters were dissipated in the larger Passaic, they broke away part of Jackson's dam (about where Route # 46 now crosses the river), and flooded the lowlands making the Little Falls Turnpike impassable. These lowlands lie in what is now West Paterson and the Turnpike is now called McBride Avenue.

In more recent years, an even more destructive flood rushed down the deceptively tranquil Peckman valley. On the night of July 18, 1945, it began to rain. Through all of the ten days and ten nights that followed, the rain continued to fall. Finally, the dam in the Essex County Park at Verona Lake, about four miles upstream from Main Street, gave way from the pressure of the accumulated waters. As the waters swept through Little Falls they carried fences, trees, and other debris with them. Houses were swept from their foundations, and in one or Cedar Grove Road a housewife was carried to her death.

Among the casualties of this flood was the massive land fill which carried the Erie Railroad across the Peckman valley. The course of the stream marks the only break in the wall of the crescent-shaped area in which Little Falls rests. The railroad engineers had to construct a large causeway to span the gap. Since the railroad, then named the Montclair and Greenwood Lake Railroad, was organized only two months after the 1875 flood, the engineers were able to make provisions against any such events in the future. Their solution was to allow the waters to pass through a greatly oversized tunnel, solidly and beautifully constructed from large blocks of brown sandstone from the quarry in the village. The causeway was sound and the structure was solid, but after standing for seventy years both were washed away on July 27, 1945.

## "LITTLE EGYPT"

One piece of land along the Peckman River gained a unique distinction over one hundred and fifty years ago. This is why people today may still refer to the area up from the river near where the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad crosses Lindsley Road as "Little Egypt."

The year of 1816 was identified throughout what were then the nineteen states of the United States as "The year without a summer." From Louisiana up into Canada, and even across the Atlantic into northern Europe, citizens suffered from the most unusual weather within memory. That strange year was first marked by an unusually extended drought. The report from Charles-

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AS A TOWNSHIP

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NORTH AMERICAN VAN LINES, INC.

ton, South Carolina dated March 29, 1816, and published in the *Newark Centinal* of April 9, 1816, told of commonly prevailing conditions.

It is now eight weeks since this City was blessed with a drop of rain. The dust in our streets continually trampled upon, has been reduced to such fine particles that it mingles with our food and atmosphere, and penetrates the recesses of our dwellings. The effect of such weather on our healths has already been felt. The skies have promised rain for some days past — and unless it speedily comes, we anticipate a general influenza.

There is no evidence that the promise of rain was fulfilled, and the general drought continued through April and into its fourth month in May. Forest fires raged in the Jersey Pine Barrens, in the Catskill Mountains, and throughout the country and the state of New Jersey. There is no record of fires in the Little Falls area, but even if there were none, the atmosphere was smoky and hazy here as it was over the entire length of the state. Though they may not have appreciated them under the trying circumstances, residents of Little Falls undoubtedly observed the spectacularly colorful sunsets which are the natural phenomena of such atmospheric conditions.

The prolonged drought also had severe effects upon the growing of crops — and this brings us closer to our story of “Little Egypt.” The *Newark Centinel* of May 7, 1816, reported:

The drought which has been experienced in this quarter for some time past, has greatly retarded vegetation. Winter grain, in general, exhibits a very unpromising appearance; and in several places in this State, we have heard of fields of grain being plowed up — and other grain put in.

The drastic effects of the drought were disheartening, but there remained the prospect of at least planting and harvesting some late crops. That is, such a prospect remained until the second unusual phenomenon of that unusual year struck. It turned cold! Richmond, Virginia, reported frosts on June 1st, ice formed on buckets on June 7th in New York City, and Washington Furnace at Lakewood, New Jersey, had killing frosts on June 10th. In Vermont, an old man got lost and froze his toes in a snow storm in June, and the New England states reported snowfalls in each of the “summer” months. By late August frosts were again becoming common, and in September they were again frequent.

We are indebted to the Paterson Ramblers and to Joseph Rydings, one of the founders of that early twentieth century walking club for the end of this story. On an outing up the Peckman River on Sunday, April 28, 1907, they gathered the folklore which connects our “Little Egypt” with “The year without a summer.” Rydings summarized the story and published it in *The Paterson Morning Call* of April 30, 1907.

On April 30, 1907, a goodly number of Ramblers went by trolley to Little Falls, after which they passed through the old fields and weeds a little beyond the Village on the road to Cedar Grove, the land so long known as Egypt. Away back, before any human being now upon the earth had been born, or, as the story writers would say, “Once upon a time” there was but one field in the whole United States where there was any corn that fully matured. In the tract known as Egypt, however, corn grew to its fullest perfection; and through the prolific yield of that favored field, the farmers from all around secured their seed corn for the following year.

As a small boy in the 1920's, this writer often carried forgotten lunches to his older brothers who were working on Ed Smith's farm on Lindsley Road. Frequently he was sent “down to Little Egypt,” but he never realized upon what historically hallowed ground he trod.

## THE PASSAIC RIVER

Our township properly takes its name from the most distinctive feature of our setting, the Little Falls — as contrasted to the Great Falls at Paterson — of the Passaic River. These falls have been important in our history because they have been an attractive and unique point of geographic reference, because they have been the source of productive water power, and because they have been the center of our relations with the people who settled further upstream.

Geologically, the gorge at the Little Falls is the spot where the vast Passaic Lake of the latest glacial epoch overflowed its waters on their route to the sea. In the present era, the gorge is the overflow escape route for the waters of the Pompton River valley and, more importantly, the waters of the large basin in which rest the Great Swamp and the Big Piece Swamp.

The rock in the gorge is basalt, a rock of volcanic origins commonly called “trap rock.” It is rock which came up through fissures in the earth's crust and then cooled as it lay on the surface. Basalt is one of the most common igneous rocks on the earth, and one which has been extremely useful in recent times when crushed and used in road building. This is the same rock which has been removed and crushed in our Great Notch quarries. It is the bed rock of the First and Second Mountains of the Watchung Hills which form the rim around our area.

There is an irony in the geological movements which formed the basalt gorge at Little Falls. While these movements limited the formation of the basalt enough to allow an escape of the waters accumulating up-country, a limitation at three or four feet lower would have produced about the same water power potential and would

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have obviated many of the strained human relations which later developed.

The gorge at Little Falls through which the cascading waters still flow is the most spectacular and attractive aspect of the local scene. Historically, the most important point was a natural trap rock barrier or reef just above the point where the present Beattie's dam now stands. It was mainly this reef which restricted the flow of waters upstream and distressed many farmers of Morris, Essex, and Passaic counties. The construction of dams on top of the natural reef only increased the hazards of flooding in the upstream lowlands and increased the resentment of the farmers occupying those lowlands. It was not until 1887 that the blasting out of the basalt reef brought relief to the farmers and brought amity in their relations with the residents of Little Falls.

The extent of the vertical fall of the waters at the gorge has been variously estimated over the years from thirty feet to fifty-one feet. The area over which the waters fall downward has been identified as being from one hundred yards to a full mile. The differences in the estimates reflect different views as to where the falls begin and where they end. Most observers over the years have restricted their estimates to the area between the top-most drop by Beattie's mill and the point where the river turns north-easterly toward the Paterson Falls. Yet the river still drops below that turn. This writer well recalls dare-devilish swimming down the rapids from just below the bend down to the "ol' swimming hole" just south of where the Route # 46 bridge now stands. (In the 1920's we called the swimming hole "B.A.B." This social historian recalls that "B.A.B." was really a misnomer, since we all covered ourselves well with home-sewn cotton bathing suits with added skirts covering us from the waist down. Others will recall with me that the suits were clammy and uncomfortably still damp on the next day unless they were slapped vigorously against the hot pavement of Paterson Avenue on the way home and had the benefit of warm summer air on the clothesline through the following evening.)

Obviously, too, estimates of the vertical drop varied according to whether or not the judge calculated from the natural lip of the reef or from the top of any existing dam. The dams there varied in height through the years, and there were periods when they were non-existent. Sometimes they were washed away by floods, as one was in April of 1854, and sometimes they were torn down by irate upstream farmers, as an earlier one was in 1772.

## THE GREAT NOTCH

Today when quarrying operations have destroyed a large part of the top ridge line which marks the eastern boundary of Little Falls, it may be difficult to understand how dramatic the Notch in that ridge appeared in earlier times when viewed from the east. Over the whole

length of First Mountain, from Garret Mountain southward, there is no break in the trap rock wall that compares to it. Recalling this, and remembering that the swampy ground at Paterson eliminated that region as a route to the west, the unique importance of Great Notch may be recognized.

The Great Notch was also important for those who approached it from the west. It is probable that it was a point along the prehistoric Indian trails when those peoples traveled from as far as the Delaware River to the tidewaters of the Passaic. When Europeans moved into the back country of northern New Jersey (both westward from the settlements at Newark and eastward from Pennsylvania and the Delaware River), we have much evidence that the road they traveled passed through Little Falls and through the Great Notch.

The farmers, millers, and ironmasters of Morris County sought the quickest and easiest route from their forges, mills, and fields to the ocean-going ships that waited to carry their pig iron, meal, flour, and apple-jack whiskey to wider markets. Three possibilities lay open to them. The longest route passed down through Morristown and Bottle Hill (now Madison) and eventually reached sea-going ships at the port of Elizabethtown. The shortest route passed through Horseneck (now Caldwell), but the passage over the mountain (the present route of Bloomfield Avenue) was not the easiest for fully-laden horses. Faced with these alternatives, up-country travelers frequently chose the route which passed by the Little Falls and through the Great Notch. By this route they most easily reached the head of navigation on the Passaic River at the Landing of Acquackanonk.

The road they traveled can now be clearly identified. Coming from the west, it passed through what is now Whippany and then crossed over the upper reaches of the Passaic River in what is now Hanover Township. It was impossible to cross the Great Piece Swamp in what is now Pine Brook and Parsippany until a turnpike company laid a causeway across (where Route # 46 now crosses) in the first decade of the nineteenth century. East of the river-crossing in Hanover Neck, the road coursed northward — generally along the route of what is now Passaic Avenue. Approaching the river again in Fairfield, the route passed along Pier Lane, and turned eastward at the site of an ancient Indian village where Zirk's Pansy Farm now stands.

The point at which the road entered Singac was determined by the location of the hills on one side and the river on the other. This is about where Little Falls Road becomes Main Street today. From there, the road followed generally along the route of what is now Main Street. The destination was the Great Notch, and the route was the most direct and the one which avoided swampy and low ground along the river. Only after crossing the Peckman River did the early traveler depart from today's customary route. There is a climb to the Notch, and no horse, nor horse and wagon, charged

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SALUTES

THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS

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straight up such hills. The Notch Road there became what we now call Lower Notch Road. This was a longer way to the Notch, but the zigzagging up the slope made the ascent far more tolerable.

## OTHER EARLY ROADS

The first official record of the Notch Road dates from 1724. Fortunately for later historians, from the very earliest times the laying out of roads usually required legislative approval and always required that the routes be registered in the court records. William Nelson, a Passaic County historian of the late nineteenth century, collected and interpreted all the official records which referred to the early roads and bridges of Passaic County. Here follows the court record which refers to our first registered thoroughfare:

November 17, 1724 – Highway laid out between John Sip and Thomas Juriansee, all along said John Sip's line to the corner, from thence along a division Line to Cornelius Luberse and Simon Van Winkle, to another division Line, and by said line between John Sip's corner, to John Sip's and Ralph Cornelius's line, to the great notch: thence as the former Surveyors laid it to the fork of Passayock River near Simon Founesses [Van Es or Van Ness] House.

Essex Roads, A, 47.

Nelson's interpretation:

This is the road starting from the river just below the Erie bridge at Passaic, where Cornelius Van Houten now lives (he occupying the old Sip farm at that point); thence running west to the river to the second cross or division line; thence to the mountain, through the Great Notch, on to Little Falls, and probably to the junction of the Passaic and Pompton Rivers.

Because of the very early settlement of the Speer family there, it seems likely that there was also a road or trail southward from the road through the Notch. This is the route over which the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad and Clove Road now pass. Such a road does not appear in the early official records, and it is probably that it remained only a trail at first. On October 1, 1805, a road is identified there and is called "the old road to Speertown [Upper Montclair]."

After 1724, the next mention of Little Falls did not occur in the register of roads until January 1, 1750.

Surveyors met at the mills of Jacobus Post, and agreed upon a two rod road laid out from Horse-neck to the Little Falls; beginning at the southwest corner of Abraham Vageson junior's field, running along a line of marked trees to Peckemen river; thence running along said Peckemen river to the



east side of the white oak tree marked till it comes to the road that leads from the little falls of Peasiack river.

Essex Roads, A, 110

Nelson did not attempt to locate this road in terms of nineteenth century landmarks. The references to the fields of long-dead eighteenth century landowners and to such non-enduring landmarks as marked trees suggest the difficulties of locating these roads in the present time.

By the 1760's, the records became more technical through the addition of precise surveyors' measurements, but since the main points of reference remained "Black oak Trees" and the corners of now non-existent houses, they remained still confusing. The following are typical, though we do discover in them the laying out of the road from East Main Street to what is now Bloomfield Avenue in Verona. Perhaps what is more important is that these records help to establish the names of early settlers and landowners, and the existence and ownership of "plantations," saw mills, and grist mills.

June 13, 1767 – Road laid from the Saw Mill of John Brower and Abraham Smith to the main Road leading from Peckmans River to Achquacknock: beginning at a Black oak Tree, about one chain distance from said saw mill, and from thence run-



Main Street looking west some 45 years ago.

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Old Paterson Turnpike, later called the Little Falls Turnpike, from Little Falls to Paterson, was laid out in 1836.

## ROADS TO PATERSON

ning N 74 deg. E 6.80 ch., S 73 deg. E 4.7 ch., S 88¼ deg. E 9.19 ch., S 17½ deg. E 5.44 ch., S 20 deg. W 3.24 ch., S 2½ deg. E 4.04 ch., S 21 deg. W 2.60 ch., S 44 deg. W 1.96 ch., S 22½ deg. W 5.49 ch., S 69 deg. W 3.1 ch., S 9 deg. W 5.38 ch., S 16¼ deg. E 4.67 ch., S 19 deg. E 3.43 ch., S 25 deg. E 4.3 ch., S 16¼ deg. E 4.76 ch., S 27½ deg. E 15.45 ch., S 22 deg. E 4.80 ch., S 42½ deg. E 3.19 ch., S 10 deg. E 5.13 ch., S 6 deg. E 3.63 ch., S 7½ deg. W 7.67 ch., to the said main road; to be two rods wide.

Essex Roads, A, 179.

November 25, 1767 — Surveyors of Essex met at the house of Isaac Riker and proceeded to lay out a road leading to the little falls, to the road leading from Newark to Horseneck.

Essex Roads, A, 187.

November 25, 1767 — Road altered and relaid that leads out of Horseneck road on the east side of and near to Peckman's river; beginning in the plantation of Isaac Riker 50 links westward of a chestnut tree standing west of said Riker's Dwelling House and in the north side of said Horseneck Road thence running N 32½ deg. E 23.80 ch., there follow twenty-eight more surveyors' notations to David Brower's grist mill.

Essex Roads, A, 188.

The site of Paterson was low-lying, swampy, and considered unhealthy. It remained largely unsettled while the roads in Little Falls were being laid out. Alexander Hamilton saw the great water power potential in the Passaic River falls and proposed that a national industrial city be built there to make our new nation independent of foreign manufactures. A tax-exempt stock company was organized in 1791, and the city began its growth. From that date on, Paterson became attractive and important to the citizens of Little Falls. The first road connecting the two towns was laid out on April 25, 1797. This road began at the Peckman River bridge at the foot of Long Hill and passed the entire length of what is now Browertown Road. From the point where Browertown Road now joins McBride Avenue, this "old Little Falls road" generally followed the route to the Paterson falls now occupied by McBride Avenue.

The Passaic Turnpike Company (which received a monopoly over the right of way from the New Jersey Legislature) was incorporated under a state charter January 23, 1828, but the Little Falls Turnpike running from Paterson was not laid out until sometime in 1836. The Turnpike followed the route of the old Little Falls road from Paterson to the point where Browertown Road starts to the south. There the new road branched westward over the route of the present McBride and Paterson Avenues.

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Main Street, East of Patterson Ave., Little Falls, N. J.

This photo was taken some 60 years ago.

Through the years the Turnpike suffered from floods, landslides, and neglect. At one point the condition of the road became so bad that a prominent mill owner at Little Falls felt compelled to take matters into his own hands. The *Paterson Daily Press* of September 8, 1871, tells the story:

Mr. George Jackson of Little Falls has bought the rights and franchises of the Little Falls Turnpike Company, and is the virtual owner, though the actual transfer will not take place for several months yet. Still Mr. Jackson has begun repairing the road and during the last week or two has spent \$150 or more upon it, and now has seven or eight horse and carts at work between Lincoln Bridge and Little Falls carrying materials to fill up the holes and ruts. His receipts from tolls during the past week amounted to only \$40 while the outlay has been three times as much. Mr. Jackson has always been one of the chief complainers against the bad conditions of the road, and now that he has obtained control of it we may be sure he will push forward the work he has so vigorously begun, until the road will be creditable to him and agreeable to the travelers over it.

George Jackson's initiative in combatting the neglect of the Little Falls Turnpike was typical of him. Because he was one of the most colorful characters to move on the local scene, we shall be returning to him later in this brief history.

The Little Falls Turnpike was a toll road, but it is not

clear just when the collection of tolls was finally ended on the Turnpike. As late as 1911, the Paterson City Council purchased the part of the road which lay within the city limits and ended the paying of tolls over that section. In a speech before the Little Falls Rotary Club on May 31, 1949, Mr. C. D. Vreeland (then eighty-one years old) recalled traveling with his grandfather to Paterson and recalled seeing his grandfather pay the tolls.

An earlier turnpike which passed through Little Falls was more important in the state-wide network of roads, but it was probably less useful to the inhabitants here. On February 24, 1806, The Newark and Pompton Turnpike Company was incorporated by an act of the New Jersey Legislature. The eighteen miles of that toll road followed routes mostly already established, and the company is reported as being in business as early as 1808. A point in Singac was one of those at which tolls were collected from travelers as they passed through. Apparently a man named Riker became the first toll collector, for there is a strong local tradition to that effect. This may have been the same John Riker who is traditionally believed to have been the first settler in Singac in 1767, or perhaps as early as 1762.

## EARLY SETTLERS

The earliest date at which settlers came into the Little Falls area has not yet been established. The earliest evidence of such settlement is the building of the Speer House in 1702. Family tradition among the Speers

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The York House at 86 Cedar Grove Road was built about 1770. It's presently owned by the Winton family. This photo was taken in 1964.

stated that they lived on the site several years before the house was built. The Speer House still stands on Upper Montclair Avenue near the Montclair boundary. The Speer farm stretched from the house eastward over most of the hills which formerly underlay the campus of Montclair State College. Until 1960, when the State of New Jersey short-sightedly sold the trap rock campus hills to quarrying interests, the field-dividing stone walls constructed by many generations of Speers were clearly visible to the college students strolling there. In 1968, the wooden Speer House is doubly interesting as the *oldest* structure in Little Falls and as what was probably the *first house* built here.

Another house built by members of the Speer family in 1753 still stands. This is the brownstone house at the corner of Cedar Grove Road and Francisco Avenue which is now known as the Reiner House. A copy of a bill-of-

sale which has passed down through the Stanley and Belding families indicates that on April 14, 1755, Jacob Spear sold to John and Cornelius Spear, the house and a tract of 61 acres for thirty-five pounds sterling. (Variations in the spelling of family names is not uncommon over the years.) The contract included the sale of "two certain Negro children named Bett and Sant."

This reference to "Bett and Sant" is the only known evidence of slavery in Little Falls. It is highly probable that many other Americans of black skins suffered here under that cruel institution. H.S. Cooley, who wrote *A Study of Slavery in New Jersey* in 1896, noted that slavery was "recognized and accepted by both government and colonists from earliest periods of settlement." As late as 1800, the number of slaves in New Jersey was higher than the total in any state north of Maryland

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Long Hill Road. Coming over the hill from Montclair, circa 1890 at right are two Great Notch residents of late 1880's out for a fast trip through the woods.

except for New York, which had a far larger area and population. The Quakers who resided in West and southern New Jersey refused to own slaves, and from very early fought for abolition throughout the state. Dutch Protestants rather than Quakers lived in our area, and "The use of slave labor was, in the eighteenth century," says Cooley, "very general in the eastern portion of New Jersey."

It has been estimated that by 1690 nearly all the inhabitants of northern New Jersey owned slaves, but the greatest areas of concentration were the places where the Dutch settled. Such an area was Little Falls. Historical records tend to be very meager with regard to the existence of slavery. Two avenues of investigation would probably prove fruitful. First, a careful search of the "Runaway" advertisements in the Newark, Paterson, Trenton, and New York City newspapers may reveal something of the extent of slave ownership here. It is now obvious that as human beings, slaves seldom "adjusted" themselves to a state of permanent servitude. They did run away frequently and the slave masters did advertise to recover their human property.

Another avenue of investigation could take advantage of another occasion when the black man or woman did figure in the written records. After 1805, New Jersey state law required that any individual born into slavery within the state (importation was effectively prohibited after 1788), was to be given freedom when reaching age eighteen. In order that the law could be enforceable, it also required the registration of "Black births" and the registration of the occasions of manumission. An examination of Essex County and Passaic County court records should give some indication of the extent of the

evil here. It seems highly unlikely that Bett and Sant were unique individuals in their condition of involuntary servitude.

The Speers came from Acquackanonk as did the second group of early settlers we can identify. The first settlement at Acquackanonk was in 1685, and all eight of the farmers who bought land on our side of Garret Mountain in 1711 were original purchasers of land at Acquackanonk or were inheritors of original patents.

On November 27, 1711, these eight farmers banded together in a partnership to purchase the western slopes from the crest of First Mountain down to the Passaic River. The limits of the tract they bought were the Great Falls on the north, and the Peckman River on the south. The deed indicates that they purchased the land from Peter Sonmans of Elizabethtown who was one of the East Jersey Proprietors. Sonmans had taken a warrant for the land himself, but it seems unlikely that he ever visited or saw the land which he sold here. The buyers listed were: Frans Post, Jan Sip, Harmanus Garretse (later Garretson), Thomas Jurianse (later changed to Van Ripper), Cornelius Doremus, Peter Poulosse, and Hessel Pieterse (later Peterson), "all yeoman."

The land purchased was described in the deed as constituting two thousand eight hundred acres, and the purchase price was listed as six hundred and sixty pounds sterling. The contract also obligated the buyers to pay the East Jersey Proprietors a yearly quit rent of "one Peppercorn, if lawfully demanded."

After the purchase was completed, the records indicate, the land was divided into farms ten chains wide

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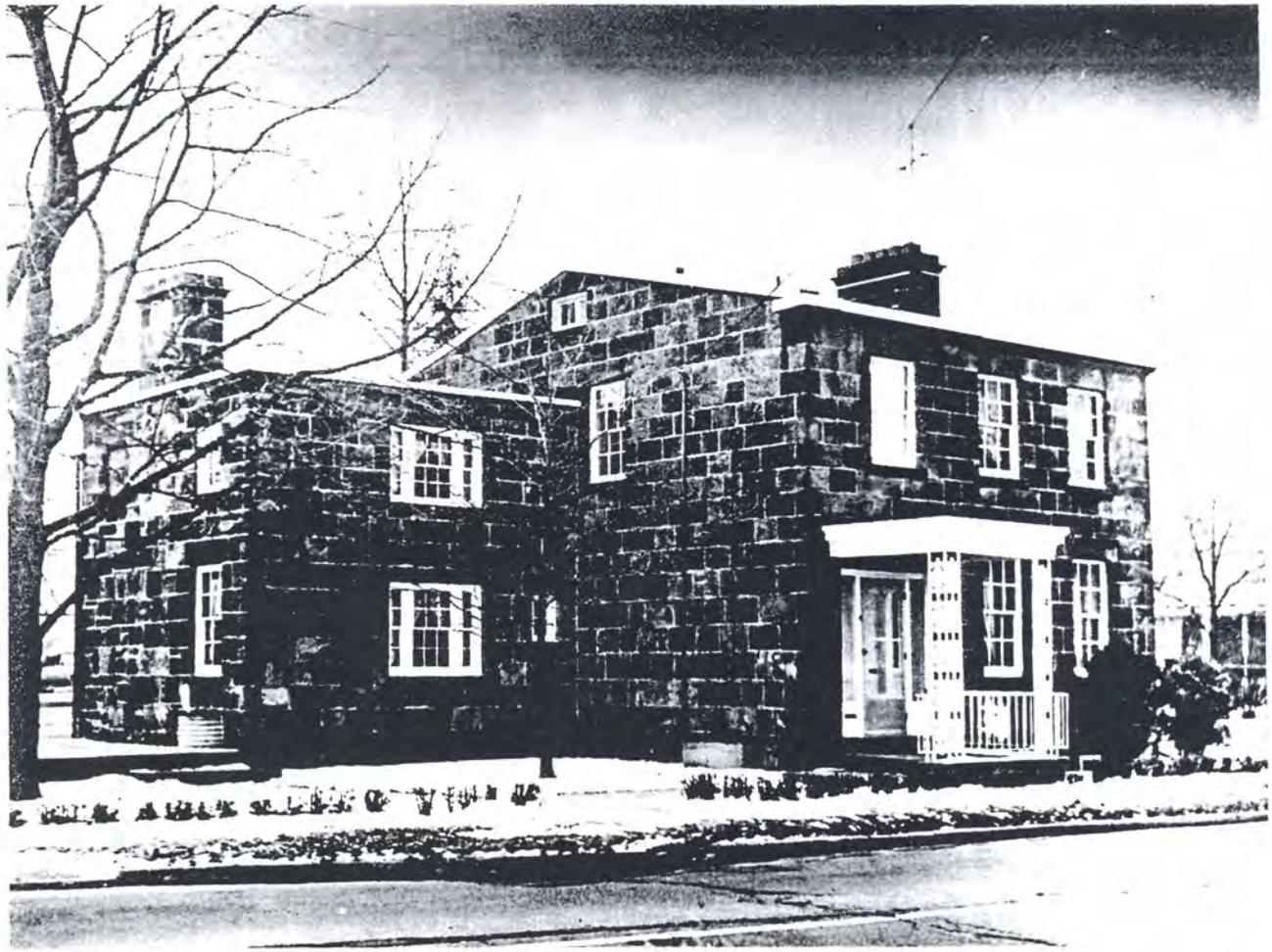
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## CAPTAIN JAMES GRAY

(660 feet), each farm extending from the Passaic River up to the crest of Garret Mountain.

The Dutch ancestry of these early settlers is clearly indicated in their names. That ancestry was common to almost all of those who settled here in the first half of the eighteenth century. In addition to the farmers involved in the large land purchase of 1711, we have already noted such Dutch family names as Speer, Van Ness, Brower, Riker, and Ryder. Other common names in the early years were Vreeland, Van Wagener, Sigler, Van Winkle, Jacobus, and Masker. The lives of these Dutch people were centered around farming and activities relating to farming such as the sawing of wood and the grinding of grains in mills. They were little interested in using the available water power for manufacturing. Only when such Anglo Saxon names as Gray, Beattie, and Jackson began to appear on the local scene, did such developments take place.

As already noted, James Gray came to the Little Falls area at least as early as 1763. By 1768, he had apparently decided to move here permanently, for he advertised his property at Belleville "For Sale" in the *New York Gazette* or *Weekly Post Boy* on April 18, 1768. Parts of the advertisement are worth reproducing because they establish the fact that Gray was not only wealthy but also a "gentleman," an important distinction in those days. That Gray found Little Falls attractive enough to give up his earlier "country seat" is also worth noting.

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The pleasantly situated house and lot of Captain James Gray, at Newark [now Belleville] on the Banks of the Passaic River, opposite the Estate of Capt. Kennedy, at Petersborough; the House is extremely convenient and comfortable, there is a good stable, Coach-House, Barn, and every other appendage proper for a Gentleman's Country Seat,

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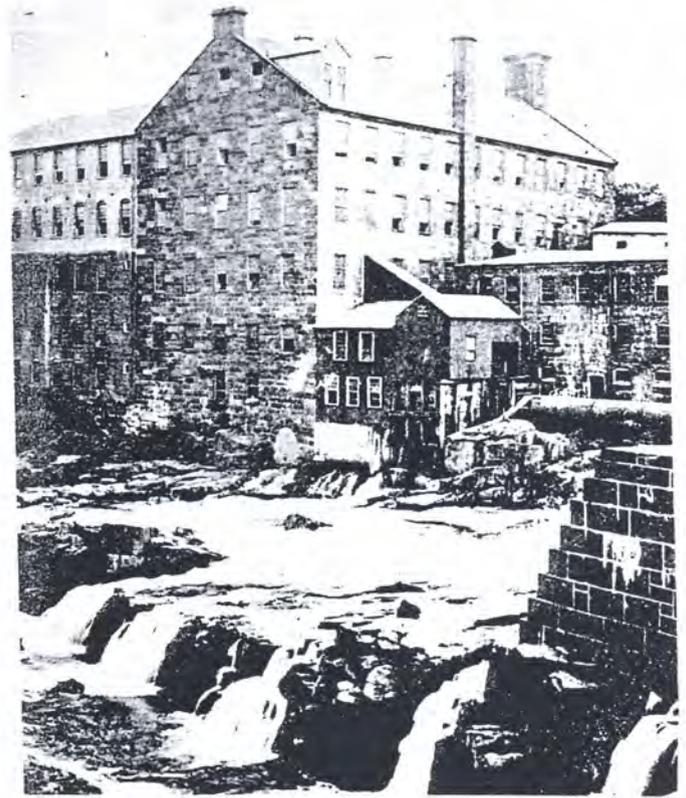


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Left: The old slave house at 614 Newark-Pompton Turnpike (Route 23) near the intersection of Route 23 and Main Street. Right: The Beattie Carpet and Rug Mills in 1907.

there are 20 acres of excellent good land adjoining, 6 acres in Grass, and fit for the Scythe, the whole is now in good Fence, and an Orchard of upwards of 300 Apple-Trees with a well chosen Collection of other Fruit; there is belonging to the Premises, a Dock very convenient and well calculated for Ship-Building particularly; a Ship of 300 tons Burthen, was not long since launched from it.

The above house commands a fine Prospect of the River Passaic, for a long Distance up and down the same, it overlooks a great part of Captain Kennedy's farm, especially his Deer Park . . . .

Enquire of Captain James Gray at the Little Falls, or Isaac Ogden, esq. in Newark.

A good bit of what we now know about Gray comes from "A Brief History of Little Falls, New Jersey" written by the Reverend John C. Cruikshank, pastor of the First Reformed Church from 1850 to 1868. Cruikshank's "History" was passed down through his descendants in the Vreeland family, but at present it has disappeared. Fortunately, much of Cruikshank's material was presented in a *Bulletin of the Passaic County Historical Society* in May of 1962. What is written here comes largely from that source.

Cruikshank began the story of Captain Gray by noting

that the lands lying on the north side of the Passaic River at Little Falls were purchased by George Willocks in 1703 from the Council of Proprietors of East Jersey. In 1733, the Proprietors sold to Cornelius Board the property on the south side of the river. This latter sale involved some 230 acres which were said to have been heavily timbered at the time. Then in 1736, the Proprietors sold to Cornelius Board and Timothy Ward, the bed of the river from "the upper reef to the foot of the perpendicular falls."

(The 1736 reference to the perpendicular falls is one of the few bits of evidence which helps to establish the existence of a particularly spectacular drop in the gorge downstream from the present Beattie Dam. There is a photograph of the falls in *The Passaic Valley, New Jersey: In Three Centuries* by John Whitehead, published in 1901. This is probably a copy of a photograph taken by one Joseph Cooke. There is also a painting done by Julian Rix in 1883 and now owned by Alexander Murray, Jr. This painting was reproduced on the cover of the program of the Little Falls Tercentenary Pageant held in the Passaic Valley High School Auditorium, November 13, 14, 1964. Apparently this "falls" was blasted out in 1887, at the same time that the upper reef was removed from the riverbed. It stood between the aqueduct of the Morris Canal [now the pipe line bridge] and the Union Avenue bridge just below the dam. Just why it was removed is not now clear. From

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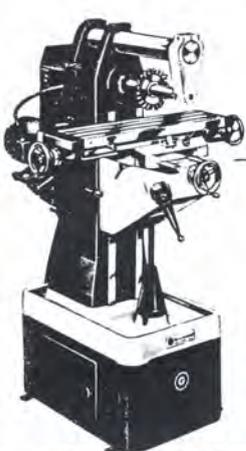
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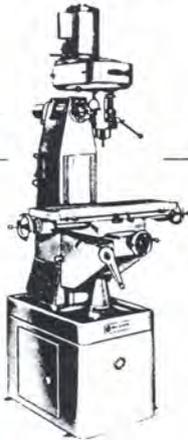
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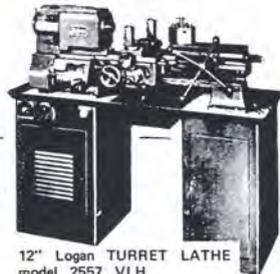
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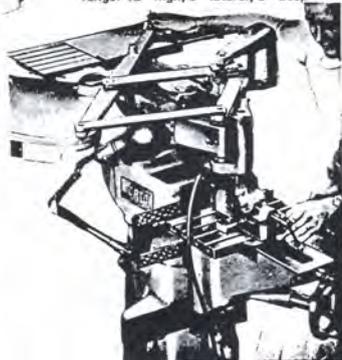


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its location in the gorge, it seems unlikely that it had any effect on the drainage of upstream areas as did the upper reef.)

(It seems inaccurate to refer to this particular perpendicular drop as the Little Falls. The early Dutch referred to the whole area as "the deep fall" — probably from the Dutch word *val*, which means rapids, or a falling stream. In addition, during the one hundred and eighty years before the blasting took place, every observer of record seem to consider the total section of rapidly descending water when referring to "the Little Falls.")

Continuing his "History," Cruikshank then noted, "William M. Miller, who was considered a good authority by those who knew him, informed the writer that this purchase [by Board and Ward in 1736] was for the establishing of a foundry on the south bank of the Passaic River." At this point the record becomes vague. We already know that Gray was living at Little Falls since 1763, but it is not until 1772, that we find evidence of his buying land here. In that latter year, a mortgage was registered in the courts of Essex County (Little Falls was part of Essex County until 1837). The mortgage was given by James Gray and by its terms, he took over the lands acquired by Cornelius Board in 1733. It is not clear about the bed of the river itself, but Cruikshank concluded that Gray also assumed its ownership at the same time.

It will be noticed that there is concern about the relation between the rifts and dams at Little Falls and the floods upstream as well as the damages done to Captain Gray's property. In fact, the twelve remaining paragraphs in the Act are concerned exclusively with that larger problem.

After the Revolution, on June 9, 1790, the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey passed another Act providing a direct solution to the problem. The contents of the Act are clearly revealed in its title: "An Act to enable the Owners and Possessors of the Meadows, Swamps and Low Lands on the River Passaic and its several branches between the Little Falls and the Mill-Dam at Chatham, to break up the Reefs near said Falls, and to dig Canals for the more effectual draining of said Lands, and to raise money for that purpose." The last two paragraphs are also an interesting part of our local history.

*And Whereas* a number of the Owners have contributed and laid out a considerable sum of money in digging a Canal round the Reef near the Falls, and as it is reasonable the expence should be equally borne by all concerned; therefore,

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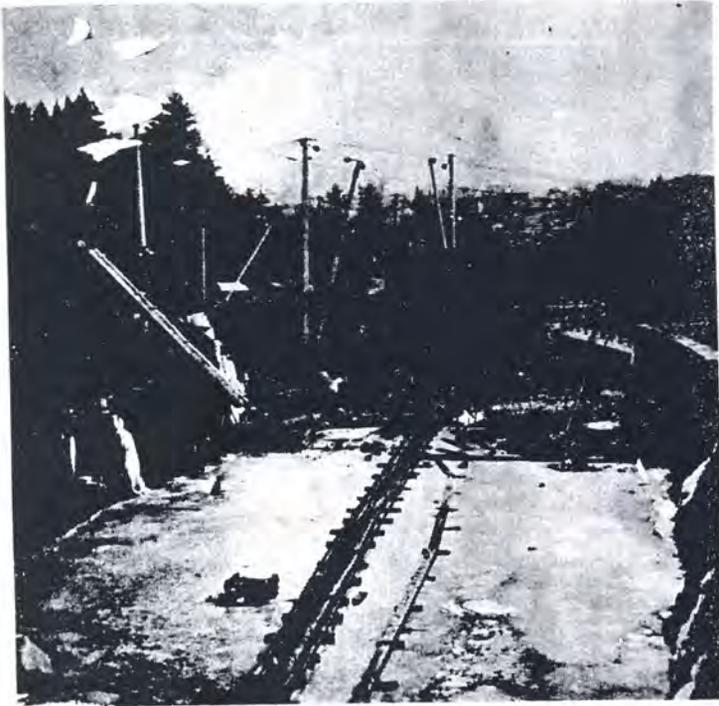
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the same, shall have credit on any of their future taxes.

It would appear that a canal was actually dug sometime about 1790. The editor of the *Paterson Daily Guardian* noted that there was a canal in existence beside the Falls in 1857. This may be the same channel utilized by the East Jersey Water Company when it moved its operations to Little Falls in 1897.

The Acts of 1772 and 1790 did not lead to the actual removal of the reefs. Neither did similar Acts passed January 31, 1812, and March 30, 1869. They were not blasted out for over one hundred years after Gray's difficulties with his neighbors. When it finally came about, the event seemed to be less the result of legislative action than a reaction to a mass protest meeting of upstream Grangers on August 25, 1887.

As noted earlier, Gray, who had a Captain's commission in the Militia of the Royal Colony of New Jersey, remained a Loyalist when Independence was declared in 1776. There was nothing particularly unusual in his act. The Rutgers historian, Richard P. McCormick, has noted that when Governor William Franklin was taken into custody by the Patriots on June 25, 1776, many of the Loyalists openly declared themselves. "Henceforth," McCormick writes, "there was to be a civil war in New Jersey as well as a revolt against the mother country. . . . In some counties — especially Bergen, Monmouth, Essex and Gloucester — Tory bands and rebel militia were engaged in vicious raids and skirmishes. Many of the experienced leaders of the state — in politics, law, religion

and business — had taken refuge in New York."

There is no available evidence about how the inhabitants of Little Falls divided on the question of Independence. The descendants of the Dutch who settled in northern New Jersey were not particularly noted for their attachment to the rebel cause, yet a goodly number carrying Dutch names did fight nobly for that cause. No Patriot soldiers have been identified as coming from Little Falls, but this is partly due to the fact that the official records list only the county, and not the town, of residence. By considering family names we may guess that there may have been three local men who fought under General Washington, but this is no more than a guess. The three were Thomas Seigler, Abraham Speer, and Francis Speer. It is also possible that all three were really from Speer-Town (Upper Montclair) as claimed by the Montclair chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Gray, at any rate, was a Tory. Cruikshank continues the story. "He reported to Sir Henry Clinton and obtained the position of command of a foraging troop. His time had come. He had not forgotten how the inhabitants of the Upper Passaic and its tributaries had destroyed his property and ruined his business prospects. With Captain Gray, supported by the British Army, it was retaliation and return payment. To his former neighbors it was (an opportunity to settle) accounts."

"It was known in the Notch camp that a foraging company, led by Captain Gray, was ravaging the country between Morristown and Caldwell. Captain Post of Acquackanonk, was hastened with his Company to Pine Brook, Chatham, and to whatever place Gray might be found to interrupt his work, secure the inhabitants in their possessions, and either take him and his foragers as prisoners or drive him from the country."

"Captain Gray, having completed his raids, was encumbered with his plunder and was on his return to the British camp in New York. He had gathered up horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, fowl, and household accommodations, had pressed into service and made available, the teams, wagons, and men to help, whom he had plundered."

"Somewhere between Chatham and Pine Brook, Captain Post, the Acquackanonk Marion, and his boys ambushed him. Gray accepted the terms of surrender, gathered his men, and fled. A guard was placed over the property, and any man who had been robbed, was called to come, identify his own, and take it home with him."

The Reverend Cruikshank did not identify any sources for his part of Gray's story. Most of it may be the product of Cruikshank's imagination. Yet, the clergyman was a very methodical and highly intelligent man, and he was reputed to have done much research on the military activities in this area during the Revolution. What we do know for certain is that Gray went to Montreal sometime during the war years and when last heard from

# BEST WISHES

*From*

*Italian-American Social Club of Little Falls*

LITTLE FALLS, NEW JERSEY

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*Compliments of*

**AYERST LABORATORIES** *Pharmaceuticals Through Medical Research*  
DIVISION OF AMERICAN HOME PRODUCTS CORPORATION



245 Paterson Avenue, Little Falls, New Jersey 07424 • CLifford 6-6300



was in Canada.

Because Gray was a Loyalist, his property at Little Falls was confiscated by the State of New Jersey. After the Treaty of Paris ending the war was signed in 1783, it was sold at public auction. The notice of the sale and a brief description of the property was published in *The New-Jersey Gazette* (Trenton) on May 10, 1784, and repeated on May 17th and 24th.

... on Tuesday the eighth of June next will be sold, on or near the premises, all that valuable farm at the little falls in the county of Essex, being part of the forfeited estate of James Grey; the farm contains about 230 acres of land, a great part of which is meadowland, some ploughland, with woodland sufficient for fewel and fencing the farm: There is on said farm a large dwellinghouse two stories high, with four rooms on a floor, with a kitchen at one end, with stables and other out-houses, a garden with a variety of grafted fruits, etc. The said farm joins near a mill on Passaic River, where is a commodious place for building almost any kind of waterworks, particularly a grist and saw-mill, on a never failing stream of water, which privileges will also be sold with the farm. The said vendue will begin at 11 o'clock in the forenoon.

## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Little Falls was the scene of Revolutionary War activity twice during the year 1780. No battle took place here, but Washington's troops did take up positions here in the early summer and again the fall of that year. From June 26 to July 1, 1780, General Washington and his army camped to the northward in the Ramapo Valley. While there, word was received that a French army under the command of General Rochambeau had been despatched from France to join with the Patriot soldiers and to help them in their cause. This intelligence did not disclose where Rochambeau's army would land on American shores. Indeed, this was probably not determined beforehand, since a British fleet in the Atlantic had to be evaded as it would do its best to prevent any landing.

Washington moved his main body of troops to positions along the Valley Road in Preakness. General Lafayette commanded the troops guarding the left wing. He made his headquarters in an area which is now part of the town of Hawthorne. Washington himself made his headquarters in the mansion of Theunis Dey in Preak-

# 1968

## A RIGHT TO BE PROUD

Public Service congratulates the City of Little Falls on its 100th Anniversary. You have a right to be proud of your city and its progress during this past century. We are pleased that we had the opportunity to provide the electricity and gas that helped power this progress, and we look forward with you to a future of growth and prosperity.



**PUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC  
AND GAS COMPANY**

## KIOWA A.C. Football Team



**FOOTBALL TEAM OF 1929**—It was this year that the KIOWA Athletic Club, organized in 1928, had its first strong football team and was undefeated. Beginning with the top row, from left, are: Slim Mead, "Graf" Romaine, Harry De Old, Al Webb, Jake Walton, Harold Lattimore, Art Hobson, Joe Ruthkoff, Howard Schultz, Paul Corcoran, Wesley Thomas, Slick Robb, (captain) Vic Mc Ewan, Walt Beckwith, Ruby Scerrato, Herb Rotherham, Bill Duncan, Stan Cole, Carl Muller, George Baldwin, and Eddie Marston.

ness. The historian of Wayne, New Jersey, William E. Berce, quotes an item in the *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury* of July 17, 1780, as evidence that the British in New York were quite well-informed about Washington's movements. "General Washington's Head Quarters, we hear, is at Colonel Dye's, at a place called the 'Little Falls of Passaic' about 20 miles from Newark, and the greatest part of his army are encamped from Horse Neck upwards to the westward of the Passaic."

Washington's purpose in moving down to Preakness was to be in a position to move to help protect Rochambeau's landing should it occur near here. Yet he could not expose his troops too much because of the danger of attack from the British troops in New York. His Preakness position put the Passaic River and the First Mountain between the two armies. To guard his right wing against a surprise attack, he sent two detachments into Little Falls. Great Notch and the lesser gap leading to Speertown (Clove Road) were two vulnerable points. But the bare hilltop just north of the Notch was also an excellent observation point over the ground to the east. To this area Washington sent Major James Parr's Rifle Corps. The camp they established gave the name to Rifle Camp Road which has persisted until today. The area was manned from about July 1st until July 28, 1780, though apparently a Connecticut regiment relieved Parr's Corp before that latter date.

Another vulnerable spot on Washington's right flank was the road leading from the Newark-Caldwell Road (Bloomfield Avenue) down to Little Falls beside the

Peckman River. Coming through the Cranetown Gap (where Bloomfield Avenue now crosses the mountain), the enemy might be able to sneak in behind Parr's riflemen up beside the Notch. To prevent such a surprise, Colonel Stephen Moylan's Cavalry Regiment, the 4th Dragoons, were stationed beside the Peckman River just south of Main Street. The entire right wing, including the Parr and Moylan outposts, was commanded by Major General Lord Stirling.

By July 18, 1780, Washington learned that the French fleet had landed Rochambeau's army at Newport, Rhode Island. Only July 28, 1780, he issued marching orders which would take his Patriot army to the Hudson River at Tappan. There the troops were to stand in readiness to cross the river and attack the British forces in New York should they weaken their forces in the city by despatching large numbers to Rhode Island.

The contemplated attack upon the British never took place. Washington's army arrived back in the vicinity of Little Falls on October 7, 1780, and remained here for the greater part of that month. Again the General made his headquarters in the Dey Mansion. This time the main body of his troops stretched along the Totowa Road from the Laurel Grove Cemetery to what is now the West Broadway Bridge in Paterson. The same outposts by the Notch and by the Peckman River were again manned.

No available evidence indicates that General Lafayette visited Little Falls during the war. General Orders issued from the Dey Mansion on October 23, 1780, do establish a tenuous relation between Lafayette and our town, but



#### DYNAMITING THE ARCH

Two photos show the dynamiting of the arch over the Passaic River in 1921. Fire blast at left failed. Photos courtesy of the Lang family.

# 1868 LITTLE FALLS 1968

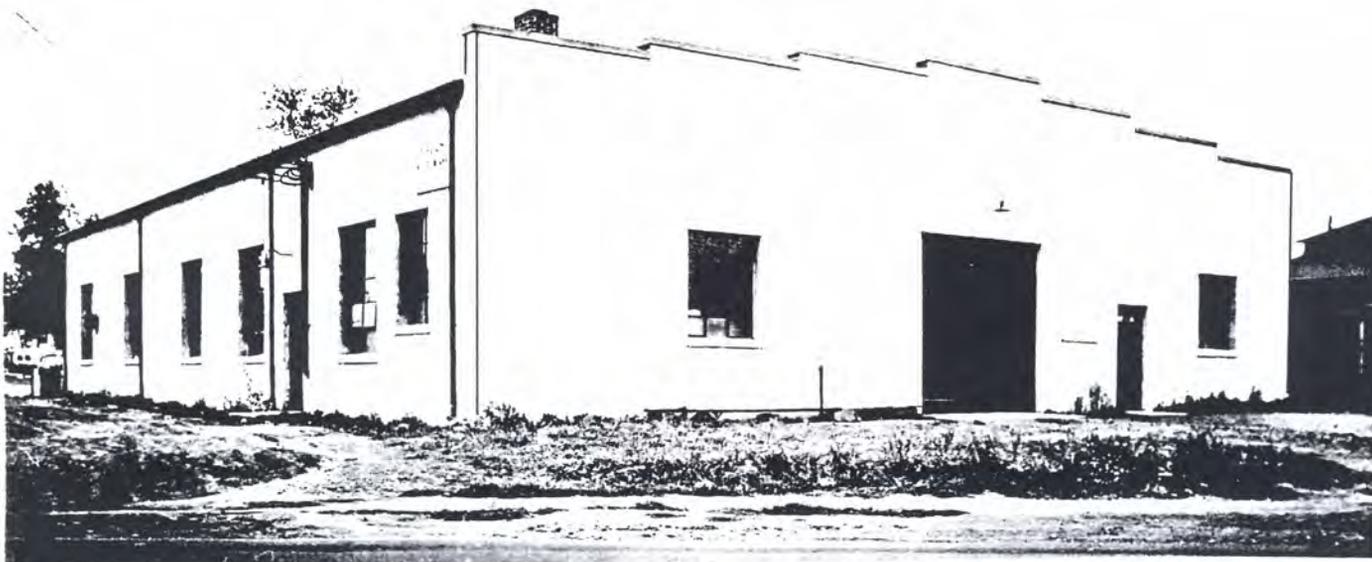
Whether it be the past, present or future, the personality of Little Falls has always been a total product of the personalities of its residents. This personality has been one of dignity, dedication and progress. We at the Farnese Pastry Shop are happy in joining with our friends and neighbors in celebrating our 100th birthday in the finest of traditions.

## *Farnese Pastry Shop*

82 Newark-Pompton-Turnpike (Route 23), Singac, N.J.

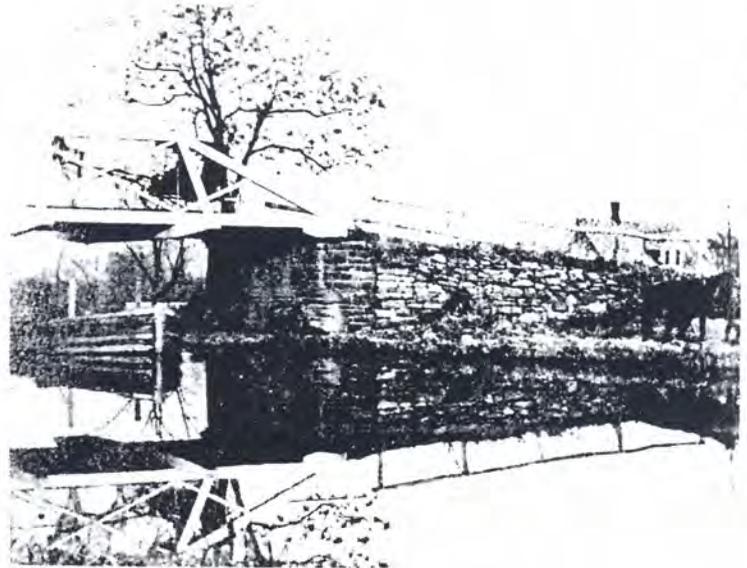
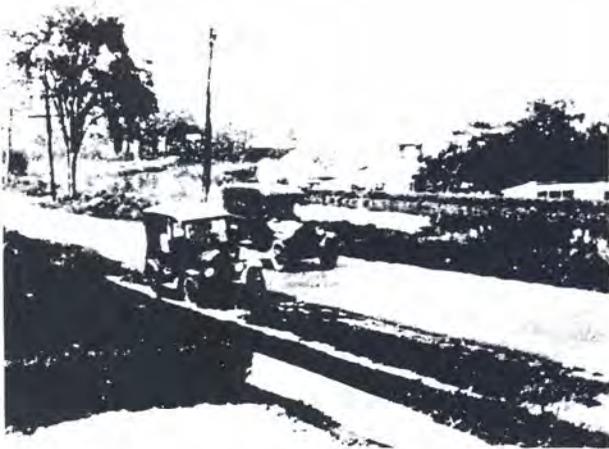
## *A Happy Birthday to Our Town*

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Falls Metal Works, Ltd., was started in March, 1946, as a partnership by Albert M. Sietsema and Barney Vander May, with four part-time employees. The business grew rapidly and in 1949 moved from the original location, 23 East Main Street, to a new Cinder Block and Stucco building at 409 Main Street. The business has continued to grow and now it is a Corporation with 50 employees. The building has been enlarged and improved, and today it is one of the Town's Industrial show places.

The Management of Falls Metal Works wishes to congratulate Little Falls on its 100 years of progress and we hope that the next 100 years will be greater than the one that has past.



### THE OLD MORRIS CANAL

**LEFT:** The Morris Canal, where it crossed at Wilmore Road and Third Avenue. **RIGHT:** Mule team pulls the barge under the Long Hill Road bridge at Main Street and First Avenue. Note

roof of house of Sam Meyer, who for many years ran hardware store on Main Street in the center of town. (Photos courtesy of Lang family).

nothing more. The General Orders despatched a Corps of Light Infantry to assist in the guarding of Cranetown Gap and the Notch. Since the Light Infantry was under Lafayette's over-all command, there remains a bare possibility that he did visit his troops here.

In 1825, General Lafayette returned to this country at the invitation of Congress. He made a grand tour of the country over a period of one hundred and twenty days. Everywhere he went he was received with most enthusiastic welcomes befitting the great national hero that he was. It has come to be believed that he visited Little Falls and returned "to the places at Great Notch where he commanded troops." Lafayette did visit Little Falls, but more than that cannot be said. The *Newark Sentinel* of July 19, 1825, records the fact of his visit.

"The Nation's Guest" took his final leave of the citizens of New-York on Thursday morning last on his tour south, preparatory to his embarkation for his native country. He was escorted from his lodgings in Broadway to the Hoboken Ferry by the military, where he crossed the North river and proceeded directly to Hackensack, where he was received with a thousand welcomes by the patriotic citizens of that village. After breakfast he continued his journey to Paterson, where after receiving the hospitalities of the citizens, and minutely examining and admiring this "Manchester of America," he set out for Morristown, passing the Little Falls, Parsippany, and Whippany in his route, in each of which places the people were eager to hail and welcome the passing stranger. Though engaged to dine at Morristown, he did not reach that place until 6 o'clock in the afternoon.

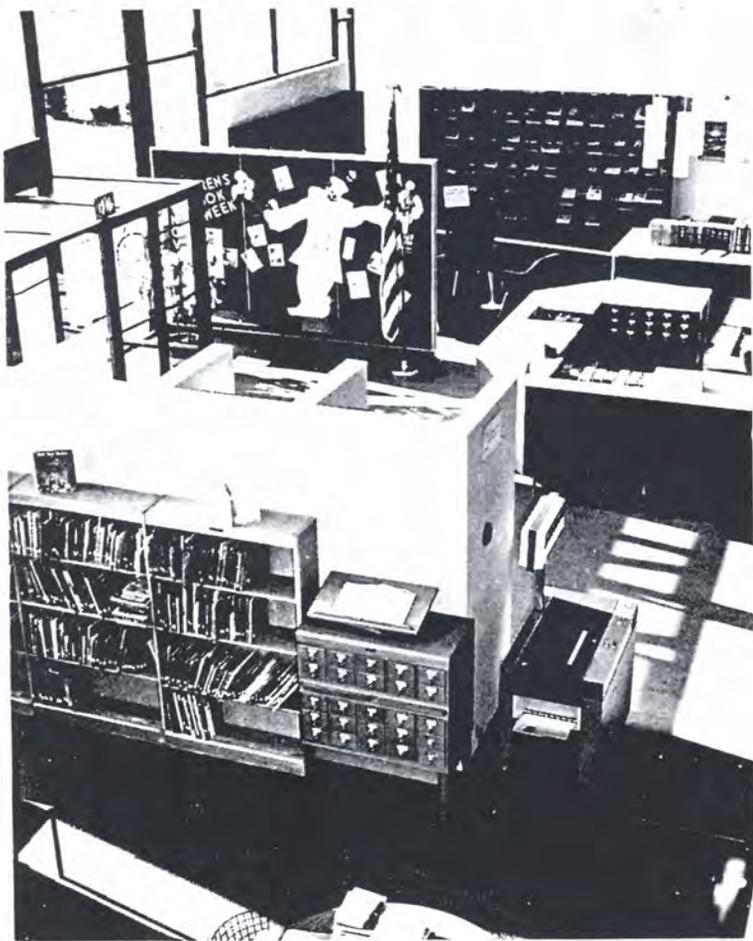
An extended visit to the old Rifle Camp does not appear to have been a part of Lafayette's visit here. His schedule for that day of July 14, 1825, seems to have been much too crowded and demanding for any side excursions. The day which followed was equally hectic. He left Morristown at 7 a.m., passed through Springfield, went north to Newark, then traveled south through Elizabeth and New Brunswick as far as Princeton before he got to bed. Two events give evidence of the breakneck speed at which his entourage traveled. On the day he passed through Little Falls, the carriage of one of his aides overturned in Pine Brook when it swerved to get around a cannon some citizens had towed into the road. On the next day, one of springs on Lafayette's own carriage broke as he was speeding through Springfield.

## ROBERT BEATTIE

If the famous Lafayette played no great role in our history, there is no question but that Robert Beattie did. Beattie was the most important and most influential citizen of Little Falls over the entire course of our history.

In 1877, *The Carpet Trade*, a monthly trade magazine published in Brooklyn, New York, presented a long biographical sketch outlining the highlights of Beattie's life and accomplishments. Presumably Beattie, who was then 66 years old and in semi-retirement, or his family was the source of this information. The sketch was reprinted in *The Paterson Daily Press* of June 13, 1877, and is the framework upon which the following story of

# Little Falls Library



At left is typical setting of the new library built in the Township's Centennial Year. The old building, which served people for almost half a century, was torn down. It had been built through the efforts of the Little Falls Woman's Club. The new building on Warren Street cost some \$240,000, of which about one-third came from state aid. The members of the Library Board include Mayor Charles Pullara, Mrs. Bruce Belding, president; Dr. Bertram Boucher, Mrs. Ada Ruffalo, Rev. John Nyitray (pastor of the Second Reformed Church) and Carmine J. Conti. Also serving as members during the Centennial year were Mayor John Kosachook, Mrs. Donald Gaskin, Anthony Suglia and Rev. Randolph Gibbons, pastor of Our Lady of Holy Angels R. C. Church.

Here is front of new library facing Warren Street which was completed during the Little Falls Centennial Year.





## SECOND REFORMED CHURCH

Parishioners of the Second Reformed Church lay cornerstone of new edifice in 1914, fifty-five years ago.

Robert Beattie is built.

Beattie was born in County Armagh in what is now Northern Ireland in the year 1811. County Armagh is a pleasantly rolling land with many swift-running streams and many fine fruit orchards. Most of the people there in 1811 lived off the land, but from the middle of the eighteenth century, the Province of Ulster in which Armagh was located was also a thriving center of cotton and linen textile manufacture. It is probably more than coincidental that Robert Beattie settled here where the physical landscape is very much like that of the Armagh countryside and that he spent most of his life here in the manufacture of textiles.

Like the rest of Ireland, Ulster's main export through the years has been its manpower. At least fifteen Presidents of the United States had Ulster ancestry. These were: John Adams, Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Jackson, Polk, Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, Grant, Arthur, Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt. An account of Belfast as early as 1773, noted that there were a total of 160 looms in the city, but that owing to trade restrictions "above one-quarter of the manufacturing people and their money have gone to America." When Robert Beattie came to America in 1827 at age sixteen, he was following a common practice among the Irish. It is likely that he brought with him some understanding of what

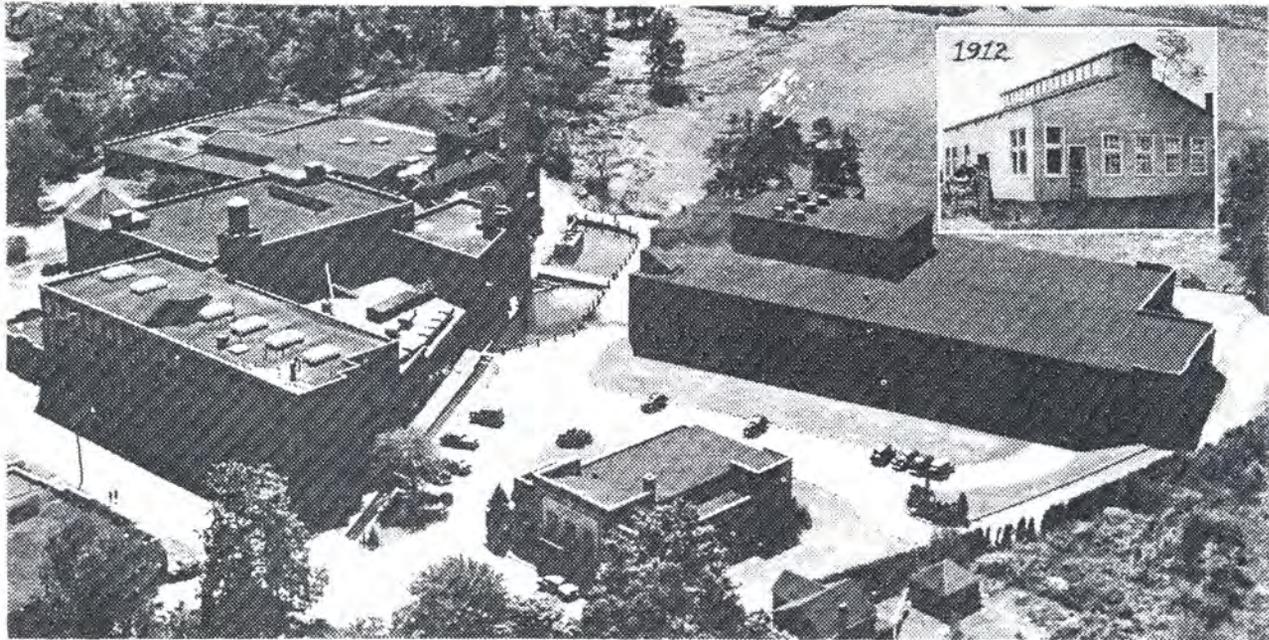
was involved in the manufacture of textiles.

In 1832, the young man entered the carpet industry for the first time in this country. He was admitted as an apprentice in the carpet works of John and Nicholas Haight and Company of Jersey City. The company had moved to Jersey City sometime after it was established in New York City in 1821. Apparently Beattie brought some skills with him which he used as bargaining power, for it was noted that his articles of apprenticeship did not require him to agree not to go to work with any other carpet manufacturer. *The Carpet Trade* cited this as the very first exception to this common clause in apprenticeship agreements.

The authors of *The American Carpet Manufacture* (Cole and Williamson, 1941) describe that industry as "one of the most venerable domestic branches of manufacture" in America. They also identify John and Nicholas Haight as outstanding pioneers in the field. Young Robert Beattie was fortunate in his early associations. He was also fortunate in the time at which he came upon the scene. "The decade 1825-1834 was the heyday in the development of the American carpet industry," wrote Cole and Williamson, "and it marks the period when the factory form of organization became dominant."

It is not clear when John and Nicholas Haight first

# *Congratulations, Little Falls Upon Your 100th Birthday*



For more than half your life we have been here, too . . . Over 55 years to be exact.

From a small beginning Dec. 9, 1912, we've grown to one of the largest institutions of its kind in the world, employing over 500 workers. From an original "wet wash" concern our service has been expanded to include laundering in all of its details, dry

cleaning, rug cleaning, rug and fur storage. Approximately 100 of our motor vehicles span the highways from parts of Rockland County, N. Y. on the north down to Seaside Heights on the Jersey shore on the south.

Let's Continue to go Forward Together

# LITTLE FALLS LAUNDRY



Dry Cleaning • Laundering • Rug Shampooing • Storage



**Dutch Reformed Church on Main Street, oldest Little Falls church built in 1842. Rev. Joseph Wilson was the first pastor.**

established a factory at Little Falls, but we do know that it was at least as early as 1826. *The Niles Weekly Register* from 1821 to 1828 had several reports about their activities. From these Cole and Williamson concluded:

In New Jersey, John and Nicholas Haight set up a manufacture of mixed cotton-warp and woolen-waft carpets by which they were said in 1821 to employ "several hundred persons." Their Jersey City factory was alleged in 1826 to employ one hundred hands in weaving alone, while spinning and preparing of the yarn – carried on in a separate establishment at Little Falls – employed yet another hundred persons.

Evidences of Beattie's advanced skills and aptitudes came in the year after he joined the Haight's. One of the obvious needs in the industry was the development of power looms which could be applied to the manufacture of the oversized products. John Haight invented such a power loom and installed it in the factory at Little Falls. In 1833 Robert Beattie was sent to Little Falls to take charge of that invention and to test it. The factory in which it was located was not at the site of the present mills, but was below the falls. The location was described as "below the quarry, at the lower end of the village of Little Falls." Another report places it on an island in the river below the falls. It is said that the foundations may still be seen there when the waters are low.

In 1834 Beattie decided that John Haight's invention would not meet the requirements of the sought-for power carpet loom. He left the employ of what was by then called The New Jersey and Little Falls Carpet Company. How he spent the next six years is not clear. In 1840 he established his own business in New York City. His factory was on the North (Hudson) River at 37th Street. There for the next three years he manufactured "ingrain carpets." This type of carpet had been developed only a few years before. It is a two-ply carpet in which the pattern goes through and through and appears on both sides.

Beattie's business in New York City was successful. By 1843 he had the capital to buy from the Haight's the building in the river below Little Falls, and he moved his business there. His purchase included the twenty hand looms which were in operation in the building.

In 1844 Robert Beattie moved upstream to take advantage of the far greater water power potential at the top of the falls. He purchased the present site of the mills and immediately began the construction of his first brown-stone building. The owners of the mill site after Captain Gray fled have not been identified. In the early nineteenth century we know that the Reverend James Duryea owned and operated some kind of mill there. Duryea had become pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in Fairfield in 1801, and Little Falls was included in his parish.

**NEW JERSEY WATER SERVICE COMPANY**  
an American Water Works System Company

**A SALUTE TO LITTLE FALLS  
ON ITS  
100th BIRTHDAY**

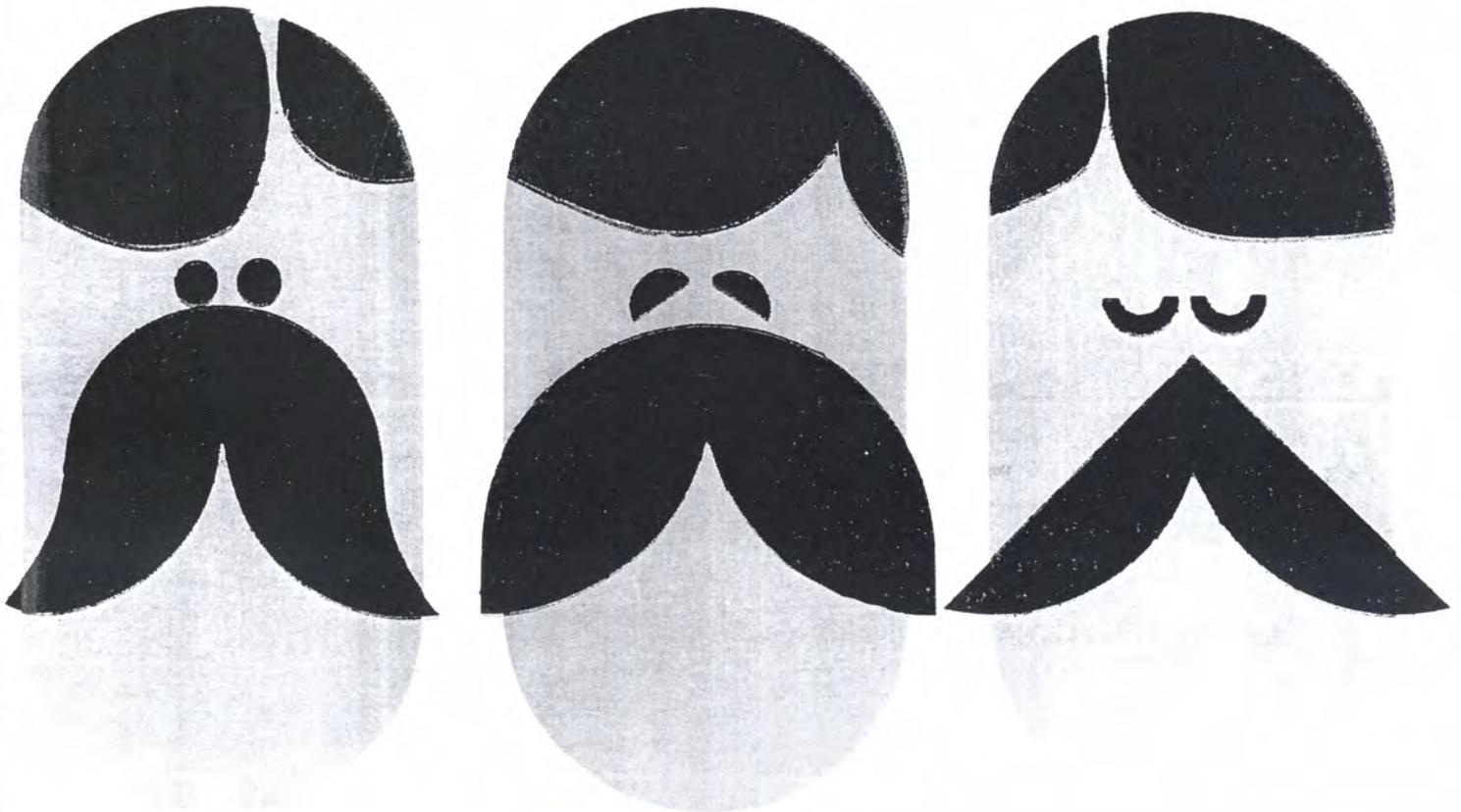
The New Jersey Water Service Company extends heartiest congratulations to Little Falls at this memorable moment in history.

We consider it a distinct privilege to share in the celebration of 100 years of progressive growth and marked success.

Since 1905, we have expanded and improved our facilities to maintain pace with the community we serve. And, as Little Falls commemorates its 100th anniversary, we are supplying more than 638 million gallons of pure water to over 4,000 residences and businesses annually.

Anticipating the ever-increasing needs of this forward-looking community, The New Jersey Water Service Company is preparing additional improvements which will strengthen and reinforce the entire distribution system.

We pledge to continue our time-honored policies of sound engineering and financial planning to complement improvement programs initiated by community leaders so that we may grow wisely together for the next 100 years — and more.





One of the first classes ever at Great Notch School, right after the turn of the century. One of the pupils was Bogert Dykstra, now one of our oldest living residents. Teachers were Miss Emma Cahill and Miss Elsie Smith.

In 1817, he left Fairfield and settled in this village. It was not unusual for Rev. Duryea to be both minister and miller. In those days the clergymen were generally the best educated and the most energetic citizens. They quite commonly engaged in various enterprises outside their pastoral duties.

Samuel Bridges followed Duryea, and had the misfortune of seeing his wooden mill building burn to the ground. The Miller brothers succeeded Bridges, and it was from them that Beattie bought the mill site. The road southward from the mill to the Newark-Pompton Turnpike was at first called Miller's Lane and only much later was changed to Montclair Avenue. The Millers (Isaac and his brothers Ezekial, Will, and John) did not manufacture carpets but more appropriately, in view of their name, operated a grist mill. They also operated a store. When Robert Beattie took over, he continued the store, at least for the first few years.

Beattie's store faced some competition, but Little Falls was still a small town. Barber and Howe in their *Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey* (Newark, 1844) described it in the year of Beattie's purchase.

"The village contains 4 stores, several manufacturing establishments and mills, one Dutch Reformed Church and one Methodist Church, and about 60 dwellings."

In 1857 Beattie expanded his holdings to include some on the north side of the river. The publisher of *The Paterson Daily Guardian* in an editorial of April 16, 1857, expressed his confidence in Beattie following this purchase. His opinions of Little Falls generally were not very flattering.

Unlike Paterson and Boonton, the water power at Little Falls goes unused (except for Beattie's carpet factory above the falls, and a felting mill below them — the latter not now running.) The total fall of the water there is 33 feet, 18 feet at the principal breast and the remainder distributed over a rapid of nearly 300 yards above.

Now that Mr. Beattie bought the land a few days ago, he has the control, and he will undoubtedly move ahead!

In a few years the place will be revolutionized. Instead of being a quiet village where everybody



Flames in 1923 destroyed the old Sindle mill on Sindle Avenue. Many oldtimers still recall that blaze, one of the Township's biggest fires.

knows everybody's affairs, it will be alive with the hum of spindles and the hurry of business. Where rail fences now stretch, streets will be opened. Where the plow now annually passes, the spot will be occupied by stores and private dwellings.

Little Falls has evidently a future before her. All that is needed to make her become second only to Paterson, is this project and the completion of a railroad to the place. At present there are several good common roads and the Morris Canal; but these are entirely too slow for the age. There must be a railroad, and there *will* be one.

A few weeks later, on May 10, 1857, the publisher was less effusive but still firm in his confidence in Beattie.

*Little Falls* – We understand that as the freshet subsides Mr. Beattie is about building a new dam across the Passaic at Little Falls. The old one was swept away by the freshet of April 1854. This will be the first of a series of improvements which we have already mentioned as about to be put into execution.

Beattie obviously did not fulfill the grandiose expectations of the *Guardian's* publisher, but he did add another brownstone building on the mill site. It was probably this building which a Newark physician described after his visit here in June, 1869. He also presents other details which are useful in completing the Beattie story.

The principal thing in the neighborhood of Little

Falls, besides the Falls themselves, is the carpet factory of Mr. Robert Beattie. Mr. Beattie has erected on the living rock, by the margin of the river, a massive stone building, 60 by 120 feet, and three stories high, in which he carries on all the processes of carpet making, beginning with crude wool, and ending with the most substantial and elegant three-ply carpet. These he makes to order of A.T. Stewart, and other dealers all over the country.

(A.T. Stewart, like Robert Beattie, was born in Northern Ireland and at about the same time. He arrived in America four years before Beattie. In 1825 he founded in New York a dry-goods concern which expanded into one of the largest retail businesses in the world. At one time he was considered the richest man in the United States. Noting that Beattie made carpets to Stewart's order was a way of attesting to the high quality of those carpets.)

The looms in the building, twenty-two in number, are driven by water power, of which, of course, the supply is ample. Mr. B. was the first to substitute power for hand looms in this manufacture. [This is highly questionable. RRB] When he commenced, a raw lad from Ireland, some years ago, it was a single hand loom he worked himself, to which he added successively until his establishment grew to what we see. In a wooden building nearby he has forty hand looms, only about twenty of

## Congratulations on your 100th Anniversary

First Savings and Loan Association of Little Falls is proud and privileged to have played its part in the growth and development of our growing township for the past 40 of its 100 years.

Since its incorporation, First Savings has dedicated itself to helping thousands of local families achieve the personal security that stems from owning their own homes free and clear — and from having a safe, profitable method of making saved dollars produce income while serving the family's financial needs and goals.

In providing these services, First Savings has contributed to the full employment of our fine community, helping to keep money circulating locally and thereby adding to the stability of our local economy. It has made Little Falls a better place to live. A better place to rear a family.

And, finally it has functioned to support and encourage our free enterprise system — the very backbone of America's standard of living.

On this, our 40th Anniversary year, we congratulate the people of Little Falls on their centennial celebration — and pledge a continued, dedicated effort to provide the best in thrift and home financing service in the years ahead.

"An Institution  
Dedicated  
To Helping  
Its Neighbors"



115 MAIN ST., (cor. Center Ave.) LITTLE FALLS, N. J. 07424 • 256-2100  
HOURS: Daily 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. • Fridays 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.



A top Little Falls baseball team some 50 years ago. Oldtimers may remember most of the players. Standing (left to right) Robert Hawthorne, Coach Warren Halsey, Harry Francisco. Middle row (from left) Sherman Baldwin, Charles Fritz, James DeGraw. Bottom: Walter Frazer, David Harriott, Lyman Sindle, Robert Harriott, Lawrence Flint.

which, however, are in operation. The amount of wool consumed daily is about 500 pounds. The power looms are attended by young girls, who seem entirely competent for the business, as it requires no strength; only attention and some degree of intelligence.

During the Civil War, the Beattie mills contributed to the Union war effort by producing blankets for the soldiers. One of the biggest scandals of the war was in the fact that many northern manufacturers passed off inferior goods for the use of the troops. Before the war, a very serviceable class of woollen goods had been manufactured by combining new wool with quantities of previously used wool. During the war such materials were incorporated into unserviceable war supplies so frequently that the name of the material (shoddy) came to mean anything which was unreliable or inferior. In contrast to the common practices, the Beatties took pride in the fact that they not only met each government contract on time, but that they "furnished an *honest* blanket."

(During the Spanish-American War, the Beattie mills produced bullet wadding; in World War I, they made burlap for the government; and in World War II, flame-throwers were turned out.)

During the Civil War years, Beattie's elder son, William,

joined the business. A few years later, in 1870, Robert Jr. also assumed a role in the family business. William favored the excitement of city life to that of the rural backwater which was then Little Falls. It is recorded that he chose to take charge of the company's show-rooms in New York City at 85 White Street. Robert Jr. remained in Little Falls where he became an active and influential civic leader.

The laboring classes were hard hit by the Civil War. Wages lagged behind rising commodity prices, and at the close of the fighting the laborer was worse off than in 1860. On the other hand, entrepreneurs experienced an unprecedented period of industrial activity and an equally unprecedented period of money making. The Beatties shared in this good fortune even if their employees did not. Indirect evidence of their increased fortunes appears in their purchase of more extended land holdings. *The Paterson Daily Press* of July 19, 1865, reported that Beattie and Son had just acquired "for the first time, full possession of the water-power in the Passaic, below as well as above the falls, and on both sides of the river" in addition to the obviously un-exhausted brownstone quarries. Further indication of the Beattie prosperity is seen in their erection of an additional large brick building at the mill site in 1876.

There is other evidence that the Beatties were enjoying substantial incomes during the war years. During

## **TECHNICAL HOME STUDY SCHOOLS**

Locksmithing Institute

Academy of Millinery Design

Typewriter Repair School

School of Modern Photography

Upholstery Trades School

1500 Cardinal Drive Little Falls, New Jersey



Little Falls' finest about 50 years ago. Standing (left to right) Mose Horton, Richard Young, Wil-

liam Lavissier, J. Thompson. Seated: E. Van Gieson, Chief Dougherty and Pat Hogan.

those years a rather undemanding federal income tax was levied as one of the devices used to finance the war. At that time, tax returns were public information, and on June 25, 1869, *The Paterson Daily Press* was able to report that "only forty men in Passaic County reported incomes over \$5,000 after making all the deductions allowed by law." Among those forty were only two in Little Falls — Robert Beattie, who reported an income of \$9,856 after allowable deductions, and his elder son, William, who reported \$10,487 after deductions. If these incomes seem meager in 1968, it should be noted that in the following year of 1870, only 270,000 persons in the whole United States paid tax on incomes of \$1,000 or over.

Robert Beattie seemed to be involved in just about everything that happened in Little Falls in the middle of the nineteenth century. The coming of the railroad is an example. By 1860 a vast railroad network had been completed east of the Mississippi River. But Little Falls had been by-passed. Beattie was active in correcting this neglect. For one thing, it was important to his business. Carpet manufacturing requires large quantities of raw materials, and none of these were produced locally. Except for small quantities of cotton yarn, everything had to be imported from overseas and carried to Little Falls. Linen was brought from Ireland and jute from

India. The chief material in carpets was wool, and none of the particular quality needed was produced in America. The wool came in great bales from Australia and New Zealand, from Argentina and northern India, and from as far away as China and Siberia. The need for effective local transportation facilities was obvious.

Finally in 1869, a branch of the Morris and Essex Railroad was constructed which ran near the village of Little Falls. The editor of *The Paterson Daily Press* commended Beattie for laying out a new 100 feet broad road to the railroad. This road appears to be what is now Union Boulevard in Totowa. The spot where it met the railroad is about where the new Interstate Highway # 80 now crosses the Boulevard. On October 25, 1875, the Montclair and Greenwood Lake Railroad was organized and a route was laid out through Little Falls. This is the same route over which the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad now passes. Family tradition states that Robert Beattie gave the land for the construction of a station off Walnut Street with the stipulation that every train passing through would stop here. It is also stated that the stipulation was honored until past the middle of the twentieth century.

One main chapter in the Beattie story ends with his death on July 30, 1882. He was seventy-one years of age. Lines in his obituaries in the newspapers tell that



Morris Canal, skater's paradise, in 1924, off Wilmore Road. Hardy s  
rok

his mills were then employing 300 hands, and that he had two daughters as well as the two sons, William and Robert Jr. Thus by indirection, we learn of the probable existence of a *Mrs. Robert Beattie*. It should be noticeable to anyone who has followed this history up to this point that it has been a totally *male* history. Through all the years since 1702, the only females found in the records are the young girls who tended the Beattie power looms in 1869. No individual female appears in the available records who is identifiable by name – unless, ironically, the Negro child slaves “Bett” and “Sant” were of that sex. The history of Little Falls is a story of people, but the sources show mainly a record of men. Beyond question, women were also here – comforting, sharing, inspiring, helping, and loving – but the available materials reveal practically nothing about them until well into the twentieth century.

The records of our past generally treat laboring people with the same anonymity. Among the few we can identify by name are Joseph and Charles Clark and Matthew Gattison. These three were relatives of Beattie whom he brought over from Ireland to act as foremen in the mills. Otherwise we usually only know the workers by their national backgrounds. It is reported that the Beattie mills first employed the people of Dutch origins who were already living here. Later on the Beatties contributed to the second wave of Dutch migrants by subsidizing the trans-Atlantic journeys of many of them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Another large ethnic group which is identifiable among Beattie employees is the Ukrainians. These people had originally gone into the mines of Pennsylvania after their migration to the United States. Dissatisfaction with the conditions there and inducements from Beattie hiring agents per-

sueded them to move here. Their settlement in Singac was climaxed by the establishment of St. John's Russian Orthodox Church in 1914.

## THE BROWNSTONE QUARRY

The erupting basalt or trap rock which gave the distinctive configuration to our area raised and flowed through an older sedimentary rock, known geologically as “triassic sandstone.” This older rock differs widely in depth, density, and color. At Little Falls it was found in unusually deep beds, it had a uniformly firm texture, and it was marked by a rich brown color. These qualities of the rock here led to another important chapter in our history.

Among the few published accounts dealing with the history of Little Falls is a charming article “Quarry for the Brownstone Era” written by Barbara Carper Lang (*The Royle Forum*, March 15, 1964). A good bit of what follows rests upon Mrs. Lang's fine article.

The site of the quarry stretched along the southern and eastern bank of the Passaic River from a point about one hundred yards east of Union Avenue to “Storey's Switch” on Paterson Avenue (slightly below the present Township recreation field). Some stone was also quarried all along the bend of the river on the Totowa side, but most came from the Little Falls side.

According to an advertisement in the *New York Journal*, January 3, 1771, cited by Charles Boyer in



rdy sk  
ked along the smooth safe ice for miles in either direction.

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*Early Forges and Furnaces in New Jersey* (1931), Gray had already improved his property before his mortgage was registered in 1772. Boyer says that Gray built a saw mill and a grist mill there in addition to a more important iron forge. The forge was said to have utilized three fires and one hammer. The ore used in the forge was reported to have been carried from Ringwood and Charlottesburg mines in balanced leather saddle bags slung over the backs of horses.

To ensure a constant supply of water for his mills and forge, Gray and some other men, possibly those situated on the north side of the river, constructed a dam on the reef above the falls. They also built a barrier of rocks across the river some 220 yards further upstream. These dams were probably not very high structures, but since the descent of the Passaic River from Chatham to Little Falls is only three and one half inches to the mile, the waters they backed up caused much distress to the farmers up the river. When rains came, they found their fields and meadows flooded, their roads made impassable, and frequently their crops ruined.

The farmers are reported to have complained to Gray and to have pleaded with him to remove the obstructions. "Remonstrances, persuasion, and personal entreaty to remove the dams were of no avail," wrote Cruikshank. "The farmers, determined that the dam must and shall be destroyed by force, assumed a warlike attitude. They organized and equipped themselves for the work and came down to Little Falls to destroy the dams by force."

Both Gray and the group of farmers appealed to the New Jersey Colonial Governor and Legislature for a redress of grievances – Gray for the damages to the dam,

and the farmers to prevent any future flooding of their lands. On September 26, 1772, the Governor, Council, and General Assembly passed an Act which attempted to deal with both problems. To Gray's satisfaction, a commission was appointed to determine if he was entitled to compensation for the destruction of his property. The pertinent paragraphs of the Act read as follows:

*And whereas* the pulling down of a Mill-Dam erected by Captain James Grey and others, over said Passaic River, above and near the said Little Falls, for the removing the Obstruction of the Waters in said River without the Consent of the Owners thereof, may have been unlawful and unjustifiable; and the further taking up and removing a Rift of Rocks in said River about Forty Rods above said Mill-Dam, as well as the Rift on which the said Mill-Dam was erected, may be thought necessary by said Managers for the free Passage of the Waters of said River, and the doing of which may be an Injury to the Owners of said Mill-Dam and Rifts, for which they, on a full Hearing of the Parties concerned, may be awarded and adjudged to be entitled to some Recompence to be made them by the said Owners and Possessors of the said Meadows, Swamps, and low Land, between the Boundaries aforesaid, benefited thereby; wherefore to the end that said Parties concerned may have a fair and impartial Hearing and Determination thereof by indifferent Persons for that Purpose,

*Be It Enacted* by the Governor, Council, and General Assembly, and it is hereby Enacted by the Authority of the same, That John Chetwood of Elizabethtown, Isaac Pearson of Nottingham, and

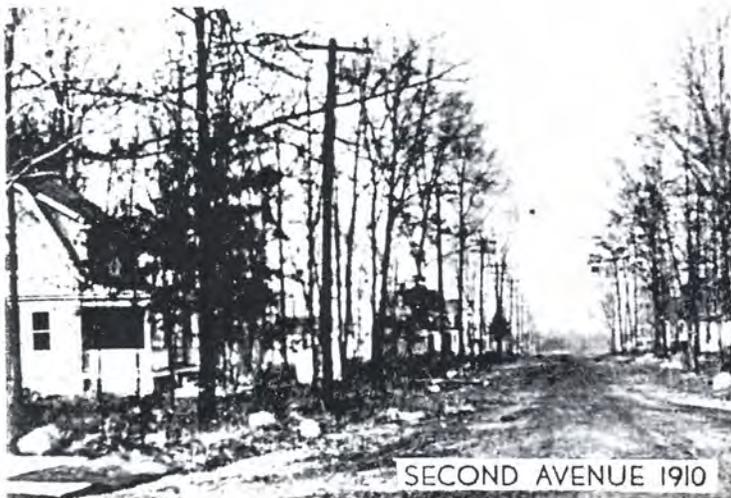
# THEY WORKED IN BEATTIE'S 65 YEARS AGO



BEATTIE MILL WORKERS, 1905—These 50 Beattie Mill workers posed for this photo outside the Guild Hall on Montclair Avenue 63 years ago. The guild was supplied for its workers as a recreation center by mill owners. Included is George Vander May Sr. (fifth from left in second row) father of 74-year-old Nicholas Vander May of Ridge Road, owner of the Little Falls Laundry on Main Street, his oldest brother and two uncles. The many descendents of these old settlers reside here today. Front row from left: Harry Couch, Anthony Simonson, Charles Van Haelst, Andrew Fritz, Josephy Hardy, John De Kergelen, William Stollmeyer, Theodore Young, William Gerber Sr. and Harry Conley. Second row: Garry Andringa, Henry Vanderberg (great-grandfather of Police Sergeant Ike Vanderberg), Edson Vander May (uncle of Nick Vander May) Garret Vander May (his oldest brother) George Vander May Sr. (his father) Michael Vander May (uncle) Harry Hacket, William Brower, John De Kneckt, John Santhouse and John Weimer. Third row: Richard Speight Sr., James Kellogg, Col. Crampton, Samuel Speight, Mike Baker, John Baker, Thomas Conlon, N.G. Fylstra and Neil Kuypers. Fourth row: Thomas Smith, John Connors, Gene Conklin, Thomas Stainton, Thomas Connors, John Shaffer, Neil De Kneckt, John Vander Meullen, Robert Stinson Sr. and Charles Kuypers. (Photo courtesy of Thomas Fazio.)



FURBECK DRUG 1900



SECOND AVENUE 1910



LITTLE FALLS LAUNDRY

John Schurman of New-Brunswick, Esquires, shall be and are hereby appointed and constituted Judges to hear and determine between the Owners or Possessors of said Meadows, Swamps and low Land; and the Owners of said Mill-Dam and Rifts (Fifteen-Days Notice being given to said Parties, or to some of them, or to their Attorney or Agent, of the Time and Place of their Meeting) what Sum or Sums the Owners of said Mill-Dam and Rifts ought to have and receive for the pulling down, removing, and the taking of same out of said River; and the Adjudication or Determination of the said John Schurman, or any Two of them, in Writing, and filed in the Clerk's Office of the Supreme Court of Judicature for this Colony, shall be good, effectual and binding to all the said Parties.

For more than a hundred years the inhabitants in and around Little Falls engaged in free quarrying. During that period an event took place in New York City which was to have a marked effect on developments in Little Falls. On September 21, 1776, a fire struck lower Manhattan which destroyed 500 buildings. Included among the buildings was the pre-Revolutionary Trinity Church on lower Broadway.

In 1840, the architect Richard Upjohn was engaged to rebuild Trinity. After a long search, Upjohn decided that he wanted the brownstone at Little Falls for his building material. In consequence, the Trinity Church Corporation leased the quarry lands along with rights to cut and remove the stone. One of the factors which influenced Upjohn in his decision was the fact that the Morris Canal passed along the edge of the quarry site. From 1840 to 1846, great blocks of sandstone were loaded on canal barges and carried to Jersey City where they were transhipped to New York City.

One of the more important persons engaged in the rebuilding of Trinity Church was the noted sculptor, James Thom. His part in the project may still be seen in the brownstone figures which ornament the spire of the New York church. Thom was so impressed by the quality of the Little Falls sandstone as a material for sculpture that he settled in Little Falls afterward. He bought a farm here, spent his last days working with the local brownstone, and died here April 17, 1850.

After the Trinity operation, a New York company took over the ownership and operation of the quarry. During that period, it was said that some of the finest buildings in New York City utilized the Little Falls stone in their construction. These included the North River Bank, the North Morris Bank, the Tower Building, and St. Andrew's Hotel at Broadway and 72nd Street. The stone was carried by boat as far as Albany, New York to build the old capitol building there. Nearer home the old Morning Call Building in Paterson and the First Reformed Church in Little Falls remain as examples of the quality and endurance of the local stone. Over that

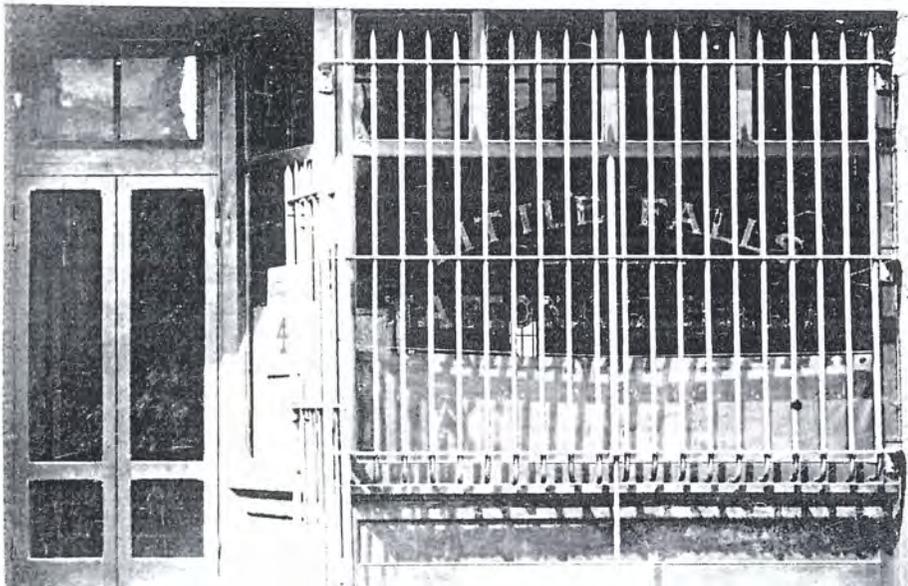
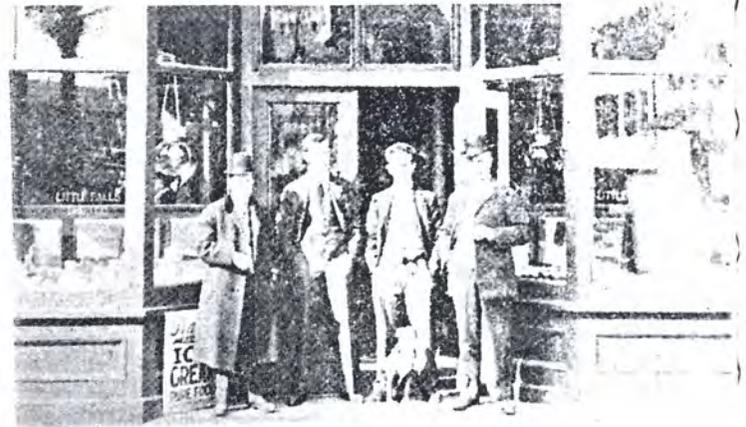
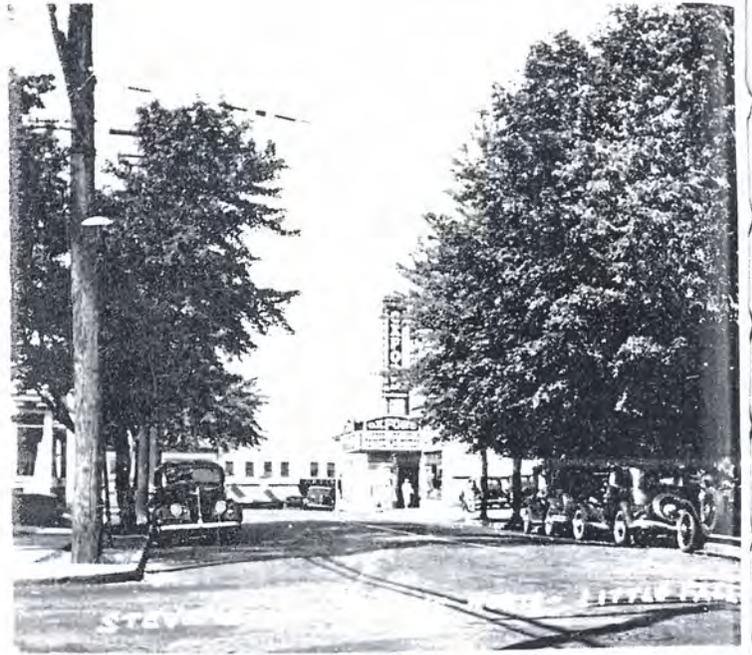
period of fifteen years, the New York company gradually suspended operations. The impression got out that the quarry was exhausted and that the only stone that could be reached was of an inferior quality.

Robert Beattie did not accept that estimate of the quarry's potential. In June or July of 1865, he bought the property and set a large body of men to work cutting and removing the stone. In a short time it was reported that Beattie's workmen were often getting out stones measuring seventeen by twelve by four feet. Most important, Beattie made a contract to supply stone for the building of the first large Roman Catholic church in the city of Paterson. This was the Church of St. John the Baptist on Main Street. The quality of the stone as well as the prompt manner it was delivered brought a letter of personal thanks from Bishop McNulty to James C. Stanley. Stanley was then the manager of the quarry, probably under a lease from Beattie.

Among others who leased and operated the quarry was Robert Matches who came to America from Scotland in 1843. Matches's descendants were long active in local enterprises. They acquired much local real estate including the sandstone houses still standing on Browertown Road and at 53-55 Main Street.

William Harris of Montclair followed Matches as a lessee of the quarry, probably following the Panic of 1873. His management was noteworthy because of his introduction of machinery into the operation. Previously the stone had been cut by hand with hard-tempered saws.

The quarries continued in existence until almost the turn of the century. In 1898, the last building to be built of the stone was the East Jersey Pumping Station which still stands on the far side of the river.



#### ABOUT 1909

Above photo shows Stanton's Drug Co. in 1909 owned by James A. Stanton and now owned by Al Baker. It was the first store lighted by electricity. At left is how Little Falls Nat'l. Bank, now a New Jersey Bank & Trust Co. branch, looked 60 years ago.

## THE MORRIS CANAL



Those were the days. Boys are cooling off on a hot summer day in the canal at Cedar Grove Road and Francisco Avenue. The year was 1905.

The passage of the Morris Canal along the rim of the quarry was an important factor in the success of the quarry operations. During the years 1825 to 1831 when the canal was being built, the contribution flowed the other way, for much Little Falls brownstone was used in canal structures. The most spectacular construction over the entire length of the canal – from the Delaware River to the Hudson – was the aqueduct which carried the canal over the Passaic River at Little Falls. This beautiful arch made of the local brownstone spanned the river over a distance of 80 feet. The top of the aqueduct was 60 feet above the bed of the river. A less spectacular but still very impressive brownstone aqueduct carried the canal over the Peckman River beside Cedar Grove Road.

Visitors from other countries as well as many native Americans were very much impressed by the aqueduct over the Passaic River. The most noted of the foreign visitors was Mrs. Frances Trollope, an English novelist. Her frankness in her book *Domestic Manners of the Americans* caused a great deal of resentment in the United States when it was published in 1833. Her obser-

vations were not always derogatory however. She wrote this about the Morris Canal:

The Morris Canal is certainly an extraordinary work; it not only varies its level sixteen hundred feet, but at one point runs along the side of a mountain thirty feet above the tops of the highest buildings in the town of Paterson below; at another, it crosses the falls of the Passaic, in a stone aqueduct, sixty feet above the water in the river. . . . There is no point in the national character of the Americans which commands so much respect as the boldness and energy with which public works are undertaken.

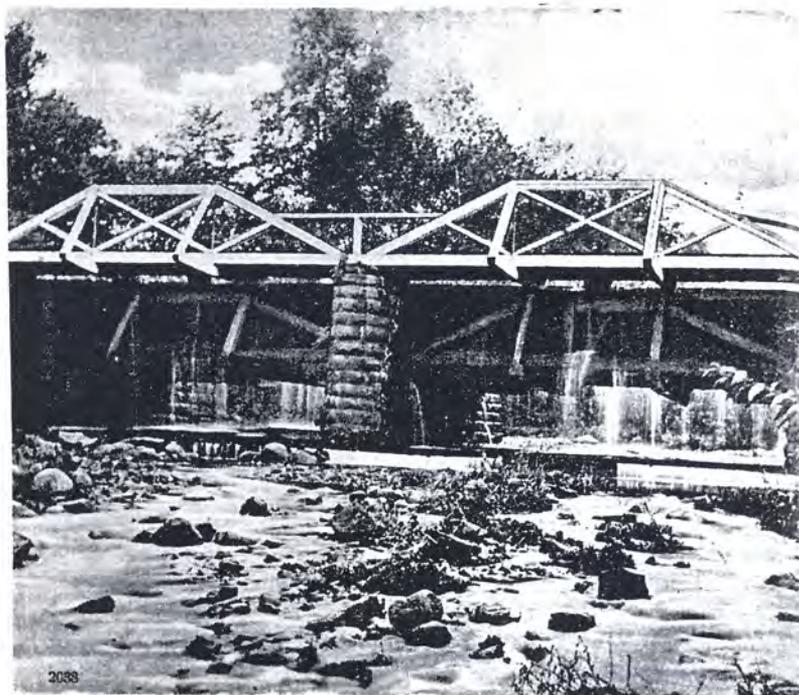
The building of the Morris Canal was a part of the nation-wide craze for canal building early in the nineteenth century. The success of the great Erie Canal in New York State was the spark which set off the craze. Even before the Erie was completed in 1825, sections were opened and brought in phenomenal revenues from tolls. In northern New Jersey, as all over the United States, men dreamed and planned to duplicate the suc-

cess of the Erie. In the plans that emerged the Morris Canal was to wind over New Jersey for over 106 miles — from Phillipsburg to Newark and across the Meadows to Jersey City. Its main purpose was to be to carry anthracite coal from the Pennsylvania mines quickly and inexpensively to the Atlantic coastline.

The Erie Canal had been a state project, but the New Jersey Legislature typically refused to support the Morris Canal project. A private corporation, The Morris Canal and Banking Company, had to be formed and its stock thrown open to public sale. Though the canal stayed open for almost a hundred years, it was never a great financial success. Poor planning at the outset hurt the profits of the canal in its early years. The four feet deep canal had cost about \$3,000,000 to build, but the shallow depth and the fact that the locks would not take boats over 25 tons caused trouble from the beginning. The main difficulty was that the 100 ton barges coming east on the Pennsylvania canals could not use the Morris and their coal had to be transhipped.

In addition to poor planning, poor management was also a factor in the canal's lack of success. The company's directors misused the company's funds in speculation and in wildcat banking. When this became known in 1841, a great public scandal erupted and the canal company failed. A new company took over and operated the canal with some success until after the Civil War, but profits never approached the earlier expectations.

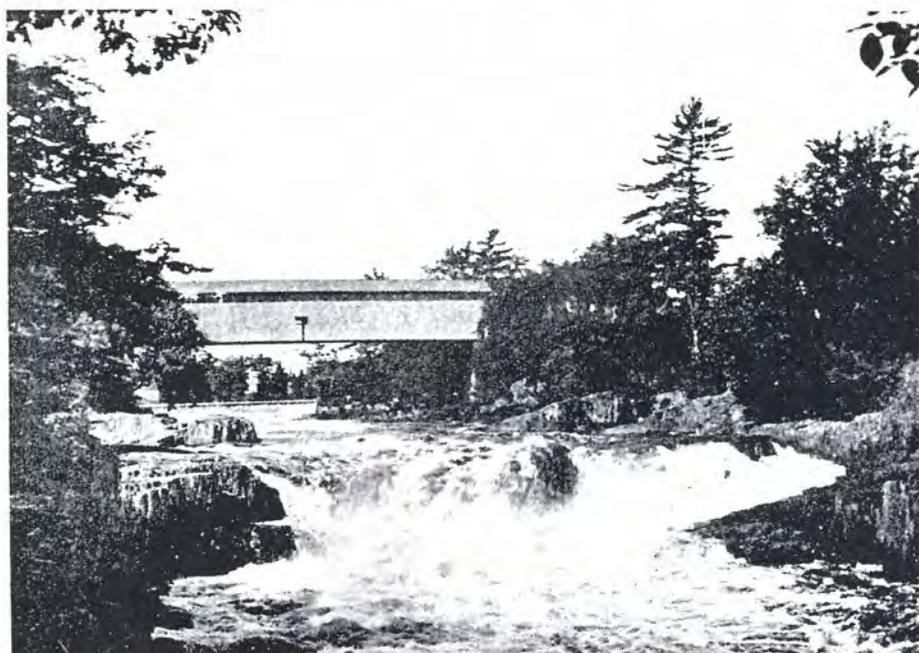
The main reason why most canals, including the Morris, were not very successful was that the canal building craze was followed almost immediately by a great spurt in the construction of railroads. After the Civil War, that spurt became a flood tide and the fates of the



**Aqueduct between Wilmore Road and Cedar Grove Road over the Peckman River. (See historical note on opposite page)**

canals were completely doomed. Experts in the New Jersey Conservation Department have estimated that in its heyday the Morris Canal had a top capacity of carrying 500,000 tons of coal annually. In contrast, the Lehigh Valley Railroad which paralleled the canal was able to carry 19,000,000 tons of coal annually by 1910.

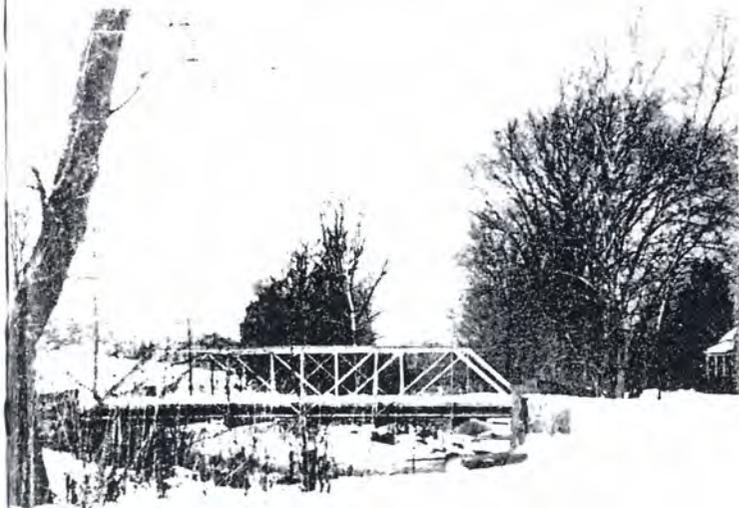
One particularly noteworthy feature of the Morris Canal was the use of inclined planes in places instead of



**Little Falls had its covered bridge once upon a time. This bridge spanned the Passaic River in 1885.**



Boating at Little Falls, N. J.



Peckman River Bridge.



The old Bowden Cotton Mill on Bowden's Pond off Cedar Grove Road, a familiar landmark for years, as it looked in 1908.

locks. The hilly terrain of northern New Jersey gave a total rise and fall over the length of the canal of 1,672 feet. If locks alone had been used to overcome this rise and fall, there would have been about 75 of them. By the use of planes, the entire ascent and descent was made by only 32 locks and planes. The plane operation started with the barges being floated into wooden cradles submerged in basins at the top or bottom of the slope. The barge was then drawn out of the water and, nestled in its cradle, was pulled up the slope on iron rails or lowered down on a parallel set of rails. The mechanism involved used long wire cables which were wound around great drums turned by water power.

There were no locks nor inclined planes within the area of Little Falls, but the local brownstone was widely used in the construction of the locks and for the foundations for the rails in the inclined planes. The stones can still be seen in the plane at Waterloo, New Jersey, and at the wellpreserved lock in the State Park at Saxton Falls in Warren County.

In the nineteenth century and through the first quarter of the twentieth the Morris Canal was the principal recreation center for young and old alike in Little Falls. This writer, like countless others, first learned to ice-skate on the canal and enjoyed many an adventurous skating trip between the banks. In the warmer months, fishermen matched wits with a great variety of finny creatures which were carried into the canal by the streams which supplied its water. In the present time when all our rivers and streams seem "naturally" polluted, it may be difficult to understand that the canal water was pure and that it was a favorite place for swimming. For those who preferred boating or canoeing, rentals were obtainable at the basin just east of Paterson Avenue. (Contrary to common belief, the only basin in town was there, just off Maple Street, and not at the site of Memorial Park off East Main Street.) Visitors from out of town frequently came by way of the canal. It is reported that the trip by canal boat from Newark to Paterson was 50¢ per passenger. It was said to be a favorite trip of honeymooners in the late 1800's.

In the twentieth century the canal was no longer economically viable. In a legislative act of 1922, the State of New Jersey agreed to take over the right of way from the Morris Canal and Banking Company. In 1924 it was decreed that the canal would be eliminated. Banks were cut and the water was drained where possible. The state gave over ownership to the municipalities through which the canal passed. In turn, the municipalities have sold sections to private owners.

Parts of the canal bed in Little Falls can still be seen. But it may be appropriate to describe the route through town for later days when it will no longer be clear. Coming from the west, the canal crossed the Passaic River on its aqueduct exactly where the pipe line bridge now crosses. It circled around behind and below the



stores on Main Street, and crossing Paterson Avenue just north of where Maple Street joins that avenue, it emptied into the basin mentioned above. From the basin, it passed directly to and through what is now Memorial Park. It followed alongside and several feet above the level of Wilmore Road until turning to cross the Peckman

River aqueduct and Cedar Grove Road. At that point it swung back toward the north. Crossing Long Hill Road just above Browertown Road it then followed that road on its way to Paterson. There were four wooden road bridges over the canal in Little Falls. There were on Paterson Avenue, on Main Street by Memorial Park, on Cedar Grove Road, and at the bottom of Long Hill.

## BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Apart from the quarry and the Beattie enterprises, most businesses and industry in Little Falls depended on the water and water power of the Peckman River. Clayton and Nelson in their *History of Bergen and Passaic Counties* (Philadelphia, 1882) describe one noteworthy example:

*James Edge, Manufacturer of Bolts, Nuts, Washers, Chains, Etc.* — This business was established by Thomas Edge in 1846, on the Peckamen's Stream, near Little Falls. The manufacture of washers was the earliest industry, after which the works were extended and bolts and other articles were made. Mr. Edge first began his labors upon the farm, and was induced by the extended demand to erect the present factory, which is now owned by his son James, who succeeded to the firm of Thomas Edge and Sons. The extra power needed in the factory is supplied by a twelve horse-power engine. The wares made by this establishment are principally used in the machine-shops in various portions of the State and in New York City. The iron used is mainly supplied by the Passaic Rolling-Mills at Paterson.

Clayton and Nelson also tell about the Felt Mill which was run by the Van Ness and Sindle families. "Uncle Billy" Van Ness, nonagenarian, civic leader, and one-time Chairman of the Township Committee, was the last member of either family to be associated with the mill. The factory stood where the Little Falls Laundry now stands and was in operation until 1906.

Van Ness and Sindle, Felt-Mill — This mill was erected in 1877 by the present firm for the manufacture of a species of hair-felt used in boiler covering. The capacity of the mill is equivalent to the working of one ton of hair per day. It is run by both water- and steam-power, and employs ten men in the various stages of manufacture. The mill is equipped with all the modern machinery for making hair-felt, for which a market is found in Philadelphia and New York. Adjoining this establishment is the flouring-mill of C. & S. Sindle, erected in 1856.

An important mill race came off the Peckman River south of Main Street. Traces of this race can be seen along Van Ness Avenue and behind the present Town Tavern. Along the race, not far to the north of Main



Old Thompson Silk Mill was doing fine at the turn of the century. Like Paterson mills it petered out. It was located on Sindle Avenue which today promises to be the key street leading into Little Falls' new multi-million industrial empire.

Street, was Sindle's Pond which provided good ice-skating well into the twentieth century. Further along, where Sindle Avenue begins, the water in the mill race dropped sharply to the east and turned a number of mill wheels before returning to the Peckman River.

Further downstream, about where Route \* 46 and the Great Eastern Mills now stand, water was drawn from the Peckman River and impounded to form Jackson's Pond. This pond was another favorite ice-skating location, particularly after the canal was drained in 1924. A short description of the Jackson mills is found in the Clayton-Nelson book.

*Little Falls Mills of George Jackson* — These mills were established by Mr. Jackson in 1850, who was formerly foreman in the dye- and felt-mills of Benjamin Nathan at Little Falls. Mr. Jackson purchased and removed all the machinery and all the stone and wood-work belonging to the former mill to its present site, where he at once rebuilt and began operations. He manufactures all kinds of hair- and wool-felt and carpeting. The factory is located upon what is known as Pecamen's stream, and employs both water- and steam-power. It has two engines, representing one hundred and fifty horse-power, four steam boilers, and two turbine water-wheels.

The factory is equipped with the most complete machinery for the manufacture of a fine grade of felt goods, and employs in its various departments

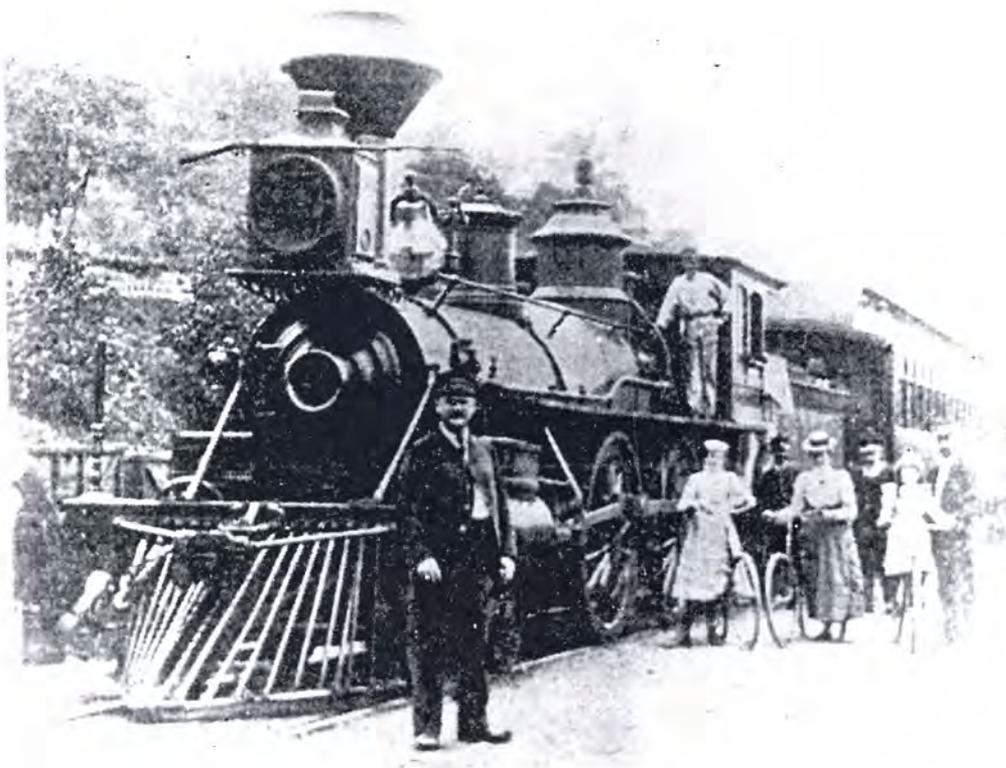
one hundred and fifty men. About 1500 pounds of material per day is worked up, and the total business of the year reaches the sum of \$300,000.

The agents of the factory are located in New York, and find a ready market for its wares in Philadelphia, New York, and other large cities.

Mr. Jackson added to his other business in 1877 a factory for the manufacture of silk and mohair braids, watch-guards, etc. This is also equipped with both steam- and water-power and all the requisite machines for producing the most perfect work. The absorbing demands of the felt-works have rendered it impossible to run the latter establishment to its full capacity.

This account gives some indication of George Jackson's initiative and energy, but it doesn't do justice to the man who was the most colorful character in our town's history.

Jackson was born in England in 1819, and came to America in 1849 at age 30. He served as Benjamin Nathan's foreman for only one year before buying him out. His purchase and improvement of the Little Falls Turnpike in 1871 has already been noted. One of his reasons for wanting to improve that thoroughfare was his purchase, two years earlier, of a hotel in Little Falls. *The Paterson Daily Guardian* of June 15, 1869, contains this advertisement:



We'll go out on limb and say this Erie engine and passenger cars at the turn of the century provided better service than today's modern version. The stop was at Great Notch. The engineer was John Freeman.

#### LITTLE FALLS HOTEL

This hotel has been refitted and is a  
PLEASANT SUMMER RESORT.

capable of accomodating guests with suites of rooms most agreeably arranged. The table is the very best and the bar comprises pure and choice liquors. The river affords excellent boating facilities and the drives in the vicinity are most beautiful. No more healthful resort can be found whereat to spend the hot season. The size of the hotel enables us to accomodate persons with rooms at any time.

GEORGE JACKSON

Jackson's story is not completely a story of rare business acumen and initiative. He had a very poor public reputation locally because of his inability to get along with people. Much of this reputation stemmed from his excessive drinking and from his tendency to become nasty when under the influence of alcohol. It was commonly believed that he beat his wife and children when he was drunk, but his defenders pointed out that he was always very contrite when he sobered up afterward.

One night in 1880, tragedy struck Jackson when his mansion in Little Falls burned to the ground. Jackson had an office on the ground floor of that mansion, and he was working there late one night while Mrs. Jackson was visiting friends in New York City. At a very late

hour, he reported, he left his office to walk down by one of his mills. On reaching the mill, he looked back to see his house completely enveloped in flames. The fire apparently started in his office and spread from there. Jackson recalled that he had thrown some wood into his office stove before leaving and he speculated that he had probably not been careful about re-closing the stove door. Jackson's daughter and a son escaped with their lives, but a second son, who was mentally retarded, perished in the flames.

One day in 1885, Jackson got into a heated argument with one of his employees. At one point he rushed into his newly re-built house and emerged with a revolver. In the ensuing scuffle, Jackson discharged the gun but without hitting his antagonist. He was arrested, nevertheless, and charged with discharging a gun with intent to kill. Jackson denied that he had any such intention. He went to trial with the expectation that his denial would be accepted and that he would get off with only the payment of a very heavy fine. To his surprise, he not only was assessed a fine but was sentenced to a year in jail.

Jackson's lawyers appealed the sentence, and before the appeal was heard, the final episode in his life assured that he would not spend a single day in jail. The final episode was his strange death in July, 1887.

Jackson took great delight in his pond which stored water to keep his mill wheels running. In one period, he



The L. Hockenberry entertainers at the old Grotto in Singac in the early 1900's.

raised large numbers of carp there until he discovered that they were not a very desirable variety of fish. Though the pond was only waist deep, he found it a great spot for swimming and boating. On July 13, 1887, three male friends came out from New York City to join with Jackson in a day's "frolic" at the pond. They paddled a boat around the water and frequently repaired to the keg of beer which they had staked down in the cooling waters of the adjacent Peckman River.

At one point, the three friends playfully overturned the boat and threw themselves into the shallow water of the pond. Looking across the pond, they testified, they saw that George Jackson was also, inexplicably, immersed in the waist deep water over by the opposite bank. While they watched, he apparently got tangled in the weeds as he attempted to climb out and slipped beneath the surface. By the time they reached him, he was dead. A Dr. Gedney was summoned from Little Falls, but there was nothing he could do.

When describing these events, the publisher of the *Paterson Daily Press* went to great pains to demonstrate that, contrary to public opinion, Jackson's death was *not* a suicide. This argument is acceptable to the twentieth century observer. In view of Jackson's reputation for heavy drinking and the strange circumstances surrounding his death, accident rather than deliberation seem to have been the cause.

A far more sober and respected citizen was George

Vander May who arrived in the United States with his wife Julia in 1880. George found employment at Beattie's mill and invested his savings in a farm on East Main Street. While the father continued working in the mill, the four eldest sons – Nicholas, John, Garret, and Herman – performed the farm chores. It was Nicholas who first had the idea of establishing a laundry. After getting his father's approval for the venture (an approval absolutely necessary in that day), Nicholas formed a partnership with his three brothers to establish the "Little Falls Washing Company." In later years the two younger brothers, Samuel and Barney, also joined the family concern.

The business was a booming success right from the beginning. Using a horse and wagon, the brothers picked up, washed, and delivered forty washes the first week, sixty the second week, and an increasing number with every week that passed. The original buildings stood on the Vander May farm property. They consisted of a frame building 35 by 45 feet and a separate structure for a boiler room. Both utilized the water from the old mill race which ran through the property. In 1913 the Vander Mays bought their first truck. By the early 1920's the laundry trucks constituted a great fleet and were a common sight over a good part of New Jersey. During the 1920's the name of the company was changed to The Little Falls Laundry Company.

During the 1930's the researchers of the Federal Writers Project found the laundry noteworthy enough to

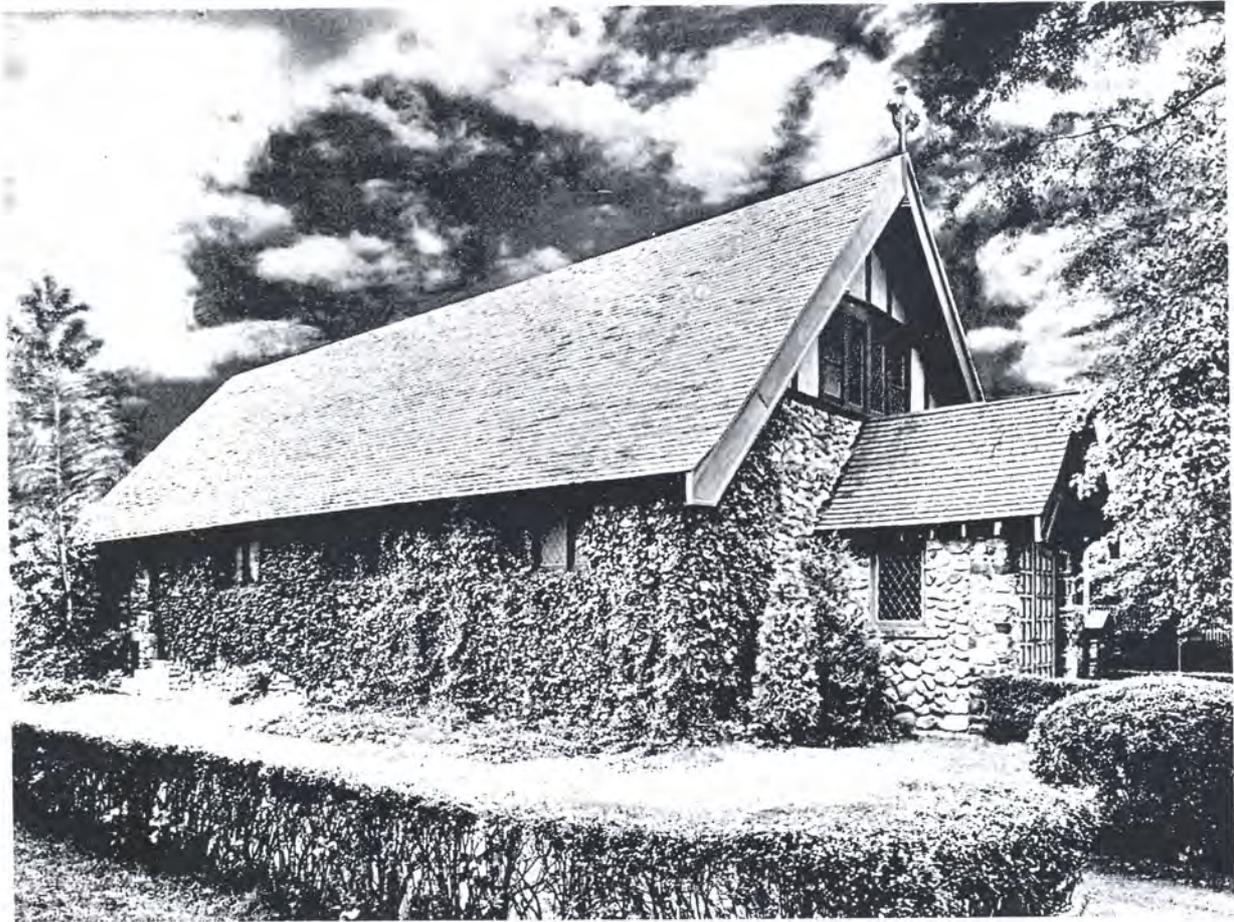


Stanley Street, looking north from Stevens Avenue, where new addition to School 1 is being built.

The Paterson-Singac bus was the latest in transportation in 1938.



At Mr. and Mrs. Overeem's barber-shop on Main Street some 65 years ago, you could get a shave and haircut for two-bits.



**St. Agnes Episcopal Church on Union Avenue, which since this photo was taken has undergone**

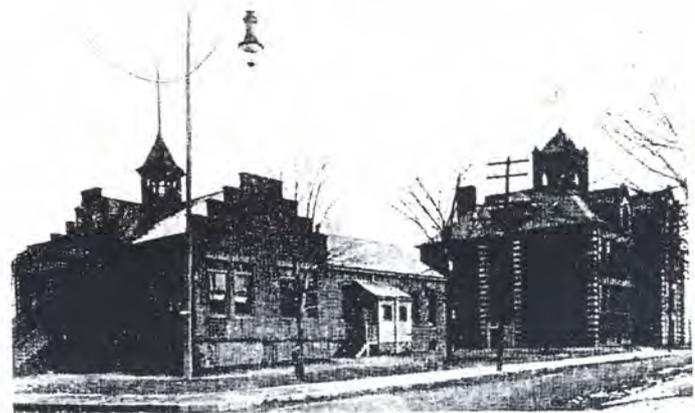
**many improvements and changes to serve the many fine people who are its parishioners.**

report that there were then 800 employees. These workers were said to use 150,000 tons of soap annually in servicing 250,000 customers. During the same decade these workers were caught up in the great national movement to organize unskilled and semi-skilled workers into industrial unions.

The United Laundry Workers Union, an independent local organization, was established at the Little Falls works. With support from the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO), the local union struck in May 1937. It claimed that the employers discriminated against the union and its members. Local sympathy in those days was very much with the Vander Mays and this was reflected in the activities of the Township Committee. The Committeemen passed an ordinance to restrict union activities and the local police were employed in enforcing the ordinance. In response the 450 strikers attracted widespread attention to their fight by hiring an airplane to tow a strike banner over northern New Jersey. It was one of the first attempts at three dimensional picketing.

In 1968 Nicholas Vander May is still president of the company. Automation and home laundry appliances has

cut the number of workers down to 535. Most of the workers, including the office workers and drivers, are organized, but they belong to several separate unions rather than to one large industrial union.



PUBLIC SCHOOLS, LITTLE FALLS, N. J.

**Old School 1 (built in 1876) is in rear and old, old School 1 (built in 1884) is in front. Both have been torn down for new modern school.**

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT



Members of the Centennial Township Committee are dressed for the centennial occasion. Left to right are Committeemen Anthony Barbieri, road chairman, who later became mayor; Mayor Charles

Pullara, finance chairman; John Kosachook, fire chairman and former mayor; Charles Dorman, police chairman and former mayor; T. W. Edward Bowdler, sewer chairman and former mayor.

The first local government exercising jurisdiction over this area was the Township of Acquackanonk. That Township was established March 15, 1684. The first citizens of Acquackanonk were of Dutch descent. They received permission to settle and organize their township from the Lord Proprietors of New Jersey, Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret. It seems probable that in addition they also had to come to some agreement with the Leni Lenape Indians already living here. Acquackanonk consisted of a large tract of land lying west of the Passaic River and north of the point where Yantekaw Creek flowed into the Passaic. (This latter point is at about the place where the present New Jersey Highway # 3 crosses the Passaic River.) The original township included most of the land which now lies within the boundaries of

Passaic, Clifton, Paterson, West Paterson, and Little Falls.

In 1684 Acquackanonk Township was a part of Essex County. The county seat was at Newark which had been settled in 1666. The county seat was an important place in early days because it was the legal center. There stood the jail and the courthouse, where all legal transactions such as mortgages and land-sales were registered. Since travel was neither fast nor easy then, the accessibility of the county seat was an important matter. The inhabitants of Acquackanonk joined with the citizens of Paterson (established as a separate township in 1831) in petitioning the State Legislature for the formation of a new county with a more accessible county seat. For over a decade, these petitions went unheeded.



### OLDTIMERS OF 1968

All were born before the turn of the century and each has played major role in development of Little Falls. From left are Wilbur Crane, "Mr. Fireman," who died after this photo was taken; Jacob De Young, former mayor; Bogert Dykstra, businessman for more than one-half century; Philip Stainton, tax collector more than 40 years; August Dykstra, businessman; Edward Lawler, sewer plant superintendent for 40 years.

In the 1830's the petitioners were joined by the inhabitants of Pompton, West Milford, and Saddle River in what was then Bergen County. The Legislature then recognized that "they are subjected to great inconvenience, and expense, and delays, in the settlement of their legal rights, by reason of the great distance some of them have to go to the seat of justice, in their respective counties." On February 7, 1837, Passaic County came into being. It was divided into five townships, namely: Acquackanonk, Paterson, Pompton, West Milford, and Manchester.

The most important political event in our local history occurred exactly one hundred years ago. Our "Declaration of Independence" is entitled "An Act to set off from the township of Acquackanonk, in the county of Passaic, a new township, to be called the township of Little Falls." The Act appears in Chapter CCCIV of *Laws of New Jersey: Session of 1868*. Following are the key paragraphs in the law.

1. BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, That all that part of the township

Boundaries of township.

of Acquackanonk, in the county of Passaic, lying westerly of the line running from the line of the city of Paterson "along the steep rocks and mountains," southerly to the line of the county of Essex, being the same line known as part of the westerly line of the old Acquackanonk patent, as described in an indenture made by the lords proprietors of the province of East New Jersey of Hans Diederick and others, dated March fifteenth, sixteen hundred and eighty-four, and recorded in the office of the secretary of state of New Jersey, in Liber A of Deeds, page one hundred and sixty-four, shall be and is hereby set off from the said township of Acquackanonk, and made a new and separate township to be known by the name of the township of Little Falls.

2. And be it enacted, That the inhabitants of the said township of Little Falls, be and they are hereby made and constituted a body politic and corporate in law,

Corporate name.



Two Mayors and Assemblywoman at left is former mayor, Harold Schumacher, Veteran Little Falls businessman; former assemblywoman Mattie Doremus and the late Andrew Yuill, former mayor and president of the Board of Education.

and shall be known by the name of "The Inhabitants of the township of Little Falls, in the county of Passaic," and shall be entitled to all the rights, powers, authority, privileges and advantages, and shall be subject to the same regulations, government and liabilities as the inhabitants of the present township of Acquackanonk are or may be entitled to by the existing laws of this state.

Place of holding first election in Little Falls township.

1. *And be it enacted*, That the inhabitants of the township of Little Falls shall hold their first township election at Smith's hotel, at Little Falls, and afterwards in each year at such place as the inhabitants of said township shall, at their preceding annual township meeting determine, at the time fixed by law for the annual township elections in the said township of Acquackanonk; and at the said first township election William M. Morrell, Charles T. Van Winkle and Francis Van Ness shall act as judges, and

Names of election officers.

Francis W. Van Ness as clerk of said election.

Place and time of meeting to divide township property.

5. *And be it enacted*, That the township committees of said townships of Acquackanonk and Little Falls, elected at the said first elections respectively, shall meet on the fourth Monday of April next, at the hotel of Henry F. Piaget, at the Notch, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, and afterwards if necessary, at such times and places as the majority of those present may determine, and then and there, by writing signed by a majority of said committees, allot and divide between said townships, such property, if any, as may be owned by the present township of Acquackanonk, . . .

7. *And be it enacted*, That the said township of Little Falls shall form a part of the first assembly district of the county of Passaic as heretofore.

Assembly district.

8. *And be it enacted*, That this act



### OLDEST FIREMEN TALK

Wilbur Crane of Enterprise Fire Co. 2 chats with Wilbur Stinson of Singac Co. 3. Crane before his death was a fireman here about 60 years. Stinson continues as active Singac member after some 53 years of service.

shall take effect immediately.

Approved April 2, 1868.

The first meeting held for the election of township officers was duly held at William Smith's hotel on the 13th day of April, 1868. The "Founding Fathers" of Little Falls are identified and recorded in the following list of township officers during the first ten years of independent existence:

- 1868.—Freeholders, Robert Matches, David Oldham; Township Clerk, F.W. Van Ness; Assessor, John J. Stagg; Collector, Lucas R. Van Ness; Township Committee, Rinear Spear, Robert Beattie, Jr., John Edge, Charles Crane, George Townley; Surveyors of Highways, Abraham A. Garrabrants, Christopher T. Sindle.
- 1869.—Freeholder, Robert Beattie; Township Clerk, Francis W. Van Ness; Assessor, Francis Van Ness; Collector, Lucas R. Van Ness; Township Committee, James Willmore, Elias Van Ness, Robert Beattie, Edward Francisco, Charles McNeil; Surveyors of Highways, A.A. Garrabrants, C.T. Sindle.

- 1870.—Freeholder, Robert Beattie, Sr.; Township Clerk, John H. Stanley; Assessor, Rynear Spear; Collector, L.R. Van Ness; Township Committee, Edward Francisco, R. Beattie, Jr., Elias Van Ness, James Willmore, John Edge; Surveyors of Highways, A.A. Garrabrants, C.T. Sindle.
- 1871.—Freeholder, Edward Francisco; Township Clerk, John H. Stanley; Assessor, Rynear Spear; Collector, L. R. Van Ness; Township Committee, Elias Van Ness, James Willmore, Wm. N. Bortic, Edo Mercellis, Charles Crane; Surveyors of Highways, Christopher T. Sindle, A.A. Garrabrants.
- 1872.—Freeholder, Robert Beattie, Jr.; Township Clerk, John H. Stanley; Assessor, Rynear Spear; Collector, F.M. Van Ness, Township Committee, Elias Van Ness, Francis Van Ness, L.R. Van Ness, S. Radcliff, James Garside; Surveyors of Highways, C.T. Sindle, A.A. Garrabrants.
- 1873.—Freeholder, Edward Francisco; Township Clerk, John R. Spear; Assessor, Rynear Spear; Collector, F. W. Van Ness; Township Committee, Elias Van Ness, S. Van Ness, L.R. Van Ness, James Garside, George



Ground is broken for the new Eagle Fire Co. and rescue squad building on Wilmore Road. Previously the company was housed in the municipal building on Stevens Avenue. Now, it is used for township offices such as the township clerk (Mrs. Sue Stewart and Mrs. Merrill Montgomery) tax collector (Philip Stainton, who is due to retire soon after 40 years of service and for the maintenance

of records. The rest of the ground floor is for use of the police department of which John Berghorn is chief. In above photo, from left are George Ferguson (an unidentified man) the late John R. Fritts, former mayor; Wilbur Jaasma; Howard MacFarland; Fire Chief Raymond Seugling; Jake DeYoung, former mayor; Harold Schumacher, former mayor and Henry Meyer.

Lamb; Surveyors of Highways, C.T. Sindle, A.A. Garrabrant.

1874.—Township Clerk, John R. Speer; Assessor, Rynear Speer, Township Committee, C.G. Yorks, Squire Radcliff, James Garside, Elias Van Ness, James Edge; Surveyors of Highways, John Ryker, Reuben Daniels.

1875.—Freeholder, Edward Francisco; Township Clerk, C.M. Stanley; Assessor, Wm. N. Bortic; Collector, F. W. Van Ness; Township Committee, Robert Beattie, Jr., Charles Crane, Robert Gow, John C. Cruikshank, James B. Saxon; Surveyors of Highways, Wm. H. Van Ness, B.J. Crane.

1876.—Township Clerk, C.M. Stanley; Assessor, Wm. N. Bortic; Collector, F.W. Van Ness; Township Committee, Robert Beattie, Jr., Robert Gow, J.C. Cruikshank, B.J. Crane, J.B. Saxon.

1877.—Freeholder, Lucas R. Van Ness; Township Clerk, C.M. Stanley; Assessor, Wm. N. Bortic; Collector, F. W. Van Ness; Township Committee, Robert Beattie, Jr., James B. Saxon, Martin Crawford, Thomas Edge, John C. Cruikshank; Surveyors of Highways, W.H. Van Ness, B.J. Crane.

(Note: In those years, Freeholders were elected as the direct representatives of the townships.)

The territorial limits of Little Falls were reduced slightly by State legislative action in 1869. On March 17th of that year, Paterson was allowed to move her boundary southward from the cliffs of Garret Mountain to a line roughly paralleling Weaseldrift Road. In 1907, about twenty acres of the original site of the State Normal School at Montclair were transferred from Little Falls to the Town of Montclair. The transfer was made in order that the Normal School might better take advantage of the public utilities and services of the Essex County community. The institution has expanded greatly over the years. In 1927, it became a four-year degree-granting college and was re-named Montclair State Teachers College. In 1958, the institution became Montclair State College and took a direction away from only educating teachers. Physical expansion of the campus to accommodate the present 4500 full-time and 3000 part-time students has been mainly onto the land of Little Falls Township. In 1968 the greatest part of the



In above photo are some of the key members of the current club who devote much of their spare time to advancing and improving athletic and recreational facilities, mostly for our boys and girls. Front row from left are Dom Carbone,

Nick Purves, Gene McLaughlin, George Hrib, Dick Bradford. Standing, Joe Saviterri, Baron Kelder, Jim Capalbo, Howard Shorger, George Arata and Dick Lane.

# THE LITTLE FALLS ATHLETIC CLUB

Local athletic history dates back to 1904 to the Pin Oak Tennis Club which once had headquarters on Union Boulevard near the Beattie Bridge.

The Club's basketball team played in Jackson Hall above stores on south side of Main Street. Track meets were held where now the GLF stands on Union Boulevard and on Paterson Avenue.

The Pin Oak Club in 1911 became the Little Falls A.A., Top track team in the Paterson area. Douglas W. Beckwith, father of Doug Beckwith, former commander of the local American Legion Post and county commander, was one of the top runners of the area.

## AT 1911 RUNNING

At the 1911 running of the South Paterson A.C. Games held annually at Willard Park, Totowa, the Club tied for second place in the point standings. Prizes of diamond rings and stickpins attracted some of the best athletes in

the metropolitan district and the cream of the New Jersey clubs.

A month later Little Falls nosed out the National A.C. of Brooklyn to win the point trophy in a Paterson meet.

Other well known meets in which the club competed were the Knights of Columbus Games at Olympic Park, the 1912 state championships at Bayonne, the Belleville Catholic Club Games and the Knickerbocker Games.

When the new clubhouse was opened, the officers of the club were: John L. "Duke" Radcliffe, president; Philip "Muldoon" Stainton, secretary and trainer; Harry Klotz, treasurer and Frank Aldrich, track captain.

The Eagle listed the club's record men as Beckwith, all-around champ; Ernie Stainton, two-miler; "Duke" Radcliffe, weight thrower and broad jumper; Ed Francisco, high jumper and Walter Ferguson, sprinter.

The medley relay team at that time consisted of John Cuffe, Frank Aldrich, Fred Aldrich and Leo Williams. On the basketball

team were John Stainton, Frank Aldrich, Radcliffe, Klotz, Williams and Ferguson.

Among the other members of the club were Roy Decker, Charles Lake, Russell Roome, Chester Roome, Russell Stager, George Beckwith, Tom Ferguson, William Thompson, Claude Entwistle, Charles Cuffe, H. Grundler, Ray Williams, Bill Taylor, Sherman Francisco, Clarence Briggs and Lou Belding.

## PLAGUED BY "BLUE LAWS"

Some of the same club members played on the local baseball team, then known as the Star A.C. A former member of that team recalls that the team was plagued by the "blue laws."

"But they had such a following that they could take up a large enough collection, when the hat was passed, to pay the five-dollar fine for playing on Sunday."

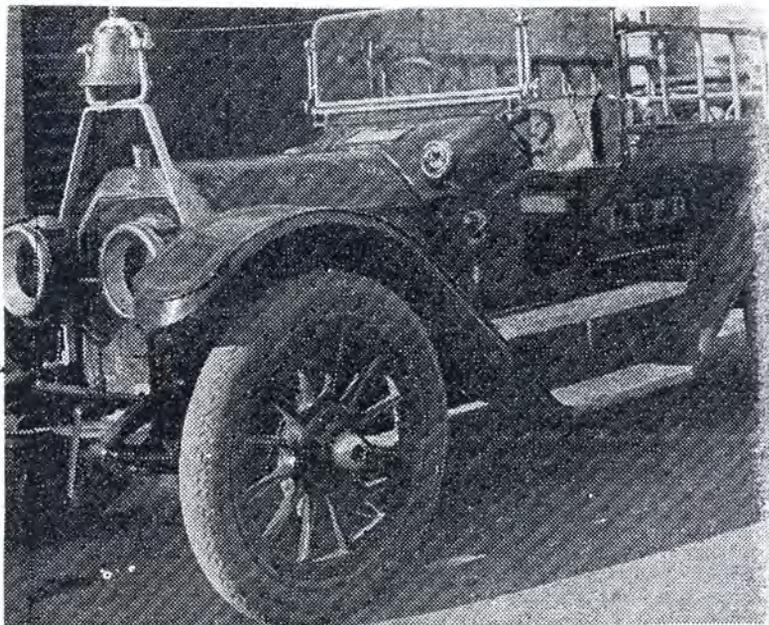
That team later went to to become the Little Falls A.C. after World War I, and it, too, gained a reputation as one of the best semi-pro teams in the area.

campus is once again in Little Falls.

The greatest territorial change and reduction came in 1914 when the Borough of West Paterson was separated from Little Falls. That event cut the township's area by about one half.

Agitation for separation began in the West Park section as early as 1905. Though there were some mansions of wealthy Paterson businessmen and industrialists, most of the residents of West Park were farmers. In the customary fashion of farmers, they felt that they were being assessed unfairly for township taxes and were not receiving a proper share of the benefits of taxation. Furthermore, they complained that practically all the township officials were selected from the other sections of the town. An examination of the lists of officials reveals that this was a valid complaint — very few were West Park residents. It is not clear how valid the other complaints were, but they seem to have been strongly felt. When a referendum was held among the residents of the section on May 1, 1914, the secession move was approved by a one-sided vote of 194 to 20. As evidence of the resentment toward Little Falls harbored by the West Patersonians, the first ordinance passed by the new Borough Council was to change the name of the Little Falls Turnpike to McBride Avenue.

By 1968, West Paterson has developed into a thriving community with a fine balance of homes, businesses, and industries. In 1914, Little Falls seemed to have lost only a large piece of undeveloped real estate peopled by less than a thousand complaining citizens. After the split, a joint committee consisting of three members each from Little Falls and West Paterson met to consider the divi-



... When the bell on this "fast" piece of apparatus started clanging in Great Notch, it could be heard in Singac.

sion of the assets and liabilities of the two communities. The committee fixed the total valuation of Little Falls in 1913 at \$2,696,290. Though half of the land area was in the West Park section, the valuation of that section was fixed at only \$808,887. The committee members agreed on a seventy per-cent, thirty per-cent division of the assets and liabilities, and West Paterson went away with \$4,495.



FIRE BUFFS, CIRCA 1916 — This speedy fire wagon and the equipment in it were the stock in trade of Enterprise Fire Co. 2, Little Fall, in 1916. They bought the wagon from Montclair Fire Department in 1912. Charles Sherman, left, and Arthur Holley are on the wagon. Others from left are Linus Daniel, Russell Stager, Wilbur Crane and "Bob," the horse.

# IMMIGRATION

One of the most important truths about America is that we are, in John F. Kennedy's words, "A Nation of Immigrants." The past of Little Falls illustrates this as well as any other place in this fair land. Even the Leni Lenape Indians who were here before the Europeans and Africans, migrated across the Bering Straits in the dim, dark ages past. More recently, the great flood of immigrants from about 1880 to the beginning of World War I was one of the most important factors in America's rise to greatness. Streams of that flood reached Little Falls in the form of large groups of Dutch, Italians, and Ukrainians. Rivulets of the flood were seen here in smaller groups, families, and individuals of Poles, Germans, Irish, Russians, and other nationalities.

The recording of information about these groups and these individuals is vital to the completion of a full history of Little Falls. In January of 1964, Marie Jaasma compiled an excellent record of the experiences of what she rightly called "The 2nd Dutch." Her manuscript is on file in the Little Falls Public Library. Unfortunately it is impossible to reproduce it in full in these pages. Sections of her report are presented here because they contribute to our understanding of our history. They are also presented as examples of what needs to be recorded about the other peoples who came here in that period of great immigration. Participants in that important experience, and the children and grandchildren of participants, are still alive in Little Falls. If the record is not made now, the details will be lost forever.

## "The 2nd Dutch"

A considerable number of Hollanders migrated to Little Falls during the years after the Civil War and up to the 1st World War. Although some families came from other provinces, the majority of these families came from a small section of reclaimed land in the Province of Friesland known as "Het Bilt." There was an old dyke already up to protect the people from the ocean and a new dyke was built a couple of miles out into the sea. In this area three small towns or "Parishes" were settled: St. Anna, St. Jakobie, and Liene Vrow.

These towns were not settled by local people out of Friesland, but by persons being persecuted for religious beliefs during the Reformation Era in South Holland, Belgium, and even France. They spoke (and still do today) a language very different from the people living in Friesland. Theirs is very much like the official written Dutch . . .

This section was Protestant in faith. They were very poor, barely scratching out a living with no room for growth. This drove many people to look elsewhere for a future and they migrated to America. Most of them came



Miss Georgeanna Smith taught in Singac School 3 at the turn of the century during the explosive immigration period. She was teacher and janitor, tending the coal stove herself. She still tutors part-time in Westfield, N.J., where she resides.



Our Lady of Holy Angels R.C. Church as it looked some 50 years ago. Building was opposite present beautiful church on Route 23. Church was established as early as 1860.

as steerage passengers on the sailing ships and spent as much as 40 days at sea. They took their own mattresses and mostly their own food. It was a rugged trip that few would venture today.

(The second migration of Hollanders began in 1879 when a young man named William Selle, aged 17, came to work at the Beattie mills as a clerk. He wrote back to Friesland for friends and relatives to join him . . . The Beattie company paid steerage passage of \$17. for those who came to work for him. This was paid back at the rate of a dollar a month.—Barbara Carper Lang)

For some years the congregation met in an upstairs room in the "Crane Building" on the corner of Paterson Avenue and Main Street. The rent was \$1 a month. This building later burned down and the congregation decided to build their own church. Around 1892 a piece of property was donated by the Beattie Carpet Company on Paterson Avenue near Maple Street to build a church on. The Beatties stipulated that the land must be returned if the church was abandoned. With financial help from the Domestic Mission Board, the church was built. Heat was furnished by a pot stove in the sanctuary, but foot-warmers were in demand to keep the parishioners from getting a chill. Later on a pipeless furnace was installed and this provided more heat. Families paid "seat money" (60¢ each member per year) and large families got a reduced rate. Forty families reserved their own pews and brass spittoons were to be found in some of them. There was no piano or organ and singing was led by a "Voor Zinger." Mr. Jocham Stepp was somewhat musical and with the help of a tuning fork he set the pitch. The congregation boasted of some hearty singers among the male members and occasionally there would be a disagreement among them on the pitch or on the tune and the rival singers would increase their volume trying to bring the others to their way. Mr. William Selle especially would get red in the face as he sang with all his might—usually off key.

The Reverend Sidney Zandstra became the pastor of the church during the years just before World War I. It was during his pastorate (1912—1917) that a new church was built on the corner of Ridge Avenue and Walnut Street (in 1914). The organ was brought to the new church and continued to serve the church for a number of years.

There was quite a stir in town and the loyalty of our members was questioned at this time, because of an incident that happened in the center of town. A crowd was listening to a band playing and in the group of listeners was Rev. Zandstra. He was busy talking to someone when the band started to play the National Anthem. Rev. Zandstra was entirely "tone deaf" and with his back to the band did not recognize the tune or see the others remove their hats. He failed to remove his and this incident was built up until one night, they hung his body in effigy. The regular consistory meetings held at the Parsonage were believed to be secret meetings of enemy



Second Reformed Church at Stanley Street at Ridge Avenue which was built in 1914. The first Church was at Paterson Avenue and Maple Street. Church was established in 1890.

spies. The congregation was looked on as pro-German. All was straightened out later when clear minds made an inquiry and found out the truth. The Holland population in town sent their share of young men to fight for their country and did their share in other ways too.

St. John the Baptist R.C. Church on Weaver St., Singac, which has been torn down to make room for beautiful new complex. Church was established in 1914.



# LITTLE FALLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



THEY HAD THE PROOF — Members of the Historical Society of Little Falls go over proofs of the centennial book. Seated from left are James Young, society president; Mrs. Elsie Curreri, vice president; and Mrs. Doris Bowdler, secretary. Standing, from left, are: George Eaton, treasurer; Mrs. Grace Banks, historian; Mrs. Marge Thieringer, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Barbara Barton, trustee; and Robert Steffy.

## Linda Vandenberg Writes About "Her Town"

The Centennial Commission's mailbox overflows with letters of congratulations from such dignitaries as President Johnson and Governor Hughes. But what may be the most valued letter of all came not from the famous or powerful but from a 17-year-old student at Passaic Valley High School. It was received April 2, on the anniversary of the Township's incorporation. It was from Linda Vandenberg, daughter of Police Sergeant Irving (Ike) and Mrs. Vandenberg. Her letter is as follows:

"I am writing this letter to wish you a happy birthday and at this time I would like to thank you. Thank you for being the most wonderful town that you are. I must apologize, Little Falls, for some of your residents who would disagree with my use of the word, wonderful. I know that at your township committee meetings people complain about your torn-up streets, traffic signs, lack of recreation facilities and our crowded schools. Why is it people can't see the good side of you. You really are

quite beautiful. You have green grass and trees, not like in the city; and flowers bloom and there are parks where one may walk and think, whether you are alone or whether you are with someone you love.

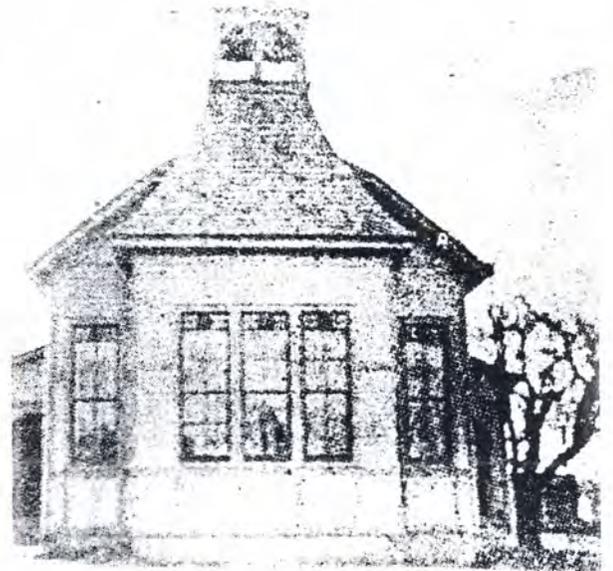
I have never seen a riot scar your lovely center. I have never seen fire destroy half-a-block of your buildings. I've never seen anyone molested while waiting for a bus. I've never seen garbage spilling into your streets. I've never seen your rescue squad or police unavailable during an emergency, whether it was personal or otherwise. I have never seen the blue sky blacked out by smog, or the earth tremble with quakes. I've never seen a plague ravage our people, nor do I remember seeing rats where children play. For that matter, I rarely see a child playing in the street, hungry and dirty.

Happy birthday Little Falls and thank you for being my hometown.

Linda Vandenberg



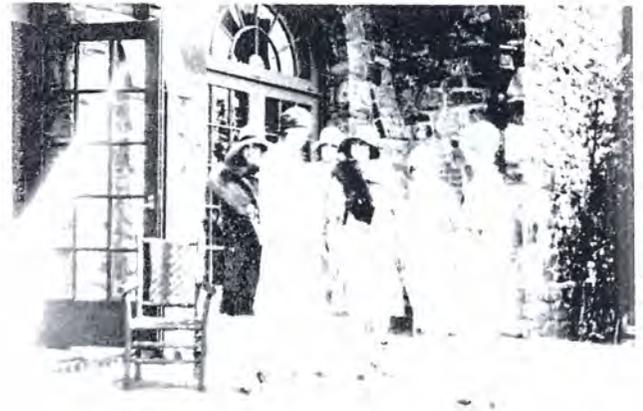
Methodist Church on Main Street, built in 1889, which was torn down in 1968 to make room for beautiful modern structure. Church was established in 1825.



Believe it or not, this was how Great Notch School 2 once looked. Today the modern new building is again undergoing renovations with several new classrooms being added.



Post Office on Warren was dedicated January 16, 1937. Lyle W. Morehouse was postmaster.



Country Club luncheon many years ago. Among those in photo are Hazel Furberk, Bess Hall and Edith Jeffries.

## POTPOURRI

The following glimpses into Little Falls history are offered in this abbreviated form in order that they may be included in this centenary edition. Almost every item represents an important aspect of the town's history and almost every item offers a challenge for further research and writing.

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*Little Falls Stage* – Samuel Riker, proprietor, leaves Railroad depot in Paterson on the arrival of trains from New York.

– *Paterson Daily Press*, March 14, 1853

*Paterson and Little Falls Stage* – Proprietor Henry Riker. Leaves Rikers Hotel every day (Sundays excepted) at 11 a.m. and 5½ p.m. Returning leaves Little Falls at 7 a.m. and 2 p.m. Fare 25¢ each way.

– *Paterson Daily Guardian*, June 8, 1876

*The Little Falls Stage-Route* (formerly run by "Sammy" Riker) has fallen into the hands of Mr. John C. Cook, the well-known German butcher of Little Falls, who is thoroughly trustworthy, enterprising business man, and intends to run the stage in such a manner as to afford the greatest possible accommodation to the

81 Years of Continuous Service to our Community with an unbroken record of Dividend Payment since our Founding in 1887.

Oldest Financial Institution in Little Falls and Oldest Savings & Loan Association in Passaic County.

**- Serving Northern New Jersey -**

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FOUNDED 1887

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WALTER E. RINGEN, TREASURER

# Centennial Celebration

## 1968



**BALL INTERLUDE** — At left is Mrs. Jerome T. Jeffreys, president of the Little Falls Womans Club which sponsored the centennial ball at the Westmount Country Club. At right is Mrs. A. J. Banks, chairman of the centennial year celebration which was the attractive highlight of the centennial year.

public at large. For the benefit of the Little Falls people he proposes to establish a newsagency at his store (between the canal and Riker's), and will supply the New York and Paterson papers and other periodicals to all comers. He will also do errands, etc., for the Paterson and Little Falls people. We cordially commend him to the public patronage.

— *Paterson Daily Press*, May 24, 1875

*The Little Falls Stage* is a dilapidated affair and must be a regular sweat box in hot weather.

— *Paterson Daily Guardian*, June 29, 1877

\*\*\*\*\*

The first religious leader identifiable by name is the Reverend James Duryea. He became pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church at Fairfield in 1801 and Little Falls was a part of his parish. In 1823, the first religious estab-

lishment was founded in the form of a Dutch Reformed Mission Station. The Station was served by the pastors of the church at Fairfield — by the Rev. H.B. Stryker, 1823 to 1827, and by a Rev. Ogilvie, 1827 to 1829.

1825— Methodist Episcopal, the first church congregation, was organized. In 1839 they erected the first church built in Little Falls. In that year Rev. Robertson became their spiritual leader. The present church on Main Street was erected in 1889.

1837 — The Dutch Reformed Church of Little Falls organized a congregation among the attendants at the older mission station. In the following year, the Rev. Joseph Wilson became the first pastor, and in 1842, the present brownstone church on Main Street was built.

1860 — Our Lady of Holy Angels Church, Roman Catholic, was established. The first site of the church building was on the Newark-Pompton Turnpike just south of Main Street.

1890 — Second Dutch Reformed congregation organized. The parishioners were Dutch-speaking. The first church building was near Maple Street on Paterson Avenue. The present church was built in 1914.

1896 — St. Agnes Episcopal Church was organized and the first church building was erected.

1914 — St. John's Church, Greek Orthodox, congregation was organized and the present church building was erected.

\*\*\*\*\*

Little Falls was unusual during the early twentieth century in having three independent and completely local newspapers. James Steel began publishing *The Little Falls Eagle* as early as 1903, and he was still printing the local news in the 1920's. *The Reporter* was published in the period following World War I. Later, and for several decades, Arthur E. Ball published and edited *The Little Falls Herald* with the ever-present support and assistance of Mrs. Ball. The existing issues of those papers are invaluable sources about the social history of our town. They present a real challenge and opportunity to a future historian.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Little Falls* — The Village contains four stores, several manufacturing establishments and mills, one Dutch Reformed Church and one Methodist Church, and about 60 dwellings.

— *Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey*, Barber & Howe (Newark, 1844)

\*\*\*\*\*

A distinguished local resident in the nineteenth century was the Reverend John C. Cruikshank. He had the longest service as pastor of the First Reformed Church (1850 to 1868) He became the first County Super-

# SCHUMACHER CHEVROLET

SERVING LITTLE FALLS & SURROUNDING AREA SINCE 1932



Schumachers of Little Falls, Middle of the 20th Century

## REMEMBER WHEN?

DRASTIC PRICE REDUCTIONS  
UP TO \$50 BRINGS  
CHEVROLET  
To Low Record Price of  
\$465

(Advertisement in Little Falls Herald,  
July 5, 1934)



When World War II Began



Opens New Showroom



Streamliners, 31 Years Ago



Modern Wrecker Service



Sixth Anniversary of  
Schumacher's Training  
Cars at Valley High School

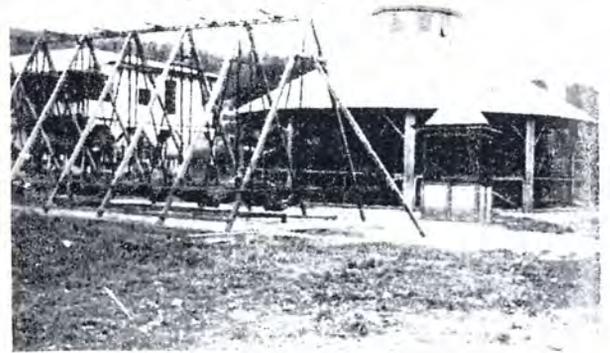
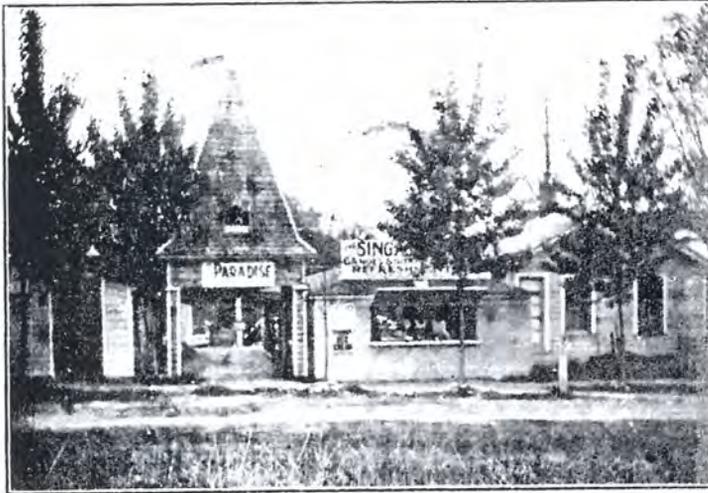
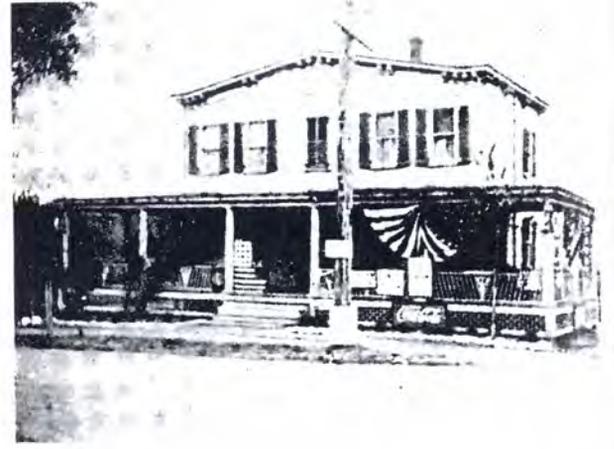
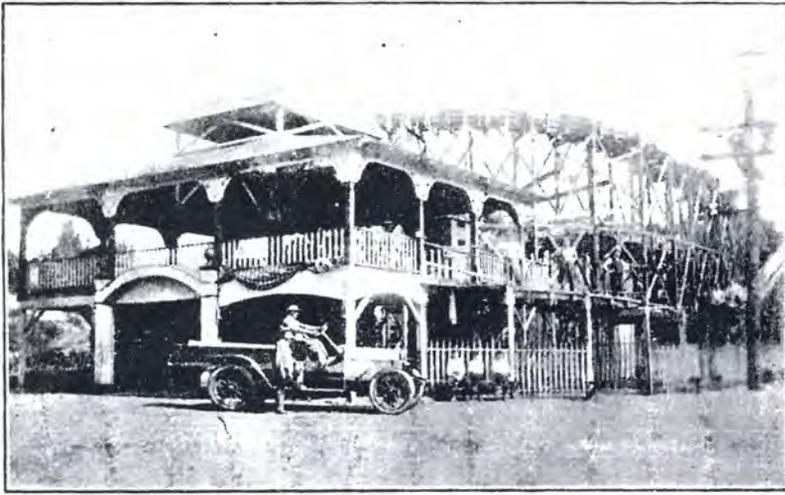


Town Car, 1926



Sale's Promotion And Circus Frolics

SCHUMACHER CHEVROLET SALUTES LITTLE FALLS ON ITS 100th ANNIVERSARY



### OLD GRANDVIEW PARK – 1916

In 1916, an announcement by Louis H. Frolich, grandfather of today's Patrolman Frolich, said Singac's New Pleasure Park on the beautiful Passaic River could be reached by trolley or "whatever convenient transportation," from New York City, Newark, Bayonne and Jersey City. Some of the features, above left, Dip the Circle; upper right, Veranda Rest operated by Philip Leath; lower left, Paradise Park, operated by Vic DeWolf and lower right, the merry-go-round. Frolich ran the extremely popular Chestnut Grove Hotel and its pavilion on the river.

intendent of Schools for Passaic County in 1868, and served in this capacity until August 31, 1892. From 1875 to 1877 he was an elected member of the Little Falls Township Committee.

Cruikshank's report to the State Superintendent of Instruction of the school year ending August 31, 1868, revealed that there were three schools in Little Falls – #1 at Little Falls, #2 at Singac, and #3 at Passaic Valley (probably West Paterson). There was a male teacher in each of the schools, and their salaries ranged from \$11 to \$14.50 a week. Cruikshank reported 327 children in the township between 5 and 18 years of age. Of these, 222 attended the public schools at least part of the year. Eight others attended private schools, and 115 attended no school at all. Cruikshank took pains to point out in his report that though the schools were public, they were not free. Each child was assessed a quarterly tuition fee which was apparently fixed at about \$3 a quarter.

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The story that the first school in Little Falls was conducted under an ancient apple tree is highly suspect. It apparently first appeared in print in 1882 in the *History of Bergen and Passaic Counties* by Clayton and Nelson. Though the legend is probably untrue, the Clayton-Nelson story is attractive enough to bear repeating.

*Schools.*—Tradition reveals the fact that the children of Little Falls during the early period of its settlement were educated in much simplicity, the first school having been convened under an apple-tree, whose far-extending branches afforded shelter from the sun and rain. The trunk, which was five feet in diameter and hollow, afforded ample conveniences as a cloak-room. After the primitive edifice had succumbed to the ravages of time, the little ones gathered in an old building formerly used as a distillery, near the present residence of Rev. J.C.



We were born in this building at 379 Main Street, Little Falls, just thirty years ago with five employees.

The Company was formed to manufacture beryllium copper precision springs. The main product consisted of compression springs made from beryllium copper wire for use in household appliances. At the outbreak of World War II, production was necessarily shifted to manufacturing springs used in defense items. We were the only firm in existence equipped to produce these critical springs in the quantities needed for the military. The demand was so great that it became necessary to find larger quarters,

So, in 1941, we moved into a building at 244 Bergen Boulevard, West Paterson and expanded the business into the production of both flat and wire springs used in exacting applications.

While we are no longer physically located in Little Falls, we still think of it as our "home", as we maintain it as our mailing and shipping address. We now employ over two hundred people, many of whom are residents of Little Falls. We are proud to be a part of this community and will continue to contribute to its growth and welfare.

BEST WISHES  
TO ALL

**Instrument Specialties Co., Inc.**

**Little Falls, New Jersey**



During the centennial year, a beard-growing contest was in progress. Not long afterward, beards, sideburns, long hair, became the style, just as it was late in the 1880s and '90s. Among competitors (above) were from left: Jack Sweezy, Dick Seugling,

Ken Farrell, Bill Baldwin. At right, Frank Puliaro (left) looks on as Tom Fazio, owner of the Oxford Barbershop on Main Street, trims whiskers of Bob Flanagan, owner of the delicatessen across the street from Tom's shop.



**CLASS OF 1902** – This was the class graduated from Little Falls School 166 years ago. Front row, from left, are John Cuff, Leigh Barnes, Jeanette Matches, John Rhodes, and Susan Brown, mother of Jack Shaw, one of today's civic leaders. Second row: Albert Shafer, Harry Stanley, Harry Wood, principal who lived in Stanhope. Third row: Anne Van Ness, Herman Vander May brother of Nicholas Vander May, owner of Little Falls Laundry; Myrtle Steel, Irving Osborne, Philip Stainton, local tax collector, Ethel DeMouth and Frank Smith.

Silent screen star Mary Pickford stood on the rocks with the water rushing by and show business became a part of Little Falls history.

That was in 1906, when David Garreth filmed "The Perils of Pauline" on the rocks beneath the Little Falls.

Another silent film, "The Indian and the Child" was also filmed in Little Falls. Township residents earned \$5 a day playing cowboy and Indian extras.

Mme. Ernestine Schumann-Heink, a world-famous contralto who sung with the Metro-

politan Opera in 1920s, was known to residents although technically not a township citizen herself. Mme. Schumann-Heink lived on Grandview Avenue in North Caldwell, just over the line from Singac.

In the 1920s, when speakeasies dotted the Singac section, a young comedian named Jack Gleason started going through insult routines at the old Colonial Inn on Main Street.

The inn was a favorite watering hole during the days of prohibition. It burned <sup>down</sup> and was rebuilt in the mid 1940s.



**MARY PICKFORD**  
Starred At Falls

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*Compliments of*

Consulting Civil Engineers  
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### DR. WARREN A. YOUNG

If you were a resident of Little Falls in the early and middle part of the century, you knew Dr. Young as "the family doctor." He brought countless numbers of people into the world not only in Little Falls, but Wayne, Cedar Grove, West Paterson, Totowa, and the Caldwells. He was the founder of the original nursing service under the Red Cross, assisted by dedicated members of the local woman's club. Mrs. Mary McCarthy was a key factor in the move in 1930. In 1950 the service was reorganized as the Little Falls Public Health Nursing Association with Mr. E. Beecroft as president. (Photo and information courtesy of Mrs. Calandra

Cruikshank, and were instructed by James C. Fallowfield. At a later period a school was opened in the village of Little Falls, in a room seven feet by twelve in dimensions, on the site of the present barber-shop. This building having been consumed by fire, the school was removed to the house now occupied by Henry Riker, below the canal. Then came the union of the church and school, which proved a fruitful cause of dispute and difference. In 1850 the township embraced but one school district. The territory is now divided into three districts, as follows: Little Falls, No. 6, Southwest, No. 7, and Passaic Valley, No. 8; the respective district clerks being, for District No. 6, C.G. Yorks; for No. 7, Robert Beattie, Jr.; and for No. 8, James Whittaker. There are 424 school children in the township, and the school

property is valued at \$6000.

\*\*\*\*\*

The first record of a public school in Little Falls is dated May 31, 1849. On that date members of the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church pledged themselves to open and support a school in what was to be known as the 6th Public School District of Acquakanonk Township. For reasons no longer clear, a bitter controversy arose between the Consistory and the District School Board. The Consistory won the ensuing law suit, but the fate of the school is unknown. The following facts, however, are clearly established.

1889 - A two-room school (#1) was built at the corner of Stevens Avenue and Park Street

*Compliments of*

FRANCIS PANDULLO, P.E.

ERNEST CHRISBACHER, P.E.

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Many years these people were "THE" members of the Little Falls orchestra. Among the names were William Summer, leader; Alexander Rogers, Tenney Radcliffs, Ernest Maas, Edward Roome, Robert Summers, William Brophy, Nix, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Van Haelst, Mrs. Dufford and Mrs. Roome.

(now Walnut Street).

body of 600.

\*\*\*\*\*

- 1904 – A "High School" was in session at School #1 with a Vice Principal in charge.
- 1914 – A brick building was erected on Main Street in Singac at a cost of \$35,000, including furniture, for housing School #3.
- 1923 – A yellow brick building was erected on East Main Street in Great Notch for housing School #2. It was built on the site of an earlier school.
- 1940 – Passaic Valley Regional High School on East Main Street was dedicated. On opening day there was a faculty of 38 and a student

The Federal Census of 1870 revealed the population of Little Falls to be:

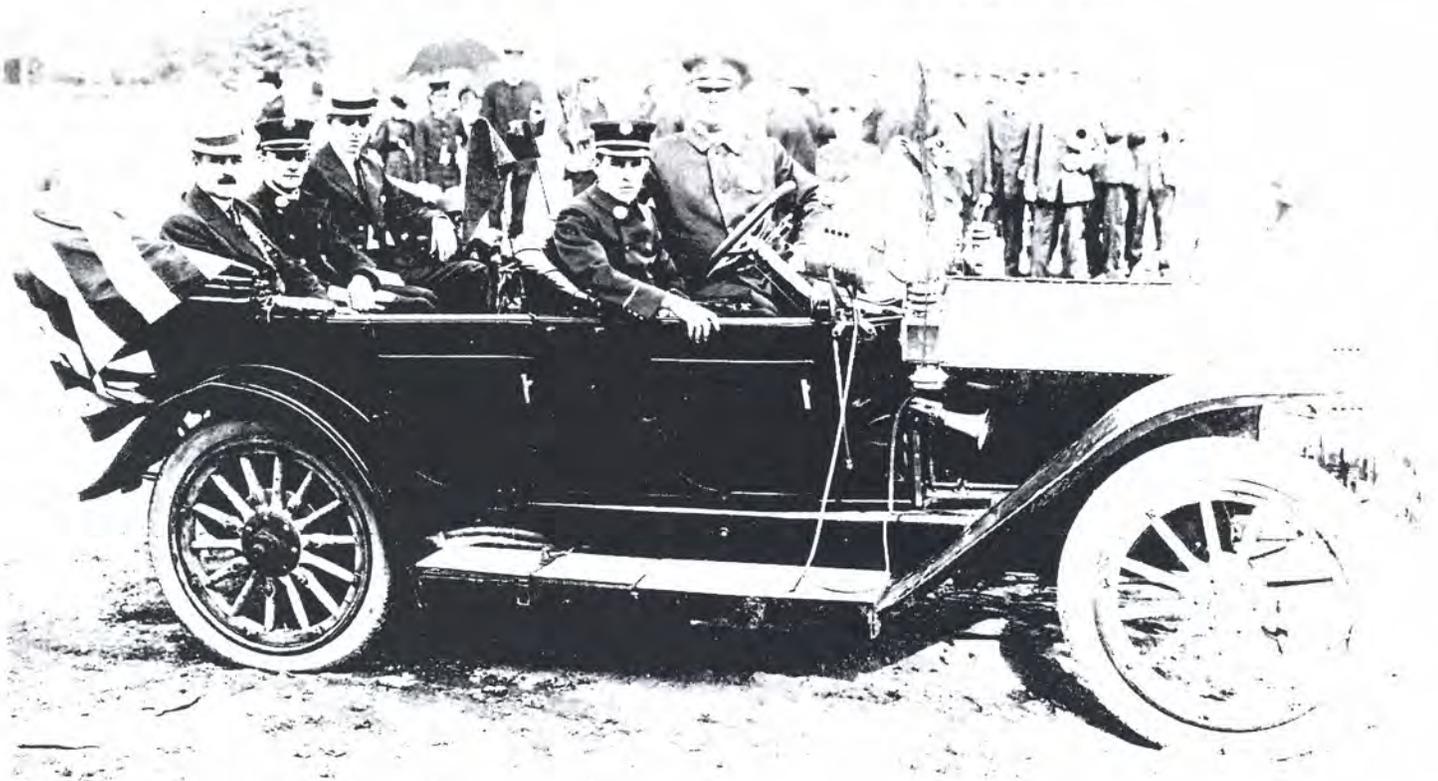
*Native-born*

- 503 White Males
- 511 White Females
- 2 Colored Males
- 1 Colored Female

*Foreign-born*

- 221 White Males
- 219 White Females

*Children (Ages 5 to 16)*



ON PARADE IN 1912 – Back seat from left: Harry Ike, Charles Baldwin, Robert Van Ness. Front seat, Wilbur Crane, Chief Dougherty. Photo taken on old School 1 grounds.

212 White Males  
206 White Females

*Blind, Deaf & Dumb, Idiots or Insane*

1

*Total Population*

1457

\*\*\*\*\*

The Singac section became headquarters for the Biograph players, under D.W. Griffith, a company which

later moved to Hollywood. Griffith's first visit here is thought to be the summer of 1909. He hired a row-boat at one of the boathouses on the Passaic River near the Pompton Turnpike and rode up to the junction of the Passaic River with the Pompton River and down to the dam at Little Falls, looking for locations for good outdoor shots. Griffith liked the scenery; and a few days later a special train came over the Erie bringing a group of actors and actresses including Mary Pickford. Other stars who worked here were Pearl White, Marion Davies, Lillian Gish, Dorothy Gish, Francis X. Bushman, Milton Sills, Conway



Dr. Mark Van Winkle, 1827-1897

Tearle, and Wallace Reid. To fill out casts, Griffith hired local residents at \$5 a day to portray Indians; and anyone who could stay on a horse for a few minutes became a cowboy.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Little Falls Public Library was established in 1908 as one of the first projects of the Little Falls Women's Club. It was first located in a building next to the parsonage of the First Reformed Church. Mrs. Wilbur Canfield acted as the first librarian. Later the library was moved to the basement of a brownstone house further west on Main Street. In 1917, a brick building was erected on the corner of Stevens Avenue and Warren Street. It is locally believed that the funds for that building represented the last grant given by the Carnegie Foundation for building of public libraries. The present library building was dedicated during this centennial year of 1968.

## ABOUT THE VAN WINKLE FAMILY

The following letter written to Herald-News by Mrs. William H. Eckert of Rome, N.Y., tells about the Van Winkle family who settled in Little Falls some 140 years ago.

"It was a thrill to have received yesterday, a copy of THE HERALD-NEWS of April 19, 1968, sent to me by my late mother's brother, Dr. David Harriott of Little Falls. This issue, you will recall was the issue in which you printed numerous articles in relation to the Little Falls Centennial. Since Dr. Charles T. Van Winkle was my great-great-grandfather, I am writing at this time, hoping I can elaborate in particular on the contents of the article listed on the top of Page 18 in which we are both mentioned as descendents.

"May I swagger a bit in declaring I have the original diploma of Dr. Charles T. Van Winkle, issued by The Medical Society of the State of New Jersey, of 1826, giving him the privilege of "practicing Physic and Surgery in this State."

"Dr. Charles T. — as he was always called, to differentiate him from his son, Dr. Mark, who also practiced medicine in Little Falls until he died, was born 1801 in Boonton to Thomas Van Winkle and Mary Tarney. He and Hannah Brown were married in 1827. That same year their first child, Mark, was born in Little Falls. The other children were: Mary (married French); Susie (married Joe Taggart the hotel owner) Emma and Thomas.

Mark Van Winkle was awarded his M.D. degree in 1855 from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, of Columbia University, (then Kings College).

"One of the children of Mark and Agnes Van Winkle was Genevieve Van Winkle. She and her husband, William Henry Harriott, had the following issue, also born in the same town as their mother and grandfather.

"Maude, deceased, married Wm. Teeling, whose mother was a Brower of the Brower House. Children: Kenneth of Riverdale, and Ruth.

"Anita, living in Hawthorne, with her husband, John J. Barbarow and their daughter Anita.

"Elsie, deceased, first married, Wm. Henry Austin Pennell and of this marriage I, Florence (Mrs. Wm. Eckert) was born. (Ruth, Margaret and I, all of very similar age, were given our grandmother's name as our middle name, but probably since

\*\*\*\*\*

"Enterprise Fire Company, Little Falls, N.J., was founded September, 1907, by four boys between 13 and 16 years of age, namely: Vincent Vreeland, Tinus Daniel, Robert Steel, and Wilbur Crane. The company derived its name from an old fire helmet that was given them which had the name "Enterprise" on the front. Wilbur Crane was elected first chief of the company and continued in office until 1916."

"The first apparatus consisted of a two-wheeled cart which carried 125 feet of garden hose and two 3-gallon chemical tanks. This apparatus was housed in a barn on the old Scott property which is now owned by Arthur H. Raith and was hauled to fires by a small pony owned by one of the boys. This was one of the first boy fire companies in the United States. Records of the first two years of existence were not kept, but from April 7th, 1909, records were kept of all fires attended and are still

my father died when I was just two years old and mother and I went to live with her parents, accounts for me always being called Genevieve and possibly also accounts for my great interest in the history of the family.) Mother later married George Dykstra, of Little Falls and by this marriage, H. George, now living in Cedar Grove, was born.

"William, deceased, had Margaret (Mrs. Steve Poster of Little Falls, secretary to the Board of Assessors) and Robert, deceased.

"David, living in Little Falls, married Ethel Stinson, also of Little Falls. They had Lois (Mrs. Richard Brookhart of Little Falls) and Jane (Mrs. Donald Spohn of N. Haledon).

"Robert, deceased, can well be remembered for his speedball pitching for the Little Falls A.C. Uncle Rob died in 1925 on his 25th birthday, of diabetes.

"All the grandchildren, except Anita Barbarow, were born and brought up in Little Falls.

"My father, William Henry Austin Pennell's mother was Florence Ada Speer. I believe you will find the Speer Homestead, although its mailing address is 614 Upper Mountain Ave., Upper Montclair, is the oldest home in Little Falls township. When my paternal grandmother died in 1946, my late father's sister sold the home, at which time a very interesting article appeared in THE LITTLE FALLS HERALD, stated the home was built by Jan Speer in 1702.

"Reynier Speer and Charity Mandeville, my great-great grandparents and hotel owners in Little Falls, were amongst the founding members of the First Reformed Church of Little Falls.

"Of course many of the earliest baptisms and marriage of my Speer, Van Winkle and indirect lines, will be found amongst the Acquackanonk Reformed Church records. (Passaic)

It is very time consuming and often frustrating, so there have been times I have put it aside, but then I start again with the digging. Perhaps it has become a disease comparable to crossword, or jigsaw puzzles in which I keep wanting to see what fits next.

Yours truly,  
F. Genevieve Eckert  
(Mrs. Wm. H. Eckert)

in existence. Later, fire companies were established in Singac and Great Notch."

— Mrs. Herbert Gooden, with the assistance of members of the Little Falls Women's Club

\*\*\*\*\*

The first Post Office in Little Falls was established January 31, 1829, during the Presidency of John Quincy Adams. The first postmaster was Benjamin C. Miller. A separate Post Office was established in Singac August 21, 1874, during the Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. The first postmaster there was Winslow Schoonmaker. The Singac Post Office was discontinued November 1, 1937, with the opening of the enlarged office at Little Falls.

We are indebted to the Passaic County historian Edward M. Graf for the following lists of postmasters which he culled from the records of the Post Office Department in Washington, D.C.

#### Little Falls Postmasters

Benjamin C. Miller	appointed January 31, 1829
Benjamin H. Bone	appointed January 21, 1836
Charles T. Van Winkle	appointed January 21, 1841
Alexander Harris	appointed October 11, 1849
Robert Beattie	appointed July 15, 1853
William C. Stratton	appointed December 18, 1855
Charles T. Van Winkle	appointed August 21, 1856
Elias Van Ness	appointed June 11, 1860
John J. Stag	appointed September 3, 1861
Frank W. Van Ness	appointed March 23, 1868
Francis J. Marley	appointed February 15, 1886
Benjamin J. Crane	appointed June 20, 1888
Francis J. Marley	appointed July 25, 1888
Ransford W. Furbeck	appointed June 4, 1889
Cyrus W. Van Ness	appointed June 30, 1893
Ransford W. Furbeck	appointed June 10, 1897
James Steel	appointed March 14, 1899
Albert C. Derby	appointed April 6, 1914
James T. Steel	Acting Postmaster August 1, 1922
James T. Steel	appointed February 10, 1923

Lyle W. Morehouse Acting Postmaster February 9, 1924

Lyle W. Morehouse appointed May 19, 1924

Joseph Ilaria Acting Postmaster November 22, 1937

Joseph Donato Acting Postmaster August 16, 1938

Joseph Donato Appointed first permanent Postmaster in Passaic County July 15, 1939

Wm. Fylstra, 1969

#### Singac Postmasters

Winslow Schoonmaker	appointed August 21, 1874
Edward L. Klotz	appointed May 8, 1901
Arthur Daniel	appointed May 4, 1909
Samuel S. Clark	appointed November 20, 1909
Benjamin Boekhout	appointed August 16, 1915
Patrick A. Connor	appointed April 8, 1918
Margaret Connor	

Acting Postmaster November 26, 1921

Margaret Connor appointed December 3, 1921

Harry R. Garrabrant

Acting Postmaster March 29, 1924

Harry R. Garrabrant appointed December 11, 1924

Joseph H. Ilaria Acting Postmaster January 4, 1926

Harry Green appointed December 14, 1926

Emely M. Green

Acting Postmaster November 2, 1929

Robert Young Acting Postmaster July 1, 1930

August A. Kleuser

Acting Postmaster October 1, 1930

August A. Kleuser appointed December 6, 1930

Mrs. L.E. Pohlman

Acting Postmaster September 15, 1931

Mrs. Isabella V. Toner

Acting Postmaster April 17, 1933

Mrs. Della Young appointed May 13, 1935

Office discontinued November 1, 1937

\*\*\*\*\*

Advertisements in the "Bulletin of the Harvest Home Festival, First Reformed Church"

October 13 and 14, 1921

#### IRVING'S CONFECTIONERY

where your patronage is appreciated  
ICE CREAM, CIGARS, STATIONERY  
CONFECTIONERY, TOBACCO, TOYS

And don't forget — a full line of  
HALLOWEEN GOODS

On Main St., opp. new Bank Bldg.  
Phone 62-W. Irving Klieger, Prop.

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REAL ESTATE Phone: 19-M Little Falls  
36-J

#### B. A. STANLEY

FOR SALE. Bungalow, 6 rooms, improvements. Plot 100 x 165 ft. Convenient to Station. Price \$6,500. Half cash. An opportunity.

Lots, Farms and Houses.

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#### CHESTER JAY HUNT

Incorporated

FINE DAFFODILS AND TULIPS

Little Falls, N.J.

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Phone, Garage 127 Phone, Residence, 291

#### LUCAS KROM

GARAGE and SERVICE STATION  
Lincoln Avenue and Main St. & Willemore Rd.

Automobile Repairing and Supplies

\*\*\*\*\*

Young men in Little Falls organized themselves into a series of athletic clubs in the first half of the twentieth century. The first of these, before and after World War I, was the Little Falls A.C. The "A.C." concentrated mainly on baseball, track events, and road runs. There

was a club house on the far side of the river on Union Avenue, and baseball games were played on "Beattie's Oval" on Paterson Avenue. Later clubs emphasized football, and competed up until World War II. After the "A.C." there followed "Cochatoes," "Kiowas," "Question Marks," "Aces," and "Mohawks."

\*\*\*\*\*

During World War II, Little Falls gained distinction as the hometown of a national war hero. Franklin Sigler of Great Notch was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, the country's highest military decoration, for his outstanding voluntary act of valor, above and beyond the call of duty, while serving in the United States Marine Corps in the South Pacific.

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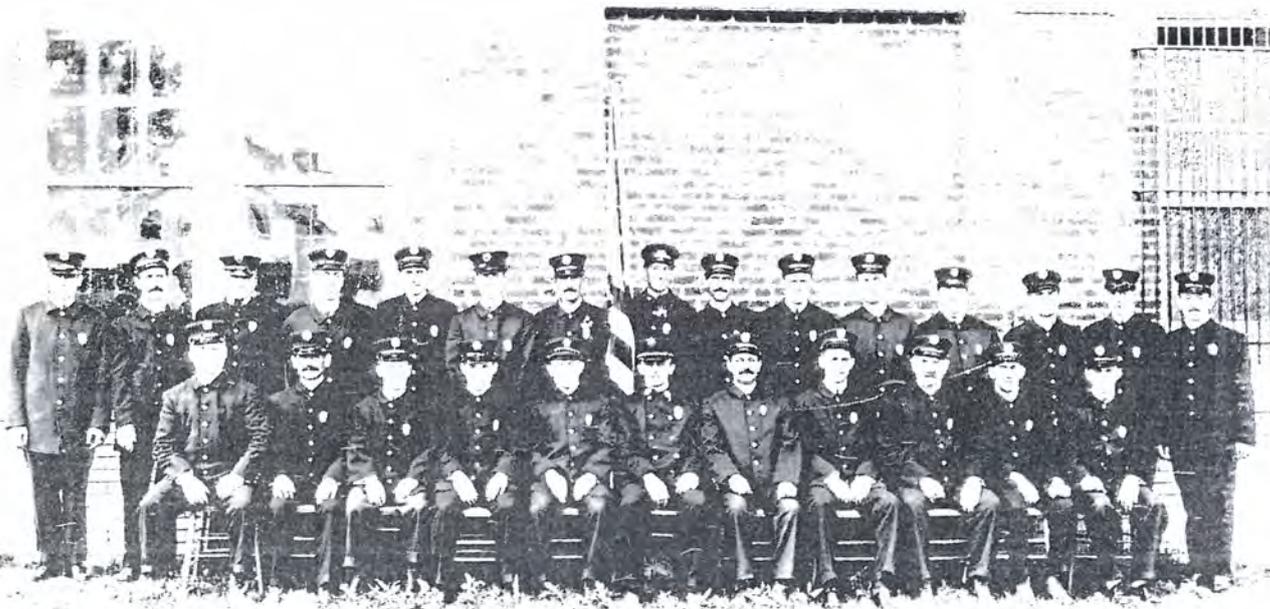
### The Pearl Rush

In 1856, a young countryman named Jacob Quackenbush drove an ox-cart up to Tiffany's Jewelry Store on Warren Street in New York City. In a small leather pouch he had a beautiful pearl taken from a fresh-water mussel that he had dug from what was later called Pearl Brook in Great Notch. The clerk at

Tiffany's knew that it was an unusual pearl, and he called Mr. Charles Tiffany to inspect it. They paid Jacob Quackenbush \$1,500 and gave him a watch, a ring, and other trinkets for the pearl. Then Mr. Tiffany sold it to a French dealer and it passed finally into the hands of the Empress Eugenie and became known as the Queen Pearl. After the fall of Napoleon III and the Second Empire, the pearl passed into the hands of the Queen of Saxony.

This find created a stir in the environs of Little Falls. People came from all over to dig in the shallow waters of Pearl Brook to find more pearls in mussels. The most valuable pearl discovered was found by a man who was not looking for anything except a mess of mussels for his dinner. He was Dan Howell, and while cooking the mussels in a skillet of grease, he noticed a pearl as big as a marble. Experts told him that if the had not been ruined by the boiling grease, it would have been worth \$25,000, as valuable as any pearl ever found.

— Mrs. Herbert Gooden



EAGLE COMPANY IN 1918 — Although Eagle Fire Co. 1 was organized on Nov. 11, 1904, its fire buffs posed for this picture in 1918, when Little Falls celebrated its golden anniversary. Bottom row, from left: Philip Dews, William Shimonsky, Harry Stanley, Mathias Lawler, Max Klieger, Charles Baldwin, Bert Briggs, William Carlock, Joseph Walton, John Stanton, Vincent Vreeland. Top row: Roy Masker, John Hackit, James Garrabrant, Sidney Edge, Cornelius Buikema, Roy Decker, William Hallaway, Fireman Brooks, Dan Masker, Fred Seugling, George Beckwith, Louis Cosloy, Tom Lawier, Irwin Osborne and Ed Lawler. Only Carlock, Buikema and Ed Lawler are alive today. The fire company and its rescue squad and ambulance unit today are housed in a new building on Wilmore Road. The squad, one of the finest in the state, was formed in 1931. (Photo courtesy of Jacob De Young.)

# Centennial Year Highlights



They served on the centennial ball committee: standing, from left, T. W. E. Bowdler, a member of the Little Falls governing body; Robert Grohol, Mrs. Elsie Curreri, James B. Young, Mayor John Kosachook and Robert Steffy. Seated: Mrs. Eleanor Brychta, Barbara Barton Mrs. Grace Banks, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Rhinesmith.

**ON THE GRANDSTAND** — This is one of the scenes on the bandstand in front of the municipal building on Stevens Avenue, when the centennial year celebration was inaugurated. From left are Robert Grohol, Mrs. Doris Bowdler, Mrs. Grace Banks and T. W. E. Bowdler, former mayor and a member of the present Little Falls Township Committee.



The many Centennial signs which dotted the Township during the big year were made by the art classes at Passaic Valley Regional High School on East Main Street, operated by Little Falls, Totowa and West Paterson. Instructors are Robert Steffy (left) and Chester Kuziora.

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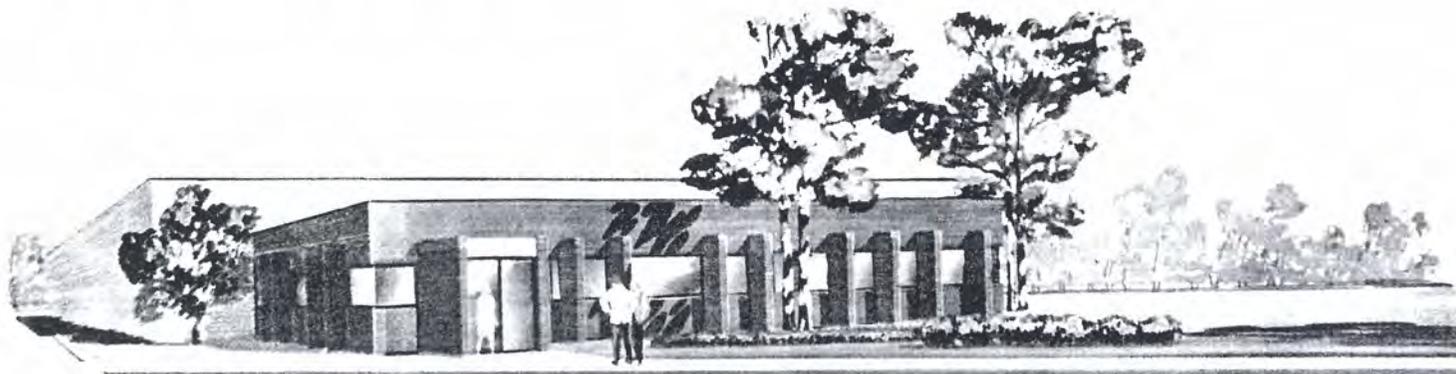
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ON ITS CENTENIAL YEAR!

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# Centennial Year Highlights

Former mayors of Little Falls, from left: Harold Schumacher, John Kosachook, Charles Dorman, James B. Young, T. W. Edward Bowdler, William Hengeveld. The Centennial Committee was most grateful to Mr. Hengeveld for helping out tremendously with the many legal details which were involved in the year-long celebration. Besides being a former mayor, Mr. Hengeveld was also a former local Township Attorney, judge of the municipal court and a committeeman.



The gentleman dressed in the style of 1868 is Richmond Holley, township administrator. Scene was at kickoff of Centennial year in front of municipal building. The many small fry are awaiting the arrival of the huge centennial cake.



**PICNICKERS** — At the centennial picnic having fun were Mrs. Dorothea Rhinesmith, Barbara Barton, Bonnie Hackes, Fran Dorman.

# Centennial Year Highlights



**MAYORS ALL** — These five Township Committeemen have also been mayors of Little Falls. From left: T. W. Edward Bowdler, Anthony Barbieri, John Kosachook, Charles Pullara and Charles Dorman.



**PICNIC CHAIRMEN** — Here are Leonard Rhinesmith (left) and John Scillieri, chairmen of the centennial year picnic held in Singac, which turned out to be a huge success



Dressed in fashion of the time Little Falls was declared a township in 1868 are Mrs. Grace Banks, Mrs. Elsie Curreri and Mrs. Doris Bowdler.



**WAITING THEIR TURN** — Hungry picnic guests swarmed most of the foodstands to devour the tasty picnic fare.

# School Trustees And Administrators



The Centennial year was a key year in the life of our school system. It was on the verge of building additions on all three schools and completely renovating School 3 at a cost of about \$1 million. All this came to pass, so that Carroll Thayer, school superintendent and school trustees were able to convert the kindergarten through eighth grade system into a middle school system. Schools 1 and 2 housed grades K through 6, while seventh and eighth graders were to be given specialized instruction in

preparation for high school. In above photo at left are our administrators. Thayer is second from left, while the three principals, left to right, are James Bowe, School 3; Peter Yurkosky, School 1 and Fred Laux, School 2. In other photo, left to right are school trustees William Liess, Dr. Robert Rento, Roger Belding, Nicholas Filliopone, Joseph Hewitt and Peter Bayda. Other trustees who participated in the school changeover are Clyde P. Marlatt, Jack DeYoung, James Cargille, Steve Gerdy, Ray Keown, Toby DeNooyer and Walter Tripp.

*THIS CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF LITTLE FALLS* produced and edited by Louis J. Vorgetts, of Wayne, under the auspices of the Little Falls Centennial Celebration Committee, was turned over to the Little Falls Historical Society for disposition and preservation.

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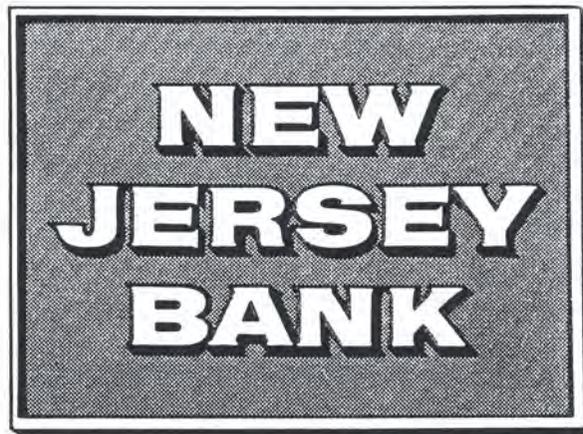
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