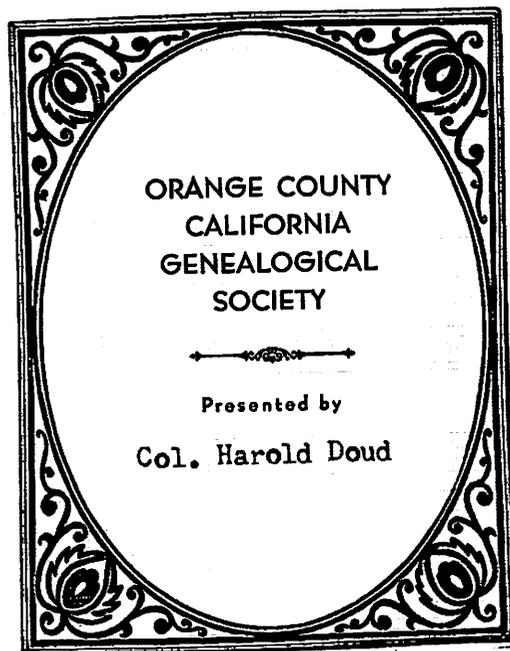


Mill Brook



Mill Brook Church
Warren Co, New Jersey



ORANGE COUNTY
CALIFORNIA
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY



Presented by
Col. Harold Doud

PB8
67

History
of
Mill Brook

Pahaquarry Township

Warren Co. New Jersey

Myra Snook

1969

Back to the Blue Ridge

by Hannah Dickisson Depue

I must go back to the mountains again,
To the mountains so broad and so high,
That their arms reach out to the distant hills,
And their shoulders touch the sky.
Back to the life that is wild and free,
To the resinous bracing air,
That nature pours through her open doors
For all who tarry there.

Where pink azaleas bloom in the spring,
And arbutus stars peep through.
Where moss grows thick on the shady slopes,
And skies are a warm lazy blue,
To the wafted perfume of sunlit days,
When the cool sweet summer rain
Drops a veil of lace over the stony face,
Unchanging, rugged and plain.

Back to the streams that are crystal clear,
And the ranges that never sleep,
That day and night, o'er the homes below,
Their incessant vigil keep.
That stretch away in the smoky distance,
In a cloud of bluish haze,
For miles and miles of green and gold aisles,
On mellow October days.

Back to the somber snow-capped peaks,
Where the fierce storms rage and howl,
Beneath a canopy of sky, enthroned
Like haughty monarchs of old.
In dark robes of state, the high ridges wait
The passing of winter's cold.

Back to the peace of the mountains again,
To each verdant wooded crest,
Where the pines sing their low sweet melodies,
And the soft winds whisper rest.
There a spirit seems to dwell apart,
From the toilers of the sod,
And the great heights seem to ponder and dream
And silently commune with God.

Published in The Country Bard Madison, N. J. 1934

Hannah Dickisson Depue was a former resident of Millbrook.

Mill Brook

Late 1800's

Flatbrookville ↑

Coorad welter
School

Cemetary

Foundation old church-school

Elias Garris

Kimble

Barn

Philip J.S. Garris

Sam Hill

Weaver Mrs. Kimble
Blacksmith Isaac Kimble

Hotel

Garris store
P.O.

Sam Garris

Tenant house
Barn

Barn

Church

Shoemaker
Atwood Garris

House
(Torn down 1912)

Barn

Mill Pond

Mill Brook

Stone bridge

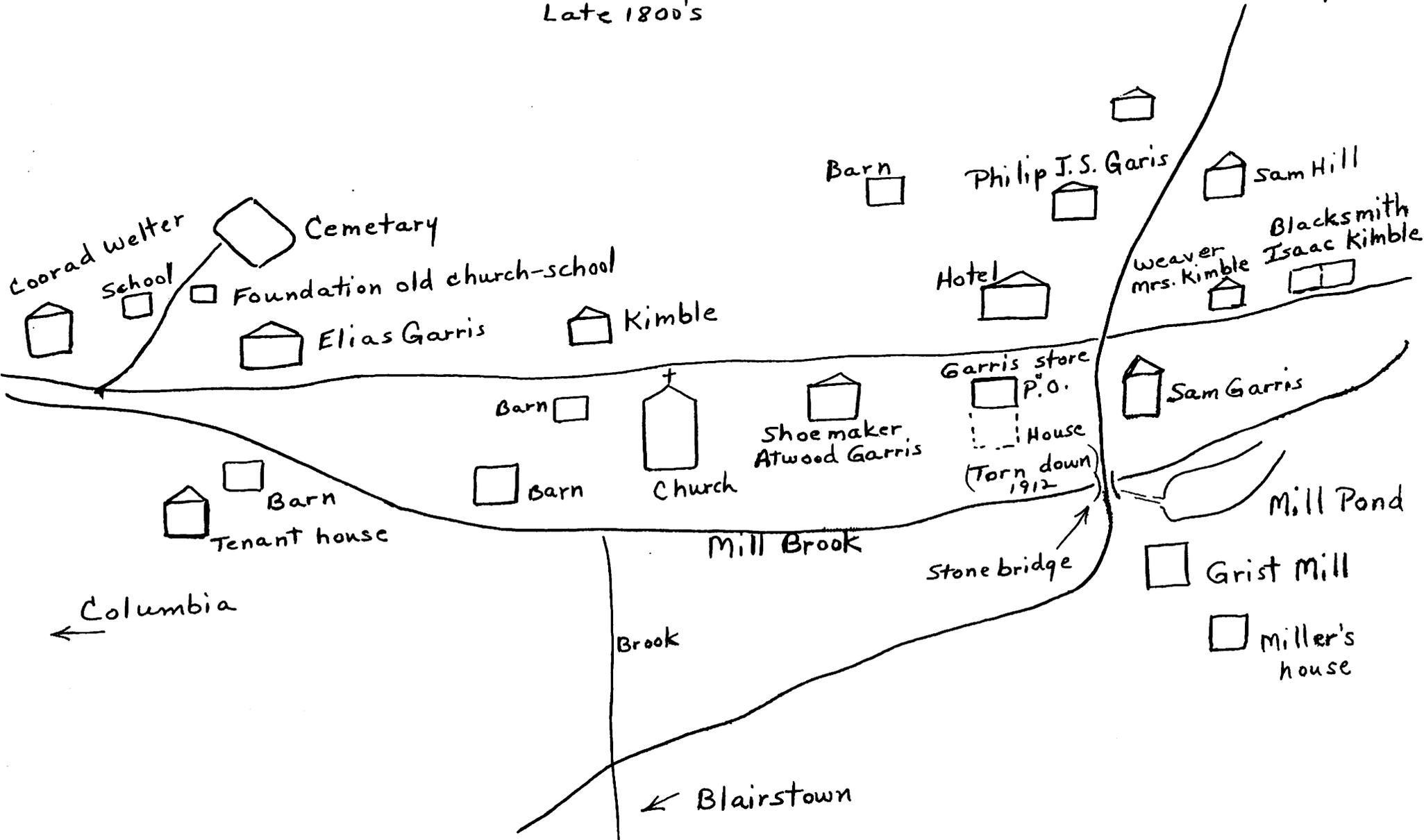
Grist Mill

Miller's house

Columbia ←

Brook

Blairstown ←



MILL BROOK

The community of Mill Brook is located by a running stream of the same name at the Northeast end of Pahaquarry Township and at the foot of the Blue Mountains. This stream is one of the largest to rise from the side of the Blue Mountains in Walpack Township, Sussex County and flows southwesterly and empties into the Delaware River opposite Aposhsenoc Island. (Some maps today list it as Van Campens Brook.)

The early 1800's found Mill Brook a busy little village having a hotel, stores, grist mill, blacksmith shop, school and church. However, settlement in Pahaquarry Township had begun in 1600, about 100 years before the rest of Warren County saw white man. Pahaquarry Township was formed from Walpack Township, Sussex County in 1824 and civil organization of the township began in 1825 with a town meeting.

Early families in the vicinity of Mill Brook were Garriss, Paddock, Hull, Howell, Labar, Decker, Dimon, Cressman, Depue, Ships, Hornbeck, Shafer, Swartwoods, Losey, Smith.

In 1880 there were two stores in town. Philip J. S. Garis ran a store in the hotel. He kept the post office there as well. He bartered primarily with the Dutch settlers in the valley and kept many of his records in Dutch. The store was later run by Floyd Dickison, grandson to Mr. Garis; by a Mr. Spangenburg and Sutton Labar. Mr. Labar was the last to have the store and closed it about 1919.

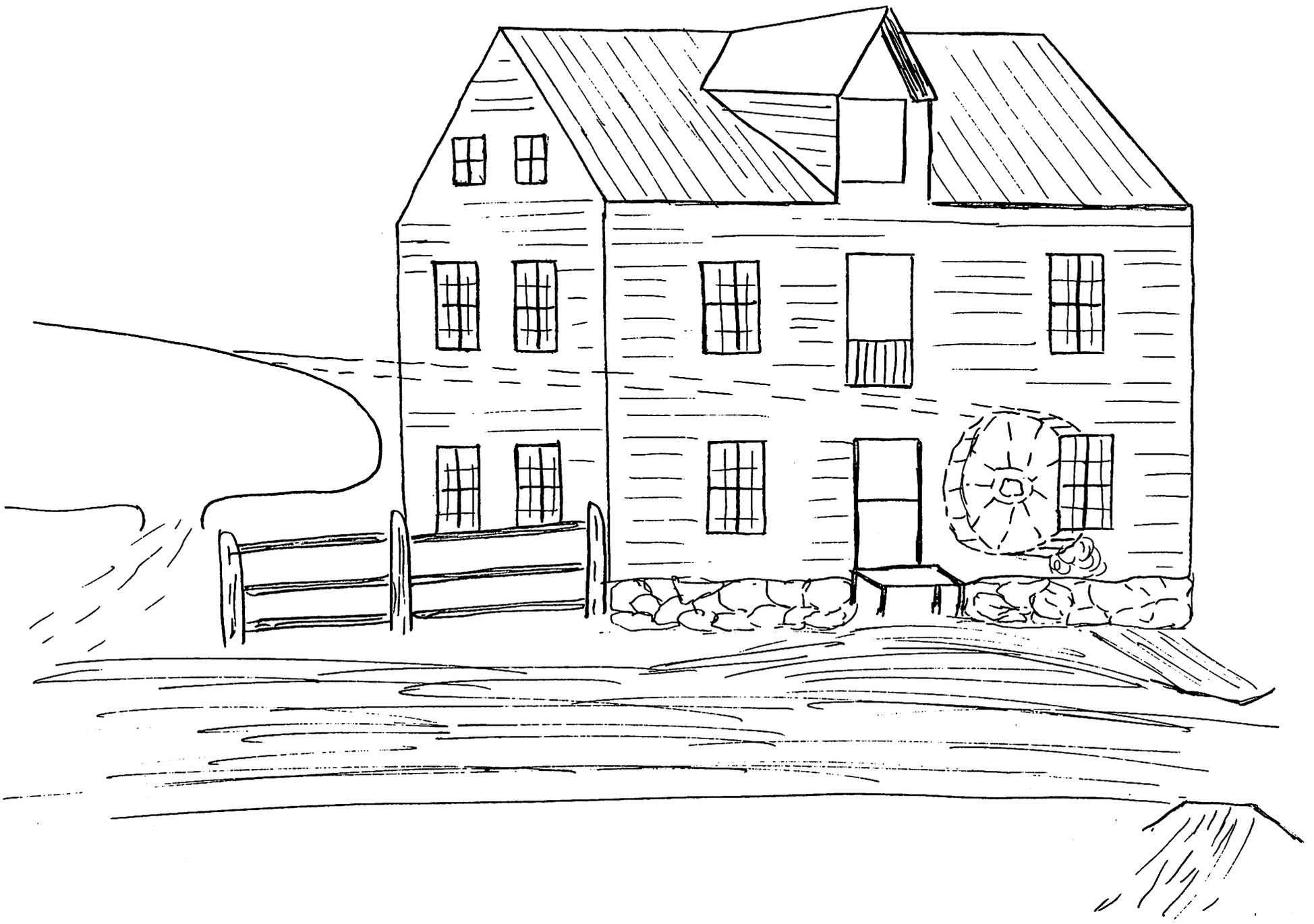
The first mail route was established 1852 from Newton to Flatbrookville, by way of Stillwater, Hardwick and Mill Brook. A post office was opened in Mill Brook that year with delivery once a week and later changing to three times a week. In 1853 the route was opened to Columbia with a stop at Calno. Elizah W. Welter became the first postmaster at Mill Brook. He was followed by Joseph F. Welter.

Abraham Garis built a grist mill in town in 1832. It was operated by George Garis. In 1880 it was owned and operated by Bartley D. Fuller. It was a 3 story frame building and contained stones for grinding that had been brought from France. It took several months to haul them by ox cart from New York City. The mill impounded water from the stream to turn a 16 foot overshot wheel which in turn operated the mill stones.

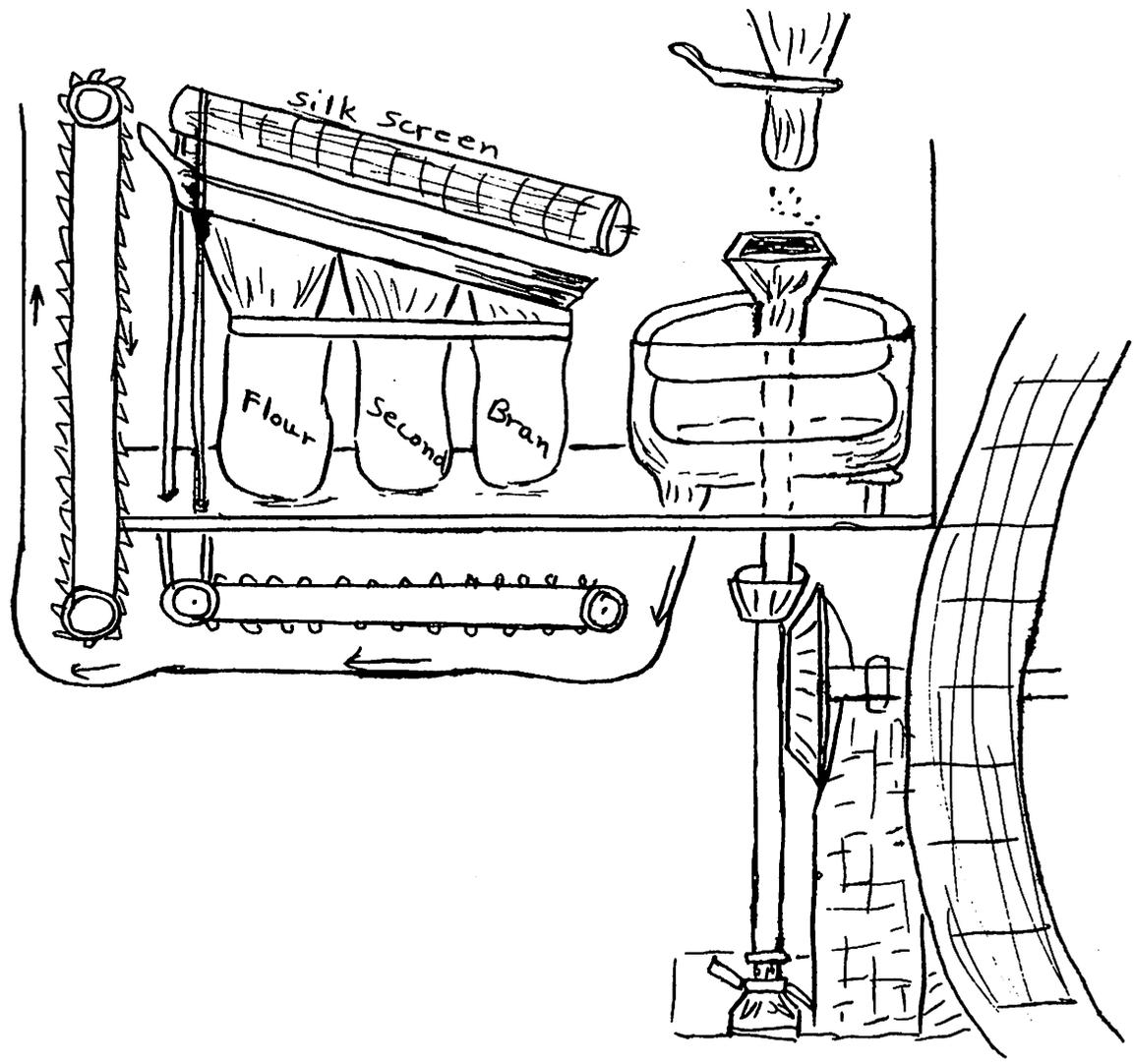
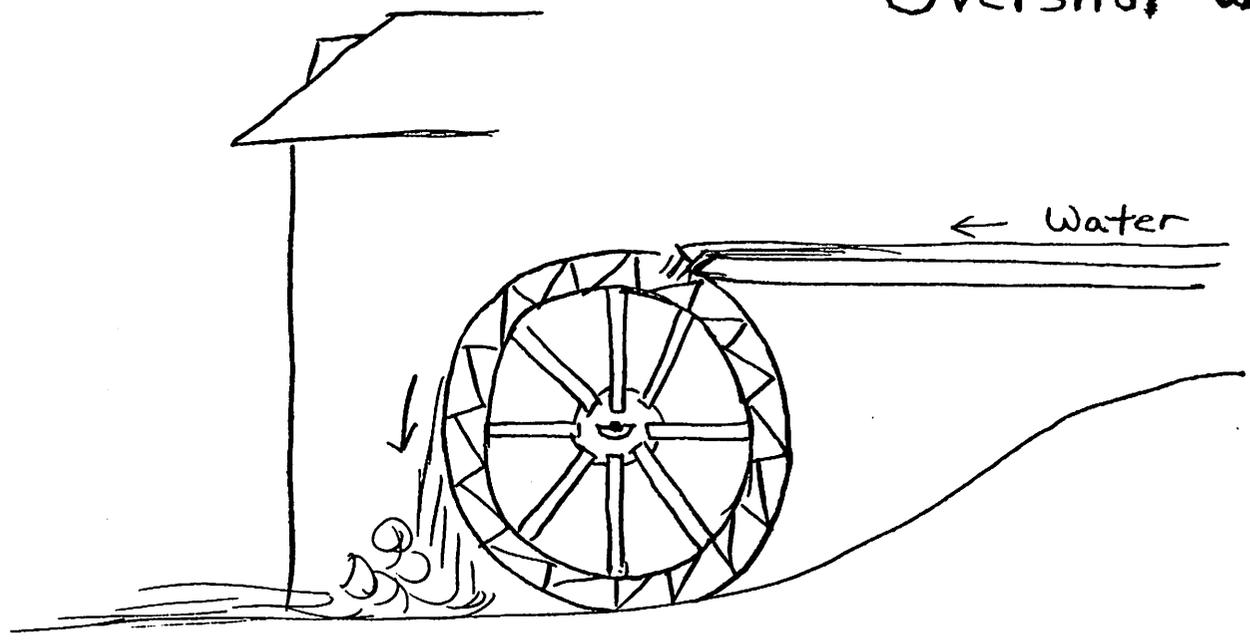
The mill served a local market for grinding grain such as rye, oats, corn (maize) and buckwheat. Grain grew so well in the valley that the mill had to operate seven days a week and at night. It was considered one of the best mills for flour in the area as meal was sifted through a bolt of silk. People would even travel over the mountain from Flatbrookville and Blairstown to get flour from this mill. Caution had to be taken, especially at night, so that the mill stones didn't become dry and cause sparks that could set the mill on fire.

When a farmer drove up to the mill he would announce what he had and how he wished it ground. This would determine which floor the grain was to be hoisted; corn and oats to the second floor and buckwheat to the third as it had to be sifted twice.

During these years the miller was responsible for keeping the stones in proper condition. This called for special cutting tools and special know-how. Later on itinerate stone cutters kept the stones in repair. Payment to the miller was a percentage of grain. The mill burned in 1920, sometime after operations had ceased.



Overshot Wheel

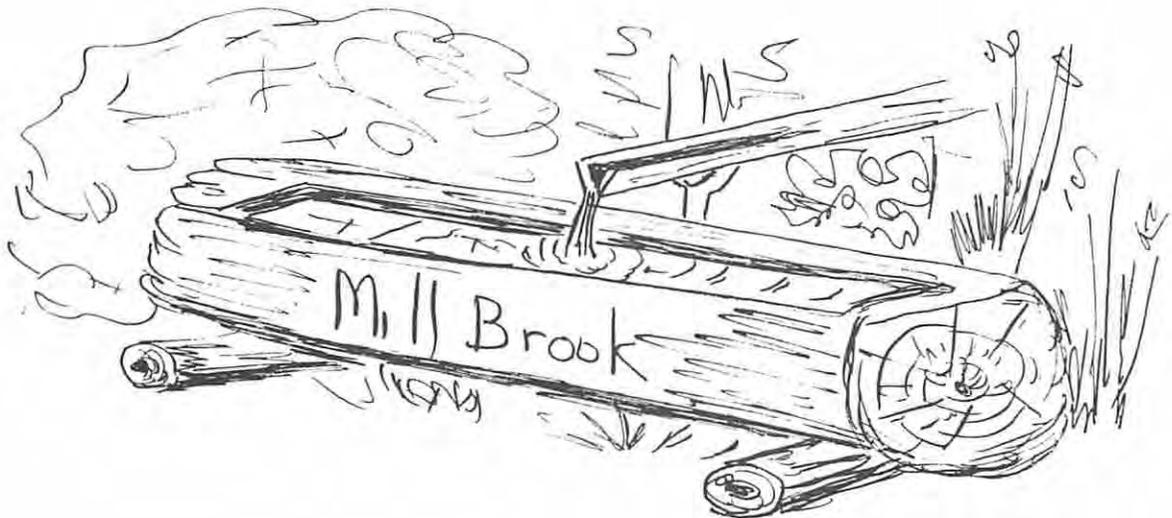


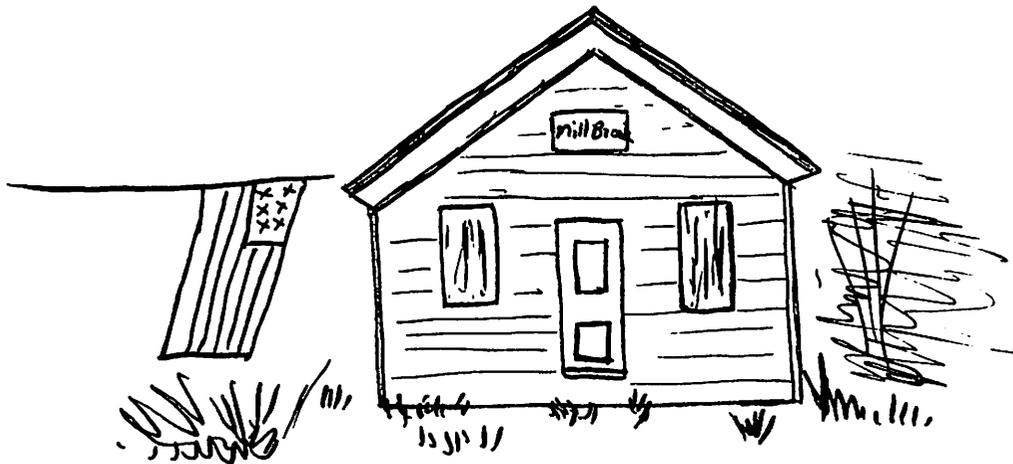
The Watering Trough

by Hannah Dickisson Depue

The cabin stood just off the dusty road,
A garden spot and then the woods began,
A few feet farther on the watering trough
Moss grown with water splashing from its sides
Flowed from a spring that never failed in drought.
Wild fern and dragons tooth grew at its base,
Long ago it had been hewn from a log,
Here found its place to serve the countryside.
Ruts filled with water showed where wheels were camped
To give a cooling drink to thirsty teams and men
Who drove across the mountains to the town.

Published in Federation of Chaparral Writers Yearbook 1951





Still sits the school-house by the road,
A ragged beggar sleeping;
Around it still the sumachs grow
And blackberry-vines are creeping.

Whittier

Edmund L. Gregg was school master 1840-41. It was held in the stone basement of the church. In 1868 the frame structure of the old church was moved to the bottom of the hill and turned into a school. In 1880 the building was valued at \$300 and had a seating capacity of 56. Of the 45 children of school age eligible to attend only 41 were registered. School was held nine months of the year with an average attendance of 18.

Teachers who later taught at the school were Mrs. Blair Rusling and Mrs. Spangenburg. It was a favorite habit of the boys to jump through the window when the teacher's back was turned, especially in nice weather. A prank played on one of the men teachers was to turn the clock ahead when he took his nap at noon.

Samantha Alice Garis resided in Mill Brook but taught at Calno. Since she wasn't able to commute as we do today, she had to stay at the homes of pupils, usually one week at a time. She never knew what the conditions would be and she often had to sleep in a cold bedroom or in the same bed as some of the children. Being a large framed woman, she would on occasion discipline a child by sitting on him.

Folklore common among the women of the valley was that it was necessary to drive the witches away when churning so that the butter would come. This was accomplished by placing a hot iron in the bottom of the churn.

The people of Mill Brook were true pioneer folk cutting timber and farming the stoney hillsides to earn a meager living. Those who settled the valley west to Calno found rich bottom land. In the middle 1700's few roads were developed and many people did not visit outside town.

Tobacco and buckwheat were the main crops raised, along with flax and wool. After 1840 broom corn was grown. Flax and wool, usually dyed with Indigo, were used for clothing. Linsey-woolsey petticoats were especially popular with the Dutch settlers. Homespun and calico dresses were worn by women and children with matching sunbonnets. This style was later worn by women of the wagon trains.

Men went coatless, hatless and bare footed in summer and wore 'cowhides' on their feet in winter. Usually there was an issue of one new pair of shoes and one new suit per year.

Little money was available, so barter was common. Sometimes it was necessary to trade over the mountain at Flatbrookville. Light farm wagons were used since heavier conestogas or the cumbersome Jersey wagons couldn't get over the mountain. Travel was mostly by horse or by foot. Because of this most travel and trade was to the West - Calno and the Delaware River. Rapids in the river made travel hazardous.

Many of the social events of the 1800's centered around a necessary phase of life. The ordinary chore was made into an event in which friends and neighbors entered.

Quilting Bees	Women sewed quilts all day.
Stone Frolic	Men gathered to pick loose stones from new plowed ground. Women prepared food.
A Raising	Neighbors built or put up a barn or house.
Husking Bee	All Gathered to husk corn. Anyone to find a red ear got a kiss.
Plowing Frolic	Men gathered to help plow.
Apple Cuts	Apples were peeled, cored and quartered for drying on a scaffold.

These usually gave way to dancing to the tune of a violin or to games in most of which were kissing.

Growing Weather

by Hannah Dickisson Depue

Its first rate growin weather now,
The crops is just a jumpin,
An all the kinds o garden truck,
Is on the job an jumpin.

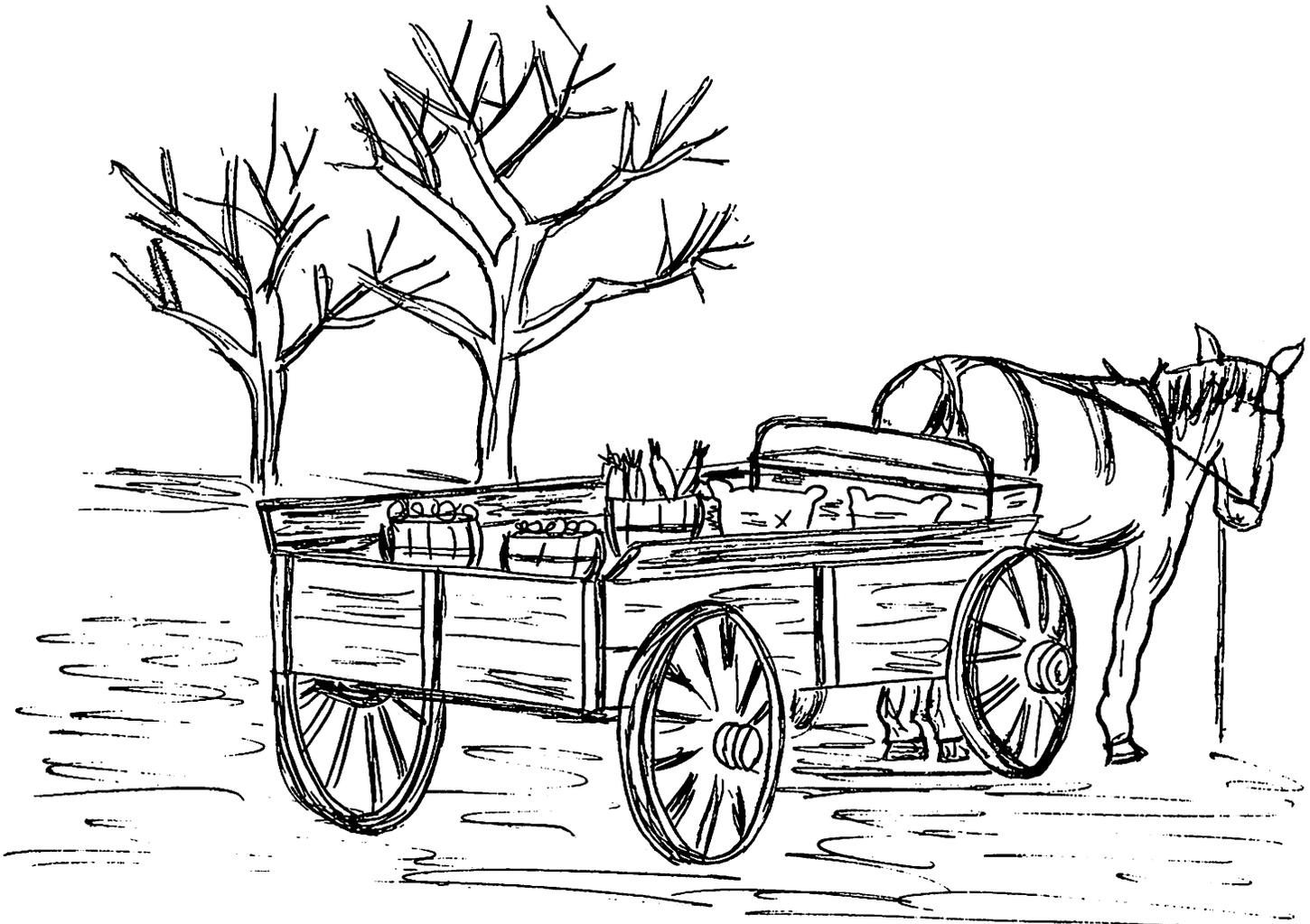
These sultry nights is good fer corn,
The stalks is surly shootin.
It's in the milk-in take a load
About next week to Newton.

The wheat an oats look pretty good,
They're jist right now a-heddin.
The clover hay was cut today,
't will hav to hav some teddin.

The stock is all a-comin on,
Them spring pigs is a-stretchin.
Will hav to ring them soon some day -
Who wants the job of ketchin?

The taters air a-growin so,
They're crowdin one another
Jist heard an Irish Cobbler yell,
"I want more room, lay over".

Published in The Country Bard
Madison, N. J. 1934



CHURCHES

Walpack Union Congregation

According to Snell's History of Sussex and Warren Counties, the Walpack Union Congregation incorporated in 1820 and purchased land from Jonas Smith, but that no know effort was made to erect a building.

However, a deed dated May 13, 1820 and recorded in Newton states otherwise. It is between Jonas Smith and the trustees of the German Presbyterian and German Lutheran of the Walpack Union Congregation, Walpack Township. Trustees were John Bergstracer, Lewis Trauger, Philip Smith, Leonard Gares, George Crisman. It states that Jonas Smith agreed to follow an act of the Legislator of the State of New Jersey passed June 1799 which incorporated trustees of religious societies. It further states that Jonas Smith agreed to let the property be "procured in consideration of the sum of six cents . . . and said parties of second part agree to pay the further sum on one cent yearly and every year on first day of January if demanded". The land transfered being "all that certain lot of land now occupied as a church and school house . . . being part of lot of land conveyed to (Jonas Smith) by a Walpack Land Company by and leasing date the tenth day of May 1813". The property contained 67 hundredths of an acre.

The church building described in the deed was a frame building with a stone basement and located on a knoll near the cemetary. The basement was used for the district school. This building remained until 1868 when the frame part was moved down the hill to present location where it continued to be used as a school. Apparently the congregation dissolved without transferring title of the property.

Methodist

The Methodist message was brought to Mill Brook area by Manning Force and George Banghart. Mill Brook was but one stop on their 500 mile circuit from Philadelphia to Wyoming, Pa. as part of the Philadelphia Conference under the direction of Bishop Francis Asbury. In 1834 Methodist churches in New Jersey came under the newly formed New Jersey Conference, and in 1857, the Newark Conference.

George Banghart was born near Bridgeville, New Jersey March 10, 1782 and was one of 14 children. He became licenced to preach at Hope, New Jersey March 24, 1810 by Rev. John Totten. Banghart joined the ministry in 1812. During his ministry he traveled frequently throughout Northwest Jersey as part of the Asbury Circuit. He became Presiding Elder of Asbury Circuit 1833. Salary was about \$51 a year. He resided most of his life near Buttzville and preached there 1845-47, 1852. In 1861 he became supernumerated or worn out and died February 9, 1870 at 88 after having spent 60 years with the church. He is buried at Buttzville cemetary.

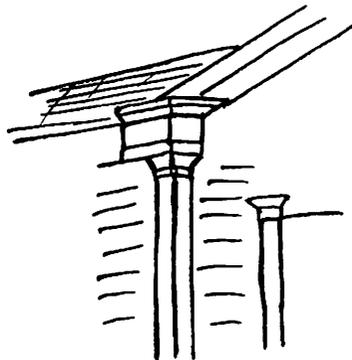
Manning Force joined the ministry in 1811. His first charge was Flanders, New Jersey, also a part of the Asbury Circuit. After traveling much the same route as Banghart, he became supernumerated in 1857. He died February 22, 1862 and is buried at Flanders. He was 73 and had spent 51 years with the church. Both men traveled by horse and horse and buggy.

The preachers were known to have stayed at the home of Coonrad Welter who had arrived in the township with his family in the early 1830's. Since prayer meetings were often held there, it became known as the "Methodist Tavern". The tooting of a tin horn announced the coming of a preacher or "circuit rider" to town and brought pioneers from miles around.

Rev. Baker formed a class at the Welter home in 1839 with Welter as leader. Members were Mary Welter, Dingman Decker and wife, Uriah Hill and Sarah Hill. In 1840 Rev. Henry Mains came on the circuit. Trustees elected for the Methodist Society at Mill Brook were as follows: Coonrad Welter, Uriah Hill, Dingman Decker, Benjamin Shoemaker. Snell says it was at this time the first church and school building was built. Probably it was at this time the Methodists asked to use the Walpack Union Church after the decline of their membership.

Membership increased in the Methodist Society and in 1860, a new and modern building was erected on land purchased from Isaac Bunnell during the charge of Rev. Ambro S. Compton. The congregation build the church themselves at the cost of \$1500. It was a wooden structure 34 X 48 feet and took one year to build. The cornerstone was laid by Rev. Cornelius Clark. It was dedicated at services Tuesday January 10, 1860. Rev. Crook S. Van Cleve of Morristown conducted 11 A.M. service, Rev. S. W. Hillard, Dover, had 3 P.M. service and Rev. A. S. Compton, presiding paster, had the evening service.

The style of architecture of the church followed that of Greek revival. This classical style of architecture was introduced in 1820 and became popular as houses, churches and schools. Those along the frontier were made of wood as were the original Greek temples. A pillar flat against a building is called a pilaster.



The deed between Isaac Bunnell and the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Pahaquarry Township, was dated May 18, 1859 and recorded in Belevidere, New Jersey. Trustees were Coonrad Welter, Uriah Hill, Phillip J. S. Garis, James Schoonover, James Van Campen, John L. Ribble and Jesse Welter. The price paid to Isaac Bunnell and wife was \$65 for 27 hundredths of an acre. It is stated in the deed "That they shall erect and build or cause to be erected and built there on a house or place of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church".

Ministers who served the church were as follows:

1839	Rev. Baker	Rev. Baker also preached at Walpack Centre just prior to Mill Brook.
1840	Henry Mains	Preached at Buttzville Methodist Church 1841-42.
1841	Wm. C. Nelson	
1842	Henry Beegle	
1843	Charles S. Coit	
1844	Reuben Van Sycle	
1845	Wm. Copp	
1846	Abraham M. Harris	
1847	John L. Hays	J. L. Hays preached at Buttzville 1865-67-68, 1884-87.
1848	Wm. V. Kelley	
1849	Isaac W. Cole	
1862	John W. Young	
	George Miller	
	Isaac Thomas	
1866	Wm. H. Dickerson	3 yrs.
1869	J. B. Mathias	3 yrs.
1876	John F. Dodd	
	John W. Barrett	
	Thomas Hall	
1880	Wm. H. Corson	

According to the records of the Newark Annual Conference, Walpack Centre is first mentioned in Appointments 1855: 'Walpack and Hainesville' 1856; 1857 Walpack Centre alone and continued so until 1869 when appointments read 'Walpack Centre and Millbrook'. However, according to the Statistical Tables, every year when Walpack Centre or Walpack is mentioned, two churches are listed. Likely the second one was Millbrook. It also states "Until consolidation of Valley charges the Walpack Church was focus for several neighboring towns". Records show that meetings were held at Peters Valley (Bevens), at Millbrook and Calno in Pahaquarry Township, Warren County, and Flatbrookville under the leadership of various pastors and official board members.

For 50 years Millbrook thrived and the church with it. Services were held every Sunday. No records of church history are known to exist. This apparently was common with many of the early Methodist churches in the Asbury circuit.

In 1880 membership was 40 and the church value had increased to \$2,000. Trustees were Coonrad Welter, Uriah Hill, Philip Garis, James Schoonover, James Van Campen John L. Ribble and Jesse Welter. However, after the turn of the twentieth century, farming and lumbering slowed and the village declined. People moved elsewhere to seek work and by mid-1920's the church no longer held regular services.

Fred Dickison recalls a time in 1912 when his father, Mason, said one morning to his wife "Alice the old church needs a new roof". So he called his sons to hook up the team for a trip to Portland. From there he took the trolley to Bethlehem to order the slates for the roof. When the slate arrived in Portland, he and several neighboring farmers took their wagons to pick up the slate and return to Millbrook. All then pitched in to roof the structure as it is today.

After 1929 the church stood empty and unused until 1935 when it was cleaned and repaired by members of the community. It was at this time Norman Garris, later editor of the Summit Herald, started the idea of having a reunion service once a year at the church for members of the valley families and descendents who had moved away. The church was never officially removed from the Methodist Conference when services ceased in 1929. However, reunion services did not emphasize the Methodist religion, but invited all friends and relatives of valley families. For many years it was Mr. Garris along with Eino and Helmi Silva who kept the reunions going. Mrs. Silva wove and donated the large tapestry which hangs over the pulpit with the words "Glory to God in the Highest".

No heat or electricity have ever been installed, so reunion services must be held in warm weather. Before the church was abandoned in 1929, wood stoves furnished heat and kerosene lamps hung on the walls. Reunion services are at 2:00 with guest ministers from nearby towns presiding. In early days of the reunions, picnics were held on the church lawn and followed by a walk up the road to the school for many before start of the church service.

1960 marked the 100th anniversary of the church. Helmi Silva gave the welcoming address. The service was conducted by Rev. H. B. Leach with over 120 persons present to help commemorate the years the church served the valley. It was Rev. Leach who donated three carved altar chairs to the church. Since that time two services are held annually in June and October. Flowers and Autumn colored leaves decorate the church for these services.

Millbrook may again become a town when Tock's Island National Recreation Area is completed and restoration finished. The church, however, will remain as is and continue to function as a house of worship.

Millbrook Cemetary Records taken 1964

John and Jemima Fleming
 2 infant children
 b. Feb. 18, 1859
 one Mar. 25, 1859

Abraham M. Garis
 d. Sept. 2, 1878
 77 yrs. 9 mo.

Anna M. (Maria) Garis
 d. Oct. 28, 1869
 4 yrs. (47 yrs)

Elias Labar Gares 1824-1909
 w. Hannah M. 1835-1912 76 yrs

Philip J. S. Garis
 d. July 20, 1908 83 yrs

Sarah Garis (Smith)
 d. May 17, 1876
 75 yrs 3 mos.

Mary Melissa Hill
 daug. Andrew & Sarah Ann Hill
 d. Mar. 21, 1863

Sarah Hill (wife of Uriah Hill)
 b. July 22, 1800
 d. Mar. 6, 1863

Uriah Hill
 d. Dec. 7, 1794
 d. Mar. 6, 1863

Charles Henry Holton (Horton)
 son Eli & Mary Holton
 d. Mar. 21, 1818

Sarah Lehomadieu
 wife of J. K. Lehomadieu
 d. Dec. 18, 1858

McMurtrie
 son of Andrew & Mary McMurtrie
 d. Apr. 2, 1853

Sarah Masker
 d. Feb. 14, 1892 82 yrs.

Mary Shoemaker
 daug. Benjamin T. & Ila Shoemaker
 d. Oct. 6, 1848
 4 mo. 24 days.

James Spangenburg
 d. Mar. 18, 1866
 87 yrs. 7 mo. (58 yrs)

Henrietta Stires
 wife George R. Stires
 d. June 26, 1867
 (20, 1857 35 yrs.)

2 infant sons of James & Sarah
 Spangenburg d. Mar. 23, 1854

Permelia Sutton
 wife of M. M. Sutton
 d. Oct. 24, 1865
 46 yrs.

Emanuel D. Van Campen
 son Margaret & John Van Campen
 b. Oct. 16, 1854
 d. May 16, 1856

Anne Van Gorden
 wife John L. Van Gorden
 d. May 22, 1852
 5 yrs.

Henry Welter
 son Coonrad and Mary Welter
 d. July 19, 1852
 5 yrs.

Mary Welter
 wife Coonrad Welter
 d. Apr. 5, 1812 (Apr. 8, 1847)
 42 yrs.

Elijah Welter
 d. Aug. 20, 1852
 28 yrs.

Kejiah Welter
 wife Coonrad Welter
 d. Feb. 19, 1882 68 yrs.

Finley R. Welter
son Jesse Welter
d. June 30, 1862
(b. Jan. 30, 1859)

Mary Margaret Welter
daug Jesse & Jane Welter
d. Jan. 20, 1850
3 yrs.

Infant child of Jesse & Jane Welter
d. Mar. 2, 1847

Martha Elizabeth _____
d. Feb. 1, 1816

Nuneros unmarked graves

* Marks in parenthies are from cemetary list of Norman Garis

Road to Flatbrookville had
thank-you-mams.



Looking down old road as it
enters town from Blairstown.

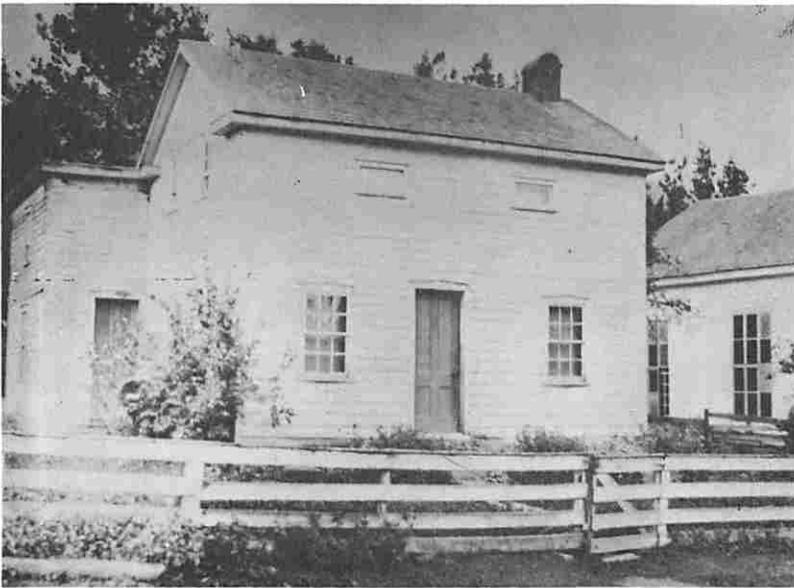


Hotel also served as store
and post office.





Dickison family
homestead remodeled
by Busch. It later
burned.



James Spangenburg
house. It was later
owned by Garris and
Depue families.



Slab house moved
from Sam Hill farm
was later occupied
by Lester Spangenburg.

Mill Brook
school house



Interior of
school.



Original stone bridge



Crist Mill





Mill Brook church
built 1860

100th Anniversary
Hannah D. Depue, Pearl D.
Rodimer, Bertha and Fred
Dickison, Tressa G. Bunting,
Mary Dickison, Sadie O'Dell,
Ruth D. Snook



Reunion service gathering 1968



Mill Brook Cemetary

Headstone in old
cemetary. Many
graves have no
markers.





Typical washday
for
Margaret Dickison



Norman Garis
and
P. J. S. Garis
at work.

Acknowledgements

Country Bard Published in Madison, N. J. 1939

Clark, Lester, edit.

Federation of Chaparral Writers Yearbook 1951. Published by Author

Hampton, Vernon B.

Newark Conference Centennial History 1857-1957. Published by
Historical Society Newark Annual Conference 1957

Philadelphia Annual Conference Official Records 1800-1823.
Drew University Special Collections.

Snell, James

History of Sussex and Warren Counties. 1881

White Township Tercenterary Committee

White Township History from Day of the Indians to the Present. 1964

I wish to thank Fred Dickison of Unionville, N. Y., a former resident of Millbrook, for his help in suppling many details of the area. Also, the family of Norman Garis for allowing me to borrow pictures from his collection

