



ALLENDALE HISTORY AND HERITAGE

VOL. VI

SEPTEMBER 1979

No. 1

NEXT MEETING: Monday, October 1, 1979, 8:30 p.m. at the Allendale Municipal Building, West Crescent Avenue, Allendale.

PROGRAM: Our speaker will be June Regal of Ridgewood, a well-known antique appraiser. Members are invited to bring a small article to be evaluated.

NEWS AND VIEWS: We expect that many of our members have been following the newspaper accounts of our society's work to preserve the Smith house at 350 Brookside Avenue. But for those who may have missed the newspaper accounts, what follows is a brief account.

We became aware of the danger to the house in late spring of this year, when members noticed trees and land surrounding the house being leveled. Upon questioning borough officials, we learned that the small house was slated for demolition within a few days. Chestnut Ridge Associates had recently obtained subdivision approval from the borough and pre-construction site work was beginning on the tract of land.

Members of the society, working with county and borough officials, won the cooperation of the developers, who agreed to halt demolition of the small house until some possibilities for saving the house could be considered.

We learned that there was no pressing need for the demolition of the house; the county did not require its removal and the developer could work on other areas of construction without the need to disturb the house. On the approved subdivision map, the small house shared the lot with the larger existing house on the site. The larger existing house would be sold after subdivision, and after meeting with members of the society, the developers expressed interest in the idea of restoring the small, historic house, and offering it for sale along with the larger house. It might be restored for use as a studio or "in-law house" and sold with the larger house. In order for this to be done, a variance allowing two dwellings on one lot would have to be granted by the Allendale Board of Adjustment; as of this date, such a variance has not been granted by the Board. Members of the society plan to attend the Board of Adjustment meeting on September 26; all members who wish to attend would be welcome.

During the summer, the small house was damaged by a fire. In spite of this, the developers still express interest in restoring the building if a variance can be obtained.

The society has applied to the state to have the house listed on the state's register of historic houses, and we are awaiting word on its status. In this issue we publish the history of the old Smith house.

IN MEMORIAM: It is with very deep regret that we record the death this summer of one of our charter members, Jack Knapp. Jack was active in the community and had served our society as an officer from its beginning until his death. He served as vice-president for three years, and as a Trustee for two years. Jack was a friend who will be deeply missed by many.

HISTORY OF THE OLD SMITH HOUSE
at 350 Brookside Avenue, Allendale, N.J.
Compiled by Patricia Wardell

The house at no. 350 Brookside Avenue, Allendale, N.J. stands on land originally part of the Romopock (Ramapo) Patent, also called "the Ramapo Tract," which was purchased from the Indians on 18 November 1709 by John Auboyneau, Elias Boudinot, Peter Fauconnier, and Lucas Kiersteed, empowered by Peter Sonmans, Esq. of the Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey.¹

The entire tract contained 42,500 acres of land, or about 66 square miles of area from the Great Rock (now Glen Rock) east to the Saddle River and then northerly along the Saddle River into what is now New York State, and extended westerly to a point beyond the Ramapo River.

On 15 September 1768 a survey of the Ramapo Tract was presented to the Board of Proprietors of Eastern New Jersey (the Alexander-Morris Survey, in the Map Room of the Bergen County Court House.)²

At this time 28,627 acres of the tract were unsold; 3468 acres were sold. The tract in 1768 had 50 woodlots and 156 tenants and was valued at 53,000 pounds proclamation money.³

The house at 350 Brookside Avenue stands on part of lot #196 of the Ramapo Tract (Alexander-Morris Survey of 1767-68) comprising 60.5 acres. In 1768 the lot was vacant; it had not been sold and no tenant was living on it. Adjoining lots were later sold to Weart Valentine (155 acres), William Folly (106 acres), Peter Tebow and John Rap (192 acres), and Henry, Cornelius, Frederick, and Peter Van Horne (two lots: 108 acres and 191 acres). By 1783, as indicated on the Hampton-Morgan Survey made that year, a house existed on an adjoining lot of the Ramapo Patent. This house was the Smith House on Hillside Avenue, which was razed in the mid-1960's and on which site stands today's Hillside School.

Between 1768 and 1794, lot #196 of the Ramapo Tract was sold, but the deed was not recorded at Bergen County.⁴

The earliest deed recorded in Bergen County for this property is dated 6 June 1794 (Book P; pg. 422) in which James Parker and Abraham Ogden, trustees appointed to execute the wills of Henry Cuyler the elder and Henry Cuyler the younger, conveyed to Albert Smith 60.19 acres "being lot 196 of the Ramapo Patent."

This may have represented an inheritance, for in a later deed Albert Smith was declared "owner by indefeasible estate of inheritance."

Albert Smith and his wife Susanna had at least five children, three of them baptised at Paramus Church: John A. Smith, born about 1783; Gerrit A. Smith, born 11 March 1786; Albert A. Smith, born 15 March 1788; Jacob A. Smith, born 13 November 1792; and Jacobus (James) A. Smith, born 24 July 1795.

On 3 November 1823, Albert Smith and Susanna, his wife, conveyed 30.38 acres of the original 60.19 acres (lot #196 of the Ramapo Tract) to his son, Jacob A. Smith. The deed is recorded in Bergen County

(Book U2; pg. 478) and the property is described:

Beginning in the northwest corner of said lot and at a heap of stones running from thence south 7 degrees west 17 chains and 87 links, thence south 86 degrees west 2 chains and 78 links, south 58 degrees west 2 chains and 18 links, south 66 degrees west 2 chains and 62 links, south 8 degrees east 1 chain and 80 links and thence easterly along the mill dam at high water mark to the southerly corner of the stone dam thence southeasterly along said brook to the line of Abraham Quackenbush thence across the brook along the line of Quackenbush north 6 chains and 20 links to a white oak tree marked, thence north 39½ degrees east 3 chains and 57 links to a stake in a stone heap, thence north 26 degrees west 11 chains and 40 links to a stake in a stone fence, thence north 52 degrees west 11 chains and 33 links to the place of beginning, containing 30.38 acres bounded westerly by lands of Garret A. Smith and Daniel Blauvelt, southerly by lands of Abraham Quackenbush, easterly by lands of said Abraham Quackenbush and John A. Smith, northerly by lands of said Albert Smith.

The Smith family originally owned a large tract of land in the area of Brookside Avenue, Hillside Avenue, and Forest Road; at least 4 Smith homesteads were built on this land, the earliest (the Hillside School site) having been built before 1783. Two Smith houses are still standing: the small house at 350 Brookside Avenue and the house at 53 Forest Road (probably built during the 19th century).

Albert Smith, his sons, and their heirs operated a sawmill on the Brookside Avenue site from before 1823 (mentioned in above deed) and as late as 1895 at the death of Jacob J. Smith, grandson of Albert Smith.

Jacob A. Smith, son of Albert and Susanna Smith, married Margaret Van Blarcom. They had nine children: Susan Smith, born 2 January 1819, married Cornelius G. Van Dien; Eliza Smith, born 23 October 1820, married John Van Blarcom; Mary Smith, born 28 February 1822, married ---?--- Bamber; John Smith, born 10 May 1824; Rachel Anna Smith, born 11 March 1829, married Daniel Yeomans; Jacob J. Smith, born 15 January 1831, married Jemima ---?---; a child who died young; Albert James Smith, born 28 December 1836; and Cornelius J. Smith, born 26 February 1839, married Margaret Ann Young.⁵

Jacob A. Smith, in his will dated 2 July 1866 and probated 19 June 1871, mentions his wife Margaret; his daughters Susan, Eliza, and Rachel; sons Cornelius J. and Jacob J.; granddaughter Margaret E., daughter of son John; Theodor Bamber, Garret Bamber, and Rachel Bamber, heirs of daughter Mary. He left houses and lots to three of his surviving children (Eliza, Cornelius, and Jacob J.)⁶

Jacob J. Smith and his wife Jemima lived in the house at 350 Brookside Avenue, where he continued to operate the sawmill as well as farming the surrounding acreage. One of his crops was strawberries, for which the Allendale area was well known. A newspaper article of May 1889 reported that "Jacob J. Smith was first in with strawberries. He shipped 62 baskets on Tuesday, which is the earliest shipment of

strawberries ever made from Allendale station."⁷

Jacob J. and Jemima Smith had four children: John J. Smith, born about 1864; Mary Smith, born about 1866; Rachel Smith, born about 1868, married ---?--- Snyder; and Margaret Smith, born about 1870-71, married George Terwilliger.⁸

Jacob J. Smith committed suicide at the age of 65 by hanging himself in his barn in January 1895. His wife, Jemima, had died in 1893, and his despondency over her death, coupled with his fear that his mill dam would give away "all together...unbalanced his mind."⁹

His will, dated 17 October 1894, probated after his death in 1895, mentions his daughters Mary Smith, Rachel Snyder, and Margaret Terwilliger and his son John Jacob Smith (with whom his was apparently dissatisfied, expressing hope that son John Jacob Smith might "change his ways.")¹⁰ Jacob's eldest daughter, Mary Smith, was named executrix, and as such, on 4 August 1902, conveyed to James Hyland of Jersey City the property on which the house at 350 Brookside Avenue stands (the previously mentioned 30.38 acre tract) plus additional acreage, totalling in all 84.47 acres. On the same day, James Huyland, widower, conveyed the same 84.47 acres to Christopher P. Smith of Jersey City.¹¹

Christopher P. Smith was the county superintendent of Hudson County in 1896, and for several years before acquiring the property on Brookside Avenue, he and his family had spent summers at Allendale in leased and rented homes. The Ramsey Journal, on August 8, 1902 reported that "Christie Smith of Jersey City, has bought the Jacob Smith place and will erect a new residence and fit the place up generally." He built, in 1903-04, the large home at 350 Brookside Avenue. The Bergen County Democrat of November 6, 1903 reported that "ground has been broken for a residence for Mr. Christy Smith of Jersey City."

His son, Christopher J. Smith, in 1917 built a home for himself on a lot subdivided from the larger tract. Christopher J. Smith was an Allendale Councilman in 1919 and later, with Stephen T. Van Houten, developed the former Mallinson's Pond into Crestwood Swim Club.

On 12 July 1943, Sarah Katherine Smith (single), probably the daughter of Christopher P. Smith, conveyed the property at 350 Brookside Avenue to John Aro Mielty and Imbi Mielty, his wife. (Bergen County Deeds, Book 2386; pg. 564.)

On 26 December 1944, John Aro Mielty and Impi Mielty, his wife, conveyed the property to Earl Theron Engle and Mirth R. Engle, his wife. (Bergen County Deeds, Book 2499; pg. 158.)

On 29 July 1948, Earl Theron Engle and Mirth R. Engle, his wife, conveyed the property to Stuart Archibald and Josephine Archibald, his wife. (Bergen County Deeds, Book 2882; pg. 181.) The Archibalds called the estate "Brook Ledge Farm."

On 29 June 1973, Stuart Archibald and Josephine Archibald, his wife, conveyed the property to the Hattons (Bergen County Deeds, Book 5792; pg. 378), who later sold the estate to Chestnut Ridge Associates, the present developers of the subdivided tract of land.

We feel that every attempt should be made to preserve the old Smith House at 350 Brookside Avenue because:

- (1) It is one of Allendale's oldest existing structures. Although a documented building date has proven elusive despite painstaking research and inspection of deeds, wills, road returns, and other records at the Bergen County Court House, it appears that the house was built as early as 1784 (the house is not shown on the Hampton-Morgan Survey of 1783) and no later than 1823 (at which time the mill dam is

- mentioned in a deed description).¹²
- (2) The architectural style represents an example of the sort of homestead built by early settlers of this area. An expert in the field of historical architecture could undoubtedly point out many additional features indicative of its age and genre, but these few are obvious to even an untrained eye: (a) hand-hewn beams--although most have been replaced over the years, (b) stone work in the foundation--thickness of the foundation walls, (c) exterior stonework on the fireplace wall, (d) small size of windows, (e) evidence of a beehive oven in fireplace wall, and (f) small size of the house itself (it is remarkable that the house exists today with few major alterations and additions.)
 - (3) The house is typical of the homestead of an ordinary early hard-working farmer and miller who laboriously carved his home and farm out of an untamed wilderness. Although, as far as we know, no famous person "slept" or stayed in the house, it has witnessed the generations of one of the "ordinary" settling families of this area.
 - (4) Allendale has lost, due to razing for rebuilding or modern development, so many of its historic landmarks (to cite a few: the pre-Revolutionary Smith house on the Hillside School site; the old Toll Gate House; the old Garrison-Berdan House on the A & P shopping center site; and the old Archer Methodist Chapel). By saving this old homestead, the borough and the developers could publicly demonstrate their interest in and respect for Allendale's history and heritage.

NOTES:

1. *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society*, Volume 50, No. 4, October 1932, pg. 375, "The Ramapo Tract," by Edward S. Rankin, Newark.
2. In 1963 Claire K. Tholl, delineator, drew for the Bergen County Historical Society a composite survey of the Ramapo Tract, based on Alexander-Morris's Survey of 1767-68, on which are superimposed old roads and houses from Jonathan Hampton-Morgan's Survey of 1783 (Library of the New Jersey Historical Society), and modern roads and railroad lines.
3. Document #8399, Stevens Family Papers.
4. It is probably recorded in Perth Amboy, at the Office of the Proprietors of Eastern New Jersey.
5. *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, Vol. 101, No. 2 (April 1970), pg. 81, "The Van Blarcom Family of New Jersey," by George Olin Zabriskie.
6. *Bergen County Wills*, Book K, pg. 278.
7. *Hackensack Republican*, May 30, 1889. (On microfilm at Johnson Public Library, Hackensack.)
8. 1870 and 1880 Federal Census Reports for Hohokus Township (of which Allendale was then a part).
9. *Ramsey Journal*, February 1, 1895. (On microfilm at the Ramsey Public Library.)
10. *Bergen County Wills*, Book X; pg. 459.
11. *Bergen County Deeds*, Book 548; pg. 213 and Book 548; pg. 217.
12. It is always difficult to document exact building dates of old homesteads; deeds often neglect to mention houses and other improvements on acreage conveyed, and wills, road returns, tax lists, and other public records can at best provide clues to the existence of houses, mills, and other real estate improvements.

A HISTORY OF ALLENDALE

Compiled by the Allendale Eighth Grade, 1945
under the direction of Willetta R. La Roe
(continued from previous issue)

PART III

Transportation.....by Bernice Swing

The first settlers in Allendale traveled either by foot, horse, or horse and buggy. The only public conveyance then was the stagecoach.

The original railroad running through Allendale was a lease line of Erie Railroad Co. known as the Paterson and Ramapo R.R., running from Paterson to Suffern. The original trackage was laid in the year 1848. It was completed and opened to traffic on Thursday, October 18, 1848. The same route is still in use now, part of a chain from Jersey City to Chicago. The old wood burners were the original steam engines. They had refueling stations and water stations along the line. The first railroad station was opposite the Methodist Church on Franklin Turnpike, then it was moved in back of Halpern's store, and later to where the waiting room is now located on the east side of the track.¹ Finally it was sold to J. H. Mallinson for an ice house and a new one was erected about 1900 on the west side of the track. This building is still in use.²

The North Jersey Trolley System started in 1911 or 1912. The route ran from East Side Park in Paterson through Ridgewood to Allendale and then through the intervening towns to Suffern. The fare from Ridgewood to Allendale was fourteen cents and the same fare from Allendale to Suffern. At first the trolley ran every half hour and later changed to every hour. From early in the morning to late at night these trolleys ran. The superintendent for a long time was Mr. Jackson of Hohokus. The nickname given this trolley by the people of Allendale was the "Toonerville". On New Year's Day in 1929 the last trolley ran.

Bus transportation has surpassed it in efficiency. The first buses that went through Allendale were the Blue Buses. They had college men for conductors. Buses travelled from Suffern to Paterson. Later, in 1923 or 1924, the Arrow buses started to run through Allendale. We now have two bus lines, the Red Bus Line and the Public Service. They run from Ramsey to Paterson and from Allendale to Paterson. The full trip with frequent stops takes about 40 minutes; the fare is 20 cents.

PART IV

Communications.....by Louise Lennox

The original telephone exchange was located in a private house on the east side of what is now route seventeen. Mrs. Smith was the chief operator in the original exchange. She probably started with about twenty customers. These people used the wall box type of telephone with a bell you rang when you called someone. The second type

¹Editor's Note: So far as is known, a railroad station never existed near Archer Methodist Church. Probably this is a reference to a horse-railroad station which at one time existed in the 19th century for use of the peat farm. Another horse railroad might have been used for Mallinson's Cider Mill.

²Editor's Note: The railroad station that exists today was built in 1870; it originally stood on the east side of the track--in 1902 it was moved to its present site.

of telephone was on a standard. This model automatically called the operator when the receiver was lifted. This brings us up to the present style telephone which is a low compact model having the transmitter and receiver in one piece. Around the year 1930 the present telephone exchange building was erected on W. Allendale Avenue, and put into service. This exchange covers the territory of Allendale, Waldwick, and Saddle River. The twelve operators in this exchange handle about 3,500 customers covered by the Allendale exchange. Each operator has 20 plugs in front of her and handles about 800 calls a day. In addition to the regular calls, they answer emergency calls for doctors, fire company, and ambulance.

(to be continued)

"FIRST FAMILIES" OF ALLENDALE...Notes on early residents of Allendale
Compiled by Pat Wardell and vicinity

(continued)

Blauvelt, Martin H.

The son of Henry C. and Catherine Pulis Blauvelt, he was born on July 14, 1846 and married, on March 26, 1863, Charity Matilda Ackerman, the daughter of Abraham and Charity Westervelt Ackerman. In the 1890's he was a harness maker and dealer in blankets, brushes, curry combs, horse-ties, collars, halters, whip-snappers, and other horse and buggy gear. He was appointed a surveyor of highways in 1895 and was president of the Allendale Board of Health in 1900.

Borger, Henry C.

Henry C. Borger was a director of the Orvil Co-operative Building and Loan Association (1906) and was a charter member of the Allendale Fire Association. Mrs. Borger ran a dry goods store in Allendale in the early 1900's, selling dry and fancy goods, notions, confectionery, and stationery.

Borger, John

Son of Henry C. Borger, he served in the armed forces in World War I and was later a Borough Councilman.

Bradley, Lyman F.

From about 1895 until 1903 he was proprietor of the hotel at Allendale.

Brainerd, Silas Ward

In 1894, he and his family moved from Brooklyn to Allendale, purchasing the property formerly owned by David Pickens (#133 Franklin Turnpike). In 1896 he was appointed a commissioner of the Allendale Board of Health and in 1898 he was elected Mayor of Allendale.

Braun, Valentine J.

Born about 1864, he moved to Allendale with his family in 1905. He owned and ran the Allendale Hotel from 1905 until his death in June 1931. He was the first Chief of the Allendale Fire Department and the first collector for the Allendale Water Department in 1918. Allendale's first fire truck was housed in his barn near the hotel until the Allendale Fire House was built. He was member of the Lighting Committee of the Allendale Christmas Tree Association in 1917. He and his wife, Lucy Louise, had one daughter, Ethel Braun (Corcoran).

Brower, Samuel C.

Born in Brooklyn about 1878, he lived most of his life in Allendale. He was a charter member of the Allendale Fire Department, later serving as foreman, assistant Chief, and Chief of the Department. He married, on June 6, 1906, in Saddle River,

Katherine M. Linkroum. They had two sons: William P. Brower and Edward A. Brower.

Brown, Jesse

He was a carpenter and was living in Allendale as early as 1880 with his wife, Mary J. He was a borough councilman in 1898.

Buechner, Sylvester

He lived on Dale Avenue. In 1926 he was elected a Trustee of the Allendale Library Association; he later served as secretary and in 1951 was elected vice president of the Association.

Burger, E. Kenneth

He lived at 243 Park Avenue. In 1929, he was a director of the Allendale Building and Loan Association. He was elected a trustee of the Allendale Library Association in 1932, and in 1949 was elected vice president of the Association.

Burtis, Edward E.

Son of Daniel Bogert Burtis, he was born about 1862 in Brooklyn, and died in January 1942. He came to Allendale from Rutherford in 1892, purchasing the property on the southwest corner of the intersection of Brookside Avenue and Crescent Avenue (later the site of San Jacinto Swim Club). Here he operated a grist mill and sold flour, grain, hay, and horse and chicken feed. According to an advertisement of 1894, his specialties included graham flour, buckwheat flour, and fine yellow meal. He later worked in the Engineering Department of the A & P Company in Hawthorne. He served a three year term on Allendale's first Borough Council (beginning 1894) and later served as chairman of the Shade Tree Commission. He married Ida M. Mains and they had children: Everett Burtis, Alan M. Burtis, and Ethel Burtis (Pilkington).

(to be continued)

Accessions

15-page "History of Allendale," a project completed by the Eighth Grade class of 1945, Allendale Public School, under the direction of Willetta R. La Roe, donated by Mrs. A. Hambright of Ramsey.

Nine volume set of the New Jersey Archives, First Series, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Wardell, Jr.

Allendale Historical Society
Officers, 1979-1980

President.....A, Marian Strangfeld
Vice President.....Jeanne Cotz
Secretary.....Audrey Miskowski
Treasurers.....Schuyler and Geneva
Keating
Trustees.....Florence Schenk
Shirley Cross
Curator-Librarian.....George and Marion
Schwack
Publicity Chairman.....Lucie Kirylak
Membership Chairman.....Annette Baum
Newsletter Editor.....Pat Wardell

Allendale Historical Society
P.O. Box 294, Allendale, N.J. 07401

Membership Categories: (Annual Dues)
Family Membership.....\$5.00
Individual Membership.....\$3.00

Allendale History and Heritage is published four times a year in September, November, February, and April, and is mailed to members of the Allendale Historical Society

Editor: Pat Wardell