

PASSAIC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

LAMBERT

PASSAIC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CASTLE

P. O. BOX 1729, PATERSON, NEW JERSEY 07509

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AUTUMN, 1974

E. A. Smyk, Editor

A MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIETY'S PRESIDENT

One year has passed since being elected President of the Society. It has been a trying and busy year. Unfortunately, there have been several deaths and resignations; with these go new appointments.

To those who have recently joined or rejoined the Society have gone copies of the *Museum Guide*, revised after 20 years of frequent reprinting. Those who have recently visited our Lambert Castle Museum have seen the new post card display which has interested many people; the collection is periodically changed. Yet to be restored and exhibited is our recently acquired Lambert Dining Room furniture. Generously donated by the Franklin Bank of Paterson, the chairs, table and sideboard were custom-made to Mr. Catholina Lambert's specifications and have returned to their old home after an absence of over 50 years. A magnificent contribution from the Koempel Foundation has made possible the acquisition of a 13 piece set of silver Apostle Spoons which have been added to the spoon collection, as well as a 19th century painting of the Passaic Falls, now being restored. Such contributions are proof of the growing influence of the Society, and the interest of culturally minded organizations and citizens in Passaic County history.

Plans are underway to mark our 40th Anniversary of establishing the Museum and Headquarters at Lambert Castle.

Yet to be catalogued are hundreds of unique books, documents and records that rest in our vaults.

Other plans are being formulated for the bicentennial celebration. Next summer hopefully should see the Society involved with an educational summer youth program that will draw support from surrounding communities. The time has come for us to take our place in the county and expand our historical and cultural programs.

We regret the resignation of Philip Del Vecchio as Trustee. He is now affiliated with the John Crowley Nature Center sponsored by the Passaic County Park Commission at the new Rifle Camp Park in West Paterson.

We mourn the passing of Recording Secretary Margarethe Maseker and Trustees Andrew T. Derrom, Edward Shinn, and Dr. Mary Bartlett Cowdrey. Their presence and good counsel will be sorely missed.

Our *Remembrances of Passaic County*, the *Castle Lite* and other Society publications are being revised and upgraded by Historian E. A. Smyk. You may see fewer publications this year because of increased printing costs, but the quality of those published will be superior.

Any ideas, comments and suggestions from the membership are always appreciated; your strong and active participation is central to the survival of this Society.

When in the area, do stop in at the Museum, we're always pleased to see you!

-JEROME NATHANS

ENTIRE LAMBERT CASTLE TO BE LEASED BY SOCIETY

In a move that both surprised and overwhelmed our Executive Committee, the Passaic County Park Commission, in agreement with the Board of Chosen Freeholders, approved the transfer of Lambert Castle to the Society. The decision to relocate the Park and Police departments was announced at the regular Commission meeting on Tuesday, October 8th.

The joint Park Commission-Freeholder declaration signals the end of 2 years of frequent attempts by the Society to obtain more room in the building for expansion of our museum, library and research facilities. Presently, the Commission and Police maintain offices on the second floor of Lambert Castle. Plans are on the drawing board for a new structure to house their operations, and it is expected that two years will elapse before the Society can occupy all of former silk manufacturer Catholina Lambert's creneled mansion.

The castle will remain under the jurisdiction of the county government, a lease arrangement between the county and our Society will in all probability form the legal basis for the occupancy. We are hopeful that Lambert Castle will be under our administrative control in time for the 1976 bicentennial celebration. Indications are that the building will play a prominent role as a terminus for county-wide historical programs.

The Society looks forward to displaying in the new quarters an accumulation of 48 years of paintings and artifacts. For the first time, we will be able to house all of our books and records in rooms set aside for a library. Restoration of the Castle will be high on the list of priorities.

For months, your officers had been meeting with the County, trying to improve the Society's relationship with the Park Commission. They first approached Freeholder Louise Friedman, who graciously permitted them to meet at her home. Our difficulties were discussed at length. Shortly afterward, Mrs. Friedman contacted County Administrator Richard DeMarco. In her letter of June 4th, she explained, among other things, that "... the Historical Society plays an active role in educating the children of Passaic County by providing an excellent museum facility."

Mr. DeMarco, who had already been alerted to the plight of the Society from the newspapers, responded by meeting with Mrs. Friedman, the Executive Committee and acting Park Director James Landoli at Lambert Castle. Both Mrs. Friedman and Mr. DeMarco suggested that the Society formally present their grievances at the October Park Commission meeting.

Then on October 7th, the *Herald-News* made public a letter sent to the freeholders by Park Commissioner Frank X. Graves Jr., in which he suggested that the Castle be turned over to our Society in order "to allow the full functional use of its historic value to the people of our state."

(continued on page 2)

When the day of the Park Commission meeting arrived, our representatives were prepared to offer their list of grievances. But before any discussion on the matter could proceed, the Park Commission, prompted by President Graves and Freeholder-Director Sidney Reiss, approved the transfer of Lambert Castle to the Society. Both Trustees Alfred P. Cappio and Sally Gibson, representing the Society, were flabbergasted. Freeholder Reiss noted that "cultural aspects have been sorely lacking in Passaic County," and furthermore "the rich heritage of our county should and will be preserved for our citizens and visitors . . . By taking this action today, we are creating a capsule of county history and making a great contribution to the culture of this area". In passing, the Freeholder concluded that with the bicentennial approaching, it was more than appropriate to locate all county history in one spot.

The Society wishes to take this opportunity to thank Freeholder Friedman, Freeholder-Director Sidney Reiss and Park Commission President Frank X. Graves, Jr., who have magnanimously supported the cultural aspects of Passaic County history by their action.

A meeting between Society representatives, the Freeholders, and the Park Commission will be held within the coming months to arrange for transition of offices. Simultaneously, the Society will undertake a master plan for the entire Lambert Castle.

On October 25th, the Society celebrated its 40th anniversary in Lambert Castle. No one would have dreamed that this recent transfer of the building would be an even greater cause for our celebration. Looking back to 1931, the words of then President Charles E. Deitz seem as relevant now as when they were first spoken: "This offer of space in the Lambert Castle is an opportunity such as come to few societies of our kind, and we must measure up to this opportunity in the coming year and years."

NEWS and NOTES

Beginning with this issue of the Castlelite, your publication will have a new Editor. Members wishing to contribute articles or information of a historical nature are urged to contact Mr. E. A. Smyk at Society Headquarters.

Officers 1974-75

At the Executive Committee meeting of May 15, 1974, the following officers were elected:

President Jerome Nathans
 1st Vice President John D. Quackenbush, Jr.
 2nd Vice President Charles Barhight
 Secretary George W. Maseker
 Treasurer Savino Gaida
 Historian E. A. Smyk
 Curator and Librarian Edward M. Graf

Your Executive Committee is composed of the following individuals:

Flavia Alaya of Paterson. Dr. Alaya was elected a trustee at the 48th Annual Meeting. She is currently Professor of Intercultural Studies at Ramapo College in Mahwah, and was one of 342 scholars in the United States to receive a Guggenheim fellowship out of a total of 2,668 who applied. The \$15,000 grant will enable Professor Alaya to spend next year on what, in her words "will be a series of individual studies of eight major Victorian writers whose work demonstrated a fascination with Italy." She received her Ph.D. from Columbia University.

Alan Appel of Palisades Park. Mr. Appel's family has long been associated with Paterson in connection with the David Appel Office Equipment and Stationery Company. An instructor in photography at Fairleigh Dickinson University, of which he is also an alumnus, Mr. Appel has produced some superb photographs both in color and black and white. A display of his work is presently on exhibition at Lambert Castle.

Charles Barhight of Montville. Mr. Barhight has been a Trustee of the Society for the last few years, and he specializes in collecting antique music boxes.

Alfred P. Cappio of Wayne. A graduate of Rutgers and Columbia Universities, Mr. Cappio served as 4th President of the Society. He has essayed a number of articles and one monograph, and now serves on the Society's Publication Committee.

Savino Gaida of Montville. Mr. Gaida is an engineer by profession, and was elected this year to become Treasurer of the Society.

Sally Gibson of Paterson. Miss Gibson was recently elected to the Executive Committee. A graduate of Fairleigh Dickinson University, Miss Gibson is affiliated with the Paterson Museum and is associated with the Great Falls Development Corporation.

Edward B. Haines of Paterson. Mr. Haines, publisher of the *Paterson News*, continues the long association of the Haines family with the Society. He is a graduate of Columbia University and is active in many local civic organizations.

Helen L. Malcolm of Hawthorne. Mrs. Malcolm, along with Mr. Cappio, is a member of the Passaic County Cultural and Heritage Commission. In the past, Mrs. Malcolm admirably served as the Society's Treasurer.

George W. Maseker of Hawthorne. In addition to Mr. Maseker's duties as Secretary, he has accomplished a considerable amount of work in preparing the Koempel Spoon Collection for display.

Robert Masiello of West Paterson. Mr. Masiello is Chairman of the Society's Publicity and Programs Committee and is coordinating bicentennial efforts between the Society and other organizations. A graduate of Rutgers University, where he majored in history, Mr. Masiello is employed by the New Jersey Bank in a public relations capacity.

Jerome Nathans of Wayne. Before his election as President in 1972, Mr. Nathans served as Secretary. A West Paterson businessman, Mr. Nathans has always been interested in the history of Passaic County.

John D. Quackenbush Jr. of Hawthorne. Mr. Quackenbush has been Chairman of the Genealogical Committee since his election as Trustee 9 years ago. Since that time, tremendous progress has been made in constructing a comprehensive genealogical file on Passaic County families. From nothing, Mr. Quackenbush has built a reference file of over 5000 family sheets for reference purposes, and he is constantly answering queries from all over the United States on Genealogical topics.

Edgar R. Shumway of West Orange. A retired executive formerly with the First National Bank, Mr. Shumway is our immediate Past Treasurer. He is associated with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program of Passaic County.

E. A. Smyk of Paterson. Living within walking distance of the Passaic Falls, Mr. Smyk has been fascinated with Paterson and its industrial heritage ever since he was a small boy. Elected a member of the Society in February 1963, Mr. Smyk assisted Curator Graf in the sorting old books and documents, and has worked at Lambert Castle ever since. Holding degrees in Political Science and Sociology from Fairleigh Dickinson University, Mr. Smyk was elected 5th Historian of the Society last October.

William J. Wurst of Clifton. Mr. Wurst studied history at Upsala College, and enjoys historical research and writing. He is a member of the Clifton Bicentennial Commission.

(continued on page 3)

Honorary Trustees

Robert P. Brooks. Mr. Brooks is one of the seven men who founded the Society in 1926. He has served as Vice-President, Treasurer, Historian and Preservation officer. Currently he is a member of the Publication Committee.

James J. DeMario. A retired executive of the Raybestos-Manhattan Rubber Company, Mr. DeMario has been a member of the Passaic Historical Commission and is well known for his efforts to have the Acquackanonk Landing area recognized as a National Historic site.

Edward M. Graf. At the urging of the late Mrs. Mollie C. Winchester, wife of Paterson Public Librarian George Winchester, Mr. Graf became a member of the Society in 1930. The next year, he was selected to replace Julia Pierce, the first Society Secretary. Mr. Graf served as Secretary for 30 years; when he relinquished that post to become Curator. He has served as an officer of the Society for 43 consecutive years, and much of the catalogued books and records in the Society Library and Archives are the direct result of his efforts.

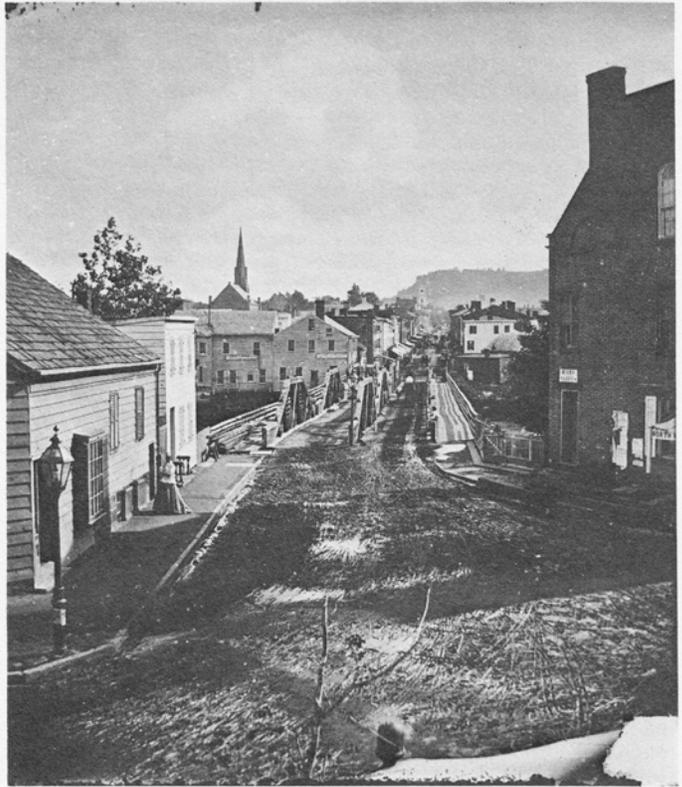
D. Stanton Hammond. Dr. Hammond is another founder of the Society. He served as Third President of the Society from 1935 to 1964, and is actively involved with a number of organizations planning for the Bicentennial.

Frederick Leode was the first Director of the Passaic County Park Commission and later Secretary of the Society.

Robert A. Mills is a charter member of the Society and has held the office of Vice President.

Esther Schwartz is an authority on American primitive art and has generously underwritten the restoration cost of oil paintings in the Society's collection.

Mary Schweizer was formerly connected with the Paterson Public School system, and has served as both Secretary and Curator.



Paterson in the Summer of 1860: Photographed by John Reid, looking from present-day Presidential Boulevard toward Main Street. Steeple is that of the First Baptist Church, destroyed in the Great Fire of 1902; in the distance can be seen the old Town clock, consumed by fire in 1870.

Mrs. Grace Pokotylo of West Paterson was engaged by the Society as a part-time Secretary last January. Since then, she has been handling the office correspondence and taking the minutes of Executive Committee meetings. In addition to these duties, Mrs. Pokotylo has been compiling a list of every publication by our society since the founding in 1926.

Mrs. Rita Jonas is working in our Research Library checking books against the card file. Mrs. Jonas' services were obtained through Passaic County's remarkable Freeholder, Mrs. Louise Friedman. The County recently has inaugurated a Comprehensive Manpower and Training Act Program, where individuals are placed with various employers and agencies. Their salaries are paid by this program.

Trustee William Wurst has braved the wretched conditions of dampness in the Lambert Castle basement and has listed hundreds of old books of limited value to our organization. The volumes had been packed away nearly a decade ago, and the effects of mold, mildew and fungus have damaged a good portion of them. Eventually, after a master list has been completed, libraries will be urged to evaluate the material and determine if any of it can be utilized.

Curator Graf started to catalogue the Society's vast pamphlets holdings; approximately 1000 pamphlets have been efficiently listed. Probably 2000 more or so need to be examined and properly classified.

The Chairman of the Society's Genealogical Committee, Mr. John D. Quackenbush Jr., regrets that a very capable member of his committee will no longer be able to assist him because of illness. Mrs. McGrogan of West Paterson will be sadly missed.

Together with Mr. G. Budd Mead of Montclair, Mr. Quackenbush has been adding to the Genealogical files; literally hundreds of family names have been snatched from obscure sources for the enlightenment of future genealogy enthusiasts. Mr. Quackenbush reports that a lot of information has been extracted from W. W. Scott's respected *History of Passaic and Its Environs*, and various Passaic County newspapers.

Within a very short interval, the Society's Genealogical collection will be consolidated in one place. All Genealogical books and records will be relocated to the second floor Hammond Memorial Library. The first floor library will be reserved for history volumes.

Would any member of the Society be willing to devote his time to organizing our scrapbook and newspaper clipping books? We have accumulated a staggering multitude of clippings, some mounted, other loose. They need to be sorted as to subject, mounted and indexed. Away back in the middle '20's, the late William H. Belcher was in charge of the Current History and Scrapbook committee. With the aid of his brother, Mr. Belcher (a former Mayor of Paterson) clipped, mounted and indexed five scrapbooks which are valuable research tools for contemporary researchers. The Society would like to see someone come forward and resume this valuable work. An index consisting of thousands of 4 by 6 inch cards resides in our vault; this needs to be updated. If someone is interested, please address either the Curator or Historian at the Castle.

(continued on page 4)

COUNTY OFFICIALS ASSIST SOCIETY

Curator Richard J. Koke of the New-York Historical Society museum has sent us a photograph of a rare pencil-and-wash drawing of the famous "Passaic Bridge" at Totowa. The original was made on June 24, 1809 by a foreign visitor to Paterson, the Baroness Hyde de Neuville (ca. 1779-1849).

Did you ever wonder how the railroads in this vicinity developed? Well, the Society has purchased a very limited number of Walter A. Lucas' popular book *From the Hills to the Hudson: A History of the Paterson and Hudson River Railroad and its associates, The Paterson and Ramapo, and the Union Railroads*. The book characterizes the building of two railroads, one from the vicinity of Garret Mountain, and the other from the Ramapo hills of New York. It may be obtained for \$15 at the Museum.

Bookbinder and craftsman Medo LoGatto of East Rutherford toured the Museum and Archives on the morning of October 4th. He was amazed at the thousands of county records, newspaper volumes and books in the library and vault. Mr. LoGatto offered suggestions on the care of our books, and methods to prevent their further deterioration.

Last month, the Society again was the recipient of unusual and valuable gifts. Mrs. Elizabeth Gutjahr, an antique dealer who operates "The Old China Shop" on Main Avenue in Clifton, donated 4 Dorflinger glass tumblers for exhibition in the museum. The Society purchased her remaining stock of two of the lovely Dorflinger glasses. Mrs. Gutjahr is a member of our Society. In addition to the glassware, she presented to the library a leather bound copy of the *Ordinances of West Orange* for the year 1909. We take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Gutjahr again for her wonderful generosity.

During the last few months, plans have been sketched for a cooperative program between the Passaic and Bergen County Historical Societies. Mutual visits between officers, trustees and members of both organizations can be counted upon to increase in the very near future.

Mr. Marden Nystrom, President of the Bergen County Society, informs us that they will present an illustrated lecture by Mr. James Ransom pertaining to antiques. Entitled "Trash or Treasure?", the meeting will be held on the evening of November 26th at the Second Reformed Church, corner of Anderson and State Street, Hackensack.

The Society has acted favorably on a request from the Hamilton-Van Wagoner House Restoration Association of Clifton to loan them furnishings not in current use or on display. A committee to work with the Association was formed under the Chairmanship of Trustee Charles Barhight, and a legal agreement will be signed before any furnishings are transferred to the custody of the Association.

The Encampment Brigade of the American Revolution will appear on the grounds of the Von Steuben House in River Edge on Sunday, November 10th, and the public is invited to attend. The program has been planned by the Bergen County Historical Society, who maintains museum in the historic house. The Brigade will feature colonial costumes, a fife and drum corps and day long activities.

On the evening of November 19th, the Wayne Historical Commission will present a lecture on the Morris Canal. It will be held at the Main Library building, corner of Nellis Drive and Valley Road.

The Society is deeply grateful to four Passaic County officials who have aided us in various ways. Freeholder Louise Friedman has taken time away from her busy schedule to help to develop a better working relationship with the Passaic County Park Commission. County Administrator Richard DeMarco has also expressed a continuing interest in the educational value of our organization; both officials are to be commended for their efforts.

County Clerk Mervyn Montgomery demonstrated last November that he is very much aware of the research value attached to obsolete county records. We are indebted to him for presenting Justice of the Peace records from 1812 to 1927. Last month, Mr. Montgomery transferred to our vault an ancient book listing manumitted slaves in the county, together with a collection of old court dockets. Before any documents are given to the Society, they are microfilmed. (It is the usual procedure to destroy such records). But our county is fortunate in having such a history-minded official as Mr. Montgomery. Researchers are given the benefit of consulting the original papers rather than having to work with microfilms.

Mr. Earl Kearns in the Register of Deeds office has been instrumental in seeing that two old lithographic maps no longer of any use to his office be given to our Society. They are the "Map of Bergen and Passaic Counties by G.M. Hopkins: 1861", and the "Map of the City of Passaic, Williamson and Strange: 1891". A legal instrument is now being prepared by the county counsel before the maps can be officially deposited at the Castle.



BICENTENNIAL FOCUS

All across the United States, local municipalities have established Bicentennial Committees in preparation for the '76 celebration. Here at the Society, a special meeting was called for July 10th to discuss our bicentennial role. Trustee Robert Masiello, Chairman of the Publicity and Programs Committee, felt the Society should actively coordinate all country-wide bicentennial programs local governments and historical groups develop. This idea met with widespread support among the Trustees present.

Both Mr. Masiello and Trustees Alfred Cappio suggested that a County map be drawn listing whatever programs were planned from April, 1975 to December, 1976. It was emphasized that the map would have wide distribution.

Further discussion centered on the completion of a day-by-day chronology of the Revolution in our country; and holding a meeting at Lambert Castle of the various bicentennial groups.

Trustee Alan Appel proposed that the Society become involved with a media presentation of historical photographs. He would enlist the support of high school and college students to aid us.

The possibility of creating a lecture series of distinguished speakers also was mentioned. Toward the end of the meeting, Mr. Masiello was given the nod to organize a committee to coordinate county-bicentennial events; both he and Mr. Cappio will begin the preliminary work.

LAMBERT CASTLE MUSEUM



WORK OF THE PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

By all indications, the Society's published articles over the last 4 decades have advanced our knowledge of Passaic County history. However, the quality of local historical writings has often been the subject of debate, particularly in academic circles. In a 1938 address before the convention of New Jersey Historical societies at Newark, Professor Robert T. Thompson portrayed the attitude of academic historians quite well. He observed:

"They (the historians) point out the genealogists whose interests extend no further than the discovery of family trees in whose spreading branches comfortable perches may be found. They hold up to scorn and ridicule the town historians who split hairs and wrangle over trivialities. They label the writers of lives of local leaders as the biographers of the inconsequential whose magic attempts to confound physical laws by converting mole hills into veritable mountain ranges. Many of the state and county histories have, they say, been little more than glorified publicity promoted by venal publishing houses."

Unfortunately, this sweeping indictment has been largely true, but the quality of historical writing and scholarship on the local level has vastly improved since Professor Thompson delivered his address.

In our particular case, two well done manuscripts from a scholarly perspective have been accepted for publication. The first is William J. Wurst's study of the reaction of various Passaic County newspapers to the impeachment of civil war President Andrew Johnson. Mr. Wurst has spent hours delving through our newspaper files, and, combined with original photographs from the Society's archives, his paper will make interesting reading. The second paper has been submitted by Mr. Robert Goller, editor of the *Towpath Post*, official publication of the Canal Society of New Jersey. Mr. Goller has researched the fascinating history of the Morris Canal's Pompton Feeder lock. We intend to have both articles in print by the end of this year. Other plans being developed are:

- Revamping the existing publications, viz., the *Remembrances of Passaic County* and the *Bulletin*.
- Reviving the Society *Monograph Series* for extended studies of local history.
- Reviving the long dormant newspaper columns on local history in the *Paterson News* and *Passaic Herald-News*.

Although it is incumbent upon the Historian as Chairman of the Publication Committee to direct the Society's historical research and writing, he cannot possibly undertake this immense task alone. The members must participate; if anyone wishes to use our research facilities and submit historical articles, let him come forward. For example, your Historian published a biographical article on the eminent turn-of-the-century local historian William Nelson in the August 14th issue of the *Paterson News*. It met with a favorable response, and the paper would like more articles of this nature to appear. There are probably a multitude of Society members who delight in the fruits of historical research; please contact Mr. Smyk at Lambert Castle and make your interests known.

Last year, over 29,500 people from 45 states and 33 foreign countries visited the Society's Lambert Castle Museum in the pleasant surroundings of Garret Mountain Reservation. They come from all walks of life and professions - teachers, businessmen, lawyers, housewives, university Professors and artists. By far the largest contingent of visitors are children and young people, and judging by the comments overheard in the Museum, they are favorably impressed with the many unusual artifacts on exhibition.

Our research facilities are in constant use, and Curator Graf is accustomed to answering thousands of questions regarding Passaic County history. Our Genealogist, John D. Quackenbush Jr., is also of assistance to researchers who request information on their progenitors.

In addition to managing the Museum, Curator Graf is busy guiding researchers through our maze of books, documents, photographs and newspapers. The curious history student hails from all over New Jersey, the eastern seaboard and Europe. One scholar journeyed from London to scrutinize our records on the Paterson Silk Strike of 1913. Other search for information on the "perennial" favorites - the Morris Canal, "Dublin" spring at Paterson, and the Indian tribes who once roamed our mountains. In almost every one of these cases, Mr. Graf has delighted in imparting his first-hand knowledge of the topic - often astonishing the researcher. For instance, some individuals here thrilled to Mr. Graf's narrative of the Great Paterson Fire of 1902, made even more vivid since the Curator was an eyewitness to the conflagration. The passing of over 60 years has not dimmed his memory, and hearing his account of the smoldering ruins of Paterson is nothing less than unforgettable.

Here is one of many letters to Curator Graf from the files, which illustrates the value of our museum as an educational and cultural center:

1557 Lemoine Avenue
Fort Lee, New Jersey
November 1, 1973

Mr. Graf, Curator
Lambert Castle
Garret Mountain Reservation
Paterson, New Jersey 07407

Dear Mr. Graf:

Due to the wonderful cooperation of people such as yourself and your staff, my class was able to see and hear about the beautiful and historic stories of one of the landmarks in this area.

We are deeply grateful for the many ways in which you assisted to make this event so meaningful.

May I add my personal thanks in helping me to make this trip so memorable for my students.

Sincerely yours,
Harriet Udell
Fort Lee Adult School



HISTORICAL MISCELLANY



HEUSSER CORRESPONDENCE OPENED AFTER 46 YEARS

Albert Henry Heusser served as the Society's first Curator from 1926 until his untimely death 3 years later. Shortly afterward, Mr. Heusser's papers and correspondence were acquired for the Society archives. They remained in a sealed letter box until just recently.

Heusser was well known as a historian and writer, being active in many patriotic and historical groups. During the early 1920's, he agitated for revival of a County Historical Society; without his tremendous organizing ability, there probably would never have been another "Passaic County Historical Society".

Heusser was a printer by trade; consequently the majority of his papers focus on business and historical subjects. The correspondence painfully reveals that Heusser nearly drove himself into bankruptcy by neglecting his printing concern in order to write history.

A good proportion of Heusser's historical endeavors were in the area of the Revolution. By 1925, he had produced the first volume of *In the Footsteps of Washington*, a fascinating book that discusses the many places General George Washington visited while he was Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary forces. (Unbound copies were preserved by Mr. Heusser's contemporary, Dr. D. Stanton Hammond, and the Society intends to have them bound as part of their observance of the upcoming bicentennial).

A few months before Heusser was stricken with a fatal disease, he produced a superb biography on the life of Robert Erskine, Surveyor-General for General Washington's Army. It is evident that Heusser poured his heart and soul into what he had entitled *The Forgotten General*. Gracefully written, the scholarly work was reissued by Rutgers University Press eight years ago as *George Washington's Map Maker*.

Curator Heusser's attempt to complete his historical researchers, operate a printing business and preside over the Society's first Museum at the Paterson Public Library, among other projects, proved too much for his fragile constitution. Hospitalized in the autumn of 1928, his condition steadily deteriorated. He died on January 3, 1929.

Three letters have been selected from Heusser's correspondence and reprinted here for their interest. Heusser wrote to Henry W. Gledhill, the Society's first Historian, requesting information on the long vanished "Peace and Plenty" Tavern of Revolutionary vintage. In his reply, Gledhill provides a personal recollection of what the tavern was like when he was a youngster. The third letter, also from Mr. Gledhill, is dated January 4, 1928, and mentions two ancient landmarks which have long since disappeared. Although the items Historian Gledhill speaks of have in all probability vanished forever, any reader who may know about them are urged to contact either Mr. Graf or Mr. Smyk at Society headquarters. Here are the letters:

Mr. Gledhill:

Was "Peace and Plenty" a *tavern*, or simply a dwelling? About when, (approximate) did it exist? Thanks for the information.

A. H. Heusser

Mr. Heusser:

Away back in the 1770's or early 1800's there was a tavern so named, on the NW corner of York Ave. (now E. 18th st.) and Willis st. (now Park Ave.) Once it was kept by Adrian J. Post. I imagine I can just about recall how what was left of it looked when I was a very small boy. I'm not at all sure about this, but I distinctly see in the distance an old fashioned tavern-like house which quite a few years ago, but not so very many, was trampled under the marching foot of "improvement".

The neighborhood round about there was known as Peace or Plenty, from which circumstance I think the tavern took the name.

H. W. G.
20 June 1925



Albert Henry Heusser, Curator 1926-1929

Henry W. Gledhill
Paterson, N.J.

Dear Curator:

There are so many good things mentioned in your card that I'll have to talk with you about 'em - particularly about the locomotives. So I'll telephone you, maybe before this note reaches you.

There's something else that we should quietly scout for, very quietly. The old Court House at Main and Oliver streets stood on a plat that was five or six stone steps higher than the grade of the streets. It was enclosed with an iron fence. The building was several feet back, a pathway being on the street sides between it and the fence. In the little yard on the Oliver Street end were two stone posts atop of which were dials marking the meridians of Paterson. When the old building was torn down they were taken away. Where they were taken to I know not, but I recall my having heard that they were stored somewhere in the new building. I'm not sure. Perhaps they - the dials anyhow - were put into a room or closet and forgotten. But it wouldn't do to talk about 'em "outside" (nor much "inside" for that matter) - for obvious reasons. Leave it to me, Stealthily I'll try to locate 'em. In the meanwhile (twixt you and me) "mums" the better word.

Also, when the old Court House was built many articles were placed in the cornerstone. I have a list of them, copied from a contemporary newspaper. More than once during the razing, and afterwards, I made inquiry on the spot, about the stone. All I could find out was that "it wasn't found." Who got it? Or was it carted away unrecognized, and lost among the wreckage? I'm inclined to giving affirmative answer to the latter question. But maybe after a while a casual word let fall against a listening ear will tell an unexpected tale - who knows?

Does my pen seem effusively garrulous? It's just in such humor today.

Thine truly & sincerely,
H. W. G.
Jan'y 4, 1928

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Curator Edward M. Graf has been diligently studying the history of Passaic County for well over a half a century. In the seclusion of his study on the third floor of Lambert Castle, Mr. Graf pours over books, documents and especially newspapers. From them, he extracts nuggets of information, and in the tradition of the historical craftsman, gathers his sources together for an article. The following "shorts" were contributed by him.

Adventure of a Horse Car

As the Totowa horse car was coming down Union avenue at 9:45 p.m. September 7, 1887, a boy threw a stone which struck the driver on the back of the neck. Putting on the brakes, he left the car, as there were no passengers, and rushed after the lad back up Union avenue. The car was near the turn of the tracks into Hamburg Avenue. The brakes did not hold, and the horses showed their disregard of the driver by jogging quietly along and passing the turn. The car finally crashed into a large frame tenement on Hamburg avenue. The occupants of the building rushed out in terror, and an old lady nearly went into hysterics. After a tree box had been torn from its fastenings the animals stopped and waited for the driver, who came up breathless and scared, without having captured the young miscreant who hit him. Little damage was done to car or horses.

American Duck

When the American ship Hannibal sailed from New York in March, 1822, under a wide spread canvas of American Duck, there was a feeling of high satisfaction in Paterson, for this material was manufactured at the Phoenix mill of Messrs. Vasques and Travers. The full suit of sails was acclaimed to be of the best quality, and it was calculated that this would dispell the unfavorable impression abroad of the inferiority of American fabrics.

Daniel Webster

Daniel Webster paid a visit to Paterson on Monday, October 23, 1837. Immediately upon arrival, in company with a number of local citizens, he toured all the principal manufacturing establishments. After spending some time at the factories, he returned to "Congress Hall" where he was loudly cheered by a large number of citizens assembled there for the purpose of paying homage to him. Mr. Webster then addressed the people from fifteen to twenty minutes. After his speech, Webster and several leading citizens had dinner at the Hall. Mr. Webster left Paterson deeply impressed with what he had seen.

Newspaper Cooperation

When you see a family taking the weekly *Guardian* home, remember they have paid for it in advance. The readers of this paper do not sponge on the printer. All those who took the paper without paying for it dropped off when we got up the advance system, so now every man who reads the only newspaper in this section worth having has paid for his paper to January 1st.

People who do not pay in advance are forced to take the *Register*, and other second hand affairs of miserable character.

- *Paterson Guardian*
February 25, 1862

Dirty Staircases

The dirtiest staircases in this city are to be found at the Court House. Some day a lawyer or judge will be missing and will be found stuck in the dirt of one of the staircases.

- *Paterson Press*
February 25, 1882

★ ★ ★ ★

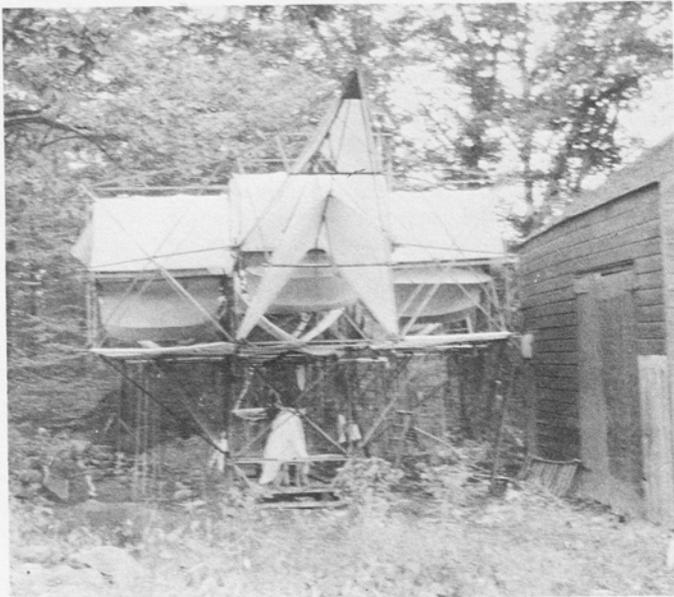
FISHING AT THE PASSAIC FALLS, ca. 1817

During the early 19th century, shad, striped bass and rock fish were caught in abundance in the Passaic River. Every spring, the inhabitants of Paterson descended on the river and "beat" for shad. Large quantities were caught, and as many as 500 fish were hooked at one time. (This is quite a contrast to what may be found swimming in the Passaic River today). Sturgeon were another fish caught and enjoyed by the populace. In one recorded incident, a man by the name of Baltus Winters actually entered the water and mounted one of the so-called "beasts". Later, the fish was "carried in triumph through the town and his captors feasted on him at Passaic Hotel."

★ ★ ★ ★

THE FLYING MACHINE CRAZE

* * * *



Mr. Bennett's Flying Machine: photo taken in Wortendyke, Bergen County, Summer of 1912.

Within a few years after Orville Wright's historic 1903 flight in a flimsy biplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, a compulsion drove some mechanically inclined Americans to make a similar try. Local tinkers were no exception to the flying machine craze, and the private files of Curator E. M. Graf contain many fascinating accounts of their heroic battles to get aloft.

Preserved in the society archives is one such recorded incident of a determined amateur to construct a machine that would send him into the clouds, and like most of the papers we have on file, has just recently come to our attention.

It appears that during the summer of 1912, a certain Mr. Bennett regularly commuted from New York City to Wortendyke, Bergen County, with the burning desire to build a machine that would give him mastery over the air. He constructed the aircraft in a secluded field off Lake Avenue, about a quarter of a mile from Allendale.

Bennett conceived the idea of using, of all things, a motorcycle to furnish motive power. Around this, he built a large, somewhat cumbersome framework approximately 15 feet high, 20 feet long, and 15 feet wide.

Part of the frame consisted of several small horizontal planes, which were arranged to extend across the width of the contraption. They in turn were about 30 inches wide, alternating with a number of barrel-like tumblers.

All of this sounds rather complicated, and it was, considering the fact that all of the various components were connected with the motorcycle unit. Bennett theorized that when the motorcycle engine was started, the tumblers would revolve, producing a suction that would lift the machine off the ground and into the sky.

Needless to say, the scheme proved to be an abysmal failure, and it is reliably reported that Bennett concluded his experiment with a hatchet, vowing that he would produce a workable device. Disheartened but not defeated, the plucky Mr. Bennett returned home to New York before he had the opportunity to try again. Ironically, he died soon afterward, thus closing a tiny chapter in local aviation history.

The above photograph illustrates the front portion of the machine. Underneath the canvas "wings" is the motorcycle unit, which was covered the day the picture was snapped. To the immediate right of the flying machine is Bennett's "workshop".

We understand that while Bennett did not object to visitors asking him questions about his work, he did find curiosity seekers annoying, and believed that the trees surrounding his little experimental station were beneficial in shutting off the view from Lake Avenue.

- E. A. S.

That indefatigable late 19th century chronicler of Paterson, William Nelson, has left to posterity and enormous collection of monographs on local history. His very entertaining book *The Van Houten Manuscripts: A Century of Historical Documents*, was published in 1894. On page 103 of that volume appears the following item which will prove to be the delight of any dyed-in-the wool antiquarian:

Petition of Abraham Ryerson for Renewal of his Tavern License, 1819.

To the Honorable Court of Quarter Sessions for the county of Bergen - March Term 1819

Petition of Abraham Ryerson Jun Respectfully

Sheweth - -

That your Petitioner is again desirous of keeping an Inn and Tavern in the house where he now lives, and where he has kept the preceding year, wherefore your petitioner prays, that the said court would be pleased to license him for that purpose - -

Abm Ryerson Junr

We the Subscribers freeholders and inhabitants of the township of saddle river in the county of Bergen, do hereby recommend to the above mentioned Honorable court of Quarter Sessions, the above petitioner Abraham Ryerson Junr as a proper person to keep an Inn & Tavern where he now lives; that he is a person of good moral character of temperance and sobriety that he has at least two spare feather beds, a sufficiency of stabling and provender for horses, and all things necessary for the accomodation of travellers - -

March 18, 1819

Subscribers Names
 Timothy I Darcy
 Richd Doremus
 Christian Shurt
 Issac H Mead
 Garret Van Derhoff
 Peter T Doremus

Subscribers Names
 Peter Courter
 Adrian Onderdonk
 William Ryerson
 James Van Duyne
 William Smith
 Cornelius Westervult



Paterson in 1815. Building toward the right is the Paterson Bank.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Sir:

Dear Sir:

In 1859, the Rogers Locomotive Works sent two locomotives to Chile to compete with two locomotives of a British firm.

The Chileans proposed a rugged test over one of their mountain ranges; the Rogers Locomotives won out, and afterwards many foreign companies bought their engines.

In 1901, while President McKinley was fighting for his life, a well known specialist by the name of Dr. Janeway was rushed to Buffalo by a special train on the Lackawanna. It consisted of one car coupled to the engine. The train traveled over the Boonton branch, passing by Lambert Castle. The run was made in 6 hours, a record unbroken to this day.

On Broadway in Paterson is the old Turkish bath where Garret A. Hobart took his running mate McKinley. Both enjoyed a Turkish bath there.

The sandstone that was used in building Trinity Church in downtown New York was taken from the now abandoned quarry in Little Falls. Many of the brownstone houses built in New York also took sandstone from this quarry.

When the last trolley left Paterson in 1938, it was former Passaic Mayor Benjamin Turner who operated the last car.

Sincerely,
Howard E. McConnell
Montclair, New Jersey

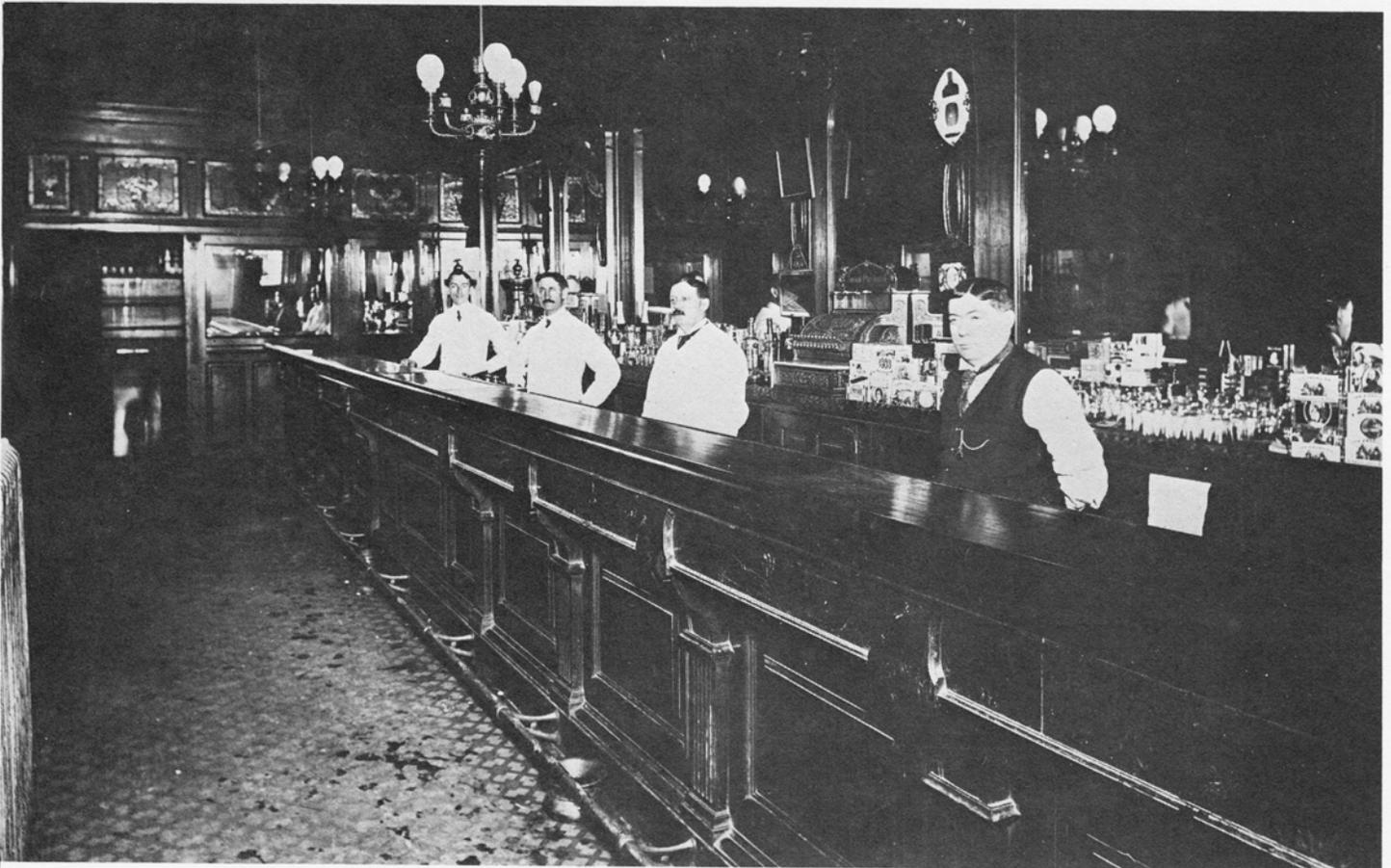
A tale of Two Cities: Nicholas Murray Butler, famous educator (though reared in Paterson) was born in Elizabeth. Donald McLean, who served as a page-boy in the U.S. Senate during the McKinley-Hobart regime, became secretary to U.S. Senator John Kean, thence to Congress from 1933 to 1945 and afterward became a judge of both the New Jersey Court of Errors and Appeals and the New Jersey Supreme Court. McLean was born in Paterson, brought to Elizabeth in early childhood, making a great name for himself.

Sincerely,
Howard E. McConnell
Montclair, New Jersey

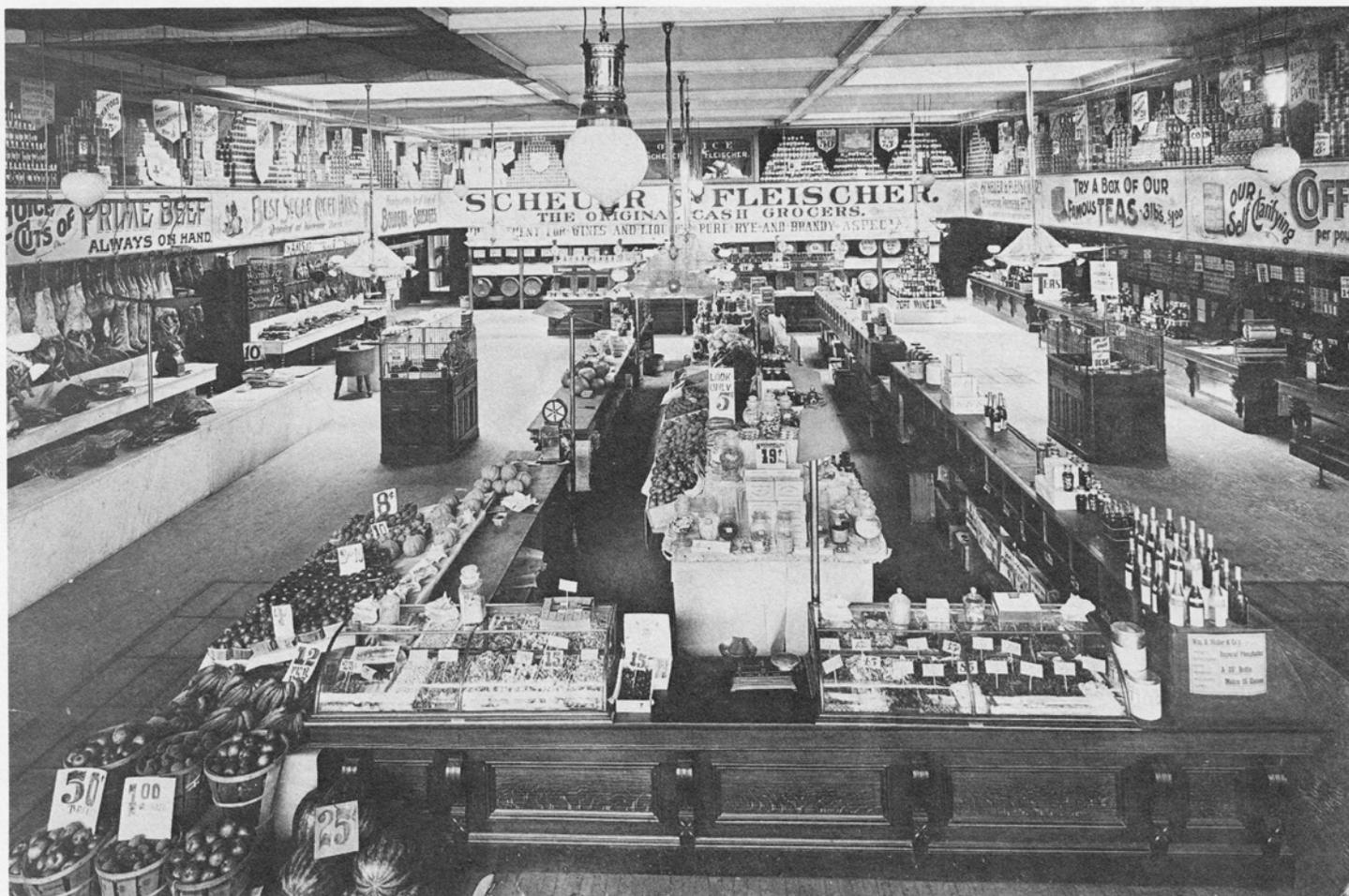
NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes the following who have been elected to membership:

- Mr. Alan Appel, Palisades Park
- Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Baum, West Paterson
- Mrs. Charles Bogert, Pompton Plains
- Miss Wilma I. Gregory, Cedar Grove
- Mr. Robert Littel, Cedar Grove
- Mr. Joseph McCue, Fairfield
- Mr. G. Budd Mead, Montclair
- Mr. Norman Milone, Paterson
- Mrs. Carrel Morgan, Wayne
- Mr. Garry A. Nathans, Lincoln Park
- Mrs. Charles Newman, Wayne
- Mrs. John Paky, Fairlawn
- Mr. George Pope, Clifton
- Mrs. Evelyn Preyer, Rutherford
- Mrs. Grace E. Rugar, Lodi
- Mr. James A. Tons, Passaic
- Mr. Walter J. Williams, Wyckoff



Thomas J. Cronin's Saloon at 90 Jersey Street, ca. 1890. Photograph by John Reid.



Interior photograph by John Reid of grocery store operated by Selig Scheuer and Nathan Fleischer at 239 Main Street, Paterson, ca. 1891. A sampling of prices: In the fresh fruit department, apples were selling for 50¢ a basket; Bananas, 12¢ a dozen; a nice ripe Watermelon could be purchased for 25¢, and three small baskets of plums could be brought home for a dime. Here is what canned goods sold for 83 years ago; 3 lb. can of peaches, 11¢; Apricots and Olives, 12¢ per can; "Best Jersey" tomatoes - 3 cans for 25¢. In the way of liquor, 1 gallon of Port Wine was selling for \$1.00; 3-year-old Rye brought 75¢ per quart. Perhaps the best bargain of all was at the meat counter. Both a large Smoked Ham and 1 lb. of Bacon sold for 10¢!

The Passaic County Historical Society Newsletter
Autumn, 1974
Volume 5, Number 4



Jerome Nathans, President
John D. Quackenbush, Jr., 1st Vice-President
Charles Barhight, 2nd Vice-President
George W. Maseker, Secretary
Savino Gaida, Treasurer
E. A. Smyk, Historian
Edward M. Graf, Curator and Librarian

Membership Categories:

- Regular, \$5.00
 - Sustaining, \$10.00
 - Contributing, \$25.00
 - Benefactor
 - Business and Organization
- } Payment of an annual contribution

Museum Hours at Lambert Castle

1:00 to 4:45 P.M. Wednesday through Friday; 11:00 A.M. to 4:45 P.M. Saturday and Sunday. The Museum is closed on Thanksgiving Day, and from December 25th to January 1st. There is no admission charge.

Telephone: (201) 523-9883

The *Castle Lite* is published Spring, Summer, Autumn and Fall for members of the Society.