

Vol. VI, No. 8 PUBLISHED BY THE PRINCETON HISTORY PROJECT May 1981

# Carrie Arrowsmith Pens Port Mercer Reflections

*How well do I remember  
The spot where I was born,  
The little window where the sun  
Came peeping in at morn. . . .*

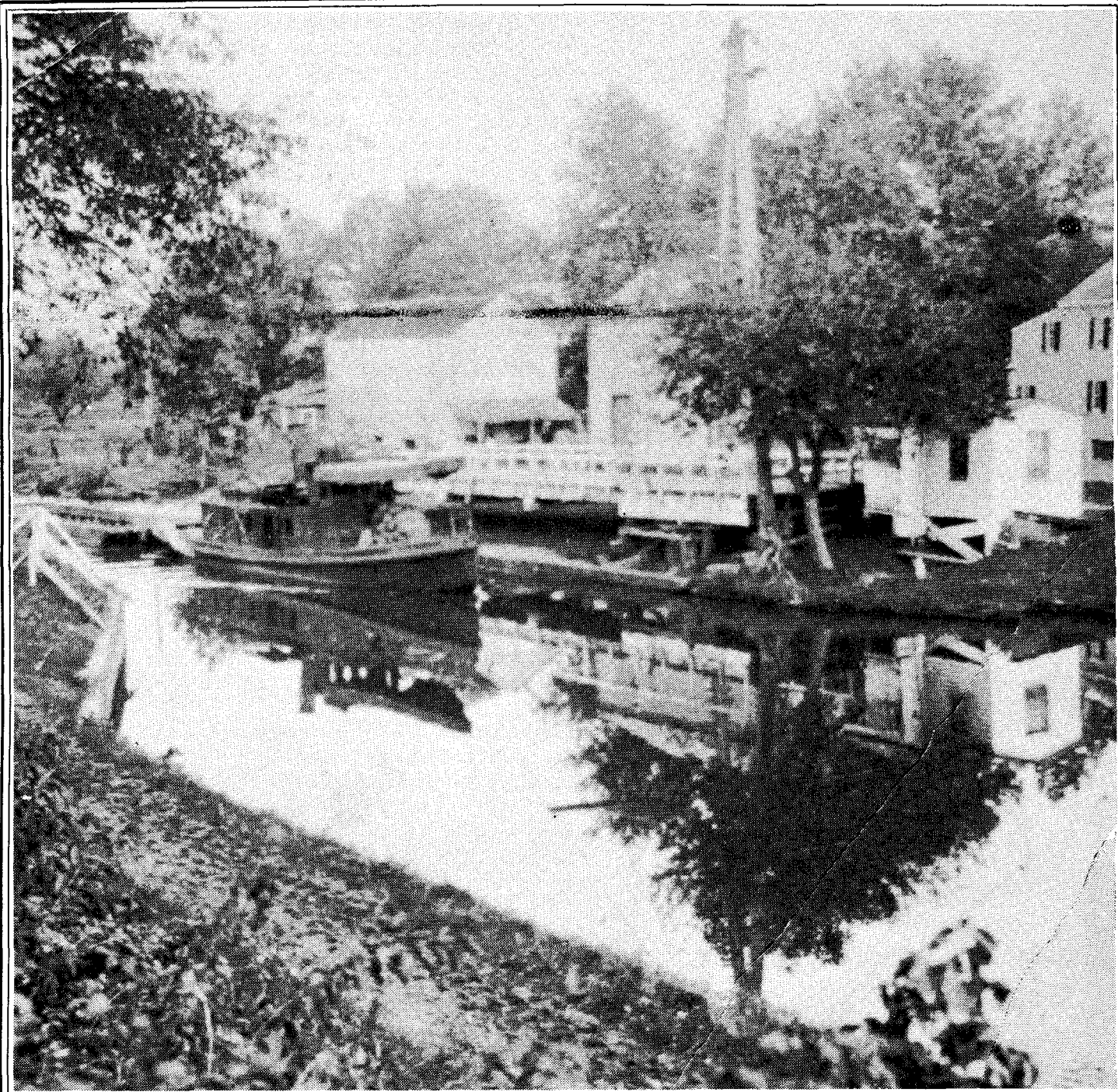
This is the story of Carrie Arrowsmith of Port Mercer. Many people have asked me to write of my young life growing up in Port Mercer where I was first born on May 5th 1899.

My mother was Anna Mercey Cumberly. She was born in Trenton, the daughter of David Cumberly of Hamilton Square. Her grandfather was John A. Cumberly of Hamilton Square. He had a daughter Eliza Cumberly, a single lady, to keep house for him. I used to hear my mother say that they had pies for breakfast. They would make one pie a day.

My mother's mother died when she was fifteen years old, and she heard that John A. Gordon and his wife were looking for a girl to help Mrs. Gordon with the household duties. She took the job and went to live with them on the farm near Clarksville. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon had a daughter, Carrie, and two sons, George Gordon and Stuart Gordon, who bought the farm after his father died and conducted a dairy with about seventy-five cows, and farmed the farm. He also owned a lot of pasture land where he pastured his cows at Port Mercer.

My mother was twenty-three years old when she met and married my father John H. Arrowsmith. I've heard it said that he moved here

*Continued on page thirteen*



Seen as through the haze of the past, a tugboat pulls an empty barge around the turn of the century through the opened swing bridge at the then busy village of Port Mercer on the Delaware and Raritan Canal. John Arrowsmith, the bridgetender, would swing the bridge open at the sound of an approaching boat's whistle by working the controls located in the little shanty to the right. The Arrowsmith family lived in the bridge house in the center of this photograph. To the left was Mather's general store, which no longer stands. *Courtesy of George Arrowsmith*

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The annual Spring outing of TOWNSPEOPLE will be held at 3:15 18 June at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Elric G. Endersby. Call 921-8330 for details.

## Updike Family Shopped Saturday Night

We didn't go very far afield when I was growing up. There were occasional trips to Trenton, but Princeton was generally the destination when we went out. Saturday night was always the big shopping night, and farmers from all the area around day nights were pleasant and relaxing, and it was good for a small boy to feel that he belonged to a family that knew so many people. Princeton was really a small town then, and the courtesy and thoughtfulness that were shown by shopkeepers and by all the people we met and talked with seemed to reflect a genuine concern for mutual well-being. I know of nothing that can equal the joy I felt when our family would go to town on a warm, Saturday evening in Summer.

*Continued on page six*

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## Genuine Concern

It is no secret that among the most persistent perceptions voiced on these pages is a belief in the lasting vitality of the reasonably self-sufficient small town as a mainstay in the American character. Like our friend Joe Procaccino, most of us view with tremendous satisfaction and lasting appreciation the choice of our parents or predecessors to settle in a small town rather than the festering ferment of the city. Driving through any one of thousands of American towns with front porches and fenced yards, neat churches and corner stores, and the ever-present knots of people, young and old, taking the time to pass the time of day, one is often moved to note that these are good places to grow up, leave for the lessons of the larger world if need be, and come back to for the well-being of the next generation.

The basic tenet of the more intimate community is that everyone knows each other, cares to some degree about each other, and needs each other in the reciprocal relations necessitated by supply and demand of goods and services. This point is here reiterated by Frank Updike's recollections of the warm Summer Saturday nights when his and other farming families drove into Princeton to engage in the anticipated pleasure of shopping. As the twilight overtook Nassau and Witherspoon Streets, behind the lighted storefront merchants and their customers did more than fill orders, they reinforced the friendships established upon "courtesy and thoughtfulness" and the sense of "mutual well-being" which existed behind every sale.

The lasting quality of this "genuine concern" is still evidenced in our town, as in countless other communities, by the fact that half a century later many of the same businesses Updike knew as a boy are still prominent in Princeton, passed along to clerks or succeeding generations. The founding dates of many of these local concerns are included in a number of the advertisements which make this publication possible. They stand as evidence of the service that has allowed these businesses to prosper.

By comparison we have now come to know a whole new sense of commerce, borne on nothing more substantial than bigness and greed, by those who care nothing more for their clients than whether their money is good. It is five years since the new malls first came to blight our landscape. By the power of flashy advertising and foolish fashion they have siphoned off the business of those too indiscriminate to realize the folly of false-front merchandising. In addition to destroying the remaining commerce of our capital city, they have defiled the fields which so recently characterized the area here described by George and Carrie Arrowsmith in their Port Mercer memories.

We trust that readers of *The Recollector* need no assistance in deciding between the established businesses which have served us so well all our lives, and the cheap behemoths which alien interests have thrust upon us. Let us hope enough others will see past the glitter, that we may soon witness their demise.

## Remarkable Legacy

Like the rest of the community whose unfolding story he chronicled so long and so well, we were shocked and saddened by the recent death of Donald C. Stuart, co-founder and editor of Princeton's unique and justly respected *Town Topics*.

In many ways a small town's press acts not only to record the happenings of a place and its populace, but also by its style helps establish how a community perceives itself. In this, Don Stuart and the newspaper he founded with the late Don Coyle thirty-five years ago were, despite success, always pleasingly modest.

Since the unfortunate demise of *The Princeton Herald* more than a decade ago, Stuart and the well-chosen staff he developed were the only ones among a rapidly developing diversity of local media who could be said truly to understand Princeton and the peculiar idiosyncracies which give it its singular personality. In clear, terse reporting, *Town Topics* continues to deliver the facts which local people want or need to know — Borough and Township government and planning coverage; news of churches, organizations and new ventures; spotlights on Princeton people in the far flung fields in which they distinguish themselves; sports (a particular interest of Stuart, who also served for decades as "the voice of Princeton football"); and, in addition to birth, engagement, marriage and death notices, the sensitive profiles of individual personalities, who, by their conscientious day-to-day contributions, make this town such a fine place.

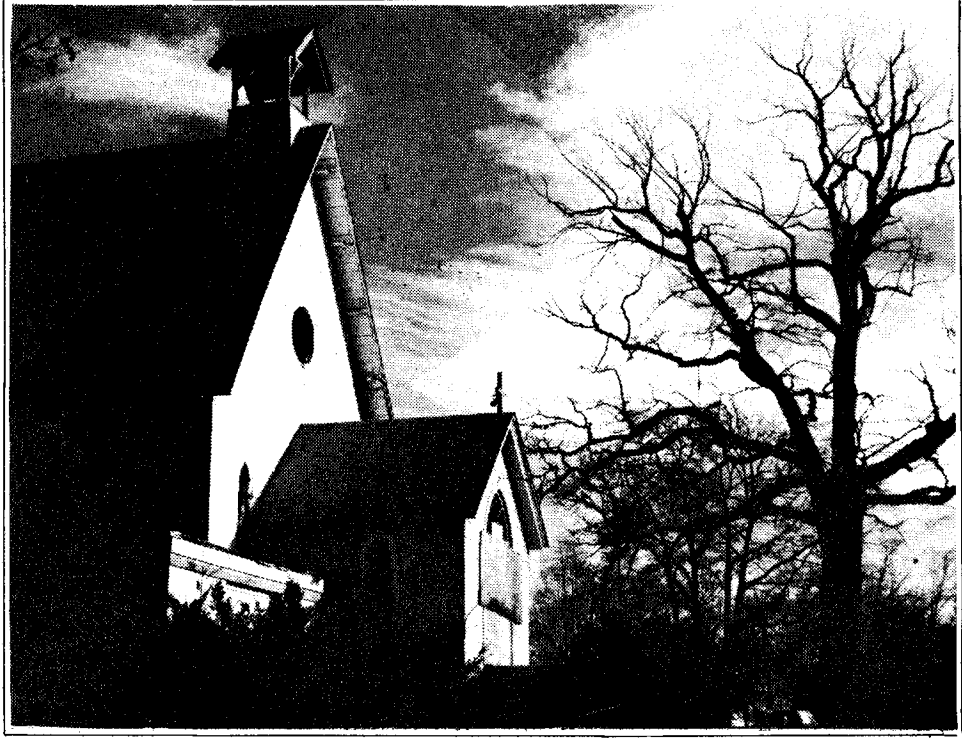
Throughout our youth, the most notable local honor that could crown the achievements of Princetonians, here and in the world at large,

was to be "nominated Princeton's Man or Woman of the Week" on the front page of *Town Topics*. Even after that feature was dropped, the honor of a front page story on the efforts of one young local historian was in no small part responsible for his decision to further that work. And when six years ago we determined to attempt the initiation of this journal of local history in newspaper format, Don Stuart was among the most helpful in his advice and encouragement, even though he must have known all too well the terrible pressures of deadlines and the accompanying sleepless nights, which are ever a part of publishing.

Of his own publication we could offer only two critical judgements. Amazingly, throughout its history, *Town Topics* has steadfastly refused to charge resident Princetonians to whom it delivers the news weekly. It is a precedent we might wish could be abandoned, if only to allow the necessary capital for better quality paper stock, so that this most accurate chronicle of local news would physically survive as a permanent record. But principally we wish that Stuart, who knew this town so well, had left space for his own editorial perceptions on its continuing evolution. Unlike the major competition in weekly news coverage, a journal of declining quality that understands the town so little as to insist on calling it "The Princetons," Stuart, a lifetime resident, could have offered enormously valuable counsel to the town he loved in print as he did in word. Despite the remarkable legacy that he left in the newspaper he created, it is disquieting to realize that his voice has now been stilled.



# For Old St. Barnabas Chapel Fate Was Ashes to Ashes and Sand to Sand

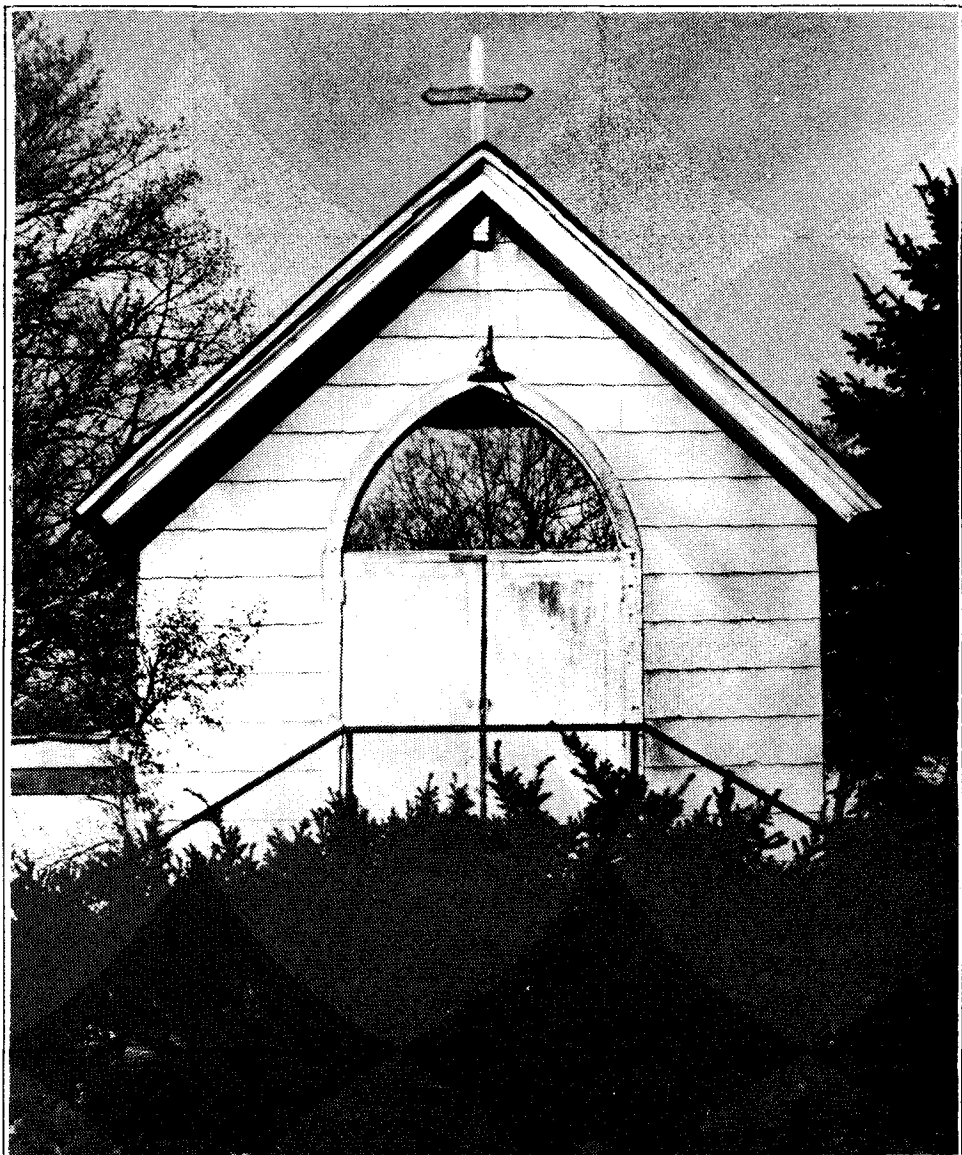


Built during the latter part of the last century, St. Barnabas Church at Sand Hills in South Brunswick Township was one of a circuit of three Episcopal missions — the others being at Rocky Hill and Monmouth Junction. The church was situated in a commanding position. Located on a hilltop overlooking the Brunswick Pike (U.S. Route One) with a magnificent oak tree at its side, the small country chapel must have presented quite a picturesque image. In 1965 the old church closed for lack of space and the congregation met at a school for four or five years until a new St. Barnabas opened its doors for Palm Sunday 1970.

When the Episcopal flock moved, the old building and the property surrounding it were sold. Due to neglect the building suffered a disastrous fire in 1974. The gutted structure stood abandoned until this Spring when fate finally overtook the forsaken chapel. Now only the narthex remains, surrounded by rubble.

When the congregation built their new church edifice they included from the original St. Barnabas a large stained glass window dedicated to Mrs. Conover, the woman responsible for its founding. Fortunately, at least one aspect of the charming old chapel that St. Barnabas once was, has been preserved for future generations.

Jeff Macechak



# History Unearthed Under Nassau Street Eatery



Wilson and Grover Cleveland first printed in 1914.

Thank you so much for the cards you sent me. There is a market among collectors for some of these older cards at various prices from ten cents on up depending upon subject. An old fire engine (steamer) will bring several dollars if owner and dealer can be gotten together.

I wonder — would you think well of including the following suggestion in a future Recollector? "The Recollector has a market for old post cards (1900-1915) that may lie in albums or in shoe boxes in attics. Readers

nurse to the first child born in the White House (Esther, 1893). I know she must have come to Princeton with them, because of the telegram sent to my great-grandfather (my grandmother's father), who died in 1907. Enclosed is a copy of what is left of the telegram for your information.

What I want from you is any information you can find on this Miss Remington. If anyone has the time, I would appreciate it if you could check the 1900 Census figures for the Cleveland household. In any case, thank you very much for whatever help you can give.

Mrs. Debra A. Posont  
Dearborn, Michigan

## Keepsake

Thanks for returning my photographs, also your very nice note.

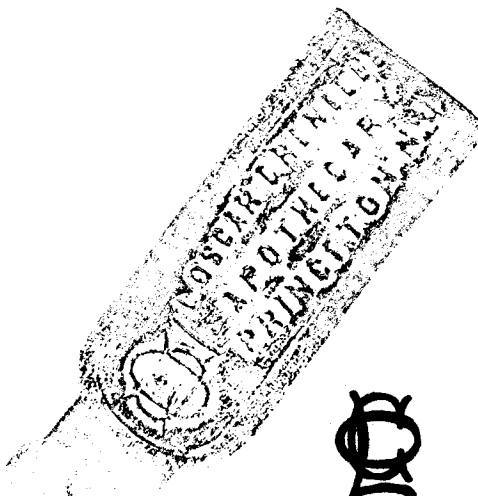
I have had many nice phone calls for all the news and pictures about the Playhouse, which made me very pleased. I am always going to keep my copy of The Recollector.

Thank you for presenting such a nice story.

Gertrude O'Connor  
Princeton

## Time in a Bottle

During the recent renovations to the Greenline Diner on Nassau Street Manager Geoff White literally unearthed a bit of Princeton history in the dirt under the building. Among several nineteenth century medicine bottles which he uncovered and donated to the History Project is one bearing the monogram and name of a



one-time druggist — L. Oscar Grenelle, Apothecary, Princeton, N.J. He and we are anxious to know more about the man and his business.

The Greenline Diner is also ex-



For the past four years we have announced all new gift subscriptions with turn of the century Princeton postcards originally printed and distributed by Christie Whiteman and donated by Whiteman's children, Grace, Dorothy and Chris H. Whiteman.

may wish to contribute them in support of our publication," or something like this.

Chris H. Whiteman  
Richmond, Virginia

## Seemingly Lost Summers

I am trying to trace my family tree, but am stranded at my great-grandfather, William A. Summers (also spelled Summers or Somers), who, according to state census, lived in Princeton from 1864 on, but seems to disappear after 1900. I am unable to find any death record for him. William was married to Emma Jackson, and had several sons and daughters: James, Cornelia, Sarah, Ira, Margaret, and Emma.

Any information from Recollector readers will be greatly appreciated!

Ira F. Brittingham  
Trenton, N.J.

## Nurse Misaid

My grandmother's aunt, a Miss Remington, was a nurse in the Grover Cleveland household. I know she worked in the White House in Cleveland's second term, because it was said in our family that she was

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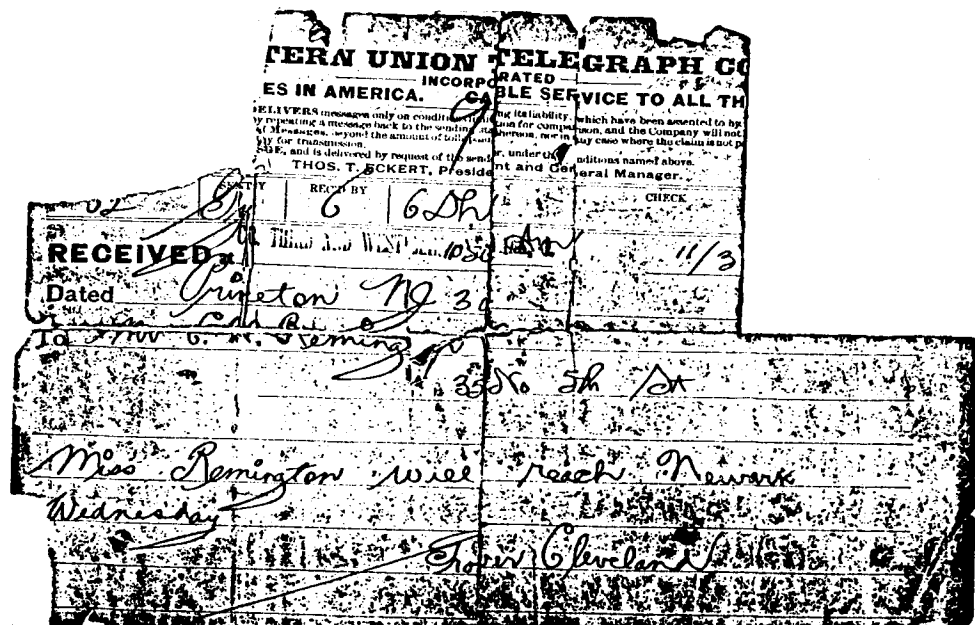
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# Maclean Sisters Were Offended by a Naked Male

tremely interested to hear from anyone among our readers who may recall the day when the mobile eatery first arrived on Nassau Street or any other history of the venerable establishment between that day and this. Please drop into the recently restored restaurant or write *The Recollector*.

*cemetery records and Mercer County deeds.*

**Wanda Gunning**  
Princeton, New Jersey

## Martha's Kitchen

Founded sometime around World War One, Martha's Kitchen was evidently a Princeton restaurant memorable for its excellent food. Many native Princetonians have told us about the wonderful meals once savored in the eatery, which was variously located, according to their accounts, over Priest's drugstore, now *Town Topics*, and over Marsh's



## Another Rowand Mystery...

I just received my first issue of *The Princeton Recollector* and upon reading the fascinating narrative of the murder of James Rowand, I found that his wife's maiden name was Berrien. I am researching the Berrien family in preparation for the publication of *A Genealogical History of the Berrien Family*. However, nowhere could I find a reference to the first name of Mrs. Rowand or her sister who resided with her. According to my records, there are only four possibilities — Sarah, Jane, Cornelia Ann or Catherine Matilda Berrien. They were born in 1812, 1817, 1821 and 1824 respectively to Jacob and Elizabeth (Slayback) Berrien and were all baptized at the Kingston Presbyterian Church. Do you have any information regarding the identity of Mrs. Rowand?

Also, my great-grandfather was Alexander Lawrence Berrien, Sr. who had extensive land holdings in Princeton Junction prior to the stock market crash in 1929 when he lost all during the Depression which followed. My family is reluctant to discuss this so I was wondering if you have anything in your files which would reference my grandfather Alexander Lawrence Berrien, Jr. or his father. I truly appreciate any information you can give in the way of newspaper clippings or pictures.

Thank you very much in advance for your assistance. I am eagerly looking forward to the next issue of *The Princeton Recollector*!

**E. Reneé Heiss**  
Vincentown, New Jersey



drugstore, now Edith's. As neither of the accompanying pictures could have been taken in either of these buildings, we are eager to learn more about Martha's Kitchen, its proprietress, and the possible site of her establishment when these views were taken.

## Whose Ashes?

My grandfather, Henry G. Marquand, gave the Marquand Chapel. My father was a faculty member, so we sat against the southeast wall, looking down on a sea of undergraduates (attendance was compulsory). Facing us was the David and Jonathan window, which commemorated my uncle, Frederick Alexander Marquand, who died young, and his friend (or roommate?), one of the Dodges. The inscription baffled me as well as Helen Sterrett, as I could not understand how years "drew nigh."

Your article on the Macleans baffled me also. In the 1930's I lived on Alexander Street and down the street lived two Maclean "girls" who I believed to be the president's daughters. On their parlor mantel stood an ornate urn said to contain his ashes. Who were they?

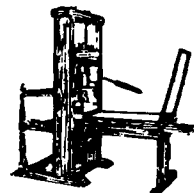
Next to them lived a faculty family with an infant son. Doctors in those days recommended sun baths for babies, so this baby was stripped and set out in the back yard. The Misses Maclean telephoned, saying they were offended by the sight of a naked male from their parlor window. The mother politely moved the

baby to the back of the yard, but they phoned again, saying that with opera glasses they could still see him!

**Eleanor Marquand Delaney**  
Hightstown, N. J.

P.S. Incidentally, Frederick Alexander Marquand was also memorialized in the face of the late-lamented "Christian Student" statue, which was modeled from his death mask, then kept in the University Library.

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## .... Solved

I have checked on the Rowand/Berrien connection. Mrs. Rowand was Ann R. Berrien Rowand and her sister was Sarah Berrien. (They purchased my house, 144 Mercer Street, jointly in 1871. (Mercer County Deeds)

Sarah Berrien died on 24 September 1873, aged seventy-one years and is buried in Princeton Cemetery. She was born circa 1802-03 (Obituary, Princeton Press; tombstone inscription)

Ann R. Berrien Rowand died on 11 February 1894 at the age of eighty-four and is buried beside her husband James in Princeton Cemetery. She was born circa 1810. (Obituary, Princeton Press; tombstone inscription).

There are a fair number of Berriens in Princeton Cemetery. I should think that they belonged to the local Presbyterian Churches rather than the church in Kingston. Mrs. Heiss should certainly take a look at the

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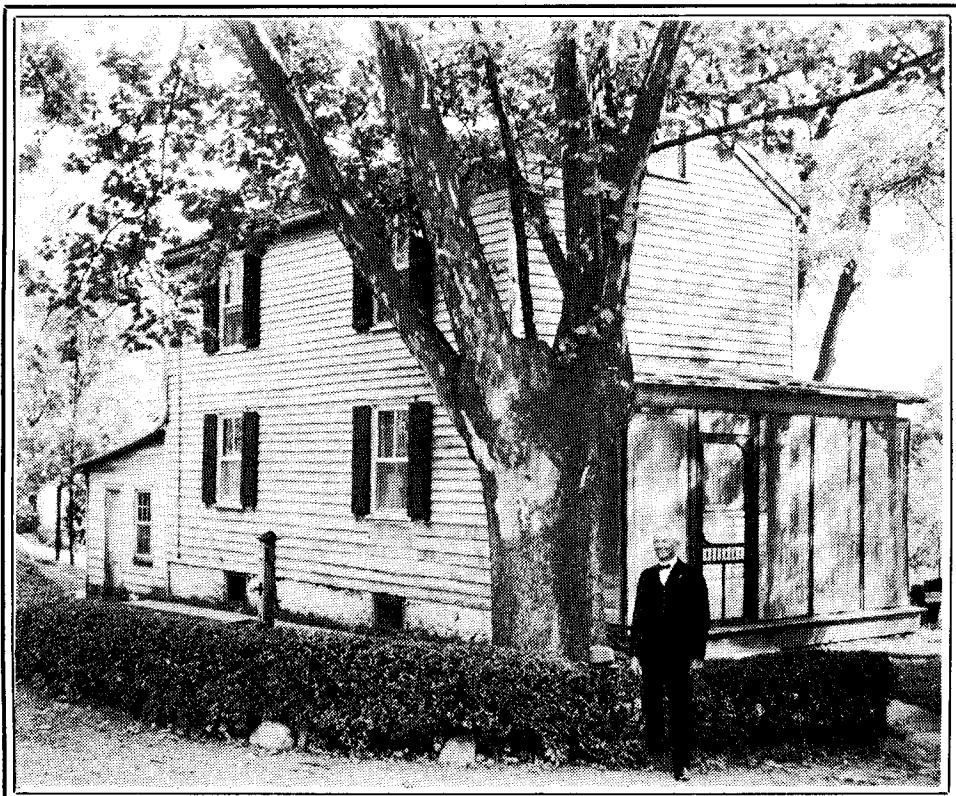
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# Bridgetender Planted the Banks of Canal in Flowers



Sometime about the turn of the century the Arrowsmiths' family friend, Walter Howell posed before the bridgetender's house and the venerable buttonwood which still graces Port Mercer. The hand pump over the Arrowsmiths' well has long since disappeared.

Courtesy of George Arrowsmith

Continued from page one

from North Jersey. He had three sisters and two brothers, Clark and Theodore.

My mother and father met in Clarksville. They were married March 18, 1896. They hired a horse and buggy and drove to Hamilton Square to the Presbyterian Church and were married by Rev. Joseph Howell, who was the pastor there at that time.

After the wedding Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mather rented a house to them on the side street in Port Mercer near their home. There they set up housekeeping. My mother said they went to Trenton and bought their furniture and it was delivered to their home which was near the Delaware and Raritan Canal by one of the freight steamers that plied the canal picking up and delivering freight.

They became the parents of eight children — five boys and three girls. While living along the canal in Port Mercer their daughter Fannie was born on January 5th 1897. After be-

ing here a short time they moved to people found employment there when they opened in 1941, namely Williard Applegate, Anne Vaccaro, Carrie Arrowsmith, Clark Arrowsmith, Wardell Seely and Leo M. Cerrier. Lee is now retired. After his wife died, Lee's sister Alba came to keep house. Their home is very pretty and up to date. It has been all remodeled.

After living on the Marchesi farm a few years my mother and father moved back to Port Mercer to a square house with one half acre of ground. They had a barn and a Jersey cow. My father farmed this ground. This place was owned by John E. Gordon.

After moving to the Gordon property the Arrowsmiths had three sons, Walter (1901), George (born 1905) and Clark (1908). This house was afterwards bought by Starr Northrop when he married Margaret Wooden of Princeton. Starr has passed on but Peggy, his wife, still lives there.

About 1906 or 1907 the bridge house was empty and my father accepted the job as bridgetender there of the bridge on the Delaware and Raritan Canal. Then we moved to the bridge house and here William (1911) and Ethel (1913) were born. We were told that one of the bedrooms was a post office and the postmaster was appointed by Abraham Lincoln during the time he was president. This was printed on the back of a picture.

In his position as bridgetender Father was good to all of those passing along the canal, helping them with the ropes and to tie up to the posts provided for this. He planted lots of flowers (he loved flowers) on the banks and kept the grass well trimmed and cut. He always bought flower plants and planted a nice flower bed for my mother up near the house. He bordered it with bricks and white-washed the bricks.

Port Mercer was named in honor of General Mercer who was killed in the Battle of Princeton. It consisted



Though his general store is gone, Charles H. Mather's home, though porchless, still stands. In addition to keeping the store, Mather sold farm machinery and coal and served as an Assemblyman.

Courtesy of George Arrowsmith

the Joseph Martin Farm in Lewisville and Mr. Arrowsmith farmed his farm. They moved to a house on the farm. Here a boy, Raymond, was born December 28, 1897. Then a girl Carrie was born May 5th 1899. By then the Marchesis had moved so they rented their little farm and lived there a short time.

Mr. Marchesi owned and farmed it. It was only good to raise feed corn for the animals — mules and a horse or two. It was along the Delaware and Raritan Canal with that black heavy soil. It always had lots of moisture and we would pick strawberries. The farm consisted of a house and a little barn.

Mr. Marchesi also worked as an iron worker in one of the iron foundries in Trenton. They had three girls and two boys, Bebel and Libero. We called him Lee. The girls were Vera, Alba and Lieta. The children went to Princeton High School. All three girls studied to be teachers and taught school in different places. All graduated from Teachers College in Trenton. Bebel died at an early age. So did Vera and Lieta; one boy, Libero, or Lee, as he was known, married and lived on that farm.

Lee was a foreman for General Electric in the Trenton mill. Many



Born in 1913, Ethel Mae was the youngest of the Arrowsmith children. The building to the rear was Mather's general store.

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# Aunt Fannie Baked Jumbles for Arrowsmith Breed

of a general store run by Charles H. Mather who also conducted an International Harvester agency which sold several types of farm machinery. Some of the barges picked up coal in Pennsylvania. Charles H. Mather had a coal yard in Port Mercer and sold coal, too. At one time he was an Assemblyman.

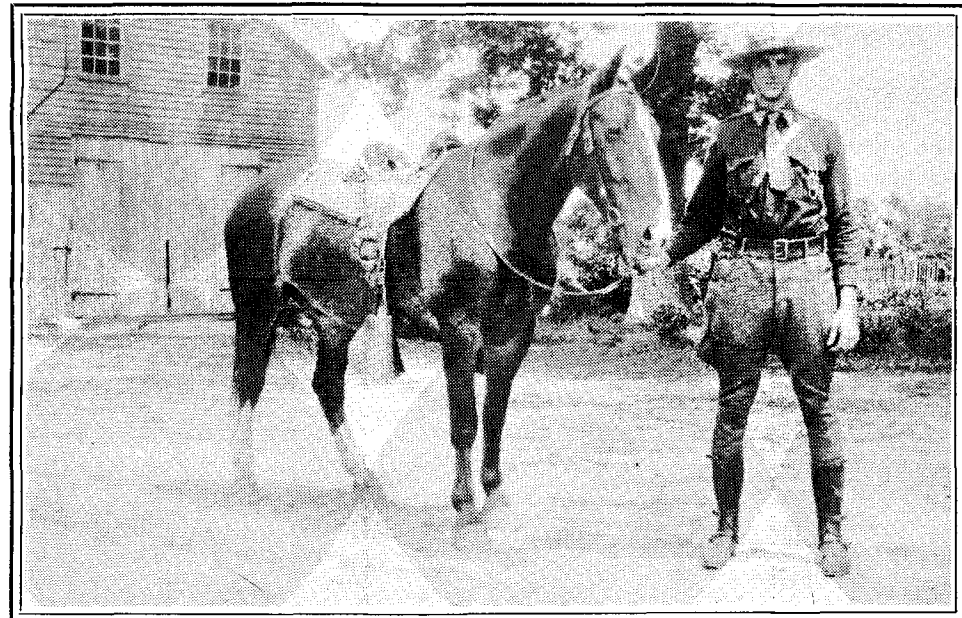
Mr. Mather was from Penn's Neck. He married Carrie Gordon, daughter of John E. Gordon. They lived in a big house in Port Mercer. The Mathers had one daughter, Etta Belle. She became a school teacher in Clarksville School and then married Charles O. Smith of Benton, Pennsylvania and they had one daughter Carolyn who became a nurse. Then she married George Neely, who is a druggist in Hopewell drug store. The Mathers had three sons, Samuel Southard Mather, Levi and John. Levi bought a store in Belvidere, married and lived there. John worked for Standard Oil Company and Prudential Insurance Company. Samuel Southard Mather went away and studied to be an undertaker and he bought a house on Vandeventer Avenue in Princeton and opened his undertaking establishment there and was very successful. He married Mae Totten of Blawenburg, had one girl, Verna, and one boy, Samuel Jr. All the original Mather family except Belle are deceased now.

The years we spent at the bride-tender's house were the happiest days of our lives. We all attended the



In 1912 or thereabouts, the Arrowsmiths posed for a family portrait outside their home in Port Mercer. Standing in the back are Fannie and Carrie; from left to right are Ray, the eldest; in front of him, William, who died at an early age; George stands in the center between his parents, John and Anna; on the right are Walter (behind) and Clark (in front), affectionately known as "Dink," after the comic strip character P.B. Dink. Another daughter, Ethel, had not yet been born at the time this photograph was taken.

Courtesy of George Arrowsmith



When Walter Arrowsmith was in training to be a State Trooper, he had to be able to ride, and take jumps, bareback. Many potential policemen were eliminated during this phase of training. Walt patrolled Salem County on horseback until 1926, when he was killed in a motorcycle accident.

Courtesy of George Arrowsmith

Clarksville School, each one going to school when we got to be five years old. We were growing up. My brothers were working on farms.

My father never owned a farm, but worked around on farms in the area. A lot of time he worked for Mr. John Updike and Clarence Updike and also on the Gordon farm. My brothers, after they grew up a little, would be hunting for work on the farms, too, picking tomatoes, corn and beans and husking corn, etc., working many days on John Updike's and Clarence Updike's farm. We kids used to run across the pasture meadows to meet them and walk home with my father and the boys.

Clarence Updike's grandmother was so good to us. Grandmom Updike would give us a brown bag with big molasses cookies in she had made. She baked the best cookies. I have also seen my Aunt Fannie Titus go down in the cellar and get a bowl

of rich cream and came up and baked the best "jumbles" you ever ate — just so good!

My oldest brother, Raymond, left home at fourteen years old to go to live in Lawrenceville with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bussom. The Bussoms who owned the Jigger Shop, asked my parents if he could come live with them and work in the shop. So he left home and went there. He worked at the soda fountain in the Jigger Shop Ice Cream parlor and sandwich place. It was close to Lawrenceville prep school so he had a lot of college boys eating. He went to evening school and then married. He worked at the Jigger Shop all his life. He died of heart failure in 1978.

One of the boys, Walter, was a state trooper and was killed in an accident on his motorcycle in 1926. He was twenty-four years old. Ethel died when she was twenty-two years old. George is the only son now living. He resides in Trenton — really

he lives in White Horse, but you never hear of that place anymore.

Fannie became a school teacher. Afterward when she grew up and was educated she started to teach in Highland Park, New Jersey where she taught for forty years. Carrie worked at General Electric for eighteen years and then retired. Carrie and Fannie are both residents of Eastern Star Home at Finderne in Bridgewater.

Port Mercer is now overshadowed by Quaker Bridge Mall. When we lived there there was no transportation out. Now there's a bus leaving every fifteen minutes. But they still use their cars.

Still, it looks about the same around there. Most of the houses are still standing; the general store, though, was torn down about twenty-five years ago. The canal bridge house is still standing and is very old. It holds many happy memories.

Carrie Arrowsmith

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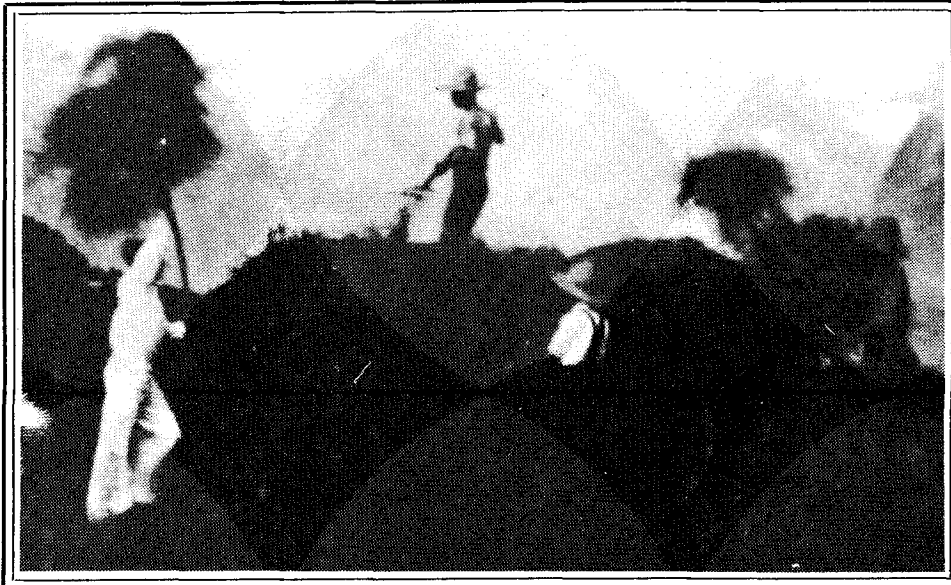
# Denizens of Port Mercer Were Alarmed by First Siren

Upon receiving the written reminiscences of Port Mercer by Carrie Arrowsmith, we were delighted to learn that her brother George was also willing to share his memories of growing up along the canal, in the interview that follows:

"My father was born in 1864 and died in 1939, May the 7th. And my mother was born in 1872, and she died March 27th, 1943. The old Arrowsmith homestead is down along the canal towards Trenton. You go down by the bridge house, and way back there's the old Arrowsmith homestead. That's where my father and all his brothers were born. Clark Arrowsmith was born there and George Arrowsmith was another, and Theodore, and there were three sisters. So they really had a big family.

"That house is still there, and the fellow that owns it, his name is Marchesi. He has kept everything in the house as it was before, kept it in good condition. And in the cellar in that house there's a spring, where they used to keep their perishables. The house was up high enough so that the water could run out through the foundation down into a ditch down towards the canal.

"Before he became the bridge-tender, my father was manager of a farm over on Princeton Pike. They had a big acreage. They must have had about twelve hundred acres, maybe more, in orchards and stuff, and they had a dairy, also. He was there managing that farm for a long time, and then I guess he moved to Port Mercer, but at first we didn't



Haying season was a busy time on local farms when John Arrowsmith and his son could find annual employment. This picture was taken on the Updike farm about 1920.

Courtesy of George Arrowsmith

live in the bridge house. We lived in a house on the left — that's where Northrops live. That's just past the Mather House in Port Mercer, up on Quakerbridge Road as you go towards Clarksville, on the left hand side. We lived in there for several years. The Vaccaros own all that land from Clarksville to the canal, and all the way back. They own a lot of land.

"We were about two years apart, each one. Except for the first one. My sister Fannie was born January the fifth, and Ray was born the same year in December, right after Christmas. Ray was my oldest brother. He used to have the Jigger Shop. Then came Carrie. Then there was Walter; he was a State trooper. He was killed in the State Police in 1926. Then I came in nineteen five, then my younger brother Clark, and then another boy, William, and Ethel. William drowned in the canal there, right by the bridge. That was a trying time for the family. He was missing. We looked and looked and looked and tried to find him and couldn't find him. My father said he had a dream that night that he was on a sandbar. There's a drain that comes all the way down along the Quakerbridge Road that empties in the canal right there at the bridge. And he had a dream that William was drowned and was found out on the sandbar. He went out in the morning



and dove down in there and that's where he was.

"The night before we'd looked and looked all over the country. Right in the afternoon he was missin'. We thought he was maybe playin' with some other kids or somethin' and went off. All of us kids knew how to swim, but him; I don't think he was quite five yet. We could all swim. When we were real small, we learned how to swim. There was an Indian workin' on a farm up there around the Schencks' and he taught us all. He used to give us submarine rides before we could even swim. We could put our arms around his neck and he would swim across the canal, sometimes underwater. Gee, I can't remember his name. He had real black hair, long black hair. He taught all the kids in the neighborhood to swim. He wouldn't let nobody near the water until you knew how to swim. He would teach you how, and then he would swim out with you so far, and then you had to swim back to shore. That's how he would teach you. And you had to make it!

"There was a lot of kids, 'cause the families them days had a lot more children than they do today. I can think of three or four families that had at least six or eight children. Havin' a big family, y'know, we had a lot of fun with the old canal. In the Summertime, us boys used to pitch a tent down there. Then we'd have war up there, and we'd swim, and we had boats that we'd float down the canal. In the Wintertime, we could always skate on the canal. Fact, when I was younger I used to skate down to Trenton to see my girlfriend. Get off at Mulberry Street, put my shoes on, and go up and maybe go to a movie or something, then come back, put my skates on, and skate home.

"We often would get a ride into Trenton if we had to go to Trenton for some reason. We'd hitch a ride on a boat and get off at Perry Street. The same way Princeton. But I never had a ride all the way through, never had a ride from one end of the canal to the other.

"When we were kids, there used to be a boat called the relief — that was the company tugboat, and it used to pull this, well, we used to call it a

shanty boat, built like a shanty. And that's where the men would live that worked on the maintenance crew. There wouldn't be about maybe fifteen, twenty men that lived on that boat. And they had a chef, and oftentimes they'd invite us kids to supper. And that used to be a big thrill to eat on that shanty boat.

"My father took care of the bridge. They would blow a horn. . . he was there, he would know when to open it. They used to have these conch shell horns, for the tow-boats. Of course, if they had steam-boats, then they could blow a whistle. My father told me that one night, one of the steam yachts was goin' through there, just about supertime, and it was the first time they ever heard a siren. It scared the people to death all around; you could hear it for miles! He said his mother was just gettin' supper on the table, and the people were comin' in. They thought it was some kind of a wildcat or lion or somethin', and they all got their guns and went out, and the gals were all bawlin', the chickens were all excited. . . He said it scared everybody to death!

"During the daytime, my father would have jobs other places, and us kids would open the bridge. I don't remember that the bridge was ever left open. There were very few boats that went through at night, unless it was an emergency or something, because they didn't have headlights in them days. But my father had, like, a shanty there, that he used to sleep in at night. He was always there on duty nights, in case there was anybody to go through. He had — well, it wasn't actually a bed, but it was a cot that he slept in. He had a little stove in there, a little pot-bellied stove that he used in the Wintertime. 'Course, when the water froze, the canal closed.

"There was a lot of activity. . . all day long, sometimes. The boats used to have a place down on that road as you go parallel to the canal. They had this big pole up with a big boom on; used to go out and lower the bucket into the boat and taken the line out and pile it up in a pile there. I guess it was all stone lime, them days. And then the farmers would come there with their wagons and load up the lime. At Mather's, coal boats used to unload there. People would come there to get their Winter coal. I would imagine Mather's store was about twenty or thirty feet wide and maybe about fifty feet long, and two stories. It had a big cellar, big trap door with stairs that went down. It had counters on both sides, and in the center they had an old pot-bellied stove with a bench up this way and this way, and people would come and sit around the old stove. The post office was on the right hand side, and people would come there and get their mail. They also had a telephone. Nobody had a telephone them days, and if you wanted to use the 'phone, you'd have to go to the store to use the 'phone. But they sold thread and they sold all kinds of cloth, all kinds of harness, everything that people would need.

"That was Port Mercer. Clarksville, where Quakerbridge Road crossed Route One, was quite a place in them days, too. They had the blacksmith shop on one side, and a store, and on the other corner was a hotel and a saloon — they didn't call it a bar in those days — and ther

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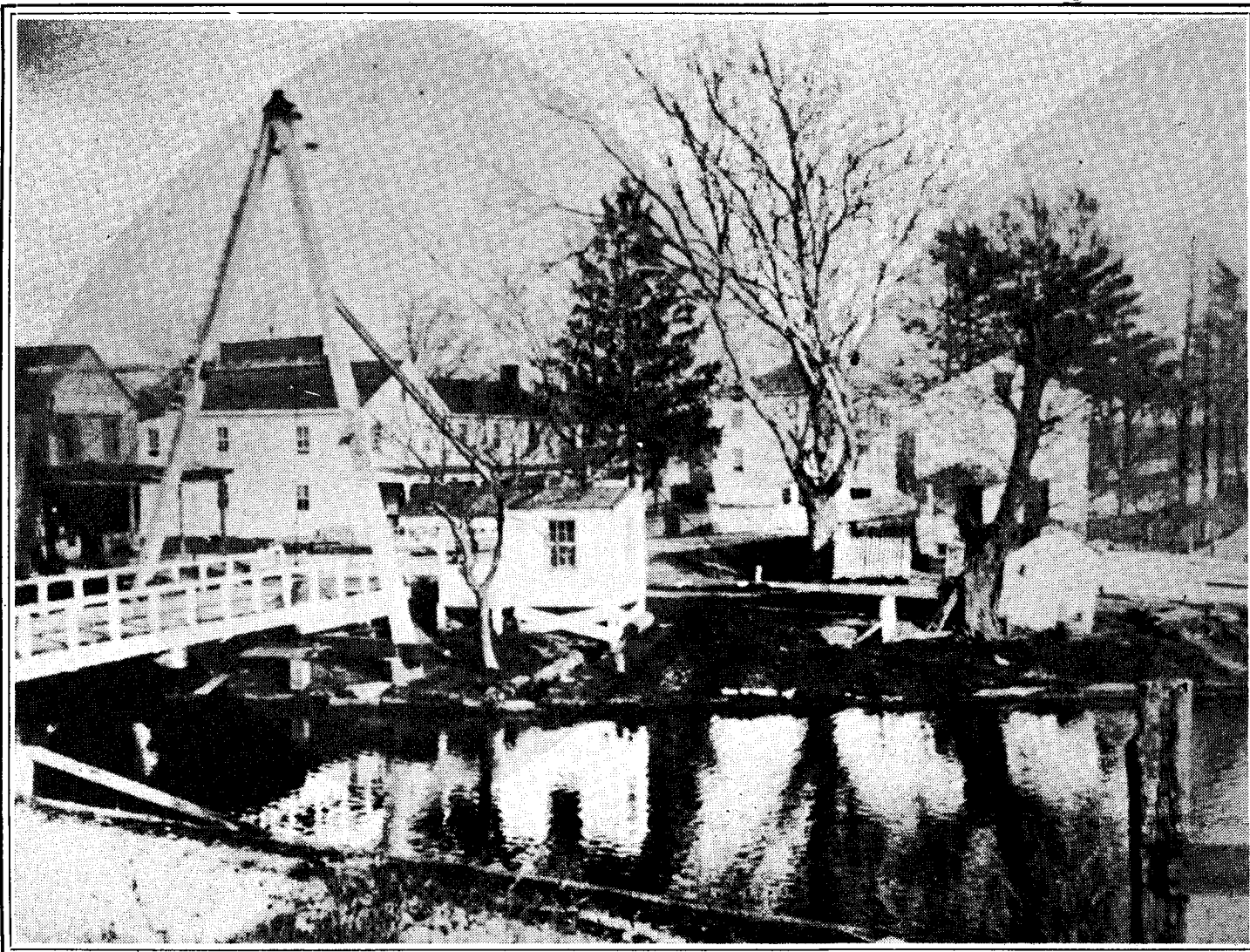
# Children Were Entertained at Dinner on a Shanty Boat

right down the highway there was a lot of houses there, at Clarksville. Our old school used to be up there where the mall is, right opposite the telephone garage.

"Everyone around Port Mercer when I was small was poor. We hardly had shoes all Summer. We used to work on the farms pickin' potatoes and things like that to get money to buy clothes to go to school with. I can remember walkin' up to Clarksville, my brother and I, Walt, and sittin' there on the bank in front of the hotel, and watch the cars go by. They were such a rarity, that you hardly ever saw a car. Route One was a gravel road in those days, wasn't even macadam.

"All us kids worked on a farm. I worked on the Updike Farm — that's how I knew all the Updikes. I don't remember Frank much — he was only a little boy — but I can remember his father, and his father's father, and his father's father's father. That house is still there. They had the big barns, and those meadows over there. They used to pasture the cows and the horses out there, and they had sheep at one time, too. We used to walk over there to that farm, and it was about three miles. We'd work all day and then walk home. Fact, when I was about sixteen, when I went to Princeton High, I worked down in Lawrence Station, where they used to load potatoes. I used to have to walk from Port Mercer to Lawrence Station, and then work all day 'til 6:00, and then walk home again, 'cause we had no transportation. Didn't even have a bicycle in them days.

"I never thought in my lifetime that they would ever have anything built over on the other side of the



Not a few passersby have been astonished to see the name Port Mercer by the roadside at the intersection of Province Line and Quakerbridge Roads in landlocked central New Jersey. But as this early view demonstrates, the tiny settlement on the banks of the Delaware and Raritan Canal once lived up to its name.

*Courtesy of George Arrowsmith*

canal. Like that golf course. When I was a kid, that was just as it was, I guess, since God made it. But I never thought they'd ever build anything back in there.

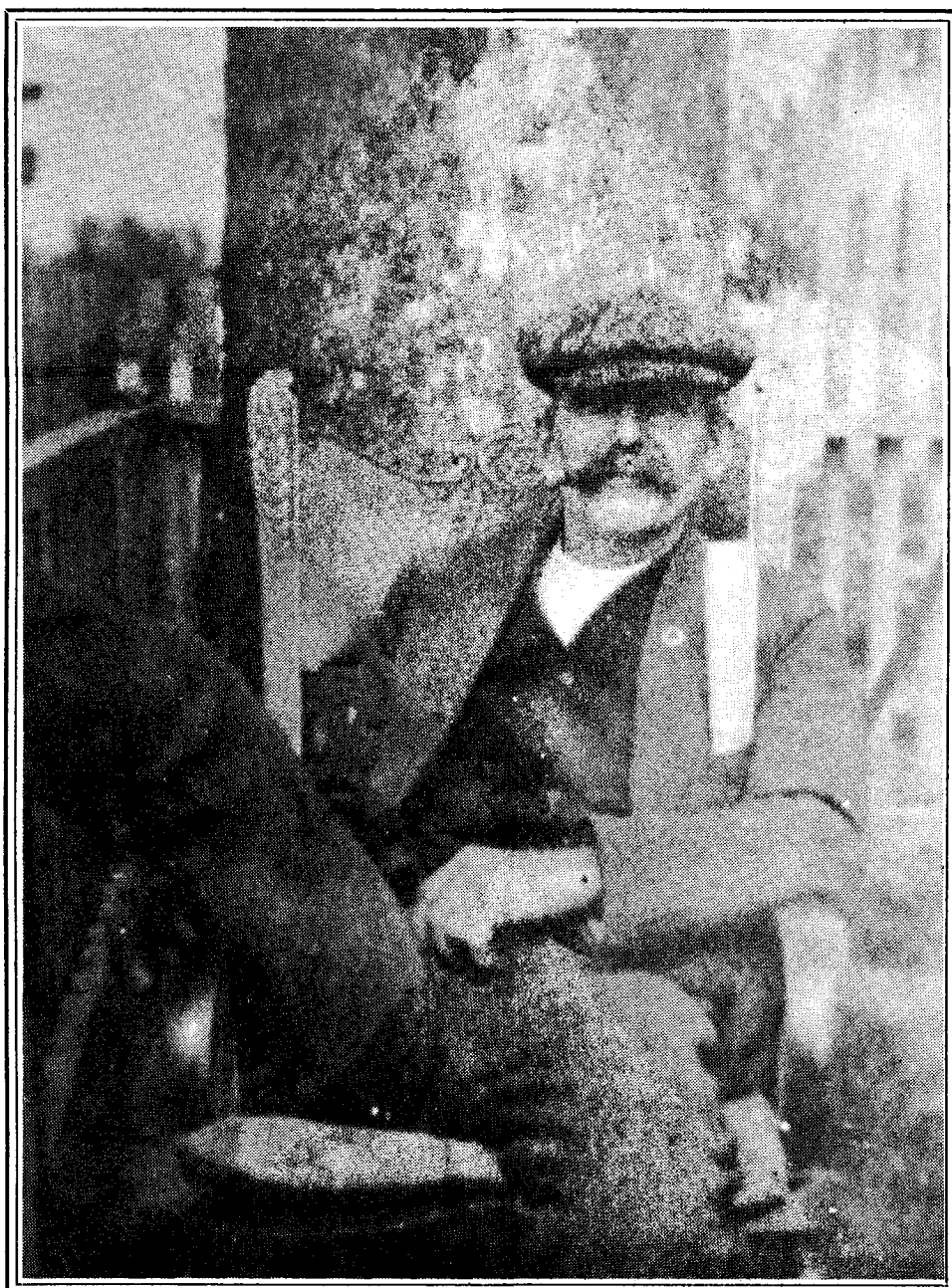
"I remember when they built that golf course... we used to play up there, my brother and I, and I re-

member I had my initials cut on a tree, an old hickory tree, that I cut in there in 1971; and when they built the golf course, darn if it didn't come right across where that tree was, and they cut that tree down.

"When they had towboats with mules and that, they put them up overnight, in stables. There wasn't one at Port Mercer. There was one at Kingston, there was one at Trenton. I don't think there was any in between.

"Sometimes they used to have young kids that were the mule drivers. Sometimes they'd ride on the mules, and sometimes they'd be walkin'. The towpath where the mules would walk was always kept in good condition. It wasn't full of holes and caved in and all that. These maintenance men, they'd have to keep all the trees and brush and stuff down between the path and the canal so the rope wouldn't get caught. And that's where we used to get all our firewood, too. We used to go down, cut the trees down, load


the wood on our big rowboat, and then pull it along, pull it up to the home. So we had a big pile of wood; and then Clarence Updike used to come over with his tractor. First he used to own just a little motor, and he used to turn a belt to saw the wood. Before *that*, we used to have to saw it manually, back and forth, like this. But then when we got a tractor, or got this motor thing goin' with a big round circular saw, and man, we could saw like anything. We could saw a Winter's supply of wood. We didn't have any coal them days; the only kind of heat we had was wood fire.




John Arrowsmith, bridgetender at Port Mercer until the canal was closed in 1933, relaxes in front of the bridge house in this early photograph. He continued to live there until his death in 1939.

*Courtesy of George Arrowsmith*

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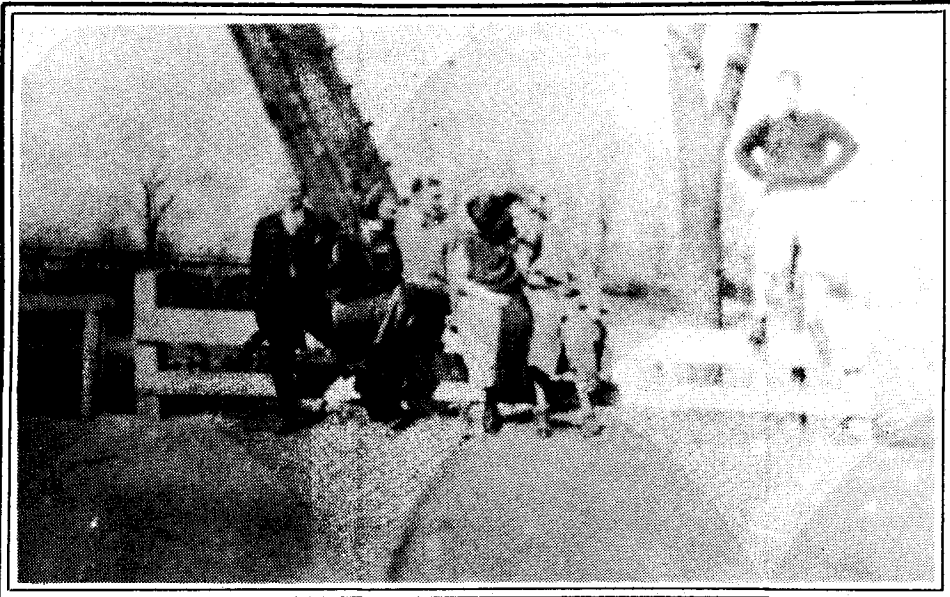



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# Arrowsmith Skated to Trenton and Back for a Date



Sixteen-year-old George Arrowsmith stands at right near clowning friends on the approach to the A-frame or "sheer leg" bridge at Port Mercer.

Courtesy of George Arrowsmith

"There are stone embankments on the canal on the side that the mules were on. Sometimes they were field-stone, sometimes they were what they used to call Belgian blocks. They were sort of granite blocks that were all the same size. A lot of the wall along there was built with these blocks. Then they had these bulk-heads to keep the ground from washin' out near the bridge. See, at one time, they had shear poles. They were big poles that were up in the air which had tails down to carry the weight of the bridge around. But then later on, we used to turn it with a crank. They had a crank with a big cog on it that turned the bridge around, and if it was balanced right, it would be easy as anything. It

would almost go of its own accord. Before that, they used to have a pole. They had a walkway on there and they had those shear poles. You had to push the pole to push it around. Manual labor then!

"There used to be a man called the skunk man, and his name was Yard — Bill Yard. He used to catch skunks alive. He'd catch 'em by the tail and as long as he could keep their feet from hittin' the ground, he wouldn't have to worry about their sprayin' him. When we were kids, whenever we'd hunt muskrats or skunks or any kinda furred animals, we'd sell 'em to him. We'd go over to Harry Baldwin's place and sell 'em to him.

"The canal company had a man that did nothing else but just track muskrats. Now, I can remember one time down towards Princeton, before they had the dams in Stony Brook, every time we got a heavy rain, the brook would flood all those fields. We used to take a canoe over it, take a canoe right over top of the fences and everything. This one time, just about opposite what we called the Duck Pond, the muskrats had all holes down through there, and I

guess the ground was weak; and the water was high on the other side where the brook overflowed the fields, and the water rushed through into the canal, flooded all the canal.

"I went to a lot of different schools in them days. I went to Penn's Neck School up Route One. The schoolhouse is still there, but it's not a school anymore. The first year of high school I went to Trenton High. See, I lived in Lawrence Township, and they had no high school in them days. So I went to Trenton, the one on Princeton Avenue, — Number One, the first year it was built, that was in 1918. Then the next year, I was sent to Princeton. But I remember when I went to Princeton, there were only two boys in the class I was in, Tommy O'Kane and I. There were about thirty-four, thirty-five in the class, and two boys. All the rest were girls!

"We had Sunday School in our regular school, in grammar school, but it was non-denominational. Everybody went, Catholic or Baptist. . .everybody. And they used to have a big enrollment, too. Bible study, and different classes according to your age. Stuart Gordon used to be superintendent there for a long time and his home was where the Vaccaros live, right back of the mall. That's a beautiful home. The windows are from the floor to the ceiling, parquet floors. . .It's the big yellow house past the mall as you go down Quakerbridge Road. Sits right on top of the hill, on the left.

"I lived home until I was about thirteen or fourteen. And then I lived over in Lawrenceville. I lived with people named Bussom that had a store. In fact, they had the old Jigger Shop before Ray. And I worked in his store before and after school. I lived right there, had a room up over the store.

"I remember Thornton Wilder. He was one of the professors at the Lawrenceville School. He lived up in the Davis house. He used to come in the Jigger Shop all the time, for lunch or for breakfast or somethin', and I knew him real well. And so he gave me a book, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, and autographed it for me. It was a first edition. And I, like a stupid nut, lent it to this one, that one, and somebody got it and didn't give it back, so today I don't have it. He was a wonderful person. Always happy and cheerful, and very friendly, very talkative. He was head of that house he lived in, and he had all those boys to control.

"I worked at Lawrenceville School, after I left workin' in the Jigger Shop. 1925. I worked in the commissary department, where they buy all the food. They got the menus and all that. Then I went from there and worked for a man named H. Arthur Smith. I worked for him, I guess, 1926 to 1940, thereabouts. I was his gardener. He had eight acres of lawns and shrubbery and stuff that I took care of in Summertime, and in Wintertime I would be his

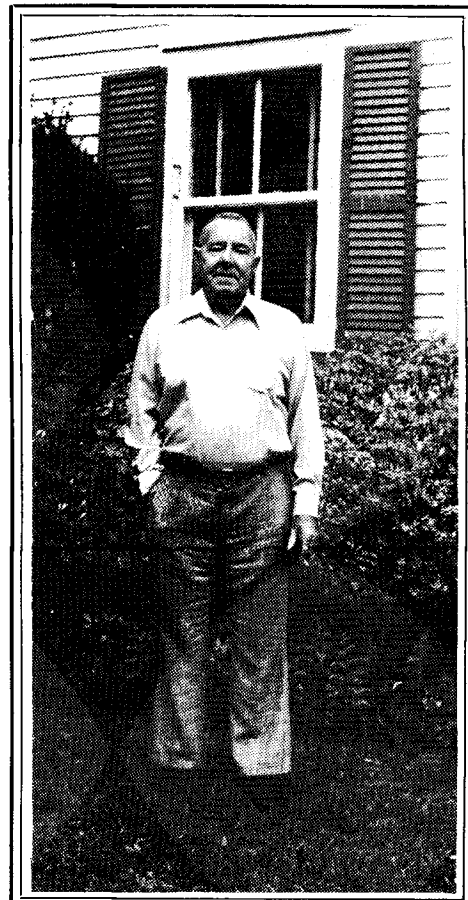
chauffeur. Chauffeur his wife around, to shoppin' . . .

"I stopped in there several years ago just to see how some of the shrubbery and stuff I planted had grown — rhododendrons. . .oh, we had every kind of tree or every kind of bush or anything you could think of. Linden trees, apple trees, ash, willow ash. . .Lord, the rhododendrons were great big bushes now, and the man that owns it, he's a contractor, and he wanted to know if I would come to trim the shrubbery and stuff for him. He couldn't get anybody who knew anything about trimmin'. But naw, I said, I'm retired. I've been retired sixteen years. It's a long time to be without a paycheck. . . .

"In 1940 I came to live down here [White Horse], and I worked in Delaval during the War, up until 1945, and in 1945 I went with Borden Company, and I worked there until I retired, in '65. That was on North Broad Street, right near the monument. The building's still there, but the windows have all been broken out and it's a mess now. But I guess that building cost 'em a quarter of a million dollars to build.

"Our lane used to go out to Olden Avenue. There was no streets here. And the back here was an apple orchard, and there were fields all around. At the time we moved here, they were just gettin' ready to develop. Soon after we moved here, they started to make streets and cut up the whole area.

"We always say, 'There were the good old days,' and I still think they were the good old days. It didn't seem to me there was much pressure on you. You could enjoy your life."



George Arrowsmith, son of the last bridgetender on the canal at Port Mercer, stands before his one hundred and sixty year old house in the White Horse section of Hamilton Township. Photograph by Jeff Macechak

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# MINSTREL SHOW PLAYED THE GARDEN



Over the years the stage of the Garden Theatre was the scene of more than a few live performances, including the once familiar minstrel shows. This photograph depicts the cast of one such local fund-raiser about 1928-1930. As identified by the donor the picture includes: back row (left to right) — Frank Kelly, Tom Delaney, Ed Kopp, "interlocutor" Ralph Kimble (in white tie), Doug MacNamee and an unknown gent; "side-men" — Charles LaTourette,

Tom Collins and two unknowns; and the remaining company (left to right) — Cray, Don Yost, Frank Bird, unknown, unknown, Dilworth, Raymond Johnson, Con Cavanaugh, Miss Bierce, Jack Delaney, Ken Hickman, unknown, unknown, Roger O'Kane, Charles Foulke, Frank Kane, Jr. and Al Briggs. We are anxious to hear the memories of any of the performers or those who shared in the entertainment from the audience.

Atta boy! There will be great doings at the Garden Theatre next Wednesday and Thursday evenings when the local Athletic Club rolls up the curtain on a regular old-time minstrel show. Funny blackface comedians and silver-tenors have been rehearsing for the past few weeks under the capable direction of Frank Mitchell and Franke Kane, Jr., the musical director.

It has been many moons since a local organization has assayed forth to don the cork, not since the days of the old Hook and Ladder troupe, and, believe me, boys, there sure will be lots of fun turned loose on the atmosphere.

The town has long been noted for its theatrical talent, and this organization has certainly captured its share. You may not believe it, but,

honest, there is enough talent in this body of mirth provokers and vocalistic exponents to gladden the heart of the famous Lew Dockstader himself.

You certainly mustn't miss this show, or both of 'em, in fact, for each performance will be well worth staying up for. You see, the club needs the money for new baseball outfits, and that's one of the reasons for the show. The other is because there is so much entertaining material in the club anyway that they just had to let you folks enjoy it. They couldn't do it all in one night.

Just adjust your spectacles and gaze upon this galaxy of well known Princetonians who will make the

evening merry. The ends will be taken care of by Frank Hogarty, Con Cavanaugh, Walter Harris and Harry Dexter, while the interlocutor will be Ralph Kimble. Isn't that a combination for rib-tickling assurance? You know, "Gentlemen, be seated," and all that goes with it before the fun begins to commence to start.

In the circle, or, we should say, where the silver-throated tenors and the basso profundos hold forth, will be Van Leigh, Charlie Stout, Elwood Blydenburgh, Henry Wheeler, Tommy Collins, Doc. Chafey, Rich Hagadorn, Herb Van Sciver, Charlie Van Sciver, Ken Hickman, Rog. O'Kane, Lou Fryer, Charlie Stryker

and Charlie Baker.

William Palmer is manager and Edgar Warren his assistant. Tom Welch is stage manager, and he knows more about arranging the stage of the Garden than the architect who drew the plans. If it isn't right at the start, he'll stop the show till he gets it right, so everybody may look for a perfect stage setting.

Now you know what is in store, and considering the lapse of time since there has been any such doings, there certainly ought to be packed houses both evenings. Unfortunately, there isn't going to be the customary minstrel street parade, or the small boys would be hanging around the Garden Theatre waiting for the doors to open like flies over a table at a harvest home supper.

We'll see you at the show!



## LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

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Photo courtesy of Mollie Carnevale Briggs

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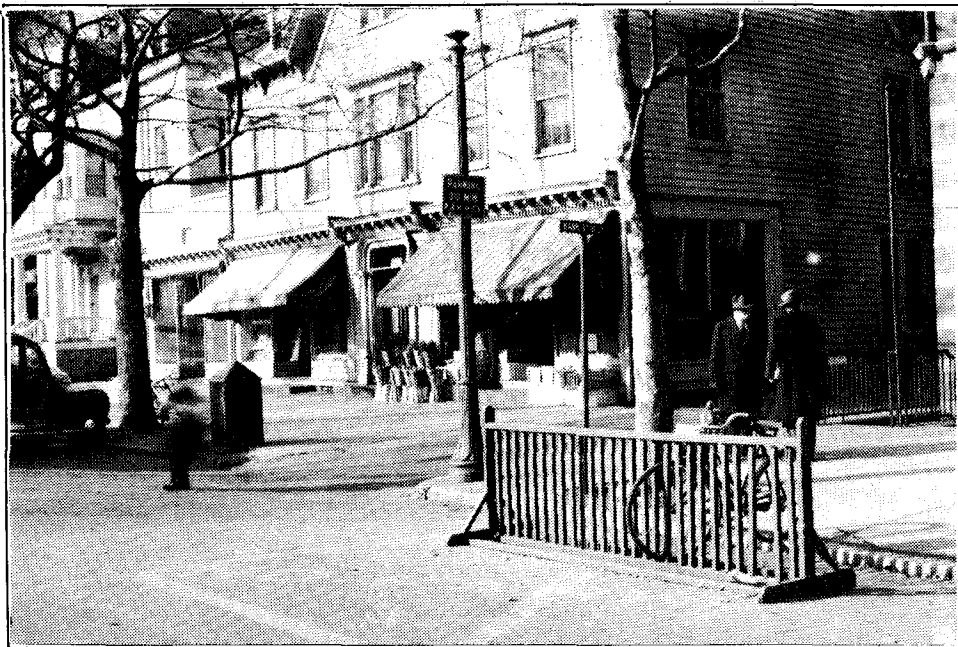
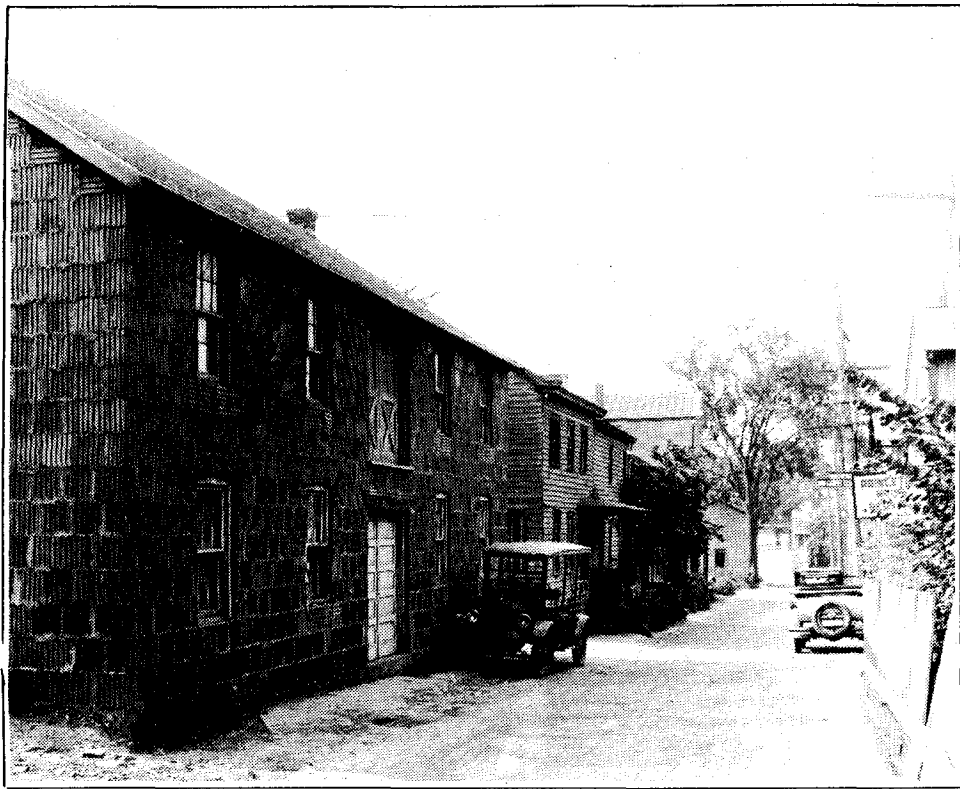
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# PESKIN COMPILES NASSAU STREET COMPENDIUM



In 1930 Julius Peskin started The Princeton News Service on John Street opposite the terra cotta structure which now houses Kopp's Bicycles. Lyon's meat market and Bamman's grocery store marked the spot where Princeton matrons began their daily shopping. The handsome Dutch Revival structure long the headquarters of Princeton Bank and Trust remains, though the bank moved to far less distinguished digs in 1964.

Courtesy Princeton Pictorial Archive



It was over fifty years ago, in May 1930, when my late partner, Lew Schleifer and I purchased the Princeton News Service Company, and settled in Princeton.

At that time and month the main business area of Princeton went from Bank Street to Vandeventer Avenue with the University on one side and Nassau Street paved in cobblestone Belgian blocks — the main drag of Princeton. How many Princetonians who are today's mothers, fathers, grandparents, and perhaps great-grandparents, remember the stores and businessmen of 1930 which they once patronized?

I got very nostalgic one day and with pen and pencil wrote their names. Unfortunately, none of the businessmen are around now but there are a few names carried on by a later generation. My list may perhaps leave out a few names and the stores may not be in numerical order along the street, but I have tried to recollect as close as I can.

I lived in Princeton for forty-one years before moving to Florida.

Kindest regards to all my dear friends in Princeton.

Julius Peskin  
Hollywood, Florida

The following list of Nassau Street businesses compiled by Mr. Peskin has been checked against a 1931 Princeton Directory and arranged by street number accordingly. Our correspondent seems to have made remarkably few omissions (two notable exceptions are H. P. Clayton's at 70 and Luttmann's at 132 Nassau Street). A few establishments in his list are not included in the directory (N.L.). Perhaps they went under in 1930 or appeared slightly later. We invite our readers to make their own comments and additions.

- 4 Frank E. South's garage
- 6 W. B. Howe, real estate (Foster, Bergen, Titus-salesmen)
- 8 Lyons' meat market
- 10 Dr. Ellis, optician (came in on Fridays)
- 12 Bamman's groceries
- 14 Princeton Bank and Trust Company (John Colt, president John Leigh, vice president two red-head receptionists, one a Miss Whiteman)
- NL Eldridge - Princeton Electric Store
- 16 Carroll's department store
- 20 French Shop, ladies' clothing (Mrs. Lahiere, proprietor)
- 20 Dolly (Pauline G.) Skillman, stenographer
- 20 Wilcox drug store
- 20 Jack Honoré, barber (basements)
- 30 Marsh's drug store
- 34 Rose, photographer
- 36 Scopa, tailor, dry cleaning

- 40 Joe Sippley's restaurant
- 42 Dr. Van Syckle, dentist
- 50 Princeton Savings (Dr. Bergen, president H. E. Eldridge, vice president Harry Hutchinson, treasurer)
- 55 Nassau Inn
- 56 Leigh Tailor Shop
- 58 Renwick's restaurant
- 60 G. R. Murray, real estate
- 60 Ed Kopp's bicycle shop
- 60 Jim Campbell, watch repair
- 68 Skirm's Smoke Shop
- 72 La Vake, jeweler
- 74 Harold Hinkson's stationery
- 76 Brophy's shoe store
- 78 Princess Shop, antiques (prop. Mr. Clark, baseball coach)
- 82-84 Balt restaurant and bakery (Mr. Tarbell, proprietor)
- 82-84 Upstairs — Eisele and King, stockbrokers (Mr. Myrick, manager)
- 86 Svenberg and Immerman, Stationery
- NL Upstairs — Al Gross, tutoring school (for college students who needed coaching)
- 88-90 First National Bank (Mr. Flynn, president Joseph Hoff, vice president)
- 88-90 Upstairs — George Rule, real estate
- 88-90 Upstairs — Princeton Athletic Association (Asa Bushnell, graduate manager. Football tickets were sold; lines would form on the stairs)
- 92 Western Union
- 94-96 Post Office (Mr. Cottrell, postmaster)
- NL Chadwick's drug store
- 100 Lyons and McMullen, Chevrolet agency
- 102 Applegate's stationery
- 102 Upstairs — O'Kane and Margerum, insurance, and shoemaker
- 104 Vogel Brothers' meat market (Ike and Bill, butchers)
- 110 Veidt's luncheonette
- 112 Orren Jack Turner, photographer
- 116 Ella Johnston, town nurse
- 120 Durner's barber shop
- 122 Postal Telegraph
- 124 Acme American Store (Mr. Kreiger, manager)
- 126 Du Praz's restaurant
- 128 Braveman, watch repair
- 130 Zapf's hardware
- 134 Bert Green's Annex Club
- 136 Lahiere's auto repair (leading to Spring Street store and garage)
- 138 Struve's Arcade Theatre
- 138 Farr's hardware
- 140 Public Service (Mr. Brearley, manager)
- 142 Baldwin's shoe store (later Hulit and Harn's)
- 142 Hubbard and Mershon real estate
- 144 Heereman's florist
- NL Clearose Studios, photographers
- 150 Fischer, tailor
- 156 Worrell and Shinn, plumbers
- 158 Public Library
- 160 Garden Theatre



# Durner's Good for a Haircut, a Conversation, or a Cigar



*Continued from page one*

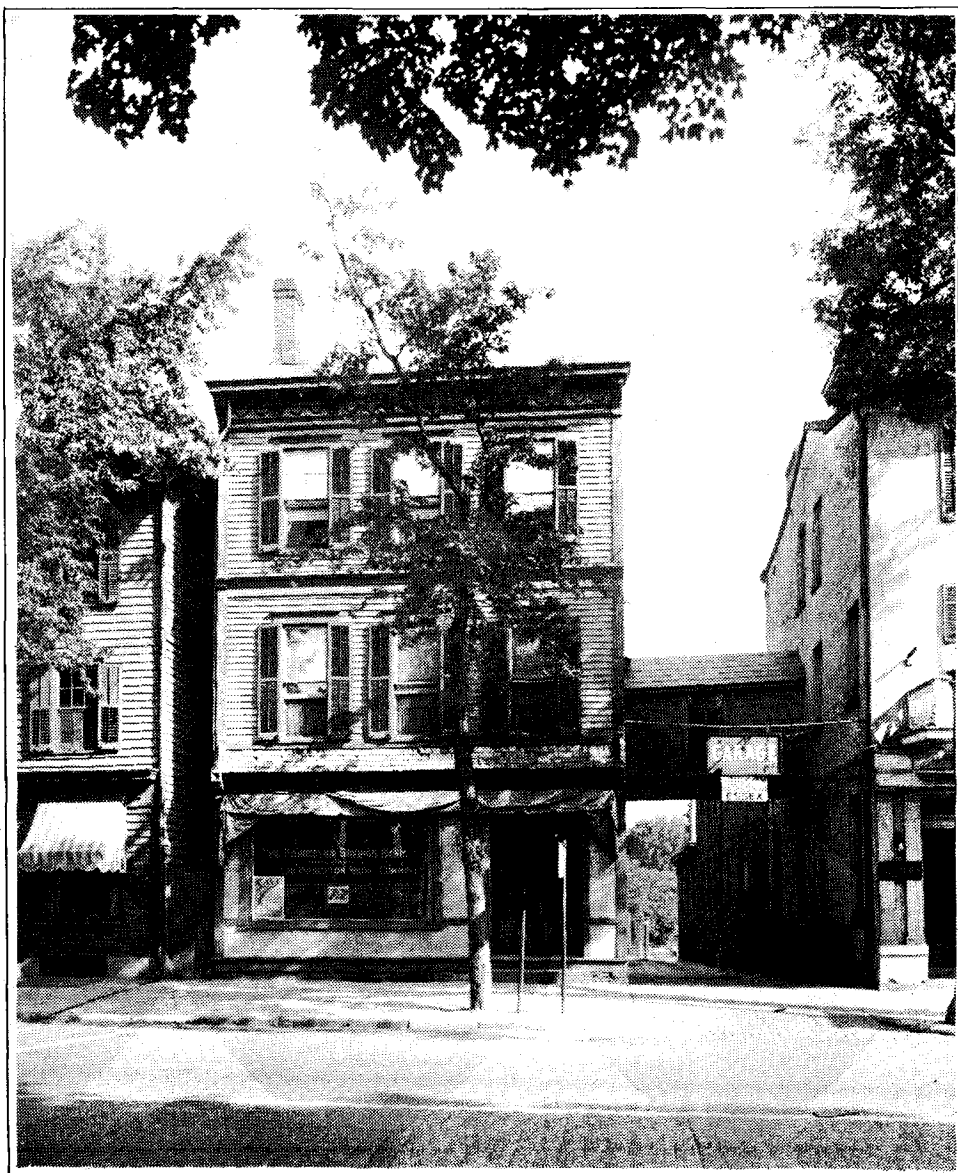
When we went into Princeton we knew most of the people we would see on the street. Many of the stores were owned by the families of people we knew and it was nice to be greeted by name when we went into a store. One of the places my father and I visited most regularly was Durner's barber shop, which was located in the area where Woolworth's now stands. Mr. Bill Durner was the proprietor and he usually had about four barbers working for him. Among them I remember Russ Smith and Larry Healy, who was the proprietor for many years when the shop was located in the Nassau Inn. The original Durner's had a cigar and tobacco counter at the front of the shop, and a gas flame where customers could light their cigars. The counter was tended by Mr. Durner's brother, John, who also cleaned the shop and collected the money, which was fifty cents for a haircut and twenty-five cents for a shave. Many of the regular customers had their own shaving mugs which were kept in a rack at the side of the shop. Often, when I went for a haircut and got finished before my father, I would go down the Alley (Tulane Street) to Spring Street, where my grandparents (the McKaigs) lived. At that time Mr. Jack Cray had a garage there, located about where Verbeyst is now. Where the parking lot is located was Brown Brothers' garage, which was the Buick agency. Later it became Lahiere's garage. My grandmother and grandfather lived at 43 Spring Street. The building next to them where the apartments are now located was always referred to as "The Greeks." I think it was a dormitory for men who worked in the dining halls at the University.

Bamman's, located where the American Express office now is, was the store where we bought groceries and meat. They bought eggs and potatoes from us, and we had a charge account there. Shopping for groceries then was a far different experience from pushing a cart down a series of aisles. Each customer was attended by a clerk who collected all the merchandise, packed it up, and collected the cash or made out a sales slip, whichever the case might be. These sales people were more than acquaintances, they were really friends, and we looked forward to talking with them while they "waited" on us. Among them were Mr. Ed Bamman (known as "Pete" to my mother and father), Mr. David Lloyd Jr., who was part owner of the business, Mr. Jim Layton, Mr. Raymond Johnson, Mr. Bob Perrine, Mr.

Watson, and in later years, Mr. Les Rigg. In the years just before the war, Dick Mooney, Bob Mooney's older brother, worked there. He was killed during the war. Dick and Bob were among the first people of my own age that I knew who lived in town. Their family had given us an Airedale dog, Tim, and Dick and Bob used to come out to the farm to see him. At that time Mr. Paul Hinds also worked at Bamman's. He used to come to our house to get eggs for the store and was a good friend to our family.

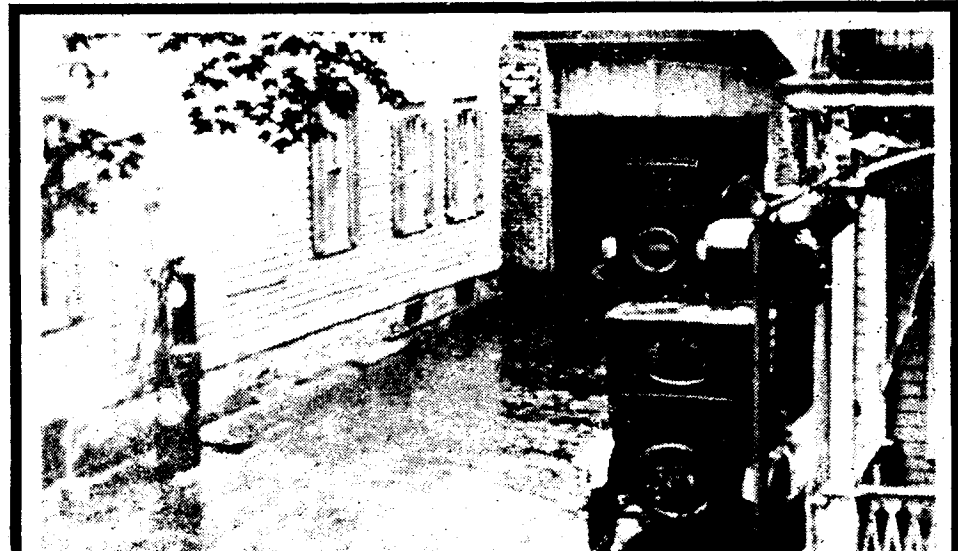
Next door to Bamman's was Lyon's meat market. Mr. John Lyons was the proprietor, and his market was reputed to be among the best in town. His main butcher was Mr. Bill Finnegan, a friend of my father. We used occasionally to sell broilers to Mr. Lyons, who was extremely particular. He wanted them to have a nice yellow skin, and insisted that the skin not be torn during the plucking. He would bring large wicker baskets out to the farm and we placed the chickens in them. They had to be fixed with their wings folded across their backs. That is the way they hung in the store and they were prepared by the butcher only after they were picked out for purchase.

On those occasions when we prepared the broilers for Mr. Lyons, the whole family took part. The young roosters were caught the night before and placed in crates. On the morning that they were to be delivered they would be taken from the crates, their legs tied together, and hung head down from a post or fence. My father would take his penknife, open the mouth and slit the jugular vein. The roosters would quickly bleed to death and as soon as they were dead they would be immersed in boiling water, worked up and down a couple of times to insure that the water penetrated the feathers and then given to someone to pluck. This, as can be imagined, was a wet and smelly job. Usually we covered our legs with burlap bags to keep the water and feathers off our clothes. All the feathers had to be removed right up to a small band around the head. Then they were placed in ice cold water to remove the body heat and finally lined up in Mr. Lyons' baskets. This usually happened in the Spring or early Summer because that was the time when the young roosters would reach a marketable weight. Sometimes in the Winter or other times of cool weather there would be whole carcasses of animals or fowl hanging outside the doorway of Mr. Lyons'



*Rose photographers, which stood near Marsh's drugstore (above left) was responsible for these views. The Bickford Building, site of Woolworth's today, was the home of Durner's and the first Gallup Poll. Princeton Savings building was connected to the Nassau Hotel by "the bridge of sighs."*

All courtesy Princeton Pictorial Archive

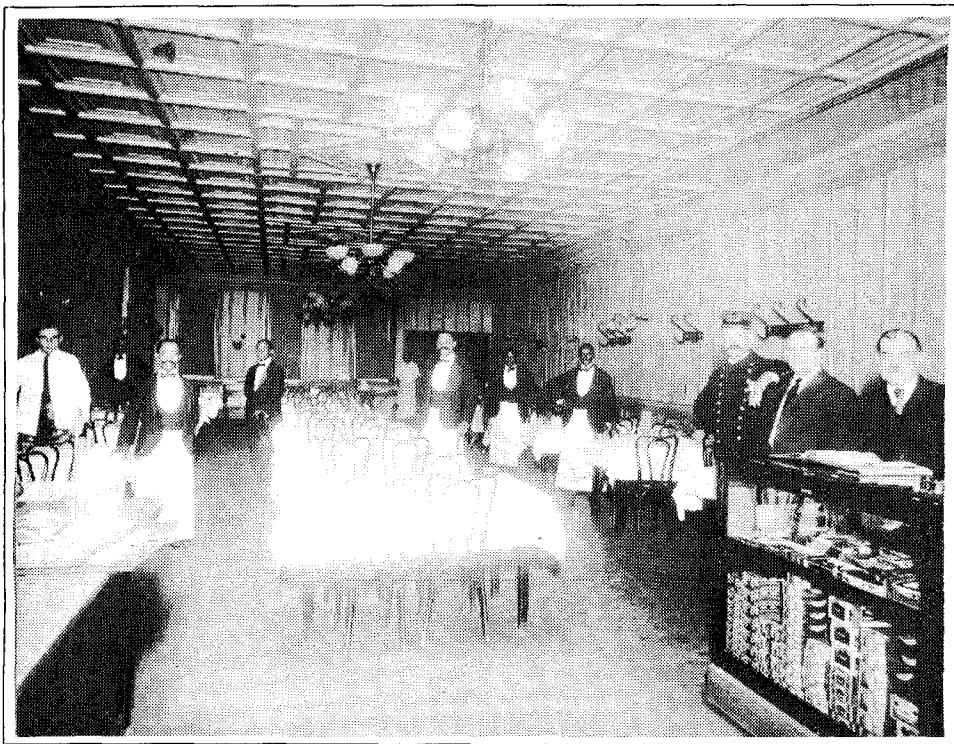
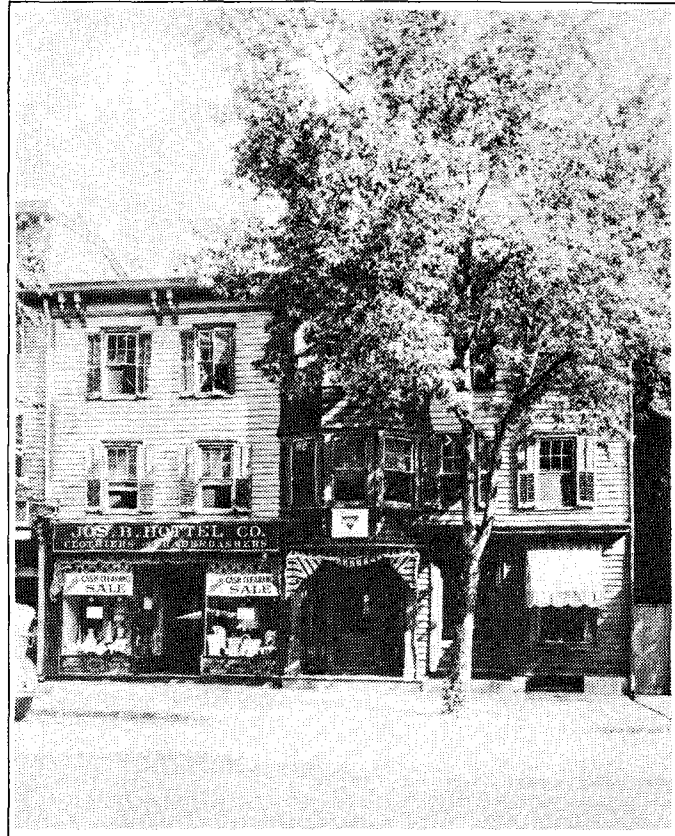


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# Carcasses Hung Outside Lyons' Market on Nassau Street



Dr. Van Sickle's dental office stood beside John Street (above left). He had a foot-powered drill and suffered from Parkinson's disease. On the same block was Hottel's clothing company and the YMCA. Renwick's was located in Hinkson's store of today. Included are Mr. Bogart (in white coat) head of the soda fountain, Mr. Kilfoil, the town's first and only policeman, "Buster" (Bill) Lewis, manager and C. Wesley Leffett, bookkeeper. The identity of the waiters is unknown.

Courtesy Grace Brown Harris, Pictorial Archive

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shop. I suppose that such practices would be prohibited now by health laws but, ironically, the meat was probably more pure than that which is now sealed in sanitary little packages. At least there were no additives to preserve the meat or to give it a bright red color.

In the block between Palmer's residence and Bank Street was Frank South's garage. Mr. South lived in the house at 2 Nassau. The garage for storage and repair was located in the rear and the showroom for cars was between the house and Lyon's. There were two gas pumps at the curb, and oil and other supplies were stored in the cellar area that was entered by a door to the left of the porch. Mr. Ernie Hoagland dispensed gas to lots of Princetonians for many years while he worked for Mr. South. Mr. South had the agency for Cadillac, LaSalle and, for some years, Hupmobile, so his gas customers had some of the most expensive cars in town. Mr. Bob Clayton was the manager for South's, and the car salesman. The head mechanic was Mr. Frank Perna and Ernie D'Andrea was then a young man learning the mechanic's trade.

On the other side of Bank street from Bamman's was the Princeton Bank and Trust Company. My mother used to go into town on the trolley to do the necessary banking during the day. I suppose there were a number of people employed there who were well known to my family, but I really only remember Mr. Bill Karch. Pop always said that when Princeton Bank was being established some of the founders came out and begged Grandpop to invest some money in it. He was more than a little skeptical, and invested only \$1000.00. However, even this modest amount grew over the years. Just an example, I guess, of opportunities missed.

Next to the bank was Carroll's dry goods store, which my mother frequently patronized. My very earliest recollection is of a house where Twenty Nassau is now located. I think I recollect its being moved to prepare the site for the new building. Among the occupants of Twenty Nassau after it was erected was Wilcox's Pharmacy. Mr. Wilcox had been a pharmacist at Briner's drug store before he went into business for himself. Harry Ballot's store is certainly one of the oldest in Twenty

Nassau. Both my father and grandfather bought things there. Marsh's drug store, known in my early years as Marsh and Burke's, was in the location that was vacated only a couple of years ago by the present Marsh ownership. I am not sure anymore of all the shops, but very near Marsh's was Rose's photo studio. My sisters, Marion and Jane, and I had a group photograph taken there when I was about ten or twelve years old. I can remember its being displayed in their window. Also in this stretch was Joe Sippley's lunch room — known to most Princetonians as Joe Sip's — and Renwick's soda fountain. Renwick's survived the renovations that resulted in Palmer Square and, for a time, was located where part of LaVake's jewelers is now.

Another land mark of this area West of Witherspoon was the old Nassau Hotel. I don't remember too much about it, but I went in there a few times with my grandfather McKaig. One of his friends was old Mr. Briner who I believe lived there. At least that is where I always remember seeing him.

Kopp's bicycle shop, where I got my first new bicycle, was in this area, and next door was the G. R. Murray Insurance and Real Estate office. These shops were up a short flight of steps and had a railing in front, with spikes to discourage anyone from sitting there and loitering. Mr. Murray was said by many people to look like George Arliss, the old time movie actor. Christie White-man's barber shop was also in the immediate area and, in the early years, Orren Jack Turner had a studio in this block.

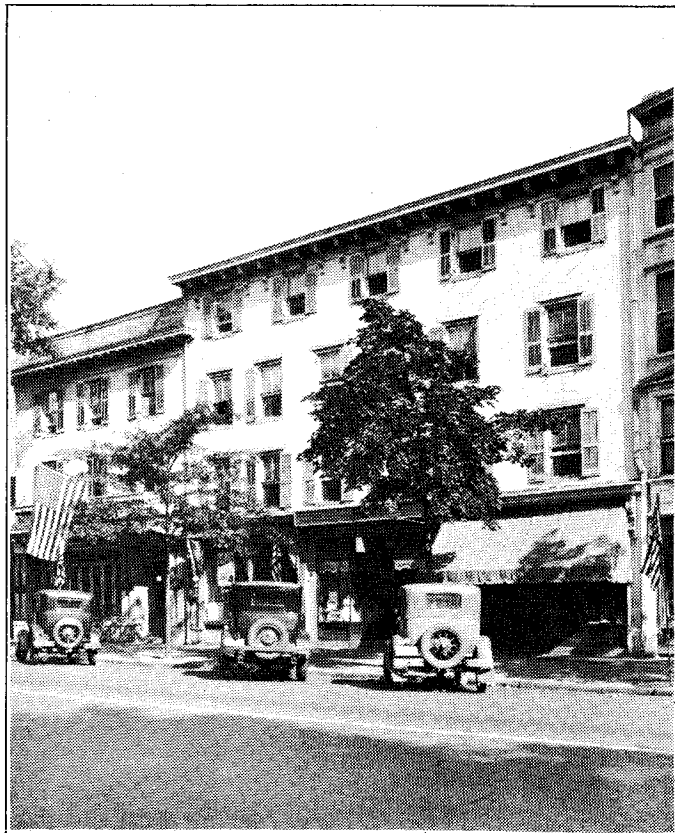
One of the few dentists in town was Dr. Van Sickle. His office was in an old house on the East corner of John street. He introduced me to the mysteries of dentistry while I was still a very small boy. Next to his office was Briner's drug store. Later this was taken over by Mr. Ed Thorne who, for a short time, operated there as well as at the store below the Methodist Church where Marsh's is today.

Next to Briner's, I believe, was Hottel's men's store. Mr. Lee McConaghy, the father of Lee McConaghy, who taught at Princeton High School for many years, was the manager. Walter Jefferson, later the manager of the Water Company, was a clerk there when he was a young

\*\*\*\*\*  
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# Castor Oil and Orange Juice at Chadwick's Was No Treat



man. William Leigh's men's store was another well known establishment located in this stretch of Nassau. Mr. Leigh was the husband of Marion Goldie, my grandfather's cousin. If I recall correctly, Mr. Charles Zapf was a clerk there.

Moving down Nassau toward Witherspoon was Clayton's store. I can remember old Mr. Clayton and how he was always so gracious to my mother. Next door was LaVake's and, as I recall, a second story connection stretching across Baker's Alley to the building next door. I was fascinated by La Vake's because they had a little package elevator that they put items in and sent them upstairs to their workshop. I always wondered what little gnomes were up there working on the watches, or rings or pins. Never were they ever seen in the store. Behind this complex of buildings which fronted Nassau Street was Harvey Bergen's livery stable. Mr. Bergen bought hay and straw from us and my grandfather used to deliver it in the "cab-top wagon."

On the other side of Baker's Alley was Hinkson's stationery store in Upper Pyne. In the same building was Brophy's shoe store. I think the old Baltimore Dairy Lunch (The Balt) and the Balt Bakery were established sometime in the early 1920's. It seems to me that they were new when I was still a small boy. Mrs. Mary Bruce, my mother-in-law, worked in the Balt Bakery for many years and nearly everyone in Princeton knew her and loved her. She dispensed cookies to a whole generation of Princeton children.

On the other side of Witherspoon were the Western Union and Post Office. Chadwick's drug store was located adjacent to the Post Office. I recall going in there once with my mother. For some reason she thought I needed a dose of castor oil and she took me in and had the man who worked at the fountain mix some castor oil with orange juice. All it did was ruin my taste for orange juice for a long time! Lyons and McMillan had the Chevrolet Agency and show room in the place where Gallery 100 is now located. Across Dohm's Alley was Applegate's stationery store, and next door was Vogel's meat market. The whole front of Vogel's store opened up to the street.

I can't name in order the other stores that lined Nassau down to Tulane Alley, but there were Mr. Durner's barber shop, Baldwin's shoe store, and Orren Jack Turner had an extensive studio and display area at the street level. There was also a small A&P store located in this block, and I think an American Stores grocery shop, as well. "Duke" Hulit had an ice cream parlor about where Landau's Too is now located. I think it was called the Tiger's Lair. We often got ice cream there to take home — that was a real treat. It would be hand-packed in a quart box and we would have to hurry home before it melted away. For a while the father of my friend Alice Brave-man had his jewelery store next door to this location.

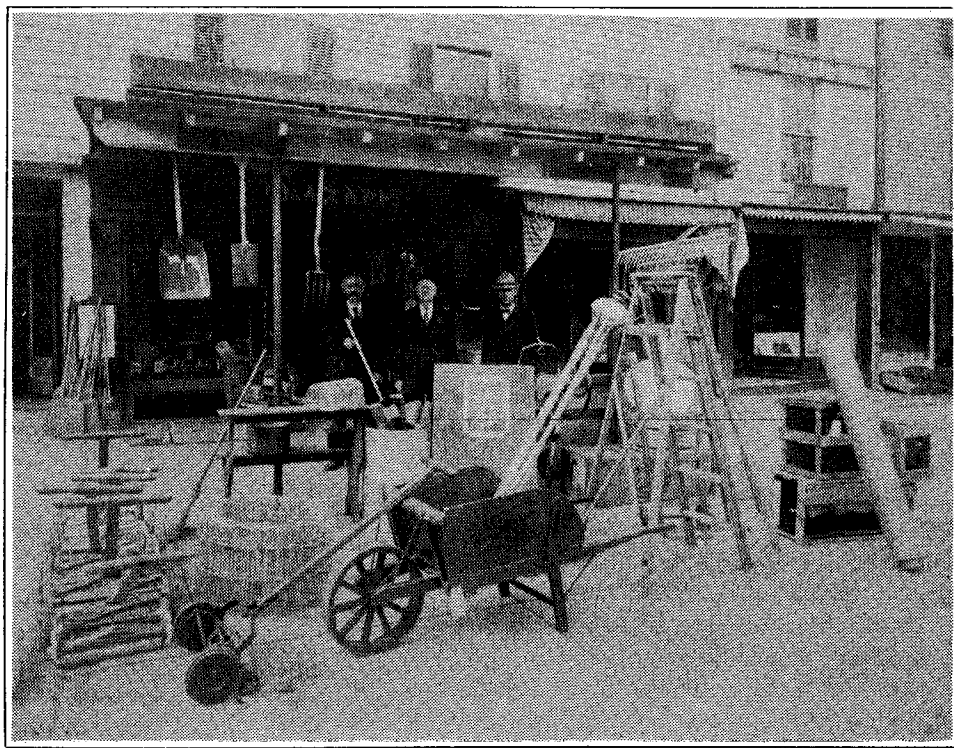
Zapf's Hardware store was located where the Princeton Savings and Loan is now. I remember Mr. Zapf, the owner, and Mr. Ted Warren and Mr. Jim Warren (I don't think they were related), who worked there for many years. Next door was Luttmann's leather shop. In those early days we sometimes took horse harness and collars in to him to be mended.

Struve's Arcade Theater, at the location of the present "Hudibras," was another favorite spot. There used to be two shows nightly, and the program would change two or three times a week. There would usually be a crowd of people in the long corridor waiting to get in and to mix with them was in itself kind of exciting for me.

Farr's Hardware Store was located in this block, and Lahey's men's shop, and the O. H. Hubbard Agency which was managed for many years by Mr. Irving Mershon. Mr. Mershon was himself a Princeton institution, serving on the Board of Education and taking an active part in town affairs. Next to the Hubbard Agency was a real joy. As a young boy I

I'm sure there were other stores or shops that I have forgotten, and it is possible I may even be mistaken in the case of a few names or locations. However, knowing so many people who were part of the Princeton scene was a real job. As a young boy I could feel it was *my town* — sentiments that I believe Thornton Wilder evoked in his play *Our Town*.

Frank Updike



In the pre-Palmer Square view (above left) are four businesses which have survived the years, Skirm's, Clayton's, LaVake's and Hinkson's. The Nassau Hotel (above right) now the Inn, traces its history into the eighteenth century. Zapf's hardware (below), which stood where Landau's Too is today, had a wooden canopy over the sidewalk, the better to display its seasonal merchandise.

Courtesy Princeton Pictorial Archive

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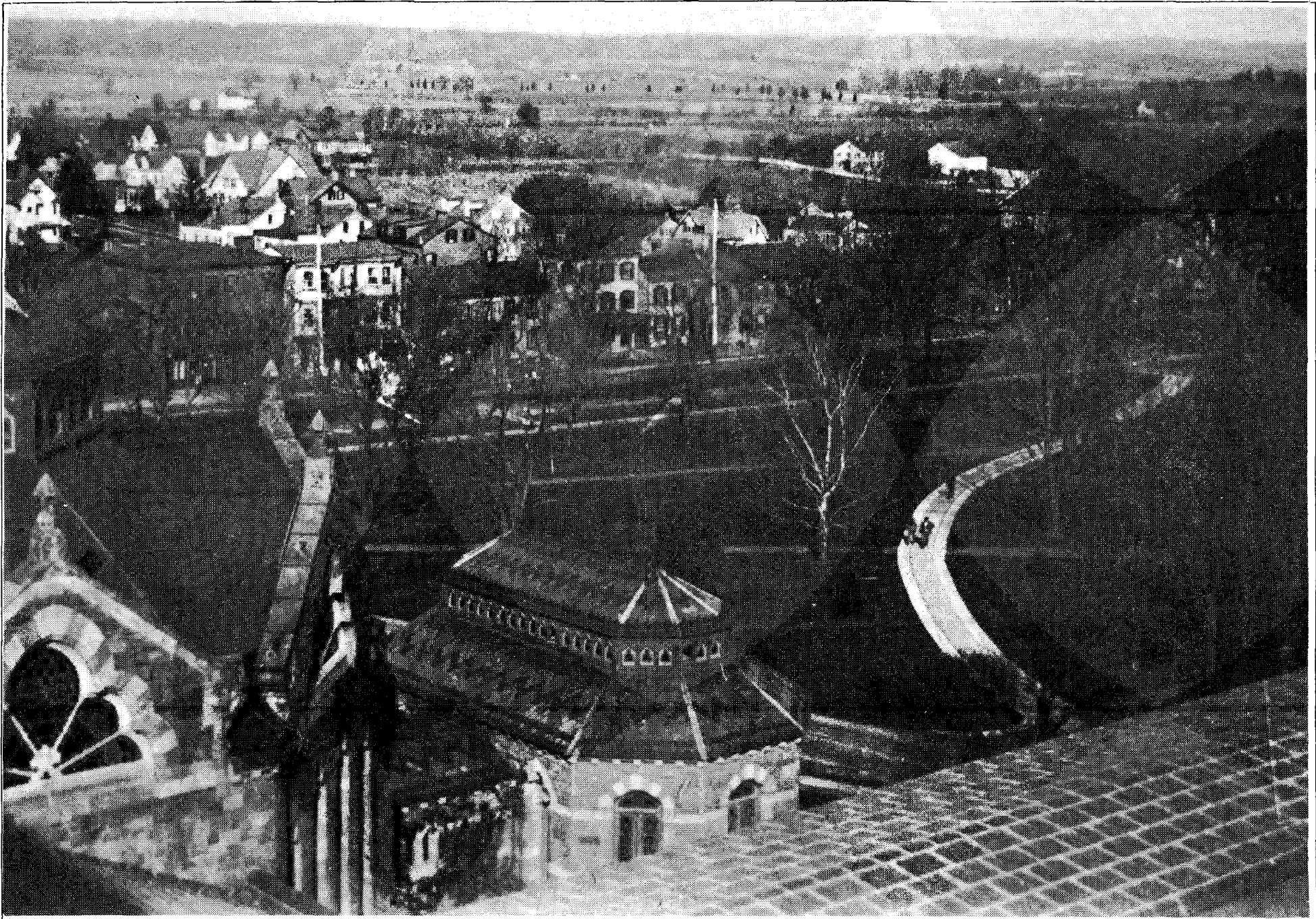


*H.P. Clayton*

Palmer Square, Princeton, N.J.



# VANTAGE POINT REVEALS CHANGING VIEWS



Since the earliest photographers first leveled their lenses to capture the Princeton townscape one of the most persistent preoccupations has been to ascend to the top of the highest vantage point and snap the surrounding views. As each new tower was raised photographic records of the vistas they revealed were soon to follow. Nassau Hall, Pyne Library, Stuart Hall (its tower since removed) on the Seminary Campus, Holder Tower, and Cleveland Tower, and the roof of Fine Hall are among these crow's nests. And when man took to the air over Princeton he took his camera, too. Dominic Nogare, Curator of our Pictorial Archive, has recently revisited a number of these vantage points to record

the changes since the early views in the collection were first struck. This panorama, before and after, was taken from the parapet of Pyne Library sometime between its construction in the 'nineties and 1915. Telephone poles had already come to Nassau Street, but landmarks like the Garden Theatre, the present Methodist Church, Princeton High, and Westminster Choir College were yet to be built and farmland extended in all the way to Wiggins Street. That so much change could occur in less than seventy-five years gives reason for pause in contemplating the next seventy-five.

Courtesy Historical Society of Princeton, Dominic Nogare

