

**HACKENSACK - HERITAGE TO HORIZONS**



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**PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE**

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## **Foreword**

The attempt to put into writing the history of a city now over 300 years old was undertaken with high ideals and a desire to detail much of the story of this area so rich in Revolutionary War history.

An area close to New York, the port of entry for people from all over the globe, seeking a better life, has thousands of interesting personal histories which could never be compressed into a small volume.

Instead, an attempt has been made to describe how each ethnic group came to be a part of the Hackensack Story. For whatever is not covered to the satisfaction of any person, or any group, we must apologize.

We anticipated in the short, volunteer life of your Bicentennial Committee that we could create what would be a small miracle. Larger ones take longer.

Why publish then? If we can look forward to encouraging others to become involved, digging into microfilmed newspapers in our library, finding old letters in their attics, delving into the "whys" of life in Hackensack as an immigrant, etc., then this small start may be a seed from which to grow. We want to know one another better. This was Hackensack.

We are Hackensack. Where will we lead it?

**The Hackensack Bicentennial Committee**

## **Hackensack, Heritage to Horizons**

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## Chapter 1

### In the beginning...

History tells us that the first known European exploration of what is now New Jersey began with Henry Hudson's arrival in Delaware Bay in August, 1609. Three hundred sixty-seven years seem like a long time ago since the visit of the Half Moon until one considers that the area had been occupied by animals - and humans - for a long time.

"An event which took place at Polifly Road in January, 1962, indicates that what is now Hackensack has been a place for life for countless centuries. In what proved to be the beginning of a strange adventure, two Hackensack boys, John Versace and Jimmy DiFranco made a strange discovery. While looking for ice safe for skating, they examined some new ditches near their homes. They found a tooth - and quite a tooth it was - half as long as a football! Then they came upon- two similar teeth nearby. Fortunately, they had recently learned in their Junior High School science class what should be done if they found anything scientifically interesting.

The next day they took their discovery to Richard Straubel, their science teacher, who recognized the uniqueness of the teeth. He immediately telephoned the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. The next day the three took their find to Dr. Edwin H. Colbert, Chairman of the Museum's Department of Vertebrate Paleontology, which studies fossil remains of extinct, back-boned animals.

The youths described the ditches, created by construction crews building the Interstate Route 80, where the teeth were found.

Dr. Colbert ordered that the teeth be immediately treated with preservatives to prevent deterioration resulting from exposure to the air. He then took John Versace, Jimmy DiFranco and Mr. Straubel to a mural in the Museum showing American mastodons in a habitat very similar to the ancient "[Lake Hackensack](#)" site. The elephantine creatures, source of these teeth, had lived there ten to twelve thousand years ago during the ice age.

The last known glacier retreated from this area 17,000 years ago, its melting ice created Lake Hackensack. This lake reached from what is now Perth Amboy, N.J., to the present vicinity of Haverstraw, N.Y. Lake Hackensack may have been there for 4,000 years before eventually draining into the Atlantic Ocean, leaving the Hackensack River. The Hackensack River, which meets the ocean tides at the meadowlands near Newark Bay, can therefore be attributed to the glacial age.

The boys' experience paralleled those of earlier times. In 1712, the Minister of Boston's Second Church, Cotton Mather, had written a letter about a four-pound tooth, believed to have belonged to a prehistoric giant, found in Albany, New York.

Ben Franklin, upon examining a mastodon tooth, correctly determined that the shape of the tooth indicated that it came from an animal which did not eat meat, rather than from a human. Science proved that mastodons were vegetarians.



The Polifly Road explorations continued for a period of years. The discovery involved more than the fascinating 'digs' for the mastodon, for bones of smaller animals also were found. It produced more scientific knowledge of the ice age Lake Hackensack. In time the boys became friendly with George Whitaker in charge of the dig for the Museum of Natural History. They learned to appreciate the great patience necessary for an archaeologist as more scientific knowledge of the ice age Lake Hackensack was acquired. The searcher found evidence of human beings, while the condition of the skulls and bones indicated that the bones had been broken by other humans, who were warlike. It was estimated the skulls dated from about 1740 B.C. To learn other interesting details of the discovery, read Georgianna Ensign's "The Hunt for the Mastodon". The remains of the Hackensack mastodon are on display in the Bergen Community Museum. Were the persons whose skulls were found ancestors of Hackensack's own Indian Chief, Oratam? To answer this question, we need to know more about his tribe.

[Hackensack Mastodon](#)

## Chapter II

### About the Indians...

The Indians referred to as the Delawares by the English settlers called themselves [Lenni Lenapes](#), meaning the original people, men among men, or men of a kind.

Over the centuries the Hackensack Indians, part of the Lenni Lenape tribe, migrated from northwestern Asia by pushing eastward across the Bering Strait, climbing over the Rocky Mountains and on toward the Great Water (Lake Superior). After crossing over the Mississippi River, they journeyed on until they reached their home in the Atlantic Coastal Region.

The Lenni Lenape Indians were divided into four groups, the Raritans, Ackensacks, Pomptons and Tappeans; all were roving tribes with no boundary lines. Settling in our area were the [Achkinheshcky Indians](#) -- (simplified - as Hackensack). They were primarily peaceful, quiet and industrious. North of the present day Fort Lee Road, along the bank of the Overpeck Creek, they built their major settlement. They also established a large settlement at Communipaw, now known as Jersey City, a convenient location for trading with the Dutch or making war on Manhattan, depending upon relations with the Dutch at a given time. These areas also were close enough to afford vacations on the shore of Staten Island, where the Indians swam, dug clams and collected shells for wampum.

According to early settlers, "The Delawares had no writing system and employed only the most primitive methods of recording special events by the use of wampum and bark markings. They preserved their history by depending on the trained memories of their chiefs." New Jersey's climate is not suitable for preservation of organic material, for the earth is too acidic to permit the survival of anything but stone, pottery or bone artifacts. This is why much of what is known of the Lenni Lenape comes from the writings of missionaries who lived with them in the 1700s. We learn that the Indians often settled along fresh water streams away from the mighty Delaware River, as turbulent winds along its banks made living conditions unpleasant. These more sheltered areas also provided better hunting and fishing. Many fish, such as shad or *herring*, were easily netted when they entered the tributary streams to spawn, while the fertile upstream lands were also conducive to agriculture.

Each village was a government unto itself, having a Chief with counselors who contributed to decision making. However, the woman of the Delawares was the authority in her own home and had some say in village affairs as well. Within a village most families were related to one another and spoke a language understood by other Delaware groups

Their homes varied from one-room bark huts, used primarily for sleeping, to huts or wigwams in a round shape with a dome-shaped roof. Others were oblong with a ridge pole and a sloped roof. All had a hole in the roof as a chimney for the fire constantly smoldering on the earthen floor. There were no windows and the single opening was a doorway covered with a flap of animal skins. Furniture was fashioned from tree limbs covered with animal skins, with steps along the walls used as seats and beds.

The Indians never considered themselves to be the owners of the land they lived on. They simply

"borrowed" land for the time they needed it, because they had too great a respect of nature to regard water and soil as personal possessions.

When weather permitted, the Lenni Lenapes gathered at an outdoor fire in front of their hut. There they made their simple utensils using clay for pots, wood for bowls, stones for knives and clam shells for spoons. Usually a family ate out of one pot, extracting food with their fingers. Some meat and vegetables were skewered on sticks and roasted over the hot embers.

To preserve food for winter, they dug pits, lined them with straw then arranged corn, beans, nuts and other perishables in them. The pit was then covered with bark. They also dried corn on the cob and hung the ears by their husks across the ceiling pole, along with other vegetables, roots, and herbs used for medicine. Their clothing was simple, consisting of animal skins, feathers and plant fibers sewn together with tough grass, using sharp bones to make holes in the hides and stone knives to cut and shape the skins. The tribes suffered from the same viruses, colds, aches and pains that we do today and they did some interesting doctoring to cure them. Indians believed that all ills came from evil demons which entered their bodies. When they were sick they asked the medicine man to frighten those demons away. The medicine man would arrive dressed in a grotesque costume and wearing a hideous mask to terrorize the demons. First he would engage in wild and unusual dance movements to drive out the bad spirits and then he would prescribe medicine made from herbs, roots and barks, in accordance with old tribal recipes. If this did not work he would resort to the ultimate treatment, the sweat lodge. William Penn in the 17th Century described this rugged treatment undertaken in mid-winter, by his Indian friend Tenoughan, who was suffering from fever and aches:

“While he was stripped to his breech-cloth his squaw prepared a sweat-bath, made by setting several hot stones inside a small hut, (the sweat lodge) built like an oven. Tenoughan crept inside, where he perspired freely for half an hour, singing all the while at the top of his lungs, while his wife was busy chopping a hole in the ice in the nearby river ...Then out of the hut he crawled, dripping with sweat to the river and dunked himself two or three times in the icy water. He returned to the wigwam and lay down beside the fire. When he was dry he went about his duties, evidently entirely recovered.”

Religion was a major factor in Indian society, permeating every aspect of life. All animals and even inanimate things in nature were respected as being part of the Great Spirit's guiding force. The medicine man was part of their religion, since healing was the work of spirits, working through the medicinal herbs. In time the white settlers learned to respect some of the cures of the medicine man.

The tribes also were extremely generous and hospitable. They shared their homes and knowledge. It was not in the extreme for an Indian host to offer his wife or his daughter to a visitor as an expression of generosity.

The Lenni Lenapes celebrated a feast similar to Thanksgiving long before any settlers arrived here. The "Annual Ceremony" was held in mid-October at the close of the harvest season. Its purpose was to worship and give thanks to lesser gods and to the Great Manito, god of the harvest, for his goodness throughout the year.

The Ceremony was held in the Big House, a huge bark-covered structure, used exclusively for this event. Since 12 was the Indian's sacred number, the celebration lasted 12 consecutive nights and parts of those days. It centered around 12 masks carved on poles to represent the gods occupying the 12 super-imposed heavens. On different days various rituals were observed by singing, dancing, eating hominy - corn mush - and the animals which the hunters had killed. When the ceremonies ended, deer skins were distributed to old men and women to fashion moccasins for themselves. The Big House was then closed until the next year.

## [Lenape Nation](#)

### **About Oratam...**

In the 1600s the Colonial Dutch settlers of New Jersey were a shrewd lot of traders and businessmen, but our local Indians produced at least one able leader who could meet them on even terms. He was [Oratam, Chief of the Hackensack tribe](#), a notable man in his day. His profile is shown on the 1976 Bicentennial medallion and through the years has been used as a symbol of the City of Hackensack.

Oratam was an able debater, who quickly recognized that the Dutch were not particularly interested in bloodshed or fighting. By using his knowledge and influence among his own people and often irritable neighboring tribesmen, he was able to negotiate some shrewd bargains with - the settlers, including the famous Peter Stuyvesant of Manhattan.

Liquor was the major source of many Indian troubles, therefore the Dutch made an-all out attempt to prevent its sale to the natives. One law, strictly enforced, kept an Indian in jail until he told who sold him the alcohol so the seller could be prosecuted. The Netherlanders, however, were somewhat tolerant and had no objections to Indians drinking as they pleased in remote places in the woods; where they were not so apt to endanger others with knife or gun

Long before the advent of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, Oratam became the New World's first Prohibition agent. His 1622 Commission from the Dutch read in part:

*"Whereas, Oratam, Chief of the Hackinghesacky, and other savages, a have complained that selfish people...do carry whole ankers of brandy into their country and peddle it out there from the Director-General and Council of New Netherland, not knowing for the present a better way to stop it, authorise the said Chief... to seize the brandy...and those offering to sell it and bring them here, that they may be punished as an example to others."*

As Chief of the Hackensacks, Oratam was a prudent and wise leader who could be decisive when others prompted war and was highly regarded by the Dutch Rulers as well as his fellow Indians. Oratam lived to the age of 90, dying in 1667; three years after the British had chased the Dutch out of this area.

Indian life was obviously affected by the arrival of the Europeans. Diseases, to which the Indians were not immune, were brought into Bergen County by the settlers. The newcomers cleared the forests to provide wood to build New York City and to supply logs for heat. In their way of life,

Indians - our first ecologists - only took what they needed from nature. The settlers were saddened by the fact that the Indians eventually found it necessary to leave this area.

On March 12, 1932, the Legislature in Trenton received a letter from a Lenape, a document that ranks among our great State papers. The following sentences are part of that letter

*"Not a drop of our blood have you spilled in battle. Not an acre of our land have you taken, but by our consent." The last sentence reads, "Nothing but benison can fall upon her (New Jersey) from the lips of a Lenni Lenape."*

## Chapter III

### Hackensack's early settlers ...

The first European settlers here were Dutch prospectors coming under the direction of the [Dutch West India Company](#). Men and women from Sweden had also come to New Jersey, but from 1655, when New Netherlands conquered New Sweden, until 1664, the whole of New Jersey was completely under Dutch control.

After [Henry Hudson](#) sailed up the Hudson River in the Half Moon, the Dutch people began filtering into this area because of their desire to trade with the Indians, knowing that furs could be sold in Europe at high prices. In 1614 the Dutch Government, claiming exclusive rights to all traffic in the Hudson River and the surrounding areas, named this territory New Netherlands. In 1660 they built New Jersey's first settlement, a village named Bergen, on a hill now known as Jersey City Heights. By 1661 this trading post was so crowded it did not have any space inside of its fortifications to place more buildings. Bergen is believed to have received its name from [Bergen Op Zoom](#), an important town on the River Scheldt in Holland.

In 1664 the British began their conquest of New Netherlands and, after a brief struggle against the Dutch, the territory was conceded to England by the States General of Holland. The English were prepared to fight but war was avoided since the Dutch preferred a negotiated surrender.

Late that same year King Charles II of Britain made a most generous grant to his own brother, James, Duke of York, deeding to him a large land tract, New Jersey! The English set up their government, claiming that [John Cabot](#), an Italian navigator in the service of England, discovered this land in 1497.

The Duke of York's grantees, Lord John Berkeley, and Sir George Carteret, seem to have had natural talents as real estate developers when they enthused about their land in a remarkable brochure, "[Grants and Concessions](#)," (sometimes called "The Magna Charta of New Jersey") which promised religious freedom to men and women, land ownership, right of assembly, and most of the other civil rights which form the basis of our legal codes in New Jersey in 1976.

In this immediate area a grant of more than 5,000 acres was made in July of 1668 to planters from Barbadoes. Included in the award were the lands between the Passaic and Hackensack Rivers, 7 miles along their banks from the junction near Newark. Later, another 6 miles was added by a second grant, subsequently known as [New Barbadoes Neck](#). New plantations started by these men helped them become influential men in the colony. By 1676 a Hackensack land grant was made.

In 1693 the Township of Hackensack was formed. This included all lands between the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers all the way to Bergen Township's boundaries. Curiously, Hackensack today is actually beyond these old boundaries. [[Click here for more on Hackensack's original boundaries](#)].

The fact that the British had conquered New Netherlands made surprisingly little change. The

people were expected to swear allegiance to the English King, which most did willingly. Many even welcomed a change in government because the iron-handed rule of the Dutch Director Generals was not pleasing to the rather independent settlers.

The English conquest started a whole new method of government, as exemplified by the establishment of counties within New Jersey in 1682. For the first time individual citizens enjoyed a government brought closer to them. One of the first four counties to be designated was Bergen. Its boundary lines ran from the New York State line to the north, down to Newark and Newark Bay to the south, the lands between the Hudson River to the east and the Hackensack to the west. In 1709 the western boundary was extended to the Passaic River.

The creation of the counties brought into being in 1693 a new political body, the General Assembly. Inhabitants now could select two citizens from each county to represent their interests in the Assembly, a semi-legislative body. By giving the people a taste of direct, representative government, the British unwittingly planted the seed of a desire for complete independence!

"[The Proprietors of East Jersey](#)," under British rule, granted large tracts of land in this area to wealthy speculators, some of whom had been associated with the Island of Barbados in the West Indies. One of them, [Captain John Berry](#), received in June of 1699 the land which today is most of the present City of Hackensack. His first grant extended a distance of 2 miles along the river and by a later grant he acquired other lands north of Hoboken in Bergen Township.

The Green, the gift of John Berry of 2 3/4 acres of land to the residents of Hackensack, dates back to 1696. The church site was included in this gift and there were whipping posts and stocks on the Green.

However hard they tried, the planters from the West Indies were unable to develop - in the vastly different climate of New Jersey - a single cash crop such as the profitable tobacco or sugar. Because -the plantation system could not work, they found it necessary to sell or rent their land for smaller farms.

Meanwhile, Captain Berry had a price to pay for all these land gifts, an annual "quit rent" of 20 shillings. Today this is the equivalent of about \$2.25. Though Berry understood this obligation, as a matter principle, he refused to pay and served a prison term in 1685 as a result. Whether it was because of Puritan tradition of land being tenure free from such charges, or whether the new settlers actually couldn't afford to pay, is not clear. Others were encouraged by Captain Berry's actions, and the towns of Newark and Elizabeth also refused to give money to their Proprietors in England.

These quit rents, common until 1748, were so unpopular as to inhibit the growth of the Hackensack area. Other matters influenced growth of this area in the early 1700s, including the efforts of a Secaucus land owner who wanted New Barbadoes Township, then part of Essex County, to become part of Bergen County as it did (the transfer took place on January 21, 1710). The added population necessitated building a new courthouse, which in turn stimulated other new development. The courthouse was built in 1715 on Justice of the Peace [Barent Kool's](#) land.

That same year a ferry landing was located at a site called Penungum a few miles out of town, from which a road ran north through marshes of the Quackasack Section. There were many orchards and farms along the river. In 1715 there was but one doctor in town, Dr. Van Emburgh, two blacksmiths, one shoemaker, a machinist's shop, and a few farms. The new courthouse and the earlier completion of the new [Dutch Reformed Church](#) in 1708 helped Hackensack and Bergen County to attract more settlers. The county population totaled 2,637 in 1726, increasing to 4,095 in 1737.

But there were hard times, too. Able bodied men, resentful of being required to serve for 2 years on road building projects, produced bad roads. The resulting poor travel facilities failed to encourage trade with the large New York City market

The 1700s produced the impending threat of a slave revolt. There are not many records to describe the lives of free African Americans in Bergen County, but a few documents tell of both free blacks and slaves living in Hackensack. The law as well as the customs of the time allowed the harsh treatment of slaves. Fear on the part of the white man made him excuse unfair trials of blacks when the courts accepted hearsay and gossip rather than facts and evidence. Punishments ranged from 100 lashes to immediate hangings. One of the original members of the Dutch Reformed Congregation in Hackensack was Jochem Robertse, a black freeman. His daughter, Mary, was the second child ever to be baptized at the church. The records on freemen are scarce because they were not mentioned in public records until after the American Revolution

By the late 1600s, as the white people saw the black population increasing faster than their own, uneasiness set in and more laws were passed restricting the activities of blacks. Slave courts were set up to try capital crimes in 1714. The 1726-1737 census showed Bergen with the lowest population of any county in the East Division of New Jersey, but the largest slave population of any county in the entire colony. Feelings of insecurity led to great injustices.

One case involved [William Provoost](#), whose widow later became the wife of Aaron Burr. (After a wedding in the Old Dutch Church in Paramus, the Burrs lived in the [Hermitage](#) now being restored, in Ho-Ho-Kus.) The harsh punishment of their slaves kept things quiet for about six years. The burning of seven barns in the area was reported in such newspapers as The New York Journal and The Boston Weekly Postboy, with hearsay and rumors exaggerated in the press. For the fires, Ben and Jack, both slaves, were burned at the stake in Hackensack near the river.

A sad commentary on man's behavior toward his fellow man can be noted in several such cases where hasty convictions led to unjustifiable punishment. The first time the court records showed an indictment against a white man for abusing a slave was in 1773 in Saddle River Township, when several whites were charged with beating a slave.

During this general time period between the French and Indian War and the Revolution, Hackensack's economy was still closely tied to that of New York City. A road and ferry network connected Hackensack and New York to the East and with the more rural areas north and west of the village. Many local merchants, too generous in granting supplies on credit during the French and Indian War, were unable to last in business for more than a year, precipitating a general recession which caused many sons of tradesmen to leave the village in order to seek fortunes in larger communities. New arrivals, some of whom were Scotch-Irish immigrants, took the places



of those who had moved away. These newcomers brought their Scotch Presbyterian Religion with them.

In the 1750s, the town government had no mayor or other central--authority, only a clerk who registered brand marks, an assessor, a collector, -two overseers of the poor, and overseers of the roads and surveyors. Residents would take turns filling these township posts.

In the Bergen County government, however, there was no opportunity to rotate jobs. Seven families dominated the political scene - two so-called "old guard" families, the [Van Buskirks](#) and the Kingslands, had for their opposition the Provoosts, Van Giesens, Demarests, Deys and Berthilfs. Initially, a person started as a member of the Governor's Council, or as an Assemblyman, and only after that did he go into township office. Only one Bergen County resident became a member of the Governor's Council after 1715 because few were qualified. To be eligible a candidate had to own 1,000 acres of land or property valued at at least 500 pounds.

The system of family control in County Government declined because of the weak economy in the years before the Revolution. These groups lost their affluence and their influence. The emerging leaders were mainly pro-Tory.

Neither town nor county officials were especially concerned about the poor or the debtors. Too much credit had been extended and the money not being collectable often produced occasional violence and chaotic situations. One reported incident involved a judge -- [Peter Zabriskie](#) -- who sat in judgment in four cases where he himself was the plaintiff. One big problem in obtaining justice was the fact that various court clerks, lawyers and judges could be brothers, cousins or otherwise related and not impartial in their conduct

During this period Hackensack had been in competition with another Jersey town, Newark, but the former's poor roads caused many economic woes. The start of ferry routes across from Paulus Hook (Jersey City) and from Hoboken to New York City brought a need for stage coach lines in New Jersey. The first stage line connecting [Hackensack and Paulus Hook](#) left from the Watson Tavern in Hackensack on Mondays and Fridays at 7 A.M. and returned from what is now Jersey City the same day at 2 P.M. Competition arose among stage lines and taverns, which acted as depots. In 1770 there were thirty taverns in this county or one tavern for each three hundred inhabitants! The stage lines, farm produce, roads and bridges all meant at least the possibility of trade with New York City.

## Introduction to Chapter IV

A visitor to the Garden State of America, as the province of New Jersey was called in the 1770s, might have been impressed by the happy, prosperous appearances. All around would be seen solid stone houses, well-farmed lands, and large orchards - outward symbols of a happy citizenry. In reality the people of the time had many reasons for tensions and worry.

Because the land had been Dutch and then English, there were legal entanglements of ownership, with frustrating complications setting neighbor against neighbor.

It has been said that if [Benjamin Franklin's son \(then the Governor of New Jersey\)](#), had more power, the Revolutionary feelings in New Jersey would have been almost nonexistent. Once the war started, pillaging and foraging by troops on both sides dealt a blow to the farmers in Bergen County who were in the neutral area of the [Hackensack Valley](#). It is important to remember that the independent nature of the Dutch led them to struggle against any interference in their day-to-day lifestyle, while their desire for liberty set them apart from most people elsewhere in the world. The Dutch really believed that birth and position did not matter, but that each individual should be an independent person and all human beings were of equal worth. Such new feelings would obviously create deep tensions, as the War for Independence developed.

## Chapter IV

### The Revolutionary War...

The part of New Jersey north of Newark had a dramatic part in the Revolution. The inhabitants were [Jersey Dutch](#), cut off in many ways from their English countryman and the rest of the colony. Like their British neighbors, they spent the months before [Lexington](#) quarreling among themselves over the issues of the day, never realizing that it was to be the Jersey Dutch farmer, not the New Englander or Virginia planter, who would be surrounded by contending armies when war came.

Nevertheless, during May, 1775, trade was flourishing in the Hackensack area. [Petiaugers](#) (two-masted flat-bottomed schooner like vessels capable of transporting 10 to 12 tons of cargo) sailed up and down the busy Hackensack River on every tide, carrying country farm produce to New York and merchandise back to the farms and mines of northern New Jersey. Stage coaches between Hackensack and Bergen were said to be busier than ever.

It was during this time in 1775 that the County seat at Hackensack witnessed sharp conflicts and embittered feelings as partisans of both [Whig and Tory](#) parties took decided stands for and against outright independence.

As early as July Fourth of 1775, "His Majestie's Justices and Freeholders of the County of Bergen and Province of East New Jersey in a meeting "unanimously agreed to the following motion, "to wit "or not. This Board says they have."

"Whether the County Committee shall have a right in case of emergency to take the County Arms out of the Courthouse"

The question of armed conflict was rapidly approaching the local area. It was the summer of 1776 when the British moved the war down from New England to New York. From then on, the Dutchmen were forced to live on dreaded neutral ground, forced to choose between loyalty to American principles and loyalty to the British Crown.

Many Hackensack area residents had enlisted in the Jersey Line of the [Continental Army](#) as early as April, 1775, after reports that fighting had broken out at Lexington and Concord. The spectacle of redcoats shooting American farmers convinced the majority that American arms must answer England's ministerial arrogance. Amazingly, New Jersey changed from a royal government to a revolutionary government without the firing of a gun. To the utter distress of the Tories, the province soon found the Governor and Council shorn of power and the lawful Provincial Assembly superseded by the Rebel Provincial Congress. Five prominent patriots were named to represent the County at the [Provincial Congress to be held at Trenton](#) on May 23, 1775. When it convened, it generally acted as though the royal government of New Jersey did not exist, - prohibiting exports to parts of Canada, proposing patriot associations, establishing numerous militia companies, and appointing their officers and levying taxes. Between Saturday, June 29, 1776, and Tuesday, July 2, the British sailed into New York Harbor, some 250 man-o'-war sailing ships strong. Most of the vessels were transports, their decks filled with redcoats, who

disembarked into encampments on Staten Island.

By the end of August, [General William Howe](#) had opened attack and had taken Long Island from American forces. September 15, saw the Americans easily driven out of lower Manhattan, and shortly afterwards the strong point of Paulus Hook and the town of Bergen were evacuated without a battle.

The Hackensack Valley was exposed to great danger. Washington and his army were almost barren of hope. Threatened by a possible British attack, on Wednesday, November 13, [General George Washington](#) abandoned his camp at White Plains, New York, and crossed the Hudson River with all the Continental troops from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the states to the south, and encamped in and around Hackensack. Washington and his staff established their own headquarters at [Peter Zabriskie](#)'s house on the Village Green. Many of the houses in Hackensack sheltered one or two refugees who had sneaked out of New York City when the British took it over.

At this point Washington considered his position as being poor but not desperate. At Fort Lee, General Nathaniel Greene prevented the British from crossing the Hudson River, helped by the sheer walls of the Palisades, which formed an almost impassable precipice for 10 miles south and 20 miles north. Greene had 2,400 men, while Colonel Robert Magaw had a force of 1,200 troops holding Fort Washington against the British.

At ten o'clock on Monday, November 16, the British movement began and with little resistance the British overtook Fort Washington. General Washington lost 2,000 men whom he could ill-afford to be without, and he sadly returned to Hackensack to plot new defenses.

On the night of November 19, the British secretly moved their flatboats north to Kingsbridge, and several thousand British troops under Lord Cornwallis packed their tents and marched to the Phillips' House on the east shore of the Hudson. At daybreak Cornwallis began crossing the Hudson with his troops, landing at Closter Dock (present day Cresskill) which was undefended because it was thought to be too steep for a body of troops with arms to climb.

Nevertheless, the British completed their landing at 9 A.M. on November 20 Washington received word of the landing at 10 A.M. while at Hackensack.

The British were only 11 miles away from Fort Lee, but the first half mile contained the obstacle of the precipice of the Palisades. Washington's headquarters at Hackensack was six miles from the fort. The route of the advancing troops met the route of the retreating Americans from the fort at Liberty Pole Tavern, 3 miles from Fort Lee and 7 miles from the Closter Dock landing. It is widely accepted that had Cornwallis moved enough of his men forward to cut off the American retreat at Liberty Pole, Washington and his rebel army would have been captured and the war ended.

The British troops did not reach Liberty Pole until the entire American garrison had passed that point. The British were well aware that the Americans had passed the same point shortly before, but they decided to go on and capture the now empty Fort Lee. When they arrived at the Fort at 1

P.M., they found 300 tents standing, 50 loaded cannons, and many other provisions and stores. Scattered along the road to Hackensack which was used by the retreating Americans were numerous muskets, knapsacks, and both heavy and light artillery.

The American troops crossed the Hackensack River at New Bridge, in front of the Ackerman-Zabriskie-Von Steuben House. It was nightfall, cold and rainy when the army wearily entered Hackensack the 21st, the countryside was a beehive of activity, as people worked feverishly to conceal Continental property that the army could not carry on its retreat. They hid or buried hundreds of soldiers' shirts and stores of gunpowder, lead, bullets, and food. Washington was still in his headquarters on the Village Green that morning, planning to abandon Hackensack and cross over the Passaic River and relative safety.

Albert Zabriskie asked Washington where the army planned to go. Washington leaned over on his horse and whispered, "Can you keep a secret?" When Zabriskie firmly assured him that he could, Washington said, "I can too." And as part of their Bicentennial program the people of Bergen County re-enacted this disheartening period and the retreat from Fort Lee through the various towns to Hackensack on November 20th and to the Passaic County Border on the 21st. Each group of citizens paid honor to those hard pressed men of the rag-tag Continental Army until they reach the Delaware River. A fitting tribute in 1976 to the courage shown in 1776 under the most adverse conditions rode off.

About noon the next day, November 22nd, the British took possession of Hackensack, and in the afternoon the Green was covered with Hessians, about strong. They foraged and plundered, frightening the inhabitants.

On November 25, 1776, four days after Washington and his troops left , N Hackensack for the Acquackanonk Bridge, the British General Harcourt in command of the 16th Dragoons, with several companies of light artillery, started in pursuit, but did not know the way. Washington had gone down Polifly Road to Albert Terhune's Lane, which intersected that old road at what is now 315 Terrace Avenue, and led to Acquackanonk Bridge (now Passaic). But as General Harcourt did not know the area, he passed Terhune's Lane and continued over the old road as far as Hillside Cemetery, where he stopped to ask directions. He was told to go back to the first branch, (now Union Avenue) over which he was to continue to the first intersecting road, (Jackson Avenue) where he was to turn to the right and follow that road to the bridge. The General followed directions, but when he arrived at the bridge he found it destroyed.

These events were the most noteworthy of Bergen County history during the Revolutionary period. The fate of the Hackensack patriots, like that of all America, depended on Washington, whose broken army now waited on the west side of the Delaware for the British to continue their drive against Philadelphia. The British, confident of victory, were waiting for the River to freeze hard enough to cross. The British believed there was plenty of time, and that the Continental Capital was but a day's skirmish away.

Toward the end of December, even Congress had left the area of Philadelphia in a panic towards Baltimore, and it seemed as though the American rebellion was quelled.

But on Christmas Day, 1776, the British were caught off guard by Washington, who crossed the Delaware in a sleet storm that night, and captured or killed the entire British force in Trenton. The whole complexion of the war was altered by this one bold movement by Washington.

Meanwhile, the patriots of Bergen County, overwhelmed by British power and Tory neighbors, kept a stiff resistance in a seemingly lost cause during the early weeks of British occupation, and when the fortunes of war drove the British back to their bastion on Manhattan Island, settled down to a five-year war of neighbors on neutral ground. The fighting in Bergen was done by the local militia, not by the main bodies of either army.

The patriot militiaman farmed during the day and did sentinel duty at night, never knowing when a band of Tories would raid his farm and carry him and his sons off to Sugar House Prison on British held Manhattan, never knowing whose home and barns had been next marked for destruction. British foraging expeditions of thousands of men often reaped the harvests that Bergen County farmers had sown. On occasion, the American forces were themselves forced to strip local farms for their own existence, and many a Jersey Dutchman who had risked his life for years found that to a foraging Continental he was but another damned Tory.

One of the numerous British foragings occurred on Sunday, September 14, 1777, when the British General Clinton led a group of soldiers into the Hackensack Valley from their camp in Manhattan. It was Colonel Aaron Burr who led a successful rout against them later that night. Burr, leading his men between (two sentinels) at the moment when they were farthest apart he was almost upon the sleeping picket before a man of it began to stir. When at a distance of 10 yards, Burr was challenged by a sentinel, whom he immediately shot dead, and then gave the word of attack. One officer, a sergeant, a corporal, and 27 privates, fell into their hands on this occasion. Only one of the pickets in addition to the sentinel made any resistance and he was overpowered after he received two bayonet wounds. The last words of the dying soldier were that...

"It grieved him sore to the heart that he had served his King upwards of twenty years, and at length must die with a charged musket in his hand."

It was on March 23, 1780, that during another [British raid](#), the Courthouse was burned along with several houses, as the following record J- proves in an extract of a letter from Hackensack, dated March 24, 1780:

"Yesterday morning at 4 o'clock, a Lt. Col. M'Pherson, of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, made a descent upon this place by way of Little Ferry. Soon after they entered the town they burnt the Courthouse, and also Messrs. Boyd' s and Chappies's dwelling-houses, and then proceeded to Paramus."

According to another letter, referred to in the New Jersey Archives as a "Letter from New Barbadoes, 1780" the British were again in this area about May 30th of that year. The letter reads.....

"This morning a detachment of about 300 of the enemy, under the command of Colonel Buskirk,

made a descent into this county. Their professed objective was to murder and carry off the militia. They divided themselves into two parties, each going upon a scout. They met at the house of J. Zabriskie at about one o'clock A.M. and mistaking each other for the rear guard (as they call it) fell upon each other in a most furious manner, and by the discharge of their muskets and use of the bayonet, they appear to have made a dreadful slaughter; the ground 'round the house being in a measure covered with blood, and in some places the clotted gore remained in heaps when I arrived at the spot, which was five o'clock. After this, they finding their mistake, retreated over and took the bridge (New Bridge) to prevent our men pursuing them.

'Tis said they had 7 or 8 killed on the spot, besides wounded. All were carried off. September 8, 1780, marked the death of the Continental Army's Brigadier [General Enoch Poor](#), who served the State of New Hampshire under the command of the [Marquis de Lafayette](#).-He is believed to have been shot in a duel with a Colonel who served under him. Poor was buried on Sunday, September 10, with honors of war in the graveyard of the Old Dutch Reformed Church. His grave can still be visited today, as can a monument constructed in his memory near the Courthouse. Generals Washington and Lafayette were present at the burial.

The surrender of the British army, under Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, in the Fall of 1781, was the signal for great rejoicing throughout the Colonies. The state of jubilation over the great success of the American and French armies was so universal that there must have been quite a few joyous local citizens who joined in the celebration. The war, however, was not yet over for the inhabitants of our area. Despite the Yorktown victory, the British still held New York City. Attacks were launched from both New York and Staten Island on the countryside. The vindictiveness of loyalist troops kept alive the bitter threat of raids, pillaging and looting in this area. The widespread illegal trading with the enemy by local merchants continued to plague the Governor of New Jersey, William Livingston, and his patriot leaders in their attempt to block all traffic with the British.

It was all over, finally, in March of 1783, when word of the [Treaty of Paris](#) signing on January 20, 1783, reached America. Reconciliation came swiftly to those places where there had been no fighting and where Tories had not remained near patriots and tried to injure them.

But in the Hackensack Area, after 7 years of war, Dutch patriots could not forget their neighbors' treacheries nor understand the indifference of those away from the neutral ground who never suffered from Tory violence. Strangers to the Hackensack Valley found the patriots' hatred for Toryism at odds with their religious ideals.

It was a direct result of this strong hatred for those who favored the British that many Tories lost their homes and property to the victorious patriots. On November 10, 1783, Washington received and made addresses to militia officers and churchmen in Hackensack. He said:

*"To the Militia Officers of Bergen County Gentn: I participate most sincerely in the joy you express at the conclusion of the war, and the re-establishment of the blessings of Peace.*

*Persuaded of the rectitude of our cause, and relying on the divine aid for*

*its success, I accepted an arduous employment, the event has justified my most enlarged expectation; and if to the consciousness of having attempted faithfully to discharge my duty, I may add the approbation of my fellow Citizens, my happiness will be compleat.*

*To you Gentn, who have experienced in no small degree the fatigues of a military life, I must return these my last public thanks for the cheerful and able assistance you have often afforded me. May you as a reward of your virtuous conduct, enjoy the uninterrupted fruits of that Independence which has been procured at the hazard of our lives."*

General Washington had great presence and was loved and trusted by his men, which accounts for the terrible hardships they endured to stand by him. This contributed to their tremendous stamina and eventual success. He had a sense of discipline and seldom lost his temper, a man of principle and conviction. His brilliant anticipation of the British Army's movements made the so-called retreat a costly defeat for England. All odds seemed to be against him and would have broken the spirit of a man of lesser strength, but he overcame all obstacles. His little army of barely 14,000 men lacked arms and supplies.

Frederick the Great, the old Prussian soldier, said that Washington's tactics in the Delaware River movements were the most brilliant achievements recorded in military annals. Howe's plan to cut the Colonies in two by taking the Hudson River failed. It dragged out and instead of ending an uprising in a few weeks, they found themselves involved in a long war in which the Colonies emerged as an independent nation.



## Chapter V

### Hackensack begins to grow...

Hackensack has certainly come a long way since Dr. Van Imburg built the first dwelling here late in the 1600s, located about where the Courthouse is now. But it has been a slow, gradual change which has molded Hackensack into its present form.

The [Dutch Reformed Church](#), known affectionately as The Old Church On The Green, first opened its doors on November 15, 1696. The Church served as an important meeting place for the village residents for many years, and many of the first homes in Hackensack were built to be near it.

In 1709, Hackensack, (officially named New Barbadoes until 1921) became part of Bergen County and the County Seat as a result of its importance and location. The Portuguese discovered Barbadoes in the West Indies and the name is of Portuguese or Romanian origin. It means "bearded", so named for the trees on the island with pendants of beardlike moss. Therefore Hackensack's name for many years, "New Barbadoes" is a Portuguese or Romanian name. (Incidentally, the only time that Washington left the country was to go to Barbadoes. At the age of 19, he accompanied his half-brother there in the hope that his brother's health might be restored.)

By the year 1834, Hackensack had become the site of 150 homes, some 1,000 residents, three churches, two academies, one girls' boarding school, ten shops, three taverns, two paint factories, one coach maker, two tanneries, two hatters, three smiths, and four shoemakers. By 1840, just six years later, Hackensack boomed to a population of 2,631 and added six sawmills to its list of businesses.

In the middle 1800s, Jersey farmers cared little about beautiful front lawns. Grass was utilitarian and kept two or three feet high and trimmed by grazing sheep or colts. There was usually a well for water dug near the house, and behind larger homes there was a small square structure known as the "out kitchen". Here the family laundering, cooking and baking of breads and pies was done. A nearby woodpile supplied the fuel for cooking and heating.

Dutch homes had simple handmade furniture. Often they had cedar chests to keep the winter woolens and their one elegance was having a large grandfather's clock. Floors usually were covered with homemade carpets designed from rags. There huge Dutch fireplace in the kitchen was the home's focal point, where family activities took place all the long winter. Cleanliness was thought to be next to Godliness by the Dutch who scrubbed everything at least once a week.

The staple evening meal was cornmeal mush and milk, and corn became their most important crop. Since rye grew better than wheat it was the ingredient for the good bread. Apples, too, were a staple crop and some were used to distill into "Jersey Lightning" or apple brandy. The strawberry crop in this county was started in Hackensack and the state's farmers made their own baskets during the winter, gathering the hickory and turning it into splints and fashioning baskets, a personal mark was affixed to insure their return, much as lobster pots are made

distinctive for the same reason. Later, this strawberry crop was so important that special trains ran on the lines into Hackensack Valley during the strawberry season.

The Northern School of Hackensack Township, established in 1800, was typical of many early schools. It was a small red building with two small windows on each side and one in the rear. It was furnished with desks on three sides of the room facing out from the wall, with seats within this enclosure for the smaller children, the stove being in the center of the room. Upstairs, another room was used for meetings. Anyone who wanted to go further than the early grades of school attended the celebrated Washington Academy in Hackensack, which then rivaled the distinguished Princeton and Rutgers. Before New Jersey created free public schools in 1871, there was a private high school in the [Schraalenburg](#) section of Bergen County with tuition costing \$15 per quarter for the pupils in the senior department, and \$7.50 per quarter for pupils in the primary department, and special additional charges for instruction in art, piano and French.

Although the people here were of French, Scotch, German and English ancestry as well as Dutch, they all spoke Jersey Dutch among themselves, went to a Dutch church on Sundays, and proudly called themselves Jersey Dutchmen. They could speak English without an accent and write it fluently by this time but Bergen County people preferred to remain as Dutch as possible, at least until 1850.

In 1850 Thomas Demarest and other local men had built a railroad connecting with the Erie line that ran to Suffern. This Northern Valley Railroad made Hackensack township flourish with population, as people could then commute to New York and Englewood.

The Frances Westervelt book, History of Hackensack, notes:

*"It is interesting in these days (1922) with the complaint of the high cost of living, to review the prices that were established by the court for the supplies for the Continental Army located in Bergen County in 1779-80. For the first year mentioned wood was \$8 a cord; hay, \$4 a hundred weight; rye and corn by the bushel was \$14... The following years... Hay of the first quality was \$200 a- ton, Corn and rye were \$18 a bushel... a cord of wood was worth \$12."*

The Westervelt book goes on:

*The following is taken from the recollections of the late George J. Ackerman, a prominent citizen of Hackensack, which was first published in 1902. The recollections are from 50 to 60 years antedating the publication when there were no names to any of the streets in the village (1840-50): "Main Street was known as Front Street and our State Street was the Back street. They joined at the Courthouse and became the Hoboken Turnpike (now Hudson Street) and had a toll gate until 1915. Essex Street was "The King's Road" going from Hackensack to Paramus with a toll gate on the Bergen side of the Passaic River, and was known as the Lower road.*

*In the area huckleberries grew in abundance and could be gathered by anyone. "Ceasar Monroe, a good old colored man and his wife, had a little shanty opposite the True Reformed Church (on Hudson Street) where they sold root beer and cakes called bolivars, round hearts*

*and candy. It was quite a favorite resort for the young people downtown...*

*At the triangle formed by Main, Hudson and Essex Streets stood a low wooden building which was used as a tannery...On the corner of Main and Essex was the house of Henry Hall, a noted pyrotechnist, who manufactured fireworks and gave exhibitions at Niblo's Garden, New York...Next door ; was the bakery of Benjamin Buckbee...his wife used to make and sell the most delicious bread and it was considered quite a treat to have Mrs. Buckbee's white bread served at meals for only rye bread was in common use in those days and to get wheat bread was like getting cake.*

*Proceeding up town, we come to Dr. Hopper's, who then in addition to his visiting the sick, kept his own drug store;... as a side issue he pulled teeth with an old fashioned "turnkey", but not without pain...Next door...standing on the northwest corner of Morris and Main, stood the old tavern of Archibald Campbell of Revolutionary fame, later kept by James Vanderpool, who in'.addition to keeping a hostelry, also ran a line of stages to the Hoboken ferry...Across the street was the Washington Mansion House kept by David A. Demarest. It had always been a noted place of resort for travelers and people having business-at the County Seat. Historical records tell us it was the private residence of PeterrZabriskie (at the time of the Revolutionary War), who was a friend of General Washington, who made the home his headquarters, his meals being sent to him from Archibald Campbell's tavern.*

*Across the Green was another tavern, called the Hackensack House, kept by Edward Van Beuren. Next door to it, looking east was the county courthouse and jail, built in 1819...The jail was in the building and the cells, four in number,...(were) secured by two doors, one of iron and one of wood with massive lock and key.*

*It was in one of these cells the ill-fated murderer, Billie Keating, was confined in 1850. At the execution, the sheriff, John V. Terhune, attired in full military regalia, with sword, cocked hat and feathers, officiated and Sam Dawson, who was the jailor, cut the rope. The scaffold was erected in the triangle enclosure on the west end of the courthouse, in full view of everybody who wanted to see enacted the last drama of the life of that unfortunate murderer. The Green was crowded with people from all parts of the county, rich and poor jostled each other to get a view of the tragedy. He was clothed in a white suit and cap made by a tailor named Royce. At that time there was a flagpole about one hundred feet high standing in the center of the Green, surmounted by a Cap of Liberty.*

*...All of these large houses spoken of (in this area of downtown) were built after one style of architecture...The front stoop was generally quite small, with a roof supported by a turned column on either corner. A bench with a back ran from each side of the front door at right angles to the house, on which the old settlers used to sit in the summer afternoons and evenings and smoke their long clay pipes... Opposite on the south' corner of Warren 'Street stood a little wooden shanty kept as an oyster saloon by Daddy Olcock. On the opposite corner was the school house with a shingle roof. It was very old and was afterward taken down and the present Washington Institute erected in its place.*

These recollections of Mr. Ackerman (cited in the Westervelt book) bring to mind's eye images

from a western movie, rural scenes past remembering by current citizens, none of us having lived in 1840. He also gave us interesting observations on the physical aspects of a time-honored monument, the old Church on the Green:

*The pews were sold to the members, who received a deed for the same, in which ownership lasted forever," with the provision "that it should not be destroyed or defaced: The church was heated by two wood-burning stoves placed on either side of the main entrance, each of which had a pipe extending the full length of the building. In cold weather the women folks generally carried little foot stoves in which was a metal pan filled with live coals to keep the feet warm during the services, which were rather long in duration, generally three hours.*

*The pulpit was quite small, being semi-circular in front and elevated about five or six feet above the floor. It was reached by a circular stairway placed on each side of it. Directly underneath it and in front of the pulpit was a desk and chair occupied by the precentor, who would sing the hymn, to be followed by the congregation. He used a tuning fork to get the pitch. There was no choir and there was not even an organ or any musical instrument in any of the churches. In fact, it was considered by some quite profane and -irreverent to have any instrument of music in their houses of worship and was deprecated in the most caustic terms by the old dominies.*

George Ackerman also relates that the early landowners had their homes on the main thoroughfare and made small lanes leading back to their farms. He listed them all and as you read the names you will still know of Bergen County families descended from these rugged souls and maybe live on streets named in their honor. There was John Berry, Issac Van Gieson, Julius Ellis, Jan, Berdan, Paulos Vanderbeek, Simon Simonsen (buried in the [Church on the Green](#)), Abraham Ackerman (who manufactured jewelry from his house), Peter Fredericks, and Edward J. Earle's store, Brom Carlock's structure for dressing hides and skins, Robert Campbell's grocery and general store, later run by Michael M. Wygant, the Quick sisters' house (the only brick house in town for quite a -time) Aunt Patty Fowler's house (beloved for her root beer and candy), the Weehawk Bank, John DeGroot, Pres.; George Y. Alliare, Cashier; Cornelius T. ; Banta's building with carriage shop, blacksmith and paint shop.

Stephen Vanderbeek had a tailor shop and also kept the post office after the term of Albert Doremus who managed to run stage coaches and was post master, too (1845-49). Adam Boyd's house was here (he became a Congressman), as were those of "Butter John Bogert", William Winant (boot and shoemaker), the Phillips' sisters (maiden ladies who kept a goat for their milk supply) and Peter Wilson (whose house was later used as a select girl's boarding school). Richard Amos' tobacco and cigar factory, was the site of the first steam engine ever installed in Hackensack, (the same building later became a carriage factory run by R.H. Gilbert). Other houses belonged to Judge Lewis Moore, (whose slaves were buried in the ground under the street now named in the Judge's honor, Moore Street), Peter Wilson and the Van Gieson homestead. Garret Meyer's home later became the Wheelman's Club and Harry Banta's square ~ wooden building had a pointed roof on top of which was a windmill used to grind paint when the wind blew. Also there were homes of John Sloat, E.A.

McFadden, and Bunky Bogert's house with store attached. The blacksmith shop of James B. Cleveland had a hay scale whose platform extended right across the sidewalk. Harry H. Banta

had a large home and grounds which later became the site of the present Post Office.

It is not possible to name all of the people and interesting occupations of these Hackensack citizens, but for those whose interest is deep enough more can be found in the "History of Hackensack" by Francis A. Westervelt, in the Johnson Library. It is hoped that the flavor of those days along Main Street and State Street have been of interest to you. George Ackerman continued on about each house and farm to where the [Lafayette Academy](#) stood. "This was an ancient seat of learning, which was abandoned in 1853. William C. Smith, a thorough scholar and mathematician and a most beautiful penman was a teacher for a number of years...After a wheelwright shop and some small cottages came "The John S. Mabon house, he kept a classical school and fitted young men for college. The next were the grounds, house and store of Teunis Banta, on Main and Passaic Street, built in 1800. He owned all of the property on the south side of Passaic Street from Main Street to the N.J. and N.Y. Railroad".

Ackerman continues,

*The store and dwelling of Abraham H. Berry, on the corner (Main and Passaic) was the center of great commercial intercourse, and a very large and extensive business was done there. His property extended from Main Street to the river front, on which were docks and extensive warehouses. The traffic via the river was considerable at this period. The schooner "John Anderson" was built and launched from these docks."*

On the opposite corner of Main and Passaic Streets was a store with dwelling attached belonging to Cornelius C. Bogert who owned about two -hundred feet of River front in rear of his house, called the dock on which were built a number of vessels.

*At the river front...up to the Anderson Street Bridge was a row of tall poplar trees. This was called "The Beach", and was a favorite resort for bathing. The whole plot from Ward Street to Anderson Street and Main to the river was under cultivation, and it was not an uncommon sight to see an immense field of rye gracefully ducking its head as the wind playfully swept through it.*

Ackerman's words carry us up Main Street to "the last one was the house of Teunis Cole, on the hill near the brook named for him. Here he had a saw mill on one side of the brook and a large grist mill on the other side. It was liberally patronized by all the farmers, who at that time raised their own grain and had it made into flour. The name of Fairmount was changed in 1907 to North Hackensack.

It is noteworthy in his recitation of the various homes and businesses in town that from the very beginning there was a definite interest in education, as evidenced by the number of schools and also to find that taverns were such an important part of the town's social life.

This excerpt taken from Lee's "New Jersey as a Colony and a State" tells the story this way;

*During the colonial period of New Jersey the Inn became a social and political center. Not only were the houses designed for the entertainment of man and baiting of beast, but they served as meeting places for council and assembly, as the temporary executive mansions for the governors,*

*as county courthouses, polling places, tax collectors, school houses, regimental headquarters on training days, terminus for post and passenger stages, post offices, banks and traveling ministers of various denominations, while the county freeholders frequently had no other building in which business could be transacted.*

In 1668 in the Province of New Jersey they already realized the inconveniences that arose from the want of an "ordinary" in every town (lavatory type facility) and the Assembly ordered that Bergen and other counties provide an Inn for the relief and entertainment of strangers. The appointed Innkeeper was considered to be a town officer, chosen with considerable care and he was licensed to provide meat, drink and lodging. An inn was always near the early churches, since so many people attending services drove many miles and the men had an opportunity to refresh themselves with a drink and the ladies also took mild refreshments and had their foot stove pans filled with hot coals to help them endure the three hour services. Often they made another visit at noon, including replenishing the coals for there was another three hour service in the afternoon, and of course before leaving on the long journey home they refilled the stoves once more. Little wonder the Inn was a special place.

A different type of "service" was supplied by taverns as on June 23, 1816, John Dodd stopped at the Vanderbeek Tavern, making the following announcement:

*Fellow citizens, I am here for the purpose of securing information that may be furnished as to the changes which may have taken place in the assessable property of individuals since the last assessment made under the act of June 9, 1815, which information must be given in writing under the signature of the person whose tax may be affected thereby, First, assemble property omitted to be assessed. Second, transfer of real estate and slaves. Third, change of residence. Fourth, burning or destruction of houses or other fixed improvement. Fifth, slaves that have been born or have died or have run away or have otherwise become useless since the preceding assessment.*

*The honor system in levying taxes! John Dodd must have learned many interesting bits of gossip on this kind of visit to various town taverns. Not only was the method of taxing different, but the turnpike road system of the 1800s was also different. When the turnpike from Hackensack to Hoboken was established in October, 1802, among the provisions set forth were that "it shall be lawful for the toll gatherer to stop any person riding, leading or driving any horse, cattle, mule, sheep or hogs, or carriage or burthen or pleasure from passing through the said gates until they have respectively paid the toll as above specified. Provided that nothing in this act shall be construed as to entitle the said corporation to demand and receive toll of or from any person except passing to or from public worship or to or from any mill to which he may resort for the grinding of grain for his family use, or horses or carriages solely conveying persons to or from his common business on his farm or any militia man passing to or from any training on muster day".*

The tolls mentioned as "above" actually read

*For every score of sheep, hogs or calves, 20 cents A score of cattle, horses or mules, 40 cents A horse and rider, or led horse or mule, 9 cents . A carriage, drawn by one beast, 18 cents*

*A carriage drawn by two beasts, 25 cents For every additional beast, if not exceeding four in the whole number, 15 cents each If not exceeding six, 18 cents each If not exceeding eight, 25 cents each for every sleigh or sled drawn by one beast, 9 cents For every additional beast, 3 cents each.*

Another interesting part of the enactment read

*All wagoneers and drivers of carriages of all kind, whether burden or pleasure, using the said road... keep their horses and carriages on the left hand of the said road..." Also interesting 'is that in 1915 the toll gates of Bergen County were abolished, after a service of 113 years. The idea was to save the taxpayers money by having, for example, the Bergen Pike become State Route N. 10. It had been a wooden plank road, a toll road, county road and then State highway having gone through the epochs from stage coach to trolley line, and then autos.*

In speaking of roads and transportation we should note that about the time of the Civil War, through the influence of Judge Jonh Huyler, the established cross streets in Hackensack (evolved from those early farm lanes) were named for the counties of New Jersey. We still have Passaic, Camden, Salem, Mercer, Warren, Bergen, Morris, Hudson, Essex, Sussex and Atlantic Streets.

## Chapter VI

### The Civil War...

Legal slavery had continued in New Jersey longer than any other northern state and in Bergen County the Dutch had as many slaves as any southern state except the cotton states of the really deep south. The New Jersey Legislature declared slavery to be illegal by the [act of 1846](#). The slave population had already been steadily declining as blacks "born free" attained the ages stipulated in the Act of 1804, and left the farms for the larger cities. The majority, undereducated and thus unskilled, faced severe economic and social handicaps. In 1830 Bergen County had a black population of 2,481 of whom 1,985 were freemen, but the pro-slavery feelings were still present.

Bergen County had been Democratic for at least two or three generations and was solidly Democratic in the 1860 Presidential, election giving [Stephen Douglas](#) its support.

A new Democratic newspaper was sponsored in Hackensack after the failure in 1860 of the Bergen County Journal and this one spoke out against the war and the quota system as sure signs as "black Republicanism". The Democratic paper asked the voters to go to the gubernatorial election and "-let them know that you go for the Constitution as it is and the Union as it was". After Lincoln was elected, South Carolina did what many Southern states had threatened, seceding from the Union. Since the Dutch in their church struggles had been "seceders" themselves, they were hardly against seceding states and many people in Hackensack felt this way. The Presidential campaign had been a bitter one and emotions ran high on both sides, such as the Democratic Confederate sympathizers in Bergen being called Copperheads after the poisonous snake. (In September, 1861, they went so far as to commit a Federal offense by flying a secessionist flag in Hackensack.)

On April 15th, 1861, Lincoln had issued his first proclamation, calling for 75,000 militia, and New Jersey was to send 3,120 men. One week later, a meeting of citizens was held with Hon. J.A. Zabriskie, Chairman, and William S. Banta, Esq., speaking to the assembled group. The report that was unanimously adopted read in part: "Resolved, That the Union shall be preserved at all hazards, the Constitution upheld, the right of government vindicated, and the Declaration of Independence maintained in its full spirit and power."

It also stated, "Resolved, That a committee of six be appointed by this meeting to provide means for the support of those left destitute by the absence of their husbands or fathers, who may volunteer in the defense of their country."

To carry out those arrangements were Messr. D.A. Berry, Garret G. Ackerson, W.S. Banta and John J. Anderson, more family names we have come to know from earlier years.

The many public meetings such as this with the fine oratory were meant to encourage men to enlist. The patriotic appeal of the speakers was so real that the pro-Lincoln group became inspired to the point that the Bergen County ranks were over-enlisted and the men over the quota



joined with New York and Pennsylvania troops in order to offer their services.

So it was that during the first year of the Civil War the Union Army had enough volunteers to fill its ranks, but on August 4, 1862, Lincoln asked for an additional 10,478 from New Jersey, and Bergen County tried to encourage men by the offer of a \$200 bonus and Hackensack offered an additional \$125. Fifteen men signed up.

The [New Jersey brigades](#) suffered severe losses, officers and men at Williamsburg, Va. and at Fair Oaks County, Va., because of the exposed positions to which they were assigned. The 22nd Regiment went into service in September 1862, and the 939 men, being the cream of the Bergen County population, became part of the Army of the Potomac. Active in the attack on Chancellorsville, Va., they served with great valor.

These Hackensack and Bergen County Regiments had been sent to Trenton and Philadelphia, then Baltimore and Washington, traveling with poor food rations in freight trains. This had caused bitter complaints. The 22nd Division had the duty also to guard Washington, D.C., until the battle around [Fredericksburg](#). There they unloaded the wounded coming back from the front and then loaded them onto steamboats transporting them to hospitals in Washington. Night after night, the men worked until midnight or later in caring for the wounded.

[Battery B](#) of Hackensack set a record at Gettysburg when it fired more rounds of ammunition, 1,380, than any other combat group in the war. It is not easy to enjoy participation in a war and these Dutchmen returned home, still disgruntled. The poor food prepared by the inexperienced army cooks, promoted many of the soldiers to prefer preparing their own meals. The pay was \$11 per month for a time, and then was raised to \$16 a month for the Northern troops. By our standards sanitary conditions were shocking and caused terrible loss of life. Most wounded died from infections and disease because antiseptics were unknown at the time. All in all these Jersey regiments, brave in battle were still unhappy enough about the war to return home and help New Jersey become one of only three states to vote against Lincoln in the 1864 election. New Jersey, it must be remembered, was a border state of the [Mason-Dixon line](#) and her trade with the Southern states was important.

When the men of the [Twenty-Second Regiment](#) completed their enlistment, they were given a roaring welcome at the State Capitol in Trenton, and again when they reached Hackensack, where honors and a banquet awaited them at the Mansion House.

The boom and panic following the Civil War had its effects on Hackensack just as much as on the rest of the nation. Even the conservative Hollanders of the Hackensack Valley became involved in bidding up land prices and in promoting the railroads and industries.

Eventually the cost of farmland went so high that it no longer made sense to utilize it for mere farming. But the boom became a bust, and by 1873 land that had sold for hundreds of dollars per acre went back to only \$10 an acre, with the depression period slowing progress of every kind..

## Chapter VII

### The turn of the Century...

Quoting the Hackensack, N.J. Illustrated, published by the [Exempt Firemen](#)

*We have a beautiful river for boating, bathing and fishing; a large well patronized circulating library; other social and musical societies which give numerous entertainments in the Opera House; a well managed Young Mens' Christian Association, which has proved to be a valuable acquisition, and Education Hall, where the young and old are privileged to inspect work done by all grades of pupils in the county's public schools...*

*In the way of recreation the town is supplied abundantly. First I think should be mentioned the river. Almost everyone finds pleasure on the water in some, way, and the Hackensack presents various attractions. Steam launches and row boats can navigate it from its mouth to the dam, 6 miles above the town; while by making short "caries", the canoeist can go miles further. Its fishing is celebrated. Among the varieties of fish caught are shad and smelts (in nets), and striped and black bass, perch in great numbers, catfish and eels. Its shores afford the only rail-bird shooting near New York, and it is a favorite feeding ground for ducks and snipe. Many of the adjacent streams are stocked with trout and the covers back of town give good quail, woodcock and rabbit shooting.*

About the same time the Rev. Dr. J.W. Dalley wrote in a special Illustrated Edition of the Bergen County Democrat:

*Socially, Hackensack is not a unit; but it is more so than most towns of its size. It has its select circles it is true, but these various coteries are not offensively exclusive to anyone but unworthy people. In fact, there is less of the real snobbish society in our place than in any other town in Northern N.J. As a consequence, it is a most enjoyable place of residence for those who esteem character of more importance than money.*

Though Dr. Dalley's comments were published at least three-quarters of a century ago, they hold true to this very day. Friendliness and neighborliness are still important characteristics of Hackensack.

More important than the lack of "snobbishness" was the beginning of fine health care in our area. As the Democrat newspaper put it in the edition of -Friday, April 13, 1888, "Dr. St. John has been working actively on the project to have a hospital located in Hackensack; and has met with remarkable success. Every year the need of such an institution is being felt, owing the growth of the town and the number of accidents on the railroads, brickyards, etc."

**Hackensack Hospital** (Note: Much of this material is very dated.)

In the early spring of 1888, Hackensack Hospital began as a 12 room house with a barn in the back, on Second Street. Fifteen years later in 1903, when Mary Stone Conklin trained in the School of Nursing, the entire area surrounding the Hospital was still lush farm country, and

Essex Street was merely a dirt road with wooden sidewalks. Cows grazed in the pastures around the 12 room frame house with 35 beds, and patients were brought to the Hospital by horse-drawn ambulance.

Although in 1903 nursing was not considered to be a particularly attractive vocation for a cultured young woman, it seemed to Mary Stone Conklin to be a good opportunity to make a valuable contribution to society. She went on to become Administrator of the School of Nursing and the Hospital for many years. The present Hudson Street, then known as the old Plank Road, was a toll thoroughfare and Dr. David St John traveled this route so often in caring for his patients he was reputed to have a charge account with the toll operator.

By 1921 there was a desperate need for improved hospital facilities and Senator William Johnson kicked off the fund raising campaign with a pledge of \$100,000. Senator Johnson (who had been the Assistant Postmaster-General of the U.S., during the McKinley administration) closed the same hospital campaign with another \$100,000 donation. His name should not be forgotten, nor will it be, with our Johnson Public Library and Johnson Park.

Today we have a modern, voluntary, nonprofit hospital, equipped with the most advanced tools of medical science for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Not only one of the largest hospitals in New Jersey, Hackensack has the reputation for leading among community hospitals with its use of the most advanced tools in its Coronary Care, Burn, and other units.

The 1976 statistics can only begin to suggest the extent of care Hackensack Hospital provides this area today. The 500 bed hospital handled 37,184 emergency room visits, 38,817 physical therapy visits, the Community Mental Health Center had 28,881 visits, and a total of 23,666 patients were admitted and cared for by several hundred doctors and a staff of 1,700 persons. Services include the only operational burn unit in New Jersey, the child evaluation center, the community nursing service, new-born intensive care unit, and the cystic fibrosis center. Hackensack Hospital is truly a major center for medical care in Bergen County.

The teaching affiliation with the New Jersey College of Medicine and Dentistry began in 1974 and continues to be strengthened. Members of the practicing medical staff are serving as faculty for medical students, interns, and residents who have chosen Hackensack Hospital for specialized training.

In 1975, the profound implications for this affiliation enhanced the hospital's ever present drive for excellence, for the training medical students require teachers of the highest competence who are equally skilled as practitioners of medicine.

**Genetics Service:** The first Genetics Service in Bergen, Passaic and Rockland Counties opened its doors here in 1975 bringing this relatively new field of science directly to those who need it.

**Community Mental Health Center:** The CMHC mission is broad, covering hospitalization, outpatient consultation, partial hospitalization, consultation and education, and crisis intervention.

**New born Intensive Care Unit:** In 1975 seriously ill new-born children were admitted to the only special care unit of this type in Bergen County.

**Child Evaluation Center:** This 10 year old center - also the only one of its type in Bergen County is a recognized leader in the area of child abuse.

**Center for Speech, Hearing and Learning Disabilities:** In addition to being a diagnostic and treatment center for children and adults with communication and learning disorders, it is the only Hospital in Bergen County with a learning disabilities component and the only one with a class for neurologically impaired children.

**Cystic Fibrosis Center:** For the child afflicted with Cystic Fibrosis, chronic congenital disease, the problems caused by constant distress of the lungs, pancreas and other areas of the body create psychological stress as well. Both children, their parents, and other family members must be helped in dealing with this disease which often requires daily treatments at home.

**Community Nursing Service:** Each day 25 Registered Nurses go out into Bergen County towns and five in Hudson County to provide skilled nursing service to the chronically ill of all ages. Mrs. St. John and her friend Mrs. S.H. Jacobson formed the Women's Auxiliary and soon had 30 members working day and night to equip the new 12 room hospital. Even before the hospital opened its doors to the public, these women had made 68 rag rugs and many curtains. They sewed and mended clothes for the patients. They started a .collection of linen sheets to be used for bandages. (In those days only cheesecloth was sold.) Bandages were sealed in jars and sterilized by the same canning process as were the quantities of vegetables and fruit, which these same women prepared in their spare time.

Fortunately the supply of raw materials was inexhaustible; everyone had linen sheets and the entire county was one large farming community. Many patients paid their hospital bills with farm produce.

In 1920 "Women's" replaced "Ladies" as the new title of the Auxiliary, -probable because after World War I, the word "Ladies" became obsolete with women's suffrage, just as skirts moved up above the ankles in shocking fashion.

Over the years Auxiliary members have continued to cut, sew and fold dressings, relieve the nurses of their more menial tasks, operate the Corner Shop and the Hospitality Cart, welcome youngsters to the hospital with their very own Foxy the puppet, and raise thousands of dollars for such items as pacemakers, and the other medical and surgical equipment of all types.

Raising thousands of dollars means, for example, from 1950 through 1968, \$267,009.85. The Auxiliary's members from many towns in the surrounding area donate over 60,000 hours a year of volunteer time to accomplish these feats.

Women sought enrichment of other kinds. In January, 1912, Mrs. Charles Adams assembled an enthusiastic group of nine women to join her in planning for a club. When the Woman's Club House .was dedicated in 1931, it was the fruition of a dream for the many women who had

worked so hard from the first days of the organization. The continued objectives of the group have been to bring women together for mutual help, fellowship, and community service.

Among the earliest projects was making a summer playground for two of the public schools, and establishing domestic science (Home Economics) classes in the Broadway School. The women helped finance as well as conceive the ideas they worked on. They initiated Clean Up Days and Clean Up Weeks in Hackensack to help beautify her and when World War I started they were fast to work for Belgian War Babies.

In 1916 they voted in favor of giving women the right to vote in accord with the Women's Suffrage movement and from the moment our country entered the war every Woman's Club department did special war work. They contributed services for the men of nearby Camp Merritt and particularly for men blinded in the war.

Working and being innovative, the Garden Club was a "first" in the entire state and inspired early understanding and appreciation of conservation of natural resources. By 1922 there were more than 700 members and from this one club women started their own chapters in neighboring towns.

The Woman's Club also worked to gain a charter on the 15th of June, 1916, for the Hackensack Chapter of the American Red Cross. Branches and auxiliaries were then established in fourteen neighboring towns by 1917. The chapter contributed to the \$78,000 raised by two war fund drives.

Woman's contributions were cutting and making hospital and refugee garments, surgical dressings, and knitted garments. The war time program included canteen service, motor car service, camp service, home service, nursing service and Junior Red Cross which assisted ex-servicemen and their families. The Jr. Red Cross raised over \$1,500 to help establish a children's hospital in France.

An even older organization, the Oritani Field Club, was the result of cooperation of two existing tennis clubs in 1877, tennis being almost as popular then as now.

The Pastime Lawn Club headed by F.A. Anthony, and President John B. Bogert of the Hackensack Lawn Tennis Club agreed to enlarge their horizons and create a club that could offer more variety in sports activities.

Together the groups purchased the Anderson property on Main Street running down to the River. The Oritani Field Club was incorporated in December 1887, with one of the first projects being a toboggan slide and readying the area for an ice skating pond, as well as cutting bushes and leveling ground to have a ball field ready in the spring. The house committee renovated the residence itself, which included bowling alleys and enlarged billiard rooms.

The public opening was a really gala occasion on the Fourth of July, 1888, when about 5,000 people assembled on the grounds, where that evening there was a grand display of fireworks.

Just after World War I, in July, 1919, a group of 15 ex-servicemen applied for an American Legion Post charter as a result of their meeting at the home of Otis Gregg. The post was named after [Captain Harry B. Doremus](#), in honor of the man who led their company and was killed in the [Meuse-Argonne offensive](#) of 1918.

In 1919 the cornerstone was laid for the original home of the Hackensack Hebrew Institute at State and Meyer Streets during a period of strong growth in Hackensack. That structure is presently the site of the local Salvation Army facilities.

## Chapter VIII

### Our newer citizens ... and schools...

In 1775 when [J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur](#) asked, "What is this new man, the American?", he answered his own question: "They are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, German and Swede. From this promiscuous breed, that race, now called Americans, have arisen."

Obviously, except for the Indians, every one of us is an immigrant or descended from an immigrant. We know the English and Dutch settled in the Hackensack Valley, creating plantations comparable to those in Barbadoes, to escape religious persecution, as adventurers and for a wide range of reasons of self-improvement.

The largest number of immigrants came to the country between 1820 and 1920. During the so-called "old immigration" prior to 1883, most were from England, Scotland, Holland, France and Scandinavian countries.

How did they know about Hackensack? A few were bondsmen in the early days, searching for freedom and a new start. They were indentured, having their fares paid by an employer to whom they were then under contract, guaranteeing that they would stay and work for that person for a specified number of years, whether as a servant or other type employee. By 1900, \$20 could bring a steerage passenger from as far as Finland or Sicily to New York, the great port of entry close to Hackensack.

Many of those who came had little real knowledge of what America was like and New York was a shock to them. Hearing of New Jersey so nearby and so rural by comparison, they chose this area. Some started from Europe in hometowns near a large port where the agents, employed by shipping companies or the new industrial organizations, made some fairly wild promises to lure workers here to fill jobs. Often this tied in with periods of economic woes, crop failures or political upheavals in their homeland. Tire Germans, Irish and others came looking for "the land of opportunity" with the hope of a "second chance".

In their native lands many had heard about America as a kind of Utopia. When they landed at Ellis Island there were agents scouting out possible workers who could be used as cheap labor.

There were jobs available in the silk mills in Hackensack and Paterson, or in local brickyards. Newcomers settled immediately in Hackensack for the employment here, or to work in the paper mill across the river in Bogota.

The same conditions existed from 1890 to the 1920s, when the second wave of immigrants came over from Italy, Ireland, Poland, Russia, Greece and other countries. Large homes in Hackensack needed housekeepers and maids, while experienced men were needed for the important Hackensack River barge trade and for building the railroads. Stonecutters and construction men were in demand for building the new subways in New York. As overseas communications - improved, the word was spread to the most remote villages about jobs in America.

Hudson Street had been known as the German Section of town as newcomers arrived during the 1860s, pushed by the famine in Germany. There were German saloons and the language one heard on the street was often German. The Irish had left their homes after the terrible hardships produced by the potato famine in the 1840s, when half of Ireland's people lived on small farms. The potato, their main source of food, suddenly was nonexistent. Between 1845 and 1847 about 750,000 persons had died of starvation and disease in Ireland and many others left, most coming to the United States. Whereas the Germans had been craftsmen, such as carpenters, or house servants to the rich, the Irish came here as laborers and to work on the river barges and boats. So many dwelled between Essex Street and the railroad on Union Street, the area was known as Little Dublin.

When Victor Emmanuel III ascended the throne in Italy in 1900 he placed heavy tax burdens on the people and the successive political upheavals induced 3 million to flee to the States from Italy in 1914 alone. They took over the laborers jobs held by the past generation of Irish. Italian stonecutters were needed in the construction industry and in building the railroads and subways.

The Hudson Street area held more and more Italians, who were replacing the Germans. With the growth of rail lines in Poland and the end of serfdom after 1860, it was possible for the Poles to leave the struggling economy at home and try America. Many of these people had worked small farms in Poland, thus "the change to laboring for low wages at industrial jobs was undoubtedly difficult. Most of the ethnic groups similarly wrestled with the English language and an unfamiliar way of life. Hackensack's brickyards and the paper mills in Bogota and Ridgefield Park were among the places they looked to for a new job.

The tremendous rise in population, in Europe in the 19th Century, the relatively small area to accommodate so many people and dramatic technological, changes causing unemployment were among the factors which caused people to leave Europe for America. Other causes which led people to look for the new and better way of life included crop failures, debts and political changes.

The influx of new residents brought changes to the old Dutch atmosphere in Hackensack as a consequence of its proximity to New York City. They found neither paradise nor the streets lined with gold, as the stories out of California and the Yukon gold rush stories may have led them to believe. Instead, they discovered a reasonable chance for education and improvement in such places as Hackensack and Bergen County. Groups of incoming immigrants tended to cling together. Often only second generation families dispersed throughout town while clinging to the respective churches and friends.

In 1870 losses from bad crops, coupled with large tax increases caused Greek families to become desperate and many in turn looked to new opportunities in the United States, giving up the farming they had known and going into service trades, restaurants and other occupations.

Fleeing the persecutions of the Turkish massacres in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Armenians came and managed to use their skills in silk, rug weaving and artistry in jewelry design to good advantage.



Problems in Russia played an important role in inspiring Jewish immigration here, particularly around 1905 when hundreds of cities and villages were attacked. Other Jewish immigration from many parts of the world resulted from persecution. They brought their talents as tailors, teachers, merchants, traders and workers. Some found jobs while others entered various business enterprises.

Hackensack was by now the largest shopping area in the county. Saturday for most families in Bergen meant to Hackensack to shop, a visit to the movies, a chance to eat out. The variety of services to be found were due in no small measure to the abilities of the many groups forming Hackensack's population.

An influx of immigrants from South America came in the 1960s and 1970s from Colombia and then from Ecuador. Today, Central Bergen, of which Hackensack is a part, has the largest proportion of Spanish speaking immigrants in the County. Included are people from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Spain, Venezuela, Mexico, Costa Rica and Central America.

Most of the newcomers were from larger cities in their own homelands. Their reasons for settling in Hackensack were given as location and being a quiet city, proximity to Farleigh Dickinson University and Bergen Community College and the opportunities to study, obtain work and make-a better life by improving their economic status. Newcomers to Hackensack have been appreciative of the educational opportunities here from the days of the Washington Institute to the present time.

How did Hackensack react to the influx of the various groups who immigrated here? Hackensack cared. An assistant to the principal of the night school (which began in 1906) asked permission to use one classroom on Saturday evenings to instruct the Italians and help them to become better citizens.

The Board of Education agreed and the classes began in 1908. Foreign born students remained part of the evening school until 1920, when Miss Ruth Sprague was appointed principal and English as a second language became an independent branch of the educational tree. Hackensack cared.

The English as a Second Language School has emphasized various languages to meet the needs of incoming groups. In 1975, most of the newcomers were from South America. In 1976, people are arriving from such countries as Iran, China, India, Hong Kong and Japan. So successful is this special school for children and adults that in our time Hackensack has become a model for other school systems which are only now beginning to help their newest citizens.

Hackensack's preeminence in the area of education is not recent, for people in the Hackensack Valley have always held learning to be of great importance. The General Assembly of East Jersey, in 1693 ruled each province was to provide a schoolmaster and three townspeople to make decisions regarding financing of a school.

In May, 1976, this Bicentennial year, the Evening School for Foreign Born Adults at the Middle School, sponsored by the Hackensack Board of Education achieved an enrollment of 462 students from 43 school districts and 56 foreign countries.

In 1923 Miss Mary Michelini joined the staff. This dedicated teacher rolled up a blackboard, packed a brief case with books and pencils and went to the homes of foreign families. She literally walked miles, from one end of the town to the other; from Jackson and Washington Avenues to upper Main Street, to the Fairmount section. She taught in one hour sessions mothers and other adults who could not come to school at night. For 7 years Miss Michelini gave home instruction to small groups of Polish, Italians, Russians, Jews and others. In 1945, she became Principal of the Broadway Evening School, serving, 18 more years for a total of 40 years of service to newcomers.

The next Principal, Mrs. Alice Falb, served from 1963 to 1976 during which time the site was changed from the Broadway School to the Middle School, a better location with more suitable furniture for adults. The principal at this time is Richard Vega.

### **How Schools Progressed**

Originally churches, farms or barns were used as classrooms. The first actual school building was built in 1730 next to the Paramus Dutch Reformed Church. On that site today is a schoolhouse museum .well worth visiting.

Before slateboards, writing was done in broad shallow sand boxes with a stick being used to trace letters and numbers. Teachers often made the quill pens for writing on paper. Before hour glasses were used, teachers made a "noon mark" on a doorsill or floor in order to tell time.

Books were scarce. Pupils, too, were scarce in the sense that they attended school only when not needed for chores on the farms. School then was an out-of-season exercise for children of the agricultural community.

It wasn't until 1820 that the State of New Jersey authorized townships to levy taxes for the support of schools. By 1840 Hackensack had six schools and 280 pupils. The first superintendent received \$20 a year as his salary. The directive for hiring teachers required only that they be 16 years of age or more and have completed elementary school.

By 1897 there were 263 students attending high school in Bergen County, 117 of these were in New Barbadoes (Hackensack), the site of the only four year high school in the whole county.

Local public and private schools seemed to be always a step ahead of neighboring communities. Hackensack was truly a center of both public and private education in northern New Jersey.

[The Washington Institute](#) on Main and Warren Streets, built by Peter Wilson in 1769, was so highly regarded there was serious consideration of making it a college. This same Dr. Wilson was a professor at Columbia University and also a member of the Assembly of New Jersey. It was up to the assembly to decide on the location for Queen's College (Rutgers University as it is

now called). Being a modest man, Dr. Wilson abstained from casting the deciding vote in favor of his hometown of Hackensack and therefore Rutgers is now situated in New Brunswick. The Washington Institute functioned as a private academy until 1865, when its trustees voted to make it a free school open to all. An outstanding scholar, Dr. Nelson Haas, was the principal at that time and the popularity of this exceedingly fine institution caused them to build a new and much larger "Washington School" (in 1878) which was later renamed [Union Street School](#).

Of equally fine reputation was [The Newman School](#) on the south east corner of Essex Street and Polifly Road. This was a Catholic boarding school for boys. Its fame must have spread all the way to Minnesota, since in the early 1900s, [F. Scott Fitzgerald](#), one of America's greatest writers, was sent here by his parents. It was known as one of the finest Eastern prep schools. From 1826 Hackensack also had the Lafayette Institute, on the west side of Main Street near Passaic Street. The school grew, was renamed the Jefferson Institute, subsequently it was rebuilt again as its growth continued and in 1894 it became part of the public school system as School #3, or State Street School (now the Hackensack Middle School).

To learn more about the Hackensack Academy (built in 1870 on the northwest corner of State Street and Central Avenue) the Abeel School, the Gateway School the many parochial schools, the seven elementary schools and the high school in more detail, refer to George Scudder's book, *A Historical Record of the Hackensack Public Schools*, from which much of this information, was taken.

## Chapter IX

### Between two wars...

#### World War I

1914, county reaction to the outbreak of the war in Europe was in keeping with the then prevailing national sentiment; "It's not our war; stay out of it." However, when war was declared against Germany in 1917, area residents changed their attitudes.

A factor in Bergen County's reaction was the construction of [Camp Merritt](#), the American Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F.) embarkation camp, on 770 acres in the Cresskill-Dumont-Bergenfield region. The fact that many of the more than 1 million soldiers processed there for overseas duty (or on their return from duty) were entertained in local homes or in Camp Merritt by county organizations brought the war closer to the local population.

[Governor Walter E. Edge](#) of New Jersey on May 23, 1917; issued a proclamation supplementing the one by President Woodrow Wilson, designating June 5, 1917, as "military registration day". He requested that it be observed throughout New Jersey as a great patriotic and legal holiday.

Hackensack and Englewood celebrated registry day with parades and mass meetings. There were lively and interesting scenes at various polling places.

In Hackensack each man who registered received a red, white and blue insignia -to be pinned on the lapel of his coat. The participants marched in a big parade held late in the afternoon and then attended mass meetings in the State Street School auditorium in the evening was one of the greatest ever witnessed in the City. The marching column was made up of members of The Grand Army of the Republic in automobiles, Spanish War veterans, members of the Home Defense League, auxiliary firemen, Junior OUAM with their large flag, Boy and Girl Scouts, Boy's Brigade, school children, three "auto machines" of the Hackensack Fire Department, Italian Society with a beautiful flag of their country and a company of Polish riflemen. The procession was led by Cols. Alfred T.

[The Hackensack parade](#), which started from the Oritani field at 4 P.M. 'Holley and Frank M. Taylor, with a platoon of mounted aides, and bands of music performing patriotic tunes, while flags fluttered from every hand. When the registration for the enlisting men closed at 9 o'clock that evening, Hackensack was second in the county with 1,410 signed up for duty. By December, 1917, and January, 1918, it was necessary for Bergen County to have six draft districts, one of which was District No. 2, Courthouse, Hackensack. Then by August, 1918, when more men were needed, another registration of 21 year old men took place as 40 men from District No. 2 enrolled, followed by a last registration in September of that year. Fortunately, this last group never needed to see active duty since hostilities ended with the signing of the Armistice, November 11, 1918.

When peace was declared with Germany, the people of Hackensack reacted to the news with a celebration which started about 4 A.M. with the sounds of bells, whistles, horns and drums. There was a large parade which included Mayor Demarest, members of the Hackensack

Improvement Commission, and many of "the groups which had whipped up enthusiasm at the beginning of the war. Nearly all businesses hung signs reading; "Closed - no business today - gone to the Kaiser's funeral." It was over.

In 1924, four years after Camp Merritt had been closed, a granite shaft was placed on a site marking the center of the former cantonment at Knickerbocker Road and Madison Avenue. The monument was dedicated in a ceremony which included General John J. Pershing, former commander of the A.E.F., and thousands of county citizens.

The postwar era did not bring the campaign slogan, "A Return to Normalcy," to fruition here. Enactment of the Volstead Act, prohibiting the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors in the United States changed matters drastically. Geographically close to New York City, Hackensack has at times been involved in the larger city's dishonorable as well as worthwhile activities. Prohibition and its speakeasies, bootleg liquor, gang wars and police raids came here via the New York route, too. Hijacking of liquor carrying vehicles was especially rampant on Bergen's highways and often resulted in bloody encounters and the disappearance of gangsters whose bodies were never found. This was not a proud time in our history.

During the same era, a series of trans-Atlantic flights brought productive attention to a salt marsh meadow lying just south of Hackensack. Transatlantic fliers Charles A. Lindbergh and Clarence Chamberlin, and polar explorer Richard E. Byrd helped to put Teterboro on the world's aviation map by their use of this pasture land on which the Dutch farmers had once grazed cattle. Fame came also by way of Dutch aircraft designer Anthony Foller, who built there the tri-motor plane "America" in which Byrd flew. The barnstorming Gates Flying Circus also flew out of Teterboro.

Bergen County and Hackensack took on a suburban flavor between 1920 and 1930, and population increased more than one-third. When the Depression hit in the early '30s its effect here surprised those who had long sought a bridge across the Hudson. Even the marvel of the George Washington Bridge had less than its anticipated effect on the prosperity and progress of the county during the period of rock bottom economics. The span did prove its economic potency; however, two decades later by helping to fuel the real estate boom of Bergen County through the 1950s and well into the '60s.

## **World War II**

A conflict which caused more destruction in human life and property and which affected more people than any war in history has thousands of stories connected with it. Even though the fighting began in September, 1939, the United States was not involved until December 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

It would take volumes to record the changes in civilian life in the United States, or even in Hackensack, brought on by World War II. Two stories of Hackensack servicemen do bear mention, however.

"They were three friends - boyhood buddies who had played, studied, and grown up together in

Hackensack's First Ward. Two of them, Corporal Joseph Peccoralo, 26th Regiment, and Platoon Sergeant Michale Krachkovsky, 24th, had been on the same attack transport, but had been assigned to different landing craft for the invasion."

As the story unfolded in The Record of February 19, 1945, "...60,000 United States Marines ... landed on the tiny, seemingly insignificant mass of volcanic ash, stunted trees, sand, and jagged rock."

This was the Japanese Island of Iwo Jima. "The third buddy, First Lieutenant Carl Padavano, was the company commander of G. Company, 3rd Battalion, 28th Regiment. This was the outfit whose men fought their way inch by inch up the side of a mountain heavily fortified with enemy pillboxes that fortified caves and the best of Japan's soldiers, who had vowed that 10 Americans would die for every Japanese killed. This was Mount Suribachi. Lt. Padavano was later to meet Krachkovsky for a brief interlude of hand-shaking and back-slapping on the side of the mountain when Japanese mortar fire sent the former football teammates diving for shelter. Their next reunion was in Hackensack after the war.

"...a squad of 20 men of G Company reached the summit of Mount Suribachi, only to be driven back by a barrage of Japanese grenades. Eleven survivors again made the assault with the American Flag tucked into the blouse of a sergeant. Six of these heroic Marines made it this time and planted the first flag attached to a length of pipe. The date was February 23, 1945."

Padavano had been wounded and after spending three days in a field hospital returned to the front and "10 days later was wounded again by enemy gunfire", but his courage in leading his platoon in a 500 yard advance under the most extreme conditions earned him not only a Purple Heart, but the Bronze Star as well.

Meanwhile, "Platoon Sgt. Mike Krachkovsky was having his hands full - of • volcanic ash. His unit was among the first to hit the beach" and after three long days on the beach Mike was assigned as stretcher bearer because of the many casualties.

"One of his most memorable recollections was on February 23 when, from 2 miles away, Mike saw the Stars and Stripes flying from the top of Mount Suribachi."

Meanwhile, Corporal Joseph Peccoralo had landed with the eighth wave, moving toward the foot of Mount Suribachi. ...His first night on the island was spent at the edge of Air Strip No.1. From this position the next morning they watched helplessly while enemy artillery directed by observation posts on top of the mountain wiped out an entire battery of Marine 75s.

"On the fourth day of a seemingly hopeless fight against an invisible enemy, a tremendous shout went up from every Marine who could see the top of the mountain. Seeing our Flag up there was just what we needed, Joe recalls." He was also wounded, as Mike and Carl had been during this action."

"But the enemy failed to keep their vow or their island...when the final count was made, there were six dead Japanese for each of our dead."

Today we find the three men still in Hackensack. Padavano is Superintendent of Schools, Joseph Peccorale is a sergeant with the Police Department and Mike Krachkowsky is employed at the Post Office in Hackensack. We turn to another Navy man, H. Kent Hewitt, born here February 11, 1887. He attended local schools, including Hackensack High. His career in the Navy was marked by his becoming Rear Admiral in December, 1940, vice admiral November 17, 1942, Admiral on April 3, 1945, Commander of the U.S. 8th Fleet, 1943. He directed the landings at Morocco, Sicily, Salerno, and the south coast of France. He commanded the U.S. Naval Forces, Northwest African waters, the U.S. 12th Fleet; and the U.S. Naval Forces in Europe from August, 1945 to September, 1946.

On November 8, 1942, North African waters were calm. On other days of the month at that time of year, that corner of Africa which edges into the ocean at the foot of the Atlas Mountains provided no spot for troop landings or beachheads.

"We did it," Admiral Hewitt said, "and we were lucky. The top command of the Army and the top command of the Navy put their heads together... We talked some, coordinating our forces, comparing notes, and when we were ready we let go with everything and we won. Once completed, our ships had to stand by until beachheads had been set up and our men well on the way inland."

Admiral Hewitt's forces stood by in those hours just before dawn and suddenly Casablanca's shore batteries opened fire, the only enemy attack on the American invaders. The guns of Hewitt's flagship returned the fire and began to edge in and out of the remarkably accurate shore fire until several harbor vessels lay as charred hulls and the shore batteries finally were silenced. This was an important step in defeating the Nazis in North Africa.

## **Chapter X**

### **Our town government**

In its early years, Hackensack was a Village located in [New Barbadoes Township](#). Local government of a sort was created by an act of the New Jersey Legislature on March 14, 1856, designating an Improvement Commission ' to upgrade the sidewalks of the Village. Those limited powers were expanded over the years until March 30, 1896, when the Commission was declared to be the governing body by the Legislature. At the same time, the Legislature made the boundary of the village and the Township coincide.

The Hackensack Improvement Commission, elected every two years, consisted of a President, one commissioner at large, and a commissioner from each of the five wards. The posts were unsalaried. In 1921 the title of the Commission leader was changed from president to mayor by state legislation.

According to Miss Ethel Hoyt, longtime City Clerk who was associated with the local government since 1911, the Commission's few appointments were much sought after. The caretaker of the town clock in the Johnson Free Public Library was paid \$12.50 per annum. The same salary went to the person designated to see that horse watering troughs along Main Street were kept filled. Among the first known municipal buildings was a rented home at 303 Main Street, where the town's records were kept until 1913, when the seat of government moved to the old firehouse at 346 State Street. The relocation resulted from the commission's refusal to pay \$50, an increase of \$5 per month, for the rented quarters.

The City's form of government was changed by referendum vote on May 23, 1933, to the [Municipal Manager Plan](#). This called for the appointment of a professional manager, and a five-man Council elected at large, with the top vote-getter being traditionally named Mayor. The first new Council was elected June 20, 1933, and too, office the following July,.18. The first Mayor was Robert A. Altschuler. On January 3, 1935, the City Council by resolution adopted the portrayal of the head of Indian Chief Oratam as the official seal of the City of Hackensack.

The former North Jersey Title Company headquarters was acquired, with furnishings, by the City the following year in lieu' of delinquent taxes amounting to \$88,000. At the time there was not the annex which is now the present police headquarters. The seat of government has been located at 65 Central Avenue since the formal dedication of May 18, 1936.

### **Our town...**

#### **Police Department**

The early history of the Hackensack Police Department is not known, there being no records available prior to 1900. The beginnings of the Department are here related by retired Sergeant Herman Barr (deceased) and through the assistance of Ms. Mary Otchy of the Johnson Free Public Library Staff, the late Mrs. Josephine Coogan, City Clerk of Hackensack, and the Library Staff of The Record.



The Hackensack Police Department came into being on February 21, 1888, when the Hackensack Improvement Commission introduced "An Act to Provide for the Establishment of a Police Force". An actual "Ordinance to Establish and Regulate a Police Department in the Village of Hackensack" was not adopted until August, 1900.

The beginnings of the Police Department as related by Sergeant Barr were spartan. The early law officers, two in number, "Bucky" Banta and George Earle, shared the enforcement responsibilities of the Village. They worked for \$50 per month with no days off. They supplied their own uniforms, guns, equipment and other necessary items. The two men operated out of borrowed space in the Fire House at 24 Mercer Street.

The patrol function was a simple matter, if one of the officers took the area north of the Susquehanna Railroad tracks, the other took the area south. It is not known how the selection of the area was made or if the selection was made by tossing a coin. These men were the bastions of law and order in the Village until 1896, when George Earle retired and "Bucky" Banta died.

About this time, Cornelius Van Blarcom, Michael Breen, Martin O'Shea and Albert Rick were appointed to the Police Department. Two years later, Sergeant Barr was appointed. According to the record furnished by Sergeant Barr before his death, there still was no Chief of Police, but Cornelius Van Blarcom was in charge and shared the patrol duties. The work load of the Department also increased about this time, the Village then having four patrol posts instead of only two, although equipment was still lacking. Sergeant Barr remembered that the police officers used wheelbarrows, stone bosts or any other conveyance they could borrow or commandeer to bring drunks and any other persons under arrest to the Police Station. Persons arrested could not be held as there was no facility for keeping prisoners.

According to Sergeant Barr, a short time later, a man whose first name he could not recall, but whose last name was Schrieber and who worked for R.C. Macy Company as a teamster was appointed as Sergeant and placed in charge of the Department. Barr's recollection is that Schrieber served only one year as head of the Department, but during his leadership the force was increased with the appointments of Charles Graber and Thomas Smith.

When Sergeant Schrieber left the Department, Irving Waltermire (or Waltermeyer both spellings appear in the old records) was appointed in charge and became the first Chief of Police. Chief Waltermeyer moved police headquarters to the basement of the Union League Club at the corner of Main and Morris Streets at the Green. About 1905 Jacob Dunn became Waltermeyer's successor as Chief of Police and police headquarters was again moved, this time to what is now the Garden State National Bank at Main and Mercer Streets, this move occurring about 1908.

Again during the tenure of Chief Dunn, the police headquarters was moved this time to Ricardo's Warehouse at what is now approximately 19 Mercer Street. This was an advantageous move for the Police Department, as now horses could be borrowed if the need to use the Patrol Wagon arose. The Police Department stayed at Ricardo's Warehouse until 1918, when it was moved across the street where it originally started in the Fire House at 24 Mercer Street. Now, however, it was officially the police headquarters and facilities for the functions of the Police Department were installed. Here the Police Department made its home and continued to grow until 40 years

later in 1958 it moved into the new modern headquarters at 225 State Street.

In 88 years of law enforcement in the City of Hackensack, the Department expanded from two ill-equipped, untrained constables into the new 107-man computer assisted, modernly equipped and technically trained law enforcement agency. The present Chief, Anthony Iurato, is assisted in upholding the law by six divisions in the Police Department: Detective, Youth, Narcotics, Traffic, Criminal Identification and Patrol.

On December 15, 1914, the Hackensack Improvement Commission (then governing body) passed an ordinance and created the first full paid and part-paid Fire Department to succeed the volunteer department which was disbanded the same night. William Ziegler, the last volunteer chief, was appropriately named chief of the new paid department at a salary of \$1,500 per year.

Fire headquarters was located then on Mercer Street in the building which X formerly housed the Alert Hose Company No. 1 and the Fire Patrol. The four men who were part of this original paid Fire Department were Joseph Mercier, William Bahlburg, Michael Wygant (the captain) and William Henry Jackson who later on was quoted often as he reminisced about those early days.

The men worked 11 days straight and then had 24 hours off. They only left the fire house three times a day to have their meals. They slept upstairs in the Mercer Street building and when they went home on that twelfth day they were still subject to call. One wonders how four men could handle fires in Hackensack and how often.

South Hackensack, Bogota, Maywood, Rochelle Park, Paramus and what was then Arcola. According to Mr. Jackson, "There's just one explanation. The volunteers. Those hardworking men who were with us all the way. They'd come through when we needed them most, following up the alarms no matter where they were when the whistles started.

Although the paid Department boasts of having the only motor driven fire-fighting equipment in Bergen County in 1911, horse-drawn equipment was still located throughout Hackensack for the use of the volunteers. As Jackson recalled,

"Here was the Union Hose Company in the Fairmount section and the Hudson Hose Company down on Hudson Street. Then we had Liberty Steamer Company on State Street near Passaic Street. They had a steam engine and hook and ladder truck.- The Morris Street building housed the protection steamer. And last but not least, Bergen Hook and Ladder truck...We had our problems in those days. Hackensack had low water pressure. If a fire required the use of three or four lines that's when the steamers came in Hydrants were few and far between so the steamers and pumpers used any available source of water - wells, brooks and rivers."

Mr. Jackson explained that the Patrol Company in the Mercer Street building had a horse-drawn wagon used to carry tarpaulins and lanterns- the tarpaulins to cover valuable furniture and the lanterns to help at night fires.

Although there were electric lights in use then, they were not plentiful and it really was handy to have oil lanterns and the old-fashioned carbon arc lamps, The Company also took care of salvage

work and keeping order at fires.

There were two ways to report a fire in the 1900s - telephone and the call boxes located throughout the city. When an alarm came through a call box it rang the bell on the front tower of the Mercer Street building and blew a compressed air whistle at the rear. Sometimes when an alarm came in there would be only one man on duty. One might be sick, another out to dinner another on his 24 hours off. That is when the volunteers proved their worth.

And when a man reached the fire he would hook up the hose, laying 5 or 500 feet by himself. He would run up and attach the nozzle (making sure the water wasn't turned on) dash back to the fire hydrant, turn on the water, rush back to the hose, drag it into the building, all of this only after he located the source of the fire and made sure that no one was inside!

A few old time residents may recall some of the more spectacular fires in town, such as the Armory in 1899, the Second Reformed Church (whose steeple sent embers and flames soaring when it crashed to the ground) in 1906, or the State Street School in 1910 on an extremely cold night with heavy snow on the ground. The days of hand-drawn hook and ladder and volunteers energetically throwing water from leather buckets seem strange when one visits our Headquarters today in City Hall Complex.

In 1876, Fire Chief George Halstead had recommended the organization of a Fire Patrol. The men of the patrol were to preserve order during the July 4th Parade and exhibition of fireworks, do salvage work at fires and keep order. When the new Fire Headquarters was built at 217 State Street in 1921, the Patrol became a salvage company, but in 1974 the Fire Patrol was re-established and its task now is to strengthen ties between Fire Prevention and Fire Suppression. Fire Fighters in cars patrol the City between 8:30 A.M. and 12:00 Midnight checking areas where a fire might go unnoticed.

The department also provides ambulance service to the City from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. The first formal training program for Hackensack firemen was begun in 1936. An officer of the Department was sent to the New York Fire School and upon his graduation was given supervision of the training program. Thirty hours of outdoor training evolutions were conducted in the Spring and Fall each year. Three hours per week were devoted to classroom study during the winter months.

To keep up with the growing fire-fighting problems arising as a result of the new synthetic products, high-rise buildings and changes in fire fighting techniques, the Fire Department in 1974 instituted a sophisticated training program developed by Oklahoma State University. As modern apparatus and additional personnel were added to the Department Headquarters gradually became overcrowded. When the City planned a Municipal Complex, a new Fire Headquarters was included in the plans as a top priority which consists of 38,000 square feet of floor space, approximately four times larger than the old Headquarters.

When the present Fire Chief, Charles H. Jones, joined the Department after World War II in 1945, he became the 38th member. Today the roster numbers 109 Officers and Fire Fighters and five civilian members.

## **Our Johnson Free Public Library**

In "Our Town" it's only proper to describe some of the struggles which preceded our current fine library system. The first Hackensack Library Association was formed in 1833 with the following trustees: Abraham Westervelt, Abram Hopper, Samuel H. Berry, Rowland Hill, Richard W. Stevenson, Henry H. Banta and Richard Danah. "This association was not of long duration, but another organization adopting the same name was formed January 3, 1859, and certificates of stock were issued...but the association did not have a successful existence".

A third association was formed with R.W. Farr, W.L. Comes, David Terhune, James Quackenbush, W.S. Banta and J.N. Gamewell as trustees. This was in 1871 and the library was on the second floor of the Wilson building, where it remained until the present library building on Main Street was opened in 1901.

The Honorable William Johnson purchased the plot, built a two story building and gave a \$5,000 donation for books. In 1916 he made a further contribution of \$30,000 for an addition to the building, None of this was accomplished without difficulties, however, as is related in the following excerpts from an article by Dr. Anna Williams printed in the Bergen Evening Record on October 1, 1951. After the men attempted to start a library in the old Washington Institute Building, many years passed and then a group of Hackensack girls established "The Hackensack Library Association" (H.L.A.), reopened the library and made a "great success of it". As Dr. Anna Williams noted:

"This second opening was started by myself when, soon after my return from college, I passed the old building, closed tight, and with the sign "Hackensack Library" on it. I obtained the key from David Terhune, and found the big room stacked with dusty books and magazines. I immediately got in touch with Sallie McRae and we made up a list of girls we thought might be suitable ones to help us. Eighteen girls consented to assist us.

'Eddie' Williams (Mrs. Broughton) was chosen President, I was made Treasurer, and Willie Angle and Emilie Williams were appointed to draw up the constitution. We divided the town into sections for canvassing to obtain subscriptions and money, and we planned to hold several entertainments to -help the fund. The whole town soon seemed very interested and we received much help and encouragement. People flocked to our unique affairs.

"...I was assigned to approach for help - David Terhune, Garret Ackerson, Frederick Jacobson and Judge Banta who all gave generously with both money and good advice. Of course, there were many others. ....Sallie McRae reported great help from Mr. William Johnson.

"How we girls worked in helping to clean up that old room and getting the books covered and ready for distribution. And how we made lists of the new books we thought were needed, and when bought, what time we spent over their indexing."

Determined volunteers seem to have always been a part of Hackensack's heritage and the accomplishment of important local innovations.

## **The Post Office**

Records indicate that the post office at Hackensack was established on August 28, 1797, with [Archibald Campbell](#) as the first postmaster. From 1798 to 1817 the service, paid for by the government, was rendered from tavern bar-rooms, living rooms in the postmasters' homes, space allotted in the "general stores" and three large stores on Main Street.

On January 1, 1851, Hackensack was one of only five post offices in Bergen County. City delivery was established in Hackensack on July 1, 1890, with three carriers. Rural delivery service began in Hackensack on September 2, 1901 with two carriers, and each received \$500 a year. The first letter carrier was John Z. Zabriskie.

In August, 1956, the State Street post office was designated a temporary sectional center facility and the annex was located at Union Street. In 1963 the annex moved to Newman Street and then in 1967 moved to the present location at Huyler Street in South Hackensack. In 1971 the Hackensack post office was officially designated as a sectional center facility, which serves 45 towns. Hackensack called "The Mamma Facility" is the largest such facility in Bergen County. William J. Nawrocki became postmaster on February 22, 1964, and remains in that position today.

Add pics of 1916-1917 construction of State Street Post office.

## Post World War II

After World War II drastic changes occurred in Paramus, River Edge and many of the towns around us. With much open space available, which an older, more established town like Hackensack did not have, they now blossomed forth with tracts of housing developments, industrial parks, newly designed shopping centers and malls.

Prior to those changes Hackensack's Main Street had been the shopping center for the county, with sidewalks crowded with people on shopping nights and lines of cars heading for Main Street often backed up to Rochelle Park on a Friday night. In the 1950s, patrons began to be absorbed by the new Bergen Mall and Garden State Plaza, causing hardship to the Hackensack merchants. Some merchants moved out to the malls and some were strong enough to remain in Hackensack.

In 1956 a Master Plan was undertaken to review past and current situations and plan for the future. Based on these projections, changes were inaugurated in cleaning out such depressed residential areas as Moore Street and replacing them with office buildings, which then helped to revitalize the business area. Bloomingdale's built a beautiful department store in Hackensack, upgrading the northern area of town. Meanwhile, the older southern end of Hackensack was deteriorating.

Other problems existed on Prospect Avenue as individual [old mansions](#) no longer attracted wealthy people to town and the affluent moved out to the more rural and residential Ridgewood and Saddle River. Fearing that the once stately homes could become rundown rooming houses, the administrators followed the Master Plan and rezoned the area for luxurious high-rise apartments. This brought many former Hackensack residents back and attracted new residents who have helped to revitalize Hackensack. They are often genuinely concerned and interested people who strive for better parks, more tennis courts and other amenities. Our new citizens have taken an active part in the community and have added impetus to Hackensack's ever strong interest in quality education.

In the 1960s the [school system underwent modernization](#) with additions and improvements to the Middle School, High School, Fanny Hillers, Fairmount and later, the new Maple Hill School, while also upgrading athletic fields and grounds.

During the '50s, '60s and '70s the City added public housing to replace blighted homes and created low rent Senior Citizens housing. Regulating the quality of buildings has become important as many older structures in the built up city had begun to deteriorate. Property Codes, planning and other measures are proving their value with the City's continuing vigorous face lift. The last area of challenge is now under consideration as the business district is receiving concerted attention with emphasis on careful maintenance and rehabilitation.

Fortunately, the City has a good fiscal base and bonding powers, making the long-term future of Hackensack bright.

## Chapter XI Persons and happenings...

Hackensack occupies 4.6 square miles. The elevations of the city run from three feet to 120 feet above sea level. New York City is seven miles to the east and its skyline can be seen from a number of locations.

Half of the total area of the city is residential, the people living in one-family, two-family and multi-family dwellings which include garden apartments, high-rise apartments, condominiums, and senior citizen housing. The other half of the City's land is commercial and includes offices, retail stores, research facilities, warehousing and light manufacturing. The shopping hub is Main Street.

The growth of resident population in Hackensack from 1834, when 1,000 people lived here, can be noted in these periods:

By

1840 - 2,631	1910 - 14,050	1950 - 29,219
1880 - 4,248	1920 - 17,667	1960 - 30,521
1890 - 6,004	1930 - 24,568	1970 - 36,008
1900 - 9,443	1940 - 26,279	1976 - 40,000

### [Current Demographics](#)

Hackensack's daytime population increases to 125,000 with people coming from all parts of Bergen County to work in and utilize the County's administrative and judicial facilities, plus other business and services in the City.

The building at 73-75 Main Street was constructed in 1800 by [Albert G. Doremus](#). It was his beautiful stone residence and a stop on his fast New York to Albany stage line. The line carried passengers and mail and changed horses at this point. Mr. Doremus was also postmaster in Hackensack from 1845-1849. His son, Richard, ran the line after Albert's death until the service was outmoded and discontinued. The building at 73 Main Street, with lovely sculptured work on the top may be the original structure, and 75 Main Street possibly an addition that may have been used as a courtyard for coaches.

There are a few other old buildings in town such as Mrs. Felice Dellasala's lovely brick house at 22 Warren Street. It has large black numbers on the side of the house, 1842, denoting the date of construction, and has remained in excellent condition, with the original timbers throughout. A red brick building on the Green, now occupied by law offices, dates from about 1834 when it was the headquarters for the War Hawk bank which had outgrown its space in the Old

### **Mansion House**

It is regrettable that the [Mansion House](#) was torn down in 1945. In corner May of 1976 a plaque

was placed on the office building at the on of Main Street and Washington Place by the Bergen County Bar Association.

[Richard Varick](#) was born and baptized in the Old Dutch Church of Hackensack in 1720. He served as Washington's military secretary, collecting many of the General's papers for safe keeping. The documents are now in the Library of Congress. He later moved to New York. The Varick family which had settled in Hackensack circa 1687, became important in early New York City social, political and commercial worlds. Varick Street in Manhattan is named in honor of the one-time New York Mayor Richard Varick. He considered Hackensack to be his true home and is buried at the Church on the Green. Richard's son James Varick occupies a special place in the history of the African America race in America. His mother was a slave in the household of the Varicks. James was born in the period when the best brains and blood were aflame with a desire for liberty, crystallized in the Declaration of Independence, which was signed when James was 26 years old. Growing up in New York City he began to show his own independence and free spirit. In 1796 about 30 blacks, under the leadership of James Varick formed the first church for blacks in New York City. His activities for his race were unceasing. Free black people of the time were normally poor. Varick's devotion to his wife and family, his religion and race moved him into a selfless life. Along with his trade of shoe-making, he labored outside his home as a tobacco cutter to earn extra wages. He also ran a classroom in his home and at his church. At the same time, he was leading a few devout men and women to establish an independent local church for members of his race.

The church outgrew its localism and became one of the great world-wide religious bodies, the [African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church](#). James Varick was elected the first bishop and consecrate on Sunday, July 30, 1822, presiding until his death in 1827.

On State Street just south of Mercer Street once stood the [Armory](#) (or the Opera House, as it was often called). It was not only used for drilling by the Guardsmen in the first floor and auditorium, but The Hackensack Dramatic Association enjoyed the premises as well for their theatrical productions using the fine state on the second floor.

The first play to be performed at the Armory was called "My Awful Dad," in 1890, and was so popular as to be followed by 33 more such productions in the next 10 years. The interior of the building was gutted by a fire in 1899, shortly after being the locale of a banquet honoring returning Hackensack Spanish-American War heroes.

One of the most famous men to come out of Company G, which drilled at the Armory, was [Captain Harry B. Doremus](#). He had served as a private in the Spanish-American War and as a Lieutenant in the Federal Service against Pancho Villa Mexican marauders. On a battlefield in France in World War I, Captain Doremus was mortally wounded just before the armistice. When the city's schools had no auditoriums, graduation ceremonies were held at the Armory. Many nurses from Hackensack Hospital School of Nursing were capped there. It was here, too, that the original "Celtics" (famous pro basketball team) played their games and that local towns' high school rivalries were fought. The Armory also had fame for the prize fights scheduled there, including matches of Maxie Rosenbloom, one-time World Light Heavyweight Champion. The Guardsmen continued to use the Armory over the years...up to the time of Pearl Harbor.



George Scudder tells us, "...it would be well to point out that the region known as 'Cherry Hill' extended from about Highland Avenue in River Edge south to about Poplar Avenue in Hackensack. The name 'Cherry Hill' was officially abandoned in the late 1880's following the Cherry Hill tornado, and for other good reasons... The Fairmount area was once known as 'Zingsem', the name being derived from Mr. G.N. Zingsem, architect of 'Fairmount Park' in Philadelphia, and his name was replaced by honoring his park instead."

(The [Cherry Hill tornado](#) moved a church off its foundation and caused much damage. It was a freak storm and none of its caliber has lashed the area since.)

In 1876 farming was still a major occupation in the Hackensack Valley. In Bergen County, farms and implements were worth \$19,554,60 of the total valuation of taxable property of only \$23,436,518.

Two hundred years ago every rich farmer had a horse for Sunday rides to church and such, but the ox was the important animal and the one most used for agricultural duties. The Hackensack Valley farmers made masks for their oxen in order to cover their eyes and keep them from eating any growing greens which would cause the animals to break the rhythms of plowing the fields.

As Thomas Paine, author of "[The American Crisis](#)", accompanied Washington and his retreating army from Fort Lee to Hackensack and across Bergen County, he wrote the oft quoted words, "These are the times that try men's souls..."

Mrs. [Alice Huyler Ramsey](#) was reared in Hackensack, was graduated from high school in 1903, and went on to attend Vassar College. Her fame came about from a drive across the United States starting June 9, 1909, in a Maxwell touring car. Three other young girls were with her on the trip, although none of them drove. Alice was president of the Women's Motoring Club of Hackensack and though she had been driving only a year, agreed to the Maxwell Company's proposal to make the trip in order to prove that women could handle automobiles.

There were no dull days, what with Indians in Wyoming, storms and floods in South Dakota, 11 tire changes, one broken axle, Iowa roads being all deep mud, Nebraska roads covered with grass several feet high, no gas stations or mechanics to depend on. The roads in the East were good, mostly hard packed dirt and a few of asphalt. The trip took 41 days. Her book about this trip, *Veil, Duster and tire Iron*, is available in the Johnson Library. She earned her title as First Lady of Automobile Travel, awarded in 1960 by the AAA and Automobile Manufacturers Association. While Patrick Henry was telling the world to give him Liberty or Death, here in Hackensack our John Fell stood on the steps of the Old Church on the Green and called on his fellow townsmen to resist the encroachment on their rights by the British Parliament. He was so great a thorn in the sides of the Royalists that he was kidnapped one night and delivered into the hands of the British. Unfortunately, no records appear that tell the aftermath of his imprisonment.

[Richard Varick](#), who is buried in the cemetery of the Church on the Green, served as Washington's military secretary at the end of the Revolution and was one of the great patriots from this area. Varick collected many of the George Washington papers for safe-keeping that are

now in the Library of Congress. Varick later served as Mayor of New York City, but considered Hackensack his true home.

For centuries before the settlers came, Polifly Road was a narrow trail winding through lush green thickets and dark forests. This was Indian country; here were the hunting grounds of Oratam. With the coming of the Dutch, Polifly Road became an important highway and it was along this early county road that many chose to build their homes. Among them was the Hopper family, which settled here in 1667 on the east side of the road in a typical brown sandstone homestead.

In 1776 [John Hopper](#) was old enough to watch Washington and his ragged troops go straggling by in full retreat from Fort Lee. During the difficult days that followed he saw more armies on the road and felt the pains of war as British or Hessian foraging parties confiscated cattle and other livestock so that John and the other Hopper children went without milk and good food.

John inherited the property and built a new house directly across the street for his wife Maria. This house passed down through the succeeding generations until 1937, when the elegant old mansion, said to have been part of the underground railway in the Civil War, became the New Venice Restaurant, now known as Guido's Restaurant (now known as [Stony Hill Inn](#)).

Dr. Powell, a 1923 graduate of Howard University Medical School, became the first black doctor in Hackensack. He opened his office on High Street, just off First and in time became an inspiration and source of pride to his people.

[Nellie Morrow](#) was to be the first black teacher in the Hackensack school system. A graduate of Hackensack High, she went on to Montclair for her college work. Before being graduated in 1922, she did her practice teaching at Fairmount School. When the time came to offer Nellie Morrow a teaching contract, it was so unusual to have a black teacher that repercussions resulted, the climax being the Jersey Ku-Klux-Klan's invasion of Hackensack with a fiery night parade when the news came out.

Mrs. [Nellie Morrow Parker](#) retired after more than 40 years of teaching in Hackensack and was honored and respected by all. Mrs. Parker's younger brother John Morrow, born in Hackensack in 1910 had a distinguished education. After his appointment as chairman of the department of foreign languages at Talladega College, he became the first American Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea in 1959.

[E. Fredrick Morrow](#) was born in Hackensack and wrote about his own "first" in his book *Black Man in the White House*, telling of the life and work he experienced as executive assistant to President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Also the author of the provocative, "Way Down South Up North," Dr. Harriet L. Knox was the first woman to practice medicine in Hackensack and was one of the first women in Hackensack to buy an automobile. Her father, who had wished to be a doctor, encouraged Harriet -- after her service in the Spanish-American War as a Red Cross nurse -- to go to Cornell Medical School. She did postgraduate work at Johns Hopkins University. After internship at Women's Hospital,

Philadelphia, she looked for a place to settle. "Hackensack played a joke on me", she said, "I thought I was going to be in a country town. Look at it today." That was in 1957, after she had been in practice here for 60 years, and before Hackensack had many high-rise apartments. "[Wind-Jammers of the Hackensack](#)" (another poem) is the title of a pamphlet in the Johnson Library that catches the imagination, and well worth reading today as when it was written in 1916 by Eugene K. Bird:

'[Wind-Jammer](#)' is a derisive term applied to sailing vessels, and men employed on them, by those who claim the greater dignity of association with steam craft..."

Wind-Jammers of the Hackensack were far different vessels -- they were piraguas, sloops and schooners -- unpretentious craft which nevertheless filled quite as important a place in their humble sphere as did the great argosies with towering masts and wonderful spread of canvas braving every stress of weather on the seven seas; even the uncouth (piragua) had its legitimate mission in former days, when it was frequently an object of interest moving sluggishly with the tide and such wind as could be induced to fill sail or sails.... So, with all its unromantic lines and general unattractiveness, the piragua was a picturesque object when seen across the meadows as "it moved upon the water with only mast and sail in view. The broad stretches of our swampland with thousands of acres of tall grass billowing in the summer breeze...have been a theme for many descriptive and poetic pens..."

"Between these marshlands the Red Man paddled his birch bark or dugout canoe centuries before the wind-jammers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sailed the waters of the crooked Hackensack..."

The old-time boats were general freighters, especially on the return voyage, when they carried all manner of merchandise for individuals and stores as far up the Hackensack as the head of navigation at New Milford. There Jacob and [Henry Van Buskirk](#) had a noted grist mill, where grain was ground for individuals, and flour as well as animal feed were shipped in large quantities. In addition to groceries, muslins, boots, shoes, hardware, farming implements, liberal supplies of fire-water were shown on the manifests.. .But there is nothing surprising in this; nearly everybody drank some form of liquor, and down to a much later date farm hands had their "little brown jub" of rum or applejack for companionship in hay and grainfield. Not all the strong drink came up the river, however; large consignments of applejack were shipped from Bergen County distilleries to New York City and the south, for it was then a famous beverage.

No book about Hackensack would be complete without a mention of Bogert's Candy Kitchen. It must have been special to generate such loving recollections.

The ritual every New Year's Day saw hundreds of youngsters coming to the shop on Main Street to wish everyone a Happy New Year. They were usually rewarded with taffy or popcorn balls by Cornelius Bogert, who had been bound out as a youth for 4 years to learn the candy trade. - High on the popularity list was taffy in various flavors. Another specialty was the hard candy called "clear toys" and made in forms of dogs, cats, goats, ladders, tiny tables, chairs, pipes, cups and saucers, pitchers, keys and even scissors in delicious gold and red colors. Of course there were chocolates and licorice, too, but those hard candy forms were important decorations on

most Christmas trees at the turn of the century.

There is a lovely white house at 370 Summit Avenue. It is not only equally pleasing inside, but comes complete with memories of authors' discussions. This home was built by Joseph C. Lincoln, who penned many charming stories of Cape Cod. Among his frequent visitors to Hackensack were friends Joyce Kilmer, author of "Trees", and [William Sydney Porter](#) -- better known as O. Henry -- wrote "The Luck of Roaring Camp", and many humorous short stories.

[James McEachin](#) served as a policeman and a fireman in Hackensack before his acting career took him to California and the starring role in "Tenafly", a TV series in which he played, naturally, a detective, the name was merely a coincidence.

It is not generally known that a top Confederate general in the Civil War was a native of Hackensack. Samuel Cooper, Jr. whose father [Samuel Cooper](#) had distinguished himself in the American Revolution as a major in the Continental Army, was born in Hackensack in June, 1798. The future general attended local schools and spent his boyhood here until he left for the U.S. Military Academy. After graduation and various posts he was assigned duty in Virginia in 1828, married and settled in Fairfax. He became a close friend of Jefferson Davis, who later became President of the Confederate States. This friendship caused Cooper to resign from the U.S. Army and help Davis with the organization of the Civil War. When the conflict started in 1861, Samuel Cooper, Jr. was made a full General. It is said that the true history of that war would be incomplete without Cooper's careful preservation of the Southern War Department records and reports.

[Gene Saks](#), formerly of Hackensack, has become a highly successful director of movies and plays. He was 6 years old when his family moved to Hackensack and he went through the Hackensack Public Schools. After graduating from Cornell University, he served in the Navy, attended the New School and Actor's Studio in New York. He has also acted in plays and the movies. Beatrice Arthur, well known as the title in the TV series "Maude" is his wife. Amongst the plays Gene Saks has directed are the Neil Simon plays "SAME TIME NEXT YEAR" and "CALIFORNIA SUITE" which are now on Broadway. Some of his movie credits are the direction of Neil Simon's "BAREFOOT IN THE PARK", "CACTUS FLOWER" and "ODD COUPLE". He directed the theatre and movie version of "MAME". Gene Saks and his wife live in California and keep in touch with their Hackensack relatives. . .

Among the sculptures located in the lower level of New York City's Lincoln Center, is a magnificent head of Toscanini made by Herman Heilborn of Hackensack. At age 62 he taught himself to sculpt. His first piece was accepted by The New Jersey State Exhibit in 1956 at the Montclair Museum. His "Lincoln Mask" was at the Lincoln Museum in Washington. His head of the renowned author Carl Sandburg was given to the N.Y. Historical Society and Carl Sandburg made a bequeath in his will of his "Lincoln Plaque" by Mr. Heilborn, to the University of Illinois.

The Vatican has a bass relief of Mr. Heilborn's "Pope John", for which Mr. Heilborn received a letter of appreciation from The Vatican. Mr. Heilborn has done other famous people, interesting faces from many ethnic backgrounds and other sculptures.

## Movie theaters in Hackensack

The Bijou Theater was built in 1901 at 150 Main Street. It was a comfortable, attractive theater showing first rate films. There was a singer of the latest popular songs and orchestra to vary the entertainment. It contained 297 seats, and was heated by steam and cooled by electric fans. Admission was about 5 cents. Today, the site is Lowit's parking lot.

The Royal Theater was located at the southwest corner of Bergen Street in the early 1900s. It showed movies and the slides shown on the screen were" accompanied by a singer. The Hudson Theater was at East Broadway and Hudson Street about 1915. It was owned by Samuel Rosenberg.

The Lyric Theater was located next to the Whelan Building at 167 Main Street. It showed movies and fine acts of Vaudeville. Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy appeared there several times.

The Eureka Theater, built in 1917, was situated in the middle of the north side of Banta Place. The Fox Theater was built in 1931, the largest theater in Bergen County. The Fox and the Oritani, built in 1926, are the only two theaters remaining in Hackensack.

When the movies were made in Fort Lee in the early 1900s, some scenes were of motorcycles going over the bridge, filmed near the Courthouse. Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. had some of his scenes made in Hackensack. Marion Davies came to Hackensack to buy some clothes while at the Fort Lee studios; she shopped at the Globe Store on Main Street then the largest department store in Bergen County.

Another form of communication was introduced in Hackensack in 1882 when General Charles Barney rented a part of George Hasbrouck's store at 175 Main Street (for \$50 a year and free telephone service) in order to establish the first Telephone Company office in town. This meant establishing a central agency and installing a primitive switchboard. Since Mary Peck -Bates had the experience with her father's telephone (connected only from his railroad station here to rail headquarters in Jersey City), she was appointed operator.

She worked the box shaped switchboard with a foot treadle to give the power to transmit the voice over the wire. With a hand held receiver, without headgear, she managed this primitive board and its twenty five lines for almost a week when an electrical thunderstorm put it out of commission for days. By 1886 only 21 firms had bothered to take telephone service and it took seven more years Before the number of phones went up to 50. Not until after 1900, when the Hackensack book listed 225 numbers, -did the telephone really begin to catch on. By that time the business had been turned over to the New York and New Jersey Telephone Co.

George Scudder, author of A Historical Record of the Hackensack Public Schools, has started another book, [Fairmount as I Recall -1915](#), giving more color to that area. He writes: "A single set of [trolley tracks](#) ran up the center of Main Street to the boundary of Hackensack and River Edge, at Coles Brook. The tracks had a loop, every so often, enabling northbound and

southbound trolleys to pass. ..This trolley line ran from Zabriskie's Pond through Little Ferry to Weehawken at the 42nd Street ferry slip. In later years they used very small trolleys, operated by one man, which we referred to as Toonerville trolleys, from an old cartoon at that time.

The second trolley line running through Hackensack was the Hudson River Trolley Line that went from the 125th Street Ferry to Paterson. Main Street at Mercer Street was one of the stops on this line which operated from 1900 until 1938. Lines were added that went to Summit Avenue, continued on Summit Avenue to Hasbrouck Heights and then to Rutherford and Newark.

The clay from the banks of the Hackensack River had been used by the early Dutch settlers to mold pottery. Mortar was made from the clay for their sandstone dwellings and plaster walls. Sandstone was found locally and used frequently to build homes. They were able to make bricks from the clay that were as good as the bricks imported from Holland and bricks were needed for fireplaces/ chimneys and ovens. For quite some time cargoes of Hackensack brick were shipped down the Hackensack River and on to various parts of the nation. During the British rule manufacturing was forbidden in the colonies and bricks were imported. The brick industry started to grow after the Revolutionary War and was an important business along the Hackensack River for a long period of time.

Oratam's name was also spelled Oraton, Oratum, Oratani, Oratany and Oratantin. His mark "z" is on the official seal of the City of Hackensack. Oratam saw the "first sail" up on the Hudson River when Henry Hudson arrived on the Half Moon.

A [dugout canoe](#) was unearthed in 1868 near the Hackensack River at Hudson Street on the property of Judge Ackerson. In 1904 it was presented to the Bergen County Historical Society and in 1914 it was identified as a very rare Indian relic probably from the 17th century and one of the few in existence. Its preservation was probably due to the mud and silt in which it was buried. The U.S. Department of Forestry identified the wood as white oak. The canoe was exhibited at the Johnson Public Library for many years and is now glass enclosed and displayed at the Steuben House in River Edge.

There was a court of small claims in Hackensack in 1686. It was held in Dr. Van Emburgh's home. There were little huts on Doctor's Creek at the time Dr. Van Emburgh lived there. They were occupied by fur traders who bought furs (probably raccoon, muskrat and rabbit) from the Indians who lived on the other side of the Hackensack River.

In the early part of the 18th century Hackensack became a place to go for medical and legal services. This was a trend that has continually developed to the present day. Real estate located in the Hackensack area was frequently advertised for sale in the New York papers — time / 1776.

In 1869, the first street lamps illuminated by gas were installed on Main Street. Cost per lamp to light per year — \$37.50.

There is a crossroad that has had several names—Academy Street, Warren Street and soon it will be Atlantic Street. The Washington Academy, as it was first called, was on the north corner of

Academy Street and what is presently Main Street. The street was renamed Warren Street about the time of the Civil War.

Warren Street will become a service road when the new extension of Atlantic Street is constructed next to Warren Street. Another street with three names in Main Street. First it was Kings Highway, then Front Street and now Main Street.

In the early 1800's State Street had wagon tracks through the center—the balance of the street was grass, no sidewalks. Main Street had deep ditches on either side, the road rounded up and was covered with gravel. Sidewalks were cowpaths and people walked on them singly.

### **Mansion House Data**

The stone part of the home was built in 1751. It was finished in fine paneling and had fireplace tiles from Holland depicting Bible scenes. Sometime after 1776 the house was enlarged and known as the Mansion House. Later it was the [Mansion House Hotel](#) and considered a fine hotel. It was sold in 1872 for \$38,000. When the building was regrettably torn down in 1945, the stones were sold for \$700. The purchaser used the stones to build a dwelling in southern New Jersey. In May of 1976 a plaque was placed on the office building at the corner of Main Street and Washington Place by the Bergen County Bar Association commemorating the Mansion House. This was the site of the building.

### **The Blizzard of 1888**

The [blizzard of March 12, 1888](#) paralyzed Hackensack for one week.

### **Funeral Processions**

Around the 1920's there were funeral processions that went up Main Street. First a band playing dirge music was followed by plumed horses drawing the hearse and then the mourners walked behind The Banks in Hackensack

1825 - The [Washington Banking Company](#) was established in the Mansion House. About 1931 the Bank erected its own building on Washington Place and failed in 1933. This building is still standing and designated for preservation. It was the first bank in present Bergen County.

1889 - Hackensack Bank organized.

1899 - Hackensack Bank became the Hackensack Trust company. Now it is the Garden State National Bank.

1903 - Peoples Trust & Guaranty Company organized. Now it is United Jersey Bank

1921 - City National Bank organized. Now it is First National State Bank - County.

1930 - Bergen County National Bank organized. Now it is Commercial Trust Co. of N.J.

### "White Manna Restaurant"

White Manna Restaurant at 358 River Street was a building at the New York World's Fair--unusual architecture—it may have been suggested for preservation (by Bergen County Historic Survey).

### **Hackensack's "Main Street"**

Almost from the beginning of our country there was a main Street—called King's Highway at that time. People were living and working on lower Main Street within sixty years of the second oldest European settlement in the United States (Jamestown 1607). Due to the building of the Dutch Reformed Church and the establishment of Hackensack as the county seat, there was a slow but steady increase in the population. Colonial Hackensack had about thirty homes in the village which was in the present lower Main Street area. They were red sandstone homes and there were neighborhood shops, all well-kept. There has always been great interest in Main Street. From its earliest days people have come to Main Street to venture into various enterprises. This attraction has continued to the present day. Main Street has gone through many down periods—the severe tribulations during the Revolutionary War, depressions after the French and Indian Wars and the Revolutionary War, the Depression of the 20th century competition from the shopping malls and has always had the ability to survive and to continue on its way in a progressive manner.



## **XII Churches of Hackensack**

### *St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church*

Less than 30 years after the arrival of the first permanent settlers in the Hackensack Valley, Pastor Justus Falckner--the first Lutheran pastor ordained in America -- started holding services here in 1704. In 1716, Lawrence Van Buskirk deeded a church site on King's Road in what was then Hackensack Township. (This is now River Road, Teaneck). The Revolutionary War and a fire in the church resulted in the disbanding of this congregation. For about 100 years Lutherans worshipped with the German Reformed congregation or traveled all the way to Union Hill for services in the Lutheran church there.

A preaching mission began in Hackensack on May 12, 1895, the first service being held in the [Washingotn Institute](#) at Main and Warren Streets. On February 7, 1897, it was agreed to incorporate as the German Evangelical Lutheran St. Mark's Church. Property for the first home of St. Mark's was purchased at 9 Hudson Street early in 1900. The first service was held in the unfinished building on Christmas Day 1901. The original structure was expanded in 1944.

By 1945 the name of the Church was changed to its present title, German services were discontinued, and regular monthly communion services were . . . initiated. In 1950 the New Jersey Synod of the Lutheran Church in America was formed, and St. Mark's became a member. On October 18, 1959, dedication ceremonies were held for a new church building at Ross and Grand Avenues. The present building has one of the oldest pipe organs in Bergen County.

### *First Presbyterian Church*

The First Presbyterian Church came into existence when a group severed ties with the True Reformed Dutch denomination, following the Rev. C.I. Paulison in 1832, as the Reformed Church of Hackensack.

On July 3, 1871, the church applied for admission to the Jersey City Presbytery and its name was changed to the First Presbyterian Church, under the Rev. Albert Amerman. The church's building was then located on Main Street, near the present side of the Johnson Library.

The call extended to the Rev. Amerman in June 1843 included this proposal: "That you may be free of worldly avocations; we agree to pay you the sum of \$250 annually, and a sufficiency "of hay for one horse and one cow, fuel for the house, and the free house of the parsonage." There were four more pastors until the Rev. Charles R. Kuebler came to the church. His active ministry of 55 years was one of the longest on record in this denomination. In 1929 the new church was completed on Passaic Street at Union Street.,

### *First Baptist Church of Hackensack*

Organized in 1832, the First Baptist Church was revitalized by prayer meetings held in private homes on alternate Wednesday evenings. The first church building was dedicated on December 30, 1870, at the present site on Anderson Street Park. The Rev. Zelotes Grenelle, Sr., then 75

years old, became the first pastor.

In 1893 the First Baptist Church of Ridgefield Park was merged with the Hackensack church. Three years later, a group left the church to form what became the Calvary Baptist Church in Hackensack.

Miss Hazel Malliet was the church's first missionary, going to the Philippines in 1920. Over the years she has been followed by scores of other members serving in the mission fields in all parts of the world.

The church's growth paralleled that of Hackensack. The cornerstone for a new building was laid August 26, 1923. In 1940, the church voted to declare itself in fellowship with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches.

On Sunday, September 20, 1953, a new Bible School building was opened, with 1,000 in Sunday School attendance. In 1974, the church established the Hackensack Christian School, later expanded to include classes from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

#### *United Methodist Church of Hackensack*

United Methodism has a long history here, starting with the posting of a public notice tacked to a willow tree on the Village Green in 1835. It reads

“Notice: July nineteenth, in eighteen thirty-five, If God permit, and I should be alive, Under a willow, near one Vanderpool, There will be preaching, say, by wise or fool, At half past two, should audience be given, ' And the good people are, hereby depend, Respectfully invited to attend.

That notice was written and posted by the Rev. John Hancock, a local farmer and Methodist preacher. There have been services held by Methodists in Hackensack ever since.

In the course of history Methodists have experienced both fragmentation and unity. Originally there were two Methodist churches here, one known as the First Methodist Episcopal Church and the other as the Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church. They were merged in 1913. The old First Church building still stands on the corner of State and Mercer Streets.

The merged church existed for years on State Street across from the Middle School. In 1965 it was decided to construct a new building at the corner of Summit Avenue and Passaic Street. The new "Steeple in the Garden" became a landmark of modern church architecture.

The Second Reformed Church Organized in 1855, the church was originally located on the east side of State Street on property donated by Mrs. Maria Berry. The cornerstone was laid in 1856; the first pastor was the Rev. James Demarest, Jr. Later, what is now the Hackensack Middle School was built across the street.

The present church building of native fieldstone -- facing Anderson Street Park on Union Street

was constructed in 1907-09. Many of the stones were brought to the site by church members by wagon from various parts of the Bergen County countryside. Special masonry craftsmen from Italy worked on the project. Fieldstone and materials similar to the church were used in the building of the educational and administrative wing, dedicated in 1965.

### *Holy Trinity Church*

On May 19, 1861, the first Catholic Church in Hackensack was completed on Lawrence Street near Union Street, and appropriately called "St. Lawrence". The ground and church cost \$1,350. By the end of the Civil War it was decided to build a larger church building, and property was purchased at the corner of Maple Avenue and Pangborn Place (then called Park Street). The new structure was dedicated on April 19, 1868, with its name changed at that time to the Church of the Most Holy Trinity.

It was during the Rev. Joseph Roland's stay (1870-75) that the first Catholic School in Bergen County was built. Around 1885, the first convent was completed for the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth of Convent Station. They began teaching here shortly after the Civil War and have continued uninterrupted since.

The present Holy Trinity Church building was dedicated on June 12, 1932, known locally for its Byzantine architecture.

Browson High School was established in 1931. But in 1954 it was decided to end the high school department in favor of building a new elementary school, which now has approximately 550 students.

### *Christ Church*

During the Civil War some Episcopal services were conducted in the Washington Institute until Christ Church was incorporated in 1863. The cornerstone of the building was laid in July the same year, and the sanctuary completed for its first service on Sunday, January 31, 1866. For the first 15 years the pews were rented for \$37 to \$75 per year as was the custom at the time.

Thereafter, support came from an envelope system of offerings. One of the greatest achievements of the parish has been the establishing of missions here and in neighboring communities: St. Peter's, Rochelle Park; Mission of the Ascension, Bogota; Mission of the Epiphany, Cedar Park;

St. Cyprian's on First and Clay Streets, Hackensack, built at the request of black members; St. Anthony of Padua on Lodi Street, Hackensack; St. Mark's, Teaneck and St. Martin's, Maywood. Since 1960, great emphasis has been placed on encouraging various local organizations to utilize Parish Hall as a form of community service.

### *Immaculate Conception Church*

The Church of the Immaculate Conception, better known as St. Mary's Church, was begun as a

parish with the purchase of property on Vreeland Avenue on August 21, 1890.

Until that time it was part of Holy Trinity Parish. When incorporated as a parish on June 5, 1891, it included Little Ferry, Ridgefield Park, Ridgefield, and Fairview, as well as its present territory. Gradually each of these towns grew and built its own churches and schools, becoming separate parishes in their own right.

St. Mary's today extends from Route 46 to Essex Street and from the Hackensack River to Polifly Road. It includes parts of Hackensack and Little Ferry, and all of South Hackensack and Teterboro.

St Mary's has had a parish school since 1904. Its first building, formerly the Hudson Street Public School, was purchased from the City when Broadway School was built. From September 1904 to September 1971, The Benedictine Sisters of Elizabeth conducted the school, when the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chestnut Hill, Pa. took it over. The present building was dedicated on November 6, 1961, replacing the old school which was demolished to make way for Route 80.

#### *First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)*

Just before the turn of the century, children of families in the Fairmount section began Sunday school worship in Zingsem's barn and at the Lowndes' home. This culminated in the formation of the Fairmount Union Chapel Association. Later the group became associated with the Congregational denomination and named itself the First Congregational Church of Hackensack.

The-first church building was located at the southeast corner of Fairmount and Grand Avenues, growing in membership and church-oriented activities as the years went by. In 1957 ground was broken for a new church building and a parsonage at Summit and Spring Valley Avenues.

#### *First Church of Christ, Scientist*

Early in the century several families from Hackensack and surrounding, towns formed a Christian Science Society, with its first service held on Sunday, March 6, 1904, in the Eckerson Building.

The first testimonial meeting was conducted on Wednesday, March 9, 1904. A few days later, on March 14, a Reading Room was opened in the Eckerson Building. The first lecture was given in the Armory in November of that year, with more than 200 persons attending. In accordance with the Manual of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass., by Mary Baker Eddy, the Society was organized as First Church of Christ, Scientist, Hackensack, N.J., in April 1905, "designed to commemorate the word and works of our Master, which should reinstate primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing". Regular services were later held in the Junior Order Hall until 1922, when work was started on construction of a church building at Hamilton Place and Prospect Avenue. The first service in-the new structure was conducted on January 27, 1924. Services and Sunday school are still being held here on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings.

### *Temple Beth El*

The eleven Jewish families living in Hackensack in 1908 decided that without a synagogue they could not consider themselves a Jewish community. A plot of land was purchased at State and Meyer Streets, the Hackensack Hebrew Institute was formed and a building fund campaign launched. Donations were received and bricks at \$1 each were sold from subscription books. The cornerstone was laid in 1919 and the building completed in 1920. The cost of the land and the building was \$35,000.

The Ladies Aid Society, formed in 1921, ran projects for the synagogue and the needy. The Sisterhood, established in 1948, is still in existence working for the synagogue and the community.

Some years later the members decided to build a new synagogue property was purchased at 280 Summit Avenue and a fund drive initiated. The new Temple Beth El was dedicated in 1971.

The Eternal Light and a tablet inscribed with the Ten Commandments from the original building are part of the new Temple Beth El.

### *St. Joseph's R.C. Church*

St. Joseph's parish had its beginning in 1895 when 20 Polish families attended mass at Immaculate Conception Church. The pastor preached in English, German and Italian, but to hear their own tongue the local Poles had to travel to St. Joseph's in Passaic.

The Polish population in Hackensack increased rapidly and in 1907 a group went to the Rev. Valentine" Chlebowski, pastor of St. Joseph's, to organize the construction of a Hackensack church. Funds were collected, more were borrowed and the men of the parish -- after a hard day's work in the brickyards and factories -- brought their tools to the site on Hudson Street and put in many more hours of digging the foundation. The church was completed and the first mass celebrated on Christmas Day 1909 by the Rev. Ignatius Szudrowicz of St. Joseph's in Passaic. The new St. Joseph's first resident pastor was the Rev. Stephen Nowakowski, who came here in 1910. He had no rectory but rented rooms across the street from the church while the rectory was being built. It was completed in 1911.

Over the years religious education of the young and the teaching of the Polish language were instituted.

### *St. Francis R.C. Church*

By 1917 it was apparent that a church was needed to accommodate the Italian community. Construction began in August, 1917 and on December 9, the same year a wooden frame church building was dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi. There was, however, only one priest to minister to the ever increasing numbers of Italian immigrants. The problem was solved by the arrival of a religious order new to this area; the Capuchin Friars, followers of St. Francis of Assisi. The church was entrusted to them in 1925, when the first Capuchin, the Rev. Gaetano Costi, became

pastor.

In 1931, a new sanctuary was built and religious education was established for members of the parish by bringing in Capuchin Sisters to instruct the children. They were followed by the Religious Teachers Filippini in 1932.

In the succeeding years the Mt. Carmel Guild and the St. Ann Society were formed. In 1947 the main marble altar and the marble which lines the walls of the church, vestibule, and baptistery were acquired. St. Francis School was dedicated in September 1967, the 50th anniversary of the parish; today the school has an enrollment of 300. During the pastorate of the Rev. Sylvester Catallo his assistant, the Rev. Henry D'Angel is was allowed to undertake the apostolate of the Spanish communicants by having a mass said in their language each Sunday. To accommodate the spiritual needs of both Italian and Spanish families, masses are celebrated in both languages each Sunday.

#### *Seventh-day Adventist Church*

In the summer of 1925, Milton H. St. John, pastor of the Newark Seventh-day Adventist Church, conducted evangelistic meetings in a tent on the corner of Main and Ward Streets. As a result, a group of newly interested persons and members of nearby congregations began to meet in Carpenters Hall on Bergen Street.

Since the new church shares Pastor St. John with three other congregations, for his convenience services were held in the afternoon. Both-adults and children attended the Sabbath school. Prayer meetings on Wednesday nights and young people's meetings on Friday nights were conducted in private homes.

The new building at 106 Euclid Avenue was opened in June, 1937, with about 65 members. By then Sabbath school and sermon had been transferred permanently to Saturday mornings. For several years an elementary day school was conducted here until several Seventh-day Adventist congregations consolidated to operate a larger 10-grade school in Waldwick. Miss Elsie Steuer, one of the charter members in Hackensack became the first principal of the school.

#### *Saint Cyprian's Protestant Episcopal Church*

Saint Cyprian's Mission, now located at 269 First Street, was organized ;' on June 18, 1926, at the home of William Francis, 268 First Street.

Present at the meeting were the Rev. A.M. Flasket, representing the Board of Missions and the Ven. Augustine Elendorf, Arch Deacon of the District. The preliminary work was done by the Rev. Maxwell J. Williams.

The first service was conducted in a hall on Berdan Place on September 13, 1925. Ground was broken on the site where the church now stands, on Sunday, May 23, 1926. The building was dedicated on September 26, 1926.

The church took its name after Saint Cyprian, Christian bishop and martyr, born in Africa around 200 A.D. He was beheaded in 258 A.D. because of his Christian beliefs and practices.

### *First Spanish Baptist Church*

The First Spanish Baptist Church was founded in April, 1969, by the Rev. and Mrs. Jose Correa. The Correas -- with children Evelyn and Joseph -- had lived in Hackensack for a number of years, while the Rev. Correa commuted to the South Bronx where he was pasturing.

As a result of the influx of many Hispanic families in Hackensack the Rev. Correa was spiritually moved to form a Spanish-speaking church, where Hispanic families could worship within the framework of their culture and language.

Present church membership includes families from ten Spanish-speaking countries and a background of five religious denominations. The church has a social as well as spiritual impact on the Spanish-speaking residents of Hackensack.

The church, whose building is at 106 Central Avenue, is currently affiliated with the Metropolitan Baptist Association of New York, the Baptist Convention of New York and the Southern Baptist Convention.

### *St. Mark 's Syrian Orthodox Church*

A number of families organized in 1953 as the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch Society, and then purchased a brick home in Hackensack as a residence for His Eminence Archbishop Mar Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, Patriarchal Vicar of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch in the U.S. and Canada. Services were conducted in the archbishop's home for the next few years.

On November 15, 1957, His Holiness Patriarch Ignatius Yacoub III formally established the Archdiocese of the Church in the U.S. and Canada under the jurisdiction of Archbishop Samuel. The following year church members began discussions on a possible site for a cathedral. Soon afterwards the group learned of the availability of the former home of the First Congregational Church at Fairmount and Grand Avenues. That structure was purchased and then remodeled.

On September 7, 1958, the cathedral, named after St. Mark's Syrian Orthodox Monastery in Jerusalem, was consecrated by Archbishop Samuel. In the intervening years many families have come to the United States from the Middle East, and St. Mark's parish has grown and currently numbers nearly two hundred families.

### *St. Anthony of Padua Episcopal Church*

The First Ward Italian community, with its own ethnic retail shops, numbered approximately 5,000 people in 1914. They worshipped at St. Mary's (R.C. Church of the Immaculate Conception), but wanted a church in their own neighborhood. Their requests to the Diocese of Newark for a priest to help them organize a local parish went unheeded.

The Rev. Antonio Guilio Lenza, assistant pastor of the Italian R.C. Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Newark, often visited friends here. He advised the First Ward group to form their own church and then seek diocesan approbation. And so the Independent National R.C. Church of St. Anthony of Padua was organized. For his outspoken suggestion, Father Lenza was suspended.

In 1917 St. Francis R.C. Church was established and many left St. Anthony for the new church. In 1924 St. Anthony closed its doors as a result of many problems. Its families were again without spiritual guidance.

A delegation received help from the local Episcopal bishop, who sent Father Joseph Anatasi, S.T.B., to minister to them. The new pastor, who spoke fluent Italian, pleased them, and because of his Episcopal background he was familiar with the rituals to which they were accustomed. Not long afterwards, the entire congregation took instruction and the church was re-established as St. Anthony of Padua Episcopal Church.

#### *Varick Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church*

Though the exact date of the start of this church is unknown, its organization probably came during the middle 1800s. Initial worship was held in th Hackensack Meeting House, today's site of the Garden State National Bank on Main Street.

The church acquired its Atlantic Street property on January 5, 1854 and was incorporated as Olive Branch Colored Mission Number Three of Hackensack in 1866. Three years later the name was changed to the Union American Church of Hackensack. It became the First A.M.E. Church of Hackensack in 1883, and adopted its current name on April 18, 1917.

By 1919 the congregation had outgrown its first building, which was then moved to the northern part of the property to become Fellowship Hall, and the present sanctuary was built. Growth continued under the pastorship of the Rev. C.M. Kirkpatrick, who was followed in 1954 by the Rev. George Lincoln Blackwell. Membership stood at 370 in 1964 -- the church's 100th anniversary.

A new fellowship hall and educational building were dedicated in 1966. Later that year the Rev. Blackwell was elected General Secretary of the Department of Christian Education of the A.M.E. Zion Church, and was succeeded by the Rev. Mack Brandon, Jr.

Expansion moved ahead with acquisition of additional property on Atlantic Street. Late in 1973 a complete renovation and refurbishing of the church building was initiated. In the midst of this work the church was saddened by the sudden death of Rev. Brandon. However, the work continued under the direction of Presiding Elder Marcus W. Smith and former Pastor Kirkpatrick

#### *Mount Olive Baptist Church*

A group meeting of 29 charter members in the Irving Hall at Main and Mercer Streets organized



the Mount Olive Baptist Mission on Sunday, July 2, 1899. The Rev. J.J. Porter became the first pastor.

The mission was recognized as an independent Baptist church by Calvary Baptist Church of Paterson, and formal incorporation followed on August 16, 1892. Later that year the lot on which the church is now located, on James and First Streets was purchased for \$290.

The lecture room was built in 1893, and services were held there for the next four years while funds were being raised for the construction of a church edifice. The Building program was initiated on July 1, 1897 and was completed in four months at a cost of \$1,500. The new building was dedicated on November 14, 1867, when membership totaled 54. The church was completely rebuilt in 1911. It was remodeled inside and out in the 1920s, during the administration of the Rev. J.P. Greene, and a new pipe organ was installed. He was succeeded in 1933 by the Rev. T.W.H. Gibson.

In the following years membership continued to grow, property holdings increased, and the church building was upgraded and improved. The Rev. Gibson served until his death in 1956. Early in 1957, the Rev. Jonathan Gilbert Brown was called to the pastorate of the church. The church is continuing to expand in service according to the needs of its congregation.

#### *New Hope Baptist Church*

Organized under the leadership of the Rev. James P.E. Love on July 1, 1920, the church's 68 charter members came from Hackensack's first two black churches: Varick A.M.E. Zion and New Hope Baptist Church. Services were held in Holt's -Hall on Berdan Place until the church was constructed in 1922.

The Rev. Love became pastor emeritus after nearly two decades of service, and was succeeded in 1939 by the Rev. Leonard E. Terrell, who served until June 1947. The Rev. W.H. Edwin Smith then became spiritual leader, serving until his death in 1961. The Rev. Richard H. Puryear was pastor from 1963 to January 1970

Later that year the Rev. Moses A. Knott of Hackettstown became interim minister and pastor. The church membership has grown to over 600. The church's property has expanded to keep pace with its other areas of growth, and the church building itself upgraded. Recently a van was purchased for transporting senior citizens and children to services.

#### *Trinity Baptist Church*

Trinity Church was organized by members of New Hope Baptist Church, when a group of them decided to leave that church along with the Rev. Richard H. Puryear, when his pastorate terminated in January, 1970. Its new church building was completed and dedicated at 218 Passaic Street in 1973.

Other black churches organized in Hackensack in recent years have played an important role in the building of the black community. They include: Christian Faith Mission, Little Bethel

Holiness, Jackson's Temple Church, Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church, Universal Hagor's Spiritual Church.

## Chapter XIII Organizations

### *Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Bergen County Lodge #73*

The restless world of today provides a perfect setting in which Odd Fellows in their daily living put into practice the precepts of the Order -To educate the orphan, bury the dead, visit the sick and care for the indigent.

[Bergen County Lodge #73](#) was instituted in 1848 in the Township of New Barbadoes. The Order is believed to be the oldest fraternal lodge in this City. Today the lodge is still active, with its members striving to do good for the community.

### *The Hackensack Y.M.C.A.*

YMCA activities for boys and young men were established about 1890, but prior to 1917 operated under the name of Social Service Work. These programs were conducted in the building at State and Warren Streets.

In August, 1917, a newly organized community YMCA replaced the SSW. Mr. James W. Loveland was elected the first president of the Community YMCA as it was first known, serving as its leader until 1922. In 1920 the Y was incorporated as the Young Men's Christian Association of Hackensack, with an officially elected board of trustees.

The present property of the Association also was purchased in 1920. The headquarters and activities were transferred to the residence which then stood on the site at the northeast corner of Main and Passaic Streets. The Y program expanded rapidly and soon larger and more extensive facilities were needed. Planning for a new building was initiated and a campaign launched to raise \$400,000 for construction. The actual cost, however, ultimately exceeded \$600,000.

The new building was opened February 12, 1928; it was undoubtedly one of the most modern and best equipped YMCA's of its time. Since then the Y program has continued to expand, with its activities and services designed to accommodate the needs of the residents of this area.

The Hackensack Y was reincorporated in 1964 as the YMCA of Greater Bergen County, with branches in Park Ridge, Ramsey, Wyckoff and Rutherford. The Y serves some 5,000 members at its Hackensack quarters. It conducts Day Camp Oratam for boys and girls, and Michikamau, a residence camp both located in Bear Mountain, N.Y.

### *The Elks*

[Hackensack Lodge No. 658](#), Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, was chartered in 1901, and its first full-term exalted ruler was Col. Alfred T. Holley. Service has been the hallmark of the lodge's existence through the years as it has aided crippled children, provided Christmas baskets for needy families, made 'countless visits to veterans hospitals and supported organizations for paraplegics, cerebral palsy, and those with rheumatic hearts. The lodge also has aided the Boy Scouts, participated in many civic and patriotic programs, and made substantial financial

contributions to local hospital fund drives.

A few years ago the Hackensack Lodge sold its imposing lodge building on Union Street across the street from the Middle School, when the use of such extensive facilities was no longer needed. The lodge has now consolidated its activities in new quarters on Linden Street, just south of Anderson Street, where members enjoy socializing with fellow Elks and their guests.

### *Hackensack Yacht Club*

While the HYC was established in 1908, records and memorabilia indicate that it was in existence years before. Prior to 1908, it was known as the Hackensack Field and Boat Club, and even earlier as the Hackensack Field Club.

Today the group still uses the original clubhouse at 50 Shafer Place on the Hackensack River. Facilities have been developed for accommodating the storage of 50 boats up to 45 feet in length on the property.

Incorporated in 1940, the HYC is listed in Lloyds Register. Its object is to promote and encourage boating and seamanship, and provide a program of social activities for its members -- now numbering 85.

Though its headquarters is on the Hackensack River most of its boating is done on the Hudson River, Long Island Sound and along the waterways of the Jersey Shore. During the summer the Club's official burgee flies over the Alpine Boat Basin of Palisades Interstate Park.

Members participate in a year-round program of social affairs, with heaviest of such activities during the winter and early spring. A highlight of the Bicentennial summer was a rendezvous of boats during a two-week cruise to Nantucket Island.

### *Boy Scouts*

Holy Trinity Church was the first Catholic organization in the country to sponsor a Boy Scout troop, when Troop 5 was chartered in 1915. Its first year saw 28 boys enrolled, under the leadership of Scoutmaster W.A. Scrivens.

That same year Troop 5 took first awards in an exhibition rally held by all Bergen County troops. In March, 1950, Holy Trinity Church expanded its scouting program to include younger boys, and Cub Pack 5 was formed. In October, 1970, further expansion led to the formation of Explorer Post 5, an advanced program for high school boys and girls to include citizenship, social events, vocational education, outdoor activities and community service.

Troop 5, Hackensack's oldest, with a history of 61 years, has since been joined by nine additional troops. Following are troop designations, sponsors, and number of years chartered:

Troop 15, First Congregational Church, 48 years; Troop 11, Second Reformed Church, 44 years; Troop 13, Police Benevolent Association #9, 18 years; Troop 372, Mount Olive Baptist Church,

4 years; Troop 285, Hackensack Housing Authority, 3% years; Troop 151, St. Francis R.C. Church, 2 years; Troop 220, Varick Memorial A.M.E. Church, new; Troop 361, unit for hearing impaired boys, Bergen Special Service School, new; and Troop 362, unit for neurologically impaired boys, Maple Hill School.

### *Captain Harry B. Doremus Post No. 55, American Legion*

In July 1919, fifteen ex-servicemen met at the home of Otis Gregg to discuss the American Legion and make formal application for chartering a local post. The history of the American Legion was explained by Colonel William M. Mead, who had attended the first convention in Paris soon after the Armistice.

There was no question as to the name of the new post. Captain Harry B. Doremus, who led the local company and was killed in action in the famous [Argonne-Meuse offensive in 1918](#), was the only man whose name was considered. The charter was granted in September and the post designated as No. 55. Colonel Mead was elected the first post commander at a meeting which followed in the Armory, when 75 men joined.

Meetings were held in the Board of Taxation room in the County Courthouse twice monthly until September 1920, when a home used as a clubhouse at Bridge and Moore Streets was presented to the post by the citizens of Hackensack. A new Post home was built in 1933 and still standing at American Legion Drive and Second Street.

For many years the Post sponsored a senior drum and bugle corps and color guard, which took national championships in Chicago in and in New York in 1947. Junior American Legion baseball has been " ", another of the Post's sponsorships. The Doremus team is one of the oldest sponsored teams in the state, and has a number of County Championships to its credit.

### *Rotary Club of Hackensack*

Early in 1920, Andrew Stertzler enlisted the support of two Freds, Fountain and Stillwell, and of C.M. Dalrymple with the purpose of forming a Rotary Club. A preliminary meeting was held at the Elks Club on March 18, and in the weeks that followed some 50 prospective members were signed up. Then it was learned that Rotary limits charter members to 25. So the list was laboriously and painfully trimmed.

Its first officers were Andrew Stertzler, president; Frederick Stillwell, vice president; C.M. Dalrymple, secretary; and Martin Toolen, sergeant-at-arms

The Hackensack Rotary Club has continued to grow, and presently has a membership of 83 community leaders. The group is proud of its many service projects, including the B. Spencer Newman Room at the Bergen County Museum. It is dedicated to helping develop a better community through its motto: "Service above self".

### *Young Men's Hebrew Association*

Late in 1923 several prominent Bergen men met in the Hackensack office of the late Charles Rosenberg to develop a central Jewish organization and meeting place. There were nearly 500 Jewish families in Bergen County and less than 10 synagogues.

A campaign to raise funds for a Y building was initiated, and its success resulted in the purchase of the property at 211 Essex Street, formerly a Catholic school. The Y was chartered in 1924 to serve the recreational, informal educational and cultural needs of Jews throughout Bergen. However, it has always recognized its obligation to serve the general community. For 50 years membership in the Y, its services, and facilities have been available to all residents of the county without regard to religion, ethnic origin, or place of residence.

When Clem Plager assumed the presidency of the Y in 1927, his goal was to see plans for the construction of a new Y building materialize. A campaign for \$100,000 was concluded in the fall of 1928, and the building was dedicated in 1929.

Then came the Depression. In January, 1931, the building was forced to close for a short period. It was at this critical time that Irving Warshawsky became the Y's executive director, serving in that post until his death in 1965. During his service the Y grew and thrived.

The Y has continually provided a dynamic and unifying focal point Bergen County for the Jewish community.

### *Lions Club of Hackensack*

Since 1927 the Lions Club of Hackensack has served the residents not only of this City, but of the entire county through many humanitarian service projects.

Highlights of the nearly 50 years of helping others include: establishment of an eye clinic at Hackensack Hospital; donation of a special shelf in the Johnson Library containing large print and Braille books for the blind; initial development and continued support of the Lions Rehabilitation Center for the mentally retarded; sponsoring annual visits of the Eye mobile to test for diseases of the eyes; and support of many other community projects such as the Community Chest, The Residence, and the Holley Center.

### *The College Club of Hackensack*

Founded in 1928, the College Club of Hackensack is a focal point for college women with varied interests. It provides scholarships for Hackensack High School graduates attending a degree-granting college or university.

The aid programs include a \$500 scholarship awarded annually for four years; and a \$150 scholarship presented annually. Recipients are qualified girls or boys who have attended Hackensack High at least two years. Awards are based on character and need, as well as scholarship.

In honor of the Bicentennial year the College Club also sponsored an essay for college-bound seniors at the high school. The winning essay, "Life in America," was written by David L. Smith, who received \$345 for his outstanding work. The Colony Club founded April 9, 1929, by Mrs. Myron Robinson and Mrs. G.W. McIndoe, the Colony Club has just completed its 47th year of service to Hackensack.

Membership over the years has ranged from a high of 50 to its present 15 active members. Hackensack Hospital, one of the club's major recipients, has received many pieces of equipment. The most recent was a pediatric heart monitor for the newborn nursery. Members also perform services for patients and visitors. The club awarded its first scholarship of \$500 to a graduating senior at Hackensack High School to establish a tradition. Two awards were presented this year - a \$500 and \$250 nursing scholarship -- ringing the total to date to 28.

#### *Society of Fairmount Friends*

This group of men meets twice each year to reminisce about the "good old days." Founded by George M. Scudder, the society has about 100 members. The men from all walks of life were boyhood friends, and enjoy reliving the memories of a rural Hackensack when they meet each May and November.

George Scudder has written a history of the Hackensack schools. He has been a help and inspiration in the compilation of this book while engaged in his own writing projects.

#### *Young Women's Christian Association*

The Young Women's Christian Association of Hackensack was incorporated in 1930 as a member of the YWCA of the U.S.A. It was located in the same building as the YMCA for 40 years, until it moved to its own quarters in 1969. The YWCA residence camp for girls 8 to 16 at Bear Mountain has operated for 46 years, while the day camp for boys and girls has provided summer fun such as swimming and other outdoor activities since the 1950s.

A few years ago the YWCA launched the first federally funded after-school day care program for Hackensack youngsters whose parents work but earn minimal salaries. The after-school program is conducted at Christ Church where qualified staffers provide a creative learning experience. There are 10 Small Fry clubs with biweekly pre-school programs for 180 children aged 3 to 5; two of the clubs are cosponsored by the First Presbyterian Church and the Second Reformed Church. Programs for women and girls are numerous, including the Y Room Registry, designed to help women of limited means find rooms to rent in private homes.

In addition to its services and programs, the YWCA offers a wide range of physical education and recreational classes.

#### *Girl Scouts of America*

The first Girl Scout troop was formed in 1931 at the Longview School at the suggestion of

Principal George Merrill. Mrs. Albert Lang did much of the promoting for Girl Scouting, while several other troops were organized in schools and churches as more girls became interested.

In 1941 national headquarters in New York contacted Mrs. Charles Bickford to gather a group of women to consider organizing a Girl Scout Council. Of the 20 at that meeting, every one agreed to serve. Mrs. Blackford, was elected commissioner.

A small store on Anderson Street was rented as headquarters, a paid secretary installed, and Girl Scouting grew as programs expanded under trained leaders and a local council. Two day camps were acquired, and by 1948 Hackensack had 30 troops -- 350 scouts and 121 adult volunteer workers, leaders, troop committee members and council members.

The headquarters on Anderson Street being inadequate, the council voted to launch a campaign to raise funds for purchasing its own "Little House," as Girl Scout headquarters is called.

Within a year the council was able to buy a house at 155 Passaic Street, and make it suitable for an office, and a place for council and leader meetings, and for troop programs. The Little House brought new enthusiasm into scouting and the organization continued to grow.

In 1959, national headquarters, then in Washington, in a move to make the Girl Scout program available to more youngsters, recommended the consolidation of the many councils into a single strong County council. Thus the Bergen County Girl Scout Council came into being. It now serves 22,000 girls in 60 towns with the help of 3,500 volunteers and staff. The County headquarters is located in the Bergen Mall shopping center in Paramus.

Outdoor life and camping are a big part of Scouting. The Girl Scout council has two camps, Bears Nest in Park Ridge and Glen Spey in New York State.

#### *The Hackensack Club of the Business and Professional Woman's Club.*

This group was formed in the autumn of 1934 by a group of eager young women who had met to establish a branch of the Hackensack Y.W.C.A.

The need has long existed for social service other than that provided by religious or fraternal groups in the African American community. Since social service organizations and recreational centers were off limits for African American youth, Josephine P. Cowan and Nellie M. Parker decided to establish the Business and Professional Girls of the Y.W.C.A.

For many years they affiliated with the Y, participating in social activities such as suppers, banquets, and teas. Later it was decided to withdraw from the Y and work independently. Through the years Business and Professional Girls had a strong involvement in community affairs. In 1959 the group became affiliated with the National Business and Professional Women's Club. Since that time the club has sponsored a career development workshop contributed to college students financially, aided the Bethune Scholarship Fund, presented plays celebrating "Negro History Week", and several members have given much time to the Health Careers Development Program in the middle and senior high schools.



### *Hackensack Art Club*

This organization has played a major role in the City's cultural life for nearly four decades. In 1938 a group of local artists conducted their first joint exhibit under the direction of Mary E. Boggan, then librarian of the Johnson Public Library.

The librarian had for some years sponsored successful one-man or one-woman art shows, so she selected a committee to invite other artist friends to join in forming a club. After several organizational meetings, B. Spencer Newman and Carl Ramee were selected to write a constitution. The Hackensack Art Club was formally organized on November 6, 1939, with 24 charter members electing Emil Stange as the first president. The club has involved itself with all types of community programs, including the judging of local exhibits, sponsoring Halloween window painting contests for children and the decorating of doors at Christmas, and other similar activities. The club now has more than 160 members representing some 40 Bergen communities.

### *Johannes Post Chapter 784, B'nai B'urith*

This international Jewish women's service organization has more than 140,000 members in North America. The Johannes Post Chapter draws its members from Hackensack, Maywood, Rochelle Park, Lodi and Saddle Brook.

Formed in 1952, it was named for a citizen of Holland who saved many people from persecution during World War II by providing food and shelter for them and helping them escape detention during the occupation. The name Johannes Post, thereby, honors those who were willing to sacrifice all in battling intolerance.

In addition to supporting national hospital projects in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Denver, Colorado, the local Chapter serves Hackensack Hospital and Saddle Brook Hospital and supports a number of other humanitarian programs.

### *Associated Craftsmen*

An industrial workshop for handicapped persons, Associated Craftsmen, Inc., was organized by the Bergen County Tuberculosis Association in 1953. Located at 15 Emerald Street, its purpose is to provide employment for those with physical disabilities. Throughout its history Associated Craftsmen has served those with a variety of disabilities through subcontract work for many of the nation's leading companies. In October 1975, it became a service of the Easter Seal Society.

The Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults of New Jersey was established in 1948, and moved its headquarters to 799 Main Street, Hackensack, late in 1958. By 1971 it outgrew these facilities and moved to New Brunswick., A pilot program in office skills evaluation and training was conducted at the state Easter Seal office from August, 1966 to December 1977, when it was located at 817 Main Street, Hackensack. This program was the only one in the U.S. specifically geared to teaching office to the disabled. In May, 1976, it moved to the Associated Craftsmen complex at 145 Hackensack Avenue, just off Emerald Street.

In addition to the sheltered workshop, the rehabilitation center includes an evaluation unit, a homebound program, a print shop, and the office skills training.

### *Golden Age Seniors of Greater Hackensack*

Early in 1954 a group of seniors met with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bissex to form an officially recognized organization representing senior citizens. Mr. Bissex was elected the first president. The club met in the Garden Center of the Woman's Club of Hackensack for many years, and now meetings are held the first and third Thursdays of each month at the Johnson Public Library auditorium.

There are 247 members. Speakers at these meetings discuss a variety of topics, including housing, taxes, social services, Medicare, entertainment, and travel. A very civic minded group, the Golden Age Seniors are represented at meetings of the City Council, Homeowners Association, Housing Authority, urban renewal, Office of the Aging, Board of Chosen Freeholders and Bergen transit agency.

Members take day trips to points of interest in the New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey region. The club celebrated its 21st birthday luncheon May 19, 1976. The club sponsored an Early American float in the Bicentennial Parade on September 11, 1976, and members followed in mini-buses.

### *Hackensack Police Athletic League*

The P.A.L. came to Hackensack as a result of hard work in organization by Patrolman Thomas Reid, Jr., and a small group of fellow police officers.

It has existed as a meaningful community enterprise since November 29, 1968, when a meeting of more than 50 businessmen, municipal officials, clergymen, and civic leaders gathered at the Varick Memorial A.M.E. Church on Atlantic Street.

A 36-member executive board sets policy for the local chapter. Board membership includes clergy of all denominations, the County Prosecutor and Sheriff, prominent businessmen, merchants, and its founding representatives of the Police Department.

Chapter founder Reid declares: "We feel P.A.L. is an approach that has brought about a meaningful change in the attitude of our young people."

### *The U.S.S. Ling*

Welcome aboard the U.S.S. Ling. At Court and River Streets on the Hackensack River is moored the U.S.S. Ling. The World War II U.S. Navy submarine now awaits visitors for inspection tours of her restored fittings, fixtures, and facilities.

When on active duty, the Ling carried a complement of 95 officers and crew. The trim, well-

cared for sub is 312 feet long and has a beam of 27 feet. The Ling, which is now the responsibility of the Submarine Memorial Association, is a living symbol dedicated to American submariners who were lost in World War II.

While the Ling is not exactly a Hackensack organization, the S.M.A. is and its vessel has "become one of the City's favorite visitor attractions.

Hackensack has the distinction of being the only U.S. city -- and probably the world-- with its own submarine!

### *The Hackensack Chamber of Commerce*

The Chamber is a voluntary organization whose objective is to promote and advance the commercial, industrial, professional, civic and general interests of Hackensack. It is the ambition of the professional and businessmen and women members to-develop a unified public spirit and make Hackensack a better place in which to live and in which to make a living.

The Chamber maintains an attractive office at 140 Main Street, where residents, newcomers, business representatives and visitors may obtain information and where the consumer can appeal a legitimate complaint.

The Chamber, through its committees, works on varied areas of interest -in the City. These committees co-operate with the appropriate City agencies.

The Residence (formerly called The Old Ladies Home of Bergen County). Three young women from the Christian Reform Church, Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Mary Christie Terhune and Mrs. Cecilia Voorhis, formed and incorporated an association under the name of "The Old Ladies Home of Bergen County".

The intent was to make suitable provision for pleasant living accommodations for aging ladies from all parts of the County. The home of the late Dr. Hasbrouck, located at the corner of State and Passaic Streets was rented from June 1896 for \$40 a month.

The price of admission was set at \$200 and the age for entering at 65 years. The ladies paid \$45 per week, but since one of the three original residents did not have the required money she was accepted at \$3 a week.

The Residence remains today, as it was in 1896, a non-profit organization. In 1909 a notice was placed in the Bergen Evening Record stating, "The Old Ladies Home of Bergen County finds it difficult to make ends meet these days!" If every farmer in Bergen County would plant one extra row of potatoes and donate the yield of that row, or the income from it, to the Home, the Treasurer would be able to keep the balance 'on the right side'"

In 1901 they had moved into a new building at 266 Passaic Street specifically constructed to offer a gracious home with comfort and security. It was appropriate in 1965 that one of the residents, Mrs. Katherine Cutwater participated in the laying of the cornerstone for the addition

of the new wing. Mrs. Outwater was 99 years old at the time. The Residence accommodates 50 guests.

### *The Bergen County Historical Society*

Our interest in the history of our town and area is due in part to the work of this Society, organized by sixty-seven members in 1902. The headquarters of the Society, with an assembly room, depository of records and museum was in the Johnson Public Library building in Hackensack. By 1922 there were 600 members and, quoting the Westervelt book, "The museum is not only the resort of authors, newspaper writers, educators and the general public, but has won recognition as a necessary co-operative adjunct to what is known as the visual and tactile method of teaching, and is visited by large classes of pupils..."

While the headquarters of the Society is now at the historic Ackerman Zabriskie - Von Steuben House in River Edge, the Society's books, maps and documents are cared for currently in the Johnson Public Library's modern air-conditioned building and are conveniently available to persons interested in history.

Many of the books, newspaper articles, pictures, etc., which were our main source of information in assembling this book came from this Johnson Library collection of the Bergen County Historical Society.

### *Kiwanis*

The Kiwanis Club of Hackensack, active in the community for 55 years, is known by its Motto, "We Build". The members are drawn from the professional and business men in town and specialize in service to the youth. Kiwanis strives to build a better community and endeavors to develop leadership ability in the young through Key Clubs at the Hackensack High School and at the Bergen Technical and Vocational High School.

Dr. Wilson D. Webb was the first president when the club was organized, June 7, 1922, in the historic Hotel Martin on the "Green".

Over the years the club has been active in such multiple town activities as Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts, Girl Scouts, Community Chest and American Red Cross, and in expanding the work of Kiwanis by sponsoring new clubs in Englewood and other Bergen towns.

When Kiwanis went international in the 1900's, Hackensack's past president, William P. Patterson, traveled to Australia and New Zealand to organize the first Kiwanis Clubs in these countries.

### *The Optimist Club of Hackensack*

This is an organization that does its best to live up to its slogan, "Friend of the Boy." For fifteen years the club has sponsored a Little League Team, for five years has sponsored a talent show at the Middle School and for three years has sponsored a Circus, entertaining approximately 10,000

children, free of charge. At weekly meetings pennies collected for a Milk Fund are turned over to the Conklin Home for Children in Hackensack, providing the milk there for almost the entire year. In all, the Optimist Club of Hackensack raises about \$3,000 every year.

### *Operation Democracy - Friendship, Hackensack-Passau*

In 1952 Col. Garlock suggested "Operation Democracy" as a method of creating better understanding between former enemy countries of World War II. The State Department assigned "sister cities", based on similarities of population, geography, etc.

Passau, with a population of approximately 35,000 and situated in low land in Germany on the Danube and Inn Rivers, was likened to Hackensack. The towns having agreed to participate, the State Department sent a group from Hackensack, which including Mrs. Essie Olive Abeel and her son Paul, Mrs. Eberhard and Mrs. W.E. Hunger, to Germany in March 1954.

At a later time Passau students came here to study for a month in Hackensack and to visit New York City, Washington, D.C. and Boston. Every few years such trips have been arranged to encourage cultural exchange and remove the emotional scars of war. The last group from Passau came in October, 1975, and enjoyed an opportunity to learn about our Bicentennial.

### *Friendship House*

A psychiatric rehabilitation center located in Hackensack since 1964, Friendship House has been concerned with meeting the needs of individuals with a psychiatric history to achieve gainful employment in the community. A sub-contract workshop within the building has been the nucleus of a work adjustment program leading to part time and full time jobs in the community.

Recognizing the need for maintenance and home repair skills, a new training program was initiated in May, 1975, to prepare Friendship House members to learn skills needed to do office cleaning, floor waxing, house painting, grounds keeping and miscellaneous home repairs. Members are introduced to maintenance work within Friendship House itself. When proficiency is evident, an individual is assigned to a work crew going out to contracted jobs in the community. Some are daily jobs; others are a single day of repairs or clean-up.

Friendship House involves approximately 100 people weekly in vocational rehabilitation services. Fifteen to twenty are engaged in the Maintenance Training Program.

### *Holley Center*

The Holley Center, established in 1971, is a unique development as it combines both a residence and day care center for emotionally disturbed children. It was initiated by Christ Church, Hackensack which received a bequest of \$300,000 from the Holley family to be used for youth work. Christ Church turned to Youth Counseling Services for advice. As a result, \$900,000 in federal building funds and a federal staffing grant (on an 8 year declining basis) were obtained to operate the Holley Center as a part of the Hackensack Hospital Community Mental Health Center, serving all of Bergen County. Thirty-two boys and girls (5-12 years) live in the center and

thirty-seven 3 to 6 year olds come to the Center for day care treatment.

Another outgrowth of the new facility was the need to provide a special class for those children who were so severely disturbed that they could not attend the regular public schools. This class is held in Christ Church, filling another need that hitherto had not been met.

## **Last Page of Book**

Today in 1976 many popular jokes begin with, "first for the good news, then for the bad news..." Here, in our history we have tried to tell all the news. We never said that Hackensack was perfect, but it has been our feeling that she can go on, and she will improve as she aims at those "horizons".

Improvement plans are in process for the downtown area, bounded by Essex, State and Court Streets, the Hackensack River, and the Susquehanna Railroad tracks. From our history we know this was the first part of our town to be developed, as farms and home sites. The new "Center City Complex" will coordinate its design around the Bergen County Courthouse.

The City plans include renewal of the old section. The County is also making plans, with the cooperation of Hackensack and other towns along the Hackensack River. Just as there was a Lake Hackensack in the mastodon's time, so there will be again after a dam or tidal barrier is built between Hackensack and Bogota to eliminate polluted, tidal action and stabilize the lake water level. All of this is an important environmental rehabilitation program that the Board of Chosen Freeholders envisions as transforming a heavily polluted section of the Hackensack River into a fresh water lake capable of supporting a wide range of water orientated activities on its 180 acres. The shoreline, such as Foschini and Johnson Parks, will have shoreline landscaping to encourage the residents to come for the boating, fishing, as well as the shoreline bicycle and walking trails. Also in the plans is a system of boat transportation which could provide service between Hackensack and other points on the lake. There is a 5 acre marsh that will be preserved and protected.

A key element in the Project is the restoration of the area around the Von Steuben House to its original colonial village atmosphere, with the area to be linked to Hackensack by the lakefront path system and boat facilities. There is even talk of an open-air amphitheatre to be included.

We look forward to saying in the 1980's the same things that inhabitants said in the 1880's. "We have a beautiful river for boating, bathing and fishing. In the way of recreation the town is supplied abundantly almost everyone finds pleasure on the water some way."

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