

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Salem County Historical Society

Founded July 31, 1884

Volume 62, Issue No. 4

Winter 2017

(ISSN 1525-0983)

Serving as the Salem County Executioner

by Mike Dixon

It was a gruesome, emotionally draining responsibility, one most officials preferred to elude on their watch, but occasionally the Salem County Executioner had to carry out a hanging. Once the wheels of justice turned and the bench handed down the death warrant, the ghastly duty of dispatching a condemned man fell to the sheriff before 1906 in New Jersey. The delivery of the deathblow required experience, along with a great deal of technical skill and logistical planning. The executioner had to calculate the precise length of a rope and tie the proper hangman's knot, hoping that after he accurately took in consideration the physique of the prisoner, the body weight would snap the neck so death came instantly. Regrettably, in the annals of the United States and New Jersey Criminal Justice Systems, executions were sometimes botched. If the fall was too long the person's head could be severed during the drop from the gallows or if it was too short prolonged strangulation might result (Sarat, 2014).

Certainly, it was a burdensome obligation that concerned the official designated to serve as the County's Hangman. Furthermore, the always practical, thrifty caretakers of the public treasury, the Board of Freeholders, fretted about cost.

Prior to the 19th century the hangman was kept in practice in Salem County putting to death at least eleven convicts. The last one in that age took place on June 20, 1775, when Caesar and Kile, two murderers, were put to death at Gallows Hill at Claysville (Hearn, 2005). Seven-



The Sheriff's residence and jail were completed March 23, 1867, on Market Street, Salem, NJ by contractor Ebenezer Smith. Sheriff John Hunt appointed Jacob P. Nicholson as prison keeper. Unseen behind the residence, *left*, was the main prison. The structure, *right*, was the female ward. This complex was razed in 1957 for the construction of a new jail and county offices. The curbside memorial drinking fountain, *front*, was dedicated to school mistress and poet Anne W. Maylin in 1891 and subsequently moved to the garden of our Society.

From the Collection.

ty-eight years passed before the justices issued another death warrant. All practical knowledge of the required skills had faded with the passage of generations, the old hanging ropes having long since rotted or disappeared (perhaps taken off in pieces for souvenirs), and who knew what happened to the gallows. Finding someone who knew how to prepare the rope, tie the hangman's knot, place the noose at the proper position on the neck, and build the scaffold so swift death (continued on page 47)

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The *Quarterly Newsletter* is published by the Salem County Historical Society Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Salem County Historical Society is to seek, document, preserve, interpret and perpetuate Salem County's heritage, and to enhance the awareness and appreciation of that heritage, through its research, collections, functions, exhibits, educational programs and publications, for the benefit of future generations and for the betterment of the community.

Research Library & Museum Hours

Tuesday through Saturday
Noon - 4PM
Admission Fee \$5.00
Free for Members

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This publication may include historical materials that contain language or stereotypes reflecting the culture or language of a particular period or place. These items are presented as part of the historical record.

Please Recycle your Newsletter



Message From the President

It was wonderful to see so many of our members and their guests at our Annual Luncheon at the Inn at Salem Country Club on September 17th! Yvonne and Jim Grant, owners of the Inn, have created a beautiful venue on the site of the old club. So many of us reminisced about the many Society dinners held there in years past and marveled at the view and the beauty of the new building. A delicious luncheon catered by Rodes, an entertaining program and a fun silent auction rounded out the festivities. Thank you to Bill Gallo and his committee for another great event. If you were unable to join us this year, please mark your calendars for Sunday, September 16, 2018 and plan to attend.

This year the Salem County Historical Society is losing an outstanding board member. Craig Schneeman is stepping away from the board as VP of Buildings & Grounds but thankfully, not away from the committee. Over the nine years of Craig's oversight of the committee, we have seen many projects (large and small) come to successful conclusion, all while Craig has kept our buildings in good repair—no small task. Please join us in thanking Craig for his many years of great service to the Society.

Well here we are approaching the end of 2017 and all the holiday activities. We are all looking forward to the Yuletide Tour of Historic Salem to be held on Saturday, December 2nd. The Yuletide tour is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year! This tour is always a great way to kick off the holiday season so please be sure to get out for the tour. I'm told there will be a wonderful lineup of homes this year. See you there!

The end of year also kicks off our Annual Appeal drive. When you receive your appeal letter in the mail, please take a few minutes to read it through, then please make a generous donation to the Society. We remain an organization that relies on membership dues, grants, investments and kind donations from people like you, people that want to keep history alive in Salem County.

Thank you for your anticipated support and may your holidays be joyful!

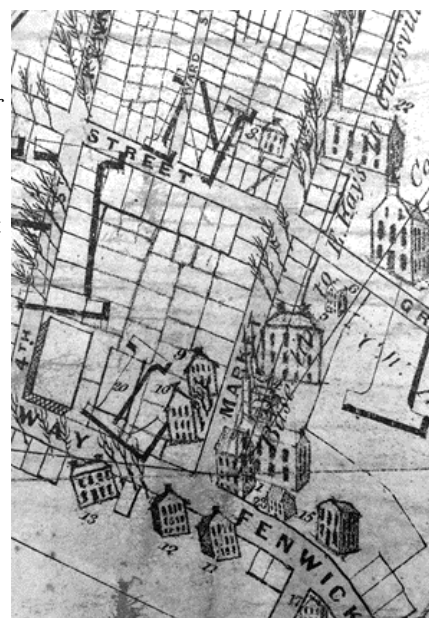
Barbara Smith Duffy, President

A Large Audience.

— It is supposed that from twelve to fifteen hundred persons were present during the performance at the Circus in Salem on Wednesday evening last. It would be a hard matter to induce so large a number to listen to a sermon. But so wags the world.

National Standard,
Salem, NJ,
October 14, 1845

Right, Detail of Noah Leeds' 1845 map, A New Map of the Town of Salem, showing the corners of Broadway, Fenwick and Market Streets. The historical society is depicted to the left of the letter "A" in the word Market as a number "9". The legend on the map identifies it as the Temperance Hotel. This rare map was donated to the Society in 1887.



Calendar of Events

- ♦ **Saturday, December 2, 2017**
Yuletide Tour in Salem City Time: 1:00PM—6:00PM
- ♦ **Sunday, December 10, 2017**
December Quarterly Meeting at Friends Village in Woodstown Time: 1:30PM
Speaker: Armando Martinez Topic: "Salem's Architectural Legacy: 18th Century Patterned Brick"
- ♦ **Sunday, March 4, 2018**
Open House and news exhibit sponsored by the Historical Society of Penns Grove, Carneys Point and Oldmans entitled, "Music in Our Communities" and "March 1, 1932." Time: 1:00PM-3:00PM
- ♦ **Sunday, March 11, 2018**
March Quarterly Meeting at Friends Village in Woodstown Time: 1:30PM Speaker and Topic to be announced.
- ♦ **Saturday, May 5, 2018**
Salem County Historical Society's Open House in Fenwick's Colony Tour Time: 10:00AM—4:00PM

What's News at Your Society

- Over the summer, the Society completed the renovation of its entire library space. New paint, new carpet, new desks, and entirely new computers. Our new library space is much brighter and open. We encourage all our members to stop in and see it. The Society extends our deepest gratitude to Mannington Mills for the generous donation of the carpeting and labor.
- Noah Leeds' 1845 map, *A New Map of the Town of Salem*, has been returned from conservation treatment. This 25" x 35" engraving was printed by the Philadelphia lithographer Thomas Sinclair and sold for \$3.00. Leeds, a surveyor and teacher, resided in Salem from 1844 until his death in 1852.
- On October 10th, Society Administrator and Curator Andrew Coldren went to the Lindsay Place Senior Center and presented a program on historical travel that was well received and brought back nostalgic travel memories for some of the audience.
- On October 15th, the Historical Society hosted the 14th John S. Rock Memorial Lecture. John Zen Jackson, Esq., spoke on the issues of the law and escaped slaves in the early 1800's. The event was held at Friend's Village in Woodstown and we were pleased to see people come from as far away as northern New Jersey, Maryland and New Hampshire in attendance.
- Friday, October 27th was the annual Walking Ghost Tour in Salem an event that supports the John S. Rock Memorial Scholarship at Salem Community College. (This year's scholarship was awarded to John Bubeck of Pennsville.) The tour was preceded by the Tunes from the Crypt organ concert at St. John's Episcopal Church performed by Joanne K. Owen. This fun and spooky event was a big hit as always and brought out many people to see historic Salem at night.
- A recent booklet entitled, "Wood-Mere Camp: Celebrating 100 Years, 1917-2017," was donated to the Society by the author, Bruce Mitchell, current president of the club.

14th John S. Rock Memorial Lecture

Right, Administrator and Curator, Andrew Coldren greets the speaker, John Zen Jackson, Esq. at the John S. Rock Memorial Lecture.



Below, Members from the Salem Women's Community Choir. *Left to Right*, Sharon Jordan, Sharon Kellum, Ida Sumiel, Lydia Thompson and Patricia Allen, Director.



John S. Rock Memorial Donors:

Anonymous
Robert and Cynthia Costa
Catherine M. Flaherty
Dana Gayner
Charlotte and Charles Harrison
Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Henderson
Sharon Jordan

Sharon Kellum
The Reverend Lois Miltimore
Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. Owen
Lydia Y. Thompson
Alice Waddington
Mary Waddington

Walking Ghost Tour



Above, Andrew Coldren, Administrator and Curator discusses 19th century funerary practices and displays a child's cooling casket during the Salem City Walking Ghost Tour. Joanne K. Owen, *left*, presented the perfect prelude to Salem City's Walking Ghost Tour with a spirited pipe organ concert, *Tunes from the Crypt*, at St. John's Episcopal Church in Salem, New Jersey.

ALEXANDER'S ANNALS

50 YEARS AGO

Elmer Times, Elmer, NJ
December 1967

- Salem County site favored over Greenwich for atom power station.
- Asa Cadwallader & Kingsley Glenn re-elected as directors of the Salem-Cumberland Dairy Herd Improvement Association.
- Salem County ranks 1st in State for acres of tomatoes harvested. [7,800 acres]
- Governor signs bill to abolish county coroners.
- Migrant labor bills adopted—Threaten farming industry—Flush-toilet provision raised the greatest cry among farmers.
- Eggs —2 dozen—99¢ —A&P.

75 YEARS AGO

The Monitor-Register, Woodstown, NJ
December 1942

- Carl Cheeseman [16 years old] won the grand championship ribbon at the New Jersey State's fourth annual 4-H Club Baby Beef Show and Sale at Rutgers University.
- "Ten Per Cent of your Income should be going into U. S. War Bonds and Stamps".
- Marian R. Hitchner has been elected to two honorary scholastic societies at Drexel Institute.
- Friends First-Day School Orchestra to present Annual Concert in Meeting House—Clarence S. Hoover, Director.
- Salem County farmers must apply to local War Price & Rationing Board in order to purchase rubber boots or shoes.
- No Thanksgiving Holiday at Seabrook Farms.

100 YEARS AGO

Salem Sunbeam, Salem, NJ
December 1917

- Dye works smoke stack when completed will be the second tallest in the state of New Jersey.
- Liberty Fife & Drum Corps being organized by Salem Councilman John M. Whelan.
- Fort Mott Minstrels to perform at Fenwick Theatre to benefit the post's Recreation Room Fund.
- Alloway canhouse halts operation on account of not being able to get dried apples for use in the making of Italian cheese.
- Coal Famine Ended—duPont Company purchased 70 carloads from which they are supplying each of their employees with ½ ton every two weeks.
- Woodstown Community Christmas tree to be lighted gratis of John E. Watson's Delco light system.

—**Sheriff Coles** has given his permission to several lady church-workers to hold **religious services in the jail** every Sunday afternoon, for the benefit of the prisoners.

The South Jerseyman, Salem, NJ, April 29, 1884

COUNTY OFFICES DEMOLISHED

The old County Offices are nearly demolished, and the new ones are progressing towards completion. The old jail already trembles at the onward march of improvement, and with its *os frontis* darkened by age, frowns at the brightness looming up in the background.

From the action of the Board of Freeholders, at their last meeting, we take it; that the tearing down of the old jail and the erection of a new one on another site, has been determined upon, provided such a proceeding would not be expensive to the county; also, that the site of the old jail will be rented or leased for business stands.

Now, some of our people are in favor of having the county ground clear, and devoted exclusively to county purposes; but we believe the majority ask for a revenue to the county, by the letting of lots for business purposes.

Should the latter be the result of the conference of the Freeholders, we would suggest that the line of the Court House be the limit of the lots offered for the erection of business stores.

This would make all our county buildings more conspicuous, present a tasteful and symmetrical front, and give to our people ample space to congregate in mass meeting for the management of our political system, or for the celebration of our anniversaries.

Salem Sunbeam, Salem, NJ, August 22, 1851

OLD JAIL

It has at last been decided to have the old jail removed. This decision, we doubt not, will receive the approval of everyone who has a desire to see our town relieved of a building that has long marred its beauty, and we wish the work all possible speed.—

By reference to our advertising columns it will be seen that the committee have advertized for proposals for the tearing down of the old jail and walls, and for the erection of a new one out of the old material so far as it will extend.

The jail is to be built of stone, on the county ground fronting Market Street, and is to be three stories high, 44 feet front by 36 feet deep, with rooms for the Sheriff or the jailer and his family.

A work house which has been much talked of and long needed by the county is to be put up in the rear of the jail, the same width, to extend back 35 feet, a plan of which will be shown by E. Vanmeter, Esq.

The ground now occupied by the jail, is to have a row of brick buildings erected hereon, to be occupied by stores, &c. In the last named buildings there is to be a Town Hall for the transaction of public business—there now being no such place in the town.

National Standard, Salem, NJ, March 17, 1852

The Old Jail

—**Mr. James H. Simkins**, photographer, of this city, has painted in oil a handsome representation of the old jail, which was torn down years ago. It is a correct painting, and this old landmark will be readily recognized by the older residents. It is on exhibition at Wood's stationery store, and is for sale.



National Standard, Salem, NJ, January 15, 1879

Genealogically Speaking....

Upper Alloways Creek Tax Delinquents — December 1792

“A Warrant of Distress for Tax for Oliver Smith, Constable...”

The following list of tax delinquents was issued by John Holmes, the Salem County Justice of Peace, to Constable Oliver Smith of Upper Alloways Creek. This list had been submitted by Tax Collector Samuel Ray and Constable Smith was instructed to deliver these persons to the Sheriff or his gaoler *[sic]*.

Joseph Stretch, Sean ^r	Joseph Swabey	John Williams	Elias Loper	Ebenezer Zanes
David Carmack	Elijah Ayars	Jacob Carmack	Joseph Hall	Abraham Harker
Samuel Ewing	John Page	Daniel Stretch	Alexander Orr	Joshua Sharp
Daniel Shepherd	John McClane	Phenias Dunham	Constant Bowen	Richard Major
John Foster	Isaac Patrick	Joseph Young	Peter Souder	Ezekiel Hannah
Samuel Patrick	Benjamin Harris	Samuel King	Annianus Snethen	Samuel Dickinson
Thomas Bee	Josiah Weaver	Jacob Stump	Peter Duffill	<i>[From the Collection</i>
Joseph Kelsey	Thomas Reeves	Jonathan Borns	Job Weeks	<i>2016.016.072]</i>
Willson Hogbin	Philip Lippo	Davis Ivins [?Sauer]	Abraham Kidd	

MORE LISTS

LIST OF LETTERS, 1820

Remaining in the Post-Office at Salem, N. J., April 1st, 1820
Salem Messenger, Salem, N J, May 24, 1820

Tamor Ayrs	Charles C. Coxe	James Harriss	Jane Miers	David Shords
Nancy Accao	Isaiah Conklin	Margaret Huseted	Catharine M. Gill	Jonathan Smith
John Anderson	Peter Davis	Sam'l Hilyard	Sarah Murphey	Benjamin Tindall
Aaron Antem	John Dickenson	Sarah Hilman	Wm. Mauganery	Mary Thompson
Deborah L. Brick	Edward Dare	John Harris	John Nelson	Elizab ^h Wheaton
Rebecca Blackwood	Susan Dawson	John Heritage	William Newcomb	William Whatters
Rev. Wm. H. Biddle	Mariah Dubois	Eliza A. Hope	Henry Pratt	Hannah Willet
Thomas Brown	Elmer Dubois	Matilda R. Jones	Rev. Edward Page	Ebenezer Wright
Mary C. Blake	Daniel Dorrel	James Jessup	Mr. H. Poughton	Charles Wentzell
Asher Bordon	Rachel Dorrel	Peter C. Jonson	Carnelius Renolds	David Weathman
Anthony Brown	Peter Errickson	Isaac A. Kollock	Dr. Thomas Rowan	Benjamin Wright
Mary Bordon	William Emery	Joshua Kirk	Allen Smith	Joseph Walters
David Cline	George Fowler	Jonas Keen	John Smith, T. M.	James H. Young
William Craig	John Findley, L.C ^k	Job Lackroy	Elisha Stretch	
Widow Cauley	Sarah Farrow	James G. Maunary	Joshua Scattergood	Samuel Sherron, P. M.

First Women To Serve On Grand and Petit Jury

Two Salem ladies and one from Penns Grove bear the **unique distinction** of being the **first women** drawn in Salem County to serve in the important capacity of Grand Jurors and one each from Alloway, Lower Alloways Creek, Upper Penn's Neck, Elsinboro and Salem will act as Petit Jurors. These will serve at the December term of the Salem County Courts that opens Tuesday, December 21st, at ten o'clock.

The ladies chosen for the Grand Jury are Mrs. Caroline W. Beckett and Mrs. Katharine S. Whitehead of this city, and Mrs. Eleanor Summerill, of Penns Grove. Mrs. Beckett's name was the first to come out of the box when Sheriff A. K. Brandriff made the drawing in the presence of Judge Edward C. Waddington and Jury Commissioner Isaac S. Smick. As the Grand Jury can be composed according to law of only twenty-three members, Mrs. Beckett having been drawn the thirteenth on the list, she undoubtedly will serve. Mrs. Whitehead and Mrs. Summerill appear twenty-eighth and thirty-fourth on the list so it is hardly likely they will have any duty to perform at this term.

The ladies drawn on the Petit Jury are Mrs. Mary Ayres, of Alloway; Mrs. Anna Williams, of Lower Alloways Creek; Mrs. E. H. Johnson of Carney's Point; Mrs. Emma Ayares, of Elsinboro, and Mrs. Mary D. P. Hiles, of Salem.

Salem Standard and Jerseyman, Salem, NJ, December 15, 1920

On Sunday, September 18th, the Historical Society hosted its 2017 Annual Luncheon. This event was a wonderful opportunity to sit down with our members and supporters and enjoy an afternoon of food and camaraderie at the Inn at Salem Country Club. We would like to thank everyone who came out and all who supported the event.



Congratulations to our 2017 Annual Luncheon raffle prize winner Laurie Kenzelman! Thank you again to everyone who bought tickets in support of the Society.



Thank You To Our 2017 Annual Luncheon Patrons & Donors

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Breslin
Dr. Robert A. Brooks
Mrs. Louise G. Brown
Dr. and Mrs. J. Harlan Buzby
Mr. and Mrs. Asa Cadwallader
Mr. and Mrs. John S. Carpenter, III
Mrs. Corinne Davis
Mr. Robert L. Davis
Ms. Annette Devitt
Mr. and Mrs. Brian Duffy
Mr. John J. Elk
Mrs. Ruth H. Flemming
Frank Leonards & Frank, LLC
Mr. William J. Gallo, Jr.
Mr. James M. Goslin

Mrs. Mary Hancock
Mr. and Mrs. Curt Harker
Mrs. Joan Hassler
Mrs. Joann Humphrey
Mrs. Jean Hepner Jack
Mr. and Mrs. James Kates
Ms. Peggy Kavanaugh
Ms. Margaret Klein
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Maltman
Ms. Sharon McCarson
Ms. Ellen Morrissey
Mrs. Anna Muhlbaier
Mrs. Barbara B. Nathan
Mrs. Mildred H. North
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Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. Owen
Mr. and Mrs. Ervin Parker
Mr. B. Harold Smick, Jr.
Mrs. Ceil Smith
Mrs. Nancy Spangler
Mr. and Mrs. Charles J. Tisa
Mr. and Mrs. Armando Verdecchio
Mrs. Emily H. Walker
Mr. Lee R. Ware
Mrs. Linda L. Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Wohlrab
Mrs. Elizabeth H. Yerkes
Mr. and Mrs. David R. Young

Library Acquisitions

Bordeaux, Gayle (in memory of Charles N. Griffith), Wilmington, NC. Photograph of Penns Grove High School Class trip to Washington, DC 1939. (2017.054)

Carr, Beverly, Hancock's Bridge, NJ. Ledger from store in Salem, NJ with transactions dated 1893—1895. (2017.049)

Compton, Robert, Bristol, VT. Materials relating to Compton, Couch, Ray and Jenkins families. (2017.049)

Correll, Philip G. and Magill, Ronald E., Salem, NJ. Materials from the Dorothy Trucksess Toulson estate relating to the history of Salem County. (2017.036)

Historical Society of Penns Grove, Carneys Point and Oldmans, Penns Grove, NJ. Funeral Card for Gideon S. Turner (2017.053)

Owen, Lawrence B., Pilesgrove, NJ. Scan of a photograph of Leonard Kidd barbershop in Sharptown, NJ dated July 13, 1968. (2017.043)

Powell, Jim (in memory of Sarah Alloway), Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Photographs relating to members of the Richman, Webber, and Summerill families. (2017.052)

Russell, John W., Fairway, KS. Blueprint drawings of machinery designed for the Ayars Machine company by Richard Russell dated May 3, 1938. (2017.039)

Sweeney, Kathleen, Salem, NJ. Various photographs and negatives from the Lower Alloways Creek school, speculated to be first grade class pictures dating from 1965—1974. (2017.049)

Williams, Hilda (in memory of Jay Williams), Woodstown, NJ. Photographs and newspaper clippings relating to the moving of the cannon that sits in front of the Old Salem Courthouse. (2017.044)

(to be continued)

Opening of the New Woodstown and Swedesboro Railroad

National Standard, Salem, New Jersey
February 7, 1883

The new Woodstown and Swedesboro Railroad was opened for travel on Thursday, and a number of persons availed themselves of this opportunity to make a visit to the city or some point along the road, in order to be a passenger on the first train. A number of our citizens gathered at the station to see the train depart, and it was quite an event to have two trains leaving the station in the morning.

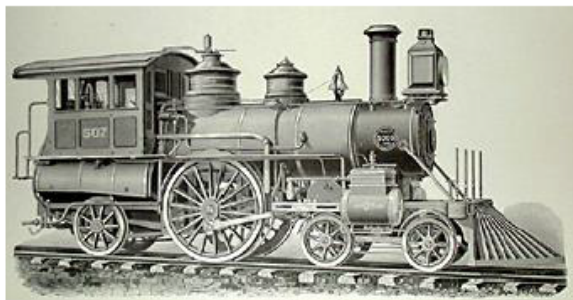


The Railroad Station, Woodstown, New Jersey

The trains departed and arrived according to schedule time. At Woodstown quite an ovation awaited the iron horse, and the opening of a railroad through that place is an event of no little importance to the people of that beautiful borough and its growing business interests.

The writer made the trip over the new road on Friday, and to our agreeable surprise the roadbed was found much smoother than expected, and the scenery along the route is more preferable than by the old road. Neat stations have been erected, that at Woodstown being quite pretentious, commodious and beautiful, and also the one at Harrisonville. A platform and a telegraph office have been erected at Riddleton, the junction with the Salem road.

With no intention of finding any fault with the new arrangement, we don't see as yet that our people are given any better accommodations, but we hope for better things in the future. The travel of this city certainly does not require two trains departing and arriving about the same time. It has been suggested that one of them be made an earlier train in the morning, say to meet the six o'clock train from Bridgeton over the old road, and the train on the new road to leave about eight o'clock in the morning and the other about 12 o'clock.



Then what is now known as the late train, leaving Philadelphia at 5:20 p. m., ought to run every day. Then again by the new arrangement, we have poorer mail facilities. The mails ought to be carried by the new road, and that would bring them in earlier in the morning and take them out later in the afternoon.

The regular railroad fare from Woodstown to Philadelphia is 83 cents, and a round trip ticket costs \$1.25; to Salem 34 cents and an excursion ticket 48 cents; to Swedesboro 20 cents, for the round trip \$1.

As it now is, the schedule is just reversed. The business interests of South Jersey are certainly of sufficient importance to entitle us to better mail facilities than we now possess, and our representatives at Washington cannot do our people better service than by attending to this matter.

Better cars are now run over the new road, even to the "smoker," which is greatly appreciated by those who use the weed.

Telegraph poles are being distributed along the new road, and a line will be in working order as soon as the poles can be set and the wire strung.

The fare over the new road remains the same as over the old, which ought not to be, since the former route to Philadelphia is several miles shorter. Another thing that is likely to create dissatisfaction, in fact, already has, and that is that an excursion ticket is only good on the road for which it is sold; or in other words, a person cannot purchase an excursion ticket to Philadelphia, and go over the new road and return on the old, and vice versa. Some parties have already been obliged to pay their fair twice on this account.



The Railroad Station, Salem, New Jersey

We understand that since the Salem depot has been moved into this city, the freight business of the road has largely increased, which is due to the liberal inducements that the company has held out to shippers. The same policy toward the traveling public would be as fruitful of good results.



(continued from Cover) resulted, while also complying with evolving New Jersey Law, was a challenge. Whatever the case, the burden next fell on Sheriff Samuel Plummer to carry out the ultimate penalty of justice on March 1, 1853. Samuel T. Treadway had been convicted of murdering his wife, and on the day he was to pay the price for the crime, the county seat was overflowing with people. To provide security at the jail and around the City, the death guard consisted of sixteen special deputies, eleven county constables, and the entire municipal police force. Early that Tuesday morning in the jail five ministers attended to Treadway's spiritual needs and hymns were sung. After bidding farewell to the clergymen, the prisoner ascended the scaffold with firm step and cheerful countenance, newspapers reported. The sheriff arranged the prisoner, placing a rope around his neck and reading him the death warrant. A final prayer was offered by Rev. McWiddemer, who had attended the convict on the scaffold, and then the cap was drawn over his head. The drop fell at precisely 12:30, the prisoner dying almost instantaneously without struggle when he fell about four feet (Salem County Freeholders, 1976). The ultimate penalty of law had been paid, and Sheriff Plummer had discharged his duties in the most careful, professional manner. He had been assisted by Sheriff Stiles of Cumberland County and Sheriff Eyles of Gloucester. Drs. Gibbon, Reeve, Dickinson and Cook were in attendance. The body was suspended about three quarters of an hour, during which time the prison doors were thrown open and hundreds of people viewed the remains.

Sheriff Plummer was proud of his work. He traveled to Philadelphia afterwards, but couldn't get a room in a hotel, to which he remarked to the clerk: "I am the high sheriff of Salem County. I hung Treadway, and I want a room." The clerk responded, "If you were the sheriff of hell and hung the devil it wouldn't make a difference to me. There are no rooms in this hotel. (Salem County Freeholders, 1976)"

With a successful execution completed, city newspapers, which had featured the story for days, moved along to other headline grabbing events so all that remained to be done was for the Board of Freeholders to carefully tally up the cost, which took \$227.05 out of the treasury (over \$7,000 in today's money). The hangman, Sheriff Plummer, was paid \$150 for his services and the carpenter received \$52.43, which included spending two days in Philadelphia and 13 ½ days work on the scaffold. The coffin cost \$8.00 and the rope was \$5.00. The prisoner's final shave cost the county \$1.62. The scaffold had been built by Levi Dubree, upon the most improved plan, and put in the jail yard Monday afternoon (Salem County Freeholders, 1976).

Thirty-one more years passed before the ultimate penalty of law had to be paid again. When Howard Sullivan was hanged on December 2, 1884, it was the closing act of a shocking tragedy that started when young Ella Watson was murdered near Yorktown on August 18, 1884. For a time, the murder was enveloped in mystery, but the vigilance of Pinkerton Detectives involved in working up the case unraveled it.

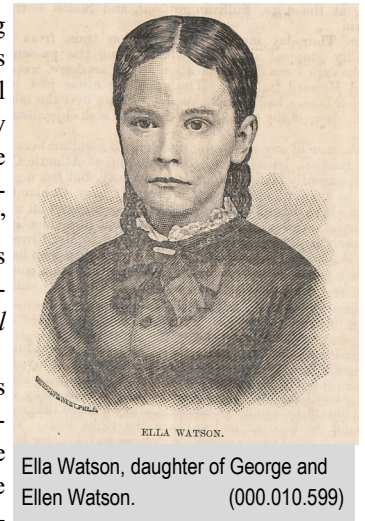
The trial was underway as the county prepared to elect new officials, and the *Philadelphia Record* reported that the office of

the sheriff would go a begging for a candidate if Sullivan was convicted. However, Killer Bill Reeves, "well known to many Salem Countians and for some time past employed at the Philadelphia Market Street Ferry" wrote to Salem County officials offering to stand in for the sheriff and do the job (*National Standard*, 1884).

After the campaigning was over, Sheriff Clinton Kelty assumed the office shortly before the grim task of executing the dreaded sentence had to be performed. The *Monitor* added that with the election behind the people, and the senatorial recount finished, the next excitement was going to be the execution of Howard Sullivan. However, building up to this, officials had lots of work to do. As the county had not carried out a hanging since 1853, they sought advice from Philadelphia, where executions were performed much more frequently. The scaffold had been stored in the garret of the courthouse, waiting until it was next needed. But when someone went to look for the old relic it was not found where it had been so long stored, nor anywhere else. It had disappeared as thirty-one years passed quickly by (*Sunbeam*, 1884). Not having a gallows, Sheriff Kelty first thought he would have J. S. McCune build one, but instead he applied to the warden of Moyamensing Prison in Philadelphia, asking if he could loan his gallows. The request was granted, and "the grim looking affair, with a terrible history," was shipped to Salem. From its trap door every murderer who had been executed in Philadelphia within a period of thirty to forty-years, had swung into eternity, a Philadelphia paper reported. It worked very well in Philadelphia, but whether Sheriff Kelty would be successful in operating it remained to be seen, the paper added. (*Times*, Nov. 29, 1884). Prison Carpenter Ford, of Moyamensing, came along to erect the scaffold and instruct the sheriff in how to spring the trap of the scaffold and make the noose for Sullivan's neck. In addition to procuring a scaffold, the county put up a temporary building for the execution in the rear of the Surrogate's Office (*Monitor*, 1884). It had been erected to hide the gallows from public view.

Sullivan almost cheated the gallows, coming near to escaping from Salem County's Death Row or its equivalent, from a cell on the third floor of the prison. He managed to get out on the roof one night in time to witness the Democratic torchlight parade. But his escape was defeated, saving "outraged justice its due, the authorities a great deal of trouble, and the county considerable expense, and the community an experience of anxiety and commotion (*National Standard*, 1884)."

On his last night, Deputies James Cooke and William Clifton, sat outside his cell, serving as the death watch. He stayed up much of the night singing, praying, and conversing with the guards. That morning when the death warrant was read, the



Ella Watson, daughter of George and Ellen Watson. (000.010.599)

seventeen-year-old was the coolest man in the party, according to city newspapers. His two spiritual advisers and ex-Sheriff Coles, accompanied him to the scaffold, where he made an address. "I say good bye to you all and thank those who have had charge of me for their kindness." Noting that "It is very sad for Sheriff Kelty to do it, but he must. If he failed in his duty he would be prosecuted and turned out of office," the teenager concluded as he said he was ready to go. (*Sunbeam*, 1884).

Under a strict state law, the hanging could be witnessed by no more than thirty-seven people. In this group were the Revs. Wilson Peterson of Yorktown and Richard Miles of Salem, Prosecutor Slape, Judge Plummer, the jurors appointed by the court, and newspaper reporters. Notwithstanding the declaration from the sheriff that few people would be admitted and with unfavorable weather, an "anxious curious throng filled the pavement for some distance and good naturedly jostled each other in their attempts to see and hear something of the act being committed inside the temporary building. Mayor Lawson had the entire city police force on duty about the jail, keeping order and although considerable excitement prevailed, no disturbances of any kind occurred. (*National Standard*, 1884)

On the scaffold after the prayers, his hands fastened with handcuffs behind him and his legs strapped, Constable Buckalew put the noose around his neck and slipped the black cap over his head. At 11:29 exactly the drop fell, and he was pronounced dead in three minutes without a struggle. The body was allowed to hang for half-an-hour before it was cut down and placed in the coffin to be conveyed, in the wagon of undertaker Turner, to Bushtown for burial.

Although not very experienced with such matters, Salem County once again handled the troublesome task. Too much credit cannot be awarded Sheriff Kelty and his able assistant ex-sheriff Cole for the excellent management of the details of the execution, the *Sunbeam* remarked. The rope had been furnished by Edwin H. Fuller & Co. of Philadelphia, who had supplied all

rope used for this purpose in Pennsylvania for many years, and it came with the regular hangman's knot already tied. After the final blow had been delivered, the gallows had to be rushed back

to Philadelphia as it was needed in the City. Relic hunters besieged Sheriff Kelty for pieces of the rope. The Board of Freeholders, however, wrangled with officials and claimants about bills related to the hanging, as well as the reward for information leading to a conviction.

The General Assembly enacted the state's first comprehensive criminal act in 1796 and that statute expressly provided that the crime of murder was punishable by death and the sheriff was to execute condemned criminals by hanging. In 1835, the Legislature also enacted a law prohibiting public execution. A significant change on April 4, 1906, substituted electrocution for

hanging and relieved the county sheriff of carrying out the act as executions were centralized within the state prison system (Martin, 2009). And with the change in the death penalty law in New Jersey, Salem County's top lawman never again had to serve as the county executioner, nor did the freeholders have to bother with the cost of executing a convict. Episodes in the history of the criminal justice system in the county had passed into history.

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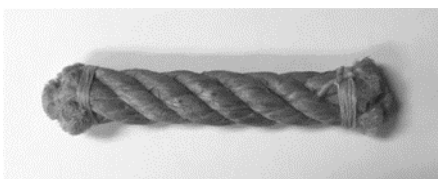
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A piece of rope from the gallows of the last execution in Salem County, 1884. From the Collection.

Mike Dixon is a historian and writer whose research and teaching focuses on community studies and social history. For nearly four decades, he has worked to encourage public interest and participation in the preservation of the past while creating understanding between earlier eras and the present. Addressing his area of scholarship, he has appeared on the *Today Show*, the *National Geographic Channel* and in prestigious magazines. Mike enjoys seeking out stories that create a distinctive sense of place. Along the way he finds rich, deep, and varied stories about the past in fascinating small towns.

He holds graduate degrees in history and the behavioral sciences from St. Joseph's University and Washington College and is an adjunct professor at Wilmington University. He is a visiting scholar for the Delaware Humanities Forum and a member of the speakers' bureau for the Maryland Humanities Council.



1915 Boy Scout Troop No. 1, Salem, New Jersey



Left to right, first row, seated: Lawrence S. Riley, William L. Richmond, Joseph Reeves and Howard Thomas.

Second row: J. Edward Godwin, John S. Dunn, Samuel Ridgway, Roland Carney, Conrad Acton, James Mifflin, and John Mitchell.

Third row: Gordon Bennett, Ralph Shimp, William Weiser, Herschell Thomas, Edward J. Gayner, Charles Crosier, Burroughs Shimp, Allen Shinn and Wilbur Perkins.

Back row: First two unknown; third, Leon (Hick) Wright; fourth, unknown; fifth, Weber Bennett, deceased, beloved Scoutmaster of the troop.

Besides those shown in the photo, the Troop Roll included: Herbert Ayars, James Bacon, Henry Ballinger, Roland Banks, Harry Berry, Norman Bloemer, Thomas Bowen, George Brayerton, John Butler, Raymond Collins, Stewart Craven, Jr., Thomas Craven, Wellington Crispin, John Davidson, John Dilworth, Leroy Driscoll, Charles Dubois, Paul Erhardt, Jr., Joseph Errig, Joseph Everingham, Frank Fahr, C. Edgar Garrison, Jerome Griner, Jr., Daniel S. Harris, Weatherby Harris, James Hawkins, Wyatt Haynes, Lee Hummel, Merwin Hummel, William Ireland, Milton Jordan, Horace Kille, Kenneth Keen, Wesley Lloyd, George Loder [sic], Earl Mason, Russell Massey, Charles Mathis, Samuel McWilliams, Stewart Mills, Furman Mulford, Francis Nelling, Elmer Perry, Willis Peterson, Howard Righter, Gordon Ruhl, Howard Ruhl, Melvin Sayre, Charles Schneider, Harold Sheppard, Edward Sickler, William B. Sickler, Jr., Frank Simpkins, Robert Smith, Francis Turner, Julian VanDyke, Stewart Weldon, Norman Wentzell, Clifton Whitehead and J. Norman Zaiser.

1916 "Boom Edition" of the *Salem Sunbeam*, Salem, New Jersey
Reprinted in the *Salem Standard and Jerseyman*, Salem, NJ, December 2, 1937

ORGANIZATION OF BOY SCOUTS IN THIS CITY

"As the outcome of a conference held at the Y. M. C. A. on Wednesday evening of this week, plans are now rapidly maturing for the establishment in Salem, of a headquarters for the furthering of the "Boy Scout" movement.

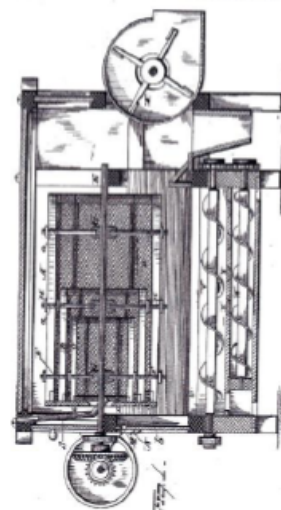
"The meeting was held upon the invitation of Dr. R. M. A. Davis, the President of the Y. M. C. A., and was presided over by Principal A. T. Steelman, of the High School with Rev. E. J. Perot serving as Secretary, and there being a number of others present, including Rev. W. P. Davis, Rev. W. C. Galloway, Rev. L. D. Hofer, Mr. Joseph Miller, Superintendent of Bethany Sunday School and Messrs. William Denn, Jas. Wheeler, Benj. F. Sheppard, Jesse Sheppard, Alex. Froebel, and Paul Collins.

"The purposes and methods of this movement were explained at length by Mr. P. C. Messersmith, the Scout-Commissioner in charge of the Camden, N. J. District, and it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the provisional organization of a Scout-Council for Salem...J. D. Sharman, qualified as a "Scout Master", was nominated for appointment as Scout-Commissioner for Salem County."

Salem Sunbeam, Salem, NJ, May 26 1911

AYRES MIDLINGS PURIFIER

(No Model.) G. W. & J. P. AYRES. 2 Sheets—Sheet 1.
MIDLINGS PURIFIER.
No. 248,690. Patented Oct. 25, 1881.



WITNESSES
Edw. L. Thompson
A. H. Lawrence
George W. Ayres
John P. Ayres
By [Signature] & [Signature], ATTORNEYS

"George W. Ayres & Son [John F. Ayres]; both of Allowaytown, N. J. are still busy in manufacturing and putting up the "Boss" middlings purifier, of which they are the inventors and patentees. Last week they put up one for William Oliphant, in Gloucester County, and they have one to put in for George Avis, at the Daretown mills."

National Standard, Salem, New Jersey,
July 27, 1881

"To prove that the Boss Middlings Purifier that George W. Ayars & Son invented about two years ago, that has a worldwide reputation, we would say that Mr. Ayars received a letter last week from Australia acquiring about the price, etc."

The South Jerseyman, Salem, NJ,
July 22, 1884

[A middlings purifier is a device used in the production of flour to remove the husks from the kernels of wheat. It was developed to compliment the emerging roller mill technique of the late 19th century, which used corrugated metal rollers instead of abrasive grindstones to grind wheat into flour. The middlings purifier was used in this process to separate the bran from the usable part of the flour.
www.wikipedia.com]

All Over the County—Over a thousand people attended the picnic of the Friesburg Lutheran Church on Wednesday of last week.

Salem Sunbeam, Salem, NJ, August 19, 1887

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Woodstown, NJ

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Charles Ware,

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"Electric lights are being
installed in the Woodstown
Friends Meeting House."

Salem Sunbeam, Salem, NJ,
December 3, 1915

The First Public Whipping

"The first court of sessions
began at Salem on the 17th day of
September, 1706. By the records
the first public whipping took
place on November 17, 1716; the
victim was Mary Hawk, of Co-
hansey, for being a spinster. The
man who whipped her received
five shillings as his fee."

National Standard,
Salem, NJ, June 25, 1879

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Unidentified photographs in the collection remain a perennial perplexity!

This photo of a family gathering in the Alloway vicinity c. 1920s is from the Robert Dorrell photograph collection that is currently being digitized.
(000.770.0079)

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