

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Salem County Historical Society

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ALSTON'S TAVERN AND FERRY AT HELMS COVE

Salem Standard and Jerseyman

Salem, New Jersey, August 29, 1935

[As transcribed from the original.]

On the Jersey side of the Delaware River, directly across the river from Wilmington, Delaware, there is a cove extending about one-half mile inland from the range of the shore lines of Carney's Point and Penns Grove. This cove extends along the Delaware River for about a mile and affords a small protected harbor for small boats. This cove has been known as Helms Cove since early colonial days. Many a shad has been netted within this shallow water, and this toothsome fish has been a means of revenue for the inhabitants of the shores of this delightful cove.

At the northerly extremity of the easterly shore of this cove the upland extends to the river's edge. It was inevitable that, with the increasing development along the Christiana River and the continued growth of that ultimate metropolis of Delaware, a ferry be started to ply between this parcel of upland at Helms Cove and Wilmington. And along with the ferry, the accustomed tavern for the accommodation of travelers.

The Inns and Taverns were not only of use for the entertainment of man where he could take repast and get refreshments on his travels, but the innkeeper was required to keep sufficient provender for horses, so that the inhabitants of Jersey, journeying to Wilmington, could, if



Helms Tavern, Maple Avenue, Penns Grove, New Jersey.

desired have his horse or horses properly taken care of during his stay across the river. They were almost an absolute necessity in the proper accommodation of travelers and strangers at those times when storms would delay, for several days, a safe passage across the river. By having a licensed tavern at these ferries the traveler was assured of accommodations for the night as the law provided that each innkeeper, to whom a license be granted have at least two extra feather beds more than those for this family's use.

Thus it was that Andrew Helms, in March 1771, made application for a license to keep a tavern and ferry at Helms Cove, as follows:

“To the honourable Bench Now Judiciously Sitting at Salem Court, May it please your Worships—I your humble petitioner Begs Leave to

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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

www.salemcountyhistoricalsociety.com

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83 Market Street
Salem, New Jersey 08079
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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 and Annual Appeal

Another year has come and almost gone. At this time, we want to thank all those who have supported us in our historic endeavors during the year. You are a vital part of our organization whether you are a member, sponsor, volunteer, attended one of our fundraisers, toured our exhibits or facilities, attended a Quarterly Meeting, participated in a community event, or visited our library for genealogical research. We hope you will continue to take part in striving to attain our mission statement:

“...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.”

This has been our lofty goal for the past 131 years as Salem County's historical society. We want to continue to offer valuable services in the community. We ask your help in donating to our Annual Appeal. Whether you can give \$20, \$50, \$100 or more, the donation will be used to maintain our unique collection of historic artifacts and manuscripts, to provide Open House Tours and speakers for group meetings, to conduct educational programs for individuals of all ages, and to continue repairing and protecting our physical complex of buildings which house our various collections. Our museum and library are among the best in New Jersey.

Costs have been increasing. It was an exceptional winter with concerns of frozen water pipes and repairing parts of plumbing systems. Heating and air conditioning are needed all year to keep our collections in good condition. Our buildings are beautiful, but aging with little or no insulation and with facades that need regular maintenance and diligence to keep up. Insurance costs are rising, as are personnel costs. The Board of Trustees has done a great job in meeting and answering these needs during the current year and will continue to do so as we move into the future.

We ask your help in making this 2015 Annual Appeal a very successful one—to help secure our investment in our city and county for the future. Please be generous.

Please respond by December 18, 2015. The tax deduction will be yours and the legacy of Salem County will continue. Thank you on behalf of the Board of Trustees for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Trudy K. O'Hare

Trudy K. O'Hare

Mr. Thomas S. Sinnickson, the carpenter, showed us the other day a circular piece from one of the windows of the old **Masonic Temple** that was erected in this city in 1827. The builder was John Smart, and on this piece of window frame was written his name, by himself, with the date—June 30, 1827.

The building was torn down several years ago, and Mr. Sinnickson has preserved this piece ever since, and he has now presented it to the Salem County Historical Society.

National Standard, August 15, 1888

Calendar of Events

- ◆ **Friday, December 4, 2015**
Woodstown by Candlelight Tour, Woodstown, NJ
6:00PM - 10:00PM
- ◆ **Saturday, December 5, 2015**
The 28th Annual Yuletide Tour, Salem, NJ 1:00PM - 6:00PM
- ◆ **Sunday, December 13, 2015**
Quarterly Meeting 1:30PM Friends Village in Woodstown, NJ
Speaker: Peter Harp Topic: Lighthouses
- ◆ **Saturday, February 6, 2016**
A Day of Family Discovery: Exploring Genealogy at the
Lummis Library, Presented by the Cumberland County
Historical Society in Greenwich, NJ, 11:00AM-4:00PM
Cost: \$15 Boxed lunch and light refreshments included.
Call (856) 455-8580 for reservations.

December Quarterly Meeting

Join us on
Sunday, December
13th at 1:30PM at
the Friends Village
in Woodstown. Our
guest speaker will
be Peter Harp who
will be discussing New Jersey lighthouses.



Society News

For years now the Historical Society has faced a growing crisis of storage space for collections. We have more materials than we can comfortably hold. To solve this problem, the Society, on September 24th, purchased a property at 115 Fifth Street in Salem to use as open storage, exhibit and workshop space. In the next few months, the Society will be working to prepare the building for its new purpose.

Over a year ago, the estate of Ed and Nancy Fogg bequeathed to the Society their home in Alloway to be sold to raise money for the Historical Society. After many improvements, the house was sold on October 8th. The proceeds from the sale will be deposited into the Society's endowment fund.

On Sunday, October 18th, the Historical Society sponsored the 12th John S. Rock Memorial Lecture at Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church. Our speaker was Assemblyman Adam J. Taliaferro of the 3rd New Jersey Legislative District. The event was a great success and raised money for the John Stewart Rock Memorial Scholarship.

On Friday, October 23rd, the Society sponsored the Walking

Ghost Tour in Salem City. This annual event was a great success again this year with proceeds benefiting the operations of the Salem County Historical Society.

The Historical Society has hosted two school groups this fall. The Quinton Township School came on Monday, October 26th, and the Salem County Christian Home Educators visited us on Friday, November 13th. Also in October a group from the Harrison Township Senior Center in Mullica Hill toured our facilities.

The Society will be open free to the public on Saturday, December 5th, for the 28th Annual Yuletide Tour. The event lasts from 1PM through 6PM, but the Society will be open from noon to 4PM.

In case you missed it in the spring, our new exhibit, "How to Make It in Salem County: Stories of Creativity, Craftsmanship and Industry" is open at the Society. Please stop by to see Salem County glass, samplers, writings of George Agnew Chamberlain, a Nobel Prize in chemistry, a drag racing motorcycle and much more.

Society Outreach

Over the past few months, the Membership and Development Committee has continued to promote the Salem County Historical Society at local community events to spread the word of Salem County history and what our Society has to offer. On August 29th, we had a very successful outreach at Market Street Day in Salem, when over 100 people visited the museum. Then on September 26th and 27th we set up a booth at the Greenwich Artisans' Faire, which was a great success. It was a delight to talk to many guests about the Historical Society and invite them to visit us. If anyone is willing to help staff booths like these and tell the community about the Historical Society, please email me at VPresDevelopment@salemcountyhistoricalsociety.com or call 856-935-5004, as I could always use another helping hand!

As VP of Membership and Development, I am also exploring ways to better serve our current membership. In an effort to further communicate with our members, we thought it may be helpful to begin sending occasional email reminders of upcoming events such as the quarterly meetings and special programs. A trial email will be sent out before our December meeting, but if anyone has any input regarding this proposition, please feel free to contact me. We look forward to better serving our current members and enrolling new members during the upcoming year! Thank you all for your continued support of the Salem County Historical Society!

—Bonny Beth Elwell

12th John S. Rock Memorial Lecture JOHN S. ROCK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



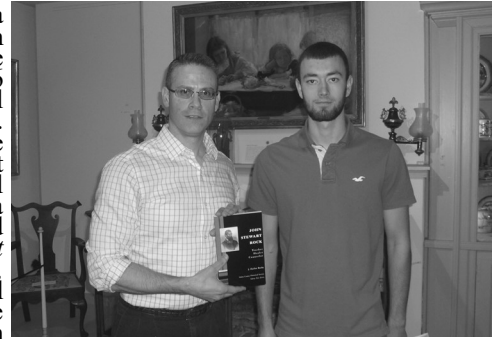
Assemblyman Adam J. Taliaferro, *right*, being welcomed as presenter for the 12th John S. Rock Memorial Scholarship by Andrew R. Coldren, Administrator and Curator of the Salem County Historical Society and Rev. Maerena W. Poole, Pastor of Mount Pisgah A.M.E. Church, Salem, New Jersey.

Salem Chautauqua Soon

The Salem Chautauqua comes earlier this year than formerly, June 11-16 being selected as the dates. This will be the tenth anniversary of Chautauqua in Salem and a souvenir program will probably be issued.

Salem Standard and Jerseyman, Salem, NJ, April 20, 1921

Austin Smith, *right*, a student at the Salem Community College, is the recipient of the 2015-16 "John S. Rock Memorial Scholarship". Andrew R. Coldren, *left*, the Administrator and Curator at the Salem County Historical Society, honors Smith with a copy of the society's award winning book, *John Stewart Rock: Teacher, Healer, Counselor*. This annual \$500 scholarship, from the Society, is awarded each year to a Salem County high school graduate who is a first year student at the college.



Salem City Walking Ghost Tour

On October 23rd, the Historical Society hosted the Salem City Walking Ghost Tour. Visitors to the Society were treated to thrills and chills and many scary stories from Salem County's



past presented by our Administrator and Curator, Andrew Coldren. The event benefits the operations of the Salem County Historical Society.

Reminder- Used Book Sale

Additional used books are available on our website, www.salemcountyhistoricalsociety.com, with many titles previously popular with our members.

Annual Luncheon



The Historical Society celebrated our Annual Luncheon held at the Centerton Country Club, on September 20, 2015. The event

featured good food, spirits and fellowship. Our Williamsburg raffle prize winners this year were Charles and Dorothy Bunting. The featured speaker was Joseph Grabas who presented a topic discussing New Jersey land and property rights. Our annual fundraiser was a great success and we thank everyone who supported and attended.

Annual Luncheon Patrons and Donors

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Mrs. Marjorie Bill | Mrs. Ann Lloyd |
| Mr. and Mrs. Robert Brooks | Mrs. Sharon McCarson |
| Mrs. Louise G. Brown | Ms. Ellen Morrissey |
| Dr. and Mrs. J. Harlan Buzby | Mrs. Anna G. Muhlbaier |
| Mr. and Mrs. Asa Cadwallader | Mrs. Barbara B. Nathan |
| Mr. and Mrs. Keith S. Campbell | Mr. Carl Nittinger |
| Mr. and Mrs. John S. Carpenter, Jr. | Mr. and Mrs. Dennis K. O'Hare |
| Mr. and Mrs. Chris Champigny | Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. Owen |
| Messrs. Philip G. Correll and Ronald E. Magill | Mrs. Marlyce Pietrantonio |
| Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Davis | Ms. Marianne Scollan |
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| Mr. Clyde Heckler | Mr. Lee R. Ware |
| Miss Katherine A. Heverin | Mr. Michael S. Warner |
| Mr. William Horner | Mrs. Elizabeth H. Yerkes |
| Ms. Joanne Humphrey | Mr. and Mrs. Russell Young |
| Mr. and Mrs. James Kates | |
| Ms. Peggy A. Kavanaugh | |

ALEXANDER'S ANNALS

50 YEARS AGO

Monitor-Register
December 1965

- Chest x-rays reveal four new TB cases.
- New Jersey is sixth greatest food processing state.
- Senate passes bill to make 20 years mandatory for dope.
- Five Dead, Two Critical, In Blasts at DuPont Company.
- Pennsville grants cable license to Tri-County Cable TV.
- State Senate nixes voting machines for Salem County.
- Men's Auxiliary for Ranch Hope formed.
- Oranges—3 dozen—85¢—Food Fair.

75 YEARS AGO

Elmer Times
December 1940

- State inspector blasts Salem jail as one of worst in State.
- Volunteers Alfred Sorrell and George Harris first men to be mobilized under the draft quota.
- Salem County Historical Society restoring the Friends' Meeting House at Hancock's Bridge.
- Pennsgrove opens new Post Office—300 attend festivities at the YMCA banquet.
- Christmas Club Savings—\$259,000 in County.
- *Pennies from Heaven*—Grand Theatre—Woodstown.
- Fresh Florida Grapefruit—3 for 10¢ —American Stores.

100 YEARS AGO

Salem Standard and Jerseyman
December 1915

- Jewish farmers living in the vicinity of Monroeville to dedicate synagogue.
- Starting January 3rd, all city barber shops will close at 8:00 PM during the week and 11 PM on Saturdays.
- People's Bank of Pennsgrove opens.
- All of the buildings at Fort Mott are being painted.
- SHS football team chooses Harvey MacDonald captain.
- Russian ship *Kiev* anchored in Delaware River—being loaded with one million pounds of DuPont powder.
- 1st football game between Woodstown & Salem High Schools—Salem favored 13-6.

Library Acquisitions:

Blazer, William (in memory of Albert Sandecki). Haddonfield, NJ. Framed print depicting the Salem Oak tree. (2015.047)

Bunting, Dorothy M. Pennsville, NJ. Materials relating to Salem High School including reunion booklets and class trip photographs ranging from 1916-2008. (2015.048)

Burchfield, Gary (in memory of Howard Michael Burchfield). Lincoln, NE. Book entitled, "John Kendig Barr - His Ancestors and His Descendants," by Mary Alice Burchfield. (2015.036)

Demko, Priscilla Coles. Salem, NJ. Items from the estate of Alice C. Bacon of Salem, NJ including WWII naval photographs and documents relating to Edwin Freas Bacon. (2015.039)

Dolhanczyk, Jeffrey and Rachel (in memory of Harry Githens). Dennisville, NJ. Track map made for West Jersey & Seashore Railroad, June 1916. (2015.045)

Force, Thomas B. Rydal, PA. Items pertaining and relating to Joseph Cook of Pole Tavern, doctor and surgeon at the Battle of Gettysburg. Items include survey maps, bonds, mortgages, deeds, daybooks and photographs. (2015.044)

Fox, Kenneth. Bridgeton, NJ. Postcard depicting Willow Causeway, Salem, NJ. (2015.041)

Herrold, Linda Layton (in memory of Harold M. Layton). Pennsville, NJ. 1840s Day book belonging to Charles Wood of Monroeville and 1853 minute book of the Bridgeton-Mullica Hill Turnpike also known as The Mullica Hill & Pittsgrove Turnpike Company. (2015.046)

Owen, Lawrence B. Pilesgrove, NJ. Books entitled, "The 1940 Flood in Woodstown," by Lawrence B. Owen, M.D. and "The Woodstown Civic Orchestra, 1931-1941," by Lawrence B. Owen, M.D. and J. Harlan Buzby, D.D.S. (2015.049)

Plasket, Marilyn. Salem, NJ. Photographs possibly relating to the Miller family of Quinton, NJ and the Plasket family of Salem, NJ. (2015.042)

Powell, Jim (in memory of Sarah Lavinia Alloway). Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Photographs and postcard depicting scenes and people in Salem, NJ. (2015.043)

Historical Society of Penns Grove, Carneys Point and Oldmans. Penns Grove, NJ. Photographic negatives relating to regional steamboats of Salem County. (2015.037)

Stanley, Lois. Swedesboro, NJ. Certificates, diploma and correspondence related to Reverend John Warren Davis of Pedricktown, NJ. (2015.038)

Stoner, Lynn V. Salem, NJ. photograph of Norman J. Whitesell and Ada Hall Smith Whitesell on their wedding day, adoption records for Melvin S. Wolfe and funeral card, funeral guest books for Norman Whitesell and Ada Smith Whitesell. (2015.013)

Theatre Ruin Memories

WHAT? SO THAT'S where the F. W. Woolworth Store on S. Broad Street, Penns Grove, has been all these years. So viewers from the north side of East Main Street near the center of the Borough explained when the last timber and brick was removed from the Broad Theatre. However, Woolworths has reported they are closing the store doors on December 31, 1968.

The last brick of the Broad Theatre on South Broad Street came tumbling down on Friday severing one of the links with Penns Grove's history of early this century.

The Broad Theatre, although not the first amusement center in town, became the first vitaphone house in Salem County in 1928. Originally it was a stage and vaudeville theatre.

The theatre was erected by the Broad Street Amusement Company, whose officers were James H. Workman, president, Lewis W. Cook, secretary, Clarence Doughnten, treasurer, and John C. Mason, manager.

The Workman residence is located next to the site of the theatre and is now the home of Workman's grandson, J. Stratton Stewart. "Strat" was full of memories as he watched workmen tear down the movie house to make way for a parking lot for the adjoining People's Bank.

Strat's mother, Daisy Workman, and his father, Charles Stratton Stewart, met when the latter was a lighting engineer at the theatre. In

fact, young Stewart was fired by his future father-in-law for leaving a sound effects man, Ed Hunt, in charge of the stage one day.

Hunt pulled the wrong switches and nearly drowned the girl on stage. Stewart never returned to the theatre and became associated with an electrical firm on East Main Street next to the bank, and later went into industry.

The first show at the Broad was given in September, 1917, with Jack Mason as manager. The Stanley-Fox Corporation leased the theatre in 1926. Later the theatre was purchased by Warner Brothers and then by Atlantic Theatres.



Salem Sunbeam, Salem, NJ, October 22, 1968

Is That a Letter or a Flourish?

Deciphering Early American Handwriting

From a www.genpa.org blog entry dated August 27, 2014

By Kathryn Manz
GSP's Research and Administrative
Manager

Recently I've been transcribing a series of documents from 1798. As anyone who has tried reading early American writing knows, the spelling and handwriting can be both charming and utterly incomprehensible. Is that squiggle on the end of a word an s or is it just a flourish? Is this person's name Herr or Kerr?

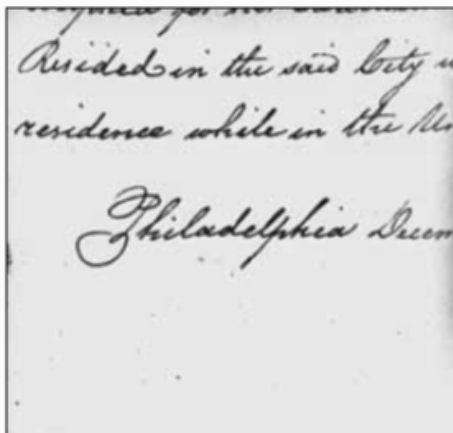
The other day, an article on the Smithsonian Institution's website caught my eye. Apparently the pen manufacturer BIC, in an effort to sell its touchscreen-friendly stylus, has created something called The Universal Typeface Experiment. <http://theuniversaltypeface.com/home>

As people submit handwriting samples to the BIC website, the company uses an algorithm to average the hundreds of thousands of submissions to create a completely and utterly average handwriting font.

The font is constantly evolving, always getting that much closer to average with each new submission. What's exciting is that you can use the website to sort the samples by gender, age, nationality, handedness, even the industry a person works in.

So if you want to know what the average Angolan Q looks like or the average S written by women in the world, you can do that.

While this project might, at first, seem like an entertaining but limited set of data (how different can an L be, anyway?!), it's an amazing resource for the genealogists and historians of the future who might want to decode all the grocery lists and diary entries we scratched out on paper.



If only this existed for the writing I'm working to transcribe right now! Not only would I love for my computer to generate the average handwriting of the colonial period, but imagine if that same program could show me the average writing for an educated man in his 40s in 1790s Philadelphia! It wouldn't do the transcription for me, but it sure could help.

Although this computer program doesn't (yet!) exist, there are plenty of resources to help genealogists struggling to read the writing in original documents. In the office of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, we have a copy of the book *Understanding Colonial Handwriting* by Harriet Stryker-Rodda. (There's a copy of the book at the Free Library of Philadelphia's Central branch, and it's also available for purchase on Amazon.)

This book provides background on different types of sources you might encounter and why the writing in them might look very different even at the same times and in the same places (a diary is private and informal, while a will is official and public, for example).

Stryker-Rodda also talks about the physical act of writing with a quill and the ways that it can affect your handwriting. (Who knew the change from a square to a chisel cut could change writing fluidity so much?)

And, of course, she includes examples of 17th-19th century script—including comparisons of English and American writing—which can be very helpful as you try to piece together your great-great-grandfather's will or a distant ancestor's naturalization record.

If you're looking for resources online that will help you improve your ability to read early American writing, try the UK's National Archives' website on Palaeography (the study of old handwriting, in case you want to impress someone in your next conversation). It has an interactive tutorial and a reference section, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/, that can help answer small questions you might have.

If you want a brief outline of Colonial American handwriting, check the Reed College Digital Collections website, academic.reed.edu/handwriting/, which has a study guide that has examples and explanations. Their website even includes several "games" to help prepare you to read documents on your own. To give you fair warning, those games are really more of a quiz, so they can be pretty disheartening the first time around. But you do learn quickly!

Finally, I'd recommend genealogist Michael Pollock's article "Howell to Reed Difficult Handrighting" on *Archives.com*, which does a great job of laying out tips and tricks for decoding old handwriting, while also stressing that modern readers' biggest mistake is projecting their own values and biases onto Colonial writing, which can definitely skew how you interpret what you read.

For more blog articles that can help you with your research visit www.genpa.org and click the tab, Events & More.

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(continued from cover)

inform you that I propose to keep a ferry and tavern at My plantation on Delaware River Where I now Dwell if your Worships will Be So kind As to Grant this favour to your humble petitioner that is to Grant Me A License for Same purpose and as I live in A Suitable place for keeping A ferry And None of My Neighbour as I Perceive has Any objection to it but All Seem Desirous therefor I hope your worships will be pleased to take it in Consideration and Grant this My humble Request and your favour Will be Greatly Acknowldged by Me your humble petitioner Sirs I Am in Douty Bound Yours to Serve.

“Andrew Helms.

“March 4th 1771, from Penns Neck

“Thomas Carney Senir, Henry Peterson, B. Smith, Charles Dalbow, John Griffe, William Miller, Cornelius Boon, Thomas Webers, Abel Harris, William Summerl, Jno. Cripps, Wm. Ronald, Peter Boon”.

The license was granted with William Hudson and Cornelius Boon as sureties.

So we find this prominent man, Andrew Helms, becoming the first innkeeper at this place that bears his family name. None can now doubt the statement that the innkeepers of old were leading men in their community and that inn-keeping was an honorable profession of which anyone could be proud.

For a space of nineteen years no record appears of any further license being granted for a tavern and ferry at Helms Cove. The time was probably not yet ripe for the successful operation of the project attempted by Andrew Helms. We are unable to ascertain whether he ceased the operation of both the ferry and the tavern or whether the ferry continued and the accommodations of a tavern were provided by Beetle’s Tavern, situated about two miles inland.

It is quite probable that the ferry continued in operation in a small way during this period and this little hamlet retained the name of “Helm’s Landing” as appears by the petition of Francis Hover, a son-in-law of Andrew Helms. This petition, in full,

following:

“To The Honourable Justices of the Court of General Quarter Sessions held at Salem for the County of Salem on the first Tuesday in December, 1790 To Which Our Petition Humble Showeth That We Recommend to your Worships Francis Hover as a Sutiable person to keep a publick Ferry and a house of Entertainment at the place Known by the Name of Helms Landing as he being Provided according to a Late Act of Assembly Made and provided Fro and In that Case, and We Your humble petitioners Begg Your Honours to Grant him Your License, and We are bound In Duty and Shall Ever Pray, Upper Penns Neck December the 7th Peter Boon, Abraham Miller, John Holton, Ebenezer pitman, William Dolbo, Abel Biddle, John Almond, John Biddle Senior, William Peterson, George Peterson, Thomas Peterson, Joseph Crispin, John Helms Senior, W. Miller Junr. Robert Kitts, Dean Simkins, Peter aplin, Benjamin Cripps”.

The license was granted, with Jacob Stanton and John Holton as sureties.

Francis Hover was succeeded by Isaac Day who, in March 1792, applied for license as follows:

“To The Honourable The Judges and Justices of the Court of Common pleas held in The Town of Salem in and for The County of Salem on the first Tuesday in March 1792 We Your petitioners Humbly Showeth We Your Humble petitioners Beg Leave to Recommend to Your Honours Isaac Day as a Suitable person to keep a publick House or Inn and Likewise a publick Ferry in the house Where he Now Dwells, the place Commonly known By the Name of Helms Landing He being provided agreeable to a Late Act of Assembly Made and provided for and In Such Cases and We hope your honours Will Grant him Your License and we Shall be in duty Bound and Shall Ever pray Upper Penns Neck, March 3d, 1792. Thomas Peterson, Ebenezer Pitman, John Almond, George Peterson, William Peterson, Dean Simkins,

Erick Peterson, Andrew Dalbow, Peter Boon, Benja. Cripps, Richard Pitman, William Dolbow, Peter Huber, Benja. Johnson, Abraham Farrow, Garrett Vanneman, Justice Williams, George Hickman, William Cook”.

The license was granted, with Wm. Peterson and Joseph Borden as sureties, and assessed at four pounds.

From the above it would appear that the tavern was not licensed from December 1791 to March 1792.

At the expiration of Isaac Day’s license in March 1793, there must have been some question as to his continuation in the operation of the tavern and ferry. Robert Kitts, who was innkeeper at “Beetle’s Tavern”, and becoming possessed of this tavern at Helms Cove, probably desired to take over the operation for himself, and for some reason was unable to obtain license at the March Term of Court, 1793 or had expected to wait until the expiration of his license for “Beetle’s Tavern” in June 1793, and then to apply for license in his own tavern at Helms Cove. Whatever did happen, we know not, as there are no records of his making application or having license granted to him for any tavern at either the March or June terms of Court 1793.

However, on April 5, 1793, Robert Kitts sold his tavern at Helms Cove to Charles Holton and the following June, Isaac Day was granted a license with Wm. Beetle and Andrew Boon as sureties, and assessed at four pounds, ten shillings.

In June 1794, Isaac Day again applied for license as follows:

“To the Honourable The Judges and Justices of the Court of Common Pleas and General Quarter Sessions held at Salem in and for the County of Salem on the Second Tuesday in June We Your Petitioners Humbly Sheweth We Your humble Petitioners Beg Leave to Recommend to Your honours Isaac Day as a Suitable Person to Keep a publick House or Inn in the house Where he Now Dwells as he Being Provided agreeable to An Act of Assembly Made and provided for and in Such Cases and We hope Your honours Will Grant him Your License and We Shall Be in Duty Bound and Shall Ever Pray. Thomas Peterson, Ebenezer Pitman, John Almond, Dean Simkins, Robert Kitts, Joseph Burden, Benja. Cripps, Wm. Biddle, Erick Peterson, Wm. Peterson, Moses Wright, Samuel Burden, W. Miller, Peter Hover, John Holton, Andrew Dolbow”.

The license was granted, with Thomas Bradway and Robert Kitts as sureties, and assessed at four pounds, ten shillings.

There are no records of any license being granted for this tavern at Helm’s Cove between June 1795, when Isaac Day’s license expired and June 1796, when Robert Kitts made his application, which was as follows:

“To the Honourable the Judges and Justices of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas and General Quarter Sessions held at Salem in and for the County of Salem On the Second Tuesday in June 1796. We Your Petitioners humbly Showeth We your humble Petitioners Beg Leave to Recommend to Your honours Robert Kitts as a Suitable person to keep a publick house or Inn in the house Where he Now Dwells and Likewise a public Ferry Across the Delaware as he Being provided According to an act of Assembly in Such Cases Made and provided and WE hope Your honours Will Grant him Your License and We Shall Be in Duty Bound and Shall Ever Pray. Thomas Peterson, Jacob Wright, Isaac Day, Benja.

Cripps, Philip Curriden, Ezekiel Simkins, Joseph Patterson, Jacob Cabal, Joseph Borden, John Flanagin, Wm. Biddle, Jacob Johnson”.

The license was granted, with Joseph Burden and Isaac Allen as sureties, and assessed at four pounds, ten shillings.

Complete silence exists about this tavern at Helm’s Cove until September 1799, when Charles Holton, the owner thereof, having departed this life without issue, his widow, Mary Holton, probably needing to provide a living for herself during her widowhood, made application for and was granted a license to keep tavern “in the house where she now lives”, being assessed at \$10.67, this being the usual amount taxed in the new American money for taverns that had been taxed at four pounds, ten shillings in English money.

Mary Holton probably had James Rose to assist her in the operation of the ferry and tavern during her term, as would appear by the application of Andrew Alston, made to September Term of Court 1800 for license “to keep a publick house or Inn, in the house Now Occupied by James Rose and Likewise to keep a Publick ferry Across the River Delaware”.

The license being granted and assessed at \$12.00, Andrew Alston, of New Castle having married Mary Holton on November 21, 1799, succeeded his new wife in the operation of the ferry and tavern, and continued until March 1802, when Isaac Price was granted a license “to Keep A publick house or Inn in the House Where Andrew Allson Now Lives”.

In March 1803, Andrew Alston again applied for license as follows:

“To the Honorable the Judges And Justices at their Court of General Quarter Sessions held in And for the County of Salem the first third Day in March 1803 the petition of the Subscribers Citizens and Freeholders of the Township of Upper Penns Neck Respectfully Sheweth that Your petitioners Recommends Andrew Alson As A Suitable person to keep a

publick house and Inn Where he Now lives at Helmes landing, And that he is furnished With a house And Other Necessary Accommodation Sutable for the Ocupation, Isaac Pedrick, Isaac Ward, Garrard Sparks, Gideon Scull, Peter Applin, George Peterson, Miles Pedrick, Daniel Dalbow, Samuel Lippincott, Saml Holaday, John Biddle, Adam Harbeson, Joseph Neals, Philip Curriden, John Page”.

The license was granted with Joseph Burden and Daniel Dolbo as sureties and assessed at \$12.00.

Andrew Alston continued as innkeeper at this tavern at Helm’s Cove until March 1805, the tavern being taxed at \$10.67 for the last term.

In March 1805, Edmund Addams was granted a license “to keep a publick House and ferry at the house Where Andrew Allston Now keeps at the Cove in Upper Penns Neck”, being assessed at \$10.67.

In March 1806, Edmond Adams was succeeded by Gideon Denny, who was granted a license by the court “to keep a public House and Inn, at Helm’s Cove, in Upper Penns Neck and in the House of Andrew Alston now Occupied as a public House by Edmond Adams”, being taxed at \$11, at which assessment it remained until its close.

In March 1807, Edmond Adams returned as innkeeper to this tavern when he was granted a license “to keep a Tavern and ferry at Helm’s Cove in the Township of Upper Penns Neck afd. in the house Now occupied as a public house by Gideon Denny”.

In March 1808, Edmond Adams was again granted a license “to keep a

Publick house and Inn at the Old Accustomed Tavern house and ferry Where he now lives at Helmes Cove". He was succeeded, in March 1809, by James Simkins, when he, James Simkins, was granted a license "to keep a Publick house and Inn at Helms Cove in Upper Penns Neck in that Accostomed Tavern house, Now Occupied as Such by Edmond Adams".

At the March Term of Court 1810 Elizabeth Smith was granted a license to keep tavern in "Upper Penns Neck" which must have been for this tavern at Helm's Cove. The following September she took over the operation of Beetle's Tavern, probably leaving her son, Abel Smith, to operate the ferry and tavern at Helm's Cove.

In March 1811, Edmond Adams again returned "to keep a public Inn & Tavern at Helm's Cove in the Tavern house and ferry belonging to Andrew Alston Esqr. in said Township now in the Occupation of Abel Smith".

Edmond Adams continued to keep this tavern and ferry at Helm's Cove until March 1815, when John Williams obtained a license "to keep a Tavern and Inn & ferry house, belonging to Andrew Alston Esqr. he having rented it for that purpose".

In March 1816, John Williams was again granted a license to keep tavern, his petition stating in part, as follows: "Whereas John Williams having rented that old Tavern Stand at Helms Cove in Upper Penns neck in Said County for the Term of two years for the purpose of Keeping a Tavern, and having been favoured with your Honours License for that purpose Last year being the first year of Said Term, and he having kept a sufficient Entertainment as a Tavern Keeper Therefore We recommend" &c.

John Williams could not have completed the full term of his two year lease nor did not continue as innkeeper for the full year's term of license granted him, because in December 1816 Aaron Sparks was granted a license to keep tavern, his petition stating, in part, as follow:

"That an Inn or House of Public entertainment hath been kept at Helmes's Cove in the Township and County aforesd for several years past in the House now occupied by Aaron Sparks, which said Inn or Tavern we believe to be Necessary".

Aaron Spark's wife, Elizabeth, was one of the daughters of Sarah Aplin, who, in turn, was one of the sisters of Charles Holton, the former owner of this old tavern. Being that Charles Holton had died without issue, the title to the tavern descended to his brother John Holton and his sisters Barbary Vanneman and Sarah Aplin. Sarah Aplin died leaving as her only heirs-at-law her two children, Charles Aplin and Elizabeth Aplin, who married Aaron Sparks.

On June 24, 1817, William Lawrence purchased the share and right of Elizabeth Sparks and Aaron Sparks, her husband, in this old tavern for \$60.00, and in September 1817 was granted a license to keep the tavern, the petition for which, in part, was as follows:

"Whereas William Lawrence having moved to that old Accustomed Tavern Stand at Helms' Cove in Upper Penns neck for the purpose of keeping a tavern and ferry".

On October 24, 1817, William Lawrence purchased Charles Aplin's share in this old tavern for \$75.00, which gave him title to one-fourth interest therein.

In September 1818 he was again granted license "to keep a public Inn or Tavern and Ferry in the house where he now lives".

On March 25, 1819, William Lawrence purchased the one-quarter share in this old tavern from Barbary Vanneman and Garret Vanneman, her husband for \$90.00, thus making him the owner of one-half interest therein.

In September 1819, William Lawrence again applied for license as follows: "Whereas the subscriber proposed to continue to keep that well known Inn or Tavern at Helms' Cove in the township of Upper Penns neck In County afforesaid; and ferry also for the purpose of ferrying passengers to Wilmington New castle &c, which he has heretofore occupied and kept

as a Tavern and Ferry and his license being about to expire this September Term" &c. The ferrying was performed in the sloop, "Jane Lawrence".

William Lawrence died before the completion of his term and in March 1820 a license was granted to William Dolbow "To keep a publick Inn and Tavern in Said Township in the house where William Lawrence formerly kept".

This was the last license granted to this old tavern stand.

William Lawrence departed this life about November 1819, intestate, and on June 2, 1821, Andrew Lawrence and Mary Lawrence, administrators of William Lawrence, deceased, sold his one-half interest in this tavern to John McCalister for \$75.00.

Whether John McCalister expected to obtain license for this tavern is not known, but as John Diver had opened his tavern and ferry the previous March, and as another tavern had been in operation for a few years in the house of Daniel Vanneman, both of these taverns already being in operation at Helm's Cove, it is possible that he was unable to get sufficient support for yet another tavern in this small village, even though this be an old accustomed tavern stand. He later in December 1823 became innkeeper in the house of Daniel Vanneman.

On July 30, 1825, John McCalister sold the one-half interest in the old tavern house to Daniel Vanneman for \$100.00, and on June 6, 1838 Daniel

Vanneman purchased the other one-half interest from John Holton and Mary, his wife for \$125.00, thus obtaining the full and entire interest in the property.

Daniel Vanneman departed this life in February 1849, and by his will devised this old tavern property to his daughter, Rebecca C., wife of Revd. Anthony Atwood.

Rebecca C. Atwood departing this life, the old tavern property descended to her only heirs-in-law, her husband Anthony Atwood, Clergyman, her daughter, Emma J., wife of Andrew Zane Jr., Attorney-at-law, her sons William A. Atwood, Manufacturer and A. Watson Atwood, Attorney-at-law, all of Philadelphia.

These heirs of Rebecca C. Atwood, deceased, sold a portion thereof on April 26, 1884 to Robert Kidd, who sold a portion thereof situate adjoining the Delaware River, upon which was probably situate the old ferry landing, to six DuPont Brothers, viz.: Eugene I., Francis G., Henry A., Alexis I., Charles I., and Alfred I. duPont.

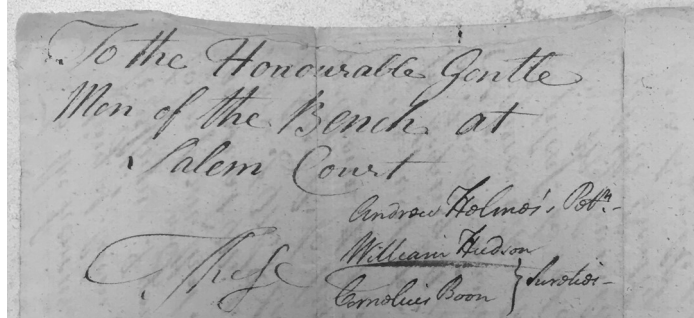
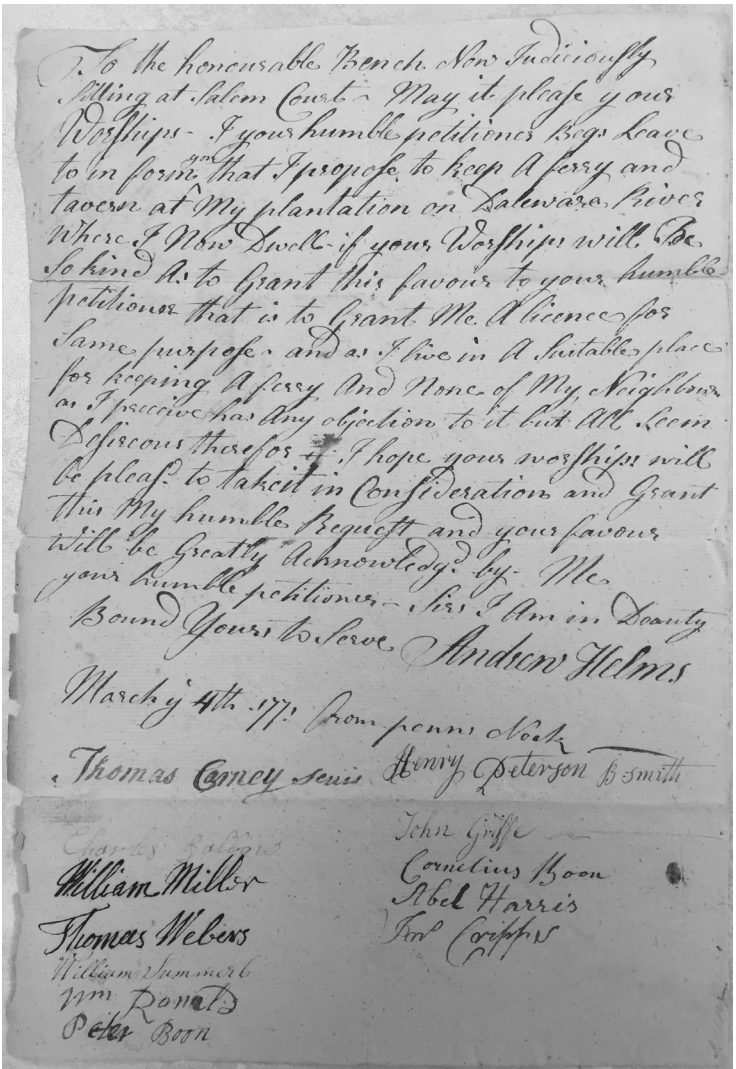
Robert Kidd departed this life on May 17, 1920, whereby the property was devised to his grandchildren, Lizzie J. Kidd and Robert W. Kidd, who, on March 21, 1927 sold a portion to Jeremiah P. Hayes.

Lizzie J. Kidd and Robert W. Kidd, however, still retain the property whereon stood this old "Andrew Alston's Tavern at Helm's Cove".

This village at Helm's Cove became a part of the Borough of Penns Grove on March 8, 1894 and the aforesaid Robert W. Kidd, at the time of the writing of this story (1933) is the Mayor thereof.

It is doubtful if this old tavern house still stands, unless it has been rebuilt, as the present house does not appear to be one hundred and sixty years old.

Considerable change has occurred in the village of Helm's Cove since the last license was issued for this old tavern. The toothsome shad is nearly a thing of the past. This little village, that each spring used to send out a horde of fishermen in their boats to net the shining delicacy, now sends out perhaps a single boat with but fair success. The merchants and traders, with their stores and warehouses have gone. Old, beautiful homes have become dilapidated, while other beautiful, new homes have been erected. Changes are continuing, but the spirit of this old quiet village still hovers overhead in the tall graceful trees that arch the streets. 'Tis true that some have been destroyed, but the majority still remain to remind the newer inhabitants of the past glory of this beautiful little village.



Tavern License application of Andrew Helms, March 4, 1771
"To the honorable Bench Now Judiciously sitting at Salem Court, may it please your worships, I your humble petitioner begs leave to inform you that I propose to keep a ferry and tavern at my plantation on Delaware River where I now dwell. If your worships would be so kind as to grant this favour to your humble petitioner that is to grant me a license for same purpose and as I live in a suitable place for keeping a ferry and none of my neighbors as I perceive has any objection to it but all seem desirous therefore I hope you worships will be pleased to take it in consideration and grant this my humble request and your favors will be greatly acknowledged by me your humble petitioner. Sirs I am in deauty bound yours to serve Andrew Helms. March ye 4th 1771 Penns Neck. Thomas Carney senior, Charles Dalbow, William Miller, Thomas Webers, William Summerl, William Ronald, Peter Boon, Henry Peterson (B. Smith may designate Henry Peterson as a blacksmith?), John Griffe, Cornelius Boon, Abel Harris, Jno. Corssis (? Cripps)". Courtesy of the Salem County Clerk's Office, Salem, NJ [#22252(1)] and transcription by Valerie N. Caulfield.



Trackless Trolleys Reported Coming
The "Standard and Jerseyman" was informed last Saturday that the trackless trolleys spoken of in these columns some weeks ago, will be in operation between Salem and Pennsgrrove within ten days.
Salem Standard and Jerseyman, Salem, NJ, July 21, 1915

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In Memoriam:

The Society is sad to acknowledge the passing of Jim Paras who was a dedicated volunteer at the Society for many years. He will be greatly missed.

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For more information about our "Partnership with History" program Call (856) 935-5004 or visit www.salemcountyhistoricalsociety.com

**WOODSTOWN OPERA HOUSE
 End of Silent Films**



The last showing of silent pictures under the management of E. W. Humphreys was given at the Opera House on Saturday evening [December 20, 1930]. The Liberty Amusement Company has taken the management of the Opera House and will give shows three nights a week, Monday, Wednesday and Saturday evenings. The very latest in the way of sound pictures has been installed in the Opera House. The first talkie show will be given Christmas night.

Salem Sunbeam, Salem, NJ, Friday, December 26, 1930

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PHOTO ID PLEASE!



This unidentified photograph of a Salvation Army Band in our collection may well have been established in a Salem County community. Please help us solve the “who, where, when” of this image.

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What a great gift idea for family or friends with ties to Salem County!

A gift membership to the Salem County Historical Society includes many special features available only through the end of the year.

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