

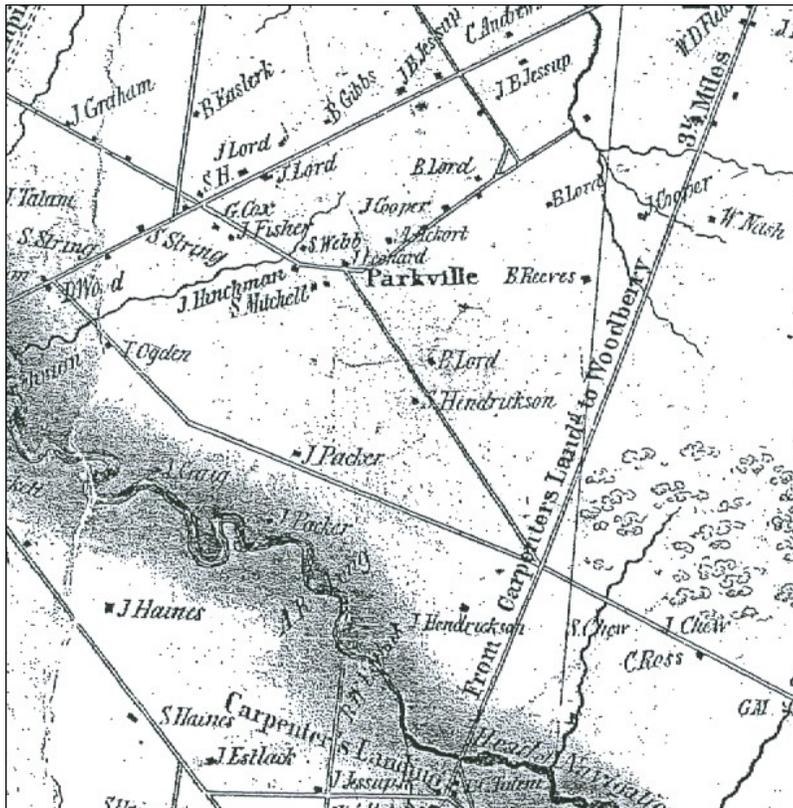
Wenonah Historical Society Newsletter

Next Meeting at 7:30 P.M.

Friday, February 12, 2016

Volume 14, Issue 2, February 2016

The Hydropathic Institute at Parkville



1849 map showing the location of Parkville with the Mantua Creek to the south and the road from Carpenter's Landing (today's Mantua) to Woodbury (present-day Rt. 45) Copied courtesy of Gloucester County

Woodbury's *Constitution and Farmers' and Mechanics' Advertiser* of April 11, 1848, announced that "the proprietors of the new village of Parkville near this place are preparing to open a Hydropathic Institute, or Water-Cure establishment...The preparatory building for the Institute, now in progress of erection, will be ready for patients on or about the first of July next." At that time, Parkville was in the part of Deptford Township that is today the Mantua Grove section of West Deptford Township. The Institute was located near the railroad tracks on today's Parkville Station Road, not far from its intersection with Kings Highway. The Institute was built strictly for use as a hydropathic establishment. At that time, many water cures were given in large converted homes or hotels. The location was easily accessible daily from Philadelphia by steamboat to Red Bank and then the Clarksboro stage, arriving in time for supper.

The first physician in charge was Dr. Sanford Bell who was appointed as Resident Physician. It was said that Dr. Bell had previously been the head of one of the largest Hydropathic Institutes in the United States. Persons wishing to reserve a place at the Institute were referred to Samuel Webb, Esq., 59 South Street, Philadelphia. Investors purchasing more than \$3,000 in capital stock were entitled to treatment until cured in place of dividends and after that twelve percent per year would be paid. The Institute was incorporated by an act of the New Jersey Senate and General Assembly on February 15, 1850. Eight of the corporators

were from Philadelphia, one from New York and one from Parkville.

Soon the Institute had been expanded to accommodate fifty patients. Hydropathy, also known as the "water cure," was touted as a remedy for cholera, gout, rheumatism, bronchitis, consumption, paralysis and other diseases. It claimed to cure what medicine could not. Separate buildings were available for those suffering from insanity, drunkenness or an inclination toward stimulants, opiates or narcotics. These patients were guaranteed all the benefits of an asylum with the comforts of home. Terms were \$8.00 to \$10.00 per week including board, treatment and everything else except laundry. In the January 30, 1850 issue of *The West Jerseyman*, readers were asked, "If they cannot (cure), nobody will employ them, for who will pay eight or ten dollars per week if they experience no relief?" Patients were to bring "two linen sheets, two large woollen blankets, four comfortables and half a dozen crash towels." Horses could also be boarded. A steward, matron, servants and bath attendants were ready to make a patient's visit more comfortable. A series of pure water springs ran all year round at an average temperature of fifty degrees Fahrenheit.

The main building of the Institute was three stories high and consisted of thirty to forty rooms. There were two separate cottages used for bathing by male and female patients. At the rear of the property stood three additional cottages: one for laundry and the other two occupied by servants. Hydrants were used to bring the spring water to the cottages and underground drains carried away the waste water. A round stone building contained the water works with a large cedar reservoir with five hundred barrels ready to receive the pure, cold water. Three cast-iron hydraulic rams were kept busy by the constant descent of spring water into the reservoir. On the first floor of the water works

WHS OFFICERS

President	Charles Horan
Vice President	Paul Lader
Secretary	Vicki McCall
Treasurer	Carol Wiltsee
Trustee	Scott Barnes
Trustee	Louis McCall

Meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month
(except June, July and August)
at the Train Station Community Center

were a bath and dressing room with marble tables. Excess water from the reservoir was carried to a fountain in the yard surrounded by weeping willow trees. Below the water works was a swimming pool with a stream of water constantly flowing through it. The bathing department was a two-story building containing large packing rooms, plunge baths, half baths, sitz baths and foot baths. Some patients received treatments of being plunged into hot water and then cold water.

In 1851, the Institute was advertising in several newspapers in South Jersey, Philadelphia and New York City. In *Cummings Evening Bulletin* of Philadelphia, this three-line advertisement appeared, "The Physician of Parkeville Water Cure may be consulted at No. 13 Filbert Street, tomorrow afternoon, at 3 o'clock." Free transportation was offered from Philadelphia for patients.

Despite all of the water cure claims and advertisements, the Parkville Hydropathic Institute was closed by mid-1852. In the July 1852 issue of the *Water Cure Journal*, it was advertised for sale "with or without the furniture, erected expressly for a water-cure establishment." The property was later used as a private home and farm by the Clement family. Many years later, Rebecca Clement recalled living in the house in the early 1920s when there was a narrow water source flowing through the basement. On November 5, 1967, the property, then used for storage, was destroyed by fire.

This article was compiled from the notes of Howard R. Kemble and newspaper clippings in the Hydropathic Institute vertical file in the library of the Gloucester County Historical Society. It was originally published in June 2005 issue of the Society's *Bulletin*.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Charles Horan

This Friday Feb. 12th at 7:30, at the Jack C. Sheppard, Sr. Community Center, we continue with our "home grown" presentations featuring a program on the Wenonah Cemetery.

As you may recall, we had a successful walking tour back in October. Bill Caraker, along with Bob Bevilacqua and others, have been working diligently to manage and reinvigorate this somewhat neglected cemetery with the goal of restoring its former splendor. Bill's presentation will cover the past, present and future plans for Wenonah Cemetery. Topics such as the original founders and burial techniques of the past will be discussed.

Please come out for some local history, community and light refreshments this coming Friday evening. Hope to see you at the train station.

Charles Horan, Pres. WHS

Visit the Wenonah Historical Society on the Internet

If you would like to keep in touch with the Wenonah Historical Society more frequently, you can find us on the Internet. We have both a Facebook group site and a website. The Facebook site can be found by searching for "Wenonah Historical Society" on Facebook or going directly to www.facebook.com/groups/708673412545429/. We now have 430 group members! You'll be able to view items from the WHS Museum and items posted by group members, and participate in some interesting on-line conversations about Wenonah's history.

Our very informative website can be found at www.wenonahhistoricalsociety.org. Here you will be able to view photo galleries, maps (including an interactive one), and our newsletters. The website is a work in progress that changes frequently. The site has been visited more than 6,000 times, with visitors from 49 of the 50 states.

WENONAH
A Century Ago

Walter Wagner has sold out his restaurant business in Philadelphia and has returned to his home here with his family.

The mid-winter dance and drill held at the WMA was a large affair and was well attended, a large number being from out of town. The gym was beautifully decorated with flags and bunting and the Academy Orchestra rendered excellent music. The drill was much enjoyed as it was especially good after which was held the dance.

Mr. and Mrs. Austin Little have moved into their handsome new home on Glassboro Road at the entrance of Mantua Ave.

Mr. Albert Green of Mantua Avenue will move to the house formerly occupied by Mr. McClure on West Jersey Avenue.

Mr. G.E. Platt has moved from here to Haddonfield where he has built a new home for his family.

About noon on Saturday a fire broke out in the home of Mr. Edward Knight on North Clinton Avenue caused by a defective flue. The alarm was soon given and the Wenonah volunteers soon responded but by the time they arrived the roof was a mass of flames. Men, women and children also hastened to the call of fire and succeeded in getting most all of the furniture out of the home. The volunteers worked bravely but on account of the high wind the fire seemed to spread rapidly, so Mantua and Woodbury companies were sent for, Woodbury bringing their steamer. The sparks threatened several houses around but by careful watching no harm was done. On account of the cold weather the water froze on the men's clothes but the ladies made huge pots of coffee and served it to the firemen. After three hours of hard work the fire was extinguished but Mr. Knight will rebuild it com-

pletely over again. The loss will reach about \$3000 covered by insurance.

Our Borough Clerk, Geo. C. Grosscup, through the Civil Service Commission, has been appointed a member of the State Prison Labor Commission.

Miss Irvin of Ohio spoke to the school children on Monday on temperance. She is going to every school in Gloucester County.

The coasting is fine around here, especially on Comey's hill, where they have rolled it and it is in fine condition. There are coasting parties there every evening.

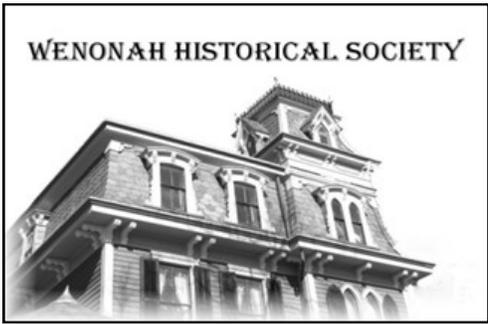
Edwin H. Ballinger and wife have moved into their new bungalow on So. West Jersey Avenue which has just been completed. Their bungalow is certainly a credit to the Borough.

Mr. J.E. Charles, our new postmaster, took charge Tuesday and we wish him success in his new undertaking.

The Wenonah Military Academy five defeated the Villanova Preparatory school five by the score of 34 to 18 Saturday night. Though the score indicated a one-sided game it was by far the most exciting game of the season. Huddock, the Academy's elusive forward, led with seven field goals in the scoring. Wells and Wadlinger put up a cracker-jack game.

The Current Events Club met last week at the library. There were about twenty members present. Mrs. William Carey of Philadelphia was the leader and had for her topic, "The Present War." Rev. H.R. Gage spoke on preparedness.

Don't forget the fried oyster and chicken salad supper to be held in the M.E. Church parlors on February 7th.



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PO Box 32
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WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2015

Membership Benefits

- MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
- MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH INTERESTING PROGRAMS
- ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AND MEMORABILIA
- INFORMATION BY KNOWLEDGEABLE WENONAHIANS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

RECEIVE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL: YES OR NO

AMOUNT PAID \$ CHECK _____ CASH _____

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

BRING FORM AND PAYMENT TO MEETING, OR MAIL. THANK YOU

WHS PO BOX 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090