

# ***NORTH CASTLE HISTORY***



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society, 1911 Postcard

## **ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ARMONK, NEW YORK**

The rear addition featuring the stained glass rose window was built during the latter part of 1888 and is reflective of the Gothic style popular at the time.

**THE NORTH CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Volume 43 -- 2016**

## Table of Contents

Letter from Anna Maria Marrone, President of The Society 2016 .....	2
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church by Sheila Smith Drapeau .....	3
Frances M. Huestis Waterbury of Kensico and Armonk.....	15
Gun Fight and Murders in Armonk, 1910.....	19
A Moment in Time: Charles and Cornelia Ferris' Coman Hill House....	28
Byram Hills High School – Celebrating 50 Years .....	29
Remembering Our Friend Charlie Pound .....	31
Trustees of The North Castle Historical Society.....	Inside Back Cover
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Armonk.....	Back Cover

## Photographs, Drawings and Maps

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church .....	Front Cover
Robert William Harris, D.D. ....	3
Vestry Minutes Organizing St. Stephen's Church.....	4
1867 Map of the Square, Frederick W. Beers .....	6
Early Photograph of St. Stephen's showing a Dirt Road .....	7
St. Stephen's Church Building showing Horse Sheds, 1903 .....	8
Today's Rectory, built by Nehemiah Searles about 1850 .....	10
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1959 .....	11
The Reverend Nils Chittenden .....	12
St. Stephen's Cemetery and Church Building, 2005.....	13
Diploma Given to Frances Huestis at Kensico on June 9, 1899.....	15
Kensico Village School.....	16
Diploma Given to Frances Huestis at Kensico on June 19, 1894.....	16
Frances M. Huestis Waterbury and Her Family, about 1913 .....	17
Front View of the Daniel C. Merritt Pig Street Hotel, 1910 .....	19
Pig Street Hotel Driveway, Outbuildings, Barns and House, 1910 .....	21
Front and Side View of Merritt's Hotel and Barn, 1910.....	22
1901 Map showing Pig Street Residents, G.W. and Walter Bromley ....	23
Rear View of Merritt's Hotel, 1910 .....	24
1851 Map showing Pig Street Residents, Sidney and Neff .....	25
Charles H. and Cornelia Ferris, about 1900.....	28
Byram Hills High School Dedication Program, 1966 .....	29
Charles Edward Pound.....	31





Smith's Tavern  
Society Headquarters  
Listed in The New York State  
and National Register of Historic Places

# The North Castle Historical Society

440 BEDFORD ROAD ARMONK, NEW YORK 10504

Dear Friends and Members,

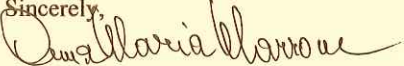
The past year was one of great satisfaction for the Board. Your continuing support is gratifying for it is only with your help that The North Castle Historical Society will remain active and dynamic in our community.

Special appreciation to Houlihan Lawrence Real Estate and manager Barry Graziano in Armonk for sponsoring and to Joe Mazzotta and the folks at Amore Restaurant in Armonk for hosting our annual fund raising event, *Partner in Preservation*. We were very happy to receive so many donations for our Silent Auction. Thanks to all of you who came, bid and supported The Society.

Our Colonial Crafts Days for 4<sup>th</sup> graders continued to bring history to life. Judy Early and Jen Kossoy, after many years, turned over leadership to Linda Cantatore and Joan Ellis. Thank you to Leo Vircillo for professionally keeping our financial records and to Jack Paschke for expertly recording Board meeting minutes. Special thanks to our wonderful docents, led by Ree Schultz and Linda Ranieri, who volunteer to guide visitors through our educational complex. Membership is growing thanks to the special work of Vince Fiore. Special appreciation goes to Stu Brown who volunteers hours overseeing the maintenance and repair necessary for the ancient buildings on our educational complex. And, to the many not named, thank you for volunteering – thank you for caring. It is a pleasure to serve as president, and together with Sharon Tomback and all of the trustees, it is an honor to also serve as Co-Town Historian of the Town of North Castle.

This is our 43<sup>rd</sup> edition of *North Castle History*. Congratulations to the many contributors for their great work during the past 43 years. Our hope is that the articles bring life to some of the names and places in Town you come across in your daily routine and encourage you to share your stories.

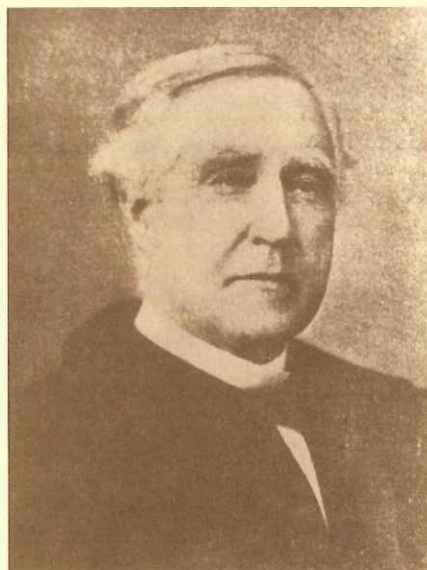
On behalf of your Society's Board of Trustees I offer our sincere thanks for your continued support this past year, both through your contributions and your participation in our programs.

Sincerely,  
  
Anna Maria Marrone, President

## **ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH A VENERABLE SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY AND ITS ROOTS**

**by Sheila Smith Drapeau**

Anchoring the east end of Bedford Road Historic District, once part of the old "Mile Square," St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is both a treasured North Castle landmark<sup>1</sup> and a marker of something even more lasting. It serves as a thriving, spiritual community that has reached out beyond its parish in faith and generosity for 175 years. Founded in 1842, it was built through the vision and determination of a 24-year-old rector, The Reverend Robert William Harris, a recent graduate of General Theological Seminary established in 1817 in Manhattan. The Reverend Harris received the call to shepherd the flock at Grace Church in White Plains.



*Collections of The Historical Society*

### **ROBERT WILLIAM HARRIS, D.D.**

His youthful energy served him well – he was also a minister to St. Matthew's Church in Bedford, which at the time was the sole Episcopal Church in Westchester's northern tier. As the area's population grew along

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<sup>1</sup> Built in 1842, St. Stephen's is the oldest structure in the Bedford Road Historic District as well as in North Castle Landmarks Preservation District No. 1.

with its spiritual needs, the popular priest often led services for his Mile Square congregants at a log cabin built on the corner of Old Route 22 and Main Street.<sup>2</sup> In ministering to his Mile Square congregants, The Reverend Harris saw the need for a larger, dedicated structure. He then set about encouraging others to help raise the needed funds to build a proper parish church. Mile Square was not his only endeavor of this ilk. The enterprising theologian also helped establish parish churches in Mount Kisco and Pleasantville, all while officiating at the aforementioned parishes in Bedford and White Plains.

*At a meeting of male persons of full age belonging to the Congregation assembling for Divine Worship in the Log Cabin Mile Square Town of North Castle County of West Chester N. Y. held at said place on the Tenth day of October eighteen hundred and forty two, pursuant to notice duly given and for the purpose of organizing a Protestant Episcopal Church in said Town,*

*The Rev<sup>d</sup>. Robert. Wm Harris, was called to preside as Chairman, and Isaiah Townsend was appointed, Secretary—*

*Courtesy of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Rector Nils Chittenden*

## **VESTRY MINUTES ORGANIZING ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH OCTOBER 10, 1842**

***At a meeting of male persons of full age belonging to the Congregation assembling for Divine Worship in the Log Cabin Mile Square Town of North Castle County of West Chester N. Y. held at said place on the Tenth***

<sup>2</sup> The log cabin had been used as Whig campaign headquarters in the "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" 1840 presidential race between William Henry Harrison and Martin Van Buren. It stood on the present site of the Westchester Chinese Christian Church (previously Armonk United Methodist Church).



*day of October eighteen hundred and forty two, pursuant to the notice duly given and for the purpose of organizing a Protestant Episcopal Church in said Town. The Rev. Robert Wm. Harris was called to preside as Chairman, and Isaiah Townsend was appointed Secretary.*

As St. Stephen's was built a few years before the hamlet of "Armonck" evolved and received its Indian name in about 1850 -- loosely translated as "fishing place between the hills"<sup>3</sup> -- one could argue that the church is actually older than Armonk. However, that may be purely semantics. According to Lyman T. Seely, author of "A History," a substantial pamphlet chronicling the years 1842-1945, "The name Mile Square is thought to have started with the granting to an unknown individual, the right to select, within the bounds of the West Patent, 'a square mile of land wherever he might choose.' Scharf<sup>4</sup>, in his history of Westchester County, thought highly of that individual's good judgment, for he says: Nowhere in the West Patent is there a square block of six hundred and forty acres that will surpass in fertility and beauty the lovely valley of Armonk."

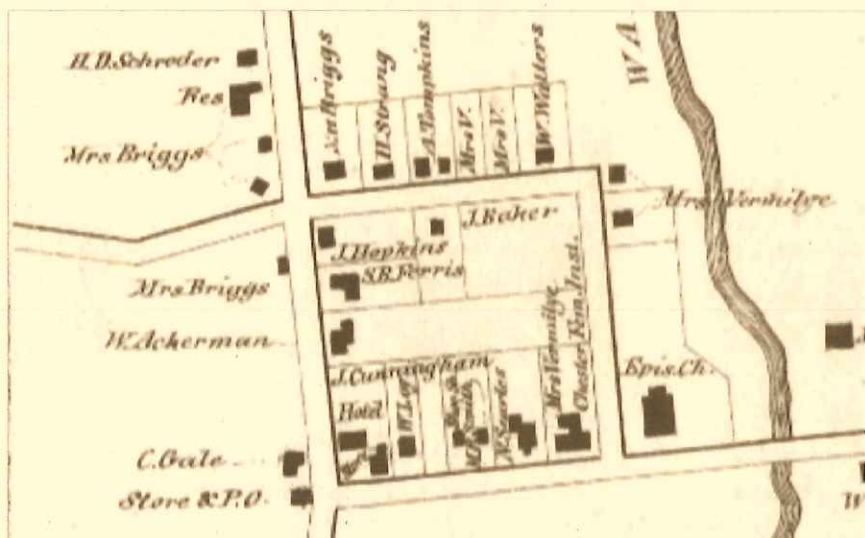
It was in this desirable spot in 1842 that construction of St. Stephen's began upon its cornerstone for the recorded amount of \$2,000, and a donated half acre generously given by a church vestryman, Elisha Sutton. Bishop B.T. Onderdonk consecrated the church on September 13, 1843. The Reverend Harris continued his post as Rector until 1853, succeeded by his assistant, The Reverend Isaac Dyckman Vermilye. The founding pastor would also leave his ministries at Grace Church two years later to become pastor of St. George's Church in Astoria, New York.

St. Stephen's was not without its challenges. Despite land acquisitions that allowed for the building of a parsonage in 1850, and the later addition of a cemetery, funds were not always readily forthcoming.

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to *North Castle History*, Volume 9, 1982 for further information.

<sup>4</sup> *History of Westchester County, New York*, edited by J. Thomas Scharf, 1886, Philadelphia, L. E. Preston & Company.



*Collections of The Historical Society*

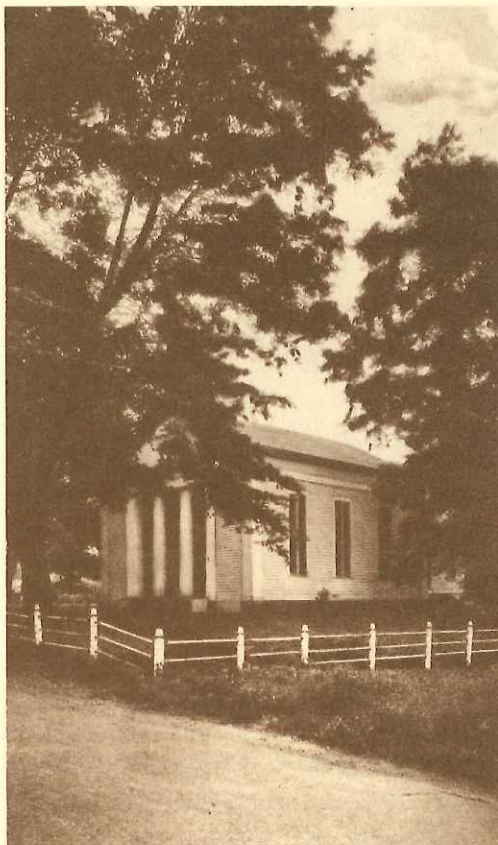
## 1867 FREDERICK W. BEERS MAP OF THE SQUARE

On April 1, 1850 the church bought about 13 acres of land from the Estate of Elisha Sutton for \$2,731. Within a year 11 of those acres were sold. A subdivision of land lying between today's Main Street, Bedford Road and Maple Avenue began the growth of today's Armonk, also called Mile Square. The connection between St. Stephen's and the naming of the village is highlighted in the September 20, 1918 issue of *The Sun*, which noted that the name Armonk became current in 1850 through the activity of the men who founded St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Church.<sup>5</sup>

A list of rectors following The Reverend Vermilye supervised such changes as structural alterations in 1888 (opening the front wall of the church to allow for more space where the altar and choir sections were situated); stained glass windows; a fence surrounding the property; and the removal of pew doors. Under the leadership of The Reverend and Mrs. Vermilye

<sup>5</sup> Through a joint project between the North Castle Library, Friends of the North Castle Library, and The North Castle Historical Society, the existing old newspapers for 1913 through 1969 have been digitized and may be accessed online via the Library's website, [www.northcastlelibrary.org](http://www.northcastlelibrary.org).

the great Chester Female Institute at Armonck flourished. It opened in May of 1851 on premises adjoining the Church. The students were part of The Reverend and Mrs. Vermilye's family.<sup>6</sup>



*Collections of The Historical Society*

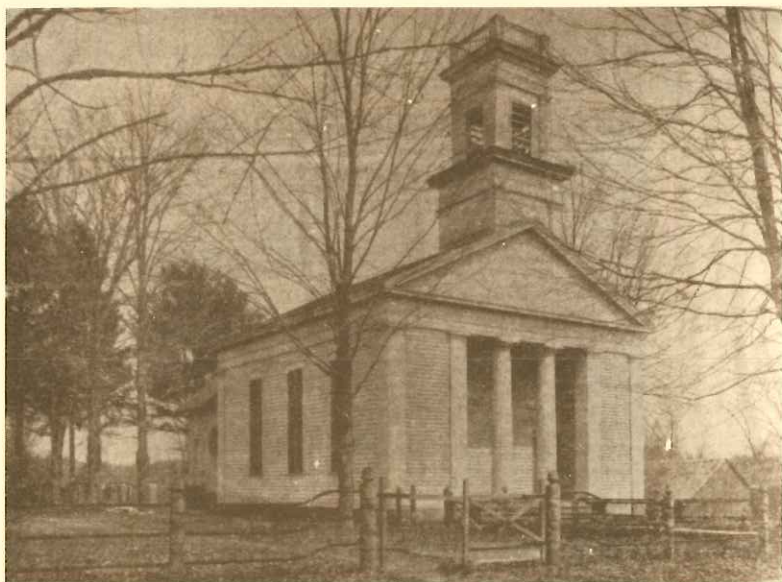
**EARLY PHOTOGRAPH OF ST. STEPHEN'S**  
**Bedford Road was a dirt road at the time this photograph was taken.**

Following its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1892, the church was struggling to remain open. In fact, according to *North Castle History*, volume 19, Marjorie A. Moore noted that, in 1895, the "church closed its doors and kept them closed for four and a half years, remaining under the supervision of Archdeacon VanKleek. Records do not tell us whether church organizations continued to function during this period when no services were held."

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<sup>6</sup> Refer to *North Castle History*, Volume 33, 2006, pages 3-7 for further information.





*Collections of The Historical Society*

**ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH BUILDING, 1903**  
**The horse sheds appear on the east side of the building.**

**The April 26, 1903, *New York Tribune* headline read “WATERSHED OF WAMPUS RIVER NEAR ARMONK TO BE PROPERLY PROTECTED FROM NUISANCES”. The New York City Department of Water Supply had scheduled St. Stephen's church building and the cemetery for removal. After several homes and outbuildings, including the St. Stephen's parsonage that stood across Bedford Road opposite the church, were torn down, the Water Supply then abandoned its destructive plans for the Wampus River watershed.**

The Reverend Henry Nicoll Wayne, having married into a well-known North Castle family with ties to St. Stephen's, showed interest in resurrecting the church in 1899.<sup>7</sup> He became the first resident rector (it is thought without a salary) since 1864, with a tenure lasting until 1912. Although The Reverend Wayne was able to restore St. Stephen's to its position as a viable place of worship, church records recall those years as a financial struggle.

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<sup>7</sup> Israel Townsend's granddaughter Edith Townsend married The Reverend Henry N. Wayne. His efforts in the early 1900s led to the reopening and rebuilding of St. Stephen's, closed from 1895 to 1900.

An interesting anecdote is that those same records note a \$10 donation given by the actor Lionel Barrymore in 1917, roughly the equivalent of \$200 today.<sup>8</sup> Barrymore stayed in an Armonk home<sup>9</sup> and later directed a 1917 silent film called "Life's Whirlpool" in which St. Stephen's is presumed to have been featured as a setting. Unfortunately, copies of the film are no longer in existence. Another connection was "The New York Hat," a 1912 silent film in which Barrymore played a pastor named Reverend Bolton. St. Stephen's rector from 1867-1880 was Cornelius Winter Bolton, a pastor who brought much progress to the parish.

Through World War I, various rectors and Diocesan supervision, the Great Depression, waxing and waning parishioner attendance, St. Stephen's managed to keep the faith. Canon Harold Adye Prichard oversaw the church from 1918 to 1940, a revered and avid advocate for St. Stephen's.

In "A History," Lyman T. Seely recounts Canon Prichard's efforts and dedication. "It is somewhat depressing to conjecture on the fate of St. Stephen's if it had been deprived of that great man's inspired leadership, his tireless energies and his determination at a time when our church's fortunes were at low ebb indeed." Canon Prichard believed missionary work to be an essential function of the church. His experience kept St. Stephen's on an integral path that embraced community giving and awareness of generosity to others.

Canon Prichard was a hard act to follow, but The Reverend Harold B. Thelin, who arrived with the energy and vision to imbue church members with the heartfelt desire to make it a self-supporting parish, was up to the task. By its 1942 centennial, St. Stephen's was financially solvent, in the midst of a rebirth, and vestry members and parishioners were exercising faith in their church and supporting a year-long celebration. By 1944, the vestry had set up an annual budget of \$4,500. By the end of the year in 1945 there was enough money to purchase a rectory, the first in 40 years, for \$7,700.

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<sup>8</sup> Lionel Barrymore's infant daughter died in 1917.

<sup>9</sup> It is believed that Lionel Barrymore frequented the William Bowron House which once stood at 122-124 Cox Avenue and on land presently part of the Leisure Farm Subdivision.





*Collections of The Historical Society*

**TODAY'S RECTORY, BUILT BY NEHEMIAH SEARLES  
ABOUT 1850**

In 1950, for the first time since 1895, St. Stephen's took its rightful place as a self-supporting church with its own parish house. Growth continued through the 1950s and 1960s, with a Casavant pipe organ installed in 1968 and \$5,900 spent repairing the bell tower that graces the sky and can be seen from most points in downtown Armonk.

The Reverend Kenneth Morris, pastor from 1950 to 1971, created an Anniversary Restoration and Improvement Fund prior to the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church. While occasional financial dips again began to throw long shadows across St. Stephen's stone columned front, the church was able to keep its doors open. About this time the parish joined the other ministries of the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist and Hillside churches to create the 'Armonk Clericus' for educating and informing the North Castle community of the spiritual support, religious services and church-related activities available to all.





*Collections of The Historical Society*

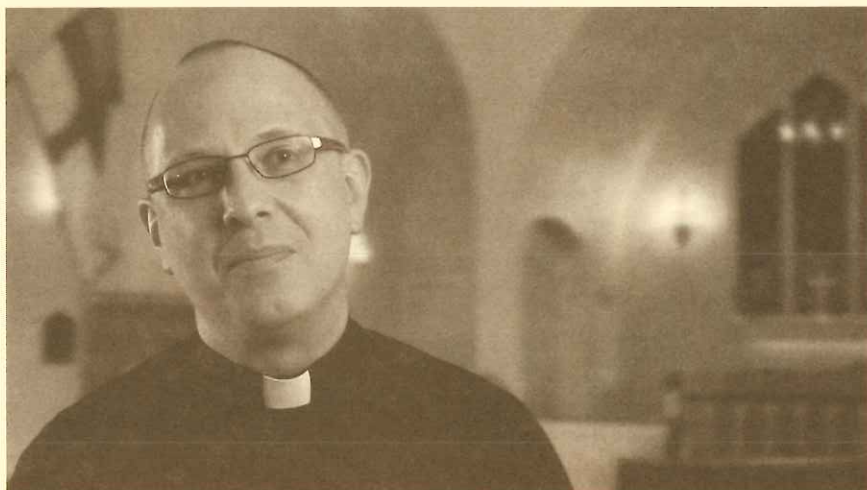
### **ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1959**

**The parish house was added in 1948 and the new wing in 1958.**

The Reverend W. Harrison (Harry) Abernathy's tenure from 1989-2008 connected the church to the community in many ways, overseeing the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, the replacement of the church roof, and a Palm Sunday celebration that parishioners recall with warmth. In commemoration of Jesus' ride into Jerusalem, a child would ride a pony from Wampus Brook Park to the church parking lot where The Reverend Abernathy would bless the palms before distributing them to the faithful.

In 2015, The Reverend Nils Chittenden took up the reins, having been Chaplain of the Episcopal Center at Duke University and Missioner for Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of North Carolina following his arrival from his native England in 2010. Prior to choosing his ordained path, The Reverend Chittenden was Director of Music of St. John's Church, in Durham, England. A deputizing member of Canterbury Cathedral Choir in the early 1990s, his music background includes serving as Director of Music at Westcott House, Cambridge. He is also a founding member of the Durham Cathedral Consort of Voices. His love of sacred music includes composing, choral singing, playing the organ and lecturing on sacred music and its roots. Taking on the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St.

Stephen's in 2017, The Reverend Chittenden has commissioned a choral piece by British composer Paul Mealor, to be premiered in June of the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.



*Courtesy of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Rector Nils Chittenden*

**THE REVEREND NILS P. d'E. CHITTENDEN,  
RECTOR OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

The Reverend Chittenden's love of historical research breathed new life into St. Stephen's rich background. Along with long-time North Castle resident George Pouder, he researched records that allowed him to recognize parishioners in the church cemetery, including 23 Civil War veterans, and family names that reflect the history of the church and hamlet. On Veterans' Day in 2016, new headstones for two Civil War veterans were dedicated and blessed, nearly a century after they were buried at St. Stephen's.<sup>10</sup> In October of 2016 a dramatized tour of the cemetery highlighted the lives of ten souls buried there.<sup>11</sup> Under The Reverend Chittenden's supervision, a new church structural restoration

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<sup>10</sup> A service of Dedication and Blessing of the grave-markers of Corporal Albert H. Ransom and Private William L. Freeland was held in the Cemetery on November 11, 2016. Eulogies for both men were offered by George Pouder, who researched and provided the documentation that enabled him, with valuable assistance from The Reverend Nils Chittenden, to obtain new headstones from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

<sup>11</sup> The lives of William Creemer, members of the Mortell family, Audrey Martin, Bridget Leary, Albert H. Ransom, Mary & Susan Ferris, Richard Boyce, Maria Franklin Freeland and Carol Hellman Dahms were dramatized. Nehemiah Searles, the Van Orden family, William Walters and Wampage the Warrior were discussed.

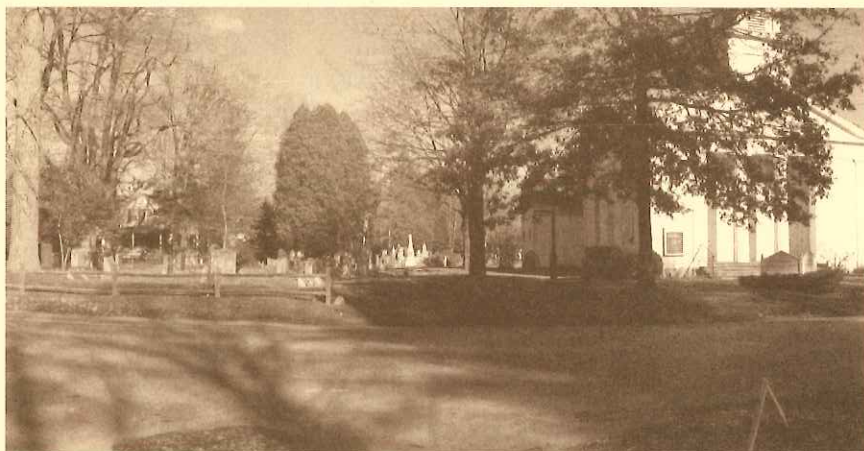


was undertaken in 2016, including the installation of the newly renovated and upgraded Peragallo/Casavant organ.

Through the decades, Armonk grew from a quiet farming hamlet into a bustling, sophisticated area where families are raised and commuters and professionals enjoy the leafy surroundings and proximity to Manhattan. St. Stephen's has grown with it, bringing generations of rectors who brought their deep faith and love of community to the church.

Today St. Stephen's stands as a beacon of faith, fortitude, hope and survival. Through its history, rectors brought their talents, hard work, and embracing care to the community at large. They found a way to retain St. Stephen's integral message of peace and love while keeping it fiscally and spiritually solvent. In a recent video produced by Armonk resident Sam Morell, The Reverend Chittenden summed up what the church and its community has, for 175 years, strived to accomplish.

"Everyone is welcome here at St. Stephen's. As soon as the renovations are done the church will be open every day so people can come in and be quiet and be inspired by the surroundings, where they can light a candle, and find it, I hope, to be an oasis of calm where they can enjoy this sacred space. St. Stephen's is here for everyone, it is everyone's church."



*Collections of The Historical Society*

**ST. STEPHEN'S CEMETERY AND CHURCH BUILDING, 2005  
at the intersection of Bedford Road and Maple Avenue in Armonk**



# RECTORS AND INTERIM MINISTERS OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ARMONK, NEW YORK

The Reverend Robert William Harris	1842 - 1853
The Reverend Isaac Dyckman Vermilye	1853 - 1864
The Reverend Martin Moody (Interim)	1864 - 1865
The Reverend Joseph W. Hyde	1865 - 1867
The Reverend Cornelius Winter Bolton	1867 - 1880
<i>Vacancy of six months</i>	
The Reverend Benjamin T. Hall	1881 - 1882
<i>Vacancy of one year</i>	1882 - 1883
The Reverend Dr. John T. Pearce	1883 - 1893
The Venerable Frederick B. VanKleek (Interim)	1893 - 1895
The Reverend William Holmes	1895
<i>Vacancy of four and a half years;</i> <i>Church closed</i>	1895 - 1900
The Reverend Henry N. Wayne	1900 - 1912
The Reverend Albert Otto Tritsch	1912 - 1914
The Reverend Glenn B. Coykendall	1914 - 1917
The Reverend Harold Owen Boon	1917 - 1918
The Reverend S. Raymond Brinckerhoff	1918 - 1927
Under the care of St. Mark's, Mt. Kisco	
The Reverend Dr. Orrok Colloque (Vicar)	1928 - 1932
The Reverend S. Raymond Brinckerhoff	1932 - 1938
Under the care of St. Mark's, Mt. Kisco	
The Reverend Harold B. Thelin	1938 - 1944
Under the care of St. Mark's, Mt. Kisco	
The Reverend Harold B. Thelin	1945 - 1950
The Reverend Kenneth C. Morris	1950 - 1971
The Reverend E. Walter Chater (Interim)	1971 - 1972
The Reverend Dr. Clarence A. Lambelet	1972 - 1979
The Reverend John Gray MacDonald	1980 - 1987
The Reverend William J. Frankhuizen (Interim)	1988
The Reverend W. Harrison Abernathy	1989 - 2008
The Reverend Richard D. Sloan (Interim)	2008 - 2009
The Reverend Joshua T. Condon	2010 - 2013
The Reverend Robert D. Flanagan (Interim)	
The Reverend Nils P. d'E. Chittenden	2015 -

FRANCES M. HUESTIS WATERBURY  
OF KENSICO AND ARMONK  
by Sharon Tomback



*Collections of The North Castle Historical Society*

**DIPLOMA GIVEN TO FRANCES AT KENSICO ON JUNE 9, 1899**  
**PALMA NON SINE PULVERE<sup>1</sup>**

**"Be it Known, That Frances Huestis is held in high esteem by her Teacher for Constant Attendance and Good Deportment during Term just finished, and is entitled to this Diploma." Mrs. Lina B. Williams was her teacher. Jacob Miller was the School Commissioner."**

Three quotes were printed on the diploma: "EDUCATION AND LIBERTY INSEPARABLE"; "NOTHING DIFFICULT TO HIM WHO WILLS"; and "LABOR CONQUERS ALL THINGS." The shield appearing center top is emblazoned with "COMMON SCHOOLS" and "THE HOPE OF OUR COUNTRY."

Frances Huestis was born August 3, 1883, and would have been 15 years old when she received the diploma above. She attended Kensico School, North Castle School District No. 6, now inundated by the waters of Kensico Dam and Reservoir.

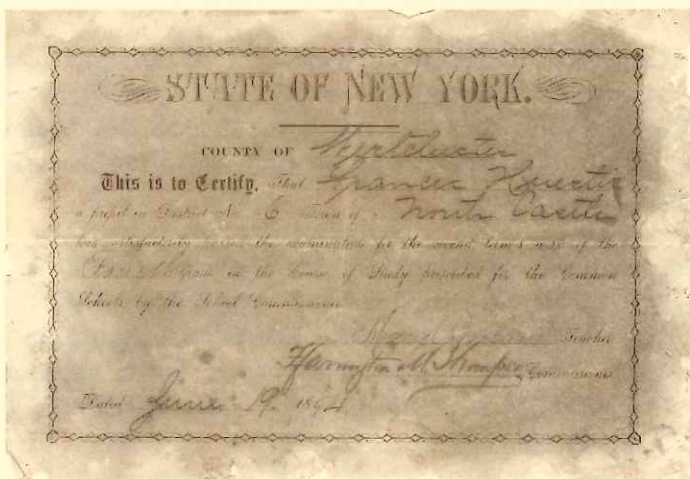
<sup>1</sup> The Latin translation is 'No Reward without Effort.'



*Collections of The North Castle Historical Society*

### KENSICO VILLAGE SCHOOL, EARLY 1900s

This photograph was taken shortly before New York City flooded Kensico. Unidentified members of the Pietschker family are pictured.



*Collections of The North Castle Historical Society*

**DIPLOMA GIVEN TO FRANCES AT KENSICO ON JUNE 19, 1894**  
**Mary Rowland was the Teacher and Harrington M. Thompson was the Commissioner.**



Her parents were Sarah Emma and Edgar A. Huestis. She had two sisters, Maryetta (five years older) and Sarah Elizabeth (two years older) and a brother, Elliot A. (ten years younger). When she grew up Frances married Ernest C. Waterbury. Their son, Stanley, was born in 1907 and their daughter, Eleanor, in 1915.



*Collections of The North Castle Historical Society*

**FRANCES (HUESTIS) WATERBURY AND HER FAMILY,  
ABOUT 1913**

The three Huestis daughters are seated with their husbands standing behind them. [L-R] Sarah Elizabeth (Huestis) Cox; Raymond H. Cox; Sarah Emma Huestis (mother); Elliot A. Huestis (unmarried son); Edgar A. Huestis (father); Frances (Huestis) Waterbury; Ernest C. Waterbury; Maryetta (Huestis) Acker; J. Fred Acker. The two children in front are Doris Huestis Cox (daughter of Sarah Elizabeth and Raymond H. Cox) and Stanley Ernest Waterbury (son of Frances and Ernest C. Waterbury).

This photograph was taken in the front yard of the Waterbury home in Armonk, today's 400 Main Street. The Edgar A. Huestis family was displaced when Kensico was inundated by the waters of Kensico Dam and Reservoir<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Construction of the second, and current, Kensico Dam began in 1911.

## Obituary of Frances Huestis Waterbury

Frances died in 1954 at the age of 71. Her obituary in *The Villager* newspaper for Thursday, July 8 reported that she was the daughter of Edgar A. and Sarah Hammond Huestis. She was survived by a daughter, Mrs. Warren Husted and one grandchild; a brother and two sisters, Elliott Huestis, Mrs. Maryetta Acker and Mrs. Elizabeth Cox; all of Armonk.<sup>3</sup>

### Frances' Husband Saved Steps of Carpenter's Store

In an article titled "Sands' Mills" published in 1952<sup>4</sup>, former North Castle Town Historian Richard N. Lander reported that during January 1905 "Ernest C. Waterbury helped load the two beautiful cut stones – the front steps of Carpenter's store – on his father's stone boat and dragged them a mile south where they still form the horseblock in front of the present Armonk Methodist Church."<sup>5</sup>

Frances' husband can be credited with saving these lovely steps that have served as orators' platforms over the years. As a result of taking land for watershed to protect the water supply, during 1904-1905 New York City systematically destroyed the buildings at Sands' Mills (where Cox Avenue meets High Street in Armonk and the site of the Containment of British Spy Maj. John Andre during the American Revolution).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Sarah Emma's maiden name has also been reported as Smith.

<sup>4</sup> *Westchester County Historical Society Bulletin*, Volume 28, Number 4, October 1952.

<sup>5</sup> The orators' platform formed by the steps remains in front of the old Armonk Methodist Church, today's Westchester Chinese Christian Church.

<sup>6</sup> The *Mount Kisco Recorder* newspaper, March 25, 1904, wrote there was "a wholesale burning up of buildings in North Castle for the purpose of saving the City's water supply from pollution ...The fine old farmhouse belonging to the David Carpenter estate was burned by order of the watershed authorities last week."

# **GUN FIGHT AND MURDERS IN ARMONK, 1910**

by Sharon Tomback

## **“SHERIFF AND HIS MEN TAKE GUN FIGHTERS”**

### **“THE TROUBLE WAS OVER HER.”<sup>1</sup>**

The “her” was Bertha Brower. The gun fighters were at Daniel C. Merritt’s Pig Street Hotel in Armonk.<sup>2</sup> Bertha’s family objected to her working there, as did her former boyfriend Larry Ortanzo with whom she lived before moving to Merritt’s Hotel.



*Courtesy of Westchester County Archives*

### **FRONT VIEW OF THE DANIEL C. MERRITT PIG STREET HOTEL, NOVEMBER 1910**

A group of armed men came to get Bertha. Ex-boyfriend Ortanzo dragged her toward a waiting buggy by the hair of her head. The Merritts resisted.

<sup>1</sup> *The New York Times*, New York, New York, November 20, 1910.

<sup>2</sup> Today’s High Street, Armonk.



Shots were exchanged. Two men died. George Brown, a negro porter for the Merritts, was charged with killing Fred Pasquale, but later, 18-year-old John Merritt gave himself up to North Castle Judge William Haviland. John was indicted for murder in 1911. It was reported that he shot from the second story porch at the command of his father. It could not be proved who fired the shot that killed James McCann, a Merritt farm hand.

"The bodies of James McCann, a farm hand, who was killed inside the house while helping the Merritts to defend it, and of Fred Pasquale, the slain member of the attacking party who fell in a lane about fifty feet distant, were examined by Coroner Squire of Ossining .... He found that a charge of buck shot had entered Pasquale's breast, making a hole as large as an orange, while McCann had been struck in the heart by a revolver bullet."<sup>3</sup>

Deputy Sheriff Nossiter, a posse, and a group of men from the Aqueduct police force found Ortanzo pointing a revolver at Bertha Brower in his cabin, a hut outside of Mount Kisco.

Daniel C. Merritt was sent to Sing Sing for a term from two to three years. His son, John Merritt, was sent to the Elmira Reformatory. George Brown was sent to the penitentiary for eight months. Westchester County Assistant District Attorney Frederick E. Weeks termed the Merritt place one of the worst pest holes in the County of Westchester. As son John Merritt, age 19, could neither read nor write, he was sent to the reformatory.<sup>4</sup>

### **John Merritt – Reformatory Failed**

Unfortunately, John Merritt did not take easily to being reformed. In September of 1914, he and James Sarles were arrested at Mechanic Falls, Pennsylvania and charged with stealing an automobile.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *The Eastern State Journal*, White Plains, New York, July 22, 1911.

<sup>5</sup> *The New York Times*, New York, New York, September 27, 1914.



*Courtesy of Westchester County Archives*

**DRIVEWAY LEADING TO THE MERRITT PROPERTY  
SHOWING OUTBUILDINGS, BARNs AND HOUSE ON THE  
CREST OF A HILL, NOVEMBER 1910**

**Pig Street, with rock walls on both sides and a split rail fence gate,  
is shown along the bottom of the photograph.**

**Daniel C. Merritt Received and Concealed Stolen Property  
belonging to President's Daughter**

Daniel C. Merritt came into the news again in 1914. Westchester County Sheriff William J. Doyle searched the house and found two cedar chests filled with suits, overcoats, a fur hat, riding boots and women's fancy clothing. The trunks had been stolen from the Crow Hill Road, Mount Kisco home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pinkerton. Mrs. Pinkerton was Ellen "Nell" Arthur, daughter of President Chester Arthur.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *The New York Times*, New York, New York, September 28, 1914.



*Courtesy of Westchester County Archives*

### **FRONT AND SIDE VIEW OF THE DANIEL C. MERRITT HOUSE, WITH BARN AND DRIVEWAY, NOVEMBER 1910**

#### **Pig Street Hotel**

According to an article appearing in the April 5, 1903 issue of the *Mount Kisco Recorder* newspaper, Daniel C. Merritt owned and operated the Pig Street Hotel. He was reportedly a large dealer in game chickens and fast horses.

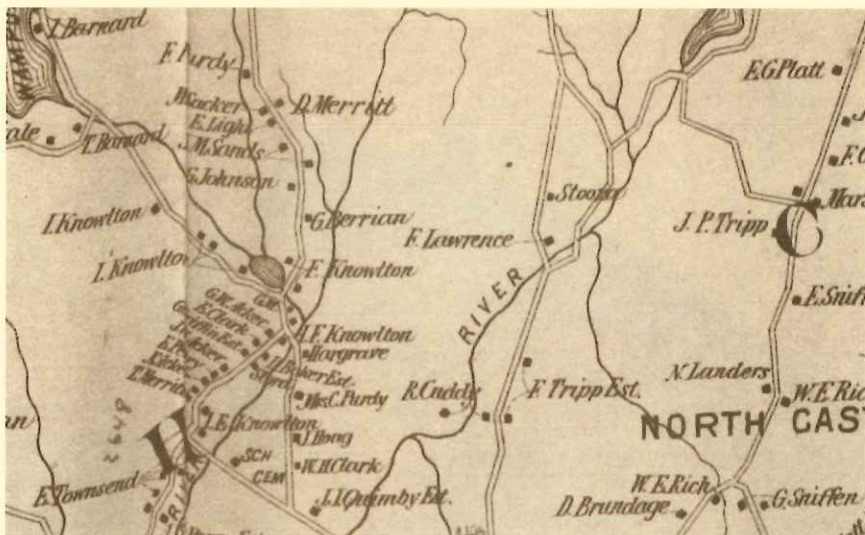
Pig Street had other names, such as Pigg, High Pig and North Star. The following article appeared in a 1936 issue of *The North Castle Sun* newspaper.

*"There is one street in North Castle that has three names, all in more or less general use. High Street is a continuation of Cox Avenue from the Route 128 intersection north. But High Street is rather better known as Pigg Street and sometimes is listed in telephone directories as North*



*Star Street. Pigg Street is the far older designation, according to the best informed. It is a refinement of the name 'Pig' Street, which began during Revolutionary days, due, it is said, to the fact that some families raised pigs, which often broke out of their pens and ran along the highway."*

### Where was Pig Street?



*Collections of The North Castle Historical Society*

### 1901 MAP BY GEORGE W. AND WALTER S. BROMLEY

**Wampus Pond** appears in the upper left corner of the map above. Today's Mount Kisco Road/NY State Route 128 appears along the eastern side of Wampus Pond running southeasterly to connect with Cox Avenue. **Pig Street**, today's High Street, was a northward extension of Cox Avenue. Some of the 1901 residents of Pig Street shown above are F. Purdy, M.S. Acker, D. Merritt, E. Light, M. Sands, G. Johnson, G. Berrian and F. Knowlton (who operated the mills earlier known as Sands Mills).

The 1936 article appearing in *The North Castle Sun* newspaper continued.

*As the street was extended up the hill to the north, the extension was called 'High Pig Street'. This was shortened to High Street, preferred by those on whose ears the plebian title jarred. In recent years a baseball team*

*called itself the North (Castle) Stars. Most of the members lived on Pigg (or High) Street and they attempted to give the street their title.*

*But while all the names enjoy some standing, the older one seems to be the most generally used. Pigg Street is the designation used on some official maps. ”<sup>7</sup>*



*Courtesy of Westchester County Archives*

**REAR VIEW OF THE DANIEL C. MERRITT  
PIG STREET HOTEL, NOVEMBER 1910**

**The water pump is pictured just to the left of the back corner of the house. The shed added to the house was left unpainted. The ornate double porches on the front of the house were not repeated on the rear. An outbuilding appears in the lower right corner of the picture.**

<sup>7</sup> *The North Castle Sun*, Armonk, New York, page 2, Friday, August 28, 1936.



*Collections of The North Castle Historical Society*

## PORTION OF NORTH CASTLE 1851 MAP BY JAMES CHARLES SIDNEY AND JAMES P. NEFF

Wampus Pond appears in the upper left corner of the map above. Today's Mount Kisco Road/NY State Route 128 appears along the eastern side of Wampus Pond running southeasterly to connect with Cox Avenue. Pig Street, today's High Street, was a northward extension of Cox Avenue. Some of the 1851 residents of Pig Street listed on the map are W. H. Smith, J. L. Brundage, Mrs. Dayton, T. Sands, A. Smith, J. Merritt, J. W. Sands, Woollen (sic) Factory, Mills, D & J Carpenter Store.

## DANIEL C. MERRITT FAMILY INFORMATION

Family research indicates that Daniel C. Merritt was descended from Thomas Merrett (sic) of Wiltshire, England who immigrated to Wethersfield, Connecticut by the 1660s. Merritt family members then migrated to Rye, New York; Greenwich, Connecticut; and North Castle, New York.



Daniel C. Merritt, age 51, reported to the census taker in 1900 that he was born in March 1849 in North Castle and that his father had been born in New York and his mother in Connecticut.

### **Reuben and Sarah Ann (June) Merritt**

According to a family genealogy Daniel C. Merritt was a son of Reuben and Sarah Ann (June) Merritt and a grandson of Reuben and Phoebe Merritt. Daniel's father was a laborer, farmer and oyster saloon keeper in North Castle on Pig Street. He purchased the oysters in Port Chester and Rye, New York, and sold them in his saloon on today's High Street in Armonk. The saloon was also known for Reuben's apple cider.<sup>8</sup>

Family records state that Daniel's mother and father, Sarah Ann (June) and Reuben Merritt, were married on July 1, 1837 in St. Matthew's Protestant Episcopal Church in Bedford, New York. They are buried in the Methodist Burying Ground at the corner of School Street and Cox Avenue in Armonk.

In 1850 the United States Census for North Castle names Daniel and his siblings, Hester Ann, William, Caroline, Josephine, Mary Jane, and Theodore in Reuben and Sarah Ann Merritt's household.

However, by the 1860 Census young Daniel was living in the household of his sister Hester Ann and her husband Reuben Johnson and their two daughters Ann A. and Josephine.

### **Daniel C. and Emily Merritt**

Twenty years later, in 1880, Daniel Merritt, age 31, was farming and his wife, Emily, was keeping house. Five children are shown on the 1880 Census: Frederick, a son, age 8; Irena, a daughter, age 7; Mamie, a daughter, age 4; Bertha, a daughter, age 3; and Sarah, a daughter, age 1.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://worldconnect.rootsweb.ancestry.com>, descendants of Henry Collins and Andrew Lester.

### **Emily and Daniel C. Merritt had 13 children by 1888.**

*The Recorder*, a Mount Kisco newspaper, published a congratulatory message to Daniel in its September 7, 1888 issue. "We earnestly request the people here to hand the cake over to Daniel Merritt, of Pig Street. It was twins this time, making 13 in all." It is interesting to note the attitude toward women that prevailed in 1888. Mrs. Emily Merritt was not included in the congratulatory message. She was not acknowledged for her part in producing the twins or for giving birth to 13 children.

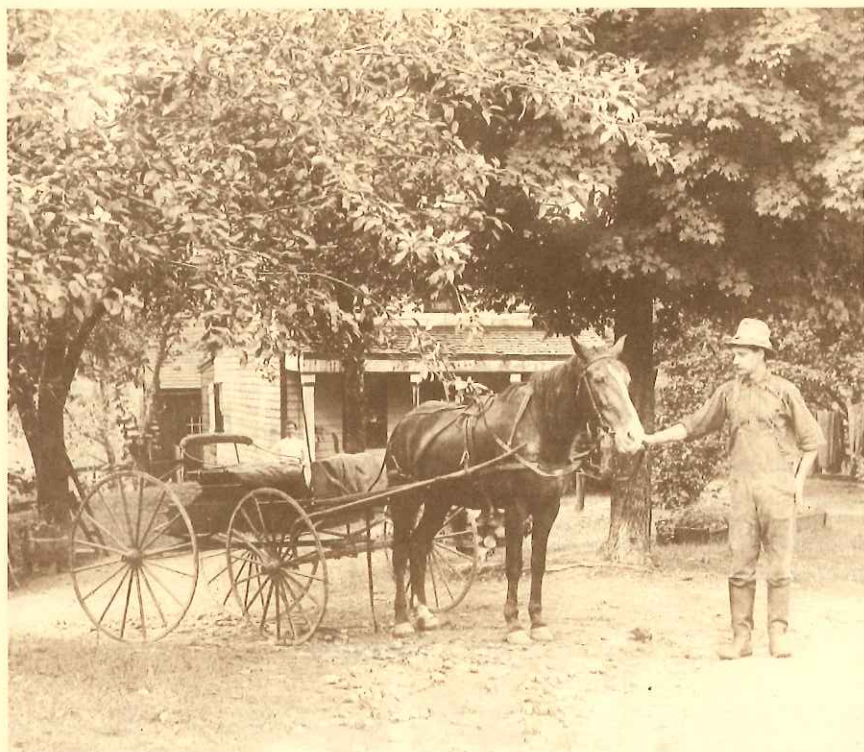
The 1900 United States Census for North Castle lists Daniel, age 51, and his wife Emily, age 45. They reported they had been married about 30 years. Living in the same household in 1900 were: Ernest F. Merritt, a son, age 19; Edna M. Merritt, a daughter, age 12; Florence E. Merritt, a daughter, age 10; John H. Merritt, a son, age 9; Leander Morgussun, a boarder, age 32, born in Sweden; and David See, a boarder, age 51, born in New York.

### **A Tragic Coincidence**

Burial records indicate that Reuben Merritt died May 31, 1889. Sarah Ann Merritt died November 18, 1852 at the age of 34 years. Baby Daniel would have been only three and a half years old when his mother died.

Tragically, the gun fight and murders at Daniel's Pig Street Hotel occurred 58 years to the day later on the anniversary of his mother's death, Friday, November 18, 1910.

## A MOMENT IN TIME



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

### **CHARLES H. AND CORNELIA E. CARSON FERRIS COMAN HILL HOUSE, EARLY 1900**

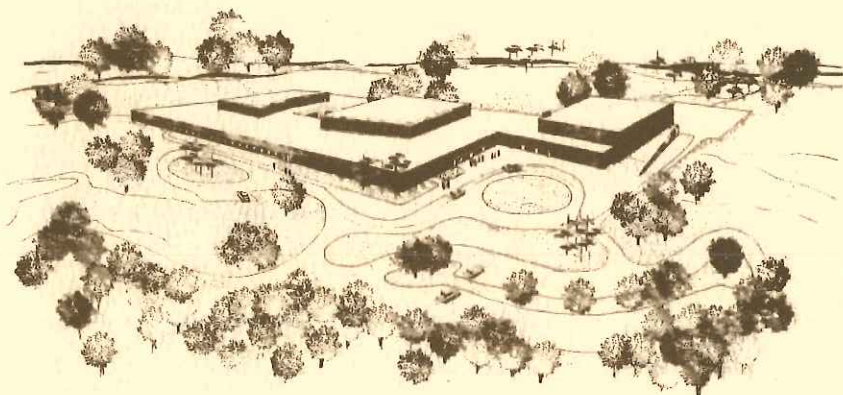
The Ferris' Coman Hill House is no longer in existence. This photograph shows a large maple tree on the right that shaded the front yard and house. A barn stands behind the house. The large apple tree is laden with fruit, and the ladder leans against the tree.

Charles Ferris has hitched his horse and buggy and is ready for a ride. Cornelia Ferris, standing behind the buggy, has washing hanging on the clothesline. They had four sons: Howard C., born 1892, Ralph C., born 1894, Nathan C., born 1910, and Clinton A., born 1911.

Both Cornelia and Charles Ferris rest in The Middle Patent Rural Cemetery. He died in 1935 and she in 1938.



## BYRAM HILLS HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



### RENDERING PRINTED ON THE DEDICATION PROGRAM

Prior to 1966, there was no high school building in North Castle. Armonk and Banksville students went to high school out of town.

Plans prepared by architect Warren Ashley for the Byram Hills High School were accepted by the school board in early 1964. Two banks of classrooms were to be built around a library and open court. The one story building was designed for easy expansion.<sup>1</sup>

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held the following year. Snow was falling heavily. "One of Mr. Lawrence Labriola's enormous blue bulldozers" was on hand, but the requisite photographs were taken using the ceremonial shovel, and attendees retreated inside.<sup>2</sup>

Byram Hills High School officially opened on September 7, 1966. The Dedication Program was held 20 days later to accommodate Gov. Nelson Rockefeller's schedule. At the appointed time he arrived dramatically by helicopter which set down on the football field. Gov. Rockefeller delivered an enthusiastic and inspiring speech. His closing remarks were memorable. "The world is waiting for you. It's the most exciting world anyone ever graduated into."

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<sup>1</sup> *North Castle News*, March 4, 1964.

<sup>2</sup> *North Castle News*, March 24, 1965.

Other speakers were: Dr. Robert A. Charpie, President of the Board of Education; John A. Lombardi, Supervisor of the Town of North Castle; Everett Penny, a member of the New York State Board of Regents; and Frank Work, President of the Student Council. The Rev. John J. Wallace of St. Patrick's Church in Armonk led the invocation, and Rabbi Murray Saltzman of Temple Beth El in Chappaqua led the benediction.

Members of the Board of Education in addition to Dr. Charpie were: J. Howard Kalk, Maggi Porterfield, John Heimerdinger, Charles Kneen, Sidney Miller and G. Clark Thompson.

The architect for the building was the award winning Warren H. Ashley. The general contractor was Double-M Construction Corporation. Additional contractors included Frank and Lindy Plumbing and Heating Contractors, Inc.; Miljoy Heating Inc.; Raffa Electrical Company, Inc.; and Lawrence Labriola Construction Corporation. Three companies provided consulting engineers for the project: Abrams and Moses; Eberlin & Eberlin; and Alexanders and Von Bradsky. Site planners and landscape architects services were provided by Robert Zion and Harold Breen<sup>3</sup>.

District voters had originally rejected a \$2,957,797 budget and later adopted one for \$2,927,997. At a cost of \$3,704,000 the budget was exceeded by \$776,000. Understandably, not everyone was pleased.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Robert L. Zion redesigned the landscape surrounding the Statue of Liberty for its 1986 centennial.

<sup>4</sup> *New York Times*, September 5, 1966.

## REMEMBERING OUR FRIEND CHARLIE POUND

by Sharon Tomback for the Board of Trustees



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

### CHARLES EDWARD POUND

**Charlie lived life fully ... family man, three careers, soldier,  
community volunteer, world traveler, musician, friend ...**

On November 20, 2016, our community lost a valued friend and devoted citizen. He was 97 years old. Charlie was born in Yonkers, New York, the son of Anna and Sidney Pound.

In 1939, during his junior year at Syracuse University, he was elected president of the Syracuse chapter of Alpha Phi Omega national scouting fraternity. He remained an ardent supporter of the Scouts the remainder of his life. While attending Syracuse he was initiated into the Robin Hood forestry junior honorary society<sup>1</sup>, and went on to work as a forester.

From 1962 until 1973 he worked as Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Conservation for Westchester County. After leaving County government, and for his third career, he founded a dredging company, Aqua Dredge, Inc., in 1975 and was serving as its president at the time of his death.

In 1961, when the Byram Hills School District was first incorporated, Charlie was the president of the Byram Hills Board of Education. In addition to serving on The North Castle Historical Society board of trustees, he was also a trusted member and advisor of Friends of Miller House/Washington's Headquarters<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Herald Statesman* newspaper, December 13, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> The Friends of Miller House / Washington's Headquarters, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization dedicated to aiding in the historic preservation and ongoing operation of Miller House / Washington's Headquarters located in North White Plains, Town of North Castle, New York. [www.friendsofmillerhouse.org](http://www.friendsofmillerhouse.org).



Charlie and Gertrude "Trudi" John were married on July 28, 1945 and eight years later moved to Armonk. They had three children, Beverly (MacMillan), Charles Jr. and Robert. Charlie delighted in his eight grandchildren - Stacey, Barbra, Beth, Charles III, Kevin, Jennifer, Stephen and Kaylin, and four great grandchildren Abigail, Lori, Emmalee and Chloe. Trudi died in 2008.

Traveling the world was one of his passions. Before Trudi died, she and Charlie had traveled to and visited 89 countries, living with local and indigenous people. Before his death, Charlie had traveled and spent time in another 26 countries.

Later in his life Charlie met Dr. Marilyn Weigold, professor of history at Pace University. They developed a caring and devoted relationship until separated by his death.

Those attending his memorial service on Monday, December 5, 2016, at Oelker & Cox Funeral Home in Mt. Kisco were treated to a tape of Charlie playing his accordion in competition at the age of 16. He was a highly accomplished musician, and he easily won the competition!

We remember him as a dapper dresser, a gentleman, a disciplined and serious minded man. He was an insightful and critical thinker, well-read and knowledgeable. His children and grandchildren remembered - during his memorial service - that he was always attentive, a good listener and a thoughtful person. They valued the time he spent with them.

Knowing and working with Mr. Charles Pound was our great honor and pleasure. Our friend Charlie is missed.

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The North Castle Historical Society is not responsible for the accuracy of statements and signed articles.

## **ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ARMONK, NEW YORK**

In October 2017 St. Stephen's will celebrate its 175th anniversary. It is not just a commemoration of a building and the people who built and sustained it. It is a commemoration of a 175 year connection with our North Castle community.

Browse the names found in church meeting records, marriages, baptisms, and deaths, and you will recognize several family and place names throughout Armonk and North Castle. Pause to appreciate the historic link and personal stories that have united St. Stephen's Church and its community over time to inspire new links and stories that will unite us into the future.

Renovations to the interior of St. Stephen's were begun in 2016. As part of the community presentation on February 9, 2016, the Reverend Nils Chittenden wrote, "Every generation at St. Stephen's has made its mark on this building.... We are just one generation in a long line who are being good stewards of this building, ensuring it is here for future generations, making it a space that speaks of God's presence to our community in this day and age."

Please forward any corrections or additions to the information presented herein and/or your constructive suggestions for improving this publication to the editorial board at The North Castle Historical Society, Historic Smith's Tavern, 440 Bedford Road, Armonk, New York 10504. If you would be willing to research and/or author an article, please let us know. Different writers and diverse perspectives are vital. We would appreciate hearing from you.

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