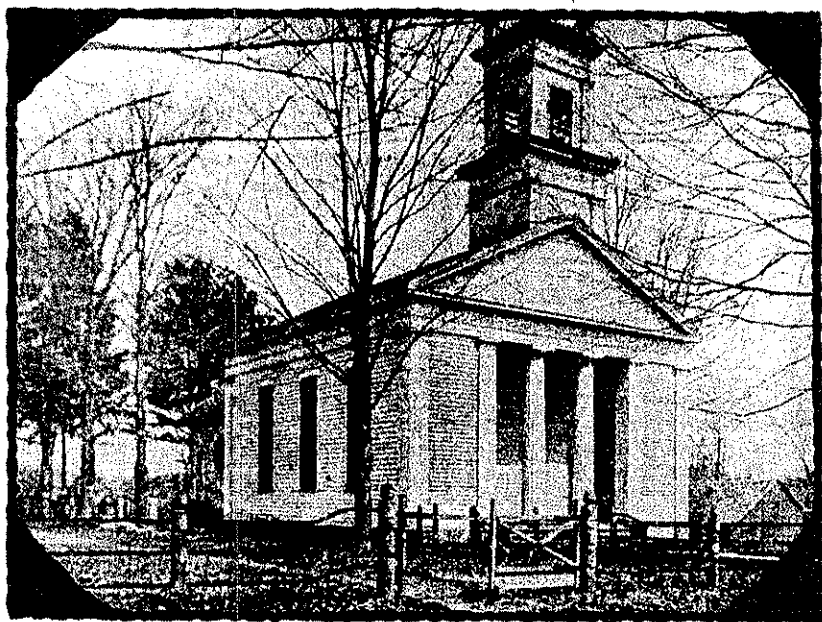


# North

# Castle

# History



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church taken during its recessionary period in the 1890's. Notice the cemetery to the left in the picture and the horsesheds on the east side where the parking lot and Maple Avenue are today. (Maple Avenue was put in here at a later date and horsesheds were later located in back of the church.) Note the first addition (behind the church) built in 1888-89, where the altar and choir section are located. Picture from the collection of The North Castle Historical Society.

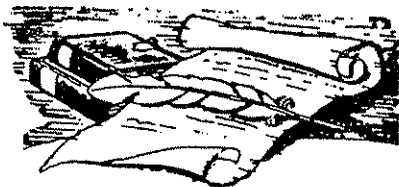
ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
THE FERRIS CEMETERY

HOTLINE TO ARMONK

# *The North Castle Historical Society*

Bedford Road, Armonk, New York 10504

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Dear Members and Friends,*

*The growth of the North Castle Historical Society over the past 20 years has been remarkable. Our membership has grown steadily, as has the number of historic buildings on Society property.*

*We have a unique colonial "village" at 440 Bedford Road. It provides a look at a time in our history that we should all take a moment to enjoy. Just ask area school children who have experienced one of our Colonial Crafts Days and you'll get an idea of just **how** enjoyable it can be!*

*Of course, our success is dependent upon the volunteer efforts of our members. Fortunately, we have been blessed with volunteers and financial support from all segments of the community.*

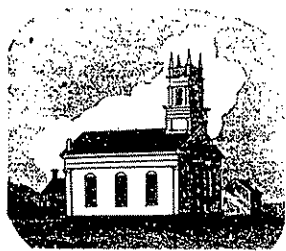
*Our Community Tag Sale in the spring and Antiques Show in the fall both require a great deal of planning and on the job volunteers. I hope many of you will be able to donate some of your time to these important Society fund raisers. I think you'll enjoy the experience of working on these projects with friends and neighbors.*

*In the meantime, enjoy this latest edition of North Castle History!*

*Sincerely,*

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature that reads "Stu Brown". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

J. Stuart Brown  
President



## ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### 1842-1992

By Marjorie A. Moore

In the late 1970s the St. Stephen's vestry and rector Clarence A. Lambelet commissioned Lyman T. Seely to compile a memorial history of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church from its earliest roots in colonial times and its founding in 1842 to its centennial in 1942 and its revitalization during the World War II years.

To commemorate St. Stephen's 150th anniversary we have condensed and excerpted Mr. Seely's presentation and brought it up to date with a brief survey of the past fifty years.

#### — The Anglican Church in Westchester —

The first historical records concerning Armonk and North Castle date from 1640, when white men began to buy land from the Indians in the area. In the years that followed, these purchases continued, so that by 1705 the Indians had sold all the land they held in Westchester County.

The history of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church begins in the decade before 1700, when Provincial Governor Benjamin Fletcher determined to promote the Church of England in the province of New York. North Castle would not be incorporated for another 20-25 years, and residents of the area were primarily Quakers who had come up from Long Island through Harrison/Purchase. In spite of the small number of Anglicans in the area, Fletcher was able in 1693 to persuade the provincial legislature to enact a law establishing Anglican ministries in the City of New York and the counties of Westchester, Queens and Richmond, and financing them by a tax on residents.

Accordingly, the Anglican Church was established at Rye (which included the townships of Rye, Mamaroneck and Bedford). To bolster Governor Fletcher's efforts, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts ("The Venerable Society") was organized in 1701. Two charter members were Lewis Morris and Col. Caleb Heathcote, who had purchased land from the Indians in 1696 and later rode with the missionaries to help establish parishes in what are now Bedford, Mount Kisco, White Plains, Port Chester, Mamaroneck and Harrison.

After 1702, when the first missionary was appointed to Rye, the Anglican Church made great strides in North Castle, largely through the efforts of the Venerable Society and the Rev. James Wetmore. Although in 1722 incumbent missionary Robert Jenney found the people "very loose in their principles of religion," by 1728, in spite of North Castle's Quaker background, the Venerable Society had established a school for North Castle and Bedford. By 1735, the Rev. Wetmore had set up a preaching schedule, using the school and private homes for services every fifth week, and by 1746 he had an assistant to officiate at "full

congregations" at Bedford and North Castle.

Around 1753 there were plans to build a church in what is now Armonk, near the junction of the present High Street and Route 128. Those plans were abandoned, but in 1761 North Castle built its first Anglican Church, St. George's, in what is now Mount Kisco, to serve both North Castle and Bedford. St. George's suffered from its use as a hospital and guardhouse during the Revolutionary War and in 1819 was torn down. By that time New Castle had been separated from North Castle (1791) and the Church of England with the end of the war had become known as the Episcopal (or Protestant Episcopal) Church. Building upon their common ties and history, church members in Bedford and New Castle formed a corporation, later known as the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United Towns of Bedford and New Castle, and undertook to complete the building of St. Matthew's in Bedford in 1809.

### — Birth of St. Stephen's —

By the end of the 18th century, North Castle Episcopalians were still without their own church, traveling for services to the nearest Episcopal Churches: St. Matthew's in Bedford, St. George's in Mount Kisco, and Grace Church in White Plains. Their interest was still strong, however, and with the support and indefatigable efforts of the Rev. William Harris after 1831, they completed St. Stephen's Church in 1842. (See Richard Lander's Address, following this article.) The Rev. Harris's drive and enthusiasm serve as an appropriate prologue to St. Stephen's first one hundred years. Many times perilously close to extinction, the church repeatedly bounced back and survived wars and hardship because of the inspired leadership of most of its clergy, the strong wills, imagination and generosity of the North Castle community, and the continuing encouragement of the Diocese of Westchester.

The building committee of 1842 was to limit itself to a construction cost of \$2,000. In response, vestryman Elisha Sutton contributed a quarter of an acre for a building site. Warden Isaiah Townsend and the Rev. Harris visited neighboring parishes to procure \$645 toward construction costs, and vestryman Ziel Eggleston, the builder, contributed framing timbers and worked without profit. Women of the church Ladies Sewing Society furnished the interior. Generous gifts of a chandelier and a pair of astral lamps for the pulpit came from "two gentlemen from New York." The choir was accompanied on the flute by vestryman Leemon Tripp. (There is no reference to an organ until the vestry minutes of April 1864, which take note of \$248 for a new organ and the sale of the "old organ" for \$25.) Today St. Stephen's is known as one of the country's best examples of the Greek Revival style of architecture and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The church was consecrated on September 13, 1843, by Bishop B. T. Onderdonk. During this period two men stand out as parish leaders. Nehemiah Searles and Samuel B. Ferris were to contribute their time, talent and money for over 35 years. The Rev. Harris remained as rector at St. Stephen's until 1853, when he was succeeded by his assistant, the

Rev. Isaac Dyckman Vermilye. Like the Rev. Harris, Vermilye served as rector of both St. Stephen's and St. Mark's, Mount Kisco, a relationship that St. Stephen's was to fall back upon in 1918. The Pastoral Aid Society contributed \$200 to help defray costs. But St. Stephen's was looking forward to a full time rector. Toward the end of the 1850s the church acquired a house and lot where it could build a parsonage/seminary. The wardens and vestry were to own the lots, but the rector was to be permitted to buy stock at the original valuation, in return for which privilege he was to establish and maintain a Female Institute that would benefit the church. Minutes are sketchy, but it appears that the wardens and vestry made a large purchase of land running from the present Main Street along old Route 22 and including the lots that today, with their houses, constitute Armonk's landmark district. Those lots were later sold for \$100 each. The school for girls became known as the Chester Female Institute. It was operated by the Rev. Vermilye's wife until some time in the 1880s. After the Rev. Vermilye's death in 1864 the parish, as agreed, conveyed the property to his widow. The parish was thus still without a rectory.

During the period from 1867 to 1880, under the rectorship of C. Winter Bolton, brother of the Westchester historian,<sup>1</sup> St. Stephen's expanded its grounds as well as its influence in the community. In 1870, Susan Amanda Carr and her husband, William, gave the church "one acre and a fraction" of land across Bedford Road to serve as the site of a new rectory, which was constructed at a cost of \$4,000. Colored-glass windows were installed in place of the plain ones. A mortgage of \$2,500 on the new rectory paid for removing the doors from the old 1842 pews, and a fence was built to enclose the church grounds and rectory. The Ladies Aid Society was organized and contributed to mortgage and interest payments.

### — First Setback and Revival —

After the Rev. Bolton's departure to Pelhamville in 1880, St. Stephen's suffered a severe setback. The first replacement, the Rev. Benjamin Hall, stayed for only a year, and the next successor, the Rev. John T. Pearce, did not have a happy relationship with the vestry. The first major alteration to the church structure was made in 1888-1889, when the rear of the church was torn out and the back wing added to provide space for what is now the altar and choir section. Much of the spirit of commitment seems to have been missing, however. The diary of a junior warden, William H. Creemer,<sup>2</sup> is testimony to the lack of harmony between the rector and some of the vestrymen even as the construction proceeded. It would appear that the Rev. Pearce and vestryman William Carr, who had earlier contributed the stained-glass windows and the land for the rectory, were acting independently of the vestry as a whole. By 1890, this problem and financial difficulties were taking their toll on the parish. The Rev. Pearce ceased to function as a rector; a period of national economic depression aggravated problems; attendance declined. The 50th anniversary passed unnoticed in 1892. After Mr. Pearce resigned in January 1893, St. Stephen's was without a rector for two

years. In 1895 the church closed its doors and kept them closed for four and a half years, remaining under the supervision of Diocesan Archdeacon Van Kleek. Records do not tell us whether church organizations continued to function during this period when no services were held.

Interest in reopening and rebuilding St. Stephen's was sparked in 1899 by the Rev. Henry Nicoll Wayne. The Rev. Wayne had married a descendant of Israel Townsend II, a founder of the church and member of a prominent North Castle family. Family ties had led the couple to reside at intervals during the 1880s and 1890s in what was by then Armonk (or Armonck). In November and December of 1899 when St. Stephen's was in disrepair, the Waynes opened their home to the parish for Sunday services, vestry meetings and a parish meeting. By April 1900, after the church had been sufficiently repaired, Wayne became St. Stephen's rector, presumably without pay. He continued as rector until 1912, the first resident rector since 1864. The Rev. Wayne was able to rekindle the old St. Stephen's spirit, but church records indicate that the years 1900-1912 were not prosperous ones. In 1904, the rectory across old Route 22 was demolished when New York City confiscated the property as part of its watershed. The church structure was in need of painting, and both the furnace and the organ had deteriorated beyond repair. In the summer of 1912 the Rev. Wayne returned jurisdiction to the Archdeacon, the Rev. Dr. William H. Pott of White Plains, who appointed a series of rectors.

One such appointee, the Rev. Glenn P. Coykendall, was active in both parish and community affairs. He led the local Boy Scout organization and worked for establishing the community library in 1916. At St. Stephen's he seems to have founded the Sunday School classes, the Women's Guild and a music committee. His energy stimulated interest in such projects as lawn fairs, parish picnics and other fund-raising affairs. During his stay there was renewed talk of a parish house, but the vestry was forced to settle for buying two stoves at \$22 each and restoring the east chimney.

### — Second Setback —

By the time the Rev. Coykendall moved on to Stamford in 1917, war worries again shook the world, the country, North Castle and St. Stephen's. Two churches in Middle Patent were closed for "lack of patronage." Attendance at St. Stephen's was dwindling; observance of the 75th anniversary was limited to comments at the regular Sunday service. The church was able to maintain some services and such programs as the Sunday School but was finding it difficult to remain self-supporting. In 1918 the parish elected a seven-man vestry, but it was to be the last formally installed vestry for more than twenty years. In November of that year the vestry resigned and turned the church over as a dependency to St. Mark's, Mount Kisco, with the agreement that St. Stephen's would guarantee to meet financial obligation of about \$2,000 per year. Some members of that vestry remained active and in 1939 were to play a part in the reorganization of the parish. For the next 20 years,



Early picture of St. Stephen's Church. Picture courtesy of St. Stephen's Church.

however, the only available records of St. Stephen's have come from newspaper reports, the files at St. Mark's and the New York Diocese, and personal reminiscences.

— New Beginnings —

That St. Stephen's survived this time of troubles is a tribute to the Rev.

(later Canon) H. Adye Prichard, rector of St. Mark's. In his early report to the diocese, Prichard expressed doubt that Armonk, then a village of about 450 people, would ever "be anything more than a self-satisfied and exceptionally stagnant community." His generosity and understanding enabled the church and the community to change his mind and to prove themselves worthy of assistance. This he continued to provide for the next 25 years.

Canon Prichard's belief in the vital importance of missionary work had led him to "adopt" other churches in the area. Both St. Luke's Katonah, and St. Mary's in Middle Patent had had the benefit of his guidance and assistance. When St. Stephen's became a mission of St. Mark's, Canon Prichard took personal charge of the parish. After late 1919 he was authorized to appoint an assistant, the Rev. S. R. Brinckerhoff, whom he made minister-in-charge of St. Stephen's and St. Luke's. (It was not an easy task to service two mission churches in those days. Father Brinckerhoff often had to travel from one place to another by horse-drawn sleigh.) Membership at St. Stephen's in 1919 was fifty families, an increase over the twenty-two families the year before. The only active parish organizations were the Sunday School, with 40 children enrolled, and the Boys Club.

Father Brinckerhoff vigorously carried out Canon Prichard's plan to revitalize the church by building upon its children and its parish organizations. One of St. Stephen's most beloved clergymen, he was a man of many talents. He played the piano and organ in three mission churches, coached newly arrived Italians in English and taught Latin in a private school in Mount Kisco. St. Stephen's held a morning service each Sunday. A Young Men's Club was formed and a permanent fund for maintenance of the churchyard was started. In 1923 and 1924 the church was reroofed, painted and redecorated and a "modern furnace" was installed. Even the perennially popular subject of a new parish house was on the lips of some.

Some time between January 1926 and 1927, Canon Prichard was called to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine to act as Dean. Father Brinckerhoff was forced to take up his duties at St. Mark's, and once again St. Stephen's was in the hands of Diocesan officials. For six months to a year no services were held. It appears that without an official vestry to carry on, parish organizations became inactive. For the next four or five years there is another news blackout until 1932, when Bishop Manning asked Canon Prichard to spare Father Brinckerhoff "enough time to take the services at St. Stephen's." In spite of the growing seriousness of an illness he had suffered since childhood, Canon Prichard assigned Father Brinckerhoff to act as minister-in-charge of St. Stephen's for a second time. The flurry of activity resumed and continued until 1938, when ill health forced Father Brinckerhoff to resign as assistant to Canon Prichard. Once again St. Stephen's became dormant, but this time for only a few months until Canon Prichard sent his new assistant, the Rev. Harold B. Thelin, to Armonk.

### — Rebirth, Growth and Maturity —

The Rev. Thelin's arrival in October 1938 seems to have sparked a new



vigor and confidence among members of the parish. Perhaps the weakening of the Great Depression allowed time for other considerations than mere physical survival. Church records are sketchy, but a local newspaper, the North Castle Sun, informs us that members were actively working toward becoming a self-supporting parish. With the Rev. Thelin's enthusiastic support, the Ladies Guild led a successful drive to save pennies toward the construction of a long-awaited parish house. The three-man remnant of the 1918 vestry, the last formal group, resigned to make way for the election of a new five-man vestry, which then proceeded to act as a building committee for the parish house. By 1940, an every-member canvass produced, after expenses, a balance of \$71.24. Efforts by the St. Stephen's Guild continued. Although St. Stephen's was back in the hand of the diocese during Canon Prichard's increasingly serious illness, the Rev. Thelin continued as rector-in-charge.

By the centennial year 1942, St. Stephen's was able to support a year-long celebration. A loan from the American Church Building Fund Commission of \$700 for structural repairs was repaid much sooner than required, thanks to a generous \$400 gift from the diocese and a successful fund-raising campaign. Bishop William T. Manning noted that a "fine spirit...has been awakened" at St. Stephen's.

The essential ingredient to a thriving parish was provided by those who volunteered their personal physical labor to make many of the repairs. R. Eugene Curry and Luke Benz were two such volunteers. Elected to the vestry in 1942, both men continued to provide leadership for over thirty years. In spite of an overwhelming world war, the loss of members departing for military service (R. Eugene Curry among them), and gas rationing, St. Stephen's continued to thrive. The every-member canvass in 1942 raised enough money to pay expenses and debts and leave a balance of \$492.58, over \$400 more than the 1940 canvass. Pauline Murrah Benz created an organ fund, and the organist received an increase in salary from \$6 to \$8 per month. New outside steps were built for the choir and vestry room. A series of New Year's Eve parties with games, prayers, and a 12:01 A.M. breakfast brought the congregation together socially as well as spiritually.

Some new traditions entered the life of the church in the 1940s. The creche that has since figured in the annual Christmas service was built by Mr. Luke Benz from timbers and siding of an old barn purchased earlier by Mr. Curry. The creche figures were found in the loft of the church and were judged at that time to be about 100 years old. Timbers from the same old barn were fashioned into an "old rugged cross" that serves as the centerpiece for the Easter custom of the Flowering of the Cross, a custom that Mr. and Mrs. Curry brought home with them when they returned from Navy service in North Carolina.

By the end of 1944 Mr. Thelin was installed as St. Stephen's full-time rector. The vestry established an annual budget of \$4,500. Proceeds from an Endowment Reserve Fund, set up in October 1912 with \$5,000 realized from the sale of church property as part of New York City's watershed, came back to St. Stephen's. The funds had been entrusted to the Diocese of New York and had been allowed to diminish in value to

about \$2,500. Within a year the vestry managed to reinvest and increase the value of the fund to about \$4,000. Also at this time a parish house fund was set up, and the building committee felt confident enough to invite an architect to review and make suggestions to existing plans.

Clearly the tide was turning. The stormy, up-and-down atmosphere of the past 70 years was beginning to change. St. Stephen's once again became a participating parish in the diocese and an influential voice in the community. It joined with residents in an effort to preserve the rural appearance of the entire block along Armonk's Bedford Road that has since been designated a historic landmark area. Perhaps more meaningful to parishioners, in 1945 the church acquired a rectory, and the cornerstone for the parish house—an elusive goal for at least 35 years—was laid in 1949. Construction was entrusted to William F. Siesel, builder, and Henry Winterling, engineer. By 1950, St. Stephen's was self-supporting and ready for the surge in growth and activity that was about to take place throughout the country.

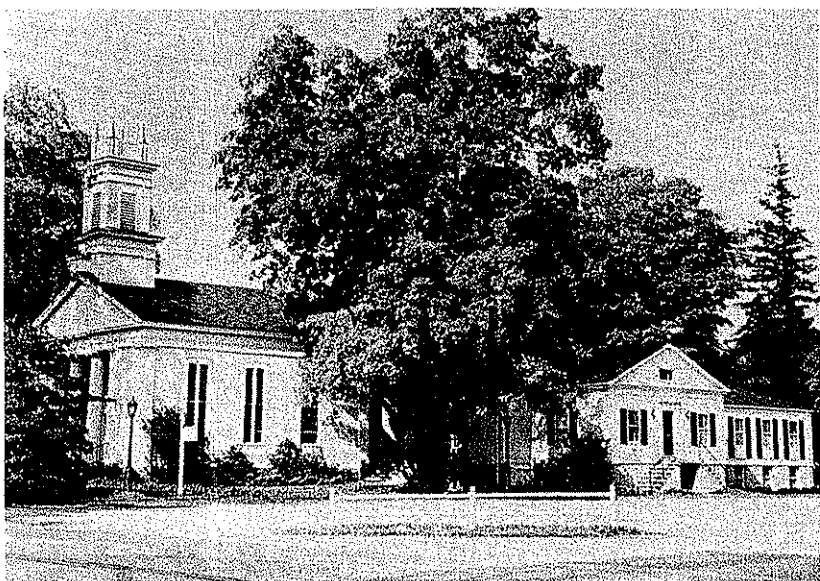
In spite of the sadness over the departure for Nyack by the dedicated and much-loved Rev. Thelin, St. Stephen's took on the task of replacing him and was fortunate in finding as successor the Rev. Kenneth C. Morris, who was installed in 1950 and stayed for more than 20 years.

### — St. Stephen's Today —

As the 1940s witnessed the rebirth of St. Stephen's, the 1950s and early 1960s saw its growth to maturity. Membership and Sunday School enrollment rose significantly, and parish organizations built up an active participation. The church established a solid financial base and made a host of repairs and cosmetic improvements. In 1958 the parish added a Sunday School wing to the parish house, following the design of architect Robert Burbank.

During the 1960s organist Phyllis Pinto supervised the purchase of a Casavant pipe organ, the church tower was restored, and women were permitted to serve on the vestry "if they have the qualifications." The 125th anniversary in 1967 was a year-long affair ending with a rededication service in which Bishop Donegan took part.

After the mid-60s, St. Stephen's, like all American churches, began to feel the effects of a creeping secularism. New approaches and new programs to enlarge the definition of community and broaden the scope of Christian service were imperative if the church was to survive. These programs and approaches have gradually made their way into and enriched the life of the church. In this spirit, the Rev. Morris exchanged pulpits for a few months with Canon H. R. Sproule-Jones, Vicar of St. Mark's in Abergavenny, Wales, and St. Stephen's joined with other local churches in inter-denominational services. St. Stephen's Treasure Mart, opened in 1969, and operated by the Episcopal Church Women, became a parish mainstay. Special music programs, lectures and educational films now play a significant role in church activities. Other community services include support by the parish of food kitchens, contributions to scholarship funds, summer day camps and world relief, and volunteer work for hospitals, the handicapped and the homeless. St. Stephen's also



St. Stephen's Church today. Picture courtesy of St. Stephen's Church.

shares the facilities of its parish house with several "tenant" organizations, workshops and classes. Under the guidance of its rector, the Rev. W. Harrison Abernathy, the church continues in the 150th anniversary year to serve the needs of a broad community and to maintain its "rightful place" in North Castle history.

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. C. Winter Bolton's brother was Westchester historian Robert Bolton who wrote *History of Westchester County*, published in 1848, as well as other works. After Robert's death on October 13, 1877 his brother continued the second book, finishing in 1881 while the rector of St. Stephen's Church.
2. William H. Creemer was North Castle Town Clerk 1876-1880, 1883-1884, 1885-1886. He recopied the old town minute book, 1736 through 1848, by hand, during the years 1885-1888, thus preserving the town's early history. See *Colonial History and Minutes of Town Meetings* [of North Castle], 1736-1791, Vol. 1, Frances Cook Lee, Editor; *Historical Records of North Castle: Minutes of Town Meetings* Vol. 2 1791-1848, Richard N. Lander, Barbara S. Massi, Editors.



## — ROBERT W. HARRIS, D.D. —

### Founder of St. Stephen's Church

Address by Richard N. Lander, Historian of the Town of North Castle, on October 11, 1987, in St. Stephen's Church, Armonk. The occasion was the dedication of a plaque to the Rev. Robert William Harris, D.D., Rector of Grace Church, White Plains, founder of St. Stephen's Parish, 1842; of St. Mark's Church, Mount Kisco, 1850, of St. John's Church, Pleasantville, 1853.

Robert William Harris was "well born." The best New England blood flowed in his veins. His paternal ancestor for whom he was named settled in Roxbury, Massachusetts in 1642. A greatgrandson, Deacon Daniel Harris, married Sarah Pyncheon, and from that marriage came William Harris, 1765-1829, Robert's distinguished father.

His maternal grandfather was the Rev. Jonas Clark, for fifty years pastor of the church at Lexington, Massachusetts. It was at his house that John Hancock and John Adams slept before the famous Battle on the Green and where Paul Revere warned them to escape before the arrival of the British.

In 1791, William Harris married Martha Clark, and from this union came Robert William Harris, born in 1807, the last of six children. William Harris began his career teaching at Marblehead Academy. He was ordained for the Episcopal clergy. He was called as the rector at Marblehead and then to the pulpit of the now famous church, St. Marks-In-The-Bowery in New York City. In 1811 he was elected President of Columbia College and served until his death in 1829.

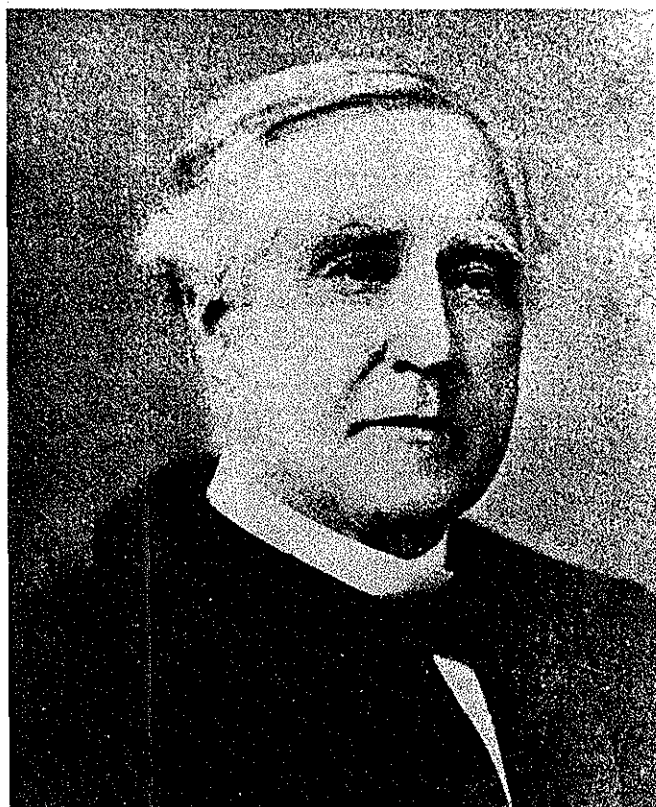
His son, Robert, was born and raised in New York City, graduated from Columbia College and General Theological Seminary in New York, and was ordained at Trinity Church by Bishop John Henry Hobart.

On March 19, 1831 Robert W. Harris was called by the vestry of Grace Church, White Plains, to be the fourth rector of that five-year-old congregation, and thus the event of the greatest consequence in the history of the Episcopal Church in Westchester County took place.

As may be surmised, the church at White Plains was not in the healthiest condition. Founded in 1826, it had replaced three rectors in five years. One can imagine the small group of 40 communicants was not in very affluent circumstances. The call was offered with a salary of \$300 and a rectory, which the twenty-four-year-old Mr. Harris accepted.

Difficulties immediately faced Harris: the promised rectory did not appear, and he was in White Plains with his widowed mother and three sisters, who looked to him for support. Accordingly, he rented a small house for \$100 a year paid for out of his own pocket. Also, another tragedy: The Church could not pay the proposed \$300 salary but only \$250. A lesser man would have given up, but not Harris. In his own words many years later, "I was compelled to think of a boarding school as a means of support," the county seat being a good location.

After much discussion a plot of four acres at the corner of Maple and Mamaroneck Avenues was purchased and a "Parsonage House" built thereon. Much assistance came to the struggling parish from outside White Plains: Trinity Church in New York gave \$750; prominent



Robert W. Harris, D.D., Founder of St. Stephen's Church.

Episcopalians outside the parish were solicited, and some \$1,091 was raised. Thus, with the sacrificial giving of the members, the rectory was completed in May 1834.

That same year a select school for boys was opened in the rectory. As the school grew, a later school building was erected on the property. Grace Church benefited greatly from the thriving school, and as the services of the assistant masters became assistant rectors, their salaries were paid by Mr. Harris. Moreover, the school furnished the rector with a more than adequate income so that he could afford to make generous donations to his own parish and to the mission churches he would later establish in Northern Westchester.

The growth and prosperity of Grace Parish continued, and in April 1841, additional land was purchased in back of the church and an addition of fourteen feet added to it. The addition included a new vestry room, new gallery, the entire interior improved and redecorated with new pulpit furniture, lamps, pulpit hangings, etc. All these things had been accomplished in Harris's first 10 years at White Plains.

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Now that his own parish was well established, Harris turned his

attention to the places around him, and he noted his interest in North Castle, New Castle, Middle Patent, West White Plains and Pleasantville.

Beginning in November 1840, he began preaching once every two weeks in the "North Castle School House" (either District 6 at Daniel White's Corner, now under Kensico Reservoir, or District 5, North of Armonk, on the East side of present Old Mount Kisco Road. History does not tell us which one). The schoolhouse becoming too small, the services were moved to a log cabin (erected by the North Castle Whig Party as the campaign headquarters of Harrison and Tyler, 1840) on the present site of the Armonk United Methodist Church. As a token of their support for Harris, the Grace vestry sent their old stoves to heat the cabin, and there on October 10, 1842 St. Stephen's Church, North Castle, was organized. No doubt Mr. Harris persuaded Elisha Sutton, who lived across the street from the cabin and owned much of downtown Armonk, to part with the plot of land on which the church was built. Accordingly, on November 10, 1842 Sutton conveyed the original church lot measuring 82½ feet x 107 feet to the newly formed vestry.

Harris then went out among his new congregation and those in his own Grace Church, and parishes in Southern Westchester and New York, and solicited funds. He raised \$645 in other churches and began the construction of St. Stephen's Church, the builder, Ziel J. Eggleston "Taking no profits." In his report he describes "A Beautiful Church of Wood," 42 x 36, with a handsome tower and vestry room 12 x 18, in the rear and a gallery across, for the moderate sum of \$2,000. Grace Church gave the blinds, two members of the Townsend family presented the chandelier and pulpit lamps. On September 13, 1843 the church was consecrated by Bishop Benjamin T. Onderdonk of the Diocese of New York.

All of the organization and building of St. Stephen's was the personal accomplishment of Mr. Harris. He served as the rector until 1853.

At a place called by such names as New Castle Corners and Kirbyville, now in the present town of Mount Kisco, there was and still is an ancient cemetery. This was all that remained of the site of St. George's Church, an Episcopal Church established through the efforts of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, erected in 1761. This church flourished before the Revolutionary War, but the war ravaged our countryside and exacted a heavy toll on the congregation and the building. Despite some attempt at reorganization, by 1819 it ceased to function and the structure was taken down.

Mr. Harris decided to reclaim the area and vowed he would establish another church in New Castle. For at least two years beginning about 1847-48 he conducted services in the schoolhouse nearby and in private homes in the area. In October of 1850 St. Mark's Church was organized, the name, St. Mark's, no doubt, chosen because of his father's association with St. Mark's in New York City.

He erected on the site of the old church a new church of wood, 30 x 50, with a tower projecting 8 feet in front. The cost, exclusive of stained glass and furniture, was \$2,050. Nearly 75% of the cost was raised by Harris, the people of his White Plains parish sending \$350, as well as assisting

with the furnishings. On April 28, 1852 the church was consecrated by Bishop Charlton Chase of the Diocese of New Hampshire.

Prior to the consecration of the church Dr. Harris (Columbia University had given him a Doctor of Divinity degree in 1849) preached the first sermon within its walls on January 25, 1852. The sermon is the only printed address of Harris to survive. In it he recounts the history of old St. George's and tells of his work in New Castle, and of kind friends everywhere who helped build the church and "how God again has crowned the work of His servants with a prosperous issue." The text on which this sermon rested was the book of Haggi, Chapter 2, Verse 9: "The glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former saith the Lord of Hosts."

Before finishing his work at St. Mark's, Dr. Harris was preaching in Pleasantville. He began in the old schoolhouse on present School Lane and before long he was holding regular Sunday services there. On June 22, 1853, he officially organized and incorporated St. John's Church in Pleasantville. For the church site he personally purchased a lot 60 x 150 on Railroad Avenue, now Bedford Road. A church of stone was proposed, but Harris could not realize the necessary funds and, while he and his Grace Church parish contributed, it was not sufficient, and he was forced to secure the financial support of the clerical association. A pretty church of wood 27' x 40' was constructed for \$1,760. The Church was consecrated on Saturday, September 22, 1855 by Bishop Horatio Potter, the Provisional Bishop of New York. Assisting in the service that day was the Rev. Isaac D. Vermilye, the new rector of St. Stephen's and St. Mark's. Harris continued to minister to Pleasantville without salary for the next six years.

One other missionary project that has not survived was the founding and building of the mission at West White Plains. He began with Sunday School, and then in 1853 erected a hall or chapel at the northeast corner of Lexington and Martine Avenues (remember Grace Church was then located across the entire town on South Broadway). This chapel was his own personal accomplishment and cost him \$865. The chapel continued until the consolidation of the Village of White Plains and the building of new Grace Church in the more central city location.

On Easter Sunday 1855 he told his congregation that the task of ministering to Grace Church and Pleasantville and the school was too heavy and asked them to appoint an assistant rector. His plan was to continue to oversee Grace, minister to Pleasantville and run the school. He also stated he felt he should purchase the rectory from the vestry as he was not serving them full time. They agreed and sold him the rectory for \$4,000. But the divided rectorship did not work out, and he resigned the rectorship of Grace on October 9, 1855, having been their leader for twenty-four years and seven months. There was great sadness in the congregation and in the White Plains community because of his outstanding leadership in the church and village.

In 1856 he received a call to be the rector of St. George's Church in Astoria, Queens, New York, which he accepted, and he ministered there for the next 33 years.

He closed the boys' school after 22 years of work in that field. But his high regard for White Plains and his many friends there made him return for the next thirty years to spend his summer vacations there. In 1868 he sold the school property and purchased a new residence at the corner of Maple and Longview Avenues.

On January 6, 1886 he resigned the pulpit of his Astoria church and retired to his White Plains home. His residence was all too brief, for he died at his home on December 5th of that year.

Dr. Harris was twice married. On Christmas Day 1834 to Frances Fisher of White Plains. They had four children (two boys and two girls). One, Robert William, Jr., became an Episcopal clergyman. After the death of his first wife he married Caroline Augusta Marshall of Somers on June 2, 1846. There were nine children in the second family (seven boys and two girls).

Dr. Harris, his wives and many of his children rest in the White Plains Rural Cemetery. His stone simply says in brief understatement, "A MINISTRY OF FIFTY FIVE YEARS."

His grown-up churches today minister to the faithful in White Plains, Mount Kisco and Pleasantville. Beautiful stone edifices have been erected to take the place of the original humble frame buildings Harris built. But we in this country village of Armonk are possessed of the original architectural gem of his first missionary project, beautiful St. Stephen's, the only church still standing which Harris himself, the founder and builder, saw in his lifetime.

We are indebted to Mr. and Mrs. R. Eugene Curry, for many years gracious servants of this church, for the gift of the Memorial Plaque [presented this day] and for reminding this congregation for all time of Dr. Robert W. Harris, the first rector and the founder and builder of churches.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The author wishes to express his appreciation to the late Herbert B. Howe for supplying much of the information about Rev. Harris. See Vol. 26 No. 1, Jan. 1950, *Westchester County Historical Society Bulletin*.

Taken from The North Castle Sun of May 2, 1919:

#### "OUR TELEPHONE SERVICE

The little village has now in service telephones to the number of twenty-eight. Eighteen of them are under the Pleasantville heading and ten under the classification of Mount Kisco and five others that should be under White Plains are classified under other adjoining villages. It should appear as though this village should have its own "Central." If this were so it is a safe prophecy that a score of others would be added. Under these conditions there would be steady growth of telephone service. We should be pleased to see our people combine and seek for a home office. This would put our pretty village in class A, and thus would our growth be accelerated. Let our people write to the management and get what is plainly their due."

(See "Hotline to Armonk" on the next page.)





## HOTLINE TO ARMONK

By Oliver A. Knapp, Jr.  
and Barbara S. Massi

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*Like most people, I take the telephone for granted with hardly a thought about what it would be like without it. Nor have I ever considered the technical aspects of installing poles and lines into a new area. The story of the telephone between Alexander Graham Bell's invention in 1876 and today's cordless versions has escaped my attention — until now!*

*The following account by a small town repairman, now Mt. Kisco Town Historian, will, I'm sure, capture your imagination, as it is a personal experience by someone who appreciates the value of reminiscing.*

B.S.M.

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The hamlet of Armonk has an interesting social and cultural heritage that is unique. Even before there was a central telephone office, Armonk offered countless attractions that could be visualized by a telephone repairman in a closer perspective than could be seen in the more populated areas of Westchester. The town offered interesting contrasts to the telephone man, such as Harry Schnoor's restaurant. Here coffee breaks were often stretched as a result of Mr. Schnoor's congenial manner as well as discussions with local characters who were familiar figures there at any time of the day or evening. Of equal interest were the numerous roadhouses, the airport, Lander's General Store, the farm buildings and beautiful estates such as Eugene Meyer's fabulous mansion overlooking Byram Lake, with its bowling alley and indoor swimming pool. In fact, working in Armonk exemplified the well known adage, "Variety is the Spice of Life."

June 4, 1929 was a day to be remembered in Armonk. The tiny brick building on Whippoorwill Road (presently owned by the Town of North Castle) containing dial central office equipment for the Armonk area, was put into service at 8:00 p.m.

Prior to that time a handful of telephone lines from the Mt. Kisco and Pleasantville central offices serviced a few places in the area. For example, Wenga Farm (the Agnew Estate), Wampus (the John Magee Estate) and the Siedenburger Estate, had private lines. A Mt. Kisco rural line serviced twenty subscribers in the northeast section of Armonk. In downtown Armonk the North Castle Police, Lander's Store, Judge Julius Raven's House and the famous Log Cabin Restaurant had private line service from Pleasantville. During the era of the Big Bands, The Log Cabin<sup>1</sup> was well known for its broadcasts, which were conveyed by telephone circuits, live, to major radio stations in Manhattan where the programs went on the air. Local New York Telephone Company technicians stood by, monitoring these big time broadcasts in the event of

circuit failure. This was always welcome assignment for the repairmen whose quick action, if required, prevented total loss of programs. In later years, the Blue Gardens Restaurant, located not far from the Log Cabin, also went on the air with Big Band programs. Armonk had become quite famous for its radio broadcasts during that era.

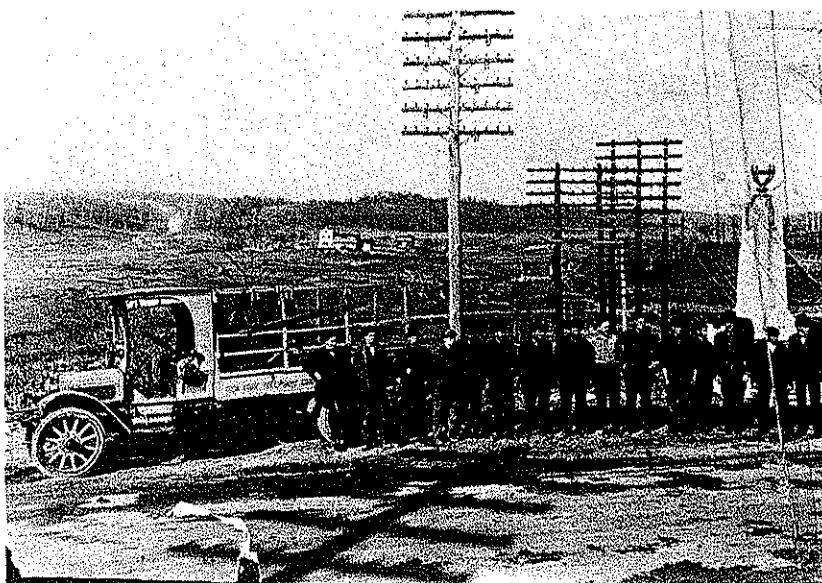
Saturday nights were always exciting during those early days prior to the arrival of super highways. Route 22 ran directly through the center of town and the Manhattan crowd would leave their favorite hangouts in the city and wend their way up Route 22 to Armonk where they got a taste of night (or early morning) life that differed quite a bit from their usual haunts. Police Chief John Hergenhan and his diminutive police force seldom had difficulty with these weekend guests, and occasionally couples passing through would ask to be directed to Judge Raven's address for matrimonial assistance. Because of this, Judge Raven became known as "the marrying judge."

The pay telephones did a rattling business over the weekends. The telephone repairmen were often preoccupied with the results encountered by the newly installed dial telephones. Weekends often found the repairmen at the Siedenburgh Estate where weekend guests found a haven from theatrical and other fields of endeavor. The caretaker, Mr. Girling,<sup>2</sup> extended to the repairmen the privileges of the mansions, including the stables, swimming pool, and the beautiful gardens which were his pride and joy.

The annals of telephone workers' careers are filled with a wide variety of tales. Few employees of yesterday or today lack favorite experiences encountered during their telephone work. From the gaslight era to the jet age, along with the changing times, came new experiences that could be added to the telephone workers' memories of a lifetime.

From the back alley Monday morning laundry syndrome where the wet wash strangled a cross-alley telephone line, to the more rural trouble condition caused by Mother Nature's offspring, the telephone man was never without a favorite conversation piece. One of "Little George" Walker's favorite anecdotes was about the farmer and the lantern. Prior to 1929 Armonk had no central office. A section of Armonk was supplied with telephone service by a Mt. Kisco multi-party line, commonly known as a rural line. George Walker, the Mt. Kisco repairman during the early 1920s, long remembered this line as a result of repeated service interruptions encountered one winter. Each evening for a period of several minutes the line would be out of order. Walker had checked out the line repeatedly but found it to be in good condition. He, therefore, had considerable difficulty locating the cause of the trouble. One night he succeeded in tracing the problem to an old farmhouse. Sitting near the furnace on a box in the basement, an elderly farmer, smoking a pipeful of Mechanic's Delight, had hung his lantern on the telephone station protector. Thus, the cause of the mysterious service interruption was uncovered!

The monotony of working in the Armonk dial office, devoid of traffic operators, was often broken by a welcome visitor. A little girl who lived on the second floor of the adjacent building rode her tricycle in a



The construction of The Kensico Reservoir and Dam took place between 1910-1917. Pictured is the New York Telephone Company's construction crew in 1914 in front of the longest span of telephone lines in the world at the time. It ran between Route 22, just before the Rye Lake Bridge, and White's Peninsula which can be seen in the background. It carried long distance circuits to Boston, Montreal, and countless other locations in the northeast. Note: house in center was Judge Julius Raven's, not yet taken down before the flooding of the reservoir. Judge Raven moved to Armonk Village where he lived on the corner of Main Street and Bedford Road. Picture courtesy of Oliver Knapp.

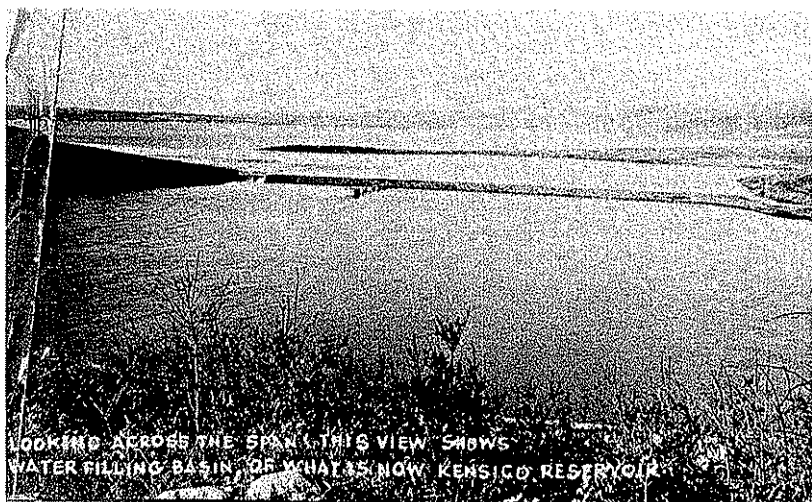
driveway between the two buildings. Because the floor of the dial office building was covered with battleship linoleum, "Becky," as her mother, Mrs. Kittredge called her, found that traction in the Whippoorwill Central Office was a great improvement over the driveway between the buildings. After a few close encounters with the telephone switch equipment, Becky would maneuver her way to the exit and take off for new worlds to conquer!<sup>3</sup>

The heating unit in the old Armonk central office was a gravity type unit that fed the finest type coal into the furnace. Sunday assignments required the repairman to fill the bunker that fed the coal. During a portion of World War II "Ma Bell" elected to have the furnace suspended and the battery equipment and switches had to be specially treated to function properly. Working in the office was anything but a pleasure in the winter months at that time.

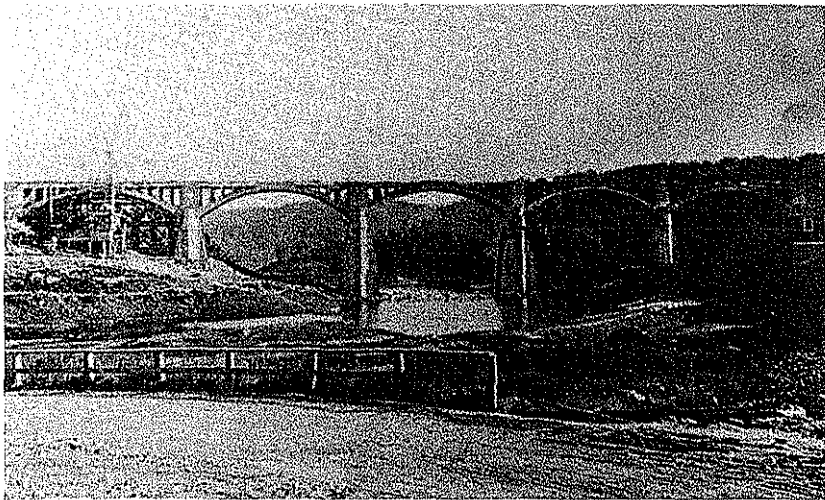
To a telephone repairman familiar with Ford's "Tin Lizzie," the Essex, and countless other automobiles of the twenties, it was fascinating to note



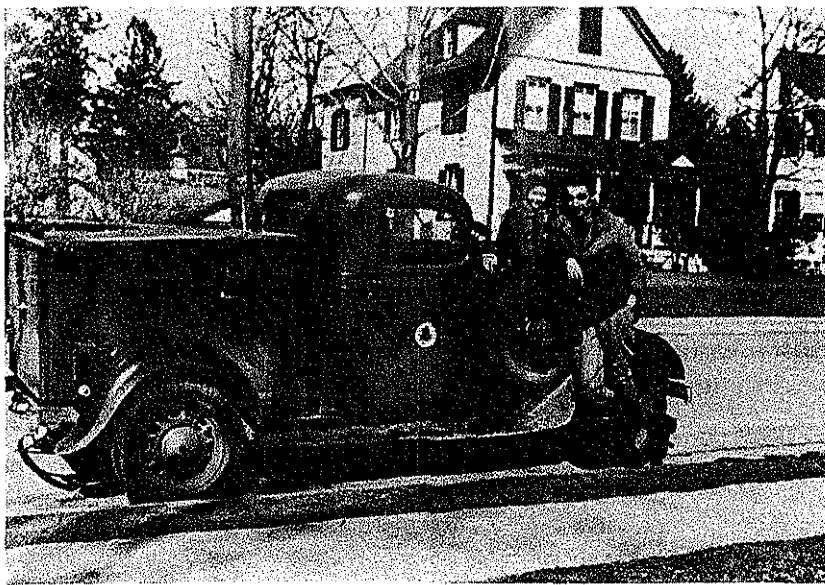
The gang that put through the telephone lines at Kensico, around 1914. Picture courtesy of Oliver Knapp.



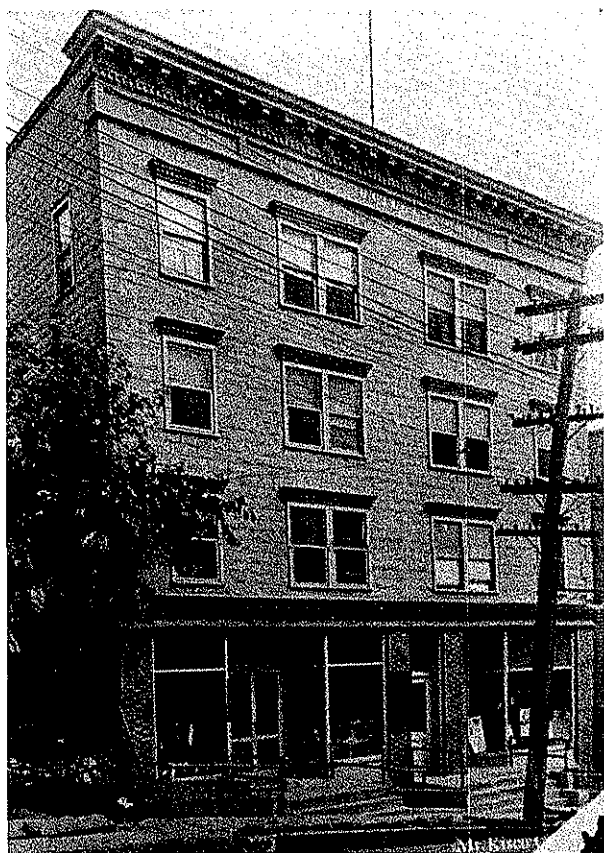
The span of telephone lines (barely visible in background) at Kensico, around 1914. The longest span of its time, it was 907 feet between fixtures from Route 22, south of the Rye Lake Bridge, to White's Peninsula. Picture courtesy of Oliver Knapp.



The construction of Rye Lake Bridge Looking east during the Kensico Reservoir project. This picture was taken from White's Peninsula prior to the flooding of the dam. Note the old road that was the main road from White Plains, through Kensico Village. Today, White's Peninsula can be seen from the bridge (on Route 22), jutting out into the reservoir. Picture courtesy of Oliver Knapp.



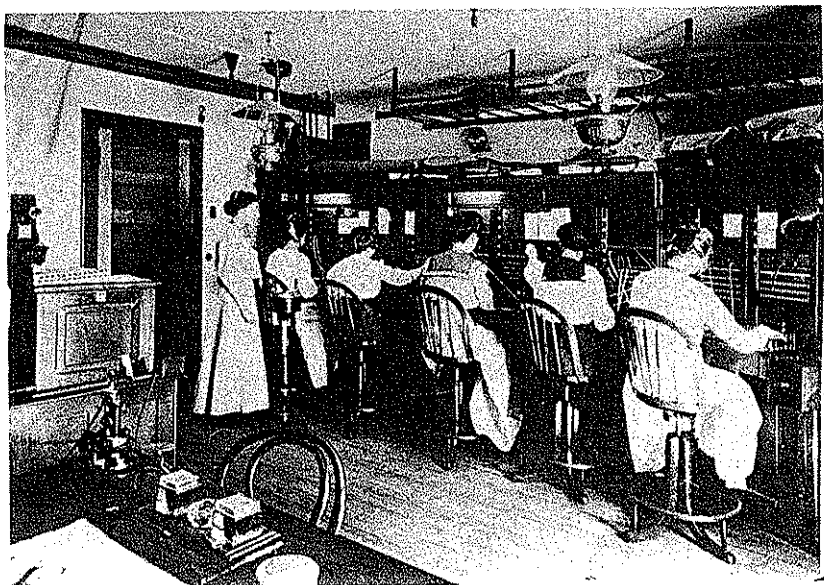
Telephone repairman on his way to work. Oliver Knapp and his daughter Joan, in the vicinity of their home on Moore Avenue in Mt. Kisco. Picture courtesy of Oliver Knapp.



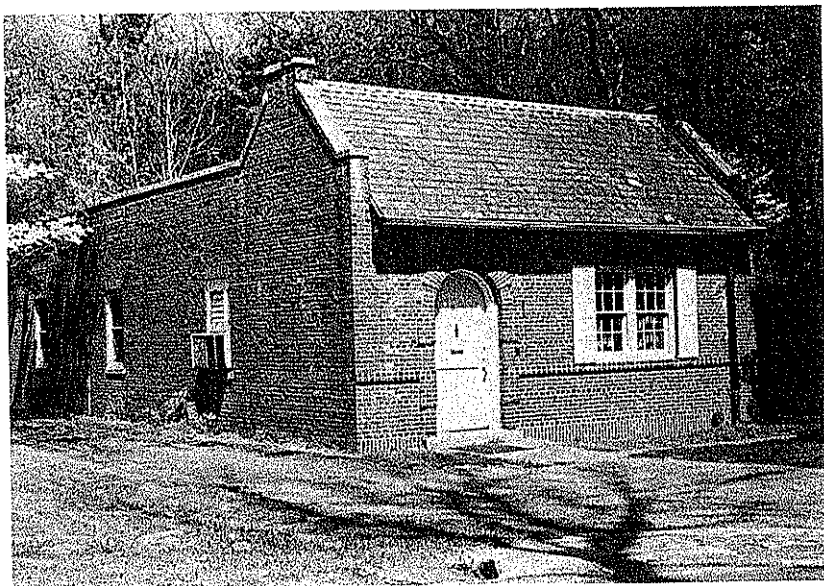
The Mt. Kisco Central Office was in the Ganun Building. The building still stands at 35 West Main Street on the north side of the hill that leads out of town toward Millwood. Picture taken around 1926. Courtesy of Oliver Knapp.

the attention observed in Armonk when a biplane such as a Curtiss "Jenny," or a Waco passed overhead as it made its way to or from the Armonk Airport. Working in the Barrett Airways operating office with the associated activity involved was an experience never to be forgotten by this writer who was thoroughly familiar with the horse and buggy age, but whose own hometown never had, and never would have, an airport. One summer afternoon in August 1928, Charles A. Lindbergh landed at the Armonk Airport<sup>4</sup>. He was escorted to a limousine and driven off. A cordon of cars accompanied him, with the telephone company's Model T Ford trailing in the rear. When the limousine carrying Colonel Lindbergh turned into the estate of Reginald Lewis on Harris Road in Bedford, "Ma Bell's" Model T continued on. What a memorable and thrilling experience it was for me, to have been a part of the Lone Eagle's earthly travels!

The telephone company has developed into a magnificent technical wonder. The services offered today such as touch tone, cordless phones,



Telephone operators at work around 1926 on the second floor of the Ganun Building. The multi-party line that served Armonk prior to 1929 terminated here. This traffic office closed in 1931 when Mt. Kisco became dial. Picture courtesy of Oliver Knapp.



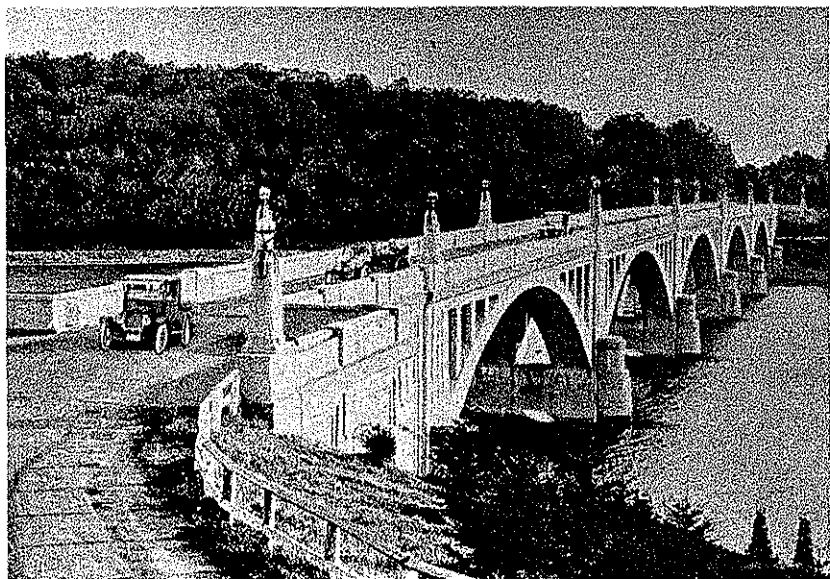
The New York Telephone Company's building in Armonk contained dial central office equipment for the Armonk area. It is now the property of the Town of North Castle. Picture taken in 1991 by Richard Koenig.

car phones, call waiting, answering machines, call forward, beepers, fax, etc. are all remarkable accomplishments that stem from the humble beginnings of the telephone company. One can't help but wonder what the future holds and what remarkable inventions are yet to be developed!

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. See "The Jazz World in Armonk," Vol. 12, 1985 *North Castle History*.
2. Albert Girling was the overseer on the Siedenburgh Estate for 48 years. It was his first job when he arrived from England. He subsequently worked for about 3 years for those who bought the estate after the Siedenburghs lost their money and the estate in the Great Depression. He then retired. His children still live in the area.
3. Rebecca Kittredge Rotondo is a North Castle Town Councilwoman. She has lived in Armonk all of her life.
4. See "Armonk's Adventure in Aviation," Vol. 6, 1979 *North Castle History*.

Oliver Knapp joined the New York Telephone Company in 1925 as a repair technician (a troubleshooter today). He was paid 29 cents an hour for a 48 hour, six day week, or about \$14.00 a week, which was all take-home pay, as there was no Social Security, income tax, or other deduction. After 47 years Ollie retired from the job, but not from the bond he had formed with the company. He has collected photos, maps and memorabilia, and written extensively on the "old days" of the telephone company in the area. He lives in Mt. Kisco, where he is Town Historian.

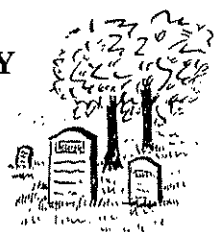


This picture of the Rye Lake Bridge over Kensico on Route 22 was taken not long after Kensico was flooded. Notice how the road bends to the right in front. This was straightened when the present road was cut through the hill, and the bridge was widened around 1938. Picture from a postcard courtesy of Oliver Knapp.



# AN EARLY WESTCHESTER CEMETERY

By Michael Ferris



Near Route 22 in the Westmoreland Sanctuary, about one hundred feet past the North Castle line in Bedford, lies the Ferris family cemetery, once a part of the Ferris farmland that straddled both towns. The land was originally settled by John Ferris (b.4/3/1723,d.10/6/1808) who built his home on the North Castle side of the border in 1745.

The cemetery is on a tree-lined knoll surrounded on three sides by a stone wall. On the south side there was a wooden fence with a gate wide enough for a horse and wagon to pass through. A right-of-way from the road to the cemetery remains to this day. There are forty-eight graves in this cemetery, the oldest being that of Elizabeth Ferris (1789), and the last, John Ferris (1898), giving the cemetery one hundred nine years of use. Other Ferrises who were interred there were later removed and placed in the Bedford Union Cemetery. Unfortunately there are twelve graves marked only by fieldstone markers. Who they were and when they passed through here is, sadly, unknown.

The original Ferris farm was said to cover some six hundred acres. John Ferris<sup>1</sup> was active in town affairs, as the North Castle Town Minutes of April 7, 1747 show: "John Ferris, Highway Master for the year for the east side of Long Bridge." That is, he kept open and in repair the road that is now Route 22 from the Bedford line to the Cox Avenue area in Armonk. During the Revolutionary War his home was burned to the ground by the British as they retreated from the burning of Pound Ridge and Bedford in July 1779, but he rebuilt not far from the site of his burned home. He died from a fall from his horse at age 85 and lies in the Ferris cemetery (Plot Seven).

His son, John (1749-1826), was a prosperous farmer and occasional blacksmith who inherited most of his father's holdings in North Castle. Active in the Armonk Methodist Church, he was one of its first trustees. The year before his death he was an attendant at the Middle Patent Church. He entered North Castle politics, held town office and was supervisor from 1811-1820.

While he was town supervisor the young country was again plunged into war with England. There was no mention of the War of 1812 in the town minutes,<sup>2</sup> the board proceeding only with the business of North Castle. In 1812 the State Legislature enacted a law establishing common (public) schools, and North Castle levied its first school taxes. Since the only method of transportation was by foot or horse, seven schools were needed, and seven separate school districts were formed, each with its own trustee, district clerk and tax collector. The system was administered by inspectors of common schools and commissioners of common schools.

To levy taxes for schools even in 1812 must have had its trials. At that time the American dollar system was only twenty years old. Along with their new money, Americans continued to use many foreign coins. A law passed in 1793 had made these coins a legal part of the U.S. coinage system and under the law the value of a foreign coin depended on the amount of gold or silver in it. Therefore, one could pay taxes in dollars, pounds, foreign coin, gold pieces or whatever. While supervisor, John Ferris also was appointed to work with neighboring supervisors to find a common home for the poor of the county, to replace the practice of supporting them in the home of whoever may have taken them in. He died at age 77, and is buried in the cemetery (Plot Eleven).

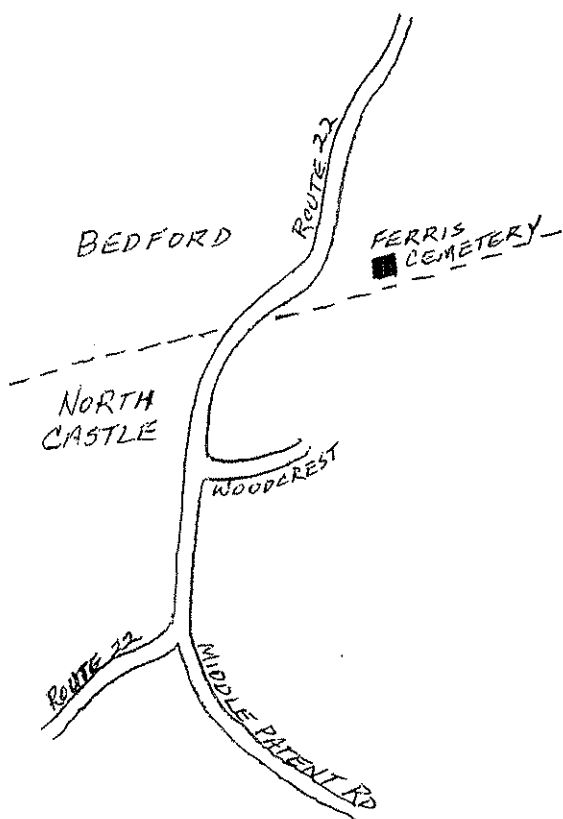
John's brother, Daniel (1752-1831), had an adjoining farm and resided on the North Castle/Bedford line. During the Revolutionary War he was taken prisoner by the British and confined to the cruel Sugarhouse Prison in New York City. Later, exchanged, he returned to his farm. While his brother, John, was supervisor, Daniel had a seven-year legal battle with the town of North Castle over paying taxes to two towns. It was never recorded if he won or lost. He died at age 75 and is buried in the Ferris Cemetery (Plot Five).

John's son, John (1811-1852), was a farmer and justice of the peace in North Castle (1844-49 and 1852). He is interred with his baby son John.

Farming continued in North Castle through the 1880s with other Ferrises, notably Daniel and James, having residences on adjoining farms. Besides the Ferris family there are seven graves of friends and



**THE FERRIS CEMETERY** showing the stone of Mary Jane Ferris, wife of John B. Ferris. She died on October 23, 1859, age 33 years, 8 months, and 21 days. She is buried next to her infant sons. Inscribed on her stone: "Yes, forever free from sadness/Where no disappointments come/And where nought is felt but gladness/Dwell she in her far off home."



neighbors, namely the Lyon family (four graves), Rachel Ingersult, Willie Kelly, and Susan Wilson. Neighbors such as the Zarr family (who maintain a family cemetery in the Westmoreland Sanctuary next to the museum), the Lyons, Reynolds, Banks and Carpenters all intermarried,\* and with eleven John Ferrises recorded in the Bedford cemeteries, records can become sketchy at best. But intermarriage between the families that settled and farmed in North Castle in its early history was quite common, to say nothing of quite confusing. Sons, daughters, and cousins from intermarriage spread throughout North Castle and scattered throughout the country from this humble beginning.

In the early 1900s farming was no longer profitable and the Ferris lands were subdivided and sold, the last lot being sold by the estate of Hannah E. Ferris to Daniel O'Brien in September 1928.<sup>3</sup> This was in turn sold to Edward Boise in 1931,<sup>4</sup> then sold to Helen Frick in 1939.<sup>5</sup> Miss Frick generously donated it to the Westmoreland Sanctuary in September 1978.<sup>6</sup>

Historical records are not solely a source for reminiscing, but a role model for the future. Hard work and interest in the building of North Castle was obvious in the early years, and North Castle's forefathers did their jobs well. The work is far from over.

## \* THE AUTHOR'S FAMILY LINE

ZARR JOHN EDWARD FERRIS born Bedford, N.Y. 3/1/1865 died there 2/9/1928; married 4/30/1890 at Mt. Kisco FLORA ETTA ZARR, born Bedford, N.Y. 6/25/1867, died there 12/20/1951; daughter of WILLIAM and CHARLOTTE REYNOLDS ZARR.

LYONS SARAH FERRIS born 10/19/1746 married JUSTUS LYONS, six children, died 7/6/1844.

LYONS JOHN BANKS FERRIS born 6/1/1812, married MARY JANE LYONS (first wife).

LYONS ELIZABETH FERRIS born 12/27/1775, married FERRIS LYONS (cousins), died 1857.

REYNOLDS JOHN BANKS FERRIS born 6/1/1812, married HANNAH REYNOLDS, (second wife).

REYNOLDS EVELYN FERRIS born 1856, married ? REYNOLDS.

BANKS DANIEL FERRIS born 4/23/1752, died 5/16/1831, married 1771 HANNAH BANKS from Middle Patent 11/23/1752, five children, died Bedford 6/22/1824.

CARPENTER HANNAH FERRIS born 1774, married TIMOTHY CARPENTER, three children, died 12/6/1782.

### REFERENCES:

1. Ferris family line. Richard Lander, North Castle Town Historian.
2. *North Castle Historical Records* Vol. 2 1791-1848, published by the Town of North Castle, 1986; Richard Lander, Barbara Massi, Editors.
3. Land Records, White Plains, N.Y., Liber 2898, pg. 15.
4. Town of Bedford Assessor's Book.
5. Town of Bedford Assessor's Book.
6. Land Records, White Plains, N.Y., Liber 7498, pg. 586.



FROM THE MOUNT KISCO RECORDER, APRIL 5, 1903:

Armonk is located on the Armonk [Wampus] River. Just south of the village, a tunnel is dug under the hill (now IBM's) and then goes into Kensico Reservoir. [An aqueduct, built around 1880 carried water from the Wampus and Byram Brooks to the old, small reservoir.] The village on the north is bounded by Wampus Lake, and Byram Lake; on the east by Morris Brundage's blacksmith shop; on the south by Byram swamp; on the west by Whippoorwill. It is situated six miles from Kensico Station, and it costs 50 cents by stage to get there. (It costs 50 cents by trolley to go from New York City to Boston). It has three stores. Kept by Flewellin & McDonald, Wm. K. Haviland, and Mervin R. Baker, all do a thriving business. All goods are drawn from Kensico Station [Valhalla]. Three [four?] hotels: Augustus Angevine [Waldorf-Astoria], Charles Walton (Brookside), William Ackerly (Road House), Daniel C. Merritt (Pig Street Hotel). He is a large dealer in game chickens, and fast horses. It has two churches, Methodist and Episcopal. These are a few of the cemeteries: Episcopal, Methodist, Quaker, on Sand's Hill; Wampus Pond cemetery, Briggs cemetery, Townsend cemetery, Smith cemetery, on George Yerks' farm; Tucker cemetery, on Albert Waterbury farm, and the Indian cemetery, on the John Platt Tripp farm. Dear readers, you should visit some of these cemeteries and see what interest these good people take on the lots where their forefathers and foremothers are now resting. One blacksmith shop, kept by William Brundage does a thriving business; harder work to sell him a bill of goods than it is to collect the money. Sam Taylor does the shoe business of the village; Frank McDonald sells what meat is used in the surrounding township; gives good satisfaction; don't have to take your hat off to eat it. Bob Quinby makes the best cider in that country. I know, for I have tried it.

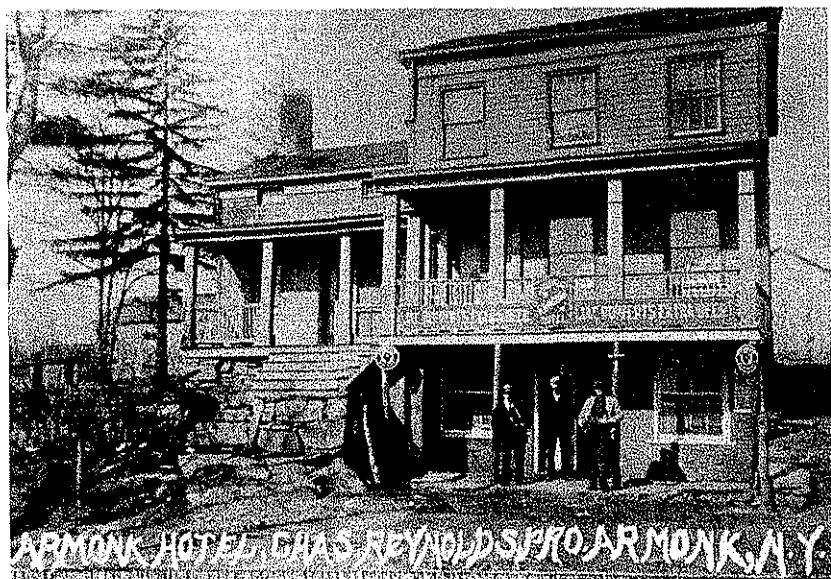
## PLACES FROM THE PAST



Picture taken about 1920 at the northeast corner of Bedford Road (formerly Route 22) and Main Street (Route 128) across from the Armonk Methodist Church. The picture shows Julius A. Raven selling apples to travelers at his vegetable and fruit stand in front of his restaurant, Raven's Corner, which was situated behind the photographer. (Raven's Corner was later Kromer's Restaurant, Miles Corner Restaurant and the Olive Branch. Today there is a group of stores at the site.)

Shown across Main Street about where Kent Place is today is an old building which at various times was a stagecoach stop, store, post office, and butcher shop. It stood as early as 1850 and perhaps even earlier. It was possibly built by Elisha Sutton. In April 1850 the property was purchased by Griffen Gale. The oldest map of Armonk in 1851 shows the store which was rented by storekeeper Marvin Warner. From at least 1860 to 1881 the building was the store and post office of James Hopkins before Hopkins moved to the store at the corner of Main Street and Maple Avenue. The store was then run by Griffin Gale and his wife Susan. The Gales closed by death in 1897-1900 after which various persons used the store, the most remembered being Alfred MacDonald who had a butcher shop there until sometime after the turn of the century. James Hopkins' greatgrandson, Judge James Hopkins, remembers that the old shop was closed up when this picture was taken. The building was torn down in April of 1922. Kent Place was put in at the site around 1960.

Julius A. Raven was born in Kensico in 1887. As a young man he worked in the tree business, and also for Westchester Lighting Co., and as a carpenter and builder, and a restaurateur. He was a member of the Board of Education and president for many years. He was Town Assessor 1917-19 and Town Justice 1931-70. He died October 6, 1976. Picture courtesy of R. N. Lander.



Armonk residents around 1910 standing in front of Reynolds Saloon which was located on the west side of Main Street not far beyond the driveway of today's Citibank. [Note: the Armonk Hotel, located above the saloon.] From a postcard by Selleck. Collection of Joseph Petre.



Almost opposite the above picture was a store and Post Office owned by Flewellin & McDonald [later owned and operated for many years by the Lander family]. It was on the northeast corner of Main Street and Maple Avenue. Postcard picture taken around 1910 by Selleck. Courtesy of R.N. Lander.

# THE NORTH CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

### Officers:

President	J. Stuart Brown
Vice President	Robert Black
Vice President	Piers Curry
Vice President	Joan Krantz
Treasurer	Thea Pitassy
Recording Secretary	Joan Krantz
Corresponding Secretary	Sharon Tomback
Trustee-at-Large	Susan R. Shimer
Trustee-at-Large	Doris Finch Watson

### Ex-Officio:

Town Historian	Richard N. Lander
Honorary Trustee	Robert Pippet

### Trustees whose terms expire in 1993:

Robert Black	Susan R. Shimer
Piers Curry	Grace Stipo
Barbara Massi	Lorraine Torres
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