

THE JOURNALS OF THE REVEREND LEWIS WHEELER WELLS,
RECTOR OF ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
AND THE PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM OF LEILA PARKER BURTON HARTHACK
OF MILLSBORO, DELAWARE

*A Look at Turn-of-the-Century Sussex County, as seen through the Journal
of an Episcopal clergyman and the Photograph Album of
a Young Lady from a Prominent Millsboro Family:*



A Selection Edited and Annotated By Richard B. Carter



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Turn-of-the-Century Sussex County through the eyes of an Episcopal clergyman

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INTRODUCTION

A glimpse into the world of late 19th century Sussex County, Delaware, is presented in the following pages in the form of excerpts from the journals of the Rev. Lewis Wheeler Wells, an Episcopal minister and rector of St. Mark's, Millsboro, from 1888 until his death in 1923. Wells's turn-of-the-century world is shown to be richer and more complex than the sometimes two-dimensional view of the period which has come down to us.

Lewis Wells was born into an upper middle class family in the town of Stratford, Connecticut, on July 20, 1855. He apparently paid his first visit to southern Delaware in 1885 to see a friend who was then serving as rector of St. Paul's, Georgetown. He returned to Sussex in 1887 as a supply priest and then, in 1888, accepted a call as rector of St. Mark's, whose longtime priest had recently passed away. He served the small parish and an even smaller country chapel at the head of Long Neck some ten miles away until his death in 1923 at the age of 68. In all, Wells spent more than half his life and the great majority of his ministry in Sussex County.

The Sussex to which he came in the middle years of the 1880's was still almost entirely rural and agrarian. It's economy was still based overwhelmingly on farming and various industries related to the county's vast stands of forest, and to a lesser extent on harvesting the rich bounty of bay and ocean. Towns situated on the county's tidal rivers and the old town of Lewes at the mouth of the Delaware Bay carried on a thriving maritime industry. Much of Sussex County's produce and forest products were still routinely transported to market by sailing vessels. Bethel in Western Sussex, Mil-

ton in Eastern Sussex and Milford in Northern Sussex were well-established shipbuilding centers. Tourism, which was to be of such importance in the next century, was still in its infancy. Rehoboth Beach, founded some years before as a summertime Methodist camp meeting, was growing in popularity and had a number of large hotels and boarding houses. Lewes also had several hotels and was a popular destination for wintertime waterfowl hunters. Its economy centered around its protected harbor at the Mouth of the Delaware Bay. The town valued its status as the first port of call for vessels entering the Delaware and its bay and river pilots, customs officials and the medical staff of the U.S. government quarantine station near Cape Henlopen were among the leading citizens of the town.

Millsboro, some 12 or 14 miles inland and situated at the head of navigation of the Indian River, was a village of about 350 persons in the 1880's and 1890's. It was the largest town in southeastern Sussex County south of the county seat at Georgetown. The town was the commercial and railroad center for a large outlying region extending from Long Neck in the northeast to the farming hamlets of Whitesville and Gumboro some 10 miles to the south-southwest, close by the Maryland State Line.

The Millsboro area had been the site of an early Indian reservation established soon after 1700 by the Maryland colonial assembly. At that time and until 1775, everything south of the Indian River and generally west of the center of present-day Sussex was a part of colonial Maryland. The first inhabitants of English origin settled in the area in the late 1600's. They had, for the most part, moved from earlier settled areas in the Maryland and Virginia sections of the Delmarva peninsula, which were already filling with settlers by 1690. The village proper had grown up in the late 1700's and early 1800's around grist and saw mills and a thriving bog iron furnace at the head of the Indian River.

Note: This article was first published in substantially different form in the Fall-Winter, 1985-1986 issue of "The Archeolog," the now-defunct journal of the late, lamented Sussex Society of Archeology and History. It was revised and the annotation expanded considerably in 1999 and now yet again. - R.B.C., September, 2009.



*Lewis and Sallie Wells
Soon after their 1888 marriage.*



The Wells Home – At the corner of State and Ellis Streets in Millsboro, was originally built by the Rev. William Ellis. It was situated next door to the church. Rev. and Mrs. Wells bought the house from Rev. Ellis's family and later substantially enlarged it with a rear wing which they used as a kind of parish house. The Wellses had no children. After the death of Rev. Wells in 1923, his heirs gave the home to St. Mark's Episcopal Church for use as a church rectory, which it remained until it was demolished in the 1990s.

Lewis Wells's journals make it abundantly clear that in this last generation before the advent of the automobile age railroads were at the center of the region's economy, and were almost equally important in the community's social and cultural life. Wells was very much interested in trains. He frequently listed in his journal the serial numbers of the engines passing through town and the size and nature of the trains they pulled - excursion trains to Ocean City, Maryland, were a common occurrence during the summer, for example. The several-times-daily trains were the town's primary link with the outside world. It is surprising how much of that outside world passed through Millsboro in the form of visitors, travelling salesmen, medicine shows, politicians, the U.S. Mail, itinerant tradesmen and even a visiting rabbi who came down from Wilmington on occasion to attend to the needs of the town's prominent Ableman family.

The Episcopal church, while probably the oldest established church on Delmarva, had long since ceded whatever position of dominance it might once have enjoyed to the Methodists. The Delaware historian Wil-



ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL—INDIAN RIVER HUNDRED

This venerable 18th century brick church was one of the two active Episcopal churches within 15 miles of Millsboro, the other one being St. Paul's-Georgetown. After a hiatus, St. George's is once more an active congregation today (Burton family album).

liam H. Williams has referred to the Delmarva Peninsula as "the Garden of American Methodism" and Sussex County was certainly a flourishing corner of that garden. Even so, the Episcopalians remained a visible and influential presence in the larger Sussex County communities.



The Millsboro waterfront — A view of the old iron foundry wharf at the head of the Indian River. The area is now Millsboro's Cupola Park

St. Mark's, the primary focus of Wells's efforts, had been established in 1848 during a burst of Episcopal missionary activity in southern Delaware following the election in 1841 of Delaware's first Episcopal bishop, the Right Reverend Alfred Lee. The church at Millsboro served as a kind of successor to the old Anglican parish of Prince George's Chapel in Dagsboro. Prince George's, one of the founding churches of the Diocese of Delaware in 1786, was itself erected in 1755 as a "chapel-of-ease" for the Anglican Worcester Parish. At that time, some 20 years before the final settlement of the Maryland-Delaware boundary dispute, everything in Sussex County south and west of the Indian River was still considered part of Maryland.

The congregation of Prince George's had dwindled to only a few active members by the early 1840's, the center of population having shifted northward toward Millsboro. In Wells's time, this ancient, cypress-shingled structure stood vacant and unused, though greatly beloved by the citizens of the area. One of Wells's projects during the 1890's was organizing annual services at the old church which became very popular and drew visitors from far and wide.

St. Mark's was also a small parish, but it had the largest congregation of the several Episcopal churches in the area southeast of Georgetown. These included the 18th century St. George's-Indian River Hundred and the tiny Trinity Chapel, Long Neck, to the northeast of Millsboro. Six miles to the southeast was the equally small Grace Chapel, located near Lamb's School on the road from Dagsboro to Baltimore Mills (later Omar), though this chapel was largely defunct by the time of Wells's arrival in the area. Some eight or ten miles to

the southwest of Millsboro was St. John's, Little Hill (also known as "Greenville"), located between Lowe's Crossroads and Pepperbox. This chapel was also mostly inactive by 1890.

Most of these churches had been served at one time or another by Wells's predecessor at Millsboro, the Rev. William R. Ellis, a Little Creek Hundred native who was a mainstay of the Episcopal Church in Sussex from the late 1860's until his death in 1887. Some years before he died, Ellis bought a lot next to St. Mark's and built thereon the original part of the house Lewis Wells and his wife later occupied. They first rented the house from the Ellis family, then purchased it in the late 1890's. Rev. Ellis's son, Gardiner, was became one of Wells's closest friends.

Lewis Wells was the son of Leonard and Elizabeth Dougall Ford Wells of Stratford, Connecticut, a suburb of the old Long Island Sound industrial city of Bridgeport. Lewis was the oldest of three brothers. The second son, Eugene Ford Wells was born Sept. 5, 1856, and the youngest, Frank Leonard Wells was born on Oct. 21, 1865.¹ The Wells family had owned a considerable amount of valuable property in and around Bridgeport, which had grown greatly in value with the rapid development and expansion of that city in the mid-19th century. By Lewis Wells's time their holdings gave the family sufficient income so that the parents and all three brothers and were, while not wealthy, at least in comfortable circumstances.¹¹

His fortunate financial state made it possible for Wells to serve both St. Mark's and the tiny "Trinity Chapel" on Long Neck, in coastal Sussex, without having to concern himself unduly about making ends meet.

¹ *The Wells family data contained herein is extracted both from lists kept by Lewis Wells in one of his journals and from web-based Wells family genealogical materials. These provide the following data: Leonard Wells, born May 2 1829; married June 6, 1854, Elizabeth Dougall Ford, born June 12 1833, died Aug 29, 1902. Their children were:*

(1) Lewis Wheeler Wells, born July 20, 1855; married May, 1888, Sarah Ann Grove, daughter of Jacob and Mary Magdalene Webner Grove of Mechanicsville, Pennsylvania; They had no children.

(2) Eugene Ford Wells, born Sept 5, 1856; married Aug 5, 1900, Alice Wheeler Wells. Note: Alice Wheeler Wells and Eugene Ford Wells were first cousins. She was the daughter of Leonard Wells's brother, William Dougall Wells and his wife, Emma Frances Woolley, but had grown up in Lawrence, Kansas.

(3) Francis Leonard Wells, born October, 1865; married, June, 1903, Ida May Benedict. Ida was born March, 1882, the daughter of Francis Wilbur and Ida May Wells Benedict. Ida may also have been a cousin to Francis.

¹¹ *My godfather, J. Reese White, Sr., who served as a longtime senior warden of St. Mark's before his death in the early 1960's, had been well acquainted with Rev. and Mrs. Wells as a boy and young man. His parents, Mr. & Mrs. William J.P. White, were parishoners and close friends of the couple, as was his maternal grandfather, Jacob Reese Godwin. Mr. White told the information about Rev. Wells's family to my father, William A. Carter, also a onetime senior warden of St. Mark's, who conveyed it to me (also a onetime senior warden of the parish). Mr. White told me about how he and other boys in the congregation were sent up to the belfry to toll the bell with padded mallets before funerals. - R.B.C.*

Trinity stood in the forest near the head of Long Neck, which juts out on the north side of Indian River Bay, separating it from Rehoboth Bay. Its small congregation consisted largely of members of the Lingo and Burton clans, both of whom had been early settlers in that vicinity. Neither congregation could afford to pay Wells much more than a pittance.

The Wells brothers attended "Day's School" according to references in the journals. This may have been the then well-known New York boarding school of the same name. Upon graduation, Wells matriculated at General Theological Seminary in New York City, from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1879 shortly before his 24th birthday. In 1884 he also received a Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree from G.T.S. In 1879 and 1880 he served as priest-in-charge of the Coit Memorial Chapel in Stratford. In 1880 and 1881 he served a small chapel in Bridgeport. From 1881 to 1887 (during part of which time he also did post-graduate work at G.T.S.) he did "general supply" work, filling in where needed in the Diocese of New York and the Diocese of Delaware.^{III} In 1882, he was at Delhi in New York State where he apparently became friendly with the Rev. James C. Kerr, an older priest who later accepted a call in Southern Delaware. It appears to have been this friendship which brought Wells to the area.

Wells came to Sussex County for the first time in 1885 to visit Rev. Kerr when he was serving as rector of St. Paul's, Georgetown. When Kerr left Georgetown early in 1887, Wells began doing supply work there, probably much in the manner of what we now call an "interim priest." He accepted a call to St. Mark's the next year. During this period he met Miss Sarah Ann Grove ("Sallie"), a young native of Mechanicsburg,

Pa., who was then living in Georgetown with a cousin, Mrs. Margaret Jane Baker Messick. Mrs. Messick was the wife of Dr. John W. Messick, a Georgetown dentist and Civil War veteran. The Messicks were leading members of St. Paul's.^{IV}

Sallie Grove, who was a year younger than Wells, was very accomplished in her own right. She was a talented musician and the published author of a book on etiquette. She appears to have had a very typical upper middle class education for the time. The young priest began courting her and the couple were married on May 14, 1889, the year after he accepted the call to St. Mark's. It's likely that his growing affection for Sallie Grove was the controlling factor in his decision to settle in Millsboro. The Messick family and their connections continued to be among the Wells's closest friends in Sussex County throughout their lives there.

Lewis and Sallie Wells clearly had a rather pleasant existence. They both loved music and taught it and played themselves at every opportunity. They drew and painted. They gardened. They were mainstays in the local "literary society" and were forever helping to organize amateur musicals and theatricals. Lewis had his weather station and his library. He and his wife went for walks in the country and visited around town many evenings. They went to summer resorts on the ocean and the Indian River. Wells pursued his wide and varied interests with evident pleasure, pursuing bicycling, marksmanship and the blowing up of stumps with black powder, at which he was apparently the leading local practitioner, foreign language studies, theological pursuits and meteorology. He kept close watch on the doings of other denominations in town and of interesting religious visitors. Rev. Wells's primary interest, of course, was the church and the needs of his parish fam-

^{III} The information concerning Day's School is contained in a journal entry. I found the information about Wells's higher education and career in a biographical listing in a 1917 Episcopal Church Annual in the Wells library at St. Mark's Church.

^{IV} 1984 Interview with Mrs. Jennie Wilgus Betts of Millsboro. Mrs. Betts's mother was the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Messick and a cousin to Sallie Grove Wells. Mrs. Betts and her parents lived in the Wells home for some years in the early 1900's and cared for the Wellses in their old age.

NOTE: I obtained much of my information about the courtship of Lewis Wells and Sallie Grove from the late Mrs. Jennie Wilgus Betts, granddaughter of Dr. and Mrs. Messick. Mrs. Betts's mother, Mrs. Penrose Wilgus, was the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Messick. Mrs. Betts lived with her grandparents in Georgetown for a time and then, as a young woman, lived for several years with Rev. and Mrs. Wells at their home in Millsboro (after the period covered by these journals). Mrs. Betts was an active member of St. Mark's for most of her life and was the leader of the Junior Choir in the early 1950's while I was a none-too-willing member of it. She was married to Walter "Huck" Betts, famous in Delaware as a major league baseball player during the 1920's and 1930's and a member of the Delaware Sports Hall of Fame. Another descendent of Dr. and Mrs. Messick well-known in the local area was their great-grandson, the late John E. Messick, Esq., a very active member of St. Paul's, Georgetown, who was prominent for many years in the work of the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware before his untimely death some years ago. — R.B.C.

ily. I have not tended to focus on this in choosing the journal excerpts presented here, but this aspect of his life shows through clearly in the journals themselves.

How These Journals came to be preserved

That this "window into the past" is available to us is due to a somewhat curious and unlikely sequence of events. I grew up in Millsboro and was from my earliest childhood until the early 1990's a member of the church Wells served. Though I wasn't born until 1947, some 24 years after Wells's death, even as a child I was well aware of him as a distinct presence in the church's history. A marble tablet set into one wall of the church sanctuary memorializes this man who served as rector more than twice as long as any other minister in the parish's 160-year history. He had a profound influence on the parish in a number of ways, and during my childhood there were still a number of people in the congregation who had known him well. Even in the early 1980's, when I began this project, there were two or three remaining.

So he was a definite presence to me as a child, even though he was long gone. I was also interested in the large and very handsome old Victorian Gothic house next door to the church which had been the Wells's private home. In my time at St. Mark's this building had been the church rectory, conveyed to the parish by Eugene and Frank Wells after their brother's death. A brass plaque mounted on the wall in the front hallway attested to that fact. The house was demolished in 1994.

I also heard that Rev. Wells and his wife were actively involved in the education of local young people and had helped to provide opportunities they might not otherwise have received. It was also said that he used to travel out in the country to minister to the religious and pastoral needs of the often rough and poor "coalies" who worked in the "coalings" (those sites in the region around the town where charcoal was made in the 19th and early 20th centuries). Then there was the curious story that he had a weather station behind his house.

In the early 1970's I had an opportunity to examine much of his extensive library, which had been left, more or less undisturbed, in the rectory attic for half a

century after his death. The rectory needed a new roof and the vestry thought they might be able to raise some money by having a big yard sale and selling some of the books from the attic. Members of the vestry asked me if I would go through the books and sort out any which were great enough value that it might be worthwhile to try to sell them separately.

For a would-be bibliophile the experience was extraordinary. Wells's collection of books was astonishing in its variety, richness and depth. Much of it was, of course, the obligatory 19th century clergyman's library of sermons, religious tracts and studies of various pressing theological issues of the day. But there was also a remarkably extensive collection of works in foreign languages. He owned books in at least two dozen languages. Though in some instances there were only one or two representative works, which he probably collected as curiosities (like Hawaiian, Chinese, Japanese and various American Indian languages), he had large collections of works in other exotic tongues which he apparently was able to read. Among these were Hindustani, Sanskrit, Hebrew, Syraic, Arabic, Persian, hieroglyphics and an assortment of modern European languages - and, of course, Latin and Greek which were basic equipment for any educated person of a century ago.

Rev. Wells also owned books on engineering, higher mathematics, soils and geology, chemistry,, history, and American Indians as well as an extensive musical library. His library contained nearly a complete set of the pioneering Smithsonian "American Bureau of Ethnology" series on American Indian tribes. At the time of the 1970's yard sale the St. Mark's vestry donated these to the Nanticoke Indian Center near Oak Orchard, where I trust they remain. Wells's collection also included a two-volume history of the American Revolution complete with maps which had been published in London in the 1780's - I don't know where that went, but I hope the church got a fair price for it. I also found five bound annual folio volumes of an art magazine from the 1850's complete with large and exquisite full-page woodblock engravings. The library also included an old 10th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica (which he mentions in one journal entry having had to lug home from the station one hot day in 1896,

and which still reposes in the church library). I also discovered a number of U.S. Weather Bureau publications including one in which Wells was listed as the official weather observer in Millsboro.

This experience began to give me a real sense of the man. One can perhaps imagine my excitement therefore when, in 1982, again removing books from the rectory attic, this time to be stored in the parish house library, I found three handwritten volumes which proved to be daily journals kept by Rev. Wells for two different periods around the turn of the century. The largest begins on July Fourth, 1896 and runs to December 31, 1900. The second is a tiny notebook in use for just a few months in the summer of 1903. The last one begins in October, 1903 and runs until December 31, 1904. Suddenly here was Rev. Wells himself speaking from a century before! It was quickly apparent that these journals were by no means conscious literary productions. He'd made no effort to achieve artistic effects. They were simply basic, sometimes terse accounts of his daily life - of the people he saw, of places he visited, of what his wife was doing, of the life of the parish and the ills and joys of parishioners, of what was going on around him.

When the first journal begins, Rev. Wells is a few weeks short of his 41st birthday. When the last one

ends, he is 49. They cover, then, much of the middle period, not only of his life but of his ministry at St. Mark's. It is clear from references he makes in the journals that he began keeping a daily journal in 1869 as a 14-year-old boy growing up in the town of Stratford, Conn. I later learned from a relative of Mrs. Wells, who was still living in Millsboro and attending St. Mark's when I began this research that Rev. Wells continued his journals until 1919, four years before his death. Gradually worsening eyesight made it impossible for him to continue them thereafter. He ultimately went blind.

I am told that this last journal, which I have not read, covers the period 1915-1919 and is mostly concerned with sad, personal matters like Mrs. Wells's lingering last illness - she died in 1917 - and his own declining health. What has happened to the other journals? Out of 50 years of them, I've accounted for only 10 years worth. It's possible that Wells's two brothers took them after his death (he and his wife had no children) or that another relative took them. One can only hope that they might some day turn up since they would represent a local historical resource of considerable importance.

The Last Piece of the Story

After revising this article in 1999, I became friendly



Millsboro's Main Street and its downtown business district, looking northeastward (Burton family album).

late in his life with Mr. Irwin Gwynn Burton II of Milford, Delaware, because of our strong mutual interest in the history of Millsboro, where "Mr. I. G." had been born and raised. He had been born in 1908 and by the time I got to know him well was in his 90's. Mr. Burton had had a remarkably interesting life and was the founder of a series of very successful automobile dealerships in southern Delaware, from which he was then retired. He was the last person I knew who had known Rev. Wells and his wife and the world they inhabited and with his passing in 2004, the last living link of which I am aware to that part of the town's history was gone. Both Mr. Burton's parents and his grandfather, Captain Theodore Burton, are mentioned in the journals, as are many other Burton family connections.

Prior to Mr. I.G.'s time, his family had all been active members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Both Burtons and members of his mother's family, the Lin-

gos, had long been members of St. Mark's or, in some cases, Trinity Chapel. He told me that during his early boyhood the Burtons gradually shifted their membership over to Grace Methodist Church. When I asked him why they left St. Mark's, he said that, for all his "Renaissance Man" ways, Rev. Wells was a terrible preacher—boring and dull. Mr. Burton's father, Fred, was the first member of the family to drop away. His mother decided to move the family over to Grace Methodist in order to keep her husband active in a church. The only member of the family who remained at St. Mark's was Mr. I.G.'s elder sister, Hilda. She stayed because Rev. Wells's young cousin by marriage, Jennie Wilgus, was her best friend and Hilda would not "abandon her." So, for all Wells's many talents and accomplishments, preaching was not one of them.

*Richard B. Carter
Millsboro, Delaware - 2009*

THE HISTORIC MILLSBORO PHOTOGRAPHS OF LEILA PARKER BURTON HARTHACK (1875–1960)

The photos on this page and many others illustrating this account come from a remarkable photograph album assembled by Leila Parker Burton Hartnack, the daughter and eldest child of Captain and Mrs. Theodore Burton. Born in Millsboro in 1875, Mrs. Hartnack grew up there and graduated from the Women's College at Newark, now part of the University of Delaware. She spent much of her adult life in San Francisco before her death in 1960. Upon her passing, she left the album to her nephew, Irwin G. Burton II, of Milford, Delaware (1908-2004).

Her maternal grandfather, Peter Parker, III, was a captain of sailing ships as was her own father. Captain Theodore Burton retired from his seafaring career upon the death of his wife when Leila was 18, in order to be closer to his family. Captain Burton's father, John Hillyard Burton, had owned much of the land on which the town of Millsboro was situated. Captain Burton and his son, Fred, established a canning factory on the edge of Millsboro where they produced canned tomatoes and other products under their "Tiger Valley Brand," named for a small tributary of the Indian River known as Tiger Valley Branch. They also opened a general store in Millsboro from which Fred Burton began selling cars in 1908, thereby becoming one of the earliest automobile dealers on the Delmarva Peninsula.

A few years after these photos were made, Leila moved to California, where she met her future husband and spent the remainder of her life. The rest of the Burton family also left Millsboro after the end of World War I, moving to Philadelphia. All three children returned to Sussex to live, however. Hilda married the well-known Millsboro native and big league baseball player, Jesse Jones. Interestingly, her best friend from girlhood, Jennie Wilgus, married Millsboro's other famous ballplayer of the early 20th century, Walter "Huck" Betts. Hilda passed away in 1939. Theodore II became a well-known Georgetown automobile dealer before his death in 1942. After excelling in sports at Swarthmore, I. G. settled in Milford and established several successful automobile dealerships there and in Seaford. He passed away at the grand old age of 96 in 2004, having devoted much of his time in his later years to family history. We are greatly indebted to Mr. Burton and his daughter, Bonnie Burton Barnidge, for the use of these marvelous photographs.



Leila Burton as a young woman with her niece, Hilda, and her nephew, Theodore Burton II, in early 1900s Millsboro. Hilda and Theodore were the two eldest of the three children of Leila's brother, Fred Hillyard Burton, and his wife, Nell Lingo Burton. The youngest of the three, Irwin Gwynn Burton II, was born in 1908. He later inherited the photo album from which these images were copied (courtesy of the I. G. Burton family).

Richard B. Carter, 2009



Carriage dealer –

B. F. Jones's "Carriage Bazaar" was the horse-and-buggy equivalent of an automobile dealership. This building is believed to be still standing and now (2009) serves as an antique/used furniture store on Main Street across from Millsboro Auto Parts.



The Mill Dam – This view shows the Millsboro Mill Dam and earthen causeway at the head of the Indian River as it was at the turn of the century. At left is a general store once operated by the grandfather of Sen. Richard S. Cordrey. At right is the largest gristmill in the Millsboro area, operated for many years by Mr. Charles Godfrey. The house in the center is one of the oldest in Millsboro and is still standing.



Blackistone's Pharmacy — Located on State Street between Main and Washington Streets, the store was operated by Dr. Ernest Blackistone, who lived next door along Main Street. The store building is still standing and is now known as Carey's Paint Shop.



At the Station — A crowd awaiting the arrival of a train at the local Pennsylvania Railroad station. This structure is still standing, though in altered form, along Railroad Avenue between Morris Street and Wilson Highway. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the railroad station was the nerve center of the community, its door to the outside world.

**Some Views of Millsboro
in the early 1900's —**

These photographs are reproduced from the family photograph album of Leila Parker Burton Hartnack, aunt of the late I.G. Burton, II, of Milford. These photos are taken from postcards made to order by itinerant photographers who visited the town at intervals (courtesy of the I. G. Burton family).



Main Street, Millsboro—looking toward the southwest, circa 1905. This photograph was taken from a position in the middle of the street at a point about where the Millsboro Auto Supply business is located today, looking in the direction of the railroad track. The intersection of Main and State Streets is several houses down from where this photo was taken.

Millsboro Public School — This structure was located at the corner of Church and Morris Streets, on the present-day site of Grace United Methodist Church, and served all twelve grades. The building was moved from this location to make room for the construction of the church. It was divided into several sections and for years one section stood along Wilson Highway at the railroad track at what is today the entrance to the Millsboro Civic Center parking lot.

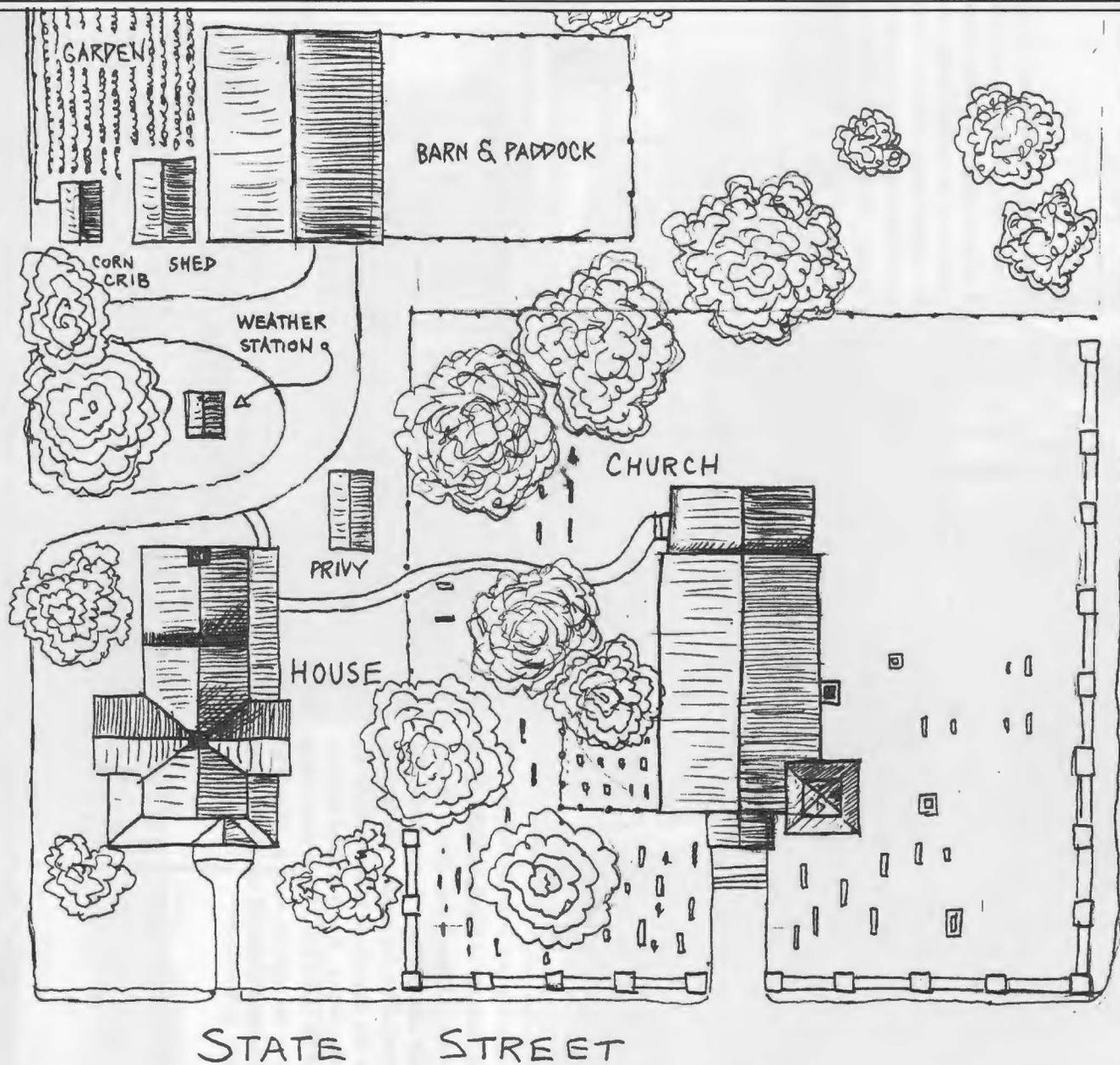


Burton's Store — Fred Burton's general store on Main Street in Millsboro. The business was started by his father, Captain Theodore Burton, after he retired from sailing ships. Among the employees and customers shown, Mr. Fred Burton is standing second from left. A few years after this photo was taken, the Burton family opened the first of what was to become numerous automobile dealerships.

THE WELLS
Establishment
AND
ST. MARK'S
Church ~

ABOUT 1900

LOCATIONS OF ALL BUILDINGS
EXCEPT HOUSE AND CHURCH
ARE CONJECTURAL, ALTHOUGH
OUT-BUILDINGS OF THESE
TYPES ARE KNOWN TO HAVE
EXISTED.



R.B. CARTER

PART SECOND OF A JOURNAL
FOR THE YEAR 1896
COMMENCING WITH SATURDAY, JULY FOURTH



Saturday, July 4th

Somewhat hazy and at times signs of showers in the southwest. Quite a strong southerly wind. Many went to Oak Orchard. The train was 30 minutes late at noon. Loaned Mr. George Morris [owner of the local livery stable] \$8.33. Can't understand how he is so short of money. The Methodist Protestant Church began services in Mrs. Thoroughgood's hall over by her place, the old Wright-Waples place, on last Sunday. Artemus Betts officiates. The Baptists will have about finished repairing their church and will hold a dedication Sunday, July 12.

The work of laying the foundation for the new M.E. Church began this week.¹ Bought one-half pound of powder but did not get time to use any, either in my Sharps .52 or in the old heavy muzzle loader (about .38 [caliber]). Mrs. Atkins, Ethel and Blaine called with Mrs. Joshua Atkins and her little girl.²

V Sunday After Trinity [July 5th]

(89 degrees - 72 degrees, 1" R[ain])

Had S.S. [Sunday School] with a small attendance. Only nine out to service. Had the Holy Communion with seven communicants. It came on to rain so we gave up the evening service. . .

Monday, July 6th

(87 degrees - 70 degrees .79" R)



*The Reverend
Lewis Wheeler Wells
in 1913 at age 58*

Cloudy with showers in the afternoon. Not so warm as yesterday but still close. Swept out the wood house; hoed beans and cleared some of the accumulations in the coal house. Sallie has been doctoring Tommie the Cat who is very sick. Did a little practicing with clarinet and flageolet. Emma Baker began this morning on two weeks trial [as a maid] at 75 cents [per day].

Wednesday, July 8th

(7 a.m. 66 degrees - 8 a.m. 64 degrees)

Cloudy, heavy rain early and quite a rain from 9 a.m. Wind NE and growing colder. Began to pick Old Homestead beans today. Practiced a little on the violin. Mr. Geo. Tunnell called while I was away to the Guild [the St. Mark's ladies' group, which met monthly] yesterday. He finds the clarinet sounds all right now but I made some mistakes in

the writing of a diagram of fingering the scale. Wrote a long letter correcting mistakes and adding new points. Harry Holland was here after dinner. [He] had a flute and ocarina. We practiced a little.

Thursday, July 9th

. . .Went to the station at 3:30 p.m. for a package from Wanamaker. Tommie the Cat had a sinking spell at noon and we did not think he would live until night. Gave him lard, milk and catnip tea in the evening. . . . Received a card from the Bishop . . . Hear the School Commissioners propose putting in Mr. Ellis as principal and Carrie Lingo as primary teacher.³

1. At this time the Methodist Episcopal Church (M.E.) was the town's 'leading church. The "M.E.'s" had recently sold their old church building to a newly-established Baptist congregation, which moved the building to a new site along Washington Street. The Methodists were building a newer, larger building at their site on the corner of Main and Church Sts. This newer church burned in the early 1900's and was replaced by still another church, which now serves in much altered form as the Millsboro Art League.

2. "Blaine" is William Blaine Atkins, who later became a prominent Millsboro businessman and dentist. His uncle Joshua Atkins was a local farmer and musician.

REV. AND MRS. WELLS OF ST. MARK'S CHURCH

The photo at left shows Rev. Lewis W. Wells standing in the doorway of St. Mark's Church. Below is a photo of Mrs. Sallie Wells as she appeared about 1910. Both photographs are from the Burton family album.



Wells Anniversary – Photograph of the special service held at St. Mark's on December 15, 1912, in honor of the 25th Anniversary of Lewis Wells's ministry there. He and his wife, Sallie, stand at center, with then Bishop Frederick Kinsman visible between them. By this time, Lewis Wells was the senior rector of the diocese. (*Diocese of Delaware Annual, 1914*)

The foundation of the M.E. Church is progressing. The [Democratic National] Convention at Chicago appears to be fully decided for "Free Silver" to oppose the "Gold Standard" of the Republicans. Fitzgerald of Illinois and Tillman of South Carolina are leading spirits. Pattison of Penna. has a strong force at his back, but he will fail. Russell of Mass. makes quite a show but carries little weight.

Friday, July 10th

. . . Harry Holland came around. He showed me some points in riding the Wheel.⁴ Mr. [William Jennings] Bryan of Nebraska was nominated for President by the Democratic Party at Chicago . . . Sallie put up some black-berry jelly, jam and simple canned berries. Tommie the Cat is improving. The boys have organized a brass band and think of hiring Prof. Prosko to teach them. His terms are \$5.00 and expenses for two lessons a week. . .

Saturday, August 1st

. . . We packed our grip and made a large bundle to

3. Gardiner Littell Ellis, son of Rev. Wells's predecessor as rector of St. Mark's, Rev. William Ellis, was a Millsboro school teacher. He was named for prominent Delaware Episcopal priest, the Rev. T(homas) Gardiner Littell (1837-1911). Mr. Ellis's wife, Sallie Quillen Ellis, was a well-known school teacher in Millsboro in later years. Carrie Lingo was a member of a Millsboro family who were members of St. Mark's Church. She later married local grocer, Jacob A. "Alley" Burton. Their son, A. Wayne Burton, became a prominent educator in Millsboro in later years.

4. Wells had just acquired a new bicycle, which he called his "wheel," and he was learning to ride it with the help of more experienced friends.

5. Will Messick was a young medical doctor in Lewes, the son of the Wells's close friend and relative, Dr. John W. Messick of Georgetown.

6. The Rev. Henry Draper Speakman, a New Jersey native, had run an Episcopal mission for black youngsters in Wilmington beginning in 1891. In 1893 he was ordained to the ministry. When his health began to fail in 1895, Bishop Coleman reassigned him to the newly erected All Saints Church in Rehoboth, thinking a dose of salt air would be beneficial. He lived in Lewes and in the summer he was assisted by vacationing Episcopal ministers from around the Diocese.



MR GEORGE MORRIS
As he appeared in 1915. See journal entry for Saturday, July 4, 1896. (courtesy of the I. G. Burton Family)

take with us. Took the train at 3:29 p.m. for Georgetown (Engine 147). Found the air quite cool in the shade. Will Messick showed me his office and fittings he has a large stock of medicines and some valuable instruments.⁵ His office is small but very neat. We took the evening train down to Rehoboth. It was more than one hour late. Mr. Speakman got on at Lewes.⁶

We went to the Hotel Henlopen, which is kept by Messrs. Smith and Ford of Dover. . . the air was cool and it was very pleasant on the porch. I was on the Henlopen porch in 1885. Went down from Geo'town with Kerr and the men he had placing the organ in the church.⁷ Had an old wood-burning balloon pipe engine of the old Breakwater Railroad. It was in June just

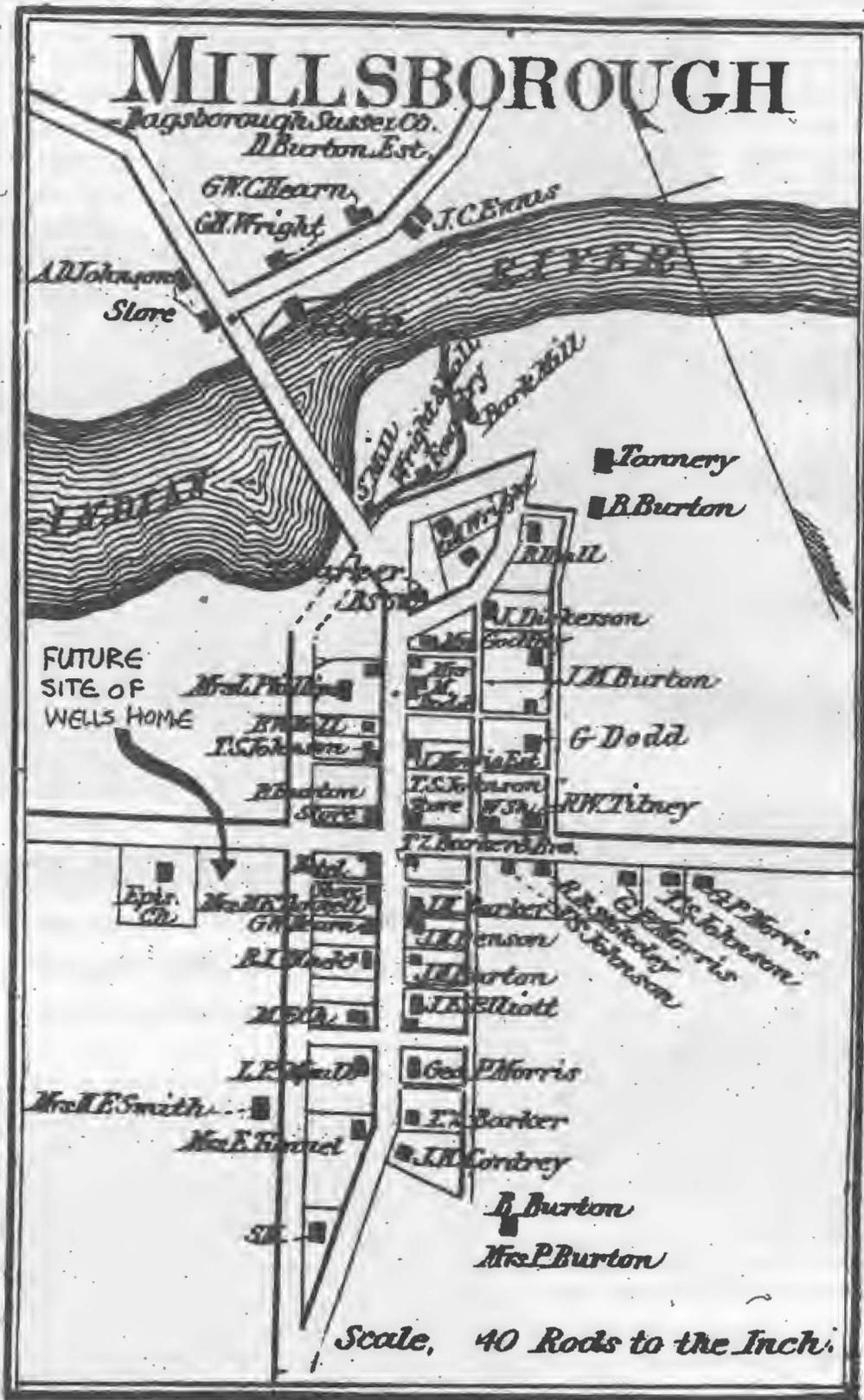
before the P.W. & B.R.R. purchased the road.⁸

IX Sunday After Trinity (August 2nd)

. . . Was up early and went around to the church - All

7. The Rev. James C. Kerr, onetime rector of St. Paul's, Georgetown, and Christ Church, Milford, was is believed to have been the man who introduced Wells to the Diocese of Delaware. The two had become friendly in Delhi, New York in 1882. In the mid 1880's, Kerr came to Georgetown to become rector of St. Paul's Church there. According to Wm. J. Wade's 1975 book, 16 Miles from Anywhere - A History of Georgetown, Del. (Page 48): "Much of the internal beautification of the church came during the pastorate of the Reverend James C. Kerr." [Wade notes elsewhere on Page 48 that Kerr was responsible for installation of a pipe organ in the church, as mentioned by Wells - R.B.C.] "Despite his work to improve the church, Reverend Kerr was unhappy, for St. Paul's did not have a rectory and the rectors were forced either to provide their own home or else to live in a hotel. Kerr gave voice to his dissatisfaction in 1886, when he told the vestry, in no uncertain terms, that he could not put up with hotel life any longer. Apparently Kerr was sincere in his complaint, for his pastorate ended in January of the next year." Kerr moved on from Georgetown to Christ Church, Milford. He died in 1895.

8. The Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore R.R. purchased the old Junction & Breakwater Line running from Georgetown to Rehoboth, in 1885. The P.W. & B.R.R. was itself later absorbed by the Pennsylvania R.R.



Map of Millsboro — The 1868 Beers' Atlas of Delaware contains this map of the town of Millsboro as it appeared some 20 years before the start of Lewis Wells's ministry there. The St. Mark's Episcopal Church lot is marked at center left. The future site of the Wells's home is marked on the map next to the church.

Saints. Had early communion with about 20 in ch. and 15 communicants. Mr. Speakman and his boy assisted at the service. He had a children's service or S.S. at 9:30 a.m. Sallie and I went to the 10:30 service. It was a shortened form of the Morning Prayer with the Holy Communion - my part was to celebrate and preach. After dinner Mr. Speakman took me around to see his friend, Mr. Ruddell of Balto. and Mr. and Mrs. Dick. We also stopped in to see some of Mr. Horn's people.⁹ He [Rev. Speakman] had Evening Prayer and I took the Absolution and Benediction.



The Methodist Episcopal Church – *The forerunner of the present Grace United Methodist Church, this structure was situated at the corner of Main and Church Streets. It is still standing in greatly altered form and serves today as the home of the Millsboro Art League.*

An oldish and a young man (both were German) gave some nice selections on piano and violin in the evening. They were both well-trained musicians . . . Wish to work up the pizzicato after the style of the Rehoboth violinist.

Monday, August 3rd

. . . Took the hack for the train. Noticed the canal as we came away.¹⁰ We went to the bank in Georgetown [there being no bank in Millsboro at the time]. Also stopped into Vincents for some silver novelty. . .

Tuesday, August 11th

. . . I painted for Seymour Downes a name for his boat. He sent a board by Mr. Burton. The name was MARGURITE, WARWICK.¹¹

Saturday, August 15th

, , , Our hens are laying very well of late and we have three hens sitting. Peach season is on the wane but they

9. Charles S. Horn (1860-1938) operated a famous Rehoboth amusement pier, "Horn's Pavillion," built in the late 1880s. It included a theater, dance hall and recreation room. In later years, after twice suffering major damage from storms, Horn moved his business ashore, into a Rehoboth Avenue location.

10. Work had just begun on the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal, which wasn't completed until about 1912.

11. Seymour Downes lived at Downes Landing on the Indian River near Warwick. He was the grandfather of well-known Sussex County historian Hazel Downes Brittingham of Lewes.

still run an extra freight up. The down freight is very light nowadays. Fodder saving is very near. Camp-meeting at Carey's begins today.¹²

XII Sunday After Trinity [August 23]

(93 degrees - 70 degrees)

Very hot and sultry. The OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS held service morning and afternoon. They had services yesterday afternoon and evening. Sallie and I went at ten o'clock. Service began about 10:15 a.m. Order of Service: Hymn, short prayer, hymn, sermon, collection hymn, benediction. The preacher was from Accomac Co[unty], Va. (from his remarks it appeared so). Text 1 S.Pet. 1. 3-4. Worship toward God for electing us to lively hope by the resurrection finds its realization as an inheritance reserved in Heaven. None seek grace but those "moved" or "called" by the spirit. Two classes of believers among all shades of opinion: those who believe in God and those who really believe in something standing between them and God, e.g. good works, mercy, charity and the like, when they should go straight to the Lord., 'A lively hope', no falling from Grace, but holding on. cf. S. Paul's 'thesis in the flesh, "my Grace is sufficient for thee", Once in grace, always in grace. mention common criticism on it. Examples of

12. At this time there were over 50 summer religious camp-meetings in Delaware. Carey's Camp, which still flourishes southwest of Millsboro, started about 1886.

so-called "falls" only show they never were in grace. O.S. Baptists great sticklers for "experimental piety" no schooling can grasp by artificial scriptural truth. "Reserved in Heaven", Resort to hereafter, now have a foretaste - just enough to keep our courage up...There were three ministers at the O.S. Baptist Ch. They had another sermon at 2:30 p.m. Many came from a distance to attend. They have \$350 to raise to clear off their debt. Carey's Camp ends today. Mr. Millard Johnson and family went to Rehoboth to attend camp.¹³

Tuesday, August 25th

(78 degrees - 62 degrees)

The school house near Phillips Hill was damaged by certain parties the other night. It is thought they were of the party opposed to moving the building this side of Mr. Joh. Atkins. Had quite a talk with a Mr. Atkins, Joshua Atkins's cousin. (He is tilling corn for Myers Betts.) We called at Mr. George W. D. Johnson's in the evening. Misses Annie and Emma Fosque are still visiting them. Many young people went to a watermelon party to Shipley Phillips's in the evening.¹⁴ Mr. Cannon Ellis's boys had an accident at the end of our lane. Their horse shied so suddenly as to overturn their covered wagon. The wheels were more or less mashed.

Thursday, August 27th

... An excursion to Ocean City, a ten-car train, stopped here a little after ten o'clock and a thirteen-car train went thro' just about eleven. We made some unfermented wine. Sallie picked over a bushel (nearly a bushel and a half) of dry beans. Mr. Frame made us a present of two watermelons.¹⁵

Tuesday, Sept. 8th (80 degrees - 71 degrees)

... Quite a number went to see the patent medicine show in Blackstone's yard [Dr. Ernest Blackstone was the

13. This refers to the Methodist camp-meeting in Rehoboth Beach's oak grove.

14. Shipley Phillips, a member of St. Mark's, lived in a large house at Phillips Hill, two miles southwest of Millsboro, and operated a general store there (both house and store are still standing in 2009).

15. Mr. Paynter Frame, also a parishoner and a prominent local farmer, was a bachelor, a horticulturalist and a leading authority on the cultivation of watermelons. He was known in Delaware as "the watermelon king." He was prominent in politics and was an unsuccessful Democratic candidate for governor. He attended every Democratic national convention from 1848 until nearly the turn of the 20th century.

16. Houston White Co. was a large fruit and produce basket manufacturing company headquartered along the railroad track in Millsboro. It also had a building materials, hardware and general merchandise division.

local pharmacist]. It is Sayman's Remedy and Concert Co. of St. Louis, Missouri. They sell herb tonic, soap, salve and liniment. One of the showmen does very good work copying photos in oils. Samples are on sight at the hotel. He also decorates watch fobs with ornamental devices. They had a big attendance in the evening. One man did some good acts on the flying trapeze. . . ordered of Houston and White 9 tons of coal for ourselves and one for the church @ \$6.40 per ton delivered.¹⁶ Tried a test for sugar in urine in a sample given me by Dr. Jones.

Friday, Sept. 18th

...Went to the mill for a dollar's worth of meal (2 1/2 Bus. 40q.) . Received a number of Republican speeches thro' the mail. Sent to Ditson's for Schumann's Study After Paganini for the piano (opus 3). Practiced some on the violin on page 118, J.S. Bach's Sonata in C Minor, the adagio movement after the presto.

Monday, Sept. 21st (72 degrees - 45 degrees)

...Nine cars went up as an excursion train to Dover where Bryan the Democrat Nominee will speak. [He refers here to William Jennings Bryan, then making the first of his three runs for the Presidency]

Saturday, Sept. 26th (77 degrees - 51 degrees)

Quite a crowd in town. Work going on at the Old Store, electing delegates to Tuesday's meeting for the formation of the County ticket.¹⁷

Tuesday, Sept. 29th

... We took the train for Georgetown. Two extra cars. Many were going to see Main's Circus. They had a good procession with camels, an elephant, and a lion on top of a cage. Steam Calliope. They exhibited on Ewing's Lot where Robin's Show held forth in 1886. Dr. [John Messick] and I went out to see the great single high summersault. They had a 60 ft. ladder with a step

17. At this time the official "voting grounds" for Millsboro were at Burton's Old Store, a short distance southwest of the town. The area, on the west side of present-day U.S. 113 south of Old Landing Road, was the site of a large plantation complex settled by the Dagsboro Hundred branch of Sussex County's huge and influential Burton clan in the 18th century. It had been the home of the Benjamin Burton, who during the Civil War, was Delaware's largest slaveowner. He met several times with President Abraham Lincoln in an ultimately unsuccessful pre-Emancipation Proclamation effort to develop a plan under which the federal government would have bought slaves from slaveholders in border states and freed them. The complex appears on the 1850 Ray & Price Map of Delaware as "Burtonville." The "Old Landing Road" running by the property was the original 18th Century road from the plantation to the Burton family's landing on the Indian River.

on top from which a man made a fall with one turn onto a netting ten feet from the ground. A fine sight. Fine work stake-driving by six or eight men with heavy hammers, each man striking in rotation. Very rapid work done in putting up tents and arranging things for the exhibition. Dr. and I went to look at the political meeting at the Courthouse. They did not nominate Custis Burton, but a brother-in-law of W.H. Boyce.¹⁸ The society has broken ground for the new M.E. Ch. It will stand across the alley from the old ch[urch]. on McFee's land. To cost about \$10,000 . . . Saw Mr. Geo. Wilson about his terms for painting and graining. He charges \$2.50 per day and board when away from home. . . They have a man at Messick's crossing to flag people when trains are coming. He is a man that lost his hand some time ago. He was so drunk today they had to relieve him for a few hours.¹⁹

XIX Sunday After Trinity (October 11th)

(73 degrees - 56 degrees)

...Read quite a good article on Cardinal Newman and for the first time came across that celebrated piece headed "Nemesis." Found it in the CENTURY for June, 1882.

18. William H. Boyce was a Georgetown lawyer who later became a judge and a one-term U. S. Congressman.

19. Messick's Crossing was the main railroad crossing on East Market St. in Georgetown where Dr. Messick's home and office was located. The building is still standing and now serves as the office of the Sussex County Legal Aid Society.

20. and 21. A great schism broke out in the Delaware Republican Party in the mid-1890's over the efforts of the municipal gas company speculator J. Edward Addicks to "buy" a U.S. Senate seat from Delaware. U.S. Senators were elected by joint sessions of the General Assembly prior to the ratification of the 17th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution in 1913, providing for their popular election. In 1896, the state G.O.P. broke into two separate parties, the "Addicks Republicans" which took the name "Union Republicans," and the "Higgins Republicans" which took the name "Regular Republicans." The Higgins faction was named for two of its leaders, former U.S. Senator Anthony Higgins and his brother, John Clark Higgins, who ran on the Regular ticket for governor in 1896. Robert G. Houston, then a young Georgetown attorney and editor of the SUSSEX REPUBLICAN (later the SUSSEX COUNTIAN), ran on the Regular ticket for Congress. Both lost (though Houston later served four terms in Congress). The breach wasn't healed until 1906 and it once caused Delaware to go for two years with no U.S. Senators at all.

22. Old Rev. John Linn McKim (1813-1909) was the senior Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Delaware. He had served in Sussex County churches since the 1840's, including twice serving as rector of St. Paul's, Georgetown. He was educated and later taught at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. He taught Greek at Delaware College during its first year under that name. When he first came to Georgetown, he was headmaster of the local academy as well as rector of St. Paul's. McKim also served as U.S. Consul in an English city for five years from 1889 to 1894. By the time of Wells's journal entry, he was living in retirement in Georgetown. He is also said to have been the uncle of famed turn-of-the-century ar-

A good article in the May number, 1882, on Cardinal Manning. Alley [Jacob A. Burton, a local merchant and one of Wells's best friends] tells us a tugboat went down off Fenwick's Island last Tuesday without much warning. Curtis Waggamon, brother of B. Frank [of Georgetown]; Mr. Lingo, father of Mr. "D." Lingo, and others from Sussex went down with the boat. The bark they were towing had to cut loose the lead line to save being swamped. Reports of a violent storm all along the coast. Three men drowned at Lewes while the life saving crew were working to save them. Just as a line was sent to a mast on the wrecked vessel, the mast gave way and they were lost.

Monday, October 19th (57 degrees - 50 degrees 1.08"R)

The Addicks Republicans had a meeting here today. The Laurel Band came to play for them. They had a fine team of six horses. They went on to Frankford..²⁰

Wednesday, October 21st (70 degrees - 45 degrees)

. . . Went with Mr. Burton down by the branch where the old Burton house stood. Saw cypress root knots, of which Mr. McKim said they used to make well buckets and measures.²¹ Mr. Burton's well is lined with a cypress curb made of lengths about 3 feet long and more in diameter. He has some fine bald cedar trees by the branch [bald cypress and Atlantic white cedar, very similar in appearance, were both common to the area].

Saturday, October 24th (60 degrees - 43 degrees .18"R)

We went to hear the Higgins Republicans. Saw Robert H. Richards [later a prominent Wilmington attorney]. Michael Byrne was chief speaker [Byrne later shifted his allegiance to the opposing Union Republican faction amidst much hue and cry about treachery]. Candidates J.C. Higgins (Governor) and Robert G. Houston (Representative) made remarks. The Geo'town Band were along. Abbott was with them. They went on to Frankford.²² Gardiner Ellis had quite an adventure one night coming from Laurel. A drunken man with a gun made him drive a long distance.²³

Tuesday, Nov. 3rd

chitect Charles McKim of the firm of McKim, Mead & White, although I've been unable as yet to conclusively prove this connection. Local Georgetown legend has it that Stanford White as a young architect came to Georgetown and assisted in the remodelling of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 1881.

23. Such incidents were not entirely unheard of, but violent crime was uncommon in the Sussex County of the late 1890s.

Clear and quite warm. Many were disappointed about the election. It appears the Higgins men put up a job on the Addicks men by selling out to the Democrats. They wrangled over the appointment of voters' assistant and thus caused there to be no election. I went out about four o'clock [to the voting grounds southwest of town]. Quite a number of stands [selling such delicacies as oyster fritters, cider, ham, cakes and pies] but not the usual interest in eating ...

Wednesday, Nov. 4th

...Report says McKinley has been elected, having received nearly double the number of electoral votes Bryan received. In Delaware Tunnell [Lewes merchant Ebe Tunnell, the Democratic candidate for Governor] and the Democratic ticket were elected and McKinley's electors were elected. It is generally admitted Higgins sold out the state [Republican] ticket in order to secure the electors.

Monday, Nov. 16th (69 degrees - 41 degrees)

...Wrote to Frank asking a loan to bridge me over the present church expenses.²⁴ Sallie is working at some flower painting [with a new set of oil paints she'd just received by mail]. Received a card from the Bishop asking me to come to Milford on urgent business. Decided to go. Asked Gardiner Ellis to go also as a delegate.

Tuesday, Nov. 17th (73 degrees - 43 degrees)

...Gardiner and I took the new train up at 1:39 p.m. We have coming Monday a mixed train up every day but Sunday at 1:39, returning in the evening at 7:40 p.m. Miss Helen McKim [daughter of Christ Church, Milford, Rector, J. Leighton McKim and granddaughter of Rev. Jonathan Linn McKim] met us at the station and directed us to Mrs. Bogart's. In the evening after services I was quartered at Mrs. Gilman's (next house). At the missionary meeting I was to speak second on



Governor Charles C. Stockley

why men should go to church. Mr. Smith of Laurel began by treating why men do not go to church. Mr. Taylor of Lewes closed by telling how to bring men into the church.

Wednesday, Nov. 18th

(76 degrees - 44 degrees)

Had an electric light in my room all night and could not turn it off. It was out of order. Gardiner came after me and we took a walk down by the creek. Some good, flat scenery. Saw men building a scow of about 25 x 70 feet. There is quite a sawing and planing mill along the creek. Two or three schooners [were under construction]. Went to the opening of the teacher's institute at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Ellis played "America." Rev. Martindale made a prayer and Mr. Bernstein gave the opening address . . . Dr. Winship of Boston told how much it cost to determine the length of a degree on the earth; also talked of the bearing of wheat upon the advance of a nation. Gardiner and I went to Ch[urch]. at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Bond of Dover preached on "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in the breaking of bread and in prayers." . . . The Bishop kept me talking so long at Mrs. Rudebash's I had no time to get my supper. Speakman and Taylor came down on the train I took. Reached home before 8:00. Found Frank had written and sent me the needful.

EXCERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL
FOR THE YEAR 1897

Saturday, Jan. 9th (41 degrees - 18 degrees)

Mrs. J.E.M. Burton brought us two bushels of potatoes the other day and some buckwheat flour and a pound of butter today. Mr. Robert Showell called on his way down home from a gunning visit at the White House.²⁵

The Lit. Society met here in the evening to talk about getting up a drama for Washington's Birthday. They decided to have "East Lyme" and "Ten Nights in a Bar-room."

24. Wells had recently paid to have St. Mark's raised up and a new brick foundation put underneath it. Thus he was short of money and needed a loan from his brother.

The hanging of James Gordy – This contemporary photograph shows the crowd gathered behind the Sussex County Courthouse in Georgetown to attend the execution by hanging of notorious convicted murderer James M. Gordy. From Wells's description, there was apparently almost a carnival atmosphere. This photo looks across the rear yard of the courthouse toward East Market Street. The row of buildings at right are situated along what was known as Cherry Lane and included attorney's offices, the office of the local newspaper and similar enterprises. The courthouse itself is seen in its original 1836 configuration. It was greatly enlarged in the early 1900s, extending out to Cherry Lane. An even larger addition was constructed in the late 1960s, at which time that section of Cherry Lane and the entire row of office buildings, as well as the buildings along that block of Market Street, were demolished. (The original glass plate negative from which this photo was made is in the collection of Mr. Nick Varrato of Millsboro. Photographer unknown.)



Thursday, Jan. 21st (55 degrees - 40 degrees)

They had a cornerstone laying at the M.E. Ch. - Rev'd's. Terry, Grise, Brewington and Eiswald. They do not close the box [time capsule] until next week. Met Gov. Stockley on the street...²⁶ The M.E. Ch. had a festival at the hall in the evening.

Sunday, March 14th

.. . Bishop. Coleman preaches at Geo'town and Milton today. Much excitement over a murder in Milton said to have been done by a Mr. Gordy who lives near Milton. Gordy was caught near Georgetown trying to get away. Many went up to Geo'town today hoping to

25. Robert Showell was the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Dale Showell of Worcester County, Md. The elder Mrs. Showell, born Mary Catherine Burton, had in 1883 inherited the old Burton family plantation, White House Farm, on Long Neck in Sussex County's Indian River Hundred. Robert Showell was married to the daughter of Gov. John Letcher, Civil War Governor of Virginia. His son, Sam H. Showell, retired to White House Farm in the 1950's, after a successful career in business and with his sons developed the property into "White House Beach," the first mobile home community on Long Neck. The Showell family still owns the property and occupies the original house, which dates from the early 18th century.

26. Former Governor Charles Clark Stockley, a onetime Millsboro merchant now living in Georgetown. A prominent businessman, he served in a number of public offices, including that of Governor of Delaware (continued on next page) (1883-1887). He was a director of the Junction and Breakwater Railroad, the first to run through southeastern Sussex County and the small station of Stockley between Millsboro and Georgetown was named for him. Stockley owned a large farm not far from the station location. Born in 1819, he died in 1901.

see the man. . . [this was the locally famous Jim Gordy case]

Saturday, March 20th

Sallie and I went to the Prosho concert. He played some fine things: "Sounds from Homer," "Mocking Bird," "Organ Imitation." Mr. Edward Todd did comedy work and showed much skill on the banjo, ocarina, musette, flagolet-piccolo and other novelties in the tin flute order. The Geo'town band came down and played certain pieces. Mr. Showell sent us some salt meat, hams, shoulders, etc., etc.

Monday, May 17th

.. . Met the Bishop at the train. (64 degrees - 52 degrees) He took dinner with us. Did not leave until nearly 4 o'clock for Trinity and he slept from Jesse Workman's to the Chas. Collins place, having been up so much of late that he was obliged to make up sleep. We stopped at Chas. Lingo's. Good turn out at service. We reached home at 11:30 p.m. He stopped at Mr. J.C. Ellis's. Very cool riding...He is sick with the bilious.²⁷

27. Wells was taking Bishop Leighton Coleman on his annual visitation to Trinity Chapel, Long Neck, which Wells served in addition to St. Mark's, Millsboro. The Bishop often stayed with Episcopal families in Millsboro on his visits. Wikipedia on-line encyclopedia defines "bilious fever" as: "any fever that exhibits the symptom of nausea or vomiting in addition to an increase in internal body temperature. The term is no longer in use, but was commonly used by medical practitioners in the 18th and 19th centuries. Causes strong diarrhea."

Wednesday, May 19th

(75 degrees - 56 degrees)

.. . Walked out to see the Bp. He is much better. He tells me C.H.B. Turner formerly of New Castle, now Dean of Nashville Cathedral, has asked to be his chaplain on his visit to the Lambeth Conference.²⁸ They leave June 12thtain pieces. Mr. Showell sent us some salt meat, hams,, shoulders, etc., etc. and return about Sept. 12th. . .

Friday, June 11th

.Clear and very pleasant. Quite a cool breeze. Commencing very early trains were going to Georgetown to see the execution of James M. Gordy of whom the papers have had so much to say. I went to the train with Mrs. Kerr [widow of the Rev. James C. Kerr and a close friend of the Wells']. She will stop off at Geo'town to see Dr. Messick. According to reports about 100 witnessed the execution. The drop went at 10:27 a.m. Death in 11 1/2 minutes by strangulation . . . Prof. Fresenins died in Wiesbaden of apoplexy at age 79.

BAPTISMS AT TRINITY

June 13th, 1897

At Evening Service:

Madge Nova, born June 10, 1894

Virginia Mary, born Dec. 17, 1895

Children of William H. Jarmon

[and] Ellen Mary Trader

Alfred Lee²⁹, born Jan. 25, 1895

Child of John E. M. Burton

[and] Josephine Dodd

28. Bishop Coleman was preparing to attend the Lambeth Conference in England that summer. The conference, held every ten years, is a gathering of all the churches in the worldwide Anglican Communion, of which the Archbishop of Canterbury is the titular head. The Protestant Episcopal Church is the U.S. Anglican denomination. Lambeth includes delegations of laity, clergy and prelates from throughout the world. The Rev. C.H.B. Turner later served as Rector of St. Peter's, Lewes. A talented amateur historian, he was the author of the 1909 work, *Some Records of Sussex County Delaware*

29. "Alfred Lee" Burton was almost certainly named for Bishop Alfred Lee, first bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware, who had served in that capacity from the early 1840s until the 1880s and was much loved by many Delaware Episcopalians. Bishop Lee may well have stayed in the Burton home during his travels in Sussex.



TRINITY CHAPEL, LONG NECK
As it appeared during the early 20th Century,

Emma Hettie, born Mar. 4, 1892,
Child of John Robert Warrington
[and] Lily M. Lynch

III Sunday After Trinity [July 4th]

(84 degrees - 64 degrees)

A few were out to evening service. People do not appear inclined to attend Ch. very regularly of late. One of the Jews I met at the hotel in '88 (Samuel Hankins) was at church. The brother of Maritz was with him.

Monday, July 5th (88 degrees - 64 degrees)

.. . Many went to Sandy Landing. Manaen Hurdle had difficulty getting his refreshment van down there. They were stalled at the second run toward Dagsboro (near Mr. Truitt's place).³⁰

XI Sunday After Trinity [August 28th]

(83 degrees - 58 degrees)

30. Sandy Landing is near the point where Vines Creek and Pepper's Creek join the Indian River. In the 19th and early 20th centuries it was a favorite gathering spot on the Fourth of July (or the Fifth of July in years where the Fourth was a Sunday). Among the attractions were mobile food wagons selling delicacies of the season such as that which Manaen Hurdle was trying to get to Sandy Landing when he had trouble. In some years there were over a thousand people there (and, of course, local politicians never missed it).

...Had Sunday School with a small attendance. People are still hunting after Sunday amusements. Some went to Milton to take the excursion on the Queenstown Railroad lately built.³¹ It's a two hour run from Milton.

Monday, August 29th

(90 degrees - 64 degrees)

...Was up early picking grapes. Went with Mr. Ellis to Charles West's place where we used his cider mill. Pressed out between 11 and 12 gallons of juice. Reached home after 3 o'clock. Put in 50 lbs. of sugar and 8 gallons of water. Mr. Jno. A. Lingo has invited us to spend a day or two at their cottage at Oak Orchard. They are spending the week at the shore. . .

Wednesday, Sept. 1

We went to Oak Orchard reaching there about 10:15 a.m. Found things very pleasant, large porches and a good breeze. Met Miss Duval and Edward Mustard, John Johnson, Misses Hurdle (Burton Prettyman's granddaughters), Mary Carter and Laura Joseph (sister of Frank Joseph), Mrs. D.D. Lingo of Dagsboro and her mother, Mrs. (Short) Lingo, Mrs. Lida Burton, wife of Wm. Burton, son of Wm. Cord [Burton]. Kate Houston and her father were down. Mr. Houston went fishing down to Massey's [Landing, at the tip of Long Neck] early this morning. Mr. Eiswald was on hand with his boat and gave the company a sail. Mosquitoes were troublesome in the evening. Sallie and Mrs. Lingo went up to see Collins boathouse in the morning. The girls made several hauls with a small seine. They gave us the fish and crabs they caught.



CAPTAIN THEODORE BURTON
This photograph from the Burton family album shows Captain Burton late in life, a few years before his death at age 94 in 1942.

Thursday, Sept. 16th

(85 degrees - 55 degrees)

In the afternoon two peddlers—Syrians, a woman and her brother from Phila.—called. We bought a few things. They are R. Catholics. She speaks Greek and Arabic. He can read Arabic very well. Tried him on [my] Arabic St. Matthew's and selections from the Koran in Lansing's Arabic Manual. We gave them a night's lodging and breakfast and supper. He wrote a little Arabic on pages 21 and 33 [of Wells's Journal]. He had a Mass Book in Arabic and also showed some knowledge of the liturgy of the R.C. Church...

Monday, Sept. 20th

(70 degrees - 54 degrees)

Rabbi Rautch came down to circumsise a child at Abel Ableman's this noon. Many went to see the ceremony. I called at the Rabbi's after supper. He sang many selections for me.³²

EXCERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL FOR THE
YEAR 1898

Monday, Feb. 14th

I went out to blast the trunk of a big oak at the Old Store. The tree stood between the new store on the cor-

31. The Queenstown Railroad connected Lewes with Queenstown on the Chesapeake Bay side of the Delmarva Peninsula by way of Milton. It was connected to several popular amusement parks on the bayside. At the Lewes end the railroad's terminus was the famous iron pier.

32. Abel Ableman was a prosperous Millsboro merchant, farmer and landowner - who had come to the town some years before as an immigrant from Eastern Europe. He had made his start locally as an itinerant peddler living near Shaft Ox Corner southwest of Millsboro, but had prospered greatly since then. By the end of his life he was said to be one of the two largest landowners in the State of Delaware, the other being former Governor and U.S. Senator John G. Townsend, Jr., of Selbyville.

The Ablemans were among the few Jewish families in the area. Though they remained staunch in their faith this meant having to have a rabbi travel down from northern Delaware for special family occasions. Despite their status as observant Jews, the elder Ablemans participated fully in the life of the community. In later years several of the Ableman children were music students of the Wellises. Rev. Wells was especially fond of young Benjamin Ableman, who went on to become a successful Georgetown merchant. His younger brother, Meyer, was a prominent Sussex County attorney in later years, and another brother, Louis, was also a well-known local businessman. Wells, being avidly interested in Hebrew, never missed a chance to hear chants sung by the Rabbi and discuss religious practices with him.

ner and the wagon shop on the right side of the road—the tree must have been over one hundred years old. I estimated rings at 120. Burst the log with 1 lb. powder in a 24 in. hole made with an 1 1/2 inch auger - Had to put off finishing on account of a lack of powder.

Monday, March 28th

...The M.P. [Methodist Protestant] people are putting up a bell tower. The tower part is for a wood house [area in which to store firewood]. It is about 25 ft. high. They have a fair-size bell 7#. Received a letter from Uncle William from Lawrence, Kansas. He says that Alice is of a notion of going to Paris in 1900.³³

GOOD FRIDAY [April 8th]

... Shipley Phillips died about 11 a.m. He had the lock-jaw, having stepped on a nail more than a week ago (Wed. a week). Had not taken much account of the hurt. Tetanus set in Tuesday afternoon, and altho' he appeared to get better in some respects, he was taken with a spasm that struck a vital part at last. I rode out with Capt.[Theodore] Burton in the evening before service.³⁴

Tuesday, May 17th

(74 degrees - 55 degrees)

...The U.S. Fish Comm. put a quantity of young shad in the river ...

[On Wednesday, Sept. 28th, 1898, Lewis and Sallie Wells travelled to Lewes to attend Dr. Will Messick's wedding. They spent the night there before the ceremony.]

Thursday, Sept. 29th

Clear and warm. We were up early and took breakfast at the Virden House [a leading Lewes hotel of the day]. Dr. [John A. Messick] and I went out to the pier (Maull's) and went with Mr. Burbage on his naphtha launch.³⁵ He takes mail and orders to vessels. We visited the ship HEINRICH of Bremerhaven, the steamer ESKDALE of Glasgow and went aboard. Took her

33. "Uncle William" was William Dougall Wells, brother of Wells's father, Leonard Wells, and a resident of Lawrence, Kansas. His daughter, Alice Wheeler Wells, was to marry Lewis Wells's younger brother, Eugene Ford Wells, her first cousin, on Aug. 5, 1900. See Note 1 on page 4 for more complete description of the Wells family relationships.

34. Captain Theodore Burton (photo on previous page) was a prominent Millsboro citizen, magistrate, businessman and former sea captain in the days of sailing ships. Born in 1847, he lived until 1942. He was the son of John Hillyard Burton, who had owned much of the land on which the town of Millsboro was later situated.

captain on, then went to the VENUS and took her captain. Went to the OLGO, a German bark whose captain died of scurvy near Cape of Good Hope. Then went to the OBI of London, which had just arrived. Reached the pier about noon. The wedding was at the church at 2:15. We all took the train at 3:11 p.m. Will and his bride went to Phila. We came home on the evening train ...

Thursday, Oct. 20th

(66 degrees - 41 degrees)

... About 1:30 p.m. the staging gave way on the front of H.L. Barker's new house, precipitating both Mr. Burton and Mr. Dryden. Mr. Dryden's end did not give way so much but that he seized the window casing and saved himself. Mr. Burton fell 25 feet landing on his head and shoulder. He was badly injured and did not come to. I called to see Mr. Goslee. He is quite ill with some diabetic trouble. Stopped to see Mr. Burton on returning. Sent a telegram to Capt. Henry Burton of Woodbury, N.J., asking him to tell George and Mary to come home.³⁶

Friday, Oct. 21st (66 degrees - 44 degrees, .40 R)

... Was over to help Alley with his father at different times. Dr. Jones has no hope of recovery ... Mr. Burton died at 4:15 p.m. He was born in 1844. I wrote for the family the funeral notices they sent away (14 letters). Mr. Hickman is in charge [Harbeson Hickman, the local undertaker].

Tuesday, Oct. 25th (70 degrees - 42 degrees)

Frank came on the evening train. He rode his wheel from Clayton to Georgetown, then took the train. Many have gone to the Peace Jubilee in Phila. About 198,000 people went there today, so the papers estimate. ...³⁷

Monday, October 31st (54 degrees - 39 degrees)

Clear and cooler. Genie [Wells's brother, Eugene, was visiting] and I took a walk down the R.R. We went below

35. A naphtha launch was a refinement of the older steam launches. It used a process in which naphtha (a gasoline-like substance) was heated and vaporized. The launches closely resembled steam launches.

36. William E. Burton, a merchant and builder, was the father of J. Alley Burton, a member of St. Mark's Church and a close friend of the Wellses. Alley Burton was a well-known local grocer and father of prominent local educator of later years, A. Wayne Burton.

37. The Rev. Frank Wells, Lewis Wells's younger brother, was then serving Trinity Episcopal Church in Clayton. Still a bachelor at this time, he'd ridden his bicycle from Kent County to Georgetown.



The Annual Services at Prince George's Chapel — In 1893, upon completion of needed repairs to the venerable structure, Rev. Wells and Bishop Leighton Coleman began the tradition of holding annual services at Prince George's Chapel in Dagsboro, the mother church of southeastern Sussex County, which dates from 1755. Visitors from all over the state would attend. One year an impromptu band of amateur local musicians provided music and led a procession through the streets Dagsboro to the churchyard, where guests had lunch under the trees after the service. This photograph shows the crowd gathered for what may have been the 1913 annual service. Then Bishop Frederick Kinsman stands under the window with Rev. Wells standing to his left (Diocese of Delaware Annual, 1914).



Prince George's Chapel — As it appeared in the early 1900s. Note that the original transept had burned off during the late 19th century and was replaced by the small wing to the right, which is visible in both these photographs. The church was later fully restored when the State of Delaware acquired it in the late 1960s (Burton family album).

The Right Reverend Leighton Coleman — Second Bishop of Delaware, was consecrated bishop in 1888, the year after Wells began his ministry at St. Mark's, and served until his death in 1907. His predecessor, Bishop Alfred Lee, had served as bishop for an incredible 46 years. Bishop Coleman loved children and they loved him. He made "Sunday School" a centerpiece of his ministry. According to a diocesan history, "...wherever he went in Delaware or in his travels through other states the Sunday School was the focal point of his visits. He talked to the children, told them stories, laughed with them, heard their catechisms, played Santa Claus at Christmas Parties and entertained them at Bishopstead." His wife, Frances, was the daughter of Alexis Irenee du Pont. It is clear from his journals that Rev. Wells thought very highly of the bishop.



the second bridge close to Houston's Switch³⁸ where a car is standing, to the corner of a little oak thicket on the left hand. Reached there about 9:30 a.m. Harriet was here [Harriet was the Wells's maid]. Genie helped Sallie with her plants. We took the rifle to a place over the R.R. where R.I. Houston has a blackberry patch to shoot.' Made some fair shots. Mr. Houston came by & talked a little. Mr. Tilghman Waggamon came along and tried a few shots. We called at [Mr. Jacob Reese] Godwin's but found no one at home.

Tuesday, November 8th

Clear and very pleasant. We were up early so Sallie could take the train for Georgetown. Worked around the house until after 10 o'clock when Alley and I went out to the Pole Dam to vote.³⁹ The voting was done in Mr. Chas. Godfrey's house. We reached home about 12:30 p.m. I went to see Mrs. Sockriter who is quite sick. Sallie came home on the evening train. She says Aunt Hettie is very poorly. Rumor says Penna. and N.Y. have gone Republican.

Thursday, November 10th, RETURN DAY

(73 degrees - 59 degrees)

Cloudy with a sprinkle. We went to Georgetown. Many on the train. About four passenger cars. Walked around the square & out near the "Y".⁴⁰ Saw what little parade they had & went to see Mr. McKim. He talked much of old times at Carlisle.⁴¹ He says Rev. Plummer of the west would like to get into this diocese . . . Quite a number of stands along the court house. The judges are reviewing the election returns in order to decide certain contested districts. We came down on the evening train.

Sunday Before Advent (November 20th)

Clear and much colder. Had a fair attendance at Sun-

38. "Houston Switch" - A switch was a railroad siding. Houston Switch is a railroad crossing located between Millsboro and Dagsboro along what is now known as Thorogoods Road.

39. The "Pole Dam" was at Ingram's Pond northwest of Millsboro. Mr. Charles Godfrey then owned and operated the grist mill there. He later moved into Millsboro and took over the "Head of the River" mill at Millsboro Pond.

40. The "Y" is the area on the east side of Georgetown where the railroad lines running to Lewes and down to Millsboro and below branch off, forming a "Y" shape in the track. The Rev. John Linn McKim lived near there.

41. Early in his career before becoming an Episcopal minister, Rev. McKim had been first a student and later a teacher at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa.

day School. About 26 in church in the morning. Not so many in the P.M. Alley and I took a walk up to Burton's Mill, came back by the R.R. Noticed a board marked "Risdon's Smut Machine, Patt'd. May 3rd, 1855." We noticed the boundaries of the land going with the old mill. Wrote to Genie and wrote to Leuck & Bruchan for Perry's Sanskrit Primer.

Thursday, December 21st (60 degrees-37 1/2 degrees)

Cloudy with high winds. No signs of clearing until evening. Had a little practice in the evening. My turkey flew away while I was attempting to catch it. Fred Burton took his team and we went for holly and Xmas trees.

CHRISTMAS DAY (Sunday, December 25th)

(40 1/2 Degrees - 29 Degrees)

Cloudy for the most part with signs of snow. Had a small attendance at church and Sunday school. Gardiner Ellis took me to Trinity. He went on to see Mr. Thomas Burton who is quite sick. I walked down with Mr. J.E.M. Burton almost to his house before I met Gardiner. Reached home before 6 o'clock. Had evening service with a few out. We did not take the tree down today.

Monday, December 26th

(41 Degrees - 29 Degrees)

Clear with north wind working southwest. Wrote to Frank asking him to dinner tomorrow. Bought a 14 1/4 lb. turkey at Houston's. Our turkey did not turn up. I went out to Chas. Hastings' but he had none to sell.

**EXCERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL
FOR THE YEAR 1899**

[Late January and early February of 1899 were extremely cold with several minor snow storms. On Friday, February 10th, L.W.W. notes that the high for the day was 4 degrees above zero while the low was ten below! It was ten below again the next day and snow began in the evening of the eleventh.]

Quinquagesima⁴² Sunday (February 12th)

(15 Degrees - 6 Degrees)

42. "Quinquagesima Sunday" - the Sunday before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent.



River Craft —

This turn-of-the-century boat at the head of the river in Millsboro is typical of the small craft enjoyed by Lewis and Sallie Wells and their friends on the Indian River and its tributaries (Burton Photo Album).

Cloudy. Wind N. Snowing all day (fine snow). Made no attempt to hold service. Alley Burton was over awhile. Two Engines and a car went up about 12 Mid-night to clear the track. They went down about 7 p.m. More wind late in the evening.

Monday, February 13th

(12 Degrees - 8 Degrees)

Cloudy, wind rather strong North. Snowing all day. Drifts 4 feet deep and fully 18 inches on an average. Had hard work getting about. Our pump has been frozen since Friday a.m. No trains moving. 4 Engines are stuck at Nassau where they generally have trouble. I helped Alley put his pigs in his barn stable. Wind became strong after dark.

Tuesday, February 14th

(21 1/2 Degrees - 5 Degrees)

Lena Dodd died. Age ? Clear; Wind brisk westerly. Snow badly drifted. Altogether there must be 24 inches on a level. First [I] clambered around to feed hens without making paths. Very heavy work getting about. Many have gone digging for the railroad at ten cents per

hour. Sawed wood, made paths, and kept fires agoing. Mrs. Asahel Dodd died about 4 p.m.

Ash Wednesday (February 15th)

(38 Degrees - Minus 10 Degrees)

Clear and extremely cold but warming up during the day. Went to the station to see the work train come up about 10 a.m. Small Engine 80 in the lead. Engine 69 next. Engine 19 last. They had no snow plow. They made Milford sometime and returned through here about 9 p.m. 4 Engines were fast at Nassau yesterday. Helped Alley move the cook stove in the house and set it up in place of their coal stove which we took out. His coal has given out.

Thursday, February 16th

Cloudy with SE Wind changing to NE. Rain from 11 a.m. Two Engines took up the a.m. train about 9 a.m. Down train came about 1 o'clock and brought mail and papers. There appear to have been at least 18 inches of snow in this last storm, and that it was equally deep all over the country east of the Alleghanies. Severe cold reached Florida. The center of lowest temperature went not farther north than Phila. . .

Captain Theodore Burton Home –

This imposing structure on Main Street was the home of Captain Theodore Burton. It was located on the site of what is today the PNC Bank parking lot and stood next door to the small, brick “Millsboro Trust Company.” In later years, the house was the residence and office of Dr. Virgil Hudson, a local general practitioner during the mid-20th century (Burton Photo Album).



Saturday, February 25th

...Benny Ableman has come home from N.Y. where he has been attending an Hebrew School. Roads are getting to be passable.

Saturday, March 4th

Mr. Nathan Messick's double team became frightened at the band and, tearing up a post at Houston's [store] came up the alley and plunged thro' our garden fence. Many of Sallie's rose bushes are about ruined.

Thursday, April 20th

...Mr. Jno. A. Lingo has his house moved back to make room for a front [addition] 16 x 30 ft. Jno. Barr of Geo'town does the moving. He uses rollers instead of sliding upon ways . . .

Young Episcopal missionaries pose with Bishop Frederick Joseph Kinsman, D.D., L.L.D., in front of Wells's Millsboro home in 1913 (Diocese of Delaware Annual, 1914). Bishop Kinsman, Delaware's third bishop and the second one under whom Wells served as rector of St. Mark's, had the interesting distinction of resigning the office of bishop in 1918 in order to become a member of the Roman Catholic Church (reproduced from the Diocese of Delaware Annual, 1914).



Friday, May 5th

. . . Mr. Thos. Ellis wishes me to blast an oak stump at his place.

Saturday, May 6th

...Went out to Thos. Ellis's about 1 p.m. We all went to the stump. It stood near Mr. Robert Houston's place on the old state road. Put in 1/2 lbs. of powder. The hole was about 14 in. deep bored with a 1 1/2 inch auger...

Saturday, May 20th

...They have a signal post at the station to use instead of a flag.

Fourth Sunday After Trinity (June 25th)

...The center of the village of Laurel was burned out



Fred and Nell Lingo Burton – the two young lovers bent upon a sudden, late-night wedding in Oak Orchard in 1899, are seen here in later years, Nell with her youngest baby, Irwin, and Fred with his coronet, circa 1908 (Burton Family Album)

yesterday. The fire broke out in a pool room about 1 a.m. Saturday. Both hotels and 70 houses burned. Steam fire engines came from Salisbury, Pocomoke and Wilmington...

Wednesday, June 28th

(87 Degrees)

Clear and very warm. No signs of rain. We had to water the flowers again. Mr. William Carey had some trouble moving his house boat from his place (Old Store) to the Old Landing. They had to get Mr. Isaac Harmon's heavy trucks on which he moves his steam mill. Mr. Carey will tow his house boat with his steamer. Mr. Tidball [the local band director] was here to say the band will practice every night this week to get ready for the 4th. Mr. Abbott was down Tuesday to ask Mr. Tidball to go with the Geo'town band to Chincoteague on the 4th (he will not go). I put wire netting on the screen door to the kitchen.

Monday, July 3rd

(92 Degrees)

Clear and very hot. Dr. [his friend, Dr. John Messick] came up from Oak Orchard in his launch. Seymour Downs runs the boat. Eddie Morris was along. They were after gasoline. All staid to dinner. They have trouble getting tangled in the grass below the Cupola and at the "Oak." Joe Don-away undertook to mow the grass and lily stems. Mrs. Morris is sick at the Perry's and the baby is also sick.

Tuesday, July 4th

Cloudy at times with signs of showers. The band went to Oak Orchard for the day. Carey took a load down in his boat. He and Dr. Messick carried people across the river to Sandy Landing. Alley and Gardiner went down in the afternoon . . .

Saturday, July 15th

Clear but clouded over toward night with a sprinkle in the evening. Made drawings on the Sunday School black-board. Wiped off the seats and put the books in order. Fred Burton sent me word that he wished me to go to Oak Orchard in the evening. I went once to the store to see him. He told me that he wished to be married at Mr. Jno. A. Lingo's cottage in the evening. He had but an hour ago told his father. I went after a team and managed to leave here at 6:40 p.m. Found the Lingos out sailing - Fred and Nellie [Lingo] did not get down until about 9 o'clock. came home at 9:40 p.m. and reached here at 11:30 p.m. Capt. Burton and the others are much put out at the action of Fred.⁴³

43. It should be noted that, despite its somewhat unorthodox beginning, the marriage of Fred and Nellie Burton was very successful. They became the parents of three children, Theodore, Hilda and Irwin G. Burton II. Theodore, founder of an auto dealership in Georgetown, passed away in 1942. Hilda, a school teacher and the first wife of major league baseball player and Millsboro native, Jesse Jones, died in 1939. The youngest, I. G., founder of several automobile dealerships in Milford and Seaford, and a knowledgeable Burton family historian, died in 2004 at age 96.

Wednesday, August 9th

Wind S.W. and partly cloudy. Many people went by, en route for Oak Orchard - they will spend the night there. We called at Mr. Frame's in the evening and he treated us to watermelon.

BIG THURSDAY (August 10th)

(84 Degrees - 70 Degrees)

Partly cloudy. Very sultry. Many went down to Oak Orchard. There were many boats and an immense crowd of people. Some rascal was working off counterfeit half-dollars...⁴⁴

Saturday, September 2nd

.. . The G.A.R. meets in Phila. next week. Dr. and Mrs. Messick intend going up.⁴⁵

44. *Big Thursday* was a traditional holiday in Kent and Sussex Counties which had its origins in 1852 when a new state ban on tonging oysters between May 1 and August 10 was lifted. The residents of the two counties had been used to eating oysters all year long and they gathered to celebrate the occasion. The day had become by the 1890's as popular a holiday as July 4th at the Oak Orchard resort on Indian River.

45. G.A.R. - The "Grand Army of the Republic" was the national organization for Union Army veterans of the Civil War - a forerunner to the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.



Fred Hillyard Burton Residence – The home of Fred and Nellie Lingo Burton stood on Morris Street on the site of the present-day Grace U. M. Church parking lot. In later years, it was the home of Mrs. Nina Timmons and her family (Burton Family Album).