

An act creating an additional Justice of the Peace Notary Public and Constable in and for Kenton Hundred Kent-Country
 Section 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly Met (two thirds of each branch concurring therein. That the Governor be and he is hereby authorized to appoint one additional Justice of the Peace one additional Notary Public and an additional Constable in and for Kenton Hundred in Kent-Country each to reside in the town of Clayton said Justice of the Peace Notary Public and Constables to be subject to the existing laws made and provided and applying to said offices

Passed at Dover March 18th 1895

Thomas S. Church

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Charles H. Rockley

Speaker of the Senate

An Act creating an
additional Justice of
the Peace, Notary Public
and Constable in Kenton
Hundred Kent County

11th July 1875

House 64 6

21 3

An Act in relation to Trustees of the Poor for South Murderkill, North Murderkill and Kenton Hundreds in Kent County.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met:

Section 1. That the Trustees of the Poor hereafter to be appointed by the Levy Court for South Murderkill, North Murderkill and Kenton Hundreds respectively shall hold their office for the term of three years from the date of their appointment but vacancies shall be filled only for the residue of a term by the commissioners of the Levy Court of the hundred where the vacancy happens. Any thing contained in any law heretofore passed to the contrary notwithstanding Provided however that the first appointment under this act for South Murderkill Hundred shall be for but two years the first appointment for North Murderkill Hundred shall be for but one year and the first appointment for Kenton Hundred shall be for but two years.

Passed at Dover February 2, 1877

Hugh Martin
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

J. Sarpino Moore
Speaker of the Senate.

*An act in relation
to chustees of the Poor
for South Murderkill
North Murderkill and
Benton Hundreds in
Kent County*

Title 7 - Chap. ³⁷⁴~~25~~

*Ch. 76
4 3*

*Passed at Dover
February 2 - 1877
H. R.*

An Act to form a new Hundred in Kent County out of parts of Duck Creek and Little Creek Hundreds to be called Kenton Hundred.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met, That an additional or new Hundred shall be and is hereby established and created in Kent County for the purpose of holding the general and special elections, the election of Assessors and Inspectors and for the appointment of Constables and Collectors and for such other purposes as may be necessary to constitute the same a distinct and separate Hundred with all the rights which may properly appertain to it as such. The said new or additional Hundred shall be called and known by the name of Kenton Hundred and shall include and embrace all that portion of Duck Creek Hundred and Little Creek Hundred in Kent County aforesaid as at present constituted lying on the west side of the west line of the Delaware Railroad and all the laws of this State that apply to Hundreds in Kent County as such shall apply and extend to Kenton Hundred hereby created and established as a separate and distinct Hundred.

Section 2. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, That from and after the passage of this act that Duck Creek

Hundred shall include and embrace that part of Duck Creek Hundred as at present constituted lying on the east side of the western line of the Delaware Railroad and Little Creek Hundred shall include and embrace that part of Little Creek Hundred as at present constituted lying on the east side of the western line of the Delaware Railroad aforesaid.

Section 3. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, that Duck Creek Hundred, Little Creek Hundred and Kenton Hundred as formed by this act shall each have one of the Commissioners of the Levy Court and Court of Appeal and at the next General election in this State one Levy Court Commissioner shall be elected for Kenton Hundred in the place of the Levy Court Commissioner for Duck Creek Hundred as at present constituted whose term of office will then expire and the Levy Court may appoint a Constable for Kenton Hundred upon the expiration of the term of office of the Constable for Duck Creek Hundred at present resident within the limits of Kenton Hundred as formed by this act and after the passage of this act Duck Creek Hundred shall be entitled to two Constables and Kenton Hundred and Little Creek Hundred each to one Constable. The Levy Court of Kent County may appoint annually an additional Trustee of the poor for said County to reside in

Kenton Hundred

Section 4. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, that all general and special elections and all elections for Assessors and Inspectors shall be held in Kenton Hundred at the Hotel now owned by John Green in the town of Kenton

Section 5. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, that the Levy Court of Kent County shall in the month of March in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine and in each year thereafter at the time fixed by law for the appointment of Collectors, appoint a Collector for Kenton Hundred and all the laws relating to Collectors in Kent County shall extend and apply to the Collector of said Hundred.

Section 6. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, that the Levy Court of Kent County shall from the last assessments in Duck Creek Hundred and Little Creek Hundred cause a duplicate or assessment list of the persons and property, real and personal, in Kenton Hundred as formed by this act, to be made, and the assessment list so made shall be the assessment list for Kenton Hundred and the taxes annually levied upon the persons and property contained in such list shall be collected by the Collector of said Hundred.

The assessment list so made as aforesaid shall be the basis upon which taxes in said Hundred are levied until the next assessments of personal and real property; Provided, that in making such assessment list and adjusting the assessments in Duck Creek, Little Creek and Kenton Hundreds respectively that whenever the lands of any persons are crossed by the Delaware Railroad said lands shall be included in the assessment of that Hundred where the Mansion Dwelling House on the premises is situate.

Section 7. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, that the passage of this act shall in no way impair the right of any Collector to complete the collection of duplicates or assessments in his hands for collection in the same manner as if this act had not been passed but such Collector or Collectors, their executors or administrators and the sureties of any such Collector shall have the same powers, rights and remedies and be under the same liabilities to collect the taxes committed to such Collector for collection as if this act had not been passed.

Passed at Dover,

February 3, 1869

John Richmond

Speaker of the House of Reps.

James Williams

Speaker of the Senate

^{Copy}
An Act to form a
new Hundred in Kent
County out of parts of
Duck Creek and Little
Creek Hundreds to be
called Newton Hundred

Title & Limits

H.

Passed January 3, 1869

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I have not found
any information
re: Kenton
W.E. Bensen*

**A SHORT, EARLY
HISTORY OF
KENTON**

By, W.E. BENSON

To the
Del. Archives

A place that I found
most fascinating & enjoyable
William Benson.

This is just a quick run-down of some facts to the history of Kenton. If further time was available a more thorough and analytical study could be made.

As far as I know, this is the deepest study yet devoted to this town's early history and as such, many old facts have been altered. This was done to fit my interpretation of new facts found, hereto never before printed. This was not done to proselytize former interpretations but to have the new facts mesh with the old. The work can, and I will hope, go deeper than what I have done but as said, this study is the most investigated thus far.

My sources were various Wills; Land Surveys; Birth, Marriage and Death Records; Tombstone Readings; Road Dockets; Tavern Licenses & Grants; and Bible sources - all from the Delaware Archives. Other sources used were: History of Delaware by J. Thomas Scharf (1888), Atlas of the Delaware State by D.G. Beers (1868), Biographical and Geneological History of the State of Delaware by J.M. Runk (1899), and Delaware Archives, Military (1911).

For the history of the town of Kenton and of Kenton Hundred (created out of Duck Creek and Little Creek Hundreds in 1869) must begin in Philadelphia. It was there in 1683 that William Penn, Proprietor of Pennsylvania and the Lower Counties, issued a warrant to the Surveyor-General to survey and reserve 10,000 acres for his family. This tract of land, in which Kenton lies, was called the Manor of Frieth.

In this area many tracts of land were already sold and soon, like other properties of his, William Penn would further divide his land. William Ellinsworth bought and created a 1025 acre tract known as "Duncaster" along the southwest branch of Duck Creek.

"Hillyards Exchange" was created by John Hillyard in 1682. It was 426 acres southeast of Kenton and near other harmoniously named tracts like "Wapping", "Baliff Hill", "Williams Range", "Oxford", and "Cambridge", to name a few.

In 1714 Benjamin Shurmer, agent of the Bristol Naval Store Co-Partnership Co., patented 3,000 acres of land for the company. The land was desired for the raising of hemp to make rigging for ships. While he visited the area, he must have liked what he saw because during the next twenty-six years Shurmer bought bits and peices of land until he obtained at least 2300 acres.

With the development that time gives, trails and roads were hewn through the wilderness of hardwood oak and hickory. Since roads were in near primitive conditions even up to the early days of the Republic, it was only natural for many taverns, inns, etc., to appear as way stations in the middle of

the black forests. But these taverns only prospered when there was a lack of the much cheaper waterways.

Even with the abundance of rivers in the Chesapeake and Delaware area the road leading from the Eastern Shore of Maryland to Smyrna Landing showed surprising prosperity. This isn't too hard to understand when, beside considering internal traffic, time could be saved by trafficking goods across the Delmarva Peninsula instead of by sailing vessel around Cape Charles. That is, if the goods were destined for points between Baltimore and Philadelphia. This is where the importance of Kenton sets in.

However the earliest mention of a tavern in this area was not along present State Rt. 300. In 1761 Thomas Craig applied for a "lyconse for Keeping a Publick House, at his Dweling House, upon the Road Leading from Dover to Lowistown" (Kenton) where he would keep a good "Houfe of Intertainment and Lotts Lickqurs." This was probably near Seven Hickories, so named because seven large hickory trees grew there. Seven Hickories was also along the road to Leipsic.

Ofcourse the more important route leading from Maryland to Smyrna Landing was developed earlier and had its tavern. It took a document of the next year "To the Worshipfull Justices of the Court of Quarter Sefsions now Setting in Dover" to prove its existence. In 1762 John Rees wrote a petition to "Humbly Sheweth" that he wished for a recommendation for a license "to keep a Tavern in the same place where he has kept this several years." Whether it laid within the bounds of "Lowistown" is hard to determine.

After paying the sixteen dollars fee he was able to serve drinks at rates set by the November term of the Legislature. Some of the costs at the inn ran as follows:

qt of Madiera wine	3.6 shillings
Gill of West India Rum	5 "

qt. of Port or Vidonia Wine	4 "
qt of Molafses Beer	1 pence
Milk Punch w/ half pint Rum	8 "
Eating for Hott Meal	1 shil.
" " Cold "	1 "
Stabliage for Good Clover hay for one night .	1 "
Qt of Indian Corn Beer	1½ pence
" of Cyder Royal	6 "

Presumably because of the drinking facilities between Maryland and Smyrna Landing or Leipsic, the area soon earned the title of Groggtown.

Ofcourse the public also needed spiritual drink. Three-quarters of a mile northeast of the oldest town in the hundred is located the oldest church. Old Duck Creek or Bryn Zion Church was established by families from Welsh Tract in 1733. These families made their settlement in Duck Creek but in 1747 William Griffen conveyed to James Hyatt, William Rees, Jeremiah Rees, James Howell, David Enos and Enoch David, trustees of the Baptist Society, one-half acre of land for a church, on condition "that it now doe and shall hereafter meet to embrace and adhere freely to all the principals and articles that are compiled in a certain confession of Faith that was agreed upon and adopted by the Baptist Association that met in Philadelphia, September 25, 1742." But the church was built elsewhere in 1771.

When there were approximately thirty members a petition was made requesting a separate church to be formed. It was granted November 24, 1781. The first members were Daniel David, Rachel David, Lydia Jones, Samuel Griffin, Mary Griffin, Martha Griffin, Rachel Griffin, Mary Griffin Jr., Elizabeth Griffin, Lydia Griffin, Lewis Williams, Ruth Williams, Rhoda Wallis, Elanor Spruance, Elizabeth Roe, Caesar Roe, Martha Meredith, Deborah Dickinson, Hugh Duborow, Martha Durborow, Mary Anderson, Rebecca McVay, Rhuhamah Parkerson, Martha Owens,

Mary Thompson, Elizabeth Greedy, Moleston Curry, James Darkling, Andrew Lockhart and Mary Lynch.

Ten years after the petition was granted, church membership reached forty-seven. Upon its going to decay, the 30' X 25' church was rebuilt of brick the same year it was erected, on a lot donated by John and Philemon Dickinson. In the surrounding grave yard is the family lot of the Spruances amongst whom is buried Presley Spruance (Nov. 28, 1837) father of U.S. Senator Presley Spruance Jr. (1785 - 1863).

The first ordained minister was the Rev. Griffith Jones. He was born October 8, 1696 in Alltfawr, in the parish of Llanon and the county of Carmarthen. In 1749 he came from England and settled at Duck Creek, preaching until his death in December, 1757. Until the church was built by the Independents, which was named Mount Zion, services were usually held in the houses of Evan Hughes, and James Hyatt.

Next came the Rev. David Davis in 1766. Born in 1695, he came from England in 1722 but then soon returned. Rev. Davis came back to America in 1737 and eventually settled in New Britain. He preached until his death, October 3, 1768. Rev. Eliphaz Dazey succeeded him to the pulpit from July 23, 1784 to October 25, 1787 with the Revs. Dr. James Jones, John Patten, and Gideon Ferrel as co-pastors.

Dr. James Jones had a particularly interesting history. Dr. Jones was born on the Welsh Tract, April 6, 1756, of a family that emigrated from Wales to Newark, Delaware in 1710. Eventually many of the Jones moved down to Duck Creek and Kenton. Educated at Newark Academy, he was licensed to preach November 2, 1782 after serving in the Revolutionary War.

On December 27, 1776 he entered the service along with his brothers Enoch and Daniel in Captain Thomas Watson's 1st Comp. of Militia, 2nd Battalion under command of Colonel Thomas Couch.

But records show that he was soon up north in Trenton. On February 24, 1777 he took the Oath of Allegiance from Caesar Rodney who was in the city at that time.

Probably about this time he joined the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment as a surgeon's mate. Under Lt. Col. William Butler, Acting Brigade Commander for Gen. "Mad" Anthony Wayne, he spent his time at Valley Forge caring for the sick. It is also known that he conveyed some messages for General George Washington.

In February of 1780, Jones was made Surgeon of the 4th Pennsylvania. He continued in this position til his retirement January 17, 1781. When he left the army he furthered his spiritual vows by being licensed to preach November 2, 1782 and thence to Grogstown he returned. But there was still use for his medical experience because records for the Auditor of Accounts show that he was paid 20^l "for medicines and attendance on William Maddon a Militia Soldier wounded by Cheney Clod." The Battles of Cheney Clow's Fort are important to the history of Kenton and Delaware and shall be dealt with further on.

Jones continued to treat physical and spiritual ailments until his death April 29, 1830 at the age of seventy-four. His Will indicates a man of fine education and pride. His wife Mary having died in 1818, Dr. Jones' son, three daughters and grandchildren were his heirs.

Some of the things he left to his son, James Jr., were two beds, a horse, one saddle and bridle of his own choice, a small looking glass, a claw-foot walnut dining table and one-third of all table linen.

His favorite daughter Esther got a carriage, horse, silver plate, and "my black woman named Letisha to serve until she is twenty five years of age after which she is to be free." Her sister Mary and she were to split the "book of Divinity", beds, bedding and table linen.

The interesting notes in the Will were in regard to his Pennsylvania property in Beaver and Eric Counties, formerly of Westmoreland County. They were given to him by a grateful Pennsylvania "in consideration of services rendered by me as a Surgeon in the Army of the United States during the Revolutionary War, was granted to me by the said State bearing date the twenty ninth day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand Seven hundred and eighty seven by a patent under the seal of the said State of Pennsylvania, signed by Benjamin Franklin Esquire President of the Supreme Executive Council of the said State."

The 300 acres in Beaver County were to go to James Jr. while the Eric County land was to be sold to pay off debts and the remaining amount to be split amongst his heirs. "All my plantations, tract or parcel of land on which I now reside, situate in Duck Creek Hundred" (before Kenton Hundred was created) were destined for his children Mary Walker and Esther Layton, and for his grandchildren Rebecca Naudain, and Thomas Jefferson and Mary Creighton Wilds.

A final disposition so often done by others was "I will, order and direct my negro man named Edward shall be free at my death."

* * *

With the British occupation of Philadelphia (1777-78) under General William Howe and Sir Henry Clinton, pro-British actions became more pronounced; bolder. The Battle of Cheney

Clow's Fort was a product of this British sympathy.

Cheney Clow came to this country during the first half of the 18th century with his parents. From England, they settled in Queen Anne's County, Maryland. When he was twenty-four years old, Cheney Clow joined the Maryland troops for the French and Indian War. Acquaintances of his from the area also joined but in the Delaware Militia. They were Capt. David Clark, Lt. John Rees, Capt. Charles Hillyard, Lt. James Stout, and Ensigns John Cahoon Esq., Thomas Tilton and John Clark.

When he returned, Clow built his house 200 yards east of the Delaware - Maryland border in Kent County. Clow's Tory sympathies came to the fore when his home was chosen as a focal point for local Tories. He was described as a British captain before the war and held that rank when the Revolution began. With the increased harassment from Tory marauders, Lt. Col. Charles Pope, Delaware Militia, was ordered to Grogtown.

On April 14, 1778 Pope wrote Governor Caesar Rodney that "It is with a Certainty I can inform you that the report of the Tories having a fort built is a truth for this Day myself with a party of about forty was within gun shot of their works - on our appearance upwards of one hundred sallied out, several shot was Exchanged - After taking full view of their works and finding it proff against our smallNumber Forced the party to retreat, We killed one of their party. Mr. Derough of Cross Roads (Smyrna) was shot through the thigh.

"as there is no provisions in the place have Ordered twenty four men to do Duty of the Night & the Rest to look out for Quarters with orders to attend tomorrow morning - pray Send us what Cartridges you can spare - likewise - Whiskey and provisions - without which I cannot Carry the fort, I have Wrote

General Smallwood on the Subject & Request his sending a light field peice."

Hopefully, Grogstown took care of Pope's whiskey needs. As for ammunition, it was possibly under his orders that the lead roof at Aspendale was melted down for musket balls. Aspendale was built by Charles Numbers in 1771 on part of the Duncaster tract. Not far off was "brick hole" where the clay was dug to make the bricks. This Middle Georgian house with Flemish-bond work has two courses of moulded brick caps capping the water table. Its great room measured 28' X 19' and was the largest room yet built in Delaware for its time. Another interesting facet to this house is that the original paint still remains on its exterior. A shingled roof now appears where the lead roof once was.

Charles Pope wrote to Rodney two days later that he was still short of supplies but it was now basically a nutritional one. Rodney only sent "fifty wt. of meet & one bbl. of bread for upperds of one hundred men." He also wrote "- if you mean to have the Militia kept to gether pray Send us a Supply amediately otherwise it will be out of my power to keep them longer than this night." He needed supplies quickly for he wished to engage Clow that night. In fact, he ordered Militia from Chester, Md. to meet him one mile and half from "Colonel" Clow's "fortress." It seems that Cheney Clow was rising in importance. Two days later when Caesar Rodney wrote Thomas McKean about the battle he was called "Genl. China Clow." Clow's fortress was, at the most, probably a small stockade. But during these trying times Clow was a real and definite threat.

In the letter to McKean, Rodney states that Pope was ordered out against "Genl. China Clow and his army of Refugees" and soon routed Clow after Clow had marched out and repulsed

the Maryland Militia coming to Pope's aid. The fort was burnt and "about a thousand weight of Bacon and two barrels of flower" was taken. This helped increase Pope's already depleted food stores.

More detail about the engagement was given when Rodney wrote Henry Laurens, President of the Continental Congress, April 24, 1778:

"On Tuesday the fourteenth Instant I Got information that About one hundred and fifty Insurgents under the Command of one China Clow were Armed and Assembled on the Western side of this County near the borders of Maryland. I, as soon as possible Collected and Sent About one hundred and forty of the Militia of this County, under the Command of Lt. Co'l Pope of the Delawares, against them - The Insurgents had built a Fort which the Militia Surrounded on the Thursday night following but Mr. Clow and his Gang, hearing of their approach, fled - The Militia burnt the Fort and secured all the Stolen Effects in and about it and Returned - I then fitted out a number of Horse-men, Since when many of them have been taken and others Surrendered to the number in all, of about fifty, about twenty of whom being single men, are sent off with a recruiting party of the Delaware Regiment to enlist or do Worse - so that with what the Maryland Militia have done, this infernal set are, I believe, broke up, and I hope to hear in a few days that the Villain Clow is Taken."

The added P.S. shows the urgency of the times: "They increased verry fast and I believe, if they had not been opposed very suddenly and with Spirit they would have become formidable in a Little time." This Tory uprising hastened the passage of the Test Act by the General Assembly in May, 1778.

However Clow was not taken at this time. Having failed to take the oath of allegiance under the Act of 1778, he was arrested for treason in 1782. On a November night a Sheriff's posse was sent to arrest him at his house where he returned.

When the order to surrender was shouted a fusillade answered them from the darkened house. The rapidity of the shots from the house indicated several defenders while the posse fired back. When they knocked down the door Clow's co-horts escaped leaving Clow and his wounded wife behind.

One Joseph Moore of the posse was killed and it was at this engagement that Dr. James Jones attended to the wounded Militiaman.

Halfway back to town Clow, dressed in his British uniform, and the posse were met by a company of Militia who demanded custody of the prisoner in order to hang him. He refused and managed to get him to jail. He was brought to trial December 10, 1782 on the charge of "not having the fear of God before his eyes but being moved and seduced by the instigations of the Devil, as a false rebel and traitor to the said State (Delaware) intending the Government thereof to seduce and reduce the same to the domination of the King of Great Britian."

Clow convinced the jury that he was an enemy officer and as such should be treated as a prisoner of war. He was acquitted. But in 1783 his enemies pressed further charges. The Anglophobes demanded Clow's conviction on the count of the murder of Joseph Moore.

Though the evidence was flimsy about Clow shooting Moore in the darkness of the night, nevertheless he was found guilty of murder. He was sentenced to be hanged but it was not until 1788 that the date of execution was set - at Clow's own request.

For six years while he remained in jail his wife pleaded for his life but the bitterness of the Whigs prevailed and he was hanged. Caesar Rodney declared that he never before wished to be Govenor until now so that he might save Clow. After the

execution a "great revulsion of feeling" was felt in the county over the way this brave man was treated.

* * *

With the war over Grogstown could now grow. At this point we come to the founding of the town and its founder. During the 1790's the name of Grogstown was used interchangeably with Lewis Cross Roads named after Phillip Lewis. Notice also that in 1761 Thomas Craig used the name Lowistown in his petition for a tavern. At other points in its history, Lewis' Bridge was used. It was named after Lewis who owned all the surrounding land in 1791, extending as far as Seven Hickories, and who laid out the lanes in 1796. He owned a part interest in the Kenton Hotel, a former landmark and, along with a relative of his, Mark Lewis, owned the local tavern.

Phillip Lewis was the only child of Phillip and Mary Lewis of Little Creek Hundred. His father died when he was nine years old and his mother was to hold his inheritance until he reached the age of twenty-one. To Phillip went two-thirds of the estate while his mother was to receive one-third. She was also left with the charge of teaching their son "Reading, writing and Cyphering Both Vulgar and Desamil arithmatick and to be well versed in the mathematicks to Read and understand Latten Well." A Continentally oriented education it was.

By February 24, 1779, Mary remarried to Risdon Bishop one month after she became a widow. Bishop petitioned the Orphans Court in Dover to be charged with the estate. It was approved by Thomas Rodney and the legacy came to 3,282 $\frac{1}{2}$.

1791 was a momentous year for Phillip Lewis. While waiting for his impending inheritance, Lewis married Dorcas Armitage January 1, 1791. She was eighteen years old and the second of three daughters to John Armitage and Frances Cooch who in turn was the daughter of Thomas Cooch Sr. from hence Cooch's Bridge derives its name.

The marriage was performed by Dr. Thomas Evans and the witnesses were her brother-in-law Robert Middleton, Joshua Clayton - then "president and commander-in-chief of the Delaware State" and James Snow. Lewis proved his worth by his having 500L "good and lawful Money of America" to be married.

By March, Phillip was of age and the property was distributed to him. Risdon Bishop petitioned the state to let Phillip receive his legacy - or what was left of it. Bishop had sold all of his slaves, spent his wife's legacy and spent another one-third, or one-half of Lewis' inheritance, in other expenses.

But with less than one-third of the original Will, Phillip began to buy land. On May 2, 1791 he bought 360 acres from James Hynson and sixty more from Thomas Murphy. November 8th saw him obtaining an additional 159 acres from William Dickinson. With these purchases, Lewis began his career as a country gentleman.

In 1794 Lewis served as a State Representative of his area. Four years later, Dorcas presented him with his first son, Albert Gallatin Lewis. He admired the Democratic-Republican Party of Jefferson's greatly, for his first son and his second Thomas Jefferson Lewis reflect his respect for these two great leaders. In fact he so hated the Federalist Party, that there are repeated warnings against anyone with such affiliations in his Last Will and Testament.

With land, respect and wealth Lewis should have had a happy life, but he had marital problems. According to different sources, he remarried to Frances Evans, widow of the minister who nine years before performed Lewis' first marriage. They were married December 19, 1800. They had two boys, Franklin and Phocion.

As for his first wife, Dorcas remarried her brother-in-law Robert Middleton, who served as a witness to the first marriage. He was a widower of her sister Mary. For added interest, when he died Dorcas married Samuel Black who was an executor of Middleton's Last Will and Testament.

With a change in wives came a change in homes. Lewis moved to New Ark and lived there the rest of his life. Though he moved from Kenton, he kept his lands and continued to take an interest in the development of Lewis Cross Roads. After his death in 1804, it was his money that built the delayed Kenton Hotel. His loans continued to help Mark Lewis and other townspeople.

Phillip Lewis was an enlightened country gentleman in the truest sense of the word. In his Will he left his son Albert silver and plate inscribed with his mother's initials and all of his "library w/ the Desks and Bookcases Containing the Same, as well as any Microscope, Case of Instruments, Maps and Files of Newspapers, Silver Buttons ... and Gold Brouch."

Though it would be after his death, the spirit humanity and liberty had him write: "It is my will and desire that all the Blacks I may die pofsefsed of, should be free at the age of Twenty Eight Years," but he added, "except those who may be run away, they are to be sold if caught for the term of seven years." Considering that most masters would sell their runaway slave permanently shows that Lewis made at least a small attempt understanding their plight.

But even his good heart and intelligent mind gave sway to his political convictions and emotions. He added the stipulation in his Will that "Provided always, that none of my said Relations who are Aristocrats or Monarchists and who vote

for and support what is called the Federal Party shall ever be admitted to enjoy or possess any part of my said real Estate under this my will." When appointing Guardians of his children he made sure of "avoiding however the Appointment of any Person as Guardian who is in any way connected with or Related to my said Children, who is of immoral Character, a Federalist or an Aristocrat."

Like his father before him, Lewis paid attention to his children's education. He wished them "taught none of the dead languages, but to be Masters of the English and French Languages, to understand the Mathematicks, Geography, natural history, natural and Moral Philosophy, and to (receive) ancient history, the English and American histories at school instead of learning the dead Languages." Evidently Phillip hated his own rearing with "Latten."

In relation to Kenton, Lewis gave the land from "Dover to the village of Grog-town or Lewis's X Roads" to Albert and Phocion when they were twenty-one. To Jefferson and Franklin would go at the age of twenty-one "all my Brick House Farm in Kent County, including all my Land in Forest of Little Creek hundred South and West of the Road leading from Dover to Grog-town ..."

In 1825 the surviving sons Albert, Jefferson and Phocion divided the property amongst themselves. As of 1838 Jefferson Lewis was still alive and kept his inheritance. The rest of the property was subsequently sold.

Though Phillip Lewis and his family faded away from the limelight, the town of Kenton clearly developed. Roads were built and maintained, and commerce increased. The Kent County Road Docket Book, 1793-1820, show many entries of the area. "The Road from Lewis' Bridge to the Maryland Road leading from Duck Creek Landing to the Head of Chester ..." "The Road from

the Stone Line through the land of Edward Tilghman Esq. over Jordans Branch to grog town, a new Road." "...from Lewis's Crofs Roads to Duck Creek crofs Roads." Then there were various names mentioned to maintain these roads: Phillip Lewis, James Scotten, Aquilla Attix, Mark Lewis, Nehemiah Cloak, Nathaniel Wilds, Jefse Ford or George Harris.

Activity in commerce increased. There was Aquilla Attix's blacksmith shop, a tannery, Simon Kollock's Mill on Little Duck Creek, Malcolm's Mill and then there was a Hotel and a Tavern.

The tavern was run by Mark Lewis. Whether it was the same one once used by John Rees is hard to determine. The tavern was maintained without incident for sometime until 1796. The problem was very clearly stated in a remonstrance against the tavern.

"To the honourable the Judges of the special court in and for Kent County, now in sefsion at Dover. The petition of the undersigned citizens of said county, respectfully Represents That in consequence of a tavern having been kept at Kenton for the sale of Spirituous liquors, much injury has resulted to the morals of the community. The village of Kenton is not situated on a stage road and there is but little demands for accomodation there by public travellers, the keeper of such a tavern therefore has but little to rely upon except the profits from the sale of intoxicating^{liquor} to persons of the neighborhood; such tavern therefore must become a mere tippling spot where the youth of the neighborhood are too often induced to go, and afsociate with the idle, the vicious, and the profane; Especially on the sabbath is the tavern frequented, and that time which ought to be devoted to moral improvement is spent in forming vicious habits. As the public good evidently does not require a tavern in Kenton, Your Petitioners can see no good reason why any one man for his individual profit should be permitted to injure a whole neighborhood. Your petitioners therefore for these and many more reasons which might be mentioned most respectfully solicit your honours not to reccommend a license for a tavern in Kenton."

Some of the signatories were William Clark, James Clark, John Green, James Roe, Wm. W. Wilson, and William R. Cahoon. At the top of the list appeared James Jones. The petition was granted and John Clark, constable of Lewis Cross Roads, ordered the inn closed when its license expired.

Three years later on "A list of Persons Recommended for Tavern License in Kent County" appeared the name of Mark Lewis. Lewis denied the non-existence of a stage line by writing that "...a public House has been kept at Lewis' Cross Roads for a number of years until within about two years past, which was of considerable advantage to travellers passing and repassing from this State, the State of Maryland, and that a public House is very much wanting at said place." Confident of renewal he also stated in his petition that he was prepared with "the necessaries ... for the ensuing year." Lewis continued his tavern until he died the next year, 1800. In 1803 the inn was taken over by Aquilla Attix, the blacksmith and then William Arthur in 1811.

1806 was a historic year for this town. During this year by an Act of Legislature, the name of the village officially became Kenton. As if a rallying cry, the town now grew in stature.

At the end of the town towards Downs Chapel was built the Kenton M.E. Church in 1818. The 24' X 60' frame building was donated and erected by Isaac Buckingham, Rev. John Durborough (first preacher of the church) and James Scotten at whose home earlier services were held. It was abandoned in 1877 and a new church was built the next year.

Agriculture of peaches, wheat, corn, vegetables, grain, etc., were the earliest production and remains to be the main products of the area.

There are many mills in the area that served the population. There was the Cloak Mill begun in 1790 by Simon Kollock and bought by Ebenezer Cloak in 1824. It was on Little Druck Creek one and a half miles from Seven Hickories. Below it was Malcolm 's Mill which was condemned in 1806. In 1847 Samuel Keefner rebuilt it as a carding mill and was then connected with a grist mill and saw mill.

Other industries were J.B. Messick's phosphate factory (1884), and different brick mills owned by John Graham, John Poor, James Williams and Nathaniel Wilds. The latter two had theirs located two miles west of Kenton at Underwood Corners.

Canneries were operated by John Graham and J.M. Arthur in 1882. From 1862-72 William B. Bowman operated a distillery next to the present Post Office which came along in 1860.

Besides Aspendale, which was built on the Quaker Plan of William Penn, are other interesting homes. Down the Cheswold-Kenton Road is the Somerville House. The two story and attic, five bay Georgian brick house was built 1800. It was the former home of Cancellor Ridgely before he moved to Eden Hill.

The Prettyman-Cooper House is located on the northeast corner of the main intersection of Kenton. The two story and attic brick house was built in 1775. It has excellent woodwork and panelling. According to legend a General Taylor once lived here and was so fond of his horse that when it died, he put its skull under the floor boards of the bedroom. When the house was being insulated, the present owner, Mr. Carl Prettyman, found it but replaced the skull where it was originally buried.

If this "General" Taylor was William Taylor from the Revolutionary War, then he was in actuality a private under Colonel

David Hall's Regiment. He "Inlisted" February 20th 1777 but the June Payroll listed him as dead. However, the July Payroll shows that he came back and was receiving his pay. The entry in August then shows next to his name: "Deserted Aug. 31st." However on May 18, 1781 he re-enlisted but then two days later the record shows he deserted the same day he re-joined!

Like William Taylor, Kenton has had its ups and its downs, its patriotism and opposing opinions. Its career has proven spotty and hard to trace - but it has always proven interesting.



KENTON

KENTON, DELAWARE

by Darlene Masten

JANUARY 16, 1963

KENTON

BY

DARLENE MASTEN

January 16, 1963
Kenton, Delaware

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KENTON

Kenton Hundred follows Duck Creek Hundred geographically. This Hundred was created by an act of the General Assembly, February 3, 1869. It was formed from Duck Creek and Little Creek Hundreds, and comprised all the original territory of those Hundreds which lies west of the Delaware Railroad.

The boundaries of Kenton Hundred are: On the north, Blackbird Hundred of New Castle County and Duck Creek; on the east, the Delaware Railroad; on the southwest, Dover Hundred and Fork Branch of St. Jones Creek and on the west by the State of Maryland. Little Duck Creek runs through the center of the Hundred, and its several branches keep the meadow lands well watered.

The Delaware Railroad running down the east side, the Delaware and Maryland through the centre and about one mile of the Kent County, Smyrna and Delaware Bay Railroad in the northwestern section. In 1880 the population was two thousand eight hundred and seventeen. There has been no survey since the erection of the hundred, but the area is about thirty-five thousand acres.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

Early settlements in the new lands of America were usually made along the waterways, where the settlers had a convenient and easy means of transportation, and in grants of land in the Hundreds of Duck Creek and Little Creek the settlers followed the course of their neighbors in other Hundreds. Most of the settlers in Kenton Hundred were English, and the greater portion of the land was known as the ¹"Manor of Freith." "Freith" was a tract of ten thousand acres laid off by William Penn under warrant and survey bearing date of May 3, 1683. A portion of this tract was purchased by the Bristol Naval Store Company in 1714, and Benjamin Shurmer took three thousand one hundred and twenty-five acres of the tract on a branch of Duck creek. Walter Dulany in 1706, took up a large tract of this land on Freith as did also Captain Richard Smith in 1710. South of the Dulany tract was what was known as the ²"Deer Park" tract comprising two thousand and two hundred and fifty-five acres.

¹ "Manor of Freith", is the land in Kenton before it was divided into sections or lots.

² "Deer Park", was the Cross Roads at Blackiston which is now Blackiston's Cross Roads.

This tract was granted to Benjamin Blacksinton June 14, 1733, by Lord Baltimore. Samuel Chew also took up lands on the west side of the Hundred and in the Maryland territory. Other large property owners and early settlers in this hundred were William Ellingsworth who received one thousand and twenty-five acres of the "Manor of Freith" on Little Duck creek, which he named "Duncaster". John Hillyard, a large land-owner in Duck Creek Hundred, in 1682, took up four hundred and twenty-six known as "Hillyard's Exchange", and is described as being on the south side of the west branch of Duck Creek and on Hillyard's Branch. It is near and southeast of the town of Kenton, and adjoining what was called "Wapping", "Williams Range," "Baliff Hill," and others. A part of this land was by deed of gift conveyed to Arthur Cook and Elizabeth, his wife, August 8, 1720, and to Hillyard's grandson, John Hillyard.

The Hillyard tract later came into the possession of Philip Lewis, who also owned other large tracts, including the land on which the town of Kenton stands.

Philip Lewis began the purchase of lands May 2, 1791, then buying three hundred and sixty acres of James Hynson and sixty of Thomas Murphey; and November 8, 1791, bought one hundred and fifty-nine acres of William Dickson, which, in 1793, was part of a tract surveyed to John Faries, who, October 20, 1773, sold to William Jones, who, in turn, Feb-

ruary 6, 1775, sold to William Dickson, Christopher Long and Samuel Jemison. These tracts extended to the ³ "Seven Hickories," an old stopping-place for teams on the road from Dover to Kenton, so called for the reason that seven large hickories stood there. In 1825, the Lewis property was divided among the sons of Phillip Lewis, Jefferson, Albert G., and Phocion P., The first name is still living. The lands of Albert G. and Phocion P. were conveyed to Frederick Staake and by him conveyed to Mason Bailey, and are now in the possession of Bailey's heirs, with the exception of a small strip of one hundred acres held by Elizabeth Jones.

The following names are of person assessed in Kenton Hundred in 1785, and are taken from the assessment rolls of Little Creek and Duck Creek Hundreds, of that date:

³ "Seven Hickories", is the name where there was seven large hickories standing there, at that time.

Sarah Allee
John Allee
Aquila Attix
Abrm Anderson
John Attix
Jeremiah Boroughs
Benj. Blackiston
Richard Boroughs
Edward Boroughs
James Bostick
Ebenezer Blackiston
Elijah Boroughs
John Barnes
Benjamin Boroughs
John Boroughs
Benj. Blackiston, Jr.
Daniel Cummins, Jr.
James Cummins
Nicholas Clarke
Wm. Cahoon, Esq.
Daniel Cummins
Rachael Clark
John Clouds
Wm. Clark
George Cummins
Elijah Boroughs
John Barnes
Benjamin Boroughs
John Boroughs
Benj. Blackiston, Jr.

Samuel Cole
Charles Clark
Ebenezer Clark
Benj. Chew Esq.
Daniel David, Esq.
Isaiah Derham
Wm. Derham
Joseph David
Joseph David, Jr.
Hugh Durbcrow
Wm. David
Daniel Durham
James Dean
Patrick Downs
Widow Durborow
Whitonton Durham
GarrettDushane est.
George Derham
John Durham
Henry Farsons
Wm. Farsons
John Farsons
Joseph Foreacres
Robert Ganel
David Griffin
Daniel Durham
James Dean
Patrick Downs
Widow Durborow
Whitonton Durham

Lydia Griffen

Wm. Griffen

Eben Griffen

Thomas Hillard

Barthia Hazel

Matthew Hazel

Benjamin Hazel

Jacob Hurlock

Wm. Hutchinson

George Jazel

Wm. Hurlock

John Hazel

Ebenezer Hurlock

George Harris

Wm. Hill

John Hutchinson

Isaac Hazel

Joseph Howard

John Ham

John Hill

Bell Jones

Hannah Jones

Jacob Jones

Benj. Jones

Thomas Jones

Dr. James Jones

Samuel Jones

Richard Keys

Thomas Lacount

Aban Moore

Thos. Moore

Robert Moore

Joseph Meredith

Wm. Murphey

Peter Moore

Godfrie Molestan

Michael Numbers

Joseph Numbers

James Numbers

Thomas Numbers

Joseph Nock

Mary Numbers

Wm. Numbers

John Numbers

Joseph Price

Allen Palmetry

Abm. Parsans

Robert Palmetry.

Hyland Pennington.

Widow Redgester

Jermiah Rees

Edward Rees

John Rees

John Spruance est.

John Spruance

John Spearman

Wm. Sharp

Presley Spruance

John Starling

Wm. Scotten

James Scotten

John Scotten

Matthew Tilghman

Wm. Thomson

Abm. Thomson

John Thomson

Moses Thompson

Jethro Thompson

Robert Thomson

James Thomson

Benjamin Truax

Hendrick Truax

James Tippitt

Pete Williams

Samuel Wilson

Nathaniel Wilds

Wm. Wallace

Wm. Wartenbury

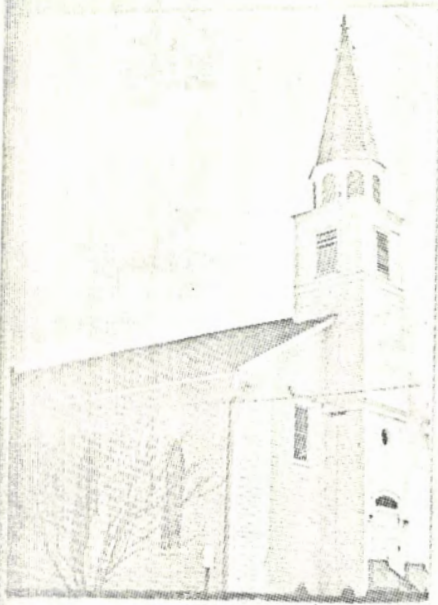
Josiah Wallace

James Green another large owner of land in Duck Creek Hundred owned a large tract in Kenton known as "Brenford", Philip Lewis took up several large tracts adjoining these and extending from a small settlement known as the "Seven Hickories", on the road from Dover to where the village of Kenton was eventually built on his land; and one thousand acres adjoining the settlement of Seven Hickories, were owned by Moors who came to the Hundred direct from Spain in 1710, and who settled in a village known as Noortown on the Dover-Kenton road.

In 1785, these Moors owned large estates and had a prosperous and thriving community. John and Israel Durham were leading members of this settlement. They and their descendants refused to mingle with their white or black neighbors and have maintained to this day their pure Moorish blood. Several families now remain in this section as direct descendants, of these Moors.

CLAYTON

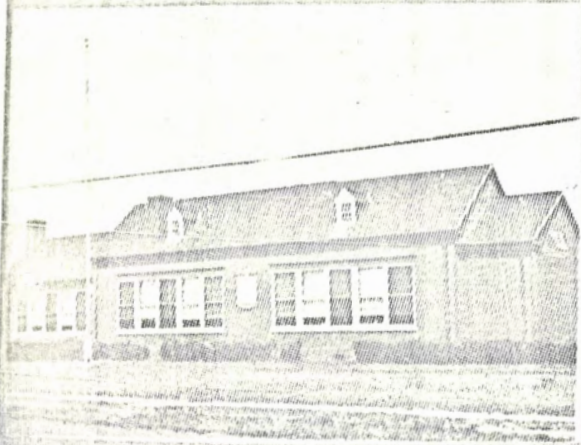
Clayton, the largest town in Kenton Hundred, is in the extreme northeastern part of the hundred. The earliest settlement at or near the present town site was known as "Jintown" on the road to Smyrna Landing. The land on which this settlement was located was held by one Richard Tibbitt, with a reversion of the fee to one William Wartenby, in case Tibbitt had no heirs. In 1859, Tibbitt sold ground for a



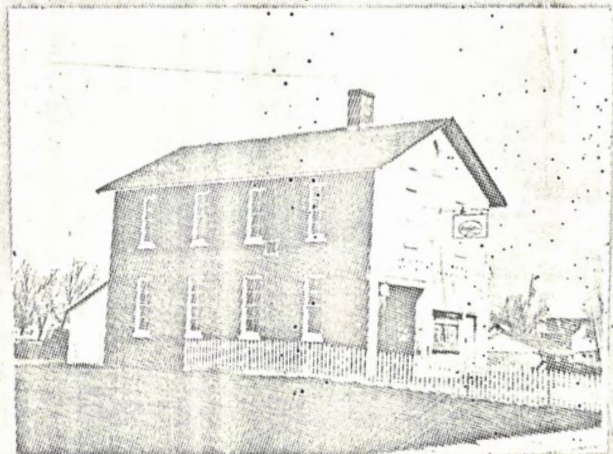
Kenton M. E. Church



Kenton Post Office



Kenton Public School



Old School House

-9-

town site, the Delaware Railroad was built and a town established along the railroad a quarter of a mile from the site of the old "Jintown", settlement.

The town was named Smyrna Station. In 1860, the Post-Office Department recognized the town for postal purposes as Clayton but it was not until 1877, that an Act of the Legislature changed the name from Smyrna Station to Clayton, at which time the town was also incorporated.

KENTON

Kenton is the oldest town in the hundred, and situated near the centre, on the Delaware and Maryland Railroad, was first known as Lewis' Cross-Roads, afterwards as Grog-town, and by act of Legislature, in 1806, it was changed to Kenton. It was called Lewis' Cross-roads, after Philip Lewis, who, in 1791, owned all the surrounding land, and laid out the roads in 1796.

The oldest house in the town is one now occupied by Mrs. Mary Green. It was built by Philip Lewis, and is of frame, and was moved to its present location about seventy years since. On the corner is an old brick house standing on the road, which was built shortly afterwards and used as the first general store in the town.

The old hotel, still standing and known as the Kenton Hotel, was also built by him in 1809. It was occupied by William Arthur in 1811, and in 1812 by James Bayels, who

run it for a number of years. Charles Hamm had it in 1843 and in the same year Thomas L. Temple, a brother of Governor Temple, took in and ran it for a number of years; it is now in charge of Terrance Carvin.

The post-office was started in 1860, and since that time the postmasters had been W. H. Taylor, John Wilds, William C. Jump, Joseph Roop, William H. Moore and W. Denny Wilds.

The town's main growth has been since the war, and the Legislature, on April 23, 1887, passed an act incorporating it into a town.

At present there are three general stores, kept by J. M. Arthurs, W. H. Moore and W. Taylor; a millinery store, two blacksmith shops and one drug store. There are sixty houses and a population of three hundred.

KENTON IN 1920

¹ Kenton in 1920, looks something like this: This is the year my father brought here to live with Uncle Jimmy Burrows. He kept store in the old Hotel. The building Mrs. Bigers has had torn down. Uncle Frank kept store in what is the Clifton Property.

There were two hard-ware stores. Now located in a building which belonged to Mr. John Arthurs. Now the

¹ Kenton in 1920: Information from Mrs. Avis Pinder in Kenton.

Ruch property. The post office run by Mr. William Arthurs was located there too. It stood in the corner of the lot opposite Mrs. Thomas. The other hardware store was run by Mr. H. Hilyard, Sr., which is now Raymond Faulkner.

There was a store or rather a meat market where the post office is now. Mr. Bull owner. Mr. John Arthurs had a canery down the railroad track opposite side from the Diamond State Daries.

Mr. Biger had a canery what now is the Van Holten. Later in the year 1923, or 1924, Mr. H. W. Hilyard were in partnership with him.

There was an old log cabin located where Mrs. Biger built her new home. It had two rooms. The big room was curtain off for a sleeping space. The kitchen had just a dirt floor. Mr. Biger's Mother and Father lived there, Mr. and Mrs. Dawson.

Then there was another store located next to the log cabin. This was operated by Mrs. Poore. Next to it and what is now the post office was a Blacksmith shop. Mr. Biger and Mrs. Reed were the Blacksmiths.

The Barber shop was a shoe repair place. Mr. Donlop was a shoe repair man and painter. The barber shop was in the Jewell Property beyond Moores store. The barber was Al Morgan. (Morrish race)

The station was opposite Weigle's mill. Trains came into Kenton four times daily. Two north bound and two

south bound. Time around 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 and 6:00 p.m. The freight station was opposited the Ruritan lot.

The creamery was located in the colored section near Van Holtens. Just below Raymond Ford's. The milk was taken to the railroad by horses. They were beautiful.

Dr. E. F. Smith lived where Viridins' now lived and his office was where Elva Attix has a storage building. The small building next to her home. He later bought the home where Eva Carey now lives.

On the street where the trailers are, the lot belonging to Mrs. Davis was a samll building that was a jail. Mr. Shultz was town cop.

Not that I knew, this following but Mrs. Hughes, father was a doctor. I have been told that he had some sort of a hospital there in his home. (The Hughes Home.)

Another doctor who left before I came to Kenton was Dr. Honey. They lived where Mrs. Susie Knotts now lives.¹

¹ Kenton in 1920 from
Mrs. Avis Pinder.

2

When the Baily home was bought from Mr. Lewis, Mr. Bailey rode a horse from Centreville to Kenton with a twine, used for a belt, and it was all ragged. He buried his money in the branch between the Bailey property and the Somerville property.

When it was auctioned off he bid the highest and people didn't think he could pay for it. He left and dug up his money and paid cash for it to every ones' surprise.

In 1907, the wheel-right shop was where Mr. Hazel's home is now. The Hoop Shop in 1917, was where they made hoop for vessels, and sailing ships. This was done by Dr. Money in off time. He took in government contracts. Mr. Taylor ran the butter factory. There was also an armory where the Cliftons lived, on the four corners of Kenton.

In the town of Kenton in 1873, there were three doctors: Dr. Godwin had his office at the Edward Attix home and at the Somerville place. Dr. Cooper at the Cooper home, and Dr. Temple was in the town. About three years later there were three new doctors, in town as Dr. Manship, Virden and Dr. Money, and Dr. Smith.

In 1887, Mr. James Hughes taught at Kenton and in 1907, Mr. Edward Hughes his nephew also taught at the old Kenton school where Mr. Everett owns.

² Reference on Kenton:
From Mr. Edward Hughes.

Mrs. Durborough gave the bell to the church and it is still there. Mr. Hughes has the dedication of the Methodist Church in September 15, 1878 and he has all the records of the church, society.

Terance Carvin, owner of the old Hotel in Kenton operated during the 1887s, and there was a fight in this old hotel, turned over a stove, and he picked it up and threw it out in the street with the fire and all.

There was sometime between 1887-1888 a cyclone came through Kenton and knocked out the end of the school building. The scholars were home but Mr. J. Hughes was cut on the side of the head. The house that stood on the corner, of the property now Mr. Everett's was also torn apart knocking ~~amp~~ into the street and unharming a woman lying sick in bed.

Where Mr. Ed. Hughes now lives there stood an ice house which was also blown away and they never found any trace of it afterwards.

The old school is moved out on the old Wild's place and still is standing. The old little red jail house was moved to the property of Mr. E. Jarrell, as he used it for a milk house and now as an odds and ends place.

Mrs. Hughes, is now the oldest native still residing in the home in which she, her mother and grandmother was born in 1882.

2 Ref. from Mr. Edward Hughes, in Kenton.

MANUFACTURES IN KENTON

Kenton has been devoted into the best farming lands of the state are in the hundred, they have been highly cultivated for years. Large quantities of peaches, wheat, corn and vegetables are raised.

About 1840, Simon Spearman, who lived on the Middle Alley road, on the farm now owned by Edward Streets, shipped the first peaches for market, and the return was so profitable that a number of the farmers planted trees, until today three-fourths, of the land is planted with peach trees. The shipments from various railroad stations have approximated in one year as high as three-hundred thousand baskets. The year 1887, was one of the poorest ever known, and fifty-thousand will cover the shipment.

Kenton has also been devoted almost exclusively to farming, and only up to within the past few years has there been any manufacturing interest outside of old grist-mills.

J. B. Messick has a small phosphate factory at Kenton, which has been in operation since 1884, and has an output of one thousand tons. W. P. Wright, since 1879, has conducted a brick-kiln at Clayton, and manufactured between three hundred thousand to four hundred thousand bricks a year. John W. Graham, at Kenton, manufactures one hundred thousand bricks a year, and has been engaged in it for seven years.

Old brick-yards have existed on the farm of James



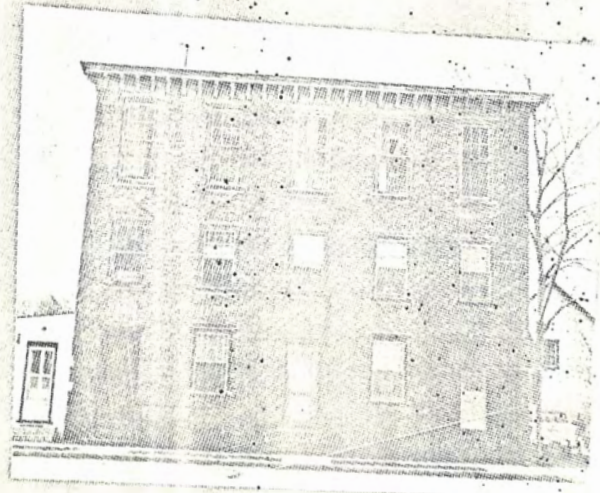
Wilds Home



Cooper Home



Aspendale Home



Old Town Hall

Williams, near Kenton, about thirty-five years ago, but were abandoned in 1875. John T. Poor formerly had a yard in Kenton, but it has been out of use for several years. Another old yard was operated by Nathaniel Wilds, on what is now the Underwood farm, two miles from Kenton.

Being a fruit-growing country, the evaporation and canning of fruit is naturally one of the main industries. At Kenton, J. M. Arthur has a large canning establishment, built in 1882, capable of turning out two hundred and fifty thousand cans of fruit in a season. In the same town John W. Graham built, in 1882, an evaporation capable of turning out three hundred baskets a year.

WILD'S SCHOOL-HOUSE

This school, was the name given to the school in District 9, for the reason the land upon which it was erected was given by Nathaniel Wilds, which has in its limits the town of Kenton, the building being located there. In 1829, there was a school-house a short distance below Kenton, with twenty scholars and eighty-five children between the ages of five and twenty. The old building was log and had been erected about 1800.

It stood until 1839, when it was torn down and a frame building erected in its place. In 1885, the Legislature authorized the erection of a new building, the old one was abandoned and a fine brick building erected in the town of

Kenton valued at three thousand dollars. In 1886, there were in it a graded school and primary with one hundred and twelve scholars.

KENTON CHURCH

The Kenton M. E. Church is in the Smyrna Circuit, and was built in 1818, at the end of the town of Kenton, on the road leading to Downs Chapel. It was a frame building, twenty-four by sixty feet. The ground was donated and the building erected by Isaac Buckingham, Rev. John Durborough and James Scotten. Rev. John Durborough, was a grand father of Bishop Cummins, of Kentucky, and the first minister of the church.

Previous to the erection of the building, services were held at James Scotten's house. The old building was abandoned in 1877, and the present substantial building was erected in that year and was dedicated September 15, 1878, by Bishop Scott. The list of preachers will be found in the article upon the Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church of Smyrna.

In 1747, a conveyance of one half an acre of land was made by William Griffin to six men, trustees of the Baptist Society, for church used after the confession faith adopted by the Baptist Association at Philadelphia, which met September, This land was never occupied by a church building,

the Welsh Tract Baptists rebuilt the church and the Independents and known as Mount Zion. The congregation and church were incorporated July 22, 1794. In the graveyard of this church repose all that was mortal of many of the old families of the hundred.

In 1828, there were 55 members attending the Kenton Church. Now, 1963, there are around 110 members attending the Methodist Church.

KENTON TEMPERANCE SOCIETY

In 1834: Agreeably to previous notice a meeting of the Kenton Temperance Society was held at the Methodist Church in the afternoon and on the evening of the _____ of _____ as 1841, these meetings were addressed by McCassey and Vicken, two of the reformed drunkors of Baltimore and it was unanimously resolved that the title of this society should be changed from the Kenton Temperance Society to that of the Washington Temperance Society of Kenton, as an evidence of the effect of these powerful address this society.

ROADS IN KENTON

In 1796, Roads were laid out and straightened, some of these roads are:

The road leading from the Duck Creek Cross Roads to Holliday's Landing by James Scotten. Through Lewis Cross Roads to Duck Creek Cross Roads. The roads running from the line through the Cypress Branch through Lewis Cross Roads and by Peter Millers' Mill, to Dover.

POPULATION

Kenton is a small trading center with a population that I know in these years:

1900---192

1910---209

1958---231

1962---221

In the years of 1900 to 1962 you can see that Kenton, has fewer people in the town today then, in the years of 1958.

BUSINESS IN KENTON

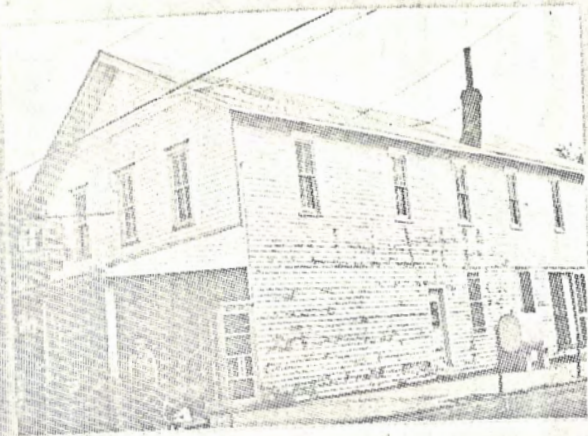
In the year of 1900 until around 1938 these business places were in the town of Kenton.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Blacksmith shop | Meat Market |
| Hoop Shop | 1 Creamery |
| Wheel-write shop | Jail |
| Barber Shop | Town Cop |
| Post Office | Hospital |
| Old Hotel | 3 Doctors-- then, 4 other
new ones later |
| 1 Hardware store | 1 Church |
| 1 Drug Store | 1 School |
| 1 Fertilize Plant | Liquor Store |
| 3 Grocery Stores | 1 Butter Making Plant |
| 3 Caneries | 1 Peach Dryer ¹ |
| 1 Mill | |

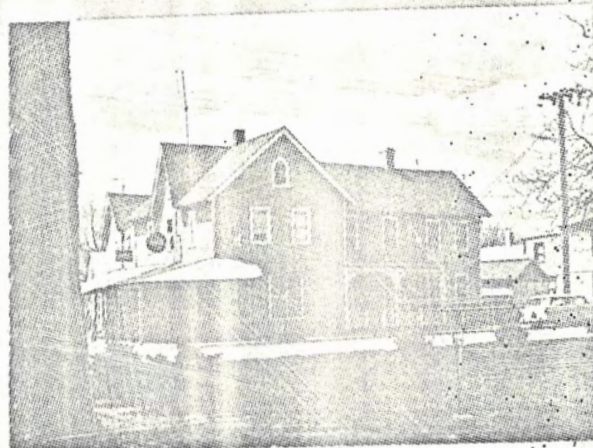
Business Places from 1950 to 1963.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Post Office | 2 Mills |
| School | Diamond State Daries |
| Church | Farm Implement |
| 3 Grocery Stores | 1 Liquor Store |
| 1 Hardware Store | Billard Parlor |
| 1 Canery | Betty's Beauty Parlor |

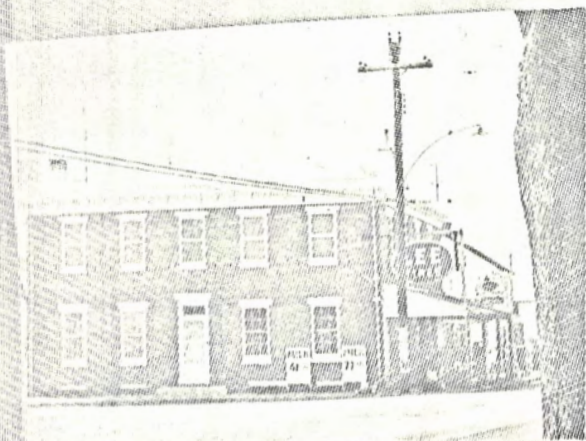
¹ Peaches are layed on a screen until they are dry.



Faulkner's Store
(Kenton Mayor)

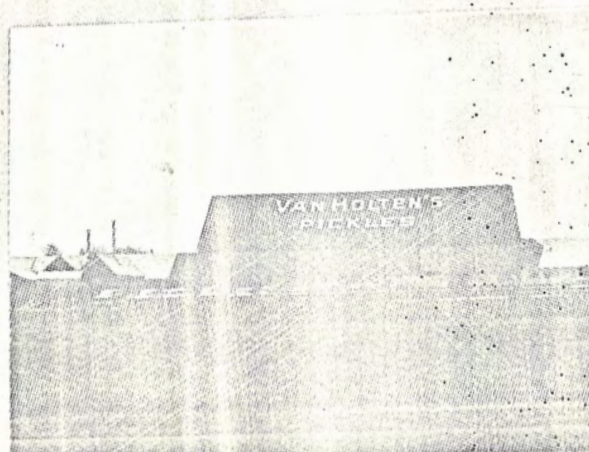


Clifton's Store



McGinnis Store

Van Holten



CLUB ACTIVITIES

The Club Activities now, in Kenton are:

1. Homemakers' Club--¹ The Kenton Home Demonstration time was organized in 1934, with Mrs. Ada Hilyard as the first president and Miss Whitcomb as County leader with 12 Charter members.

The purpose of the club was for home improvement. The county agent, Miss Whitcomb, furnished the materials for the programs. We had lessons on chair caning, stool making, sewing, painting, making lamp stools, food demonstrations and many other home projects.

With the dues that are collected from the members we donate to the Heart, Cancer, March of Dimes, also the Scholarship funds.

W.S.C.S.

As far as its known there has been the Ladies Aid Society ever since the church was started, which changed its name to the W.S.C.S. December 1940. There are at present 25 members, and Mrs. Alfred Shackleton is President.

¹ Information given by
Mrs. James Rowlinson & Mrs. Alfred Shackleton.

BIBLE CLASS

The Kenton Bible Class started in 1925. Mrs. Tim Sylvester was President with 25 members. The Minister was Rev. John E. Parker at that time. Each year they hold an Anniversary Dinner. This year there were 11 charter members present. This organization helps out with different church expenses or what ever is needed.

KENTON SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT

The Kenton Sunday School has 110 members on roll at the present time. Rev. Frank O. Baynard minister, Superintendent Mr. Paul Palmer, Secretary Miss Darlene Masten, Treasury Mrs. Belle Palmer.

Mr. Edward Hughes, Sr. is the oldest active member with 37 years of perfect attendance.

RURITAN CLUB

The Kenton Ruritan Club's charter was sign on December 9, 1959 with 35 members present. There are now, 16 members. This organization helps in the community affairs. The President is Mr. Edward Hughes, Jr.

GUN CLUB

¹
The Kenton Gun Club was organized in May, 1958, with 15 members. There are now, 45 members, Originally, there was only one trap field. Now, there is a lighted trap field, a skeet field, and a club house.

The members plan to install another trap field this spring. The club is located on the property of Edward Alexander.
¹

1 Mr. Charles Austin

HISTORIC HOMES IN KENTON

ASPENDALE HOME

(Route 300, about a mile southwest of Kenton)

¹
Aspendale, built in 1771-73, stands on part of a tract originally known as Duncaster. A great portion of this tract, at the headwaters of the southwest branch of Duck creek, was deeded in 1770 to Charles Numbers. "Yeoman, of Duck Creek Forest."

Charles Numbers started to build his home in 1771 and completed it in 1773. Not far off is the old "brick hole" (now a small marshy pond) whence was dug the clay to make the bricks to be used for the three-bay, two storey and attic house of Georgian quality. Apart from plan, it might be classified as restrained Middle-Georgian with some Early-Georgian elements, and a venture or two into the future.

Aspendale is one of the comparatively small number of old Delaware houses that have never passed from ownership by the families of the original builders, and have been continuously lived-in by them. Charles Numbers was the great-great grandfather of the present owner. The house Charles Numbers built in 1771, has, therefore, escaped such maltreatment as changes in ownership so often caused, and likewise the neglect and abuse incident to absentee landlordism.

The Flemish-bond brickwork of the south and north fronts is of admirable quality, and it is worth noting that two

courses of moulded bricks cap the water-table instead of the more usual single course. A belt course, five bricks in width with the three middle courses recessed, imparts effective accent to the south and north fronts.

By way of contrast, the east and west ends of the house, with their twin chimneys coupled by short curtain walls, are stuccoed. When the house was completed in 1773, the ridge of the roof was slightly fattened, covered with lead, made with lead, made into a deck between the pairs of chimneys, and enclosed with a balustrade. During the Revolutionary War, the lead was required for bullets. The balustrade was then removed, and the shingled roof given its present form.

The one-storey and attic frame wing at the west end adds a note of interest to the composition. It is a good instance of the frequent Delaware habit of having a frame wing on axis with the main body of the house. It is older than the rest of the house, just how much it is impossible to say. The particulars of construction indicate that it was already standing when the brick structure was erected. It is certainly of much earlier type, the one room, fireplace and winding-stair type, only, in this case, instead of a winding stair, a ladder or "stee" gave access to the big chamber above. The previous presence of the wing may have suggested the plan of the 1771 building.

The various dependencies, farm buildings, old lanes and divisions between the fields, have never been changed, and although there have been renewals and additions about the barn. Aspendale and its plantation surroundings are virtually the same as when Charles Numbers finished his brick house in 1773. The place is a living example of a prosperous Kent County farmstead in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

It would be little short of a miracle if Aspendale had altogether escaped Victorian "improvement." The "improvement," however, was of very limited extent and easily eliminated. Outside, it consisted of a Victorian verandah hitched onto the middle bay of the south front, and an "ornamental" Victorian cornice. Inside, two partitions encroached upon the area of the large parlour.

When the present owner took over after the demise of two old spinister aunts, who had occupied Aspendale during part of the Victorian Era and in the years following, the only exterior restoration needed was the removal of the aforesaid verandah, and the replacement of the cornice "prettification" by a Georgian cornice in perfect scale with the house. Indoors, only the parlour partitions had to be taken away.

One of these partitions had sliced off the west side of the parlour to make a long, narrow hall from the front door

clear through to the door on the north front. The other divided what was left of the parlour into two smaller rooms. When these came out, the original character of the room appeared. Its ample dimensions, twenty-eight by eighteen feet, assured exceptional dignity and spaciousness; it was actually one of the largest rooms in Delaware when the house was built. Removal of the partitions, besides revealing a room of unusual and satisfying proportions, disclosed the formerly obscured fine panelling and the cupboards at each side of the fireplace.

On removal of the parlour partitions, the original plan of the house at once became obvious and intelligible. When Charles Numbers built his house, he adopted the "Quaker plan" William Penn had advocated in 1684, a plan little heeded elsewhere in Delaware. Georgian methods were confined to the exterior and to the appointments of the interior. The parlour was the one big room; the partition "near the middle" divided "one end of the house into two small rooms," the hall and the study (formerly a dining-room). The frame wing was the "added" room and became the kitchen. Aspendale, indeed, affords the best instance in Delaware of what can be unquestionably identified as the "Quaker plan" recommended by Penn.

As to the appointments of the interior, besides the handsomely panelled whole east or fireplace wall in the parlour, already mentioned, there is a wood cornice and a

chair rail but, in the manner of the day, no panelled dado. In the hall, the entire fireplace wall is panelled; there is a good wooden cornice and chair rail. In the study the vigorously panelled dado, chimney-breast and cupboards, and the robust wooden cornice, are all of a pattern much earlier than the actual date of the house. In all likelihood, the joiner had learned his craft under his grandfather and was loath to give up time-honoured practices. Instances of the same thing occur in plenty of other houses. In the upstairs rooms there is the same carefully-studied and admirable panelling and other woodwork as there is downstairs. So much for the Georgian interior dressing of a "Quaker plan" house.

There are no mantels above any of the fireplaces except in the kitchen; the panelling ends in mouldings framing each fireplace. All the fireplaces are of different measurements, including one in the attic, (without panelling or any other accompanying grace,) which is probably the smallest fireplace in Delaware, or in any other state for that matter.

It is worth noting that in the study the paint on the woodwork is the original coat applied in 1771, and the paint now on the walls is the same colour as the original lime wash. This same fortunate preservation of paint and wall colours occur elsewhere in the house also.

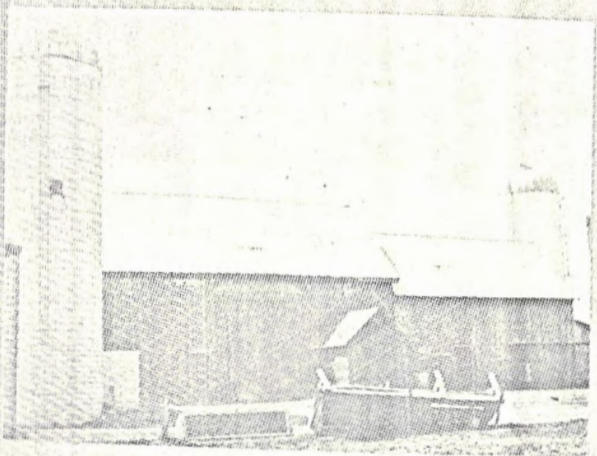
The few slight changes required to make Aspendale convenient for modern living have in no wise altered the aspect of the house. Enclosure of the north porch to the frame wing



Bailey Home



Somerville Home



Jail for Slaves

Landscape



to make a modern kitchen, has made the former kitchen available as a dining-room. Besides this, the judicious introduction of several bathrooms, so far as any visible changes go, has rendered the house completely comfortable.

COOPER HOUSE
(Kenton.)

Late eighteenth-century two-storey-and attic brick house, at northeast corner of State Routes 300 and 42. In good condition; excellent woodwork and panelling.

The home of where Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Hughes now reside.

BAILEY HOUSE

At the Cross Roads in Kenton, Bailey House, built a century ago by Major John Wilds. It is a two storey-and attic brick house. They claim that there is a skelton of a horse's head between the two floors.¹

¹ This information, was taken from Mr. Eberlein & Mr. Hubbard from their book.

SOMERVILLE

(MY HOME)

One mile beyond, Gamalien Garrison farm. Brick colonial home. A two-storey and attic, five bay Georgian brick house, c. 1799 to 1800. Exterior painted white and much Victorianized. Interior has good woodwork and admirable panelling. In what was the parlor a landscape of the branch, where the colored church now stands painted in large dog-eared overmantel panel.

The walls are 16 to 18 inches thick. The Former home of Chancellor Ridgeley, where he held Court of Chancery, until he moved to Eden Hill.

The old brick building now used as a barn, is still standing which was used for a jail for the slaves. There is an ice house beneath.

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