

INTRODUCTION

The earliest permanent settlers to establish roots in Milford came to Kent and Sussex Counties between 1664 and 1676 after the English took control of Delaware from the Dutch and Swedes. Most early settlers came from old Somerset and Accomac Counties in Maryland and Virginia where English families were staking claims to small land grants of 200 acres on Maryland and Virginia's eastern shore. Other families moved north from Lewes after that town was founded in 1631 by the Dutch West India Company.

Henry Bowman obtained a patent from the Duke of York in 1680 to settle a 2,000-acre tract of land called "Saw Mill Range" that now encompasses Milford. Alexander Draper settled in Slaughter Neck in 1677, Luke Watson was granted land in Cedar Neck in 1676, Mark Manlove moved to Milford Neck in 1677, and Isaac Mason settled along Canterbury Road about 1685.

Milford was settled at the headwaters of the Mispillion River at a location called "Three Runs," at the confluence of the Mispillion River and Bowman's and Clark's branches. These early English settlers were industrious millers, farmers, merchants, and sailors. Milford got its start as a landing site and trading post built by a mariner-turned-trader, Joseph Oliver. Oliver was born about 1727 in Slaughter Neck near the plantations of Alexander Draper and Nehemiah Davis. He migrated north to the Mispillion River headwaters and during 1771-1773 purchased a 115-acre tract of farmland on the north side of the Mispillion River, where he established his home and wharf.

In 1787, Oliver divided his farm into a town grid and began offering lots to newer settlers, costing from \$3 to \$8 per year under the old English system of ground rents. The first lots were sold along Northwest Front Street in December 1786 and January 1787. By 1790, Milford had more than 80 structures built on Oliver's 115-acre farm extending from the river to the present location of Banneker School on North Street.

By 1791, Oliver had petitioned the General Assembly in Dover for a drawbridge over the Mispillion to be constructed along "Kings Highway" leading from Kent to Sussex County. The bridge permitted traders and travelers easy access to Sussex County along the road leading to the court at Lewestown. At the same time in 1787 that Oliver was selling lots for his new village, Parson Sydenham Thorne, rector of the Savannah Church located three miles west of Milford, decided to relocate his church to a plot of land donated by Oliver along Church Street in Milford. Parson Thorne married a wealthy widow, Betty Crapper, and purchased the stately "Silver Hill" mansion and 263-acre farm owned by the Cullen family. He soon built a gristmill just west of Oliver's landing. Together, these two enterprising leaders assured the survival of Milford as a new town through their tireless efforts to bring business, culture, religion, and civility to a primitive area.

Milford obtained its town charter in 1807, the same year Joseph Oliver died. New merchants established stores, wharves, and granaries along North Walnut Street, extending the business district two blocks to the Mispillion River.

The Mispillion River was the primary avenue of trade throughout the 19th century and it is not surprising that Milford became a major shipbuilding town around 1790, with John Draper's shipyard located on the north side of the Mispillion at Northeast Fourth Street where it meets the river. Between 1790 and 1815, William DuPrey operated another shipyard near New Wharf east of Milford, and by 1815, Nathaniel Hickman was building wooden sailing vessels farther east at his farm near Delaware Bay, known as Hickman's Landing. By 1860 Milford boasted seven shipyards employing hundreds of carpenters, loggers, caulkers, and scroll workers.

Following the Civil War improvements in technology ushered Milford into the lucrative era

of canning and fruit drying. Before the invention of refrigeration there was no efficient and safe method of preserving and transporting perishable vegetables and fruits to city markets in Wilmington, Philadelphia, and New York. The first boiler-powered fruit drying machines were introduced in 1870 and the effect on local farm products was immediate and dramatic. When the railroad finally reached Milford in August 1859, a new method of transportation provided a reliable alternative to steamboats and sailing ships. Milford grew to a town of 3,500 inhabitants by 1900. The town boasted new electric lighting installed in 1887 and a public water system completed in 1892.

In 1900, two local dentists brought a fledgling dental supply business to Milford after the death of the owner, Levin D. Caulk, in 1896. Drs. Frank and G. Layton Grier saw the need for new advancements in the development of synthetic porcelain for tooth repairs. They started a new manufacturing plant in Milford that expanded in 1908 and again in 1912 to become the most advanced research facility of its kind in the field of dentistry.

Drs. William (II) and Sam Marshall, guided by their mother, Mary Louise, led a drive with support from the Grier brothers to establish a hospital in Milford between 1907 and 1921. The Milford Emergency Hospital was incorporated in 1913. It was located at 110 Northwest Front Street in the former Purnell Lofland home; it was relocated across the street in 1921 in the remodeled Reynear Williams home. In 1938, the hospital was moved to its present location on Clark Avenue and was reincorporated as the Milford Memorial Hospital.

Milford and its local environs have been home to nine governors since 1787. Some of its most historic homes were built and owned by these community leaders over the past two centuries. Today, Milford claims the first woman governor in the history of Delaware, Ruth Ann Minner, elected in 2000.

As Milford enters the 21st century it has grown to a town of 7,500 citizens, proud of a heritage that extends back to the earliest period of European settlement. Delaware is one of the original 13 colonies and the first to ratify the federal constitution on December 7, 1787. The historic district, riverfront greenway, and civic-minded residents lend a quality of life to Milford that is not found in every small town. As Milford enters the 21st century, it will continue to treasure its past and preserve the best examples of its early history. We hope this pictorial history of Milford will keep the past alive for the next generation proud to call Milford home.

—Dave Kenton



The 2001 Milford Historical Society Trustees are, from left to right, (front row) Ralph Prettyman, treasurer; Carolyn Humes; Marvin P. Schelhouse, president; Dave Kenton; Dr. Ed Hendel, secretary; Dawn Willis; and Susan Emory. Absent from the photo are Barbara Jones, F. Brooke Clendaniel, and Mort Whitehead (deceased).



1. Hiram Barber's saw mill
 2. Draper-Reis Cannery
 3. Walnut Street Bridge
 4. Causey mansion
 5. South Milford shipyards
 6. Business district
 7. Mispillion River
 8. Silver Lake tumbling-dam site
 9. Peninsula
 10. Hilly landscape
 11. Churches
 12. Houses
 13. Industrial structures
 14. Open areas
 15. Trees

MILFORD.

DELAWARE

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1885 LITHOGRAPH OF MILFORD. This map of early Milford provides a detailed replica of every structure and landmark in Milford when the population was 2,500. The Mispillion River begins at the original Silver Lake tumbling-dam site at the peninsula. The river meanders eastward past Hiram Barber's saw mill, Draper-Reis Cannery, Walnut Street Bridge, and east to the South Milford shipyards. The Causey mansion is visible at the corner of S. Walnut and Causey Avenue. The business district is centered on Walnut Street on both ends of the drawbridge over the Mispillion.

... OF THE ...

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EARLY LAND GRANTS AND LANDMARKS

1676–1776

Milford was settled gradually after 1680 when Henry Bowman was granted a patent for a 2,000-acre plot called "Saw Mill Range." Between 1680 and 1787, when the first lots were plotted, many patents were granted in the eight-mile area surrounding Milford. Early mills were constructed and landings were established along the Mispillion River. The following diagrams, maps, plots, and photographs attempt to describe Milford during the colonial period prior to the American Revolution.

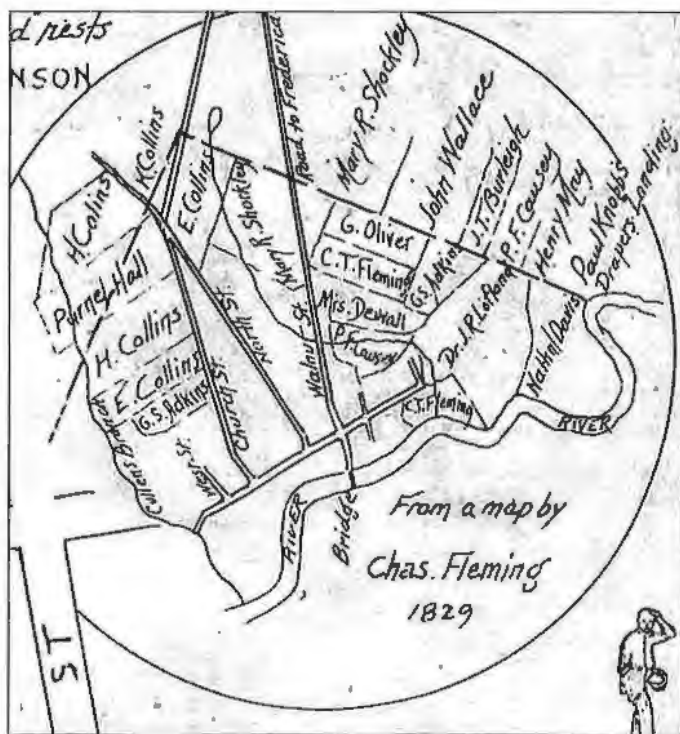


THE 1778 PLOT. The earliest detailed survey plot of the Saw Mill Range and South Milford was done to divide Levin Crapper's plantation among the heirs following his death in 1775. This plot shows the location of "King Highway" (dotted-line road) crossing the Mispillion River at the headwaters of Silver Lake, and the location of Levin Crapper's first mill built in 1768 at Crapper's Mill Pond, now Haven Lake. Presbyterian branch is shown in the center flowing into Silver Lake at the former site of the old Presbyterian Meeting house (Jack and Mary Lou Shaeffer's home today).



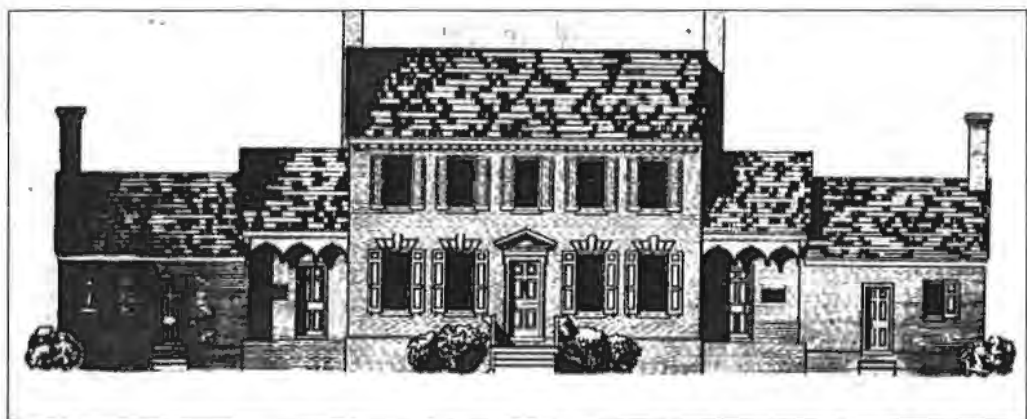
PARSON THORNE MANSION. This photo was taken in 1960 just prior to James R. Draper gifting the home to the newly formed Milford Historical Society. This home is the oldest structure standing in Milford today. Joseph Booth built the rear, frame-section of this home before 1735. This home has had a succession of owners.

CHARLES FLEMING MAP, 1829. This early map of Milford was drawn by a noted surveyor and shows the town limits shortly after it was incorporated in 1807. The western side of the plot shows Cullen's branch that flows along Truitt Avenue and behind Avenue Methodist Church today. This stream was called "Tanner's branch" later when three tanneries were operating along its banks. In the 20th century, the stream was called Muller's Run.

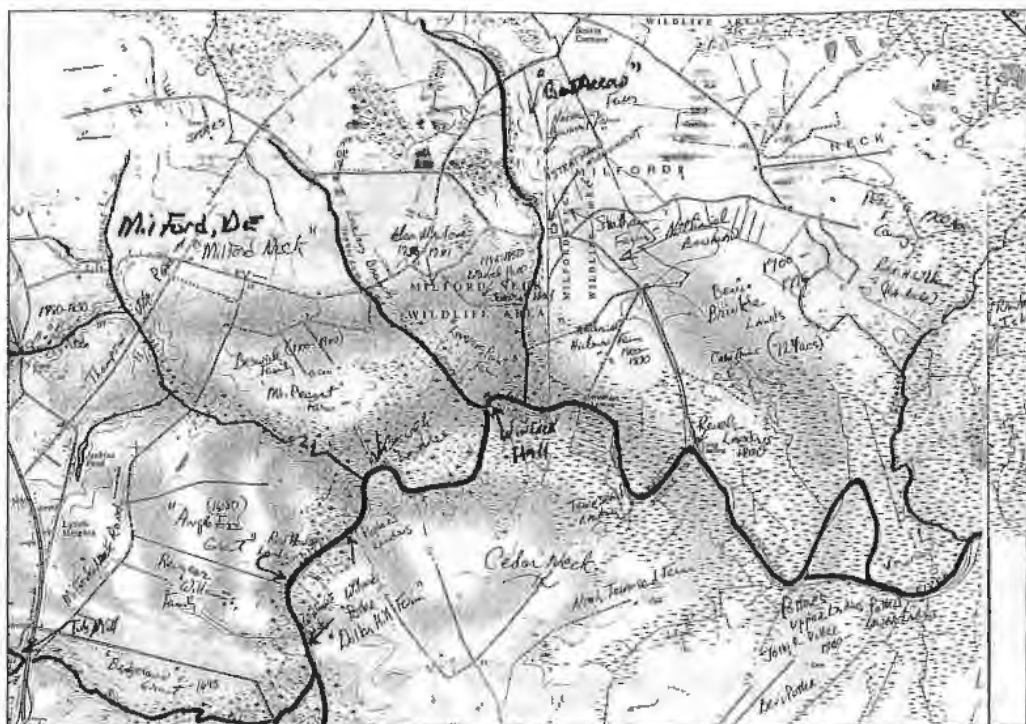




LEVIN CRAPPER MANSION. The Crapper Mansion was designed in a five-bay, Georgian-style architecture and constructed in 1763. The front door formerly faced southwest, overlooking the 500-acre plantation that encompassed nearly all of South Milford. In 1850, when Gov. Peter F. Causey purchased the old home, the front was changed to face the Mispillion River and Walnut Street. Wings were added to the early structure and the architecture was changed to Greek Revival style, popular in the 1850s.



COLONIAL VIEW OF PARSON THORNE MANSION. Architect R. Calvin Clendaniel did a sketch of the Parson Thorne Mansion for the Milford Historical Society. The drawing represents what the brick section of the Thorne Mansion may have looked like between 1746, when it was built, and 1879, when it was modified to Victorian styling by banker Henry Fiddeman. This view shows the mansion in classical Georgian style without an elevated roofline and without three distinctive gables that are familiar to us today.



EARLY LANDINGS ALONG THE MISPELLION RIVER. A map of the Mispillion River shows the early land grants and farms located along the section of river starting at New Wharf at the left margin and progressing eastward past "Red House Landing" at Angleford, Beswick's Landing at Mt. Pleasant farm, Winlock Hall's Landing at Lovelong Point Farm, Hickman's Landing at Hickman farm, Renville's Landing on the Brinkle plantation, Porter's Landing at John R. Potter's farm, and the Mispillion Lighthouse landing at the entrance to Delaware Bay. This map also shows the location of the first Baptist Meeting House on the DeWeese tract at Baptist Branch and the "Bent Arrow" farm settled by Nathaniel Bowman in 1750 at the "Stratham" monument deep in Milford Neck.



MISPELLION WALKWAY, 2001. The walking bridge built as an extension of the Mispillion greenway project allows residents to walk the banks of the Mispillion River from Thorne-Oliver Bridge at Walnut Street, westward to Silver Lake and the site of Thorne's original gristmill built in 1787.



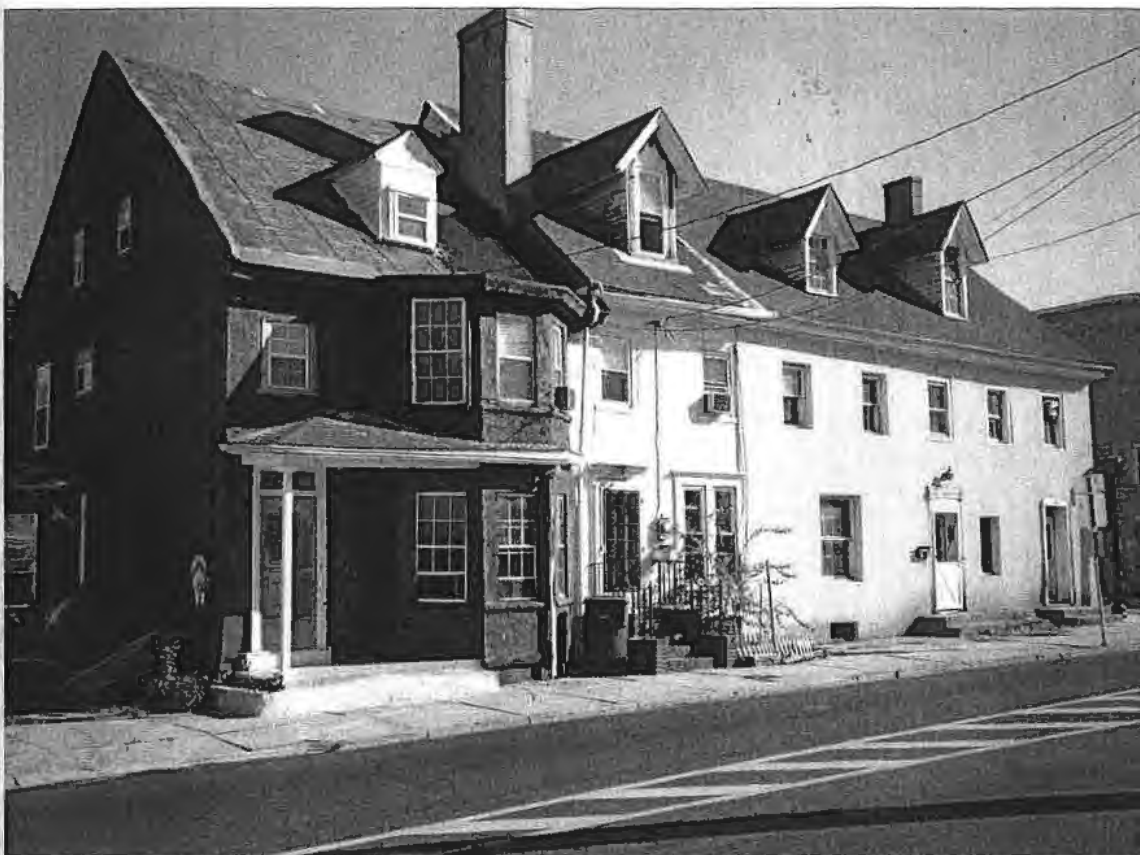
DR. WILLIAM MARSHALL. Dr. Marshall was born in Milton near San Hill Church and spent his formative years in Georgetown. He studied medicine at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and returned to Milton to practice in 1847. After gold was discovered in California, he joined the Gordon Expedition as a surgeon in 1849 and spent two years in California without finding the "mother lode." When the Civil War broke out in 1861 he was commissioned as a surgeon with the Union army in the 3rd Delaware Regiment. He was wounded in 1862 at Antietam and later served at Fort Delaware. He returned to Milford to marry Hester Angelina McColley, daughter of Trusten P. McColley of South Milford. Dr. Marshall raised four children, one of whom, George W. Marshall, followed his father's path to the medical profession. By 1870 Dr. Marshall was involved as a partner in business with the shipbuilding firm of J.W. Abbott & Co. as financial manager. He purchased the Marshall Mill operation, expanded to a brick making business, and converted the water mill to steam power. He was active in all phases of Milford life until his death in 1900.



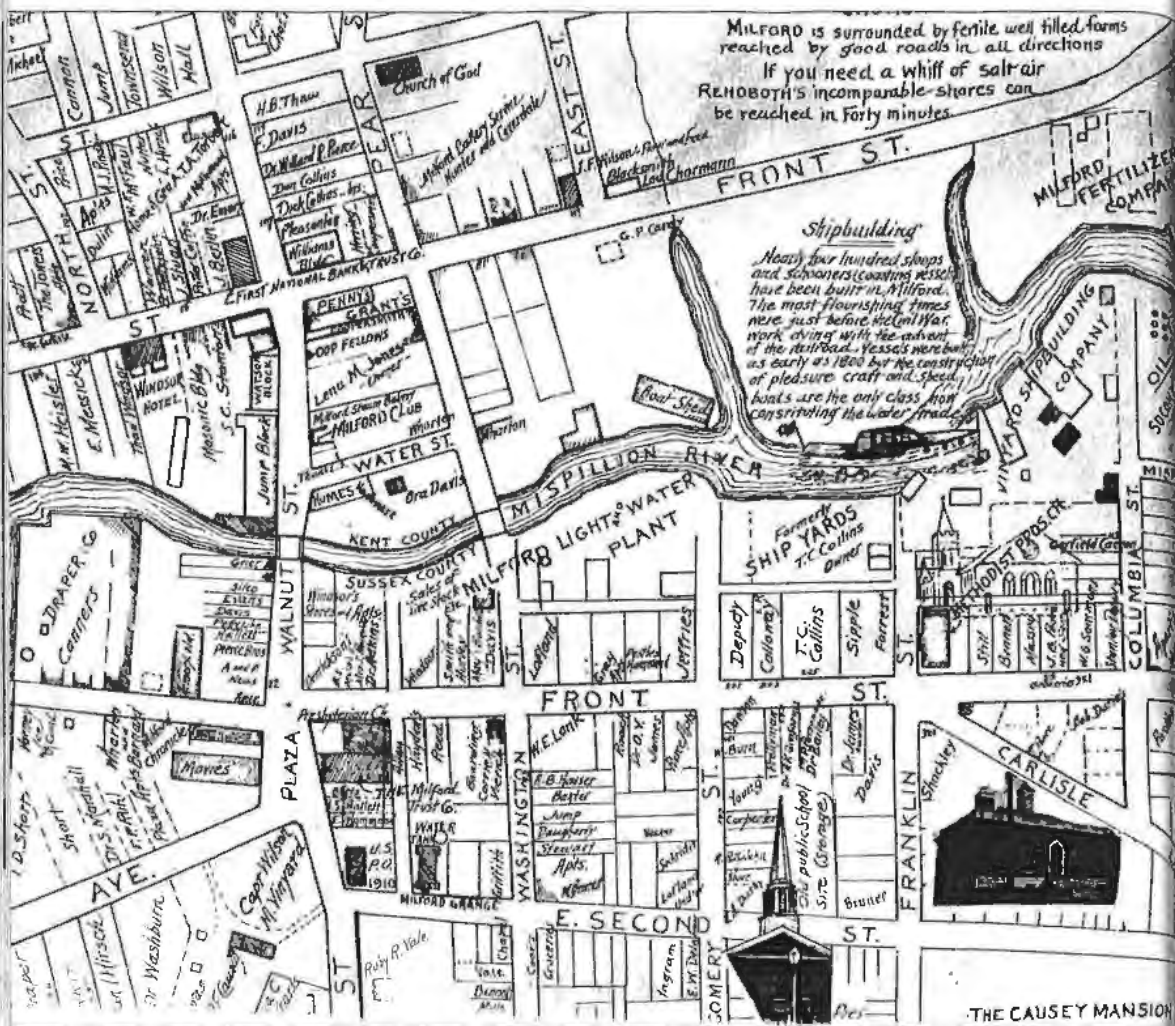
THE TOWERS. This landmark structure located at 101 Northwest Front Street was one of the first buildings constructed when Joseph Oliver surveyed his farm into lots in 1787. John and Cynthia Wallace built a home and store on this corner in 1783 and were succeeded by their son, Thomas. Later the home was purchased by Gov. William Burton and descended to his daughter, Rhoda, following his death in 1866. Rhoda Burton married a wealthy New York businessman, Clinton Roubush, who sponsored her restoration of the old home in 1891.



GENERAL TORBERT HOME, 1907. The three-story, Greek Revival home was at first a store built by Benjamin Wadhams and later used as a tavern for James Starr around 1810. Daniel Currey, merchant and father of Mary Currey Torbert, purchased this home from Governor Causey about 1854 and lived here until his daughter married Gen. A.T.A. Torbert in January 1866, after which the newlyweds made this mansion their home. Alonzo Reynolds, a noted architect from Port Deposit, Maryland, upgraded this home to modern standards in 1850.

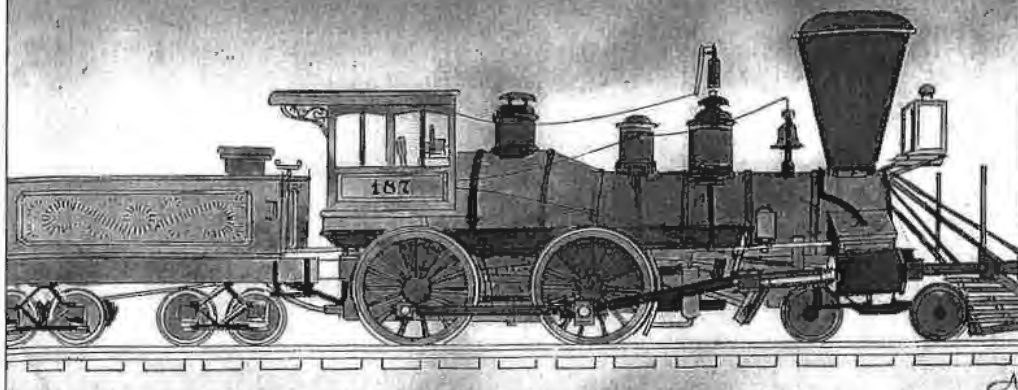


RALSTON/SUDLER HOME. John Ralston built this home in 1795 for his family. Upon his death, his son-in-law, Dr. Joseph Sudler, inherited the home and conducted his medical business from the corner office. Later in 1848 the building was used to launch Milford's first newspaper, the *Beacon*, published by John H. Emerson from Denton. Daniel Godwin used the building as a store prior to moving to the opposite corner to the Williams (Jewell's Store) building in 1830. This building was home to Milford Seafood Market from 1940 to 1955 when Dennard Conner owned the building. Today the property is owned by Frank Fioca and shows signs of old age. It is 206 years old.



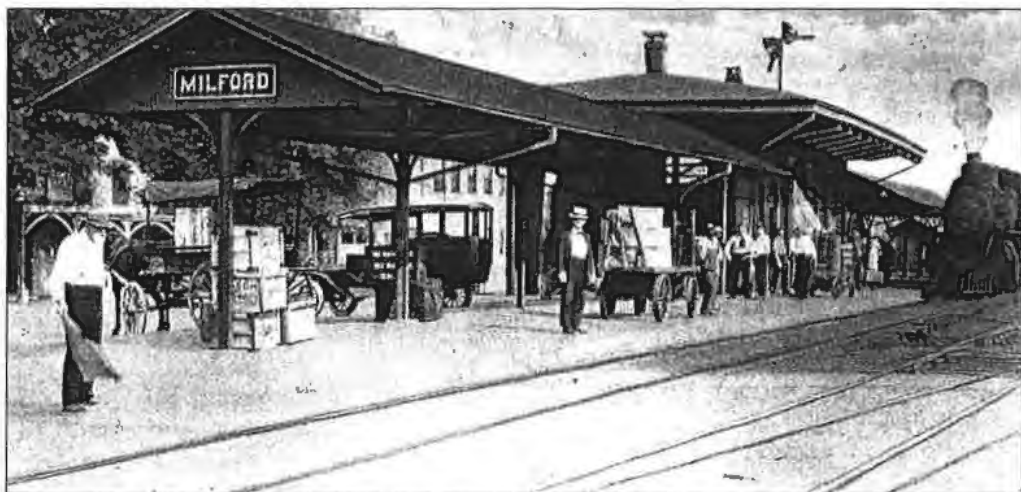
MILFORD SHIPYARDS, 1780-1920. Sailing ships were being built along the Mispillion River as early as 1750 at Millstone Landing (New Wharf) and Wyncoop's shipyard near Marshall's Mill. Shipbuilding began in Milford about 1782 when John Draper established a two-acre shipyard site at the base of East Fourth Street where it meets the river (Domino's Pizza). His son, Alexander Draper, purchased the shipyard in 1801 and built several wooden sailing vessels at this site before moving to New Castle County. The Drapers built about 22 vessels between 1780 and 1809. The bulk of shipbuilding, however, was conducted along the south bank of the Mispillion between S. Washington Street and Fisher Avenue. This map was charted in 1938 by W.P. Richards, a civil engineer, and depicts the location of the main shipyards between Montgomery Street and Columbia. David West began building sloops in 1818 and built nine from the wharf behind his home at 205 S.E. Front Street (T.C. Collins) before his death in 1832. Sylvester Deputy and his son, James H. lived next to David West on the west side and at the N.E. corner of Front Street and Montgomery. The father-son team began shipbuilding in 1828 and continued until 1872 when James H. Deputy retired. William A. Scribner who lived in the Lank home at the southeast corner of Washington owned the entire riverfront block between South Washington Street and Montgomery Street and Front Street. Scribner began his shipbuilding career in 1846 and built 21 ships before his death in 1882.

"Tiger" - First Locomotive - 1859



"The Tiger" First Locomotive to Milford

"THE TIGER." Milford businessmen fought the first railroad that made its way down the peninsula beginning in 1855. The railroad was forced to locate its tracks west of Rt. 13 and nearly 10 miles west of all river towns including Smyrna, Dover, Frederica, Milford, and Milton. Small towns sprang up around the railroad just as fast as tracks were laid. The towns of Clayton, Cheswold, Viola, Farmington, Harrington, and Greenwood were all built when the railroad came downstate in 1856. After resisting the railroad for two years and enduring a treacherous eight-mile trip to Harrington, Milford businessmen formed the Junction & Breakwater Railroad in 1857 to extend tracks to Milford, Georgetown, Lewes, and Rehoboth. The line opened to Milford on September 7, 1859, with the arrival of "The Tiger." This locomotive served the line until the turn of the century.



THE RAILROAD DEPOT, c. 1915. The railroad depot was the center of activity for businessmen from 1859 until 1940, when trucking began to carry the bulk of farm produce, coal, and freight to the cities. This scene shows a northbound train in 1915 with hotel hacks lined up to carry passengers to local hotels. From 1890 to 1920 as many as seven trains passed Milford daily.

RUTH ANN MINNER, FIRST GOVERNOR FOR THE NEW MILLENIUM. The campaign for governor of Delaware in 1999 saw two Milford candidates square off against each other in a hard-fought race. Mrs. Minner emerged victorious and became the first woman to win the governor's office in state history. She is currently enjoying wide support among all Delawareans and lives at "Woodburn," the Governor's mansion. Milford has not sent a Governor to Dover since William T. Watson served in 1895 following the death of Gov. Joshua Marvil.



THORNE-OLIVER BRIDGE AND GREENWAY, 2001. The Milford Greenway was extended to the west side of Walnut Street in 1999 and provides a walking view of the site behind Northwest Front Street where Joseph Oliver established his first wharf in 1772. Oliver petitioned the General Assembly in 1791 to build the first drawbridge over the Mispillion to connect Kent with Sussex County.



THE OLD AND THE NEW. The Milford water tower was erected on the site of the former water "stand pipe" built in 1892 following the disastrous fire in 1891 that nearly burned the town to the ground. In the background are modest row homes built in 1855 by Curtis and Bethuel Watson located on South Washington Street. These homes were rented to tradesmen and shipyard workers during the 19th century. They are still serving as rental properties 150 years later.

NEW MILFORD LIBRARY. The Milford Library was built with funds pledged from local residents (60 percent) and a state grant (40 percent). David G. Burton, local businessman, former councilman, and civic activist, led the drive to raise \$2 million for the library in the face of daunting odds. The community project is the most outstanding example of Milford's revitalization efforts over the past decade. The library provides a community meeting room and outdoor amphitheater that serves as a focal point for community events. It sits on the site of Henry Hudson's home, built in 1810 that was demolished to make way for the new library.



The Commission on Landmarks and Museums and the Milford Historical Society sincerely hopes you have enjoyed this pictorial history of Milford and the Mispillion River. We have tried to provide a collection of previously published photos along with many new ones that tell the story of Milford during its 215-year history as the town that was built at the headwaters of the Mispillion River in an old land grant called "Saw Mill Range."

I. MILFORD PAST AND PRESENT

Milford began as a little settlement along the north bank of the Mispillion, lying completely in Kent County. All area south of the river was known only as Sussex County. In 1791 when a law was enacted by the General Assembly providing for the maintenance of a drawbridge over the Mispillion, it was described as being, "on the public road leading from the village of Milford into the county of Sussex." Joseph Oliver laid out his land in building lots in 1787, a date accepted as that of the founding of Milford. The community was confined to the area east of Mullet Run and north of the river. Like most towns and cities dating back to the 19th century, Milford's street pattern has been kept, enlarged perhaps, but with the original plan of straight streets laid out in square blocks. By 1796, according to a historian of that time, there were eighty houses, all but one built since the American Revolution.

N. W. Front Street, from N. Walnut Street to Silver Hill was the business section of Milford in the days of Sydenham Thorne and Joseph Oliver. As homes were built and new businesses developed, the center of business activity shifted. "Downtown Walnut Street", as the shopping district between the two Front Streets is still known, was the center of business by mid or late 19th century. A real estate and insurance office, an attorney's office, a saloon, barber shops with their red and white striped revolving poles as much a trademark as the cigar store Indian, the city office, a theatre, banks, restaurants, a church, a hotel were interspersed with stores. The dirt main street was originally paved with logs, called a corduroy road. This crude roadway was covered with bricks when the town outgrew its pioneer days, and later the automobile brought about the surfacing of the brick street with asphalt.

Through the pages of this section Milford is shown as it has looked from the turn of the century to the summer of 1977. Traffic jams of horse-drawn vehicles, as well as heavy automobile traffic, are pictured; dirt streets, views of downtown stores recalling memories of rabbits, muskrats, chickens, and hogs hanging in front of the butcher shops, crates of fresh vegetables and fruits set on the sidewalk in front of the grocery stores, bring back Milford of early 1900.

Old buildings which Milfordians have loved and lost are shown here as well as those still standing in all their dignity to lend beauty to Milford. In recent years there has been an increased awareness in the community of the esthetic and economic value of our 18th and 19th century buildings. It is no longer unusual to see an old building being renovated for use as a place of business or a professional office. Young couples are restoring old houses while living in them. If this trend to preserve and adapt old buildings to modern use continues, perhaps in the future one will still be able to see the remaining architectural treasures depicted in this book.



North Front Street looking west as it appeared in 1908.



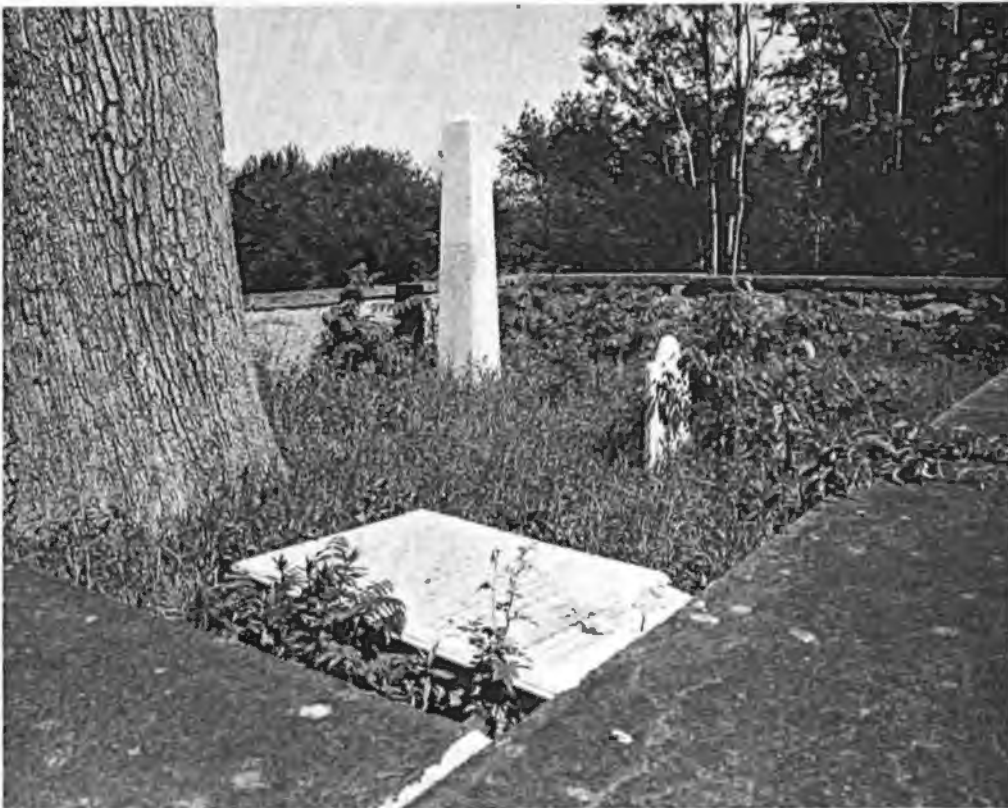
Hotel Windsor at 24 N. W. Front Street when it was a haven of rest for salesmen and other weary travellers.



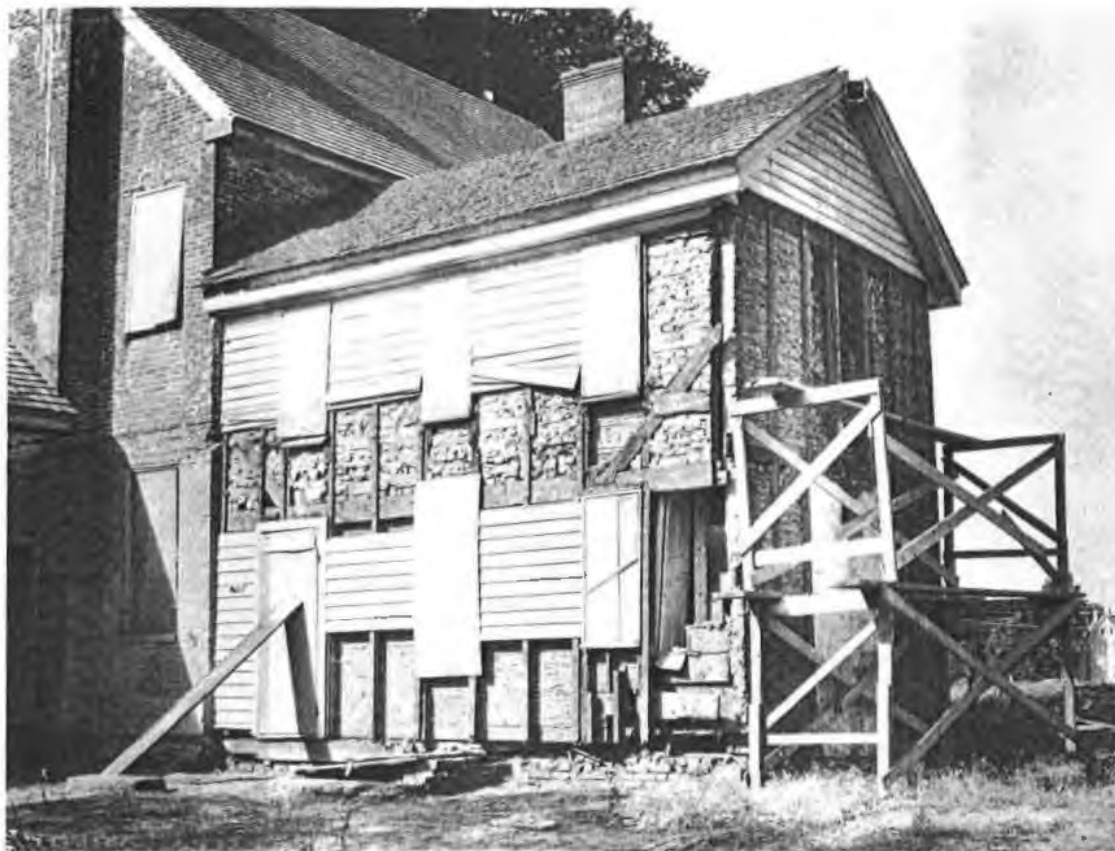
Old Red Mill which stood at the foot of Mill Street on the site, tradition tells us, of Parson Thorne's mill.



Parson Thorne Mansion, 501 N. W. Front Street, before restoration. This is the oldest building in Milford, the rear frame wing having been built between 1730 and 1735 and the main front section between 1750 and 1760. It receives its name from the Rev. Sydenham Thorne, first rector of Christ Church and co-founder of Milford. Property of Milford Historical Society. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Cemetery at Silver Hill showing slab tombstone on grave of the Rev. Sydenham Thorne and the Clayton Family monument.



Parson Thorne Mansion undergoing restoration in 1963. Removal of worn siding on this rear wing exposed brick nogging used for insulation.



Facade of Parson Thorne Mansion after removal of Victorian veranda during 1963 restoration.



The Towers, 101 N. W. Front Street. Built in 1783 and remodeled in 1891 to its present style. This was the home of John Lofland, the Milford Bard. Home of Mr. William M. Chasanov.



Southeast corner of The Towers. John Lofland used a room on the second floor, called his "garret", for his writing.

Drinking Fountain. One of two fountains given by the Milford New Century Club in 1898, one in North Milford and one in South Milford. These supplied water for dogs in the lower bowl, horses in the middle bowl, and people at the top.





Mill House, 414 N. W. Front Street. Judged to be a late 18th century house which could have been the home of Parson Thorne's miller. Once the home of George B. Hynson. Owned and restored by Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Elfreh.

Tombstone marking grave of Governor Daniel Rogers in Odd Fellows Cemetery where his remains and those of members of his family were re-interred in a lot bought for this purpose by the State of Delaware.



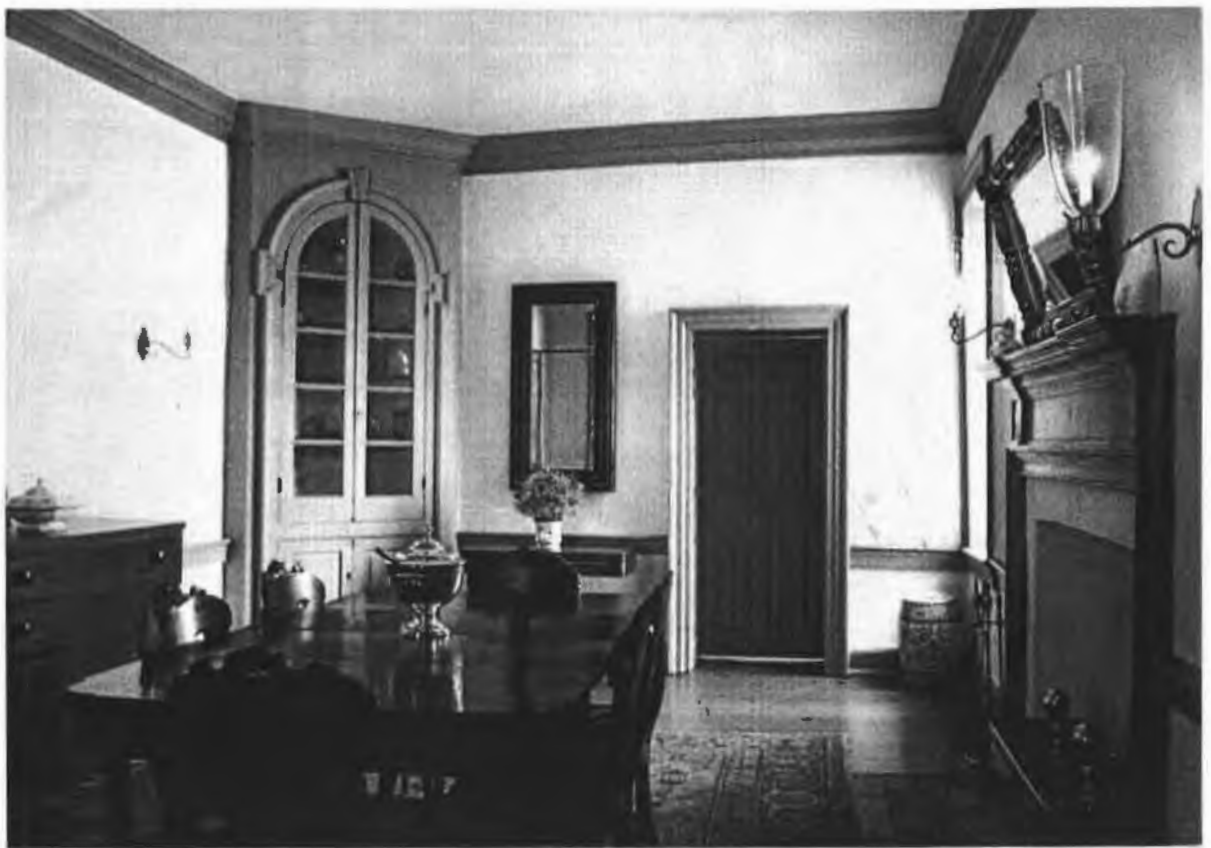
Sapp House, 318 N. W. Front Street. Cypress shingle exterior. Once the home of Dr. Benjamin Potter, nephew of Col. Potter who founded the Kent County Poor Charity. Home of Mr. Frank Sapp.



Professional Building, 12 N. W. Front Street. Built in 1855 by Curtis Watson for his residence. Milford's first hospital was opened in this building through the efforts of Mrs. George W. Marshall.

Wells Building, 10 N. W. Front Street. Built in 1855 by Bethuel Watson for his residence. Now owned by Mr. J. William Wells and used for offices.

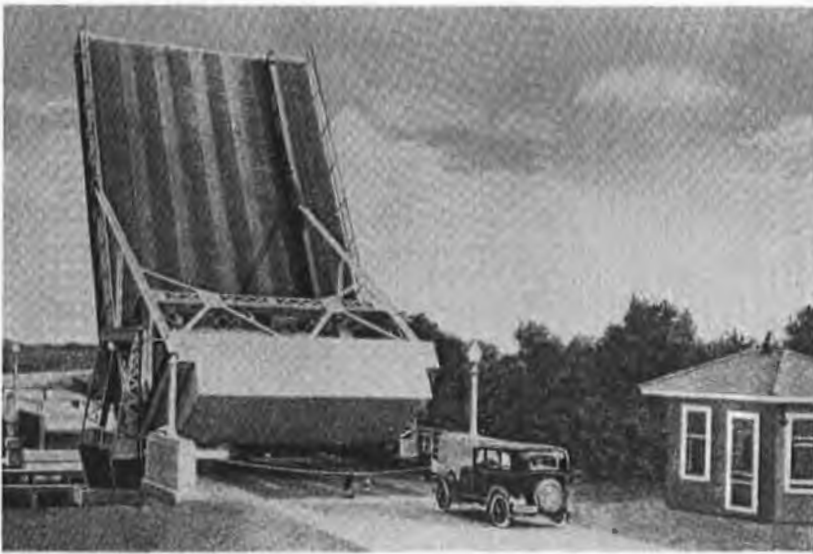




Dining Room of Parson Thorne Mansion showing original corner cupboard, cornice, and mantel.

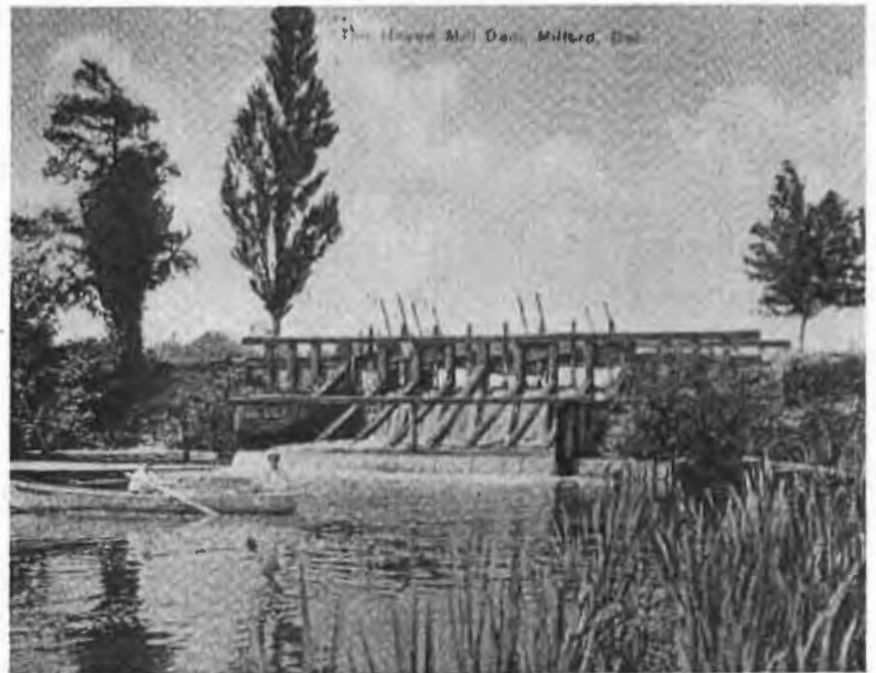


Powell House, 302 S. Walnut Street. A Victorian house typical of those here and there in Milford. Owned by Mr. and Mrs. F. Brooke Clendaniel.



Drawbridge over Mispillion River on
Route 14 bypass to Rehoboth,
circa 1935.

Tumbling Dam at Haven Lake before
construction of du Pont Highway,
Route 113.



Site of the Old Mill Ford,
From which Milford was named.



Old Dam at Haven Lake before
construction of du Pont Highway.

GOVERNORS OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE FROM MILFORD



Charles Polk 1827-1830
1836-1837



William Tharp 1847-1851.



Peter F. Causey 1855-1859.



William Burton 1859-1863.



William T. Watson 1895-1897.

Other Milford men who served as chief executive for whom no pictures are available:

Daniel Rogers 1797-1799

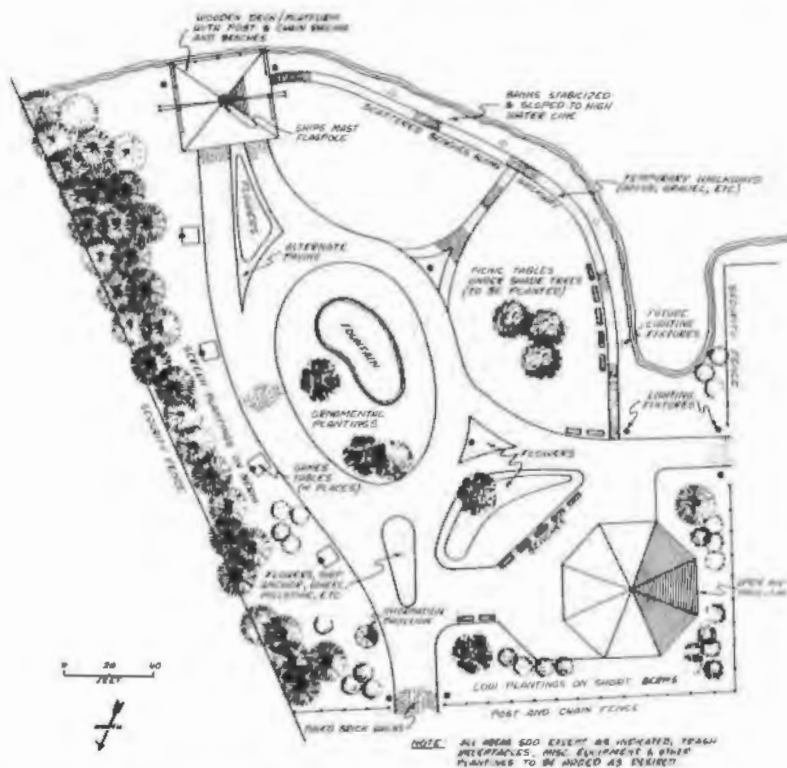
Joseph Haslet 1811-1814

1823 January-June

BICENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE



Milford Bicentennial Park situated on the Mispillion River behind the city parking lot on N. E. Front Street, shown in August, 1977. The first public event held here after the dedication was a piano concert on the evening of August 23, 1977 sponsored jointly by the local unit Disabled American Veterans and the City Department of Parks and Recreation.



Plan of Milford Bicentennial Park on Mispillion River behind City Parking Lot on N. W. Front Street. Creation of this park was the project by which Milford qualified to be named a Bicentennial Community.

POSTAL SERVICE



West end of Purity Row on N. W. Front Street,
said to house Milford's first post office.



Site of S. Walnut Street Post Office 1907, looking north.



Frank H. Crandleb

PROPRIETOR

Central Hotel

North Front St.

HEATED BY HOT WATER.

ELECTRIC LIGHTS

SAMPLE ROOMS.

ALL THE MODERN IMPROVEMENTS IN THE HOUSE,

Milford. Del.

"He keeps just a fine Hotel,
Just full four stories high,
Where he will entertain you nice,
In stomach and in eye.
In food and drink and cozy beds,
First-class in every way,
And treat you kindly I am sure,
At very little pay,
Just stop there when you come along,
And spend at least a day.

THE TABLE will be supplied with all the Delicacies of the Season, such as Game, Fish, etc. It will we found one of the best Hotels on the Peninsula.

Sample Room for Salesmen.

Free Hack to and from the Depot.

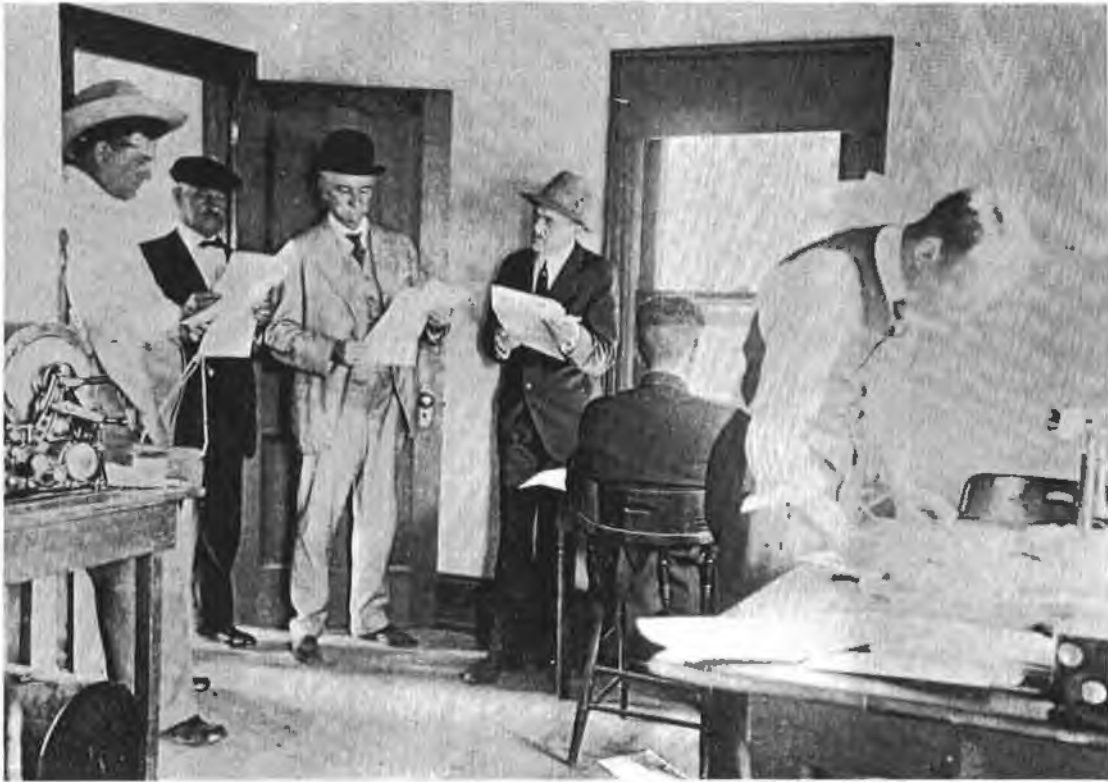
LIVERY ATTACHED.

...The Bar Well Stocked With Finest Wines, Liquors and Cigars.

GOOD GUNNING AND FISHING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Advertisement in "Delaware State Directory 1899" of the Central Hotel, located on N.W. Front Street which later became the Hotel Windsor.

NEWS MEDIA



Office of the Milford Chronicle Publishing Company circa 1915. The third man from the left wearing a derby hat is Col. Theodore Townsend.



Office of The Milford Chronicle in 1906. Col. Theodore Townsend, one of the founders of the paper in 1878, is shown second from left.



Milford Emergency Hospital, N.W. Front Street,
circa 1923.



Milford Emergency Hospital patient's room.

*Milford
Delaware*

1776 - 1976



*Celebrating
America's
200th
Birthday*

MILFORD

BUSINESS DIRECTORY.

William Horton Governor
 P. P. Cassey Mayor

Joshua C. Connor Farmer, Collector &c.
 Daniel Currier Clerk & Farmer

William Burton	Governor	Joshua C. Fennar	Marmer, Collector dr.
R. F. Conroy	Mr. Burmaster	Daniel Fennar	Stinson & Marmer

Joshua C. Turner Farmer, Collector Ac.
 Daniel Turner Otisum & Farmer

BECOME A PART OF GREATER MILFORD

*Quality
of Life
at its
Best!*



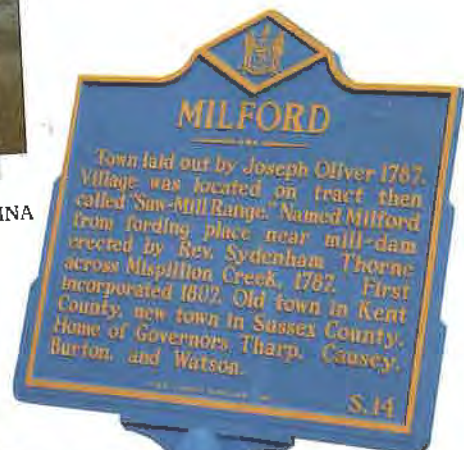
THE MISPELLION MARINA



THE SHAWNEE COUNTRY CLUB



THE FIGHTING BLUE HEN



DELAWARE
SMALL WONDER

WE HAVE THE SPACE TO GROW

Greater Milford is all that a community can be - a perfect place to raise a family and a friendly place to retire. Taxes are low enough to be the envy of the Atlantic seaboard and high enough to provide a quality of life. It offers opportunities for growth while preserving its traditions from the 18th century.

Housing to serve the needs of low-income families or to satisfy the most affluent is available with police and fire protection from a dedicated and caring corps of citizens.

The community is vitally interested in education for all age groups. Three elementary schools are geographically located for convenience to the families they serve. These feed into the Middle School in a southwest residential section of town and the High School in the northern, almost rural, area. The High School academic curriculum is challenging enough to prepare students for the most prestigious schools in the country.

On their Milford campuses, both the University of Delaware and Goldey Beacom College offer courses for college credit. In its Continuing Ed program, the University also offers courses for graduate credit. Within a 20-mile radius of Milford, students can pursue courses at other colleges to achieve an Associate's, a Bachelor's, and a Master's Degree.

Almost every creed is represented with churches and a synagogue located within a short driving distance, and sometimes within walking distance. The different congregations have an ecumenical attitude, joining together to help the needy or to relieve a crisis situation. This concern about each other in the church overflows into daily lives, making Milford a truly friendly and caring community.

The Milford Public Library,



TOP RATED PUBLIC SCHOOLS



FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY



FREEDOM OF WORSHIP



ROOM FOR DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH



THE LATEST BOOKS - KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF

WE HAVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE



CONVENIENT SHOPPING CENTERS AND MALLS



SAFE COMMUNITY LOW CRIME RATE



AFFORDABLE RETIREMENT



UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS EDUCATION



CONTINUING EDUCATION

located on a quiet corner near downtown, is easily accessible to all residents of the area. With its collection of 20,000 books, many large-print, its constantly increasing videotape library, and its access to inter-library services, it serves Milford and the surrounding area.

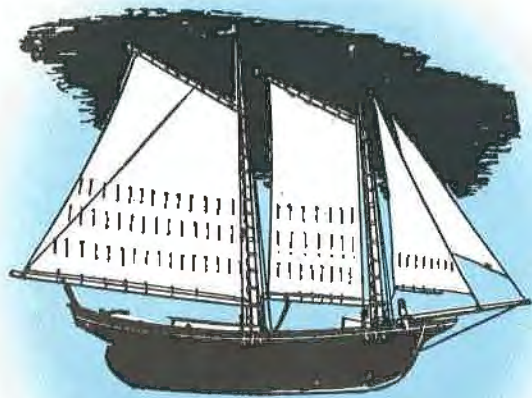
For those with an interest in the performing arts, The Second Street Players, Milford's own drama company, present three or four plays a season.

The Delaware Symphony, under the direction of Stephen Gunzenhauser, travels to Milford three times a year, the best acoustical site in the Kent-Sussex area. Bus trips by local charter companies are also organized for cultural events in Philadelphia, Washington, and New York as well as for fun days in Atlantic City.

Milford has also kept pace with the national interests in the environment and outdoor activities. A state-sponsored nature center has opened at an old nineteenth century mill near town, organizing workshops and activities for the very young as well as for adults.

The parks and recreation group, sponsored by the city and state, offers a structured program for all kinds of sports including baseball, touch football and soccer, and draws from all ages, preschoolers to adults. Even ski trips to the Poconos and New York State are offered. Fishing and sun-filled days at the beaches are only minutes away. The Senior Citizens Center also offers crafts, bus trips, social events, and lunches at a minimal charge.

An attractive country club at a reasonable cost is available for anyone interested in golf, swimming, tennis, or bridge. Truly, Milford has something to offer everyone's leisure interest and within a minimal driving distance.



Baltimore - Inner Harbor
2 Hours



Washington D.C. - 2 Hours



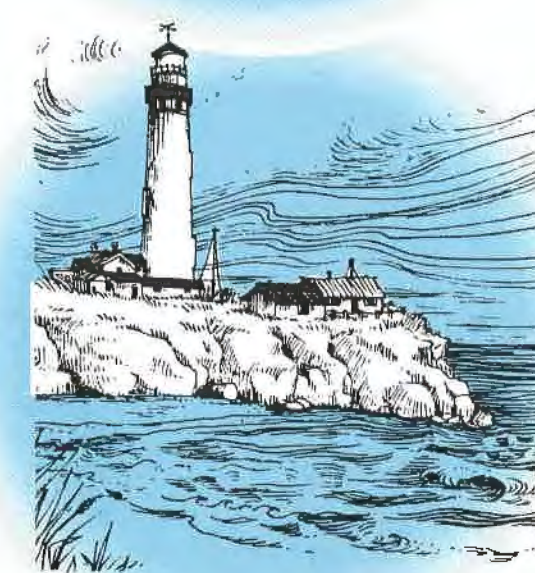
Williamsburg, VA - 3 Hours



Philadelphia - 2 Hours



Delaware Bay - 15 Min.



Clean Beaches - 30 Min.

MODERN HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Milford Memorial Hospital offers the best of a small community hospital and an advanced medical facility. Accreditation by the Joint Commission of Healthcare Organizations plus membership in the American Hospital Association and the Voluntary Hospitals of America assures advanced services by a qualified, caring staff.

Asophisticated array of diagnostic and treatment services on an inpatient and outpatient basis includes:

- (1) Ambulatory Surgery
- (2) Cardiopulmonary Services
- (3) Chemotherapy
- (4) Dietetics
- (5) Emergency Care
- (6) Laboratory Services
- (7) Obstetrics/Gynecology
- (8) Occupational Health
- (9) Pediatrics
- (10) Pharmacy
- (11) Physical Therapy
- (12) Radiology
- (13) Surgery.

The hospital employs more than fifty qualified staff physicians representing over twenty specialties. Physicians must meet strict medical standards and participate in continuing education and quality assurance activities to maintain their licensure and admitting privileges.

Nurses are the primary care givers offering the technical expertise and round-the-clock care that patients require and deserve. They understand that treating people with dignity and compassion is just as important as the use of advanced technology and procedures.

Community services are a real source of pride for the hospital. Services available include physicians referral, guest care, "Kids Korner" (for working mothers with sick children), health screenings, community education, and a speakers bureau.



MODERN DIAGNOSTIC TECHNIQUES



WELL STAFFED HEALTH CARE AT ITS BEST



PRODUCTIVE WORKERS



LOCAL CHILD CARE SERVICES



ABUNDANT COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE

INDUSTRY WITH A SENSE OF COMMUNITY



WIDE CHOICE OF PLANT SITES



TECHNICALLY TRAINED WORKERS



RAIL SERVICE



INTERNATIONAL CORPORATIONS



TRANSPORTATION TO NEARBY MARKETS

Delaware's constantly improving business climate produces a positive atmosphere for business development. The Greater Milford area is strategically located just far enough off the densely populated northeast corridor for uncrowded living, yet close enough for comparatively easy access to national and world markets.

In Milford the state and local governments are responsive to wants and needs. Calls to the City Hall, The Chamber of Commerce For Greater Milford, The Delaware Development Office, Kent County Economic Development Office, or the Sussex County Economic Development Office are answered by experienced business people who are not afraid to personally answer their telephones.

Detailed information is available on the following:

- (A) Taxes ...
State and Local
- (B) Financing ...
Bond, Economic Development, S.B.A., Bank
- (C) Labor ...
Supply, Productivity, Earnings
- (D) Education ...
Training Services, Schools, Quality
- (E) Markets ...
Size, and Access
- (F) Transportation ...
Highways, Major Airports, Railroads, Ports
- (G) Utilities ...
Electric, Waste Systems, Communications, Water
- (H) Sites ...
Location, Permits, Tours
- (I) Construction ...
Costs, Locations

RICH IN HERITAGE, WEALTHY IN OPPORTUNITY

Delaware's "Quality of Life Legislation" along with its geographical location make it the ideal choice for a home, for a family, for a business, or retirement. The Greater Milford area, located in the southern part of this "Small Wonder", has it all:

- (1) Moderate but distinct four-season climate
- (2) Housing money that buys more than in most metropolitan areas
- (3) No state or local sales taxes
- (4) Close-by modern shopping facilities
- (5) Competitive up-to-date health care facilities
- (6) Close proximity to major cities and airports
- (7) Municipal sewer and water
- (8) Effective police and fire protection
- (9) 911 emergency call system
- (10) Productive labor force
- (11) Cooperative attitudes

*Quality
of Life
at its
Best!*



PARSON THORNE MANSION
CIRCA 1735



EXPANDING JOB
OPPORTUNITIES



MODERN UTILITIES



SYNDICATED NEWS COVERAGE

Produced by Partnership of Greater Milford Commission with funds provided by the Delaware Development Office and The City of Milford.

DELAWARE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

(302) - 736 - 4271
(800) - 282 - 8667

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR GREATER MILFORD

(302) - 422 - 3344

CITY OF MILFORD CITY HALL

(302) - 422 - 6616

KENT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

(302) - 736 - 2010

SUSSEX COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

(302) - 855 - 7770

streams, were of much greater importance, previous to the construction of the railroad, than now. They consisted principally of a suitable place for landing and loading boats, and for these purposes granaries were erected. The principal one on the Murderkill Creek was Fork Landing, where, in 1816, Levi Lister owned a wharf and granary, and another wharf and granary was jointly owned by Thomas Sipple and William Tomlinson. In 1852 there were here three granaries, two stores and several dwellings. Two vessels plied weekly between this landing and Philadelphia, carrying grain to the latter place. It is now occasionally visited by boats of light tonnage.

SCHOOLS.—The several subscription schools in operation previous to 1829 gave way to the common school system adopted in that year. The hundred was divided into school districts, and school-houses erected in suitable locations. Among the pioneer district-school teachers within the bounds of Milford Hundred, were John Quillen, John Sharp, William Hurley, Martin Harrington and ——— Harvey. As the buildings became dilapidated, new and more commodious ones were erected, and when the scholars became too numerous, new school districts were created. The schools of to-day in this hundred are in an excellent condition, being supplied with many conveniences, and taught for nine months each year by skillful and competent teachers.

MILFORD TOWN.

The town of Milford is located on both sides of the Mispillion Creek,—North Milford, or the old town, being taken from Milford Hundred, Kent County, and South Milford being taken from Cedar Creek Hundred, Sussex County. The town is located on a tract called "Saw-Mill Range," containing seventeen hundred and fifty acres of land, which was warranted to Henry Bowman, March 20, 1680, on condition that he should build a saw-mill thereon. It is probable that he complied with the conditions of the contract and built a saw-mill, but just where it was located it is now impossible to tell. Saw-Mill Range passed from Henry Bowman to his son John, who, May 5, 1780, sold five hundred and ten acres of it to Joseph Booth, who gave part of it to his son John, who sold it to William Manlove, Jr.

May 17th, 1771, Joseph Oliver purchased one hundred and fifteen acres of Saw-Mill Range of Jacob Warrington, who then owned it, and April 17, 1773, he bought, adjoining, a tract of Levin Crapper, also part of Saw-Mill Range, also part of an adjoining tract called "Improvement," of the Pennsylvania Land Company.

February 23, 1774, Nathan Adams (merchant) bought one-quarter of an acre of land lying on the creek near the place called Millstone Landing, now known as New Wharf Landing, of Joseph Oliver. In 1787 Joseph Oliver had James Johnson survey the land lying on the north side of Mispillion Creek into town lots. Some of these lots were conveyed by deed,

but most of them were demised by perpetual lease, with a reservation of ground-rent, which is still paid annually. The first lot of which there is any record at Dover was taken by William Johnson, on the corner of Water and Walnut Streets, and is now occupied by C. W. Davidson, jeweler. The boundaries of the lot are here given, as a specimen of a curiously minute description:—

"Beginning at the intersection of said street, it being that point which hath north eleven degrees west, forty-four feet seven inches from the diametrical centre of the body of a maple tree taken at the height of eighteen inches above the surface of the ground, standing in the edge of the cripple of said creek, below Milford bridge; thence running with Walnut Street north eight degrees and fifty minutes west, thirty-three feet three inches; thence leaving said street north seventy-nine degrees, seven minutes and twenty-two seconds east, eighty-nine feet ten inches and seven hundred and seventy and five thousandths of an inch. Then south eight degrees and fifty minutes east, thirty-one feet and one million forty-nine thousand four hundred and seventy-five ten millionths of an inch to Water Street; thence with Water Street south seventy-seven degrees and forty-four minutes west, ninety feet four inches to the place of beginning. Containing two thousand eight hundred and eighty and eight superficial square feet and seventy-nine square inches and seventy million one hundred and eighty-three thousand and twenty and seven hundred millionths of an inch."

Joseph Oliver, Sr., leased or sold after this town lots to the following persons, as found among the minutes of James Johnson's surveys: Joseph Aydelott, two lots on Front Street in 1794, Thomas Allen, William Brinckle, James Bowen, Nancy Bradley, Nancy Bateman, Jesse Bradley, William Crumpton, John Cary, James Carman, Joseph Carman, John Collins, Thomas Collins, John Crumpton, Eliza Collins, Zabdiel Dawson, James Dawson, Peter Davis, Jonathan Dyer, Abner Dill, John Davis, Molly Davis, Andrew Davis, Sarah Davis, Monk Davis, Charles Draper, John Flemming from Peter Caverly, Joram Griffith, Belitha Glass, Isaiah James in 1787, Elijah Jester, John Honston, Isaac Lofland, John Laws (bricklayer), Thomas Marriner, Jonathan Manlove, James Millechop, John Newcom, Gauladett Oliver, John Pleasonton, Andrew Patton, Curtis Palmore, Samuel Pasley, Richard Pettigrew, William Sorden, Thomas Strowd, Joshua Spencer, Noah Spencer, Elias Shockley, John Ralston, Nathan Russom, Nehemiah Riley, John Thomas, Stephen Townsend, Pompey Turner, James Tichner, Andrew Witha, Levi Wilents, Jasper Waller, William Margin, Bethuel Watson, William Ward, David Walton.

According to James Johnson's notes he began May 28, 1817, to survey and lay out the town of Milford, under the direction and superintendence of John Pettigrew, Dr. Joseph Sudler, John Wallace, Martin Dewaley and William Davis, commissioners, duly elected to lay out the town of Milford, in pursuance of a special act of the Delaware Legislature. After being sworn by James Millechop, Esq., they proceeded to attend to the duties of their appointment.

The following are the boundaries given on a map in 1838: "Beginning at Mispillion Creek, at Paul Knabb's Landing; thence with a line of land formerly of Samuel Oliver, Sen. and John Draper, North 53° West up the lane leading to Paul Knabb's; thence on a division line of lots now of Geo. S. Atkins and James T. Burleigh, Gauladett Oliver, John Wallace, Peter F.

Causey and Mary K. Shockley, 148 perches out to the road leading from Milford to Frederica and in a line of land formerly of Wm. Bradley, dec'd, for the said Oliver and Draper land; thence with said line South 22° West across the lot of Mary R. Shockley's lot, including two and a half acres thereof in the limits of said town; . . . across the lot of Edward Collins, Sen., dec'd, including one-third thereof, with the dwelling-house in the limits of said town, across the county road six and three-tenths perches, north of a stone hurled on the Northwest side of said road opposite North Street; thence across Henderson Collins' lot on the east side of the Quaker meeting-house road, including three and one-half acres thereof in the limits of said town to and across the meeting-house road and a piece of woods of Benjamin Potter's and Benjamin Henderson's line, making the whole line one hundred and ninety-two perches; thence with said Potter and Henderson's line, formerly Oliver's, west thirty-two perches to an old white oak stump near Cullin's branch; thence into and down the water-course of said Cullin's branch to Mispillion Creek; thence down said creek to the place of beginning." In 1886 the lines were changed in some places. The first line extends from the Frederica road to a branch thereof, where it corners, forming nearly a right angle, thence to Cullin's Branch, thence following the streams as before to the place of beginning.

South Milford has been laid out since by Jamea Johnson and resurveyed by Thomas J. Davis. It lies on the south side of Mispillion Creek, and has Front and Second Streets parallel with the creek and Georgetown Road, Washington, Montgomery, Franklin and McColey Streets running from the creek. Carlisle Lane runs diagonally from the corner of Franklin and Front to Second Street; Cansey Street extends from the Georgetown Road to the depot. The town contains some three thousand inhabitants. According to the *Gleaner* in 1856, the population of the town was two thousand inhabitants, with twenty-five stores, two hotels, twelve schooners and sloops running to Philadelphia. The export trade at this time was said to be 250,000 bushels of corn, 80,000 bushels of wheat, 10,000 bushels of oats, 5000 bushels of rye, 2500 cords of wood, 400 cords of bark and 400 cords of quercitron, worth \$351,500, and the imports were placed at \$225,000. The exports and imports by shipping are not as much as formerly; but if what is transported by vessels is added to that carried by the cars, the amount would probably amount to more than in 1856.

CORPORATION HISTORY.—The town of Milford was first incorporated in 1807; the first Board of Commissioners were Dr. Joseph Sudler, John Wallace, Martin Dewaile, William Davis.

The act of incorporation passed in 1867 is the only one we have records of. Under the town charter they elected five commissioners, an alderman, an assessor and a treasurer, all for one year.

1867.—C. S. Watson, H. B. Fidoeman, P. W. Hall, John H. Denning,

commissioners; P. S. Smoot, alderman; Dr. N. Pratt, assessor; R. S. Hemmons, collector; John H. Denning, clerk.

1868.—A. T. A. Torbert, T. F. Hammersly, Jas. F. Anderson, John Cahall, W. Thomas Prettyman, commissioners; Jas. B. Davis, alderman; Jas. H. Bell, assessor; R. S. Hemmons, collector; J. F. Anderson, clerk.

1869.—A. T. A. Torbert, Dr. N. Pratt, Joseph Truitt, Wm. Thomas Prettyman, P. W. Hall, commissioners; James Short, alderman; Jas. H. Bell, assessor; Joseph Gorby, collector; Dr. N. Pratt, clerk.

1870.—James Postles, N. H. Johnson, J. Y. Foulk, T. F. Hammersly, Wm. C. Welch, commissioners; James Short, alderman; Joseph Gorby, collector; Jas. H. Bell, assessor; J. Y. Foulk, clerk.

1871.—Chas. T. Fleming, Wm. C. Welch, T. F. Hammersly, J. Y. Foulk, John R. Cahall, commissioners; James Short, alderman; Jas. H. Bell, assessor; Geo. A. Moore, collector; J. Y. Foulk, clerk.

1872.—O. J. Hall, N. J. Pierson, S. G. Evans, Chas. T. Fleming, John W. Causey, Geo. Russell, commissioners; Wm. Shockley, alderman; Jas. B. Davis, assessor; Geo. A. Moore, collector; C. J. Hall, clerk.

1873.—J. Lowery, Jas. B. Mitchell, John R. Cahall, Geo. Russell, D. O. K. Strong, Samuel Simpler, commissioners; Wm. Shockley, alderman; Jas. D. Mahan, assessor; Geo. A. Moore, collector; S. M. Simpler, clerk.

1874.—Chas. T. Fleming, John Cahall, Wm. A. Yister, Samuel Simpler, A. K. Hall, T. J. Davis, commissioners; Wm. Shockley, alderman; R. A. Steward, assessor; Geo. A. Moore, collector; Chas. T. Fleming, clerk.

1875.—C. J. Hall, John W. Hallett, John Cahall, M. H. Davis, Jas. Beedy, Wm. H. Davis, commissioners; Wm. Shockley, alderman; R. A. Steward, assessor; Geo. A. Moore, collector; M. H. Davis, clerk.

1876.—C. J. Hall, James Beedy, John B. Cannon, John Hallett, Wm. H. Davis, M. H. Davis, commissioners; R. J. Beswick, alderman; R. A. Steward, assessor; Wm. B. Truitt, collector; C. J. Hall, clerk.

1877.—P. W. Hall, Wm. Hill, John B. Cannon, H. W. McColey, Wm. A. Scribner, A. K. Hall, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; Samuel M. Simpler, assessor; R. S. Hemmons, collector; H. W. McColey, clerk.

1878.—Elnathan Smith, John R. Cahall, R. J. Beswick, H. W. McColey, Wm. F. Revill, I. I. Smith, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; Samuel M. Simpler, assessor; R. S. Hemmons, collector; R. J. Beswick, clerk.

1879.—R. Y. Watson, Charles T. Fleming, G. W. Joseph, William F. Revill, Charles A. Blair, D. O. K. Strong, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; R. J. Beswick, assessor; George F. Pierce, collector; D. O. K. Strong, clerk.

1880.—Frank Rickards, Theo. Townsend, James Reedy, H. W. McColey, S. M. Simpler, Charles A. Blair, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; George P. Minor, assessor; William H. Twigg, collector; Theo. Townsend, clerk.

1881.—James Reedy, J. O. Brown, Theo. Townsend, James Russell, Charles A. Blair, M. H. Davis, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; R. J. Beswick, assessor; S. M. Simpler, collector; Theo. Townsend, clerk.

1882.—Dr. G. W. Marshall, Theo. Townsend, J. O. Brown, S. W. Gray, M. H. Davis, John B. Smith, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; R. J. Beswick, assessor; S. M. Simpler, collector; Theo. Townsend, clerk.

1883.—Frank Reedy, John H. Apel, James Welch, James Abbott, John W. Ratcliff, R. H. Gilman, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; John W. Hallett, assessor; S. M. Simpler, collector; R. H. Gilman, clerk.

1884.—John H. Apel, Robt. M. Carpenter, Isaac S. Truitt, R. H. Davis, S. N. Gray, J. T. Hells, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; H. W. McColey, assessor; J. D. Hill, collector; Isaac S. Truitt, clerk.

1885.—James M. Hall, John H. Apel, Wm. N. Dorsey, Wm. F. Causey, Geo. C. Abbott, Geo. H. Hall, commissioners; Azel Stevens, alderman; R. H. Davis, assessor; J. D. Hill, collector; Geo. H. Hall, clerk.

1886.—James M. Hall, Frank Richards, Wm. T. Watson, Wm. F. Causey, H. W. McColey, Wm. A. Humes, commissioners; R. J. Beswick, alderman; Theo. Townsend, assessor; J. D. Hill, collector; H. W. McColey, clerk.

An act of reincorporation was passed at Dover on February 28, 1887, by which the town began to work under a new charter. The government of the town now consists of a *Town Council*, composed of a president and six members. The president and three of said members shall be freeholders within the town limits, the assessor also to be a freeholder. Two of said councilmen shall be elected for two years, the president and four members for one year. There have been several amendments to the old charter, but none of much interest.

Those elected under the new town charter, March

7, 1887, were: President, H. W. McColley; William T. Watson, James Russell, Joseph M. Davis, R. C. Hall, Frank Rickards, Charles H. Tuthill; Alderman, R. J. Beswick; Assessor, William G. Herring; Collector, Thomas A. Watson; Clerk, Charles H. Tuthill.

Among those who have held the office of justice of the peace in Milford are J. Millechop, Samuel Ratcliffe, Henry Hudson, John H. Denney, William M. W. Dorsey, Manlove Hayes, Richard H. Phillips, Robert J. Beswick, Lowder Layton, Beniah Watson, William Porter, John J. Hazzard, William F. Revill, William Shockley, Azel Stevens. Among the post-masters were Thomas Winsmore, appointed in 1803; Charles Mason, Perry Stevens, Joseph George, William M. W. Dorsey, Alexander Hall, A. W. Bell, Rhodes S. Hemmons, William G. Hering, R. A. Steward, Dr. R. Y. Watson.

INDUSTRIES.—Milford has always been an industrious town. The condition upon which Henry Bowman took Saw-Mill Range was that he should build a saw-mill, and from the name of the tract it is evident that saw-mills were in operation here at an early day. In connection with the saw-mills it is fitting to observe that ship-building was an early and important industry. The oak in this vicinity is good, and the reputation of Delaware-built schooners and sloops was far extended. A small vessel was built up near the dam many years ago, and a man by the name of Du Pre built one vessel at the New Wharf. In 1793 action was taken in the Legislature in relation to a wharf. Robert Russell was one of the first ship-builders where Carlisle's yard now is. David West next carried on the business, building only about one small vessel per year. M. R. Carlisle and William F. Revill carried on ship-building from about 1830 to 1850, when Revill retired and Theodore Carlisle entered into partnership with his brother. This partnership continued for about thirty years, during which time they built many three-masted schooners of one thousand tons burden. Since Manlove Carlisle died Thomas Carlisle has not built many vessels. Among other builders were Sylvester A. Deputy and his son, James H. Deputy, who built a number of ships and worked at the business for many years. William A. Scribner also had a yard where David Lank, a son of John Lank, another old ship-builder, now is. There are three ship-yards in operation now,—Abbott's, Carlisle's and Lank's. A tug-boat, the first built at Milford, was launched from David Lank's yard in 1887. There have been about six or seven vessels built per year at these yards for many years. They have been mostly sloops or two and three-masted-schooners, built for coast-wise trade, of from one hundred and fifty to one thousand tons burden.

Grist-Mills.—In 1787 an act was passed by the Delaware Legislature enabling Rev. Sydenham Thorne to erect a mill-dam across Mispillion Creek, and for the condemnation of a small piece of flat

land on the Sussex side of the said creek, for the use of a grist-mill. This petition represents that Rev. Sydenham Thorne, of Kent County, is the owner of a certain tract of land, which affords a very convenient situation for a grist-mill, being at the head of Mispillion Creek in the county of Kent. It appears that Rev. S. Thorne erected a grist-mill where the Red Mill now stands, possibly the same structure that is there now, about 1787. The mill is shingled in place of siding and has been the same as now as far back as any one now living can remember.

There was a ford here formerly, which gave the name Mill Ford or Milford. The head of navigation is said to have been farther up the stream prior to the erection of the mill dam; be that as it may, the head of navigation is now below the mill dam.

Joseph Oliver immediately began to lay out a town and lease lots, as before noticed, and the town from this time forth began to grow in population and importance. This section has been celebrated for corn, and more recently good wheat has been grown, which has rendered the milling business both necessary and profitable. Among the subsequent owners of this mill have been Mr. Dutton, John M. Darby, Peter F. Causey and his son of the same name, who is the present owner. Gov. Causey was also owner of what is known as the Haven Mills. The Red Mill has four run of stones, and recently one-half roller process has been added. A husk factory was built for Orcutt Brothers about 1850, and is now operated by R. H. Williams; it manufactures about two hundred thousand tons of husks for mattresses. Peter F. Causey built a woolen-mill in 1868, which burned down July 27, 1872, and was rebuilt and operated by Hoffecker & Brother, who employed thirty hands and manufactured about five thousand yards of cloth per week. These mills were one hundred by fifty feet main building, with a picker-room twenty-two by fifty feet. They were destroyed by fire in 1882. R. H. Williams operated a mill for grinding black oak bark to a fine powder, called quercitron, for coloring purposes. This branch of industry has been abandoned since other processes have been discovered to produce like colors at less expense. George S. Grier, an Englishman, has operated a foundry and repair-shop here for a number of years. Allen Tolbert owned the Haven Mills; subsequently Edward Stapleford, Joseph Dutton, and John M. Clayton finally purchased them for John M. Darby. These mills at that time consisted of a grist-mill, a saw-mill and carding-machine. The tanning business was formerly quite extensively carried on by James Clayton and others.

James H. Denning started a pottery on Pear Street about 1840, and carried on business for about thirty-five years, making all kinds of earthenware, supplying all the country around. The American Basket Company was organized at Milford in 1876.

Alden first fully demonstrated the practicability of his fruit-drying process here in 1871, his establishment then employing ninety hands day and night

during the fruit season, which lasts about six weeks, and consuming from three hundred to five hundred baskets of peaches in twenty-four hours. There are now some thirty drying factories in Milford and vicinity, which, together with Reis' Cannery, which was started in 1881, and employs about eighty or ninety hands, having a capacity of from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand cans per day, is capable of disposing of the peach and tomato crop without loss to the farmer, even if there is no pressing demand.

Nathan Davis had a small plow foundry back of Lowery's hotel, near John Dunning's pottery. In 1849, George S. Grier purchased the Haven Mills water-power of Peter F. Causey, and started a foundry. He has employed sixteen hands and made agricultural implements of all kinds. Matthews, Hall & Co. have a foundry near the depot, started about 1865, where general repairing is done. Isaac Simpson has the largest phosphate factory. Clift & Ryder, King & Spearman, Peter Truit, Taylor & Sharp have been prominent carriage-makers. John Scribner, blacksmith, years ago made the bolts, screws and nails that were used in vessel-building at Milford.

Merchants.—Nathan Adams took up land at Millstone Landing, now known as the New Wharf, in 1774, and is mentioned as a merchant. Adams' heirs sold this property to Benjamin Parker. Among the early and well-remembered merchants were Molton Rickards, Squire Samuel Ratcliffe and Walter Sipple (who were in partnership), Wm. Sorden (who owned the property now owned by Geo. S. Adkin's heirs), Jacob Biddle, John Wallace, Martin Dewaile, Daniel Godwin, John M. Darby, Lowder Layton, Walker Sipple, Benjamin Potter (was a merchant and tanner), Peter T. Causey and son, Gov. Peter F. Causey, Abner Dill, Benjamin Waddams, Rev. Truston P. McColey (hatter and merchant), Peter Griffiths, Isaac Lohand, Curtis Watson, Bethuel Watson, Mitchell & Warren, George Buchanan, Andrew J. McColey, Joseph Bennett. About 1840 there were twenty merchants doing business in Milford, every one of whom were solvent and worthy of credit.

Drug Stores.—Joseph S. Bennett, the first druggist in Milford, commenced in 1846 where Benjamin Anderson has a grocery-store. He was succeeded by Thomas Wallace, and Thomas R. Hammersley conducted the business for him. Sherwood & Foulk succeeded him; after Sherwood died Foulk sold his interest to Thomas Sherwood, a son of his former partner, and started again where Dr. Marshall now resides, in 1856, and in 1870 he removed to his present quarters in Watson's block. Thomas Sherwood sold to Thomas F. Hammersley, who now has a drug-store on Walnut Street. Dr. Marshall, Dr. Pratt and H. L. Page now sell drugs.

The house now owned by Wm. F. Causey, Esq., was built in 1750 by an Englishman by the name of Levin Crapper. Gov. Rogers resided here in the early part of the century, and is buried on this farm. Lowder Layton

was an early merchant in a little store which stood where Peter F. Causey, Jr., now lives. The farm contained six hundred acres when Rogers owned it. In 1849, Governor Causey purchased and refitted it, and it is now one of the most desirable residences in town. Of Lowder Layton's sons, Caleb S. was associate judge of Sussex County, and Garret S. was a physician in Milford, and Joshua was a merchant at Georgetown.

Henry Hudson owned the land where South Milford now stands, and had James Johnson lay it off into town lots in 1819. He built the brick house now occupied by Widow Lemuel Draper. The building of this house ruined him, financially, and Walker Sipple purchased the property, from whom it passed to his daughter and John A. Hazard, who sold it to Lemuel Draper. After his failure, Henry Hudson kept the hotel where Lowery now is.

Thomas Davis resided in Cedar Creek Hundred, and was a member of the Legislature at one time. Two of his sons resided in Milford. Robert M. was Treasurer of the State of Delaware, and Thomas J. Davis is a surveyor and conveyancer, and has settled a large number of estates.

Daniel Curry started the first peach orchard in the neighborhood of Milford, and was laughed at by his neighbors for so doing. He was also a grain dealer and shipping merchant at Milford. Mary E., his only daughter, was the wife of Gen. Torbert. She came into possession of her father's real estate, and now resides at Milford.

Major-General Alfred T. A. Torbert, son of Jonathan R. Torbert, was born at Georgetown, July 1, 1833. He was educated at the home school and West Point, graduating in 1855. He was with General A. S. Johnston in his campaign against the Mormons in Utah. At the breaking out of the Rebellion he helped to organize the New Jersey troops, and was commissioned colonel of the First Regiment of New Jersey Volunteers, September 16, 1861, by Gov. Olden, and served with the regiment during the Peninsular Campaign. In April, 1864, he was appointed brigadier-general in command of the First New Jersey Brigade. May 4, 1864, he was assigned to the first division of cavalry under General Sheridan. He did gallant service at Winchester, and in many other hard fought battles; subsequently he was promoted to brevet major-general. He married in January, 1866, and resigned his command in the army, and came to Milford to live, in the home of his bride. In 1869 he was appointed minister to San Salvador, where he remained nearly two years until 1871, when he was appointed consul-general to Havana, and in 1873 consul-general to Paris. After his return home he devoted himself to his private affairs, and was on his way to Mexico on private business when he was shipwrecked, his body being washed ashore on the coast of Florida. He is buried in the Methodist cemetery.

Nelson Rickards moved from Georgetown to Milford about 1837, and started the chair-making business,

which he followed for many years. Perry P. and James S. started carriage-making, which the former still continues.

Bethuel Watson, son of Isaac Watson, who patented land in Sussex County in 1785, lived in Cedar Creek Hundred. Jesse Watson, son of Bethuel, married Rachel Collins, and their son Beniah came to Milford, and engaged in the mercantile business. He took his son Curtis into partnership with him, and after his death, in 1844, Curtis and his brother Bethuel engaged in merchandising until the latter died. Curtis S. Watson not only engaged extensively in merchandising at home, but also in the export trade. As many as twenty ships traded from this port then, and large quantities of quercitron bark, which brought as high as ninety dollars per ton in Europe, were exported.

His life is worthy of more than passing notice. He was born December 9, 1809, in Cedar Creek Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware, three miles south of Milford. His grandfather Jesse Watson was a native of the same hundred, where he lived and died, at the advanced age of ninety years, and his grandmother at eighty-seven years. Jesse Watson had three sons, Jeremiah, David and Beniah, and one daughter, who married and moved west. Beniah, the youngest son and the father of Curtis S. Watson, early in life learned the carpenter's trade but after his marriage with Elizabeth Shockley, engaged for a time in farming in Cedar Creek Hundred, and owned a saw-mill, which he operated. The children of Beniah and Elizabeth Watson were Curtis S., Catharine, Ann, Bethuel and Beniah.

Curtis S. Watson was the eldest child. He obtained his education in the schools near his home, and at the Milford Academy, remaining on his father's farm until he was nineteen years old. He then entered a store at Milford as a clerk. When he attained the age of twenty-one years, his father and he, in 1831, engaged in the mercantile business in Milford, as the firm of B. Watson & Son. This co-partnership continued for ten years, when his father on account of increasing age, retired. Mr. Watson then took into the business, as partner, his brother Bethuel, and the firm name was changed to C. S. Watson & Co. They carried on a general business which gradually grew and developed and became very profitable. These operations included not only the buying and selling of store goods, but dealing in real estate, grain, lime, lumber, fertilizers, and other articles, by which they supplied numerous customers, residing in town and over a large extent of the surrounding country.

A number of tracts of land were purchased containing valuable timber which was cut down and much of the white oak lumber used in the construction of vessels. Within fifteen years, C. S. Watson & Co. had built at Milford, fifteen vessels ranging from sixty to two hundred tons burthen. These vessels they used in shipping the grain, bark, staves and lumber to Philadelphia and New York. All the

merchandise sold in the store was billed as a return cargo. They also brought lime from the Hudson or North River on the return trip and sold it here to the farmers of the vicinity.

In 1856, C. S. Watson & Co. retired from the general merchandising business. Bethuel, the junior member of the firm died the next year. Curtis S. Watson then engaged in buying and selling grain, guano and phosphates which he continued with great success for a quarter of a century at Milford. He retired from business in 1882 to attend to his large landed interest in Kent and Sussex Counties aggregating in all two thousand five hundred acres. The farms which he now owns, he purchased at various times with means he accumulated through his rare ability as a business man. In addition he owns three store buildings and the post-office building on Walnut Street and his large residence on Front Street in Milford.

In 1876 Curtis S. Watson was one of the organizers of the First National Bank of Milford and has since been a member of the board of directors of that institution. He served as a member of the board of town commissioners for ten years; and was president of the board several terms.

He was fifteen years a director in the Junction and Breakwater Railroad, from Harrington to Lewes. In politics he has always been a staunch democrat. His first presidential vote was cast for Andrew Jackson, in 1832, and he has since voted at every presidential election for the candidate of his party. He was elected a representative to the Legislature in 1859, and re-elected in 1861, serving in all, four years. From 1871 to 1875, he represented Kent County in the State Senate. For fifty years he has been a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Milford and a trustee and steward for a long period. He is a liberal supporter of the church and devoted to its interests and to the cause of religion. He was made a Mason half a century ago, in Temple Lodge, No. 9, of Milford, and became a Royal Arch Mason, thirty years later.

In 1840 Mr. Watson, made his first visit to Saratoga, New York, then a small village. Every year since that time he has spent about sixty-five days of the hot summer months at that now famous pleasure resort, making in all forty-seven visits in forty-seven years.

Mr. Watson was married, January 5, 1833, to Sarah, daughter of Thomas Davis, of Cedar Creek Hundred, by whom he had seven children, all sons.

His wife died November 5, 1851. Their surviving children are Beniah Watson, attorney at law, practicing at Dover, Delaware, and Dr. R. Y. Watson, the present postmaster at Milford.

Curtis S. Watson was married, July 27, 1853, to Lydia A. White, daughter of George White, of Milford.

Peter F. Causey and Dr. Lofland had mills for grinding quercitron or oak bark. D. H. Holland



G. D. Warren

started general merchandizing where Hume has his hardware store in 1837, thence he removed to a store which stands nearly opposite where he is now, and in 1880 he came to his present location. He took his son, Joseph E., into partnership with him, and has since done a leading business, and is now the merchant of the longest standing in the place. John Jnmp commenced about the same time that Holland did, and discontinued recently. Randall Williams and Henderson Collins, William C. Williams and Benjamin Potter, who left a will giving his property to the poor of Kent County, outside of the poor-house, were all merchants in Milford. Noah Lofland was one of the first hatters here, and his son, William, whom Anderson succeeded, and T. P. McColley worked at the business.

Benjamin Anderson commenced the hatter business in 1836, and was one of the last hatters in the state, when he discontinued in 1860. After he stopped making hats, he associated his son with him in the dry-goods business.

In 1878 Benjamin Anderson started the present grocery business. Alexander Pullen started the nursery business in Milford, in 1870. He has since associated James F. Anderson in the business with him, and they sell from two to three hundred thousand peach trees yearly, beside ten thousand apple and five thousand pear trees, vines and berries. Hall & Son are also doing a large business.

The railroad takes considerable business from the shippers by water. The largest importation by vessel is material for fertilizers, and coal. The out-going vessels carry pine and oak wood and piling, also oak timber for ship building. George Hall and D. H. Holland are principally engaged in shipping wood.

John Pettigrew came to Milford from Scotland, and was a soldier of the Revolution. He owned the property where James M. Hall now resides. He married Ann McNeill, and had three daughters—Ann, wife of Dr. Greer, Margaret, wife of Dr. Joseph Sudler, and Leah, wife of J. Millechop. Of Millechop's daughters, Sally was the wife of Ezekiel Cowgill; Margaret married Elias Naudain; Ann married Purnell Hall, a farmer and cabinet-maker; Mary G. married John Greer; Lavinia R. married Dr. Karsner, and Clara M. married James C. Wilson.

Governor William Tharp was born November 27, 1803, and died January 1, 1865. His great-grandfather was John Tharp, of Sussex County, England, who settled in Kent County, Delaware. His son, William married Ruth Clark, and their son James married Eunice Fleming. Their son, William (the Governor), had a family of daughters that married and settled in Milford and vicinity. Ruth is the mother of William Watson, and Williamina is the wife of C. J. Hall, lately Clerk of the Peace for Kent County.

Miss Harriet McNatt, who was born with the century, and is the last of her family, has a very clear recollection of events that took place in the early his-

tory of the town. Her grandfather, Richard Delaner, was one of the early settlers and owned a large tract of land on the road to Harrington, at Delaner's Cross Roads, about three and three-fourths miles from Milford. He was a large planter, and carried on store keeping and a tavern. He was an Irishman by birth, and fought for the Americans all through the Revolutionary War. He died in 1810, aged eighty-one. He had two sons—Levin H. and John, and a daughter, Mary, the wife of Major McNatt, and Harriet R., now aged eighty-seven, is the only surviving member of the family. Her mother remembered when there were only three houses in Milford—Joseph Oliver's house, which stood where Colonel Watson and Mrs. Ruth Carlisle's residence now stands, then called Oliver's Landing; William Sordons, a merchant, and Isaiah James, a tanner. Afterwards, William Brinckle lived where James Truitt lives, and carried on tanning. He was very aged when he died. His children were William, John and Mary, wife of Dr. John Adams. Thomas Collins had a large family, all of whom are dead or have moved away.

The first school Miss McNatt attended was in 1808, near her grandfather Delaner's. It was kept in a log school-house with an earthen floor, with planks around the outside for desks. The Quakers had a meeting-house where Rosa lives. Gauladett Oliver and John Thomas were Friends. The former had three sons—Joseph, Thomas and Paul, and several daughters. Ann, wife of William Godwin, Governor Rogers, Governor Tharp, Governor Burton and Governor Causcy all resided here. David Walton and Colonel Hall were cabinet-makers. Samuel Ratcliffe lived in South Milford years ago, in a little red house.

HOTELS.—Daniel Godwin built the brick part of the Lowery House, it being the first three-story building in the place. He kept the hotel a number of years and was superintendent of the stage route from Wilmington to Seaford. He also engaged in the mercantile business, and built the house now owned by A. B. Cooper. He was also a local Methodist preacher. His son, William, became commission merchant in Philadelphia, and Frank was president of the Corn Exchange, in the same city. Daniel C. was in partnership with his father many years. Samuel P. founded the Franklin Reformatory Home, in Philadelphia, and is its president. Peter F. Causay purchased this property and sold it to Justus Lowerey, the present proprietor. Joseph Walton first leased the Stine lot on September 18, 1786, and in 1792 he made a lease for a ground rent for \$8.13. Walton and family built and occupied this lot several years. Martin Dewaille, a Frenchman, came into possession of the property, and his widow kept a hotel there. The successive owners since have been William A. Mygatt, Levi Harris, John W. Jump and Richard F. Stine, who has erected a fine brick hotel. J. C. Shockley kept this hotel for twenty years.

PHYSICIANS.—Dr. Joseph Sudler was one of the first physicians in the place; he married a daughter

of John Pettigrew. Dr. James P. Lofland, Gov. Burton, M.D. and Dr. James R. Mitchell, were the three leading physicians for many years. Dr. Owen, was also an early physician. Dr. John S. Prettyman came to the village when a young man and in connection with his son is still practicing here. Dr. Nathan Pratt, Dr. Mark G. Lofland, Dr. J. O. Pierce, are among later physicians. Dr. J. D. Strong, was the first Homoeopathic physician in the place; he built the residence now occupied by J. B. Smith.

There are eight physicians practicing medicine in Milford, Dr. Wm. Marshall and son, Dr. G. W. Marshall, Dr. J. W. Purnell, Dr. Nathan Pratt, Dr. J. O. Pierce, John S. Prettyman and son, John Prettyman, Dr. J. G. Dawson, who has one of the finest collection of Indian relics to be found outside of the Smithsonian Institute.

Dr. James R. Mitchell was born in Caroline County, Maryland, in 1806, and moved to Milford with his parents when he was one year old. He was educated here and read medicine with Dr. Burton, of Milford, and attended the University of Maryland. He located in Milford, and had a successful practice for forty years.

Purnell Lofland, lived and died in Milford. He had two children by his first wife, Mary Robinson, Dr. James R. Lofland and Elizabeth, wife of Spencer Williams, who was cashier of the Commercial Bank of Milford. His second wife was Arcadia Burton.

Of his children by his second marriage, Purnell was a merchant, and a lieutenant in the Mexican War, Mary was the wife of Samuel Harrington, and Ann married — Austin.

Dr. John Owens, a native of Nanticoke Hundred, Sussex County, was born in 1787, at St. Johnstown. He studied medicine with Dr. Jos. Sudler, and graduated at the University of Pennsylvania, in 1819. He practiced medicine in Milford and Frederica for many years in the present century. His wife was Mary, a daughter of Isaiah James, one of the first settlers, and was considered a great belle in her day. Dr. Owens was a charter member and first secretary of Temple Lodge. One of his sons, Frederick J., became a physician.

Charles T. Fleming, son of Beniah Fleming, was born in Mispillion Hundred, about seven miles from Milford, in 1805, is descended from William Fleming, who came to Mispillion Hundred, from Scotland, in 1740, and took up four hundred acres of land. Charles T. came to Milford in 1827, and in 1835 commenced surveying; having collected the old surveys of James, William and Manlove Johnson, he became the most competent surveyor in this part of the state, and he has done considerable conveyancing. He was notary public, and commissioner of deeds for New York, for many years; for forty years he was agent for the Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company. In 1837, he was a Whig member of the legislature. Originally a Presbyterian, he joined the Methodist church during the time there was no Presbyterian

church in the place. In 1883, Mr. Fleming laid out in building lots, eight or nine acres belonging to Frank Rickards, situated in the northeastern part of the town, which are now (1887) largely occupied by dwellings.

Colonel Thomas Peterkin was a bachelor, a very demonstrative man, with decided convictions, true to the cause he espoused, and proverbially honest. John W. Redden was a carriage-maker here. He married Catherine, a daughter of Gulaudette Oliver. They removed to Natchez, Mississippi, in 1820. William Brinckle, Jr., son of William Brinckle, Sr., was born in Milford. John P. Brinckle was a lawyer at Georgetown, where he died quite young.

MILFORD BRIDGE.—In June, 1785, an act was passed to enable Joseph Oliver, of Kent County, to erect a bridge over Mispillion Creek. In 1791 this act was repealed and the following was enacted: "Whereas, the draw-bridge over Mispillion Creek on the public road leading from the village of Milford into the county of Sussex hath become of great utility to the inhabitants of Kent and Sussex Counties, hence it was provided that each county should pay half of the expenses of keeping and repairing the bridge and Isaac Davis and John Ralston, of Kent, Daniel Rogers and Nathaniel Hayes, of Sussex, were appointed commissioners to carry out the provisions of the act. The act further provided that the bridge between abutments should be thirty-five feet, nineteen feet of which should be a draw or platform eighteen feet wide with good and sufficient chains for raising and lowering the same, a provision that was necessary when vessels ascended the Mispillion to a point above the bridge."

STREET LIGHTING AND FIRE DEPARTMENT.—An act to regulate and light the streets of Milford was passed February 5, 1807. This act was subsequently repealed. Now the streets are being lighted by electric light. Milford Hook and Ladder Company was organized in February, 1869, with Mark G. Lofland, president; Reuben A. Steward, vice-president; P. C. Fossett, secretary; Justin Lowery, treasurer; William B. Lowery, fire marshal. The company contained about twenty members.

BANKS.—Elias Shockley owned a controlling interest in the old Commercial Bank. He was largely engaged in merchandising and gave his name as security too freely causing his failure, and the bank went down with him. After this failure the Smyrna Bank established a branch office at Milford and did banking business here until the establishment of the present bank. The First National Bank of Milford was chartered July 27, 1876. The first board of directors were H. B. Fiddeman, C. S. Watson, M. R. Carlisle, James R. Lofland, George Russell, Robert H. Davis, James H. Deputy, C. J. Harrington, James M. Hall. The first officers were H. B. Fiddeman, president; J. B. Smith, cashier, and Isaac S. Truitt, teller. W. R. Aldred is the present teller. T. J. Davis, George S. Grier and J. B. Smith are among the directors now. According

to report in 1887, the cash capital of the bank is sixty thousand eight hundred dollars; surplus, thirty-five thousand dollars; undivided profits, \$11,659.58.

SCHOOLS.—William Johnson bought the lot now owned by C. W. Davidson in 1787, and lived and died there. He was a surveyor and one of the first, if not the first, school teachers in the place. Like all the schools here, up to 1832 it was a private school. In Johnson's note-book the following notices appear: Thursday, March 25, 1788: "Notice is taken that James Trau called William Russell a liar. Witness, William Pope." "Notice is taken that Peter Robinson was absent from the school till the evening." "Notice is taken that James Train came to an engagement in school this evening." A system of private schools has been continued with varying success until the present time. A private school or academy was held in the Masons' building for many years. In 1832 the first public-school in the northern part of the town was held in the house now owned by J. B. Smith, and William Dickinson was the first teacher; this building was sold to Captain James Thumpenn and the Masonic building was purchased for public school purposes in 1846 and was used until 1887 when it was remodeled and enlarged. There is also a public school in South Milford.

Daniel S. Ellis, superintendent of North Milford public schools, January 15, 1887, reported as follows: The value of the school property is two thousand dollars with four teachers and one hundred and twenty-three pupils. Charles W. Allen, principal of the South Milford School, reported that the school property is worth forty-five hundred dollars; amount of money raised by tax, eighteen hundred dollars; amount of money received from the State, eight hundred dollars; amount paid for teachers' salaries, eighteen hundred and ninety dollars. The school is in operation nine months in the year with an average attendance of one hundred and forty-two pupils out of two hundred and twenty-one, the whole number on the roll.

The Milford Female Institute was conducted by Rev. Mr. Kennedy for six or seven years. Mr. Kennedy was pastor of the Presbyterian Church at the time, and desiring to educate his own family he started a school for females where the common branches, languages and music were taught, and many of the the young ladies of Milford were here educated.

SOCIETIES.—*Kirkwood Encampment, No. 6*, was organized September 4, 1850, with the following charter members: Thomas Wallace, Joseph H. Bennett, John H. Denning, Joseph C. Gorby, Robert H. Clark, John S. Moody, William C. Welsh, Joseph L. Linderman.

Milford Grange, No. 6.—The first grange in the State was organized in West Brandywine, in 1874, by Mr. Hamilton, then residing in California. Milford Grange was organized the same year, with John G. Rosa as the first master. There are from thirty to forty members in the Milford Grange at present. Mr. Rosa resides where the old Friends' meeting-house

formerly stood, and is one of the most enterprising farmers in the vicinity.

Temple Lodge, No. 9, A. F. and A. M., was organized in Milford, Jan. 16, 1815. This lodge was organized by General Jesse Green, who was the first Master. The other officers were John Mitchell, Sr. W.; James Millechop, Jr. W.; Colonel Thomas Peterkin, Treasurer; Dr. John Owens, Secretary; John W. Redden, S. D.; William Brinckle, Jr., J. D. The Masters since the organization up to 1846 have been Jesse Green, James Millechop, Jr. (five times), John Mitchell, John W. Redden, Dr. James B. Lofland (thirty-eight times), Spencer Williams, Joseph G. O. Oliver, Edward Collins, Beniah Watson, William M. Godwin, Liston A. Honston, Dr. William Burton, William F. Revill, Daniel C. Godwin. They met in a building, part of which is the present public school building, until about 1846. A private school was conducted in this building for many years, and it is said that a number of poor children, some of whom have since become prominent, were educated at the expense of the Masons. This lodge was the parent lodge of a number of other lodges in the vicinity.

Crystal Fount Lodge, No. 10, I. O. of O. F., was organized February 10, 1847. The charter members were Joseph S. Bennett, Joseph C. Gorby, Samuel P. Godwin, John H. Denning, Joseph L. Linderman, all of whom are still living but Linderman. During its existence till 1887 the lodge has paid \$7079 benefits to sick members; for burying the dead \$6502; relief of widows and children about \$700; outside charities \$693. Present assets \$5816.23. One member, J. G. Foulk, has been Grand Master of the State. Three members—J. G. Foulk, Alexander Hall and Samuel M. Simpler, have been representatives to the Sovereign Grand Lodge. The present membership is forty-nine. In 1879 ground was purchased and the beautiful Odd Fellows' cemetery was surveyed into burial lots. Since the organization of the lodge nearly every public celebration in the town has been managed by the order.

RELIGIOUS MATTERS.—*Christ Church, 1704–1887.*—The Rev. Thomas Crawford, a missionary of the English "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," stationed at Dover, is believed to have held the first service of the Church of England in the lower part of Kent County, in the year 1704. The congregation then worshipped at a place three miles west of the present town of Milford, though it is not known in what year the first church building was erected, or precisely where it stood. As early as 1745 a small wooden chapel, supposed to have been the second edifice of the kind, thirty-six feet long by thirty feet wide, was built at the point known as Church Hill. This building is mentioned in the missionary reports under the name of *Christ Church Mispilkon*, though it was popularly called "The Savannah Church," on account of a swamp near by, or, perhaps, to distinguish it from "the *Three Runs* meeting-house" of the Presbyterians, situated two miles

further down the creek. At this date, the English minister stationed at Dover, and officiating also at Mispillion and Duck Creek, was the Rev. Arthur Usher. He was succeeded by the Rev. Hugh Neil, who, in turn, was followed, in 1757, by the Rev. Chas. Inglis. At the end of a successful administration of six years, Mr. Inglis was called from this field to the rectorship of Trinity Church, New York. The next name on the list of ministers is that of the Rev. Samuel Magaw. With his removal terminated the fostering care of the Venerable Propagation Society over the English Churches of Kent County. From this time the Mispillion Church appears to have had a separate existence and history.

In 1773-75 the Rev. Sydenham Thorne arrived and took up his residence near Church Hill. Mr. Thorne, like his predecessor in the rectorship, was probably of English birth and education, though he came to this County from Virginia. Besides having considerable ability as a scholar and preacher, he was also distinguished for the refinement and elegance of his manner. Wealthy, benevolent and public-spirited, he was said, by one who well remembered him, to have been the most influential man of the county; and this, notwithstanding his political and religious principles of unconcealed loyalty to the King and Church of England.

In the year 1777 Mr. Thorne came into possession of the farm on the west side of Mullet Run, a little stream which empties into the creek two miles east of Church Hill. This property was subsequently owned by his nephew, Peter Caverly, then by James Clayton, and afterwards by the late Benjamin Potter, who, at his death, devised it to his grand-nephew and namesake. On this land the parson, in 1779, erected the large and imposing brick house, known as the Thorne Mansion, —almost the only relic of the last century which has been allowed to remain without alteration to the present day. Among the parishioners of the Savannah Church was Joseph Oliver, who owned the farm extending from Mullet Run, a quarter of a mile eastward, towards another land mark on the bank of the Mispillion, called the High Hill. At the instance of the parson, or mainly under his direction, it is said, Oliver about this time divided his land, or a large part of it, into town lots and streets. Of these lots two were given for the use of the parish church and graveyard; and here, in 1791, was laid the foundation of the present Christ Church, Milford. Much opposition was made in certain quarters to the removal of the house of worship to another site, and, in consequence, some of the members refused or withheld their assistance in the new enterprise. But notwithstanding this drawback, the building went on until the walls were raised and roofed in, the parson himself paying the cost of the brick, which were made of clay dug from Oliver's land, and burned in a kiln three hundred yards north of the church. The sills, rafters, beams and girders were constructed out of trees grown on Mr. Thorne's farm, cut down and

hewn at his expense, and, when necessary, sawed into shape at his own mill. The death of this zealous man, February 13, 1793, interrupted the building of the church, and the work remained at a standstill for more than a quarter of a century.

As originally designed, the edifice was of two stories, having galleries on the north, west and south sides, and the Communion Table on the east. The pews were made with high and straight backs, and the pulpit was a quaint-looking affair, shaped like a chalice, and surmounted by a lofty canopy or *sounding-board*. It was placed in the east wall, over the holy table, so that the preacher might look into the galleries as well as upon the audience in the pews beneath. The inside of the building, designed to be finished in a semi-circle, seems never to have been carried any further than the putting in of the arched pieces intended to hold up the ceiling. It was not until the year 1835 that the original church thus begun in 1791 by parson Thorne, was entirely completed.

The next minister of the parish was the Rev. William Pryce, who officiated until 1800. He then removed to Wilmington and became the rector of Trinity Church (Old Swedes), in that town. Seventeen years later the church was again under the charge of the Dover minister, the Rev. Henry R. Judah, until 1819, when the Rev. Joseph Spencer was made master of the academy in Milford, and, in connection with this position, rector of the parish. Mr. Spencer, afterwards doctor of divinity, resigned these offices in 1822-23, and was appointed principal of the University Grammar School, Philadelphia. Services were now maintained till 1830 by the Rev. Daniel Higbee; and three years later than this date, began the rectorship of the man who was destined to complete the building of the temple whose foundation had been laid by the lamented Thorne, nearly a half century before. The Rev. Corry Chambers was an Irishman, and graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, who had been but a few years in this country, and was previously settled in Lewistown, Pennsylvania. An energetic man and a popular preacher, he soon succeeded in bringing together and adding to the flock, scattered and discouraged since the departure of Parson Higbee, until the church was filled again, on Sundays and at other religious festivals, with an interested and devout assembly.

During Mr. Chambers' ministry, a new roof was put on, the galleries and pews received their first coat of paint, and the pulpit was adorned with hangings and upholstery of crimson silk, in the most approved style of the day. It is related that, just after these extensive improvements were completed, and before ever a service had been held, the new roof in some unaccountable manner suddenly took fire. The accident, by good fortune, happened at midday, and an alarm brought swiftly to the spot a score of interested citizens, by whose willing help the flames were extinguished in a few moments, and before any considerable damage had been done.

A pertinent illustration of the old adage, "to strike while the iron is hot," was afforded, on this occasion, by Mr. Chambers, who, thinking the opportunity too good to be lost, immediately after the fire, opened on the spot a subscription paper for repairs, and with tears in his eyes, went about among the bystanders, soliciting money; until presently, he had received contributions and pledges amounting to twice as much as was required to make good the damage. The church, now entirely finished and furnished, was, in 1836, consecrated to pious uses by the Rt. Rev. Henry U. Onderdonk, provisional bishop of the diocese of Delaware.

Soon after this date, Mr. Chambers was succeeded by the Rev. John Reynolds, who remained in charge till 1843, meanwhile supplementing his slender salary by giving instruction to the young people of the town and others, at the Milford Academy.

In the following year the church fell to the pastoral care of the Rev. John Linn McKim. This gentleman, a native of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, was graduated at Dickinson College, in the class of 1830, and had been a pupil there of Doctor Joseph Speucer, sometime rector of Milford, and afterwards professor of Ancient languages in this institution. Mr. McKim was himself a thorough classical and mathematical scholar. Like his predecessor at Milford, he was master of the academy as well as rector of the church. His learning was said to be accurate, varied and extensive, and he was especially remarkable for the rare power he possessed of adapting his sermons to the character and needs of those who heard them. A man of singularly pure life, of gentle manners and cultivated taste, he deserves to be ranked with Inglis, Magaw, Thorne and other worthies whose names are destined to be held in grateful remembrance as long as the parish shall have a history to record.

By the choice of the vestry and congregation, the rectorship now descended from father to son; and, in 1863, the Rev. John Layton McKim began his ministry in the venerable church. A native of Delaware, and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, it is a point interesting in this connection, that he received his academic degree precisely a century after his predecessor, Mr. Magaw, who had graduated at the same college in 1767. The coincidence goes further; for he also came to the parish just a hundred years later than his illustrious fellow-alumnus. Like him, too, he seems to have had a faculty for teaching, and devoted a large part of his time to this profession. The most successful teachers often prove to be also the most useful clergymen, and the two offices have been united in the case of more than one minister of this parish, who, but for the increased compensation which followed, might have been compelled to "shake the dust off their feet and depart," even though the people had been ever so willing to listen to their instruction and submit to their administration.

During the incumbency of Mr. McKim, the church was enlarged by the addition of chancel, sacristy

and tower; the new work being carried on chiefly under his own direction and supervision. But while the ancient edifice was remodelled as to its roof and general outside appearance, the walls, ground-sill and floor, were allowed to remain as originally placed by Mr. Thorne.

Mr. McKim resigned in 1880, and at this date the parish is administered by the Rev. James C. Kerr. Under his judicious direction, the church has lately been decorated in the best style of ecclesiastical art, and otherwise improved until it is perhaps not surpassed in beauty and convenience by any house of worship in the state.

Milford Presbyterian Church.—The Three Runs Presbyterian Church is supposed to have been organized in the latter part of the seventeenth or the first part of the eighteenth century. It was located on the ground now occupied by an old abandoned graveyard and took its name from the Three Runs of the Mispillion Creek. It was a frame structure with a brick floor and was abandoned as a place of worship in the early part of the present century. Miss McNatt remembers that her grandfather Delaner and family worshipped here. Governor Tharp's family also were Presbyterians. The records are lost, but the following election of trustees in 1819 has been preserved. "At a meeting of the Presbyterian Congregation of Three Runs held at Milford, January 11, 1819, Joseph Hazlett, Robert P. Campbell, John Shafer, Robert King and William Satterfield were elected trustees." The Ralstons worshipped here also. When Rev. G. W. Kennedy came to Milford in 1849, there were only two members of this church remaining, Robert King and his sister. Mr. King was a firm Calvinist and devoted his life largely to the study of the Scriptures and theological works, and was liberal in giving for religious purposes.

In 1849, the Presbytery of Wilmington instructed Rev. G. W. Kennedy, an Evangelist, for the Presbytery to visit Milford, and, if the way be open to organize a Presbyterian Church there. He visited Milford and found only two Presbyterians. One was the wife of Governor William Tharp and the other was Miss Johnson afterwards Mrs. Primrose. In a short time other Presbyterians moved to Milford and a church was organized with seven members, viz.: Mr. and Mrs. William V. Coulter, Mrs. Governor Tharp, Mrs. Edward P. Morris, Mrs. Purnell Lofland and Mrs. S. M. Kennedy, the pastor's wife.

A move was made at once to build a church, and Governor Tharp, Colonel, afterwards Governor Causey, Dr. James P. Lofland and John Hazzard were appointed a building committee, with Rev. George W. Kennedy as chairman and financial agent, through whose untiring exertions a neat and substantial brick church and parsonage were erected in 1850. At the organization of the church, William V. Coulter was elected and ordained a ruling elder, subsequently Rufus K. Baynum and Robert C. Hall, were elected and ordained elders. After a number of additions

had been made to the church in March, 1856, Rev. Mr. Kennedy resigned his position as stated supply. The church remained vacant until November, 1857, when Rev. John W. Mears, of Philadelphia was elected pastor. During the first year of his pastorate, thirteen members were added to the church. He resigned February 15, 1860, and November 14, 1860, Rev. J. Garland Harned succeeded to the pastorate and was installed. He resigned September 20, 1863. Then the Rev. L. P. Bowen, a licentiate, was received as stated supply, and entered upon his duties January 24, 1864. At this time there were thirty-four members. He resigned January 28, 1866, and was succeeded by Rev. John F. Severance. At the same time Colonel Henry B. Fiddeman, Henry J. Hall and Jacob Y. Foulk, were elected ruling elders. Mr. Severance was succeeded by Rev. Richard A. Mallery, July 12, 1868, who died June 9, 1875, and after an interval of a year, Rev. A. A. Dinsmore was elected pastor. Messrs. James B. Gilchrist and Edwin Hopkins were elected to the eldership. Mr. Dinsmore closed his labors as pastor in November, 1875, and was succeeded by Charles F. Boynton, who began his pastorate February 1, 1876. He resigned in January, 1879, and the pulpit was supplied by Rev. S. K. Schofield until February 1880, when Rev. H. L. Bunstein became pastor and continues as such to date, September, 1887. During his pastorate, William Marshall, M.D., John B. Smith and William A. Humes were elected ruling elders. There are at present on the roll of membership two hundred and ten names.

Mr. Bunstein was born in Easton, Pennsylvania, August 18, 1844, graduated at Lafayette College in 1864 and at Union Theological Seminary in 1872. He was pastor of Clinton Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, from 1872 to 1876, of Beech Creek Presbyterian Church 1877-1880, and was called to Milford in November 1879.

Methodist Episcopal Church at Milford.—October 18, 1787, Francis Asbury, in his journal, says: "I had divine aid in preaching at Milford, the house was open and the day was cold." December 3, 1787, Joseph Oliver deeded to Nathaniel Smithers, Jr., Joseph Aydelott, William Ward, Elias Shockley, Thomas Ross, Reynear Williams, William Beauchamp, John Taylor and David Beauchamp, a lot containing fourteen thousand four hundred square feet "for the use and express purpose of building a preaching house or church thereon for the only proper use and benefit of the religious society of people called Methodists." Tuesday, October 22, 1789, Asbury says: "Rode to Milford; we had a great move and noble shouting." Rev. Mr. Whatcoat was presiding elder here then. Milford Circuit first appears in the minutes of the Methodist Church in 1789, Thomas Jackson and William Ratcliffe, preachers, Richard Whatcoat, Presiding Elder. The circuit must have embraced a large amount of territory, as the membership reported is eight hundred and seventy-nine whites and two hundred and thirty-six colored. The early records of

Milford Church are not to be found, but from the recollection of the oldest inhabitants it appears that Samuel Draper, Julia Adkins, George S. Adkins, Henry Hudson and wife, Walker Sipple and wife, Lowder Layton and wife, John R. Draper and wife, Jabez Crocker and wife, Wesley Collins and wife, Benjamin Henderson and wife, were prominent members. Revs. James Bateman, Levi Starks, George Taylor, John D. Onins and Charles Carsner, are remembered. The latter had a great revival in 1837 which was kept up night and day, and one hundred and thirty-seven members were added to the church. Daniel Godwin, Molton Rickards, George Adkins, Wesley Collins and Samuel Draper are remembered as class leaders. In 1855, during Rev. William Annear's ministration, there was a great revival, and many joined the church. There was another great revival in 1874, during Rev. D. C. Ridgway's pastorate, and some three hundred joined the church, ninety of whom were from the Sunday-school. The first Methodist church, which stood nearly opposite where the present church stands, was sold at public sale for \$49.50. In 1840 the second church was built on the site of the present church. Among the most prominent subscribers to the erection of this church were Rev. Truston P. McColley, John M. Darby, Peter F. Causey, John Rickards, William N. W. Dorsey, Samuel Draper, G. S. & W. Adkins, John Wallace and family, Daniel C. Godwin, James R. Mitchell, Charles T. Fleming, Henderson Collins, Purnell Hall, Henry May, Elias Smithers, George Primrose, Clement Clark, Jesse Sherwood, Beniah Watson, James H. Deputy. This second church and lot cost \$4428.35. The present church was erected in 1871, at a cost of \$19,000. William T. Vails, Joseph S. Truitt, James H. Deputy, William Welsh and Peter F. Causey, were committee. A party of nine gentlemen bought the old church and converted it into a public hall. The parsonage was rebuilt at a cost of \$4000, in 1883. A chapel has recently been built in South Milford through the instrumentality of Peter F. Causey, John C. Hall and Joshua Spencer, at a cost of \$2000, for Sunday-school purposes. The Baptists have recently organized a church in the town.

Reverend Jonathan Spencer Willis, son of William Barnaby Willis and Mary Spencer, was born in Talbot County, Maryland. His father served as sheriff of Talbot County, was a member of the Maryland Legislature four terms and was a very successful agriculturalist. Oxford John Willis, his grandfather, was custom-house officer at Oxford, Maryland, for a period of forty years, when that place was a leading port of entry and before Baltimore developed into a commercial town. Oxford John Willis was the grandson of John Willis, the grandson of Sir Richard Willis, who came to Virginia early in her colonial history, with the Fairfaxes and others who took up large estates in Virginia. The subject of this sketch is of the eighth generation in direct line of descent from Sir Richard Willis. Mary Spencer, his



Yours Truly
J. S. Millis

membership is mentioned in the conference minutes in 1789. This church was re-organized and made distinctively colored at the time Bishop Scott re-organized the colored Methodist Churches throughout the United States.

BIOGRAPHICAL.—Rev. Trnston P. McColley was born March 9, 1793, and educated at the country schools. He became an apprentice to the hatter's trade; was a merchant for some time and a local preacher many years. In 1832 he was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention and made president of that body. He was a useful man in the community and the church, and died at the age of eighty-one. One of his daughters, Angeline, became the wife of Dr. William Marshall who was born in 1827. Dr. Marshall was educated at Milton and studied medicine at Jefferson Medical College. He was surgeon on the ship "Clarissa Perkins" that conveyed the first of the '49 men to California. He worked in the gold mines for a time and returned in 1851. He was surgeon in the army and wounded in a skirmish. He was captain in the Sixth Delaware Regiment. He removed to Milford in 1866, was secretary to the State Board of Health and delegate to the Ninth International Congress of Physicians. He owns a large flouring-mill and is otherwise interested in business. His son, Dr. G. W. Marshall, was born in 1864 and educated in Delaware College and Jefferson College, from which he was graduated in 1876. He came home and married Mary L. Dennell and has been practicing medicine in Milford since that time. The house where Dr. Marshall resides was built by John Law in 1787. From John Law it passed to John Pleasonton, a merchant who had a store therein. Elias Shockley also had a store and a tavern. Polly Peterkin was murdered here by a man who married her for her money. It was the old Commercial Bank building, and after its failure the Smyrna branch bank was here also.

CHAPTER LXV.

SUSSEX COUNTY.

SUSSEX COUNTY is the southernmost county of Delaware, and has an area of about nine hundred and fifty square miles. It is bounded on the north by Kent County and Delaware Bay, on the south by Maryland, on the east by Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean, on the west by Maryland and Kent County. It is drained by the Mispillion Creek, Cedar Creek, Prime Hook Creek, Beaver Dam Creek, Cool Spring Creek, Love Creek, Middle Creek, Miry Creek, Furry's Creek, Indian River, Irons' Creek, Pepper Creek, Turkey Creek, Herring Creek, Assawamun Bay, Pocomoke River, Sheals' Creek, Gray's Creek, Broad Creek, Coal Creek, Tussocky Creek, Little Creek, Nanticoke River, Deep Creek, Gum Creek, Gravelly Creek,

Clear Creek, St. John's Creek, Marshy Hope Creek and the Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The surface is nearly level, and a large part of it is covered with forests. The soil is mostly fertile, the staple products being corn, wheat, cattle, pork, lumber and potatoes. The county is intersected by the Delaware Railroad and the Junction and Breakwater Railroad, and contains thirteen hundreds as follows: Lewis and Rehoboth, Georgetown, Cedar Creek, Broadkill, Indian River, Northwest Fork, Broad Creek, Nanticoke, Seaford, Little Creek, Dagsborough, Baltimore and Gumborough. The town of Georgetown, in Georgetown Hundred, is the county-seat.

The territory occupied by the present county of Sussex was known in the seventeenth century as Horekill, Horekill and Whorekill, and extended from Bompties (Bomhay) Hook to Cape Henlopen (Fenwick Island). The first settlement was on the site of the present town of Lewes.

In 1658 Lientenant Alexander De Hinijossa was given command of the Horekill, and was succeeded by Peter Alrichs,¹ nephew of Vice-Director Jacob Alrichs, as commandant, in 1660. The territory was controlled by the Dutch authorities at New Amstel (New Castle), and Peter Alrichs, by reason of his official position, obtained a monopoly of the trade from Bompties Hook to Cape Henlopen, causing considerable dissatisfaction among the inhabitants, who complained to the Vice-Director William Beekman, of Fort Altena, and he wrote to Director Stuyvesant. Two years later, 1664, the territory passed into the possession of the English.

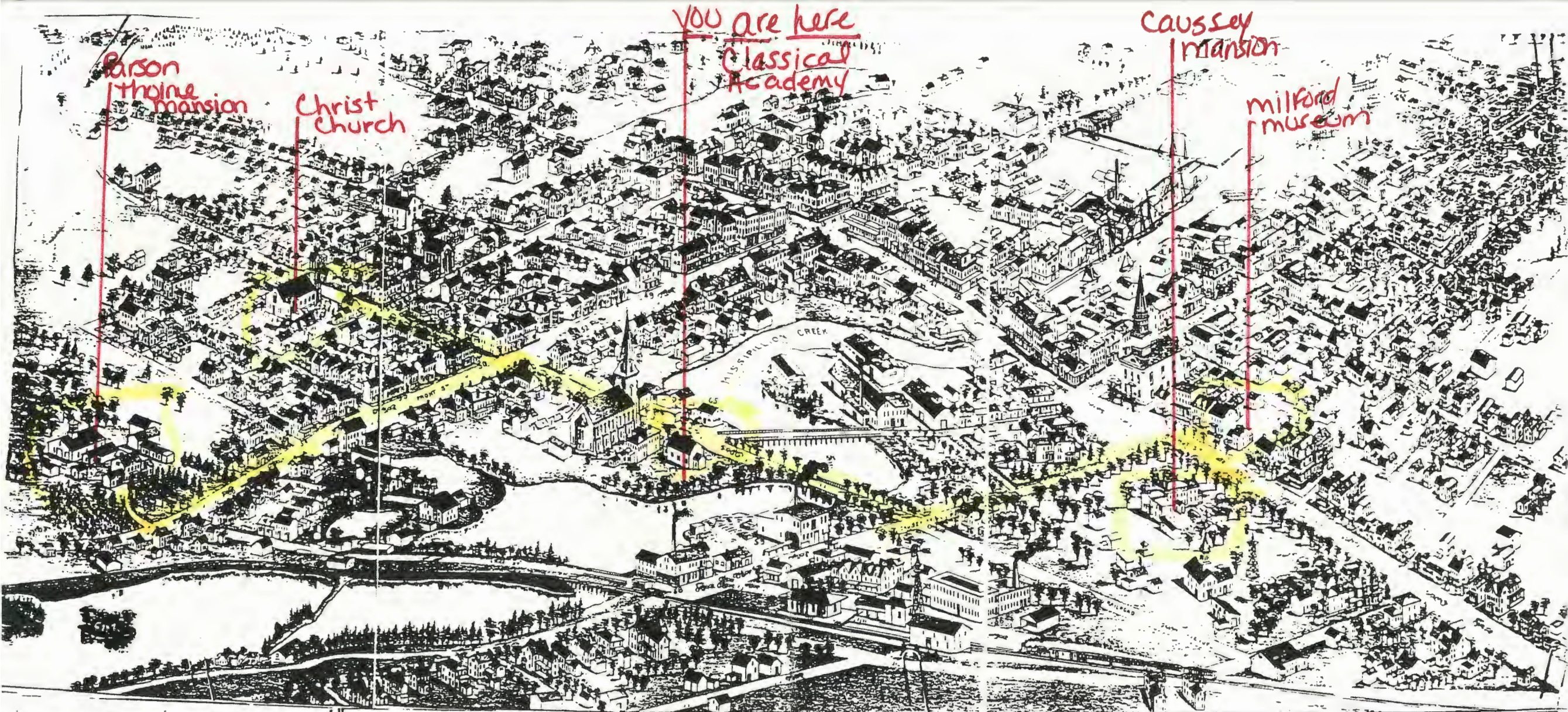
On April 22, 1665, Captain Martin Creiger, was granted permission to trade in Delaware Bay, and on November 11, 1665, Peter Alrichs was allowed to traffic at Horekill for "skias, peltry or what nther commodities those parts would afford, he to make entry with the officers at Delaware (New Castle) of the quantity and quality of goods."

On March 20, 1666, all duties on household goods were discontinued on the Delaware River, and on October 22, 1670, on petition of the inhabitants, all customs were abolished.²

On January 12, 1670, a grant was made to James Mills for a "neck of land" lying "to the southward of the town called Whorekill." He was also given

¹ Peter Alrichs took up a tract of land at the Horekill, while he was in command under the Dutch, but a patent was not obtained, and, upon the capture of the territory by the English, in 1664, all the land in his possession, both in New Castle County and at the Whorekill, was confiscated and later granted by Governor Richard Nicolls, in 1665, to William Tom, clerk of the courts "on Delaware." A tract at the Whorekill was granted to Tom, and his name appears in a list of persons whose quit-rents are still due, as follows: "Will Tom, at dirt Whorekill, 2 bushells." This tract was on the Whorekill and on the side of Pagan's Creek. It contained one hundred and thirty-two acres and was resurveyed to him July 7, 1675.

² Samuel Jennings, later Governor of New Jersey, in a letter October 17, 1680, to Penn Lawrie and Lucas, assignees of Edward Byllinge, says, "In good time we came to anchor in Delaware where one, Peter Alrichs, came aboard and brought a handsome present to our Commander and sent for me into the round-house, where they both were, and Peter told me he had nothing to say relating to customs, he had no commission for it, nor did he know anybody that had."



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ENGINEER, MANUFACTURER OF & WHOLESALE DEALER

A TOUR OF EARLY MILFORD

compiled by

Edward Millis Hurley

for

Captain Jonathan Caldwell Chapter
Daughters of the American Revolution

to commemorate the

One hundred sixty fifth Anniversary
of the

Founding of Milford

1787-1952

The last place any of us would choose for a sight-seeing tour would be our own home town. If there is one place we all know by heart it is Milford. And yet it is sometimes possible not to see the woods for the trees, and through looking at the same thing every day not to see it at all. So we are going to do a kind of travelogue in reverse and try to get a picture of the town as it looked when it was young - young and small.

Most of you know that North Milford was the old town and was a prosperous settlement long before South Milford grew up. For many years there was nothing on the southern side of the creek but the Crapper plantation, a stretch of 1570 acres of land valued at \$120,000, a large fortune in that day. The plantation house, which we know as the old Causey Mansion, remains to this day, and is still the most beautiful residence in the town. It was built about 1763 by Levin Crapper and was then a house of two stories and a half with dormers in the roof, the back of the house being what is now the front. It was Governor Causey who raised the third story and gave the house the stately classic lines it now has. Perhaps no house in Sussex so perfectly represents Delaware civilization and culture during the years before the War between the States as this one. All the culture, all the hospitality and open handedness of our ancient Delaware stock is enshrined there and you have only to look to catch a glimpse of the past. In one of the slave quarters lived the black Mammy of the household. As she grew old she grew fat so that

she could no longer ascend the narrow little staircase to her sleeping room above, so her master had enough bricks removed to make a wider passage for her and to this day the hollow place made for her comfort can be seen in the wall.

For many years the life of the Crapper plantation provided the only activity of the southern side of the stream, but in North Milford things were stirring. The town owes its origin to two men, both of whom we must meet before we examine the work they accomplished. First, Mr. Joseph Oliver, whose plantation comprised the land known as Saw Mill Range. His house stood about half way between the present site of Mrs. James Stanton's and the creek. It was many years later cut in half and moved to Front Street in South Milford about where Joseph's Garage now stands and where many of you probably remember it. Mr. Oliver was a keen business man; he ran a store and bought country produce which he shipped in his own vessels out of the river. He petitioned for a drawbridge across the stream and it was built at the expense of the two counties. As enterprising as Mr. Oliver was, it is possible that his house might have remained the only one on the creek bank had it not been for the advent of a new man, a Virginian, Mr. Sydenham Thorne. Mr. Thorne was the rector of Christ Church, an able business man and a fine scholar. He bought all that land at the edge of town now known as the Draper Farm and built on it the handsome colonial residence which we know as Silver Hill. He was quick to see the possibilities of the location for a town and he was not slow to follow up his ideas. He approached

Mr. Oliver and offered to build a dam across the creek at his own expense if Mr. Oliver would agree to lay out his land in building lots. The agreement was made and both projects were carried out. Then a grist mill was built where the Old Red Mill stood and a saw mill farther up stream. By 1790 there were eighty buildings in the town, thus showing a fairly rapid growth. When Mr. Thorne came here the church stood at Church Hill about half way between here and Houston, in fact the present highway passes over the old graveyard that surrounded the church. Mr. Thorne was so sure of the future of the town that he accepted the gift of a town lot from Mr. Oliver for the church and began the work of building the present edifice although some of the congregation objected to the removal. He himself paid for the making of the bricks, but in the midst of his work he died at the age of 45 years, and the walls stood unfinished for some twenty years. In 1789 Mr. Oliver also donated the land for a Methodist Church and graveyard, a part of the foundation yet remaining in the old yard on North Street across from the Milford Elementary School. Whatever Mr. Thorne did was well done and in the best of taste. For his house he choose the most commanding elevation we have, because, it is said, it resembled the situation of "Shirley" in Virginia, the home of General Lee's mother's family, the Carters. Although the pitch of the roof was spoiled about 1880 and the old dormers removed, yet in all other respects it is today one of the best colonial survivals in the county, if not the very best. Filled with handsome paneling and curious staircases it is a worthy

memorial to its builder.

Mr. Thorne also built that row of brick dwellings that stood about where Mr. Wilson Vinyard's home now stands and which most of us remember only in the last stages of decay, yet, like all of his work there were well designed and so long as they stood, gave an 18th century look to Front Street. For a long time they were known as the Mitchell Buildings, later as "Purity Row".

What is now the business section of the town was then a corduroy road serving only as a passage to the bridge. The business section was out West Front Street on the high ground near Silver Hill. Here was the tan yard store, the bark yards for quercitron bark, the vats for tanning hides, cord wood and staves stacked for shipment out of the river, and places for all the lesser trades that went with these. As the town grew the building we remember as the Old National Bank was built by Mr. Wadhams for a storehouse and dwelling. He also built what is now the Mulholland Apartments as a two story tavern kept by Mrs. Hetty Starr and known as Starr's Tavern. This tavern was then an important stopping place for the stage line down state. Mrs. Starr is said to have died of fright. Her son came home drunk, mounted on a spirited colt, and rode up the steps into the hall. As she opened the parlor door to see what the noise was the colt reared in the well of the staircase and she died of heart failure. When it came into the possession of Mr. Daniel Currey it received its third floor and the general appearance

it now has. The daughter of Mr. Curry married General Torbert, our consul general at Paris and the most famous citizen the house has ever had. It was here that Mrs. Torbert waited for the return of her husband's body after he was lost at sea in the wreck of the Vera Cruz, his funeral having been the largest the town has ever seen. As the town prospered all those stately homes in the Torbert block sprang up and fortunately remain today pretty much as they were in the beginning. In the old Hammersley house - where the Collins insurance office is - may be seen what can happen to these treasures when they fall into intelligent hands. No one has been more successful in sympathetic restoration than has Mr. Collins both here and at the old Carlisle house where he lives. Not only he, but the town has a right to be proud of his work. Other very old houses that have come down to us and are yet to be seen are the Towers, once a store, and now showing but little of its original architecture, and Max Willson's house which until 1850 stood on the southeastern corner of North Walnut and Second Streets, and has been carefully preserved by the Willsons. As to schools, the old Academy, built in 1810, was the most noteworthy and is yet to be seen in the older portion of the Milford Elementary School.

A new industry gave rise to South Milford. The Town there grew up as the shipyards grew and prospered and from 1820 to 1875 they showed a steady growth. At one time there were seven yards in operation at once. Mr. Henry Hudson laid out South Front Street parallel with the creek

and convenient to the yards and in many of the old houses there the peculiar style of ship carpentry work ~~may~~ be easily recognized. Fortunes were made in shipbuilding. One of the earliest firms was that of David Black, later there was Carlisle and Reville, Truitt and Deputy, and yet later, Lank and Reville, the Scribner Yard and Abbott and Company. Considering the size of the river really large ships were built, some of 600 tons burden. All this activity caused the growth of stores on Walnut Street and the foundation of the present business section, although it long remained a street of stores and dwellings interspersed, the old Marshall property being about the last of these to go. Some of the houses on Front Street show the effect of this prosperity, notably the Scribner house, now Colonel Lank's and the Hudson house, now Mrs. Jennings. For many years there were wooden bars across Carlisle Lane - the lane leading only to the Trusten McColley Farm. The old McColley house still stands and Dr. William Marshall is now restoring it. It is remarkable for its fine staircase and its curious second floor fireplaces. No account of South Milford would be complete without some mention of the old Causey Spring House. It stood near the corner of Church Street and Causey Avenue, where the Short lumber stacks now are, and was a place of resort for young people on summer evenings. There were carved the heart emblems with their intertwined initials. It was always said that those who drank from this spring would never leave Milford. The spring is gone but Mr. Joseph Holland moved the spring house into his yard where you probably remember

it. We can no longer drink from the spring, but those who live here are usually confirmed Milfordians if not to the extent of a certain old man they used to tell about, whose feet began to hurt the minute he crossed the stream at the Tub Mill and didn't stop until he came back on this side and was again in sight of town.

It used to be the fashion to conclude with a moral so that what we say to you now will serve in the old fashioned way to point a moral and adorn the tale. That old Roman saying - time destroys everything - is just as true for us as it was for them. It is only when we resist and make some organized effort that we are able to rescue some spoils from the wreck of time. The buildings we have been thinking of, some remarkable for their architectural beauty, others for their antiquarian interest, have survived by the merest chance. Much has been lost, like the old Mitchell Buildings, on Front Street, for instance, which a New England town or a Virginia Williamsburg would have taken care to preserve. Until the bridge was built across the creek on Washington Street, it appeared that business would inevitably expand out North and South Walnut Streets and that the Causey Mansion and the fine old houses in the Torbert block in North Milford were doomed to give place to commercial buildings. Most fortunately for the town the bridge has made possible a more compact and convenient business section - convenient because it makes a circular drive for automobiles and provides greater ease of access to the stores. And yet, in spite of

this lucky chance, the fact that they will be preserved remains a pious hope - the hope that this or that building will not fall into the hands of the Philistines, but into hands ready to restore and preserve that which can no longer be replaced. The preservation of such things is already the serious concern of other communities. Not long ago some of you may have seen a photograph in the papers of some citizens of Boston sitting in groups on the pavement. The city had threatened to remove the old brick pavements which were so well in keeping with the buildings on the street, but the determined resistance of these enthusiastic "sitters" called so much attention to the proposed desecration that the pavements were saved and will remain for many a long day to delight the antiquarian eye. So jealously do the citizens of Boston guard even the pavements that front their historic buildings. Here then is our moral - private citizens can do all - or even enough to win the battle. Without some sympathetic civic help our treasures will continue to disappear one by one, in the future as they have in the past. We cannot get back what our town has lost - we can save those really fine things that remain.

Parson Thorne House

This house was built about 1785 by the Rev. Sydenham Thorne, an Anglican minister who came here from Virginia about 1773 to take charge of Christ Church which then stood at Church Hill. This house is one of the best colonial survivals in the county. It has the curtain wings so typical of plantation architecture in the 18th century. Exquisite panelling and built-in cupboards with butterfly shelves remain in place in the parlor. You will note that the roof line was changed in the late years of the last century, being raised to a square pitched roof, the old dormers removed and the present peaked gables installed. These changes may be plainly seen in the attics where even the frame of one of the old dormers still exists. Notice also that there is no indoor communication between the plantation offices, the ~~small~~ rooms behind the arcades no doubt having been larders and butteries. Until a few years ago some of the slave quarters still stood in the rear.

It is impossible to look at this house without giving some thought to its builder. In addition to his clerical duties Mr. Thorne was a mill owner, a planter, and a co-founder of Milford. In politics he was a zealous Tory. It was during his rectorate that the present Christ Church was built although it was not finished due to his untimely death. As was the custom he is buried on the plantation and those who are curious may see his tomb within the walled family graveyard.

Christ Church

Christ Church, Milford, originally Christ Church, Mispillion, founded 1704, was one of the first colonial parishes of the Diocese of Delaware, organized by the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel of the Church of England, with the Right Reverend Bishop of London as the Ecclesiastical Authority.

The first church edifice, known as Christ Church, Savannah, Mispillion, was built about 1705. This was replaced by a larger edifice and a churchyard upon land granted Jehu Davis in 1720. This building was used until 1836 and was known as Christ Church, Milford, from 1790. In the year 1789, Joseph Oliver, a Vestryman, gave two lots in the newly-planned community of Milford. Upon a portion of this plot the present edifice was built. The remaining part is used for churchyard purposes. This building remained incomplete until 1836 when it was consecrated for Divine Services.

The present Christ Church originally was of colonial design. This was changed by alterations and the addition of the chancel and the tower 1861-1865.

Pettigrew House

This house now owned and occupied by Charles Windsor was built by Capt. John Pettigrew. Especially interesting here is the quaint kitchen wing with its towering chimney. The house is equally interesting as the long time residence of Capt. Pettigrew's daughter Mrs. Ann T. Greer. Mrs. Greer kept store in a small story and a half building just west of her residence, carried on a farm, and was famous for her business ability and shrewd worldly wisdom. Her advice on many matters was often sought by her fellow townsmen. So competent was she that Judge Wise of Virginia carried on a legal correspondence with her and seeing her letters signed "A. T. Greer" presumed that his correspondent was a man and complimented him on his business ability.

The house in later years was the home of Mrs. Clara Yardley and is still well preserved and in excellent repair.

112 Front Street, N.W. (Dr. William Marshall Jr.)

The northeastern rooms were built in 1787 by Elias Shockley, tenanted successively by Lowder Layton, the Fitzgeralds, the Commercial Bank of Delaware and in 1811 the western rooms were added by the Milford Branch of the First National Bank of Smyrna. In 1879 both properties were snuggled against each other in the lines shown on the bricks from the frontal view, were purchased by Dr. & Mrs. George W. Marshall, who joined the two parts in one and raised a family of four boys, of whom the second oldest, Dr. William Marshall Jr., assumed ownership on the death of his mother in 1933.

The house is of brick and contains the offices which have been used first by Dr. George Marshall until his passing in 1915 and then by his sons Drs. William and Samuel Marshall.

The Towers

This house which architecturally presents today all the gingerbread romanticism of the 80's was not always so. The room on the corner was once a general store kept by John Wallace the step-father of John Lofland, the Milford Bard. It is to him that the house owes its fame. It was in the little garret room whose window is to be seen next to the chimney that he acquired his education and it was from that garret room that he sent forth the poems, short stories and essays that made his reputation. Unfortunately, he was an alcoholic and an opium addict and these vices hastened his untimely end. According to his friends he fell into evil habits because of disappointment in a love affair in his early years. Mr. Mitchell, the father of his fiancée, forbade the marriage and on the day of Miss Mitchell's marriage to another man John withdrew from the world and for the succeeding three years never left this house. Indeed, during that time he is said never to have had a hat on his head. Having loved society he came to abhor it and it was during this period that the case bottle became his constance companion. However, he left a considerable body of writings and to this day is the literary luminary of Milford.

Old School

The cafeteria was originally the Milford Academy built about 1810 and sponsored by the Masonic Lodge. Before 1817 a second floor had been added for a lodge meeting room and a belfry added for the old iron bell, cast in 1809, and now displayed in a cabinet at the new school through the interest of the local D.A.R. The Masons did not own the building until 1832 when Temple Lodge #9 bought it and retained it until 1846 when they sold it to the school committee for the United Districts #42 and 43 of Kent County. This was a pay school and most of Milford's prominent men attended here. John M. Clayton was born at Dagsboro but his parents lived at Silver Hill during his academy attendance. You will better understand the excellence of the curriculum offered here when you consider the many eminent men who came from the school. John Lofland the Milford bard was educated here together with other well known names as George P. Fisher, Hiram McColley, Caleb Layton, Daniel Godwin, Daniel Currey, James Lofland and other doctors, ministers and statesmen. Col. Haslet, the Revolutionary hero, had a son who attended school in Milford. The nickname of the state, Blue Hen's Chickens, originated in this locality. Captain Jonathan Caldwell commanded a company in his regiment. His men took with them some game chickens with celebrated fighting qualities and said to be from the brood of a Kent County Blue Hen. The fame of these fights spread through the army and into contemporary history until Delaware Veterans became known as Blue Hens Chickens and the state the Blue Hen State. We wish this old building could be preserved for posterity as there is nothing of the past which links so many of us as intimately as this.

Old Methodist Graveyard

This graveyard grew up around the first Methodist chapel in Milford, a small frame building, the brick foundation of which you may see in the rear. In 1842 this building stood, or rather, leaned on props and sometime thereafter was sold for \$27.00. Across the street is St. Paul's, the second Methodist building, now a colored church. Many of the old worthies of the town are buried here, General Torbert, Trusten P. McColley, Daniel Currey and Governor Causey.

General Torbert House

This house was built about 1825 by Benjamin Wadhams (also the builder of the old National Bank on the other corner) for a tavern, since it stood on the old stage line. To visualize it as it was then you must take away the veranda on the garden side and the bow window above it and remove the third floor. Here Mrs. Hetty Starr kept Starr's Tavern and is said to have died of fright one night when her drunken son rode a blood horse into the front hall. She is buried in the old Methodist graveyard.

The house later became the home of Daniel Currey who added the third floor according to plans drawn by Alonzo Reynolds. Mr. Currey's daughter Miss Mary married General Torbert of Civil War fame. General Torbert was our Consul General at Paris from 1870 to 1874. When the Torberts returned to Milford they brought handsome French furnishings with them. This house was famous for its hospitality and was the scene of many fashionable reunions. Mrs. Torbert was especially

gracious to all visiting clergy and here were entertained many of the most prominent people of this country. General Torbert lost his life in the shipwreck of the Vera Cruz in 1880 in his efforts to save his fellow passengers. His funeral was long remembered as the largest ever seen in Milford.

It is worthy of your attention to notice the chaste lines of Greek architecture employed on this house and on the Mitchell house directly opposite and especially to the curious fact that the portico of this house provides a perfect example of the Doric column while the portico of the Mitchell house is an equally splended example of the Ionic order. This house is a perfect architectural example of the classic "Maison Carre" (Square House) of which there is a famous specimen in Richmond. The walls were originally raised for a bank but the building was completed and the service wing added by Dr. Mitchell.

The houses in this block form the stateliest group of homes remaining in the town. They are seen to the best advantage from the National Bank corner ~~where~~ the succession of stately facades mount the hill in increasing grandeur. Fortunately, the entire block still retains its ancient Brick pavements which are in admirable keeping with the buildings. Although the portico of the Davis home has been destroyed. The house was once the old Methodist parsonage long the home of the Rev. Jonathan S. Willis and there was a Dame's School for small children kept in the cellar to which there was an outside entrance below the level of the street.

The next house south now in the process of restoration by its present owner, Edgar Welch, was built by John McCurdy of Philadelphia for his daughter Mrs. Nehemiah Davis, the grandmother of Mrs. Helen Pierce. The parlor, which has been restored, boasts a handsome roccoco ceiling and fireplace. The next house, long the home of Dr. Collins, was built by Mrs. Collins's father Daniel Godwin on the site of the old Causey home. The rear rooms of this older house are a part of the present edifice and with their low ceilings, tiny staircases and paneled doors form a delightful contrast to the more stately rooms built by Mr. Godwin in the front. Especially noteworthy here is the sharp roof line with its casement garret windows reminiscent of a Parisian roof top.

Baker House

Where the house now stands there stood about 1830 a one story frame dwelling occupied by William Jammons. From him it passed to Peter F. Causey and by him was sold to Daniel C. Godwin, who changed the sloping hill to the present terrace and built the handsome three story residence now occupied by Dr. John B. Baker. Mr. Godwin sold it to Dr. Robert Frame. It was next bought by Dr. Robert H. Clark, paymaster in the United States Navy. During his lifetime it was greatly beautified and boasted a splendid boxwood garden. There was once a curious brick bath house built into the bank of the terrace where there were wooden tubs which provided a steam bath when filled with hot water. The house has been

sympathetically cared for by Dr. Baker and is as beautiful today as ever.

Causey House

This house, known to most of us as the Causey Mansion from its long occupancy by Governor Causey's family, was built for Levin Crapper in 1763 by an English architect named Mitchell. The plantation counted 1500 acres and included what is now South Milford. The house was then two and a half stories and what is now the back was then the front. About 1855 it was remodeled by Governor Causey in the mode of the Greek revival. There is much elegance and simplicity in this adaptation which is to be seen in the window caps and the beautiful iron grille work at the windows in the third story. Most of the slave quarters have disappeared but one yet remains, the small brick building to the right of the house. Governor Causey was in the mercantile business. He shipped his products by schooner to Philadelphia and brought back articles of household use for sale here. Another governor of Delaware, Daniel Rogers, lived there.

McColley House (Egglinton Hall)

About 1792-95 a Mr. Egglinton built the back room (now the kitchen) and the room above. After Egglinton's death his widow married Mr. William Black who impounded the pond and ran the plantation of several hundred acres. About 1805 he added two rooms above and one large room below to the earlier Egglinton Building. On the death of the Blacks the plantation was bought by Trusten Polk McColley about 1828. He added the three story frontal building of two large rooms on each floor and a staircase and hall, perhaps the finest in Sussex County, that is open to the third floor.

Mr. McColley was a hatter by trade but is better remembered as a popular Methodist preacher whose fame was state wide. His popularity may be judged by the fact that in the course of his ministry he married 1600 couples and preached over 1000 funerals.

T. C. Collins House

The home of T. C. Collins, 205 S. E. Front Street is said to be the second oldest house in South Milford. It was built in 1794 by a ship carpenter named David West and occupied by him until he sold it to Peter F. Causey. In 1836 it passed to Manlove Carlisle and in 1866 was purchased by Thomas Carlisle, grandfather of T. Carlisle Collins. At that time portions of the present boxwood gardens were laid out and were later extended when the property passed to Mrs. Darwin Collins, daughter of Thomas Carlisle. Her son, the

present owner, has made extensive additions to the dwelling and the gardens and has been especially successful in his restoration of the house. The peculiar character of ship carpenter work is plainly evident in the interior. The windows are fitted somewhat in the manner of a port-hole without sills. The present owners have filled it with fine old furniture and share their pleasure in the property with all lovers of old Milford.

There are yet other houses in town of the greatest interest which our space in this brief catalog will not permit us to describe. Among these are the Scribner House now occupied by Col. Lank; the two beautiful Watson Houses with their classic fronts in pressed brick, the one occupied by Mrs. Sarah Stanton and the other by the Masonic Temple; the Harrison White Property (No. N.W. Front Street); the Charles white house built by John M. Darby and probably once the mill house; the Billie Welch House (now occupied by Mrs. Sallie Sapp) built by the proprietor of the Blacksmith Shop which stood on the opposite corner; the old Senator Abbott House (No. 115 N. W. Front Street); the Max Willson House which has a stairway similar to that at Mt. Vernon; the Clarence F. Jewell Property (203 N. W. Front Street) which was built by Dr. John Ralston and later used as the office of Dr. Joseph Sudler.

ADDENDA

Sudler Apartments

This quaint old house was built by John Ralston in 1793 on land bought from Joseph Oliver. Ralston's son-in-law Dr. Joseph Sudler lived in the dwelling and had the use of the shop. It is a curious commentary on the times that Ralston in his will made provision that Sudler should pay no office rent unless he should attempt to bring in a bill for medical services to Ralston or his family, in which case the rental charges for the office were to become retro-active. In 1837 the estate was sold and the building changed hands many times. It was owned by Captain George Primrose, a Philadelphia ship builder, until 1843, then by Daniel Godwin. On one side was a milliner shop, now the residence of Mrs. Lee Truitt. In the shop end of the building Martin Chamberlin kept a grocery store for many years and it was also occupied by John Emerson in 1848. It was he who printed the old Milford Beacon.

This house is especially interesting in it's roof lines with the tall old dormers that give it such an 18th century look. It has been very successfully restored by Mr. Clarence F. Jewell, the present owner, and is now known as the Sudler Apartments.

MS 9558 Gift of David Burton, Milford

Milford

Milford, located on both sides of the Mispillion River and fifteen miles from Delaware Bay by water, is divided by the river into north and south Milford. Milford is the fourth largest town in the state and is an industrial and trading center for lower Delaware. Because of industry and prosperity, many of the older houses have been either removed or altered. The dwellings on the pleasant tree lined streets are architecturally varied, comfortable and complacent, designed for large families.

The trend in building homes in Milford was to build them in the country rather than the city. Therefore, despite the network of good roads and the modern conveniences of home living, homes in Milford are still centered near the country. Most residents are still too close to the farm to forget mud, dust, frozen pumps, and hog-killing dinners. Meanwhile it is still the aim of most of the young people to get away from the country.

North Milford, the older part, stands on a tract of land formerly called Saw Mill range, taken up by Henry Bowman in 1680. During the next century, farms and plantations covered most of the countryside near the river, but no effort to establish a town was made until 1787 when Joseph Oliver, a landowner and merchant, laid out streets on his plantations at Oliver's landing. That year the Reverend Sydenham Thorne built a dam for a gristmill and sawmill at a ford on the stream, hence the name Milford.

On the Sussex County side, South Milford was laid out in 1819 on the land of Henry Hudson. Milford was early noted as a shipping and ship-building town. By the 1850's, before the railroad began to undermine water shipping, a dozen schooners and sloops of the port took away annually more than 300,000 bushels of grain in addition to tanbark, slaves, lumber, cordwood, and other products. From Philadelphia and other ports, they brought

manufactured goods for a region extending well into Maryland on the west. In contrast to Frederica and other villages whose growth was also based largely on water transportation, Milford did not stagnate with the decline of shipping, but grew steadily larger and busier. Booming industries of the nineteenth century were the manufacturing of fruit-drying machinery and an iron foundry, both established by an English ironmaster and inventor named George S. Grier. The last sailing vessel was launched in Milford in 1917, the three mast one hundred ninety-five foot schooner Albert F. Paul. Between 1920 and 1930 the population increased thirty-eight percent.

Industries past and present in Milford include: dental materials, wood veneer products, dresses, woolen yarn, building materials, brick, fertilizer, flour, feed and monuments. Boatbuilding consisting of the expensive cabin cruiser, the other, party boats for fishing parties. The largest weekly paper in Lower Delaware is the Milford Chronicle.

At one time Milford had almost forty fruit drying establishments.. There was some shipbuilding and much manufacture of agricultural implements; and the town had many substantial merchants, among them: Charles Barker, J. B. Counselman, Zachariah Johnson, J. L. Smith, E. C. Peck, Samuel Darby, George S. Grier, Allen Tolbert, James H. Denning, Nathan Adams, Molton Richards, Samuel Ratcliff, Walter Sipple, Lowder Layton, Daniel Goodwin, Trustin P. McColley, Isaac Lofland, Curtis Watson and Joseph Bennet.

James Johnson, an old schoolmaster, took up town planning project in 1817, laying out the Sawmill Range into building lots and thus the beginning of Milford. The town derived its name from the fact that to get to Oliver's Mill it was necessary to ford the creek at Oliver's Landing. In 1791 a bridge was built at the landing. Joseph Oliver's house was the first one built, it's site being on North and Second Streets. Before 1800, Thomas Collins built a home. Another old building on the northwest corner of

Second and Church Streets was referred to as one of the landmarks of the place as early as 1813. Other early settlers were Henry and Thomas May, descendants of the early Dutch navigator, Cornelius May, after whom Cape May and May's Landing in New Jersey take their names.

James Johnson laid out South Milford some years after North Milford and it was resurveyed by Thomas J. Davis. Lewes Crapper built the first house in South Milford. It was erected in 1763. He owned the land that became the town site, also much of the adjoining land in Sussex County. He was the wealthiest man in that county, owning thousands of acres. His mansion house was erected at the intersection of South Walnut and Depot Streets, and was later occupied by many prominent citizens, among them Lowder Layton, Governors Daniel Rogers and Peter F. Causey and Joseph E. Holland.

Milford was first incorporated in 1807 and re-incorporated in 1867 and 1887. During the Nineteenth Century, Milford contributed four governors to the state, Peter Causey, Daniel Rogers, William Burton and William T. Watson.

The early settlers in Milford were deeply rooted and grounded in religious beliefs, and early in the history of the settlement we find mention of the places of worship and of the donation of the tracts of land for the purpose of erecting meeting houses. Strange as it may seem, the earliest sect is now completely extinct. A Quaker meeting house was built in Milford about 1790. Baptists were meeting as early as 1781. The Three Runs Meeting house of the Presbyterians, a quarter mile from Milford, dates back to 1762 and united with the Milford Church in 1850. A few miles west of Milford was an Episcopal body referred to in 1704 or 1705 as "Savannah Church" or "Christ Church Mispillion", the predecessor of Christ Church Milford founded in 1791. Methodists were holding

services near Milford in 1777, and in 1789 Bishop Asbury was in Milford.

1923 by the owner, Dr. Frank L. Grier. Dr. Grier and his brother, Dr. G. Layton Grier, were dentists who bought a dental supply business and moved it to Milford in 1900. They developed it into an international business, now the L.D. Caulk Division of Dentsply International. Dr. Grier was instrumental in bringing about the initiation of President Warren G. Harding into Milford's Evergreen Forest #49 of the Tall Cedars of Lebanon. On that occasion President Harding was a guest of the Griers' in this house.

East Side of Old Rehoboth Boulevard between S.E. Front & S.E. 2nd Streets . . .

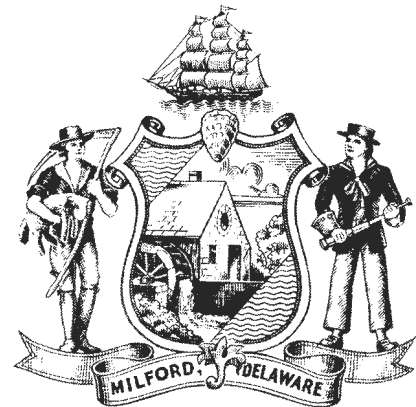
UNION CEMETERY. The little used Union Cemetery was laid out by Captain Thomas Humphreys. "The Peninsular News and Advertiser" stated on March 27, 1874 "It is beautifully located on high ground, about a quarter of a mile from South Milford on the bay road."

**Funded by:
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Milford, Delaware**

**Prepared by
The City of Milford
Landmarks and Museum Commission**

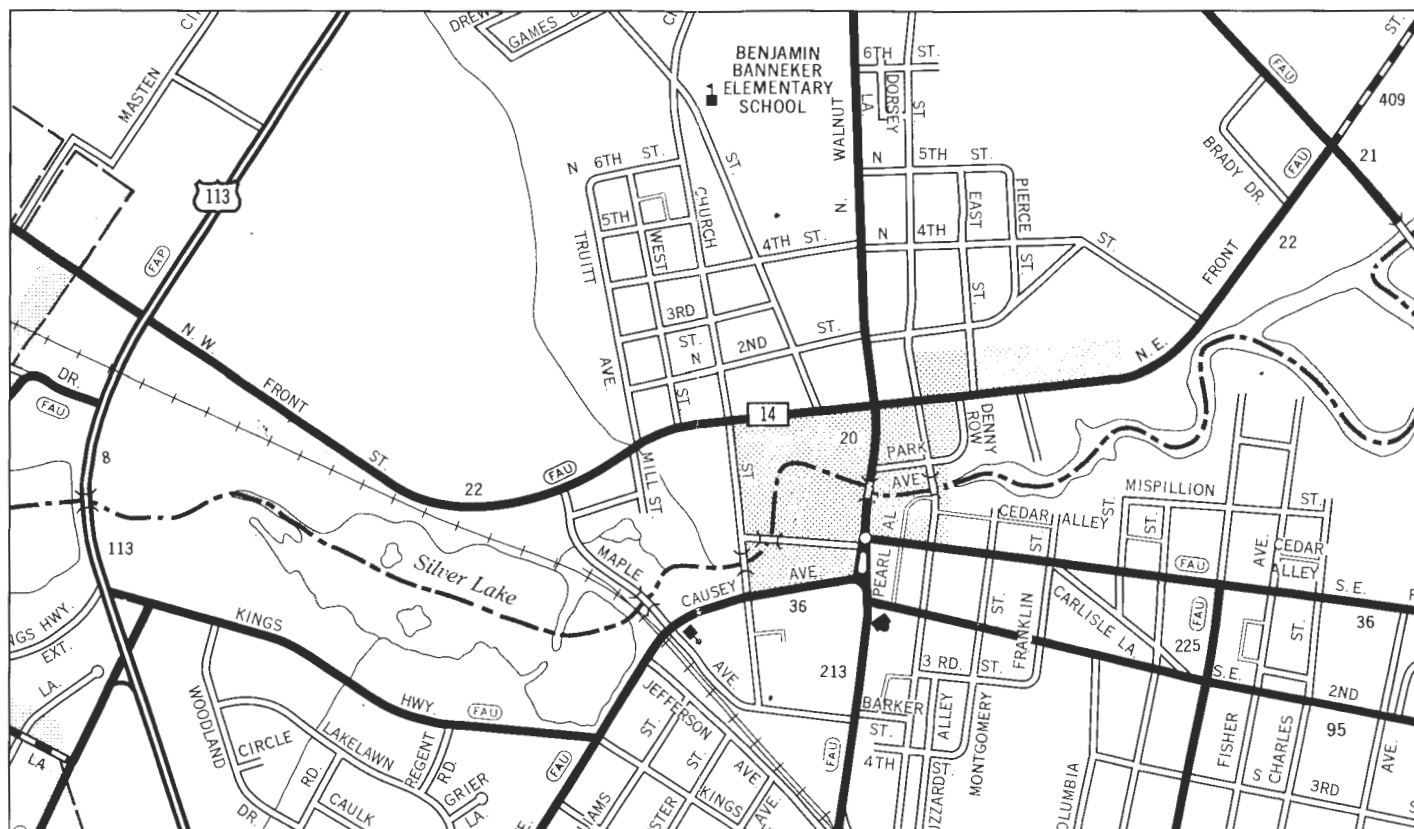
DELAWARE
SMALL WONDER

Milford Delaware Founded 1787



A Walking / Riding Tour of Historic Milford

WELCOME to Milford, Delaware, a city rich in the development of both Kent and Sussex counties and of our country. Your tour starts with the Parson Thorne Mansion and continues to the east toward the center of town.



HISTORY OF MILFORD

For many years a river-crossing settlement, the town was founded in 1787 by the Reverend Sydenham Thorne, an Anglican clergyman who had arrived in 1774, and Mr. Joseph Oliver, a merchant who had extensive landholdings in the area.

In 1787 Reverend Thorne purchased property on Silver Hill, just west of Oliver's holdings, both properties being part of a tract of land which had been granted to one Henry Bowman in 1680 which was known as "Saw Mill Range."

The Thorne residence is now known as the Parson Thorne Mansion.

The two men are reported to have entered into an agreement whereby Thorne would build a dam across

the river at his mill and Oliver would lay out his land in building lots. The founders adopted the Old English system of 99 year ground leases in perpetuity rather than outright sales.

Milford has been the home of eight governors of the State of Delaware: John (Jehu) Davis 1789; Daniel Rogers 1797-99; Joseph Haslet 1811-14 and 1823; Charles Polk 1827-30; William Tharp 1848-51; Peter F. Causey 1855-59; William Burton 1859-63; and William T. Watson 1895-97.

★ Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

★★ Listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of an Historic District

N. W. FRONT STREET



- ★ 501 **PARSON THORNE MANSION**—Property of Milford Historical Society. The rear wing, which is the oldest part, was built by Joseph Booth between 1730 and 1735. The main section was built by John Cullen between 1745 and 1750. In 1879 Col. Henry B. Fiddeman remodeled the mansion by adding the three gables and raising the roof line. It receives its name from Reverend Sydenham Thorne, first rector of Christ Church, 1774-93, and co-founder of Milford. Famous occupants were statesmen John M. Clayton, Secretary of State under President Zachary Taylor, and Governor William Burton during his term as Governor, 1859-63.

- ★ 414 **MILL HOUSE** (Privately owned). A late 18th century two story brick house with a tin gable roof, it is associated with Milford's industrial interests. The most notable occupant was newspaperman George B. Hynson, author of "Historical Etchings and Vicinity" published in 1899 and "Down Yan and Thereabout," a book of poems published in 1920, illustrated by Milford artist William H. Roach. Hynson is best known as the author of the state song, "Our Delaware," written in 1906.



- ★ ★ 318 **WELCH/SAPP HOUSE** (Privately owned). A two story frame shingled house built c. 1825.
- ★ ★ 214 **RULE HOUSE** (Privately owned). The original house, 216, was a two story frame building erected about 1787, with the brick front added in 1810. The adjoining frame house, 214, was built in 1820. At a later date these houses were joined, then finally separated as they appear today.



- ★ ★ 211 **HARRISON WHITE HOUSE** (Privately owned). A 2-story frame house with a second story porch directly over the first story porch. The steep slope of the roof, together with the porch style and corner fireplaces in both the 1st and 2nd floor rooms, are signs of construction c. 1790-1800. The style is common in Charleston, South Carolina. Mr. White, an early owner, was a well known cabinetmaker and undertaker.
- ★ ★ 208 **JAMES HALL HOUSE** (Privately owned). A Victorian two story Italianate Villa/Second Empire style house with a widow's walk, it was built c. 1880.
- ★ ★ 201 **SUDLER BUILDING** (Privately owned). A plain two story stucco over brick double house which was erected by John Ralston in 1797, with three living units, gable roof and twin dormers. It was later rented to Dr. Joseph Sudler, his son-in-law, with an agreement to provide free medical services to all of the Ralston family in lieu of rent. It was the location of Milford's first newspaper, "The Milford Beacon," published by John Emerson in September 1848.
- ★ ★ 127 **JEWELL'S STORE PROPERTY** (Privately owned). The -131 brick store was built by John Williams in 1814. The attached frame residence was built c. 1840, with two massive cross gables and decorative bargeboards. It became the home of Governor William Tharp, who purchased it when he became Governor of the State of Delaware in 1847.
- ★ ★ 115 **ABBOTT/BROWNING HOUSE** (Privately owned). A two story stucco over brick house built between 1811 and 1820 by Purnell Lofland. The original land was part of a tract running from N.W. Front Street between North and Church Streets, to their intersection to the North. Delaware State Senator Sylvester Abbott purchased the property in 1905.
- ★ ★ 112 **JOHN LAWS/BANKING HOUSE INN**. This structure was originally two separate two story brick houses. The eastern portion was built by John Laws between 1787 and 1789 on land purchased from Joseph Oliver. The western portion was built in 1811. A branch of the Commercial Bank of Delaware occupied the western side of the building between 1812 and 1827. The Bank of Smyrna conducted an office of Discount & Deposit from 1831 until the opening of the First National Bank of Milford at N.W. Front Street & Walnut Street in 1876. In 1879 Mr. Andrew Donnell of Newark



purchased both houses for his daughter, Mary Louise Marshall, founder of Milford's first hospital, and her husband, Dr. George W. Marshall. The houses were then joined together for use as their residence and office. A Bed & Breakfast and Restaurant is now open to the public in this building.



- ★ ★ 106 MARY ADKINS BROWN HOUSE (Privately owned). A two story frame house with double cross gables, it was built c. 1806. Mrs. Brown, familiarly known as "Miss Mollie," opened the library in the rear wing to school children of Milford from 1912 to 1921. A brick springhouse on the rear of the property straddles the property line with 108 N. W. Front Street, now the garden of the Banking House Inn.



- ★ ★ 101 THE TOWERS (Privately owned). This structure was built -103 in 1793 by John Wallace as a two story store and residence. His stepson, John Lofland, "the Milford Bard," did much of his writing in his "Garret." Later Delaware Governor William Burton, a prominent physician, lived there. His

daughter, Mrs. R.B. Roudebush, remodeled the building to its present Queen Anne Victorian style.

- ★ ★ 24 CENTRAL HOTEL/KENT & SUSSEX INN (Open to the public). Built in 1892, this three story brick hotel has a large cupola at the roof. The top floor served as the second location of Milford's hospital which opened in 1909. There were seven beds set up in the ballroom, each bed surrounded by screens for privacy. An equipped operating room was in the next room and the Central Hotel provided meals for the patients.

In the days of travel by train, the hotel was a popular stop-over for travelling salesmen. It was famed for its comfortable accommodations, good food and jitney service to and from the railroad depot. Entertainment was furnished by local story tellers sitting on chairs lined up on the covered front porch in seasonable weather.

- ★ ★ 10 WATSON/WELLS/HALPERN BUILDING. These 2 story -12 attached brick houses were built in 1855 by Curtis Wason (No. 10) and his brother, Bethuel Watson (No. 12). In 1909 No. 12, then owned by Temple Lodge #9, A.F.&A.M., housed Milford's first hospital in two rooms on the second floor. Later, the telephone company had its exchange on the second floor, in days when calls were made only through operators. Around 1920, during a shortage of rooms in the elementary school, one grade met here. Currently both houses are used for offices.

- ★ ★ 17 STEWARD BUILDING (Privately owned). A variety of commercial functions have taken place in this three story frame building, from icehouse, to bakery, to neighborhood grocery store. Milford's best known private secondary school was conducted on the third floor of the building from 1863 to 1873 by Reverend J. Leighton McKim, Rector of Christ Church, and bore the name "Milford High School." In 1891 the third floor was burned in the "Great Milford Fire" and was replaced by a mansard roof. The 19 N.W. Front Street attached two story frame dwelling was built in 1890. During the term of Mr. Steward's appointment as Postmaster, the store also served as a post office.

- ★ ★ 48 COOPER BUILDING (48 N. Walnut Street & Corner of N.W. Front Street). This stucco over brick structure was built in 1845 by the Godwins for use as a store. Originally a two story building with a corner entrance, the third floor was added as a meeting room for Temple Lodge #9, A.F.&A.M. The first floor of this building has served as a store since its construction.

N. W. THIRD STREET

- ★ CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (Corner of Church Street & N.W. Third Street). Christ Church Mispillion, founded in 1704 by the Society for the Propagation of The Gospel in Foreign Parts, is one of the earliest parishes in Delaware. The present building was started in 1791 by Reverend Sydenham Thorne, co-founder of Milford, who was rector from 1774 until his death in 1793. The building was not completed until 1836. Under the direction of Reverend John Leighton McKim, the church was remodeled to its present Gothic style in 1863-65. In the churchyard, against the west wall of the church, is the grave of Joseph Oliver,

co-founder of Milford. Also buried here are two of Delaware's Governors: William Tharp and William Burton. It is open for regular church services and upon request.

★ ★ OLD METHODIST GRAVEYARD (Corner of North & N.W. Third Streets). On land acquired from Joseph Oliver in 1787, this is the site of the first Methodist Church in Milford. The building was located in the center of the yard facing west. General A.T.A. Torbert and Governor Peter F. Causey are buried here.

★ ★ ST. PAUL'S A.M.E. CHURCH (Corner of North & N.W. 3rd Streets). Erected in 1842, this two story brick church replaced the original house of worship built by the Methodist Episcopal Church about 1788, which was located in what is now the old graveyard on the east side of North Street between 2nd and 4th Streets. By 1871 the congregation had outgrown the building and a new and larger one was erected in that year on Church Avenue. After its discontinuance as a house of worship, the edifice became a public hall where theatrical and cultural events were held, and, at one time, was used as a conserve factory. As late as 1875 a private primary school was conducted on the first floor of this building, and rooms were rented at intervals to accommodate several classes from the North Milford School.

In 1889 the congregation of St. Paul's A.M.E. Church bought the building, and, again, it became a Methodist house of worship. It is open for regular church services and upon request.

N. W. SECOND STREET

★ ★ 9 WILLSON HOUSE (Privately owned). In 1854 this two story frame house was moved from 119 N. Walnut Street to permit the erection of the "Bank House." An interesting feature of this house is the beautiful stairway similar to the one at Mt. Vernon.

N. WALNUT STREET



★ 119 BANK HOUSE (Privately owned). A three story brick Greek Revival structure designed by Alonzo Reynolds of Port Deposit, Maryland, it was erected in 1854 as a banking house for the Bank of Milford, then located a block away on N.W. Front Street. The bank failed before moving into the new building. Dr. J. R. Mitchell bought the building and furnished it for his home and office.



★ ★ 206 GODWIN/BAKER HOUSE (Privately owned). Built circa 1830 by Daniel Godwin, this three story frame Greek Revival house was later owned by Dr. Robert H. Clark, paymaster in the U.S. Navy. Since that time it has served as a doctor's office and residence.



★ 417 LOFLAND/SNYDER HOUSE (Privately owned). This Victorian, Second Empire, two story brick house was built by Peter Lofland circa 1880. The ground rent was \$18.00, payable annually. Bricks used to build the house were taken in payment for a debt. The Lofland's acquired all of the remaining ground rents of the original Joseph Oliver lands.



600 GOVERNOR WATSON HOUSE (Privately owned). A large two story brick house built in 1903 by William Tharp Watson, Governor of Delaware 1895-97, it contained one of the finest libraries in the state. Mr. Watson was the grandson of Governor William Tharp and was a prominent businessman and real estate investor, owning a large portion of Milford's business district.

CAUSEY AVENUE and S. WALNUT STREET



- ★ ★ 2 CAUSEY MANSION, (Corner of #2 Causey Avenue & S. Walnut Street, privately owned). A large two story brick residence built in 1763 by Levin Crapper, it is the oldest house in South Milford. In 1855 it was remodeled to a Greek Revival style with hip roof, and balustrade and widow's walk. Levin Crapper owned all of the lands on which "South Milford" stands and was considered to be the wealthiest man in the county. Upon his death, the house passed to his son Moulton. His widow, Esther, married Daniel Rogers who became a Governor of the State of Delaware. A later owner, Peter F. Causey, also became a Governor of the State. It was he who remodeled the mansion in 1855 to its present Greek Revival style.

- ★ ★ 121 OLD POST OFFICE/MILFORD MUSEUM, S. Walnut Street. This brick one story building was erected in 1910 in neo-classical style with a hip roof, concrete balustrade and wooden cupola. This was Milford's first post office erected by the federal government, and it served as such until 1962. Prior post office locations changed with the appointment of each new postmaster. It is now the Milford Museum, in the care of the Milford Landmarks and Museum Commission, and includes the E. Millis Hurley Library, which contains one of the most complete collections of volumes on Delaware History.

The museum is open to the public Saturday and Sunday afternoons except on holidays, is closed during the month of August, and may be opened at other times by appointment. Call: City Hall—422-6616.

S.E. FRONT STREET

- ★ 205 CARLISLE/COLLINS HOUSE (Privately owned). A two story frame house, it was built c. 1794 by David West, a ship's carpenter. In 1859 this house, along with numerous other properties in South Milford, were owned by Mr. Manlove Carlisle, a Milford shipbuilder. The framing techniques and interior joinery are reminiscent of the shipbuilding technology most likely employed at the Carlisle shipyards which were located behind the house along the river. The adjacent boxwood gardens date back to 1866.

S.E. SECOND STREET



- ★ 700 EGLINTON HALL (Privately owned). The original 1½ story frame house, now contained in the rear wing, was built between 1792 and 1795 by Henry Eglinton. His widow married William Black, who, in 1805, added a large room and hall downstairs and two rooms upstairs, in front of the original building. In 1825 the property was bought by Truston Polk McColley, a hatter and popular Methodist clergyman and large landowner, who added the three story front section noted for its beautiful staircase.

S. CHURCH STREET



- ★ 6 MILFORD NEW CENTURY CLUB (Opened by appointment). The late Victorian building was erected in 1886 as a schoolhouse for the Classical Academy which was organized in 1883, and has not been altered since its construction. The Milford New Century Club, organized in 1898, began to hold its meetings in the building in 1899 when the school closed. In 1905 the Club bought the building and its contents from the Academy and, in 1913, purchased the land from the Tomlin family. Besides serving as the Club's meeting place, the building has been used for many social events and community functions.

Mr. Ruby Vale, a prominent attorney and benefactor who gave Milford the land and building for its present City hall, first moved to Milford as a teacher at the Classical Academy.

LAKEVIEW AVENUE

- ★ ★ 301 GRIER/ROGERS HOUSE (Privately owned). The house was built in 1890 and was remodeled between 1921 and



Milford Historical Society NEWSLETTER

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IN MEMORIAM Mary Catherine Downing Holcombe 1909 - 2005



M. Catherine Downing Hocombe in front of her beloved Parson Thorne Mansion circa early 1970s.

Mary Catherine Downing Holcombe, a charter Trustee and first President of the Milford Historical Society, passed away January 1, 2005. Mrs. Holcombe was a gracious lady, who guided the society and the preservation of the Parson Thorne Mansion for over forty-three years.

Mr. James Richard Draper made the offer to her for the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to restore the Parson Thorne Mansion. She felt it was too big a project for the DAR and asked if the donation would be made to a local historical society, if one would be established.

In December of 1961, the Milford Historical Society was incorporated with Mrs. Holcombe as one of the original three Trustees. She served as a Trustee, the first President, and editor of the newsletter. When she retired as an active Trustee, due to her health, the Board of Trustees made her Trustee Emeritus.

A committal service was held at the Parson Thorne Mansion on January 12, 2005, and her ashes were interred in the retaining wall of the east arcade. A small bronze marker with just her name on it is set into the bricks of the east arcade floor (see page 5). If you seek her monument, you must look around you, as the Parson Thorne Mansion is her monument.

CHRIST CHURCH PARISH CELEBRATES 300 YEARS

The year 2004 marked 300 years of existence for Christ Church Mispillion. It was the second parish in Delaware established by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Rev. Thomas Crawford, a missionary priest of the Church of England, first held services in lower Kent County in 1704. The original church was located at Church Hill about three miles west of Milford.

The Rev. Sydenham Thorne, the first resident rector, was instrumental in the relocation of the church to the new town of Milford. Construction was started in 1791, was interrupted by the death of Parson Thorne in 1793, and was not completed until 1835.



This sketch of the church was done by Frederick Polley in the 1930s as part of a series of historic churches in America. The original artwork, now in a local collection, is reproduced with kind permission of the owners.

Historic Markers Have Arrived

The State of Delaware sponsors a historic markers program. These bronze or blue and gold markers are seen peppered throughout the State. Due to its historic significance, Parson Thorne Mansion was in need of one. Members of the Trustees drafted text for such a marker and worked with Russ McCabe, historic markers program manager and now Director of the Delaware Public Archives, to have a bronze marker created to be placed at Silver Hill (Parson Thorne Mansion).

A dedication ceremony was held on July 31, 2005. Further, the blue and gold Milford marker that was next to the Citizens Bank building at the intersection of routes 14 and 113, was refurbished and relocated to the lawn of Parson Thorne Mansion. This is a fitting tribute to Parson Thorne who has been credited as being one of the founding members of Milford.

The Society is very appreciative of the efforts of Senator F. Gary Simpson for funding and sponsoring our new Parson Thorne Historic Marker.



The refurbished Milford State Historic Marker at its new location.

Additional photographs from the M. Catherine Downing Holcombe Memorial Service



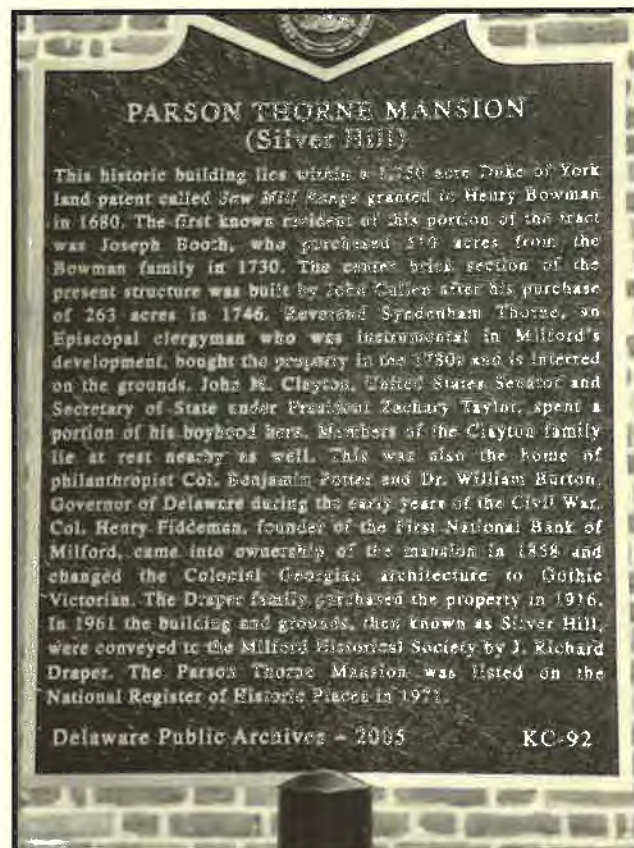
Site of the Catherine Downing Holcombe Memorial Service and the location of her remains.



Marker placed at Parson Thorne Mansion in memory of M. Catherine Downing Holcombe.



The new Parson Thorne Mansion State Historic Marker. From left to right: Director of the Delaware Public Archives, Russ McCabe; Representative V. George Carey; President Marvin Schelhouse; Secretary, Susan Emory; Trustee, F. Brooke Clendaniel; Treasurer, Ralph Prettyman; and Senator F. Gary Simpson.



Text details of the new Parson Thorne Mansion State Historic Marker.