

TOWNSEND YESTERDAY

BY

The Committee for
The Slide Presentation
TOWNSEND: YESTERDAY & TODAY

Sponsored By

The Corbit-Calloway Memorial
Library



The Prize-Winning Photo

A late 1880's view of the Quillen residence, formerly the Finley residence, and front room millinery shop of Mrs. Susan Finley Quillen, Main Street. Now the residence of Mrs. W. Milton Hart.¹



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an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

1979

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TOWNSEND: YESTERDAY & TODAY

A LOCAL HISTORY SLIDE PRESENTATION

Narrated by

HAROLD WATTS, JR. & MARY HOMAN

Monday and Tuesday, February 18th and 19th

at

7:30 P.M.

Sponsoring Organization: The Corbit-Calloway Memorial Library

Contributing Organizations: The Townsend Women's Club; The Odessa Women's Club; Winterthur Properties, Odessa; The Odessa Friends of the Library; Central Grange, St. Georges; Duck Creek Historical Society; Smyrna Friends of the Library; The Port Penn Museum; The Port Penn Civic Association; and Appoquinimink School District.

A WORD ABOUT TOWNSEND

Townsend, Delaware, known for its broad streets and comfortable homes, is the youngest of the three towns of the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend area. Indeed, before the 1850's the site was merely a cluster of cabins owned by blacks; it was named Charley Town after one of its more important residents.

Samuel Townsend, a man in his thirties, had begun buying land in the area, and by 1851 Levi W. Lattomus had established a store. Soon the railroad came through and a depot was constructed. When it came time to name the growing village, Samuel Townsend succeeded in having it named after himself, although his opponents favored Lancaster, which is said to have been the name for this tract.

By the late 1880's when Scharff was writing his history of the state, Townsend had been incorporated, a plot plan made, additional streets laid out, and the population had reached 350. By 1888, Emmanuel Methodist Church, which was organized in 1871 with 15 members, had 125 members. At Gray and Commerce Streets Appleton and Hart had a peach evaporating business, and during the six week season 800 baskets per day were shipped to New York and Philadelphia; there were 100 "operatives." In addition, fresh peaches and grain in large quantities were the staple exports of the town.

By 1908, when Henry Conrad was finishing his **History of the State of Delaware**, Townsend's population had reached 800. The rapid population growth had continued despite the ending of the peach prosperity after the 1880's. In addition to the Delaware Railroad which passed through town, the Queen Ann and Kent Railroad ended there. Townsend had become a bustling railroad center. Manufacturing was confined to a creamery and, in summer, a cannery. The Building and Loan Association, organized in the late 1880's, was a continuing success, and, according to Conrad, "Good schools, churches, fertile farming country...make it a promising town."

Since Conrad's day, Townsend has lost some population and the Maryland railroad connection, but it has adjusted itself to the late 20th century. Immanuel United Methodist Church with its impressive stained glass windows continues to be the architectural focus of the town. One may regret the passing of the movie theater which also served to bring people together, but television-watching has closed the movie theaters in many another town.

In 1908, Daniel B. Maloney, among others, was cited as a leading citizen. Into the 1970's, Miss Ethelwn Maloney, sprightly and perceptive, was an authority on Townsend. She would have enjoyed the present project: the sharing of memories and photographs of her town.



At left is Samuel Townsend (1812-1881) for whom the town was first named Townsend's Station in 1856; the name was shortened to Townsend in 1861. Mr. Townsend was a large land owner, store keeper, and builder of the first house in what was to be Townsend.²

At lower left: Samuel Townsend with his son, Samuel, jr.³

Below: The Townsend House build c1768 on Harmon's Mill Pond Road, where Jeanette Townsend Wilson remembers living as a young girl. The farm is now owned by Ruth Tindall.⁴

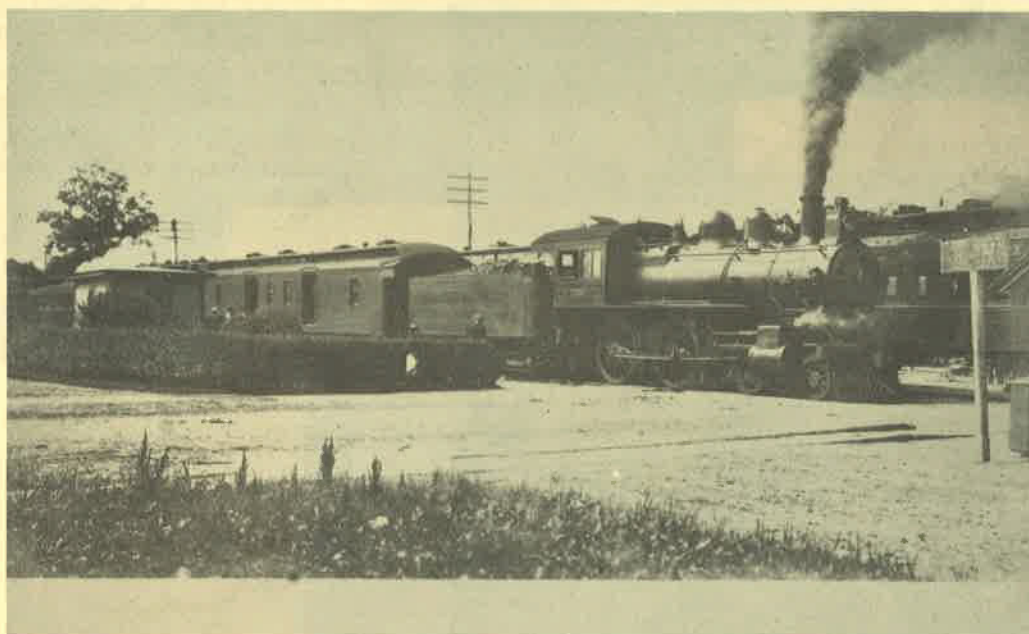




At left: The railroad green facing Commerce Street about 1912.⁵

Since Townsend was the last stop on the Maryland railroad, the conductor is said to have called: "Towns' end; all towns end here," encouraging the mispronunciation of the town's name.⁷

At right: Early 20th century view of depot, serving the Delaware Railroad and the Queen Anne and Kent Railroad.⁶

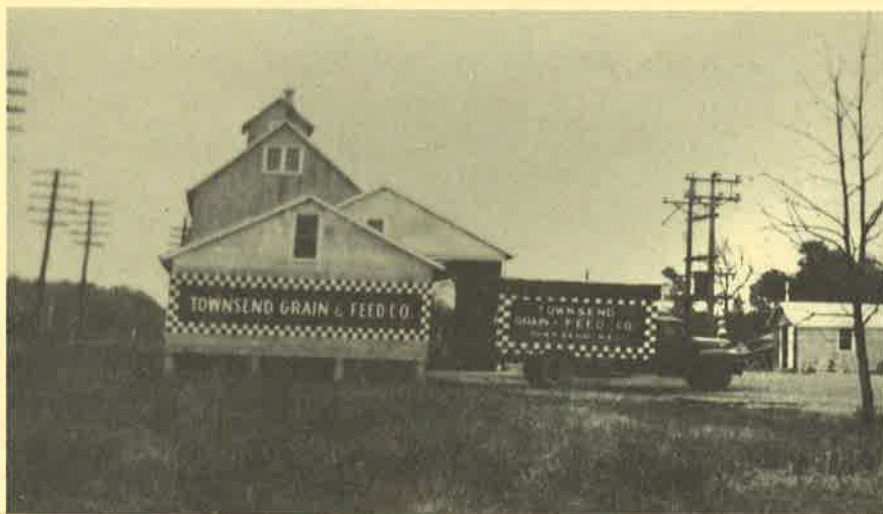




Above: A 1920's view of Barlow's Farm, located south of the town on Barlow's Bridge Road.⁸



At left: a view of the Wright Canning Company between 1910 and 1923. The tall man with a goatee is Steve James, weighmaster and bookkeeper.⁹



Below: The Townsend Grain and Feed Company in the 1940's. The Company, owned and operated by Elmer Case, dries wheat, corn, and soy beans, which it ships out on trucks.¹⁰

At right: Townsend's first school, "The Little Red School House," a one room building, facing "the main street in town." The school was built in the early 1860's; this photo was taken somewhat later. After Townsend's second school was constructed, this building was used as a harness room by James Dickinson.¹¹

Below: An 1890 graduating class of twenty-eight members from the tenth grade of the Townsend School.¹²



Below: Townsend's second school built in 1883 on North South Street. It first housed two classrooms, later three. It was used until it was destroyed by fire in 1915.¹³





At left: Townsend's third school house, built during the 1915-1916 school year. In 1932 it became Townsend's first fire house.¹⁴

At right: Townsend's school at The Levels. This photo was taken in 1923 of Mirlam Douglas and her first through sixth grade class. Mrs. Douglas taught in the Townsend schools for forty-four years before her retirement.¹⁵



Below: The present school, built in 1932, prior to 1949, when two classrooms and a cafeteria were added.¹⁶

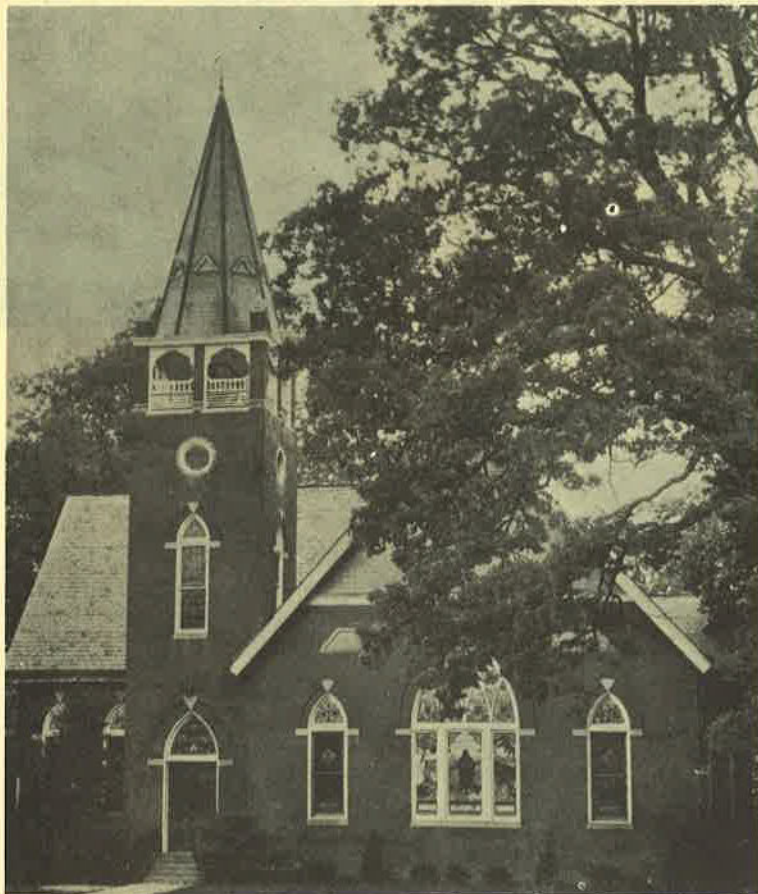




Above: Emmanuel Methodist Church, built in 1886 in the yard where Fellowship Hall stands today. This building also served as a school after fire destroyed the school in 1915.¹⁶



Above: Old Union Methodist Church near Blackbird, founded in 1789. At first a log structure known as Dickinson Chapel, it was replaced in 1847 by the brick structure shown here.¹⁷



At left: Immanuel United Methodist Church on Main Street, built in 1902-1903. The new wing was added in 1961.¹⁹



At left: Methodist Parsonage on Main Street c1914. Rev. Warren Burr designed and helped to build this structure.²⁰

At right: Scott United Methodist Church, Blackbird. This church was dedicated in September, 1899 and continues to hold services each Sunday. Rev. Gary Tulak of Odessa is the minister.²¹



At left: An early 20th century photo of the L.J. Dickinson Hotel, Townsend's second hotel. It was destroyed by fire before 1927. The first hotel, built by Abraham Ingram in 1856 is now the Hesseltine home next to Wilmington Trust.²²



At left: Early 20th century photo of Lattomus' grocery store on the corner of Main and Commerce Streets; now owned and operated by Albert Buckworth.²³



At left: c1920 photo of Harmon's drug store and ice cream parlor. Reuben Harmon and Leon Buckson are standing out front.²⁴



At left: Townsend Supply Company, first owned by Daniel B. Maloney, a hardware store and lumber yard as it appeared prior to its 1972 purchase by Louis C. Mandes, who has replaced this building with a new brick structure.²⁵

At right: Early 20th century photo of W. Harmon Reynolds' carriage and harness store on North Commerce Street. Now the Ralph G. Faries building.²⁶



At left: Maloney's grocery store at Main and Commerce c1905; now Bartsch's sub shop. Building next door was the second post office. Levi Lattomus became first postmaster in 1857. The first post office was a small building next door to Lattomus' house on Commerce Street.²⁷



At left: "Old Hart's" office. Photo was taken about 1905.²⁸



At left: Early 20th century view of Reynolds' variety store, Main Street.²⁹



At left: Interior of Reynolds' store taken c1920's. This picture provides a view of the town's third post office at the rear of the store.³⁰



At left: An 1890's view of Wiggins' Pond Dam. Later this site was known as Harmon's Pond.³¹



At left: Scene at Harmon's Mill Pond, September, 1934. Today the mill is gone and the pond is overgrown with tall grasses.³²

At right: An early 20th century view of stream leading into Harmon's Mill Pond.³³



Scene at Harman's Mill, Townsend, Del.



At left: An 1890's view of skaters on the mill pond.³⁴



At left: "Brookramble" on The Levels, built by James Crawford in 1805, was the 19th century home of Dr. James V. Crawford and the 20th century home of the George Ginn family. This house is now owned by David and Allison Matsen.³⁵



At left: The 19th century home of Thomas and Lucy Bratton on the corner of Main and South Streets. Photo taken c1890 shows Mrs. Bratton on the front porch. Present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hutchison.³⁶



At left: A turn-of-the century photo of the Burge house on South Street. Mrs. Burge is standing out front.³⁷



At left: A late 19th century photo of "the red house on the hill" on Railroad Avenue.³⁸



At left: Looking north on Commerce Street at turn-of-the-century toward general store at end of street. The Lattomus' house and grocery store, now Buckworth's, are the second and third buildings on the right.³⁹



At left: A similar view about 1930. Note Hart's general store, formerly Maloney's, at far left. The house at right c1901 was build on the site of the store that burned. The Lattomus' house, partly hidden by trees, is now the home of Agnes Mannering.⁴⁰



At left: South Commerce Street c1900.⁴¹



At left: Wyndfield Cottage, Main Street c1906.⁴²



At left: Main Street M.E. parsonage with view of John Guessford's barber shop, Townsend's barber for sixty-seven years. A building adjoining the barber shop housed Townsend's fourth post office before the present brick post office was constructed.⁴³



At left: Main Street c1895, looking west at the Gill House, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Farrow.⁴⁴



At left: c1905 view of Main Street. The house on the right is now the home of Mrs. Darwin Beardsley.⁴⁵



At left: Main Street looking east at the turn-of-the century, presently the homes of Mrs. Fenimore Douglas and Mrs. Elmer Pritchard.⁴⁶



At left: The home of George Hart, built in 1883; now the home of Florence Hart Taylor and Mr. Taylor. The homes of Leon Buckson and John Farrow are also visible.⁴⁷



At left: Turn-of-the century photo of Main Street homes, now Daniel Hutchison Funeral Home and the home of Horace Van Horn.⁴⁸



At left: A turn-of-the century view of West Main Street. The first house on the left was last owned by Norman Hutchison.⁴⁹

PICTURE SOURCES

- ¹Mr. and Mrs. Milton Hart
- ²Maryetta Carey
- ³Maryetta Carey
- ⁴Frances Townsend
- ⁵Esther Pratt
- ⁶Clara Reynolds
- ⁷Betty Hutchison
- ⁸Pete Rattledge
- ⁹Miss E.E. Wright,
Aberdeen, MD
- ¹⁰Elmer Case
- ¹¹Miriam Douglas
- ¹²Florence Hart Taylor
- ¹³Betty Hutchison
- ¹⁴Mabel Beardsley
- ¹⁵Miriam Douglas
- ¹⁶Pete Rattledge
- ¹⁷Miriam Douglas
- ¹⁸Maryetta Carey
- ¹⁹Miriam Douglas
- ²⁰Liston Watts
- ²¹Emily Mannering
- ²²Betty Hutchison
- ²³Madeline Farrow
- ²⁴Mabel Beardsley
- ²⁵Agnes Mannering
- ²⁶Miriam Douglas
- ²⁷Betty Hutchison
- ²⁸Betty Hutchison
- ²⁹Ann Warrington
- ³⁰Ann Warrington
- ³¹Betty Hutchison
- ³²Maryetta Carey
- ³³Clara Reynolds
- ³⁴Mabel Beardsley
- ³⁵Martin Insolo
- ³⁶Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hutchison
- ³⁷Ethel George
- ³⁸Betty Hutchison
- ³⁹Betty Hutchison
- ⁴⁰Agnes Mannering
- ⁴¹Betty Hutchison
- ⁴²Betty Hutchison
- ⁴³Betty Hutchison
- ⁴⁴Betty Hutchison
- ⁴⁵Florence Hart Taylor
- ⁴⁶Betty Hutchison
- ⁴⁷Betty Hutchison
- ⁴⁸Betty Hutchison
- ⁴⁹Betty Hutchison

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