

Histories of Newark 1758-2008

SEVENTY-FIVE STORIES ABOUT
NEWARK, DELAWARE,
AND ITS CITIZENS

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Wallflowers Press
Newark, Delaware

IN THE ERA OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1775-1783

by Wade P. Catts

Newark during the American Revolution was an “urban” place of very recent creation. Beginning in about 1752, the name Newark appeared in newspaper advertisements for land sales.¹ A charter to hold markets and semi-annual fairs had been granted to six residents of the village in 1758, less than twenty years before the war. The charter allowing



A Revolutionary War veteran's grave site in the Head of Christiana Cemetery. Courtesy Wallflowers Press.



Front and back of the King George II half shilling, 1758. Courtesy Wallflowers Press.

the fairs and market days was certainly a major commercial coup for the villagers, one that laid the foundation for Newark's businesses and likely served to attract people to the town to shop and to settle. Newark's placement at the intersection of major overland routes may have brought the village custom from travelers. The formal creation of the market and fair days likely led to Newark's designation as a destination of a well-known race track, called the Central Race Course. Located to the west of the town, the course attracted clientele from adjacent Maryland, southeastern Pennsylvania, and apparently “sporting men” from Virginia and New Jersey.² Until Richard and Thomas Penn, Proprietors of Pennsylvania, chartered the Newark Academy in 1769, the village's chief notoriety may have occurred in 1764 when Mason and Dixon and the members of their survey crew used the St. Patrick's Tavern (now the location of the Deer Park) as their headquarters while surveying the famous boundary.³

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Like other small inland communities in the region developed during the middle of the eighteenth century, Newark was a loose assemblage of houses, stores, a market house, an academy and taverns strung out generally along a single principle street, the main road from New Castle and Christiana Bridge to Nottingham in Pennsylvania, but also located at the intersection of that road and the main road leading from Dover and southern Delaware into southeastern Pennsylvania. From Newark, roads lead to New London, the Head of Elk, Nottingham, Christiana and Kennett Square. Revolutionary Newark was described by one contemporary observer as a “pleasantly built city of about sixty houses.”⁴ The village was a mixture of large properties holdings of 5 to 15 acres as well as smaller town lots.

At the time of the Revolution a traveler to Newark would have encountered a village composed mostly of wooden dwellings of log or frame construction along with a variety of wooden outbuildings. Only very wealthy and well-to-do merchants and millowners could afford to build in something more substantial such as brick or stone.⁵ Principle buildings in the village that would have met the traveler's eye were merchant-miller Alexander MacBeath's house (today's Elliot Hall), reputedly constructed circa 1775; the Newark Academy Building, a stone structure completed in 1776; and the Market House adjacent to the Academy.⁶ Next to the Academy Building was a small lot with an “English School” sold by John and Agnes McClean to the school's trustees in 1773.⁷

Travelers' needs for food and drink were met at taverns such as St. Patrick's Inn, a log building at the west end of town and the Three Harts Tavern nearly opposite MacBeath's brick house.⁸ St. Patrick's Inn was a well-known

1724.) During the 26-year ministry of the second pastor, Rev. Charles Tennent, George Whitfield, famous orator and revivalist from England, spoke several times in 1739 and 1740 to groups said in contemporary reports to number in the thousands. The original church was log, built about a mile north of the present site and occupied until it was outgrown in the 1730s. The third was erected on the current site in 1752 and occupied until 1855 when the present building was completed. The stone wall around a portion of the church property was built in 1785. Numerous additions and improvements have been added to the 1855 structure, with an elevator and chimes steeple added in 1997.

HEAD OF CHRISTIANA PRESBYTERIAN

1100 Church Road

As early as 1706, Scotch, Irish, Welsh and Huguenot immigrants in western Pencader Hundred, who previously had worshipped in New Castle, built a log meetinghouse on part of the present site of Head of Christiana Cemetery. Until 1713 services were conducted semi-monthly by Rev. John Wilson, pastor at New Castle. The building later became known as Gillespie's Meetinghouse, after Rev. George Gillespie, the first full-time pastor, who served from 1713 until his death in 1760. Funds for construction of the second building in 1750 came from the sale of 100 acres of land donated for the purpose by Rev. Gillespie. Rev. Gillespie, pastor at Head of Christiana for forty-seven years, was a native of Glasgow, Scotland, and educated at the University there. His father, also a minister, was a member of the Westminster Assembly, which wrote the original standards for developing the Presbyterian Church. After the destruction of the second building by fire in 1858, the current church was erected and dedicated March 9, 1859. Political division caused by the Civil War reached into Head of Christiana. At least once the pastor, Rev. James L. Vallandigham, from a Democratic family, was questioned by Federal authorities as to his support of the Union cause. A severe doctrinal schism over modernism and fundamentalism during the 1920s and 1930s devastated Head of Christiana, as it did numerous other Presbyterian churches. Pastor Rev. Henry Welbon and three-quarters of the congregation left to form the new Bible Presbyterian Church of Newark, now Evangelical Presbyterian Church. After much struggle, Head of Christiana is again a viable and growing congregation.

Head of Christiana was the first of three early Presbyterian churches established in the Newark area between 1706 and 1730. Courtesy University of Delaware Library.



WELSH TRACT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Welsh Tract Road

In *Newark Past and Present* the authors state Welsh Tract is the third Baptist church built in America, although a plaque on the building itself says "oldest in United States." However, it is generally agreed that a congregation made up of mostly Welsh Baptists immigrated in 1701, lived for a year in Pennsylvania, then moved en masse to the Iron Hill area of Newark where they had received a 30,000 acre grant of land from William Penn. The grant came to be generally known as the Welsh Tract. A log church built in 1703 was replaced by the present church in 1746. Church records were written in Welsh until 1732. The name Welsh Tract is kept alive today by the church name and Welsh Tract Road on which it stands.

The oldest grave in the cemetery is that of Reese Ryddarcks who died in 1707 at age 87. Tradition says he had been an officer in Oliver Cromwell's army during the Reformation in England and he, with his wife, was in the second group of immigrants from Wales to America, c. 1702. In 1736 some of the Welsh...

Welsh and Scots-Irish immigrants brought a Baptist congregation to Newark in 1703. The present building was erected in 1746. Courtesy University of Delaware Library.



LITTLE KNOWN HISTORY
OF
NEWARK, DELAWARE
AND ITS ENVIRONS

BY
FRANCIS A. COOCH
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
GEORGE H. RYDEN



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In 1804 and for nearly ninety years thereafter, Newark was a straggling village, its one main street and few short spurs deep with dust in summer and mud in winter. Nearly every property was fenced all around. Although for years previously the veracious catalogue of Delaware College averred that the town had a population of about two thousand persons, the United States Census of 1900 showed but twelve hundred and thirteen and that of 1910, nineteen hundred and thirteen. There could not have been more than six hundred or eight hundred souls in the town when the Curtis brothers came here in 1848.

Although Newark was incorporated in 1758 by charter of His Gracious Majesty, George II of England ("snuffy old drone from the German hive"), there was no religious edifice in Newark until 1812, when through the gift of Isaac Tyson, who then owned the mill property now occupied by the National Vulcanized Fibre Co., the Methodists acquired the land now comprising the Newark Cemetery, on which they built a church where they worshipped until 1851. The congregation of the Village Presbyterian Church, "New School," which was organized in 1835 with sixteen members, acquired in 1843 the property where St. John's Roman Catholic Church now stands and built a house of worship thereon. In the same year the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, "Old School," which had been organized in 1839 with nine members, built a house of worship back of where Faders' Bakery now stands. The two congregations were united in 1860.

The year 1843 was truly a year for building church edifices in Newark, for the congregation of the St. Thomas Protestant Episcopal Parish erected their church in the same year. Not until 1866 was there a house of worship in the town for either the Catholics or the colored folks; the former worshipping either in Elkton or in private homes, and the colored people with the white folks. Prior to the early forties, Presbyterians worshipped either at Head of Christiana or at White Clay Creek and Episcopalians at St. James, near Stanton.

Although Newark Academy was established here in 1767 and for years fulfilled a useful mission, drawing to its halls

many youths who in later years became famous in State and Nation, its accommodations and its scope were perforce limited. When Newark College was opened in 1834, the Academy was merged with it but for years the attendance of the collegiate and academic departments was pitifully small and of course in those early days the institution was open only to men students. The first meetings of the congregation of the Village Presbyterian Church were held in the school room of the Rev. Samuel Bell, who conducted a young ladies seminary at Linden Hall. In 1845 Rev. Elijah Wilson, then the pastor at Head of Christiana, took charge of this school. There was another school about a mile north of Strickersville, Pennsylvania.

By virtue of an Act of the General Assembly of 1829 creating the Free School system, there were established two School Districts in Newark. Those children living on the north side of Main Street attended the school building of which the residence of Dr. P. K. Musselman is a part, and those on the south side, in the little brick building in the rear of Walter Powell's restaurant. In 1884 the Districts were consolidated and the building next to the Newark Trust Company was erected. There was no school for colored children until after the Civil War.

There was no dearth of places of refreshment, however. Besides the Deer Park Hotel, built near the old St. Patrick's Inn, and the Washington House, I can recall the Delaware House that in my early childhood occupied the S. E. corner of Main Street and S. College Avenue and I have read and been told of the Newark Hotel that stood where Center Hall now stands, of Parkinson's nearby and others. Then there was "Rackin Jimmy" Armstrong, who kept a "wet end grocery" and liked to sell whiskey because, as he said, it was "all cash and no remnants." Many of us can recall the like institution that flourished in the center of the town until, under the local option law, rural New Castle County voted dry. In those early days an unenlightened citizenry had not dreamed of the large returns to be realized by the establishment of a monopoly of the business of demoralization and taxing it under a high license law.

Todd's. Dr. Whistler lived in the house later occupied by Dr. Charles M. Allmond, still later by Dr. Walter Steel, opposite the Watson Evans house, now called Purnell Hall, and East of this stood the combined stove store, tinsmith's shop, and dwelling of Nathan Ziegler, which later was occupied by Charles E. Lowber, the undertaker, who was followed by Robert T. Jones.

The dwelling, which Dr. Steel built on the site of the Whistler house, was moved to the South side of Delaware Avenue and is now the first dwelling East of Wolf Hall.

In the Watson Evans house, built by Dr. Joseph Chamberlain, lived the "Evans girls," Sue, Em, and Agnes, with their niece, Nathalie Turner, one of the sweetest dispositioned young women I have ever known, despite the physical infirmity that shortened her life. I think Mrs. Evans, a widow, was living then.

Attached to this building on the East, was the office of Dr. Vandeventer, the dentist.

Beyond this, very much as now, but for the wall and fence, long gone, is what was the Caulk property, now called the Elliott building, though it might well be called the Alexander Macbeth property, after one of the early fathers of the town. It is nearly, if not altogether, the oldest dwelling in Newark. In 1880, this dwelling was occupied by Fanny Caulk, who later married John L. Elliott, and Bennie Caulk, her eccentric brother, short, stocky, swarthy, and black-bearded, who it was said boasted six toes on each foot, knew his Bible well, was an ardent Presbyterian, and a valiant trencherman. It is told, that Ben, being given a ticket to a supper at Head of Christiana Church, ate so long that Dr. Gilfillan offered him a dollar to quit. I am sorry to say, that, in denying this, Ben used very much the same language that has been ascribed to Saint Peter in the hall of the high priest's palace.

Below Nathan Ziegler's was a very old, stuccoed, double front house, and below this lived the Colmery family in another very old house with a store attached. It was a store for children, where they sold stick candy from jars, such as I doubt if can be found today. George W. Colmery and his

But we must not forget the Presbyterians, least of all in this house of worship.

Beginning, as I have said before, with the founding of a Calvinistic Church by the Dutch in New Castle in 1657, the Presbyterians began their first organization in 1684 or 1685 at which time, according to Dr. Vallandigham, the Dutch Church was merged with it.

Prior to 1700, there appears to be no record of a pastoral ministration at New Castle, as it was not until the date just named that Rev. John Wilson of Scotland, took the charge. What sterling folk these Presbyterians must have been, far from home influences, well nigh forgotten, and without a pastor, to have maintained their organization on this fringe of the wilderness for a period of from fifteen to sixteen years.

About this time, due to civil and religious persecutions and for economic reasons as well and fostered by William Penn, colonists from Scotland and the North of Ireland began coming to Delaware, and Pennsylvania in great numbers.

In 1705 or 1706 the Presbytery of Philadelphia was organized with seven members.

In 1716, this Presbytery was divided into four Presbyteries and to the Presbytery of New Castle was assigned the supervision of all the churches of Delaware.

This Presbytery was organized in New Castle, March 13, 1717, and at its organization were present, representatives from New Castle, Head of Christiana, organized 1703 to 1708, Appoquinimy (Drawyers) organized in 1708, and Welsh Tract, (Pencader) 1701 to 1710.

Throughout the Eighteenth Century, the organization of other Presbyterian churches in this County followed in rapid succession. Lower Brandywine was organized in 1720; White Clay Creek, probably in 1720; Red Clay Creek, in 1722; the Presbyterian Church at Christiana Bridge, between 1730 and 1738; the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington about 1737; the Forest Presbyterian Church in 1742; Saint Georges in 1742; and Hanover Street in 1772.

I realize that some of these dates probably will be questioned, but I have used the best information available to me and crave the indulgence of any members of other Presbyterian churches who may be present, for any unintentional errors, into which I may have been led.

During all this period, the Presbyterians, like other denominations suffered many vicissitudes, both temporal and spiritual, not the least of which was the great schism following the preaching of the Evangelist Whitefield, in the third decade of the Eighteenth Century. In spite of all these trials, the organization was preserved, a re-union effected in 1759 and the church militant again became the church triumphant.

It must not be supposed that these pioneers, Swedes, Dutch, or British were altogether rude, unlettered people nor even that their culture was of a spiritual nature only.

In a publication, *The History of Education of Delaware* by Prof. Lyman P. Powell (1893) he says, "But the early settlers of Delaware, from the first, made praiseworthy attempts to instruct their children in the rudiments of common learning and Christian theology. They did so because they came from Sweden and Holland, at that time the farthest advanced in general education of all the countries of Europe."

Rev. William D. Mackey in his *History of White Clay Creek Presbyterian Church* (1876) says, "Our ecclesiastical ancestors were intelligent. I do not find in the old documents belonging to this Church that any of them had to make their 'mark' in signing their names," and "The Church of Scotland early adopted measures for the promotion of general education."

Dr. William T. Skinner, in a *History of Pencader Presbyterian Church* (1899) says of Rev. Thomas Evans, second pastor of this Church (1719-1723), "He had an Academy at Pencader, which was the first Presbyterian School in the Country, antedating by several years the 'Log College' and the Synod Academy, which was started in 1743 by Francis Alison, and moved to Newark, Delaware, in 1767." He recalls the fact that Rev. Samuel Davies, President of Princeton

*Hon Anthony Higgins
Compliments of Geo. G. Kerr*

A Historical Discourse

Delivered July 2d, 1876,

AT

Head of Christiana Church,

NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DEL.,

BY

The Rev. JAMES L. VALLANDIGHAM, D.D.,

PASTOR.

SECOND EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA:
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1898.

A HISTORICAL DISCOURSE.

Psalm lxxvii: 5, "I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times."

We have convened together to-day under peculiarly interesting circumstances. It is the close of the first century of our existence as a nation. In looking back over the past, we have abundant reason for heart-felt gratitude to God, for His great goodness to us during the hundred years that are gone. But it is not to consider "the days of old, the years of ancient times," as a *nation*, but as a *church*, that we meet here to-day. We wish to trace the history of this church—sometimes on the minutes of the Presbytery called "Christiana Creek," and sometimes "Head of Christiana Creek"—from its organization down to the present time. And not only is the *time* interesting, but also the *place*. We here stand on hallowed ground. For one hundred and sixty-eight years, this place has been occupied as a place of worship to the Most High. Here His praises have been sung, His Word has been read and preached, and the incense of prayer has ascended to His throne of heavenly grace. Here, too, is the resting-place of the dead, where lie the remains of thousands of those who once worshipped here—their bodies awaiting the resurrection, their spirits before the throne. We cannot now, however, indulge the solemn reflections that naturally occur to the mind in such a place, and at such a time as this: we must proceed to present the facts of history.

It has been customary, in writing the history of a church, to give some account of the early settlement of the State, or of the County in which the church is located; as, however, this congregation has from the beginning been composed of citizens of the three States, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland, even a meagre sketch of this kind would consume more of our time than we can spare. It is sufficient to say that the early settlers of this region were principally Scotch-Irish, Welsh and Huguenots.

From documents that now lie before me, I learn that on the 5th day of March, 1732, this ground—or at least two

acres and four perches of it—was leased by James Steel to the elders of this church, whose names are given, viz.: Samuel Johnson and John Cross, of New Castle County, Delaware; Alexander White and William Semple, of Chester County, Pennsylvania; and David Alexander and Andrew Wallace, of Cecil County, Maryland. The consideration was the annual payment of sixpence, if demanded.

It seems that prior to this time, probably as early as 1708, there was a house of worship here. Reference is made to it in this lease, and mention also is made of the intention of the congregation to erect a *new* house of worship. On the 20th of September, 1806, another lease was made of one acre, two rods, and nine perches, by Allen Steel and Ruth, his wife, and James Steel and Ann, his wife, to William Price of Chester County, Pennsylvania; George Gillespie, Obadiah Sergeant, John Macbeth and William Anderson, of New Castle County, Delaware; and John R. Evans, of Cecil County, Maryland, Trustees of this church. The lease was for nine hundred and ninety-nine years; the consideration, six cents annually, if demanded. This comprises all the ground belonging to this church, with the exception of two small parcels recently purchased from Thomas Steel, the one designed for the erection of sheds, and the other for the enlargement of the Cemetery. An impression has prevailed in the congregation that the ground on which this church is built was given by the Rev. George Gillespie. This impression is erroneous. From records in the Recorder's office at New Castle, we learn the following facts: Mr. Gillespie, by deed of gift, dated July 26th, 1733, conveyed one hundred acres of land to the elders of this church, Andrew Wallace, Thomas Weer, John Rankin, Nathaniel Brien, William Wallace, Joseph Wallace, Moses Scott, and John Steel. On the 15th day of November, 1749, the elders made a deed of release of the same land to Mr. Gillespie, on "this condition, that he would release it back again for the pious use to help build a brick meeting-house." Mr. Gillespie "did release back to the abovesaid particularly-named elders the above said tract or parcel of land, that they might sell the land, and take the money paid for it to help them to build a brick meeting-house near or close by Mr. Gillespie's old meeting-house." The elders, by deed dated May 15th, 1750, conveyed this land to George Gillespie, farmer, son of the minister, for fifty pounds. We suggest the following explanation of this rather singular transaction. In 1749, the

elders wished to erect a new house of worship. They had but little money—not enough for the purpose, nor could they readily, if at all, secure the requisite amount; but they had the hundred acres of land given by Mr. Gillespie. By the conditions of the deed, however, they had no authority to sell it. To obviate this difficulty, they reconveyed it to Mr. Gillespie, and received from him another deed granting them the requisite power. Then they sold the land, and applied the money to the erection of the new meeting-house.

The first meeting-house for the use of this congregation was, probably, built in 1708. It was a log building, and stood in that part of the graveyard where the remains of the first pastor now repose. The second building, which was of brick, and which most of you no doubt well recollect, was erected in 1750. On Sabbath, the 14th day of March, 1858, it was consumed by fire. The congregation assembled that morning to find their ancient and beloved sanctuary in flames. They immediately convened in the session-house, and after a brief religious service, resolved to call a congregational meeting on the Thursday following. The meeting was held, and arrangements were made at once to rebuild. As the result, this commodious and comfortable edifice was erected. While it was being built, the people usually attended public worship in neighboring churches, though occasionally they had service in school-houses, or in private dwellings within the bounds of the congregation. On Sabbath, the 29th of August, the house was so far completed that the basement could be occupied for public worship, and on that morning it was thus used. The pastor preached on Psalm cxxii: 1, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." The room was crowded, and the beaming countenances of the people, and the cordial manner in which they engaged in the service, showed very clearly that they fully entered into the spirit of the text. They were indeed glad, after having been separated as a worshipping assembly for nearly six months, again to meet together at the place of their fathers' sepulchres—the place where they, and their ancestors for generations before them, had been accustomed to worship. Early in the spring, the whole edifice was completed, and on the 9th day of March, 1859, was dedicated. The dedicatory sermon was preached by the Rev. Robert P. DuBois; his text was Genesis xxviii: 16, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." And since that time we have been privileged again

and again to exclaim: "Surely the Lord is in this place!" We have felt His presence; we have seen the evidence of it, in the reviving of the hearts of God's people, and in the conviction and conversion of many sinners.

The first reference, on the minutes of the Presbytery, to this congregation, now known as "Head of Christiana," we find among the proceedings of the Presbytery of Philadelphia (at that time the only Presbytery in this country), at a meeting held in Philadelphia, on the 18th day of May, 1708. It is in these words: "This day was read before the Presbytery a letter sent by the people of and about White Clay Creek in New Castle County, importing their desire and petition to the Presbytery, to have the ordinances of the Gospel administered with more convenience and nearness to the place of their abode, for the greater advantage and ease to their several families, promising, withal, due encouragement to the minister that shall be appointed thus to supply them." By "the people of and about White Clay Creek," we understand the people of White Clay Creek Hundred, and the people living in parts of Cecil County, Maryland, and Chester County, Pennsylvania, adjacent thereto, who were accustomed at that time, as at the present, to worship together. I do not believe that the reference is to the ancient and venerable organization in Millcreek Hundred, now known as "White Clay Creek Church." Far be it from me to "pluck a single one" of the laurels that adorn the brow of that noble church, of which, for nearly twenty-two years, I was pastor, and which I still love with a warm affection, but historical researches and discoveries constrain me to the belief that at the locality, or in the neighborhood where White Clay Creek Church now stands, there was neither church edifice nor church organization till about 1721. This application of "the people of and about White Clay Creek" was opposed by the people of New Castle, on the ground that it would weaken their church, and the Presbytery refused to allow them to establish a separate organization, but directed the Rev. John Wilson, then pastor of New Castle Church, to give them one-half of his time; and it is probable that Mr. Wilson did preach here, on every alternate Sunday, till his death in 1712. Mr. Wilson, it is believed, was a native of Scotland, and was among the first Presbyterian ministers that settled in this country.

The first pastor of this church was the Rev. George Gillespie. He was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1683, and

educated in the University of that city. He was a descendant of the Rev. George Gillespie, who was a prominent member of the Westminster assembly—that august body of divines by whom the standards of our Church were framed. On the 6th day of June, 1711, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Glasgow, and in the spring of 1712 came to this country. For a short time he labored in Woodbridge, New Jersey, and an effort was made to have him settled there, but owing to strife and contention among the people, the effort failed. In the winter or spring of 1713, he received a call from this church, and having signified his acceptance, on the 27th of May, he preached his trial sermon for ordination on Galatians iv: 4, 5, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." On the same day, he delivered an *exegesis* on "*An Christus pro omnibus et singulis sit mortuus,*" and was examined on the languages, the sciences and theology; all which exercises proving satisfactory, he was, the next day, ordained and installed pastor of this church. And this is the only church of which he was ever pastor. Here he labored diligently, faithfully and successfully till his death, January 2d, 1760. The people and the children of the people among whom he had so long labored, in deep sorrow over their bereavement, carried him to his grave, and on the monument they erected to his memory, inscribed this noble testimonial to his character:

"Sacred to the memory of
THE REV'D MR. GEORGE GILLESPIE:
Who was a sound Divine,
An useful, practical Preacher,
Eminent for Piety,
Zeal for the Honor of Christ's House,
And every social virtue:
A tender Husband, an indulgent Parent,
A good Master, a warm Friend,
Courteous, hospitable, never discontented
With an income narrow and very uncertain.
He spent much time in Prayer and Meditation,
And longed to leave this world and be with Christ."

To this brief but comprehensive estimate of his character and tribute to his worth, given by those who knew him, it might seem unnecessary to add a single word; but as Mr. Gillespie was for a long time a leading member of the Presbytery, and for forty-seven years pastor of this church, it may be proper to notice some of the prominent characteristics of

the man, and some of the leading events of his long and useful career. Mr. Gillespie was a man of firm and decided character—an advocate of sound doctrine, strict government, and rigid discipline. Especially was he an advocate of rigid discipline in cases of gross immorality, and on three different occasions he entered his protest, when penalties were meted out to offenders utterly incommensurate, in his judgment, with the gravity of their offences. So much dissatisfied was he at one time with a decision of the Synod, in a case of discipline, that he threatened to publish some strictures on its action, and was restrained only by the peremptory injunction of his Presbytery. Yet he was not a contentious man, but, on the contrary, at a time of great strife and confusion in the Church, he was one of those who earnestly sought the peace as well as the purity of Zion. In the division that occurred in 1741, the causes and attending circumstances and exciting events of which we have not time now to notice, though dissatisfied with both parties to the quarrel, he for a while identified himself with the New Side. This, however, was not owing to any laxity in his views as to either doctrine, government or discipline. On all these points he was thoroughly orthodox. His connection with the New Side was brief. In February, 1744, as we learn from the Philadelphia papers of that period, he appeared before New Castle Presbytery, “convened at the New London tract, and then and there, in the presence of the said Presbytery, and of a very numerous congregation, confessed his error and sin in leaving them, and solemnly declared he was sorry he had ever joined the New Party: that he had acted rashly and divisively, and was led to it by the appearance of piety in some, and by not duly considering and comparing the protestation and the apology of the New Brunswick Presbytery. He thought that the things laid to the charge of said Presbytery, and used as a ground of casting them out, had not been tabled against them, nor they called to an account and tried before their exclusion. Whereas, upon a fair and impartial review of the affair, he found there was a sufficient ground to cast them out in 1739, when they gave in their apology, because in it they argued for the subversion of the Presbyterian plan of government, and paved the way for all the anarchy and confusion that has followed since.” This explanation was considered perfectly satisfactory and he was cordially received again into the Presbytery.

It is evident, from this explanation, that Mr. Gillespie

was not actuated by unworthy motives in the attitude which, for a time, he assumed: the appearance of piety—of more than ordinary piety—in some of the excluded brethren, and his impression that they had been dealt with harshly, and unjustly, and in violation of the rules of the Church—these were the motives by which he was influenced, and as soon as he discovered his error, he appeared before the Presbytery, and frankly and humbly acknowledged it.

In the spring of 1754, he was unable to attend the meeting of the Synod, but wrote a long and interesting letter addressed to the Moderator and members. It is dated, “At Head of Christiana Creek, May 15th, 1754.” In this letter he deeply deplores the “woful divisions which are among ministers and people,” and expresses the hope that the Synod may devise some means of healing these divisions. He notices some of the conditions of a plan of union that had been proposed, and states his objections. He was not willing to be required to acknowledge that the “Great Revival,” as it was called, was a “glorious work of God.” Not that he was opposed to revivals, but the spirit exhibited by the “chief instruments in that work,” the “delusions and errors” into which they fell, the divisions of Presbyteries and churches which ensued—these constrained him to look upon those times, not as “glorious days and times,” but as “days or times of the Lord’s controversy” with His people on account of their sins. Still, notwithstanding the irregularities and other evils of which he complains, he says, “I think that God, in the midst of His anger, hath remembered mercy, and hath converted some souls.” He expresses an earnest desire “that both sides would bury in oblivion all the faults” of each other, and “unite together again in the doctrine, discipline and government of Christ’s house;” and thus devoutly closes his letter: “That the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole King and Head of the Church, the great Master of Assemblies, may be with you in all your consultations and determinations, direct and aid you by His Holy Spirit in every thing that cometh before you, to act for your spiritual comfort, the good of souls, the true peace of His Church, and God’s glory, is the earnest and sincere desire of your affectionate servant and brother in the work of the Lord.” We give these brief extracts from the letter, because they exhibit the true spirit of the man—his zeal for sound doctrine and the order of God’s house, his love of peace, and yet his readiness, if need be, to contend earnestly for the faith once

delivered to the saints, and his earnest desire to compose the differences which, at that time, so much interrupted the harmony and interfered with the prosperity of the churches. It was, no doubt, owing to his firm but conciliatory and prudent course, that this church remained harmonious and united, while most of the churches of the Presbytery were vexed with internal dissensions, and some of them, ultimately, divided.

Mr. Gillespie endeavored to advance the cause of religion by the press, as well as from the pulpit. In 1735, he published a "Treatise against the Deists, or Freethinkers, shewing the necessity of revealed religion:" and in 1744, "Remarks upon Mr. Whitefield, proving him a man under delusion."

When Mr. Gillespie first came to this region of country, he purchased a large tract of land, in the immediate vicinity of this church, and erected a house, where for the remainder of his life, he resided. His descendants are numerous, many of them esteemed and useful members of this, and of neighboring churches.

Mr. Gillespie was one of the original members of New Castle Presbytery, which was organized March 13, 1717. The Elder that represented this Church on that occasion was John Steel, the ancestor of the family of that name residing in this vicinity, two of whom are now Elders of this church, and several others active and efficient members.

For some years after the death of Mr. Gillespie the church remained vacant, and was dependent on the Presbytery for supplies.

The second pastor was the Rev. John McCrery. The time and place of his birth I have not been able to ascertain. He was a graduate of Princeton College, and was taken under the care of the Presbytery, January 9th, 1766. A subject was assigned him for *exegesis*,—"Num perseverantia sanctorum ad eternam salutem sit certum"—and he was directed to prepare a sermon on Hebrews ii: 9, last clause. At a subsequent meeting, his *exegesis* was read and his sermon delivered and sustained as parts of trial for licensure. After preaching two other sermons, and delivering a lecture on subjects assigned him, and examinations on the arts, sciences, and languages, at two different meetings of the Presbytery, on the 31st of July, 1766, at Boyd's Meeting-house, now called Upper Octorara, he was licensed by the Presbytery of New Castle, to preach the Gospel. For several years he remained a licentiate, preaching sometimes without, but generally within, the bounds of New

Castle Presbytery. In the meantime he received a number of calls from vacant churches. At a meeting of the Presbytery in this church, April 22d, 1767, we find the following record: "The calls from White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana congregations, were prepared according to appointment, and brought into Presbytery, and by the Presbytery given to Mr. McCrery for his consideration, in order to his giving an answer as soon as he can conveniently." These calls he retained in his hands till April, 1768, and then by letter to the Presbytery, declined them, and returned them to the people. They immediately made out calls for Mr. William Foster, which, after brief consideration, he declined. In October, 1768, the people of White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana renewed their calls to Mr. McCrery, and he accepted them, and in accordance with arrangements previously made, on the 9th day of May, 1769, the Presbytery met in this place. Mr. McCrery preached the opening sermon—his trial sermon for ordination—on John xiv: 6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"—which was sustained. The next day he was examined on the several branches usually required, and his examination proving satisfactory, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, and installed pastor of the united congregations of White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana. The sermon on that occasion was preached by the Rev. James Finley, on Acts xx: 28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood." The Rev. Alexander McDowell presided, and gave the charge to pastor and people. The Elder that represented the charge at that meeting was John Rankin, the ancestor of the family of that name now worshipping at White Clay Creek, though at that time connected with this church and congregation. Mr. McCrery was pastor of White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana churches for thirty-one years. He resided in the vicinity of this church, in a house now owned and occupied by Mr. George Casho. But although he was so long settled here, I have been able to gather very few facts and incidents of his life and ministry. No mention of him is made as far as I can ascertain, by any of our ecclesiastical historians. Yet he was undoubtedly a pious and prudent man, and an able and successful minister. Presumptive evidence of this is the fact that he received many calls from other congregations, and

that for more than thirty years, he was able to sustain himself as pastor of this and White Clay Creek Church, one of the most important charges in the Presbytery.

In the life of the Rev. Archibald Alexander, D. D., it is stated that in 1791 Mr. McCrery was nominated as a candidate for Moderator of the General Assembly; and Dr. Alexander says that he was represented to him as "a godly and evangelical man." He died June 18th, 1800, and was buried in the grave-yard of this church. On the slab that marks his last resting-place is the following estimate of his character, inscribed by those who had long known him:

"Amiable in temper and deportment:
Vigorous in intellect;
Considerable in literary attainments:
A proficient in the school of Christ;
A profound divine:
A pathetic preacher,
A watchful, tender pastor,
Praying and laboring to the last,
That others might know the grace
Of a precious Christ."

He left two sons and three daughters. His eldest son removed to the South, and became a prominent man in commercial and political life. For a time he was an avowed infidel, but was converted through the instrumentality of a pious wife, and became an active, devoted, and useful member and Elder in the church.

As an interesting incident of the present occasion, I may be permitted to refer to the fact that although one hundred and six years have elapsed since Mr. McCrery was settled here as pastor, there still remains a link to bind us to his pastorate: one of those whom he baptized still survives and is an honored member of this church—Mr. Andrew Kerr—who, in the 83d year of his age, in reasonable bodily health, and with the faculties of his mind unimpaired, is present with us to-day.

Mr. McCrery was pastor here during the whole of the Revolutionary struggle. He and his people were warm friends and advocates of Independence. Some of them served in the army during the whole of the war, others fell on the field of battle—sacrificed their lives to purchase for us the precious inheritance of freedom and independence.

It is to us this day a matter of honest pride—a source of sincere gratification, that in looking back over the history of those times, we find that our Presbyterian ancestors were, with

scarcely an exception, the friends of freedom—that they contributed so liberally and fought so bravely, and suffered so patiently, and sacrificed so cheerfully, in order to secure the inestimable civil and religious privileges and blessings that we now enjoy.

After the decease of Mr. McCrery the church was vacant some eleven or twelve years. Ministers of the gospel were comparatively few in those days, and it was often a very difficult matter to secure a pastor. At every meeting of the Presbytery, however, application was made for supplies. These, as far as practicable, were furnished. They were generally settled pastors, who were obliged, every year, by appointment of Presbytery, to leave their own churches for a number of Sabbaths in order to supply vacancies. Sometimes vacant churches were supplied for several months or a year by a minister engaged in teaching, or by a licentiate who had not yet accepted a call. The stated supply system, however, was not popular in those days, the churches wisely preferring settled pastors. During the vacancy here referred to, this church was for a time supplied by the Rev. John Waugh, who was then Principal of Newark Academy.. Mr. Waugh died December 15th, 1806, and was buried in the grave-yard of this church.

It may not be out of place here to state that near the grave of Mr. Waugh lie the remains of two other Presbyterian ministers—the Rev. Charles Wallace, and the Rev. Pierce Chamberlain. Mr. Wallace was an Irishman, and for complicity in the Rebellion of 1798 against the British government, was tried and convicted, and was about to be executed, when, through the earnest intercession of a young lady, he was released, and immediately came to this country. He labored for some time on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Mr. Chamberlain was pastor for a number of years of a church in Erie, Pennsylvania, and afterward Principal of a Female Seminary in Newark. He was the father of the Rev. George W. Chamberlain, now a missionary of our Board in Brazil, rendering efficient and valuable service in that exceedingly interesting and promising missionary field.

The third pastor was the Rev. Andrew K. Russell. He was born near Warrior Run, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, in 1780, and graduated at Dickinson College in 1806, with the highest honors of his class. For a time he was Professor of Languages in Washington College, Pennsylvania,

then under the Presidency of the Rev. Dr. Matthew Brown. In the fall of 1811, he removed to Newark and took charge of the Academy, at the same time preaching in the churches of Head of Christiana and White Clay Creek. Having received and accepted calls from these churches, at a meeting of the Presbytery held here, April 8th, 1812, he was ordained and installed their pastor. On that occasion, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Read presided, the Rev. John E. Latta preached the sermon, and the Rev. Samuel Martin, D. D., gave the charges to pastor and people. For twenty-seven years, till removed by death, he continued pastor of the two churches, and Principal of the Academy. In addition to his ministrations to the churches in the country, he also frequently preached in Newark, either in the Academy or in his own house, and it was through his instrumentality that the First Presbyterian Church of Newark was organized, and its first edifice erected; he contributing liberally of his means to the erection of the building, as well as superintending the work. Mr. Russell was a popular and successful teacher, and many of his pupils became eminent in their respective callings and professions. A man of talents and learning, of kind and genial disposition, and pleasant manners, he secured the respect and esteem of the whole community. He died February 6th, 1839, and was interred in the cemetery of this church. Though nearly forty years have elapsed since his departure, his memory is still warmly cherished by the people and the children of the people among whom he so long and successfully labored. His second wife, a daughter of Arthur Whiteley, of Dorchester County, Maryland, survived him many years—an esteemed and honored mother in Israel. A beloved daughter, the wife of the Rev. Dr. Hugh Hamill, still lives in this vicinity, as do also two of his sons.

The following are the names of the ruling elders of this church during the pastorate of Mr. Russell: James Anderson, John M. Johnston, John Jordan, Joseph Alexander, James Phillips, James Crawford and John Whann. The time of their election and ordination is not recorded. A revival of religion occurred in this church in 1831, resulting in a large accession to the membership. Other revivals may have occurred, and probably did occur during his ministry, and the ministries of his predecessors, Messrs. Gillespie and McCrery, but no record of them has come down to us. The sessional records of this church for nearly one hundred and twenty years are lost—a

loss that we greatly deplore, as no doubt they contained facts and incidents that at such a time as this would be exceedingly interesting.

For some three or four years after the death of Mr. Russell, the church was without a pastor, but was supplied part of that time by the Rev. Alexander Heberton, and part by the Rev. William R. Work, both of whom now reside in Philadelphia.

In June, 1842, Mr. Elijah Wilson commenced his labors here and at Newark. Mr. Wilson was born in the city of Philadelphia. His academical education he received at Kinderhook, New York, where also, in 1831, he made a profession of religion, and was received into the communion of the church. In 1835, he became a student of Rutgers College, New Jersey, and while pursuing his studies there, became totally blind. He studied theology at Auburn and Princeton, and was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick. On the 9th day of August, 1842, he was elected pastor of this church, and of the First Presbyterian Church of Newark; and on the 12th day of October following was ordained and installed. On that occasion, the Rev. James Latta presided, the Rev. R. P. DuBois preached the sermon, from 1st Thessalonians v: 25, "Brethren, pray for us;" and the Rev. Stephen R. Wyncoop gave the charges to pastor and people. For about four years Mr. Wilson labored here with a good degree of acceptance and success, especially considering the difficulties to which he was subjected in consequence of his blindness. In his preparation for the pulpit, he, of course, needed assistance, and this assistance was kindly granted by members of the family where he boarded, and after his marriage, by his excellent wife, a daughter of Mr. Andrew Gray, to whom he was married in November, 1842. In the spring of 1845, he assumed the supervision of a Female Seminary in Newark; but this, with his labor in the churches, was too great a tax on his strength, and in 1846 he relinquished the pastorate of the churches, and in a year or two after, also the supervision of the Seminary. For a short time he was pastor of the church of Wrightsville, Pennsylvania. He afterwards lived in Media, in Wilmington, and in Philadelphia, laboring as he had strength and opportunity. He compiled and published a book called the "Living Pulpit," and spent some time in its circulation. He now lives in New Brighton, Pennsylvania. During his ministry here—on the 22d of February, 1844, the following

were elected elders: James Mote, Thomas Garrett, John McLaughlin, George Johnston, Samuel Johnston, Joseph Whann and Jones Matthias. On the 31st of March, they were ordained and installed.

The Rev. Joseph Barr was elected pastor of this church, March 22d, 1848, and installed on the 8th day of May, following. At the installation, the Rev. Thomas Love presided, the Rev. A. DeWitt preached the sermon, the Rev. R. P. DuBois gave the charge to the pastor, and the Rev. S. R. Wyncoop to the people. Mr. Barr was born near New Castle, Delaware, December 4th, 1791, united with the Church in his seventeenth year, graduated at the University of Pennsylvania in 1811, studied theology with the Rev. John E. Latta, and the Rev. James P. Wilson, D. D., and was licensed to preach in October, 1812. After spending some time in missionary labor, he was settled, in the fall of 1813, as pastor of the churches of Norriton and Providence, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. For a time, he taught in the Academy in Norristown, and was instrumental in building up a church in that place. In 1823, he took charge of the churches of Leacock and Middle Octorara, and there remained nearly twenty years, till failing health compelled him to leave. To this church (giving a portion of his time to White Clay Creek) he ministered between five and six years. In October, 1853, being in feeble health, he resigned, and removed to Wilmington, where he died, May 24th, 1854. On the 27th, he was buried at White Clay Creek. The present speaker, who was then pastor of that church, preached the funeral sermon on Revelation xiv: 13, "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." The Rev. Messrs. Love, DuBois and S. Dickey took part in the service. Mr. Barr was a godly man, and an earnest, faithful and devoted minister, laboring up to his strength, and often beyond his strength, in advancement of the Master's cause.

In October, 1853, the present speaker was elected pastor of this church, and also of White Clay Creek and Newark. The arrangement was that he should give one-half of his time to White Clay Creek, and the other half to Head of Christiana and Newark. In accordance with this arrangement, he commenced his labors in the united charge on the first Sabbath of December, 1853. On the fourth day of May, 1854, he was in-

stalled pastor of the three churches—in the morning at White Clay Creek, and in the afternoon here, the people of Newark church attending here, and uniting with this congregation in the installation services. The Rev. R. P. DuBois preached the sermon on 1st Corinthians xiv: 8, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" The Rev. A. DeWitt presided, the Rev. S. M. Gayley gave the charge to the pastor, and the Rev. Dr. Spotswood to the people. With the events of the present pastorate, which has now continued nearly twenty-three years, most of you are familiar, and a very brief reference to some of them is all that is necessary. The most important of them were the erection of the new church edifice, of which mention has already been made, the election and ordination of elders at two different times, and several precious revivals of religion. On the tenth day of April, 1859, Thomas Whann and John T. Steel were ordained and installed ruling elders; and on the sixteenth of May, 1872, Thomas Cunningham, Joseph Crows and George W. Steel were elected to the same office, and on the second day of June following, ordained and installed. In November, 1854, it pleased God to grant to the three churches which then constituted one charge, a copious shower of Divine influences—a revival of religion of extraordinary extent and power. As the fruit of it, one hundred and forty-two were added to the communion of the church—seventy-one at White Clay Creek, and seventy-one here and at Newark. It was a genuine work of grace, and its blessed effects have been seen and felt ever since in the vigor and spirit infused into the churches, and the uninterrupted prosperity which has continuously followed. In the fall of 1870, this church was blessed with another revival of great power, resulting in an accession of fifty persons to its membership. Other times of refreshing also have been experienced, of less power and extent, but still very precious, bringing sinners to a knowledge of the Saviour, rejoicing the hearts of God's people, and exerting a most salutary influence upon the community. The effect of the great revival of 1854 was not only greatly to increase the membership, but also to enlarge the congregation, and thus create a necessity for a larger amount of labor for the proper cultivation of the wider and more extensive field. To meet this necessity, at the suggestion of the pastor, an assistant was employed a portion of the year, for several successive years. The Rev. Messrs. A. P. DeVeuve, Elkanah D. Mackey, H. G. Finney,

J. D. Smith, S. T. Thompson, S. C. Brace, C. G. Lee, and more recently and for a much longer time, Professor William D. Mackey officiated in this capacity and rendered acceptable and efficient service.

The field still enlarging, the pastor asked to be released from the care of the church in Newark, in order that he might give the whole of his time to the churches in the country. The Presbytery granted the request, and dissolved the pastoral relation on the third day of October, 1860. In 1875, at the suggestion of the Presbytery, a further division of the charge was made, and at the meeting held at Lewes, in April, calls from each of the churches for the entire services of the pastor were presented. The call from White Clay Creek was declared to be irregular; the one from Head of Christiana, being in order, was tendered and accepted. The pastoral relation to White Clay Creek was dissolved on the third day of May, to take effect on the thirty-first of that month, and since the first of June, 1875, the whole time of the pastor has been given to this church.

I regret that I have not been able to present a more interesting and satisfactory sketch of this ancient and venerable church; but my sources of information have been very limited. The records of the Presbytery of New Castle, from 1731 to 1759, covering a very important period, are lost, and the sessional records of this church for more than a hundred years are missing. It was my desire to give some account of the elders, and of some of the prominent members—godly men, and devout and noble women—and of the young men reared within the bounds of this congregation who became ministers of the Gospel; but on these points I am able to say but little. John Gardner, whose name appears on the roll of Presbytery as early as 1707, was at first an elder of New Castle Church, and on the organization of this church became an elder here. Andrew Kerr, the father of the present Andrew Kerr, was an elder during the ministry of Mr. McCrery, and also of Mr. Russell. The names of all the other elders, as far as they could be ascertained, have been already given. The Rev. John Rankin, who resided many years in Worcester County, Maryland, and was pastor of Buckingham and Blackwater churches, was born and raised within the bounds of this congregation. He was educated at Newark Academy, studied theology with the Rev. Dr. Thomas Read, of Wilmington, and became an able and eminently useful minister. The Hon. John R. Franklin, of

Snowhill, one of the leading men of the Eastern Shore, and now one of the judges of the First Judicial Circuit of Maryland, is a grandson of Mr. Rankin. The Rev. Peter Hossinger, who, for many years, has been an earnest and faithful laborer in the West, was one of the children of this church. No doubt there were others who became ministers, others elders and private members, well worthy of remembrance on this occasion, but the earthly records on which their names are written and their virtues inscribed have perished. Their record is on high. That God has so long preserved and prospered this church, where some of you have for so many years worshipped, and where your fathers for generations before you were accustomed to worship, is cause this day for devout and heart-felt thankfulness. And never, perhaps, has this church been in a condition more prosperous and more full of promise than at the present time. We have a large membership, a numerous congregation, an edifice comparatively new, and commodious and comfortable, a flourishing Sabbath School, and an interesting Bible Class. Let us, by strict adherence to sound doctrine, by exemplary conduct and a Christian spirit, by enlightened zeal and constant reliance on Divine aid, endeavor to preserve to ourselves, and to transmit to our children and our children's children, the precious inheritance that God has given us.

My dear hearers, by this review of "the days of old, the years of ancient times," we are solemnly reminded of our mortality. The ministers and elders and members who, generation after generation, worshipped here, have descended to the tomb. Sooner or later we must follow them. Let us faithfully serve the God whom they served, believe in the Saviour in whom they trusted, follow the guidance of the Spirit by whom they were led, and when called hence to be here no more—no longer to mingle in the services of this earthly sanctuary, we will be prepared and permitted to unite with them in the higher, holier and more perfect services of the blessed temple above.

APPENDIX.

Officers of Head of Christiana Church,

JULY, 1876.

Pastor,

THE REV. JAMES L. VALLANDIGHAM, D. D.

Ruling Elders,

MESSRS. JONES MATTHIAS,	THOS. CUNNINGHAM,
THOMAS WHANN,	JOSEPH CROWS,
JOHN T. STEEL,	GEORGE W. STEEL.

Trustees,

MESSRS. JOHN T. STEEL, <i>Pres.</i>	THOMAS WHANN,
JAMES H. RAY, <i>Sec.</i>	JOHN McKEOWAN,
THOMAS STEEL,	THOS. CUNNINGHAM.
JAMES McKANE.	

Treasurer,

MR. JOHN T. STEEL.

INVESTED FUNDS.

Besides the real estate referred to in the foregoing discourse, the Head of Christiana Church has invested in bond and mortgage six thousand and seven hundred dollars—the proceeds of a legacy from a former member, Miss Mary Russell, deceased. The interest of this money, according to the provisions of the will, is to be applied to the support of the pastor, and to the keeping up of the repairs of the church.

THE MEMBERSHIP.

On a careful revision of the roll, it is found that there are one hundred and eighty-eight communicants living within the bounds of the congregation. Besides these, there are on the roll the names of some twenty others who have been living without the bounds for several years, but who have not asked for certificates of dismission. These are not counted in the annual report to Presbytery of the number of members.

THE REVIVAL OF 1854.

The Revival of 1854 was so extensive and powerful, and so far-reaching in its blessed influences, that it is deemed advisable to place on record here the following account of it, which was written at the time, and in the winter of 1855 published in the Philadelphia "Presbyterian" and the Pittsburg "Banner." It is well to "remember the years of the right hand of the Most High;" and the perusal of this narrative may stimulate and encourage in a time of declension or depression.

NEWARK, DEL., Jan. 12th, 1855.

Messrs. Editors:—A brief notice of the late revival in my charge has already appeared in the columns of your paper; it has, however, been suggested by a number of my brethren, that a more detailed narrative might prove interesting and profitable. I propose, therefore, to give a fuller and more minute, yet still a succinct account of that precious work of grace.

My charge is composed of the churches of White Clay Creek, Head of Christiana, and Newark. The last named is in the centre of the town, White Clay Creek is two miles east, and Head of Christiana two miles west of the town.

We commenced a series of meetings on the first day of November, and continued them for twenty-three days, with three services each day. The first week we spent at White Clay Creek, the second at Head of Christiana, and the third was divided between the two places. In the meantime, there was preaching every evening in Newark. At White Clay Creek, there appeared much seriousness and solemnity on the first day of the meeting. On the second day, an inquiry meeting was held, and nine persons presented themselves. Similar meetings

were held every afternoon, and sometimes also in the evening for a week, at the close of which period about ninety had appeared as inquirers. We pursued the same course at Head of Christiana and Newark, with a similar result. On the 23d day of November the meetings were closed, with an attendance as large as at any time previous, and with the interest unabated.

Subjects of the Work.

More than two hundred persons had appeared among the inquirers, the great majority of whom are indulging a hope, and we have good and satisfactory reason to believe that they have really passed from death unto life. Of these, one hundred and forty-two have been admitted to the several churches of my charge. A number, especially of those who are quite young, have deferred uniting with the Church till the spring. Some have united, or will unite, with churches of other denominations. They are of all ages, and every rank and condition of life—the young, the middle-aged, and the aged—the rich and the poor, the illiterate and the learned. Even the colored people—that neglected and degraded class—in a measure shared in the blessing. One at least was hopefully converted unto God, and salutary impressions, we trust, were made on the minds of others. Two or three days after the commencement of the meetings at White Clay Creek, a colored woman—one of the very few who attended—was observed sitting in her pew in deep distress. She was conversed with, instructed and directed, as from day to day she came up to the house of God, and in a short time found peace and joy in believing. A few Sabbaths since, she came forward before the congregation and publicly dedicated herself to the Lord in the ordinance of baptism, and was received as a member of the church. We trust she has commenced her journey to the heavenly Canaan, and that she will eventually reach that blessed land where earthly distinctions are unknown, where "it matters not whether an African, or American, or European sinner may have burned upon the pilgrim." A number of the subjects of the revival were aged persons, men and women, who had lived strangers to the grace of God, till their children, and children's children, had grown up around them. They have experienced the fulfillment of the prophecy, "In even time it shall be light." The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has shined upon them. And contrary to an opinion which we have sometimes heard expressed (and which in the case of *most persons* converted in advanced years *may be true*), their views of Divine things have been very clear, and their evidences, as developed in their examination by the session, most pleasing and satisfactory. In quite a number of instances, husband and wife have come forward together—together sought the Lord, and together found Him precious to their souls. In some of these cases, we trust it is so in all, the family altar has been erected, and the morning and evening incense of prayer and praise now daily ascends.

A large number of young persons have been brought in; most of the young ladies connected with my congregations; some of the most promising young men of the College and Academy, several of whom have already announced their intention to devote themselves to the Gospel ministry; young farmers settled in the country congregations, destined no doubt to be, in years to come, the elders and trustees, the pillars to sustain the venerable churches to which they belong. Among the inquirers, also, were a number of children from twelve to fourteen years of age, with regard to most of whom it was deemed advisable to postpone admission into the church for some time to come. The great majority of the subjects of the revival were those who were religiously educated, and were regular attendants at church; but in several cases, those who were of a very different character, who were only occasional hearers, or who were openly wicked, profane, reckless, were mercifully and graciously made sharers of the blessing.

The Revival the Work of the Spirit.

The revival was most manifestly the work of the Spirit, and it was a work of great power. It was not the work of man. Although there was a great diversity in the gifts of the different brethren who kindly assisted during the meetings, yet no matter who preached, or who exhorted, the truth seemed to be carried home to the heart, with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. We endeavored to feel, and to keep prominently before the people, that it was "not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord;" and that, therefore, earnest, fervent, and united prayer must be offered up for the descent of the Holy Spirit. And such prayer was offered up from hundreds of Christian hearts, and the Spirit did come in great power. This we all most sensibly felt. We could truly say with the patriarch, "How dreadful is this place; surely the Lord is here! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" The most reckless men in the community—for even they were occasionally seen in the sanctuary—were evidently awed. There were very few, if any, who regularly attended the meetings, who remained entirely unconcerned; all, we believe, were in a measure awakened. In a number of instances, individuals came to the house in the morning utterly careless and unconcerned, and went home in the evening under deep conviction. Some who at first opposed the work, when they saw members of their own families awakened, afterward themselves became its subjects; some who went, out of curiosity, with a determination, as they have since confessed, to resist all impression, were constrained to yield to the powerful and pervading influence. No attempts were made to create excitement; a most profound stillness and solemnity pervaded the meetings, interrupted occasionally by the sighs of the anxious, or, as was the case in two or three instances, by the outcries of some more heavily burdened soul, who, in an anguish that could not be repressed, was writhing under a wound inflicted by an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty.

Exercises of Those Under Concern of Mind.

The exercises of the inquirers were, of course, very various. The convictions of some were exceedingly pungent, their distress so great that it was sometimes difficult to persuade them to leave the church after the services were over; they would sit in their pews in bitter anguish of spirit, and ministers and elders would remain to converse and pray with them, sometimes for more than an hour. And frequently too, indeed, generally, the whole congregation, or nearly the whole congregation, would remain to mingle their hearts and their voices in the prayers and praises that were offered, and to listen to the exhortations that were delivered. And how delightfully, on such occasions, did they sing some of the beautiful hymns of our excellent collection: "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," "Alas, and did my Saviour bleed," "Come, humble sinner, in whose breast," "Am I called, and can it be," "People of the living God." These, and other sweet songs of Zion, were sung with such earnestness and deep feeling, that we could almost imagine that we were listening to the melody of the better land.

Christians Aroused.

The church was thoroughly awakened. The ruling elders came nobly up to the work, and sustained the hands of the pastor, and of the brethren who assisted him. The same, too, was the case with the private members; and mothers in Israel, and young men and maidens could be seen in the intervals of public worship, going from pew to pew, with deep feeling, and eyes bathed in tears, endeavoring to direct, or instruct, or comfort, inquirers, or to admonish, or persuade the careless, or those who were only partially awakened. And we are convinced that in this way much good was done. The people had a mind to work. For weeks together, they laid aside, almost entirely, their worldly business, and came up to the house of the Lord. They brought their families and provision along, and remained during the whole day, and sometimes too, for the evening service; or if they went home, returned again. In the morning the roads were thronged with the citizens of Newark, male and female, who walked out to the country churches and spent the day, and then walked home in the evening, to attend the service in town. And when, as was the case two or three times, the weather was such as to render it unfit, at least for ladies, to walk, all in town who had conveyances filled them with their families and neighbors, the public stages or hacks were hired, persons living in the country sent in their carriages for their friends, and in this way all, or nearly all, who desired were enabled to attend. We mention these things to show the spirit that prevailed; the earnest desire there was to be present at all the meetings, and the effort that was made to accomplish this object. The people seemed to love the house of God with the most ardent affection; after the services were over, they would linger as if unwilling to depart—unwilling to leave

the place where they had witnessed such wonderful displays of the Divine glory.

Many interesting incidents occurred during the revival which I would like to relate, but I have probably already wearied your patience, and must draw to a close.

Condition of Things Previous to the Revival.

A few words with reference to the condition of things previous to the revival, as this is a point in relation to which brethren have frequently and with much earnestness inquired.

For months previous, the congregations had been large, much larger, I am told, than had been usual for years before. There seemed to be a general desire to go up to the house of the Lord, and there was close, and earnest, and solemn attention to the services of the sanctuary.

There was a lively interest manifested in the temporal affairs of the Church. In August the Trustees of all three of the congregations met together, and unanimously resolved to increase the pastor's salary, the amount originally promised proving inadequate to his support. Shortly after, one of the congregations resolved to build a new church edifice; another one of them expended a considerable amount in re-fitting and making comfortable their old building. In all the congregations there seemed to be a determination faithfully to attend to the *temporal* affairs of the Church. And this is more nearly connected with its *spiritual* prosperity than many persons seem to imagine. See Malachi iii: 8, 9, 10.

The weekly prayer-meetings were well attended. The pastor was sometimes agreeably surprised to find the house well filled, when, owing to the inclemency of the weather, he had expected to meet with very few. The people seemed to love to attend, and they often found it good to be there.

There was entire harmony throughout the charge. In every individual, young or old, the pastor met a friend—a warm and cordial friend; and in but a single instance, during the year, was he called upon to notice any dissension *among brethren*, and that case was speedily and satisfactorily settled. Such was the state of things among us when our special meetings commenced; and we were encouraged to commence them in view of this state of things, and also of the fact that there were some cases of seriousness and inquiry in all the congregations, and more especially at White Clay Creek, as more fully appeared at our communion there, on the second Sabbath of October.

Present Aspect of Things.

And now, perhaps, it may be inquired, what is the *present* condition of things? Exceedingly interesting and encouraging; large congregations, and much seriousness and solemnity; an earnest hunger-

ing and thirsting for the bread and water of life. The prayer-meetings are well attended, and they are greatly multiplied. There are now within the bounds of my charge eight weekly prayer-meetings—among them a female prayer-meeting—and two prayer-meetings conducted by the young men, one in each of the country congregations.

The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Of my whole charge, I can truly say that it is a field, emphatically “a field which the Lord hath blessed.”

Truly and sincerely yours.

JAMES L. VALLANDIGHAM.

THE PRESENT PASTOR.

The present pastor of Head of Christiana having failed to give, in his Historical Discourse, the same minute information in regard to himself that he has given in regard to his predecessors in the pastorate, and the people naturally desiring to know more in relation to him, to his ancestry, education, licensure, ordination, former labors in the ministry, etc., the Committee in charge of this publication, in order to meet that desire, have deemed it proper to insert here the following extracts, touching these matters, from the Historical Discourse delivered by Prof. Wm. D. Mackey, at White Clay Creek Church, on the 9th day of July, 1876.

* * * * * “James Laird Vallandigham is a native of New Lisbon, Ohio, a son of the Rev. Clement Vallandigham, who was for thirty-two years pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of that place. His mother's maiden name was Rebecca Laird. His paternal ancestors were Huguenots, and among the early settlers of Virginia. His maternal ancestors were Scotch-Irish, and settled in Pennsylvania. He graduated at Jefferson College, taught a number of years in New Lisbon, Ohio, and in the Buckingham and Snow Hill Academies, Worcester Co., Md., studied law with Irving Spence, Esq., and the Hon. Andrew W. Loomis, and practiced some five or six years in his native town. He was married Sept. 24th, 1839, to Miss Mary E. Spence, of Snow Hill, Md. Having united with the church, he relinquished the law and studied theology with his pastor, the Rev. A. O. Patterson, D. D. He was licensed April 16th, 1845, by the Presbytery of New Lisbon, but continued teaching in various places, and, in the meantime, supplied vacant churches. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Baltimore, April 3d, 1850, and installed pastor of the Monokin Church, Princess Anne, Md. Soon afterward he also became pastor of the Rehoboth Church. His pastoral relation with those churches was dissolved in Nov., 1853. * * *

* * During Mr. Vallandigham's pastorate there were glorious revivals and consequent large additions to all the churches. In 1854, seventy-seven were received into this church on examination, and twelve on certificate. There was marked interest again in 1857 and

1858. In 1865, about sixty were received on examination, and thirty-one of them then baptized. There was special interest again in the fall of 1869. During the whole period there were two hundred and seventy-six admissions to the church on examination, and fifty-six on certificate; seventy-one marriages, one hundred and thirty-seven adult baptisms, and one hundred and thirty-three infant baptisms.

* * * Mr. Vallandigham still resides in Newark, and enjoys the unabated affection and confidence of this congregation. He faithfully preached the sound gospel here for nearly twenty-two years, and was greatly blessed in his work. He left the congregation in a most prosperous and harmonious condition. My long intimacy with him would prompt me to say more, but it is not necessary before this audience, and the bare statements already made are a sufficient eulogium.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on Mr. Vallandigham, by the trustees of Delaware College, at the Commencement in 1874, rendering him an exception to the general rule, that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country."

APPENDIX TO THE SECOND EDITION,

February, 1898.

Owing to frequent applications for copies of the foregoing Historical Discourse, especially from descendants of the first pastors, elders, and prominent members, it has been deemed advisable to publish a new edition.

In this discourse the most important events in the History of Head of Christiana Church from its organization to July, 1876, are recorded, and here the history is continued very briefly to the present time. For seventeen years subsequent to 1876, Dr. Vallandigham continued his labors as pastor. During those years little occurred requiring special notice. The usual services were regularly observed; and at several times during that period there was special interest in the congregation—precious revivals, resulting in the addition of a goodly number to the communion of the Church, and very comforting and encouraging to the pastor and the people.

On the 13th of April, 1893, John McKeowan, William Smith and Joseph A. Mathias were elected elders, and on the 23d of the same month were ordained and installed.

In July, 1893, Dr. Vallandigham tendered his resignation, to take effect on the 30th of November following, that being the close of his pastorate of forty years; and at a meeting of the congregation, September 14th, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, The Rev. Dr. James L. Vallandigham has, on account of his advanced age, tendered his resignation as pastor of the Head of Christiana Church, which office he has so ably and faithfully filled for the last forty years: coming to us when in the very prime of life, thus giving to this congregation his best powers; and

WHEREAS, Almost an entire new generation has grown up around him, there being scarcely half a dozen persons now living who were then members of the Church; and

WHEREAS, He has stood abreast of all the outward movements of the Presbyterian Church through nearly half a century; and

WHEREAS, This congregation has reluctantly, and only from a sense of duty, joined with him in asking the Presbytery to dissolve the relation which has existed between us as pastor and people through all these years; and

WHEREAS, We desire to bear testimony to his earnest and efficient services; therefore.

Resolved, That in Dr. Vallandigham we have found a pleasant and courteous Christian gentleman, a sound and able theologian, an eloquent preacher of the Gospel of Christ, a sympathizing friend and pastor in our afflictions and bereavements, always manifesting an interest in the welfare, both temporal and spiritual, of those to whom he ministered, and in his intercourse with the community dignified, straightforward and consistent:

Resolved, That as a congregation we cannot estimate nor fully appreciate the influence of his life and labors among us, but we will ever remember Dr. Vallandigham with tenderest feelings of love and regard, and in his separation from us, we wish him all possible comfort and happiness in his remaining years, and hope that a kind Providence may have him in His watchful care and keeping, and that the choicest blessings of Almighty God, both temporal and spiritual, may attend him in all the remainder of the journey of life, and that he may have strength for years to come to preach, as occasion offers, that blessed Gospel that he has so long and faithfully proclaimed to us. Our prayer is that when these toils and vicissitudes and partings are past and gone, we all may be gathered into that upper and better sanctuary, to go no more out forever.

At a meeting of the Presbytery of New Castle, October 4th, 1893, the pastoral relation between the Rev. Dr. Vallandigham and the Head of Christiana Church was dissolved, to take effect on the 30th of November, that being the close of his fortieth year as pastor of that church.

The Presbytery unanimously adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That in view of the exceptionally long and successful pastorate of Rev. James L. Vallandigham, D. D., over the Head of Christiana Church, the Presbytery of New Castle, in dissolving a relation that has existed for forty years, desires to put on record its high appreciation of the faithful labors of Dr. Vallandigham in this charge, which, under his fostering care, has grown to be a strong and

vigorous Church, looking upon and regarding the duration of such a pastorate as honorable alike to the pastor who has given the vigor of his manhood to the care of the Church, and the people who have enjoyed his ministrations and upheld his hands in his labors."

Dr. Vallandigham's immediate successor was the Rev. James D. Shanks, D. D., who, after a very successful pastorate of nine years in Trinity Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, having resigned on account of throat trouble, and having been recently elected Principal of the Academy of Newark, was invited December 1st, 1893, to serve the Church as stated supply, which he continued to do until April 9th, 1895, when he was elected pastor, and on the 6th day of June, 1895, was duly installed. Rev. Dr. Vallandigham presided and proposed the constitutional questions; Rev. A. N. Keigwin, D. D., of Wilmington, preached the sermon; Rev. Lafayette Marks, D. D., of Wilmington, delivered the charge to the pastor, and Rev. N. H. Miller, D. D., of Newark, delivered the charge to the people.

During the first two years of his pastorate, thirty-four members were added to the communion of the Church.

In June, 1896, Dr. Shanks resigned the Principalship of the Academy, and gave his whole time to the pastorate of the Church, and has continued to do so up to the present time.

Wednesday, October 13, 1926

Head Of Christiana Church Arranging 224th Anniversary

*Hundreds Expected To Attend Services Next Sunday In
One Of Delaware's Oldest Institutions; Plan
Morning And Afternoon Services*



The two hundred and twenty-fourth anniversary of the founding of Head of Christiana Church will be observed next Sunday, October 17.

At the old church, situated along Nottingham pike, about two miles west of Newark, will be held two services, one at 11 a.m., the second at 2 p.m. Miss Josephine Kaye, an ordained minister of the Gospel, will make addresses at both services. Miss Kaye is also a doctor of medicine and will

go soon to a foreign field as a medical missionary. She is temporarily speaking for the "Pocket Testament League," under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur B. Wilson, of Wilmington, will direct the singing. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson are very popular with the Head of Christiana congregation.

Reverend John McMurray is pastor of the church.

The Commemoration of the 200th
Anniversary of the Organization
of the Head of Christiana Pres-
byterian Church, Newark, Delaware



June 20th, 1907

Sketch of the Church's History



THE exact date of the organization of this church is not known. It is, however, quite certain that it was organized sometime between 1703 and 1707. As early as 1703 reference is found of services in this community, and in 1708 the society was of sufficient strength to formally request Presbytery to secure for them regular services. The first house built was a log house built over the spot where is now the tomb of Rev. George Gillespie, and on land owned by John Steel. The first record of a deed of lease was in 1732, when James Steel, the son of the said John Steel, made a lease of two acres and four perches to the elders of the church. The history of the church is well set forth in the historical discourse of Rev. James L. Vallandigham, D.D., bringing it down to the year 1898. Since that time the church has been remodeled, putting in a vestibule, a new pulpit and choir platform, pulpit furniture, a steel ceiling, new lamps and a new carpet. Excavating under the north end of church and making a kitchen adjoining the Sunday-school room, and a stairway leading from the basement to the vestibule. New stained glass memorial windows have been put in and the church handsomely decorated.

THE following is a copy of the tablet in the vestibule:

Log Church in Old Graveyard Built
Between 1703 and 1708 on Land owned

BY JOHN STEEL

The Pulpit stood over the spot where
Now lies the body of

REV. GEORGE GILLESPIE

Brick Church on this site Built in 1750

Destroyed by Fire March 14, 1858. Rebuilt
in same year

REMODELED IN 1906

List of Ministers

Rev. John Wilson	1703-1712
Rev. George Gillespie.....	1713-1760
Rev. John McCrery.....	1769-1800
Rev John Waugh.....	1800-1806
Rev. Andrew K. Russell.....	1812-1839
Rev. Elijah Wilson (blind).....	1842-1846
Rev. Joseph Barr.....	1848-1853
Rev. James L. Vallandigham, D.D., LL.D.....	1854-1894
Rev. James D. Shanks, D.D.....	1894-1898
Rev. Joel S. Gilfillan, D.D.....	1899-

Trustees in 1906

JOHN T. STEEL, *President*;

GEORGE W. STEEL, *Treasurer*; J. T. JOHNSTON, *Secretary*;

J. A. MATHIAS,

WILLIAM FRAZER,

J. T. EGNER,

THOMAS L. BROWN.

Program

2.30 P.M.

ORGAN PRELUDE.

HYMN—No. 56.

SCRIPTURE READING.

PRAYER.

ANTHEM—BY THE CHOIR.

GREETINGS—

From Presbyterian Historical Society:

REV. HENRY C. MCCOOK, D.D., Sc.D., LL.D., *President
of the Society.*

From Sister Denominations:

REV. W. F. COCKRAN, D.D., *Pastor of M. E. Church, Newark.*

HYMN—No. 597.

ADDRESS—"Our Heritage in Other Men's Labors."

By REV. JOSEPH BROWN TURNER, *Pastor of the Presby-
terian Church, Dover, Del.*

HYMN—No. 651.

BENEDICTION.

5 P.M.

Luncheon.

Program

7.45 P.M.

ORGAN.

HYMN—No. 1.

PRAYER.

ANTHEM—BY THE CHOIR.

ADDRESS—"Historic Items."

By THE PASTOR.

HYMN—No. 542.

ADDRESS—"Presbyterianism."

By REV. WILLIAM H. ROBERTS, D.D., LL.D., *Moderator
of the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in
U. S. A.*

HYMN—No. 575.

BENEDICTION.



THE Presbytery of New Castle met in this church October, 1906, and on Wednesday evening, October 3, recognized the event of the coming 200th anniversary with the following program:

Two Hundred Years of Evangelistic Work

REV. J. R. HENDERSON
MODERATOR OF PRESBYTERY, PRESIDING

Echoes from the Churches

I. ONE OF THE OLDEST CHURCHES:

Rev. J. B. North, LL.D., of Snow Hill, Md.

II. SISTER CHURCHES WHOSE HISTORY RUNS BACK NEARLY 200 YEARS:

(a) Glasgow, Rev. T. C. Potter, D.D.

(b) St. Georges, Rev. J. R. Milligan, D.D.

(c) Rock, Rev. Wilson T. M. Beale.

(d) Christiana, Rev. J. Edgar Franklin.

III. CHILDREN OF THIS CHURCH:

Rev. William J. Rowan, Ph.D., of Newark, Del.

IV. SISTER CHURCHES OF A LATER DATE:

Rev. John McElmoyle, of Elkton, Md.

Officers

Pastor

REV. JOEL S. GILFILLAN, D.D.

Elders

JOHN T. STEEL,

GEORGE W. STEEL,

JOSEPH A. MATHIAS.

Organist

MISS MARY E. KIMBLE.

Assistant Organist

MISS AGATHA R. SCOTT.

Sabbath School

Superintendent.....JOHN T. STEEL.

Assistant Superintendent.....J. EARLE GILFILLAN.

Secretary and Treasurer.....GEORGE W. STEEL.

Organist.....MISS MAGGIE LAW.

Cornetist.....LA MARTINE D. GILFILLAN.

Missionary Society

President.....MRS. EDNA D. GILFILLAN.

Secretary.....MISS REBECCA JOHNSTON.

Treasurer.....MRS. GEORGE W. STEEL.

Trustees

JOHN T. STEEL, *President*;

GEORGE W. STEEL, *Treasurer*; JOHN T. JOHNSTON, *Secretary*;

JOSEPH A. MATHIAS, WILLIAM FRAZER,

JOHN T. EGNER, THOMAS L. BROWN.



*The Head of Christiana Manse
Erected in 1900, in Newark, Del.*

THE CHURCHES OF DELAWARE

by

FRANK R. ZEBLEY

Author of "Along the Brandywine"



*A history, in brief, of the nearly 900 churches
and former churches in Delaware as
located by the Author.*

1947

Grace Pentecostal Church, at Newark, was organized and held their early meetings in Fraternal Hall. The present church, on Lovett Ave., was built in 1935. It was dedicated in April of that year by the Rev. Fleming Van Meter, District Superintendent of the Assemblies of God. The church was incorporated on Jan. 24, 1939.

A **Christian Church** was organized at Newark in 1884. It passed out of existence in a few years.

The **First Nazarene Church** at Newark was organized in Fraternal Hall on Nov. 3, 1940. Formal organization took place on Jan. 21, 1941. In July, 1944, they purchased the dwelling at No. 27 Chapel St., and converted it for church and parsonage uses.

The **Holiness Christian Church** at Newark. In 1917, a holiness group, called the "Heavenly Recruits," began holding meetings in Fraternal Hall. A few years later, when the Recruits became one of the so-called "tonguers" group, the Newark church changed to Holiness Christian. They were incorporated on Oct. 2, 1925. On Nov. 7, 1925, they purchased a church site at College and Cleveland Aves. No church was ever built and the lot was eventually sold. Services were held regularly until Oct. 27, 1940, when the church was closed.

There are four colored churches in Newark. **Mt. Zion A. M. E.**, the **Pilgrim Baptist Church**, built in 1913, the **Church of God**, who were organized in 1941 and meet in the Newark Community Center, and **St. John's A. U. M. P.** St. John's was organized in 1855 when the meetings were held in a log house on the site of the present church. This church was erected in 1867 and was dedicated on Jan. 30, 1870. It was remodeled in 1916.

Wesley M. E. Church at McClellandville was built at a date that cannot now be determined. The first church was burned on Nov. 3, 1850, just as the Rev. Mr. Westbrook was starting his sermon. The present church was built in 1854. On the afternoon of Feb. 9, 1890, the church caught fire and was severely damaged. The church was rebuilt and refurbished, after which a reopening service was held on Sun., Oct. 12, 1890. It was conducted by the Revs. T. E. Terry, C. R. Jones and Pres. Elder W. L. S. Murray. The church ceased to function in 1927.

In 1932, it was purchased by a group of four private individuals. They reconditioned the building at a large expense and arranged to hold a Sunday School. It is also used as a community-center. On Jan. 5, 1939, W. Austin Hill, a local-preacher, began to hold undenominational meetings on Sundays and a prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings.

Mr. Hill received a regular charge at the 1944 Conference and since that time services are held with guest speakers.

The **Head of Christiana Presbyterian Church** is located two miles n. w. of Newark, close to the Maryland line. It was organized between 1706 and 1708. The first meeting-house was built of logs, on land owned by John Steel and was located just north of the present church. It was known as "Gillespie's Meeting-House" from the name of the first regular pastor, the Rev. George Gillespie, who was installed on May 28, 1713. A new church was built in 1750. It was incorporated on Sept. 1, 1787.

On Sept. 20, 1806, Allen and James Steel deeded an acre and two rods of land to the church subject to a ground rent of six cents to be paid annually on March 25, if demanded. The deed contained a reversion clause with any land used for the graveyard excepted. The church was burned on Sun., Mar. 14, 1858, just as the congregation was assembling for morning services. A new church was built immediately and was dedicated on Mar. 19, 1859.

Additional land was purchased from Thomas Steel on Sept. 12, 1859 and on Dec. 10, 1875. Major improvements were made in 1905. The large graveyard dates back to the first church. The tomb of the Rev. George Gillespie is located where the pulpit of the old log church stood. The inscription states that "he was ordained in Glasgow in 1712, ordained here in 1713 and died on Jan. 2, 1760." The oldest legible tombstone that the writer could find is that of Andrew Wallace who died on Mar. 3, 1751.

Welsh Tract Primitive Baptist Church is located, two and one-quarter miles south of Newark, at the foot of Iron Hill. The first church was built, in 1703, by a group of Baptists who had settled on a grant of land known as Welsh Tract. The present church was built in 1746 on a lot of six acres, four of which had been donated by James James. The church was incorporated on Feb. 9, 1788.

The gable-stone dated 1746 is, so far as the writer can determine, the oldest gable-stone or corner-stone on any church in Delaware. It was the mother church from which sprang the churches at Wilmington, Kenton, Cow March and Mispillion. Patches in the side brick walls show where a cannon-ball from the battle of Cooch's Bridge passed through the church taking an angular course with a heavy descending angle.

Additional land adjoining the church property was purchased from Alexander Coulter on Apr. 23, 1853 and from Levi G. Cooch on Sept. 3, 1863. There is a large and well-kept graveyard. The oldest tombstone that the writer could find is dated 1707. It bears an inscription in a combination of Welsh and Latin. Translated it reads:—

"Riceus Rychiough, born at Danwenog county Cardiganshire and buried here in the year of our Lord 1707. Aged 87."

As this tombstone does not have a more definite date it ranks as the third oldest legible tombstone in Delaware. Nearby is a field-stone inscribed, Elis Price, 1712. Services are now held monthly with an annual home-coming in the fall.

The 200th Anniversary was celebrated on Oct. 17, 18 and 19, 1903. The exercises were conducted by Elders J. G. Eubanks and N. W. Meredith.

The African Union Church of Iron Hill was incorporated on Sept. 20, 1867.

St. Daniel's A. M. E. Church is located, one and one-half miles s. w. of Newark, at the base of Iron Hill. The first church was built in 1838 and the present church was built in 1927.

The First Methodist Church at Glasgow was built, of brick, in 1832 and dedicated in 1833, by the Rev. Matthew Sorin. A new church, of sandstone, was built in 1857. It was dedicated by the Rev. Mr. Hickman. The present frame church was dedicated on Oct. 5, 1884, by the Rev. Andrew Manship assisted by the Rev. W. L. S. Murray.

Head of Christiana celebrates 295th

Already on the National Historic Register, church gets state historic marker this week

To celebrate the 295th anniversary of the founding of one of the nation's oldest Presbyterian churches, Head of Christiana Church in Newark will unveil a state historic marker at a celebration on Sunday, June 24.

The church, founded in 1706 and on the National Historic Register, will dedicate the marker on the grounds of the church following the morning worship service.

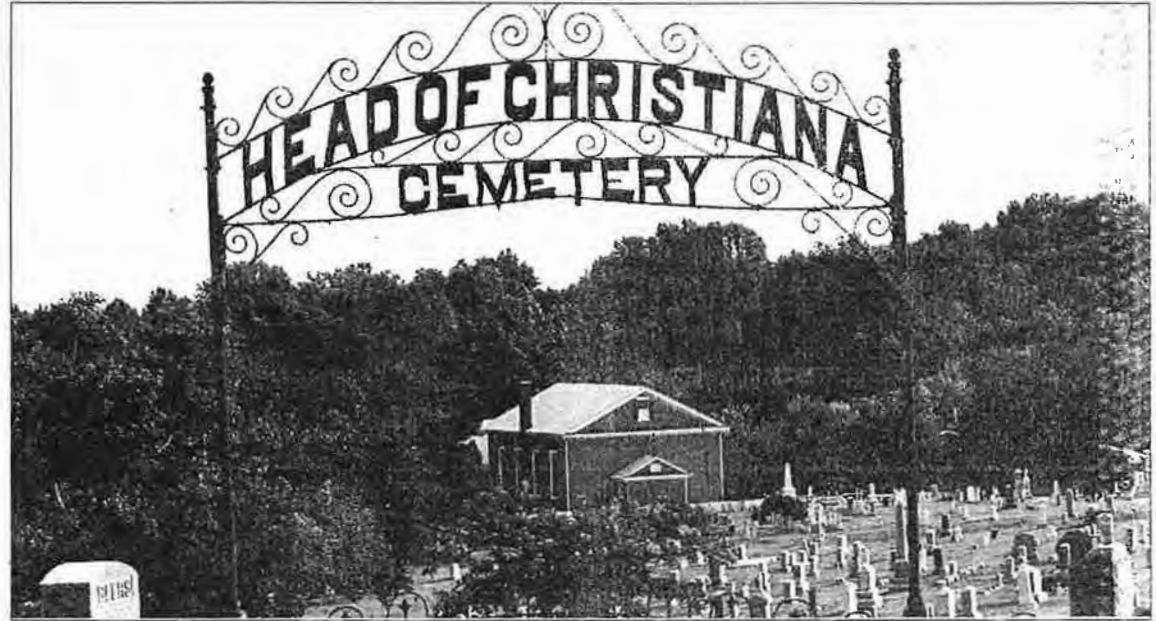
The unveiling will begin with a brief ceremony led by remarks by Delaware State Senator Steven Amick (R-Newark West) at 10:15 a.m.

The marker states: "The First Presbyterian services in this area

were conducted by Rev. John Wilson in 1706. Then pastor of New Castle Presbyterian Church, Rev. Wilson came every other Sunday to minister to the many residents of this area who had immigrated from Scotland and Ireland. In 1708, a modest log structure was erected on land owned by John Steel.

"The first installed pastor was Rev. George Gillespie, a native of Scotland, who arrived in 1713 and served until his death in 1760. During his tenure the log building was replaced by a brick structure which served the congregation until it was destroyed by fire in 1858. Within one year, the present church was built, and while alterations have been made, the basic structure remains intact.

"A number of critical issues have impacted the church over the years. Many members were ardent patriots and active participants in the struggle for American Independence. In the 19th century, the question of



NEWARK POST FILE PHOTO

The Head of Christiana Presbyterian Church was established on West Main Street/Nottingham Road in the early 18th century.

slavery proved divisive, with partisans within the church on both sides of the issue.

"During the 1930's a dispute concerning theological matters resulted in an attempt to separate from the established church. For a time the church was closed, but the efforts of a few trustees and elders resulted in a court action that barred the move, and the building was reopened. Since that

time, the congregation has grown and prospered, adding new members, and expanding its ministry.

"In 1983, the church was entered on the National Register of Historic Places."

The Reverend Kit Schooley said his congregation is "quite proud" of being selected for a state marker.

"This is one of the 'new generation' of markers, giving a lot

of space to tell our story," Schooley said. "It gives people a real appreciation of our church's history."

Head of Christiana Presbyterian Church is located off Nottingham Road on the western side of Newark. The public is welcome at the ceremony on Sunday.

INSTALLED MINISTERS OF HEAD OF CHRISTIANA

George Gillespie	1713 - 1760
John McCrery	1769 - 1800
Andrew Kerr Russell	1812 - 1839
Elijah Wilson	1842 - 1846
Joseph Barr	1848 - 1853
James Laird Vallandigham	1854 - 1893
James Dickson Shanks	1895 - 1898
Joel Scobey Gilfillan	1899 - 1910
Adrian Van Oeveren	1910 - 1917
Walter Raymond Clyde, Sr.	1918 - 1920
John W. McMurray	1921 - 1928
John H. Moore	1929 - 1931
Henry Garner Welbon	1931 - 1936
Evan W. Renne	1940 - 1948
James L. Getaz, Jr.	1949 - 1952
Robert W. Tull	1956 - 1961
Richard L. Loring	1961 - 1986
Duane E. Hix	1988 -

A Narrative History of HEAD OF CHRISTIANA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**1100 Church Road
NEWARK, DELAWARE**



Founded in 1706 when Presbyterians in this area were organized into
a congregation meeting at the head of the Christiana Creek.

1706 -- 1994

LIST OF MAJOR REFERENCES

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This is a genuine...

The handwritten inserts in this book are copied from an original deed of transaction presently preserved for display at the church.

Beginning at a stake standing on the left side of Christiana creek...

PROLOGUE

What goes through the mind of one who reads the "Founded in 1706" statement on the Sunday bulletin of Head of Christiana? Perhaps there is a fleeting picture of log cabins and Native Americans, or fur trappers and sailing ships. While it is of academic interest, more importantly, it is of consequence in helping us appreciate a past which affects our present and shapes our future on our journey of faith at Head of Christiana.

Therefore, when Head of Christiana celebrated its 275th anniversary in October, 1981, a small group of members was commissioned to research the past and write this brief history of our church. Then, too, in 1994, when a second printing was needed, some of these same persons provided this edited and updated version of the original work.

This historical synopsis is not intended to be a scientific study, although care was taken to ensure accuracy, nor is it all-inclusive, but rather it notes the highlights and main events that have shaped our destiny. It also attempts to give a flavor-of-the-times when things were happening and something of the personalities of those who took part in the events.

If you like what you read, you can thank the authors: Robert Wevodau, Eugene Hildabrant, Clement Steele and John Hill. Better yet, pass this booklet along to someone looking for an old, historic church with young ideas -- someone who wants to help make the next 275 years vital and fulfilling chapters in our continuing history.

A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF HEAD OF CHRISTIANA

1706 AT THE BEGINNING

The year was 1706. President of the Royal Society in London was Sir Isaac Newton, whose prestigious position was attributable in no small degree to his formulation of the law of gravity 40 years before. Two 21 year old musicians were building reputations in Germany: Johann Sebastian Bach as organist at St. Boniface Church in Armstadt and George Handel in Hamburg's Opera House orchestra. A 12 year old boy in Paris would live in history as Voltaire, philosophe extraordinaire and champion of satire and wit, and in Boston a poor candlemaker and his wife welcomed their fifteenth child, a son named Benjamin Franklin.

While the Age of Reason was approaching its peak in Europe, a host of Native American Indian tribes ruled the North American plains from the Alleghenies to the Rockies. It was three generations before the American colonies formally rejected British rule, and 87 years would pass before the French Revolution swept away the feudal monarchy and -- the heads of -- Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. The Pacific Islands we call Hawaii would not be seen by the white race for another 72 years. Delaware, the first state, was the southern extremity of William Penn's land grant from King Charles II.

And somewhere among the rolling hills near a tributary of the Christina River, a group of Presbyterians gathered together to worship God.

1706 - 1712 THE FIRST YEARS

The earliest settlers in Delaware were the Swedes and the Dutch, but our first congregation was undoubtedly dominated by Scotch/Irish. Driven from Scotland to Ireland by the persecutions of Charles II, the continued remorselessness of James II forced them to seek religious freedom and tolerance in America. Many of these immigrants settled in the region where Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland share common borders. Early families of our church with roots in Scotland were the Alexanders, Kerrs and Wallaces; Ireland sent us the Barrs, Russells and Steels.

The first worship services were probably held in members' homes, for there was no Head of Christiana church building in 1706. This was the year the first presbytery in America was formed under the leadership of the Rev. Francis Makemie, one of the pioneer Presbyterians in the colonies. Makemie and six other ministers met in Philadelphia and established an organization known simply as "The Presbytery." Five of these pastors were located in the region which is now the New Castle Presbytery: Francis Makemie at Rehobeth, MD; John Hampton at Snow Hill, MD; George McNish at Manokin and Wicomico, MD; Samuel Davis at Lewes, DE; and John Wilson at New Castle, DE. The two other charter members were Nathaniel Taylor of Upper Marlborough, MD, and Jedediah Andrews of Philadelphia, PA. The minutes of this presbytery provide us with the first written reference to our church organization, citing a meeting which took place in Philadelphia on May 18, 1708:

"This day was read before the Presbytery a letter sent by the people of and about White Clay Creek in New Castle County, importing their desire and petition to the

the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. to form an enlarged denomination called Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

On January 16, 1987, Head of Christiana welcomed as interim pastor the Rev. Willett Smith, retired pastor of Limestone Presbyterian Church. Rev. Smith served approximately one year as we went about the process of calling a new pastor.

In 1987, with a new mission statement in hand, we extended a call to the Rev. Dr. Duane E. Hix, then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Hudson, New York. He preached his first sermon at Head of Christiana in February of 1988. Rev. Hix, his wife Medora, and two children Adam and Monica, soon became an integral part of our church. Their youthful enthusiasm has attracted many newcomers, including young families, to our membership while their dedication continues to enrich our spiritual life. Rev. Hix guided the church through a successful transition from a three-board government to a unicameral system, and he was the first pastor to receive a housing allowance in lieu of our providing a manse.

EPILOGUE

How does one measure church growth and prosperity? We can point to brick and mortar, such as the Educational Unit erected in 1959, or electronic aids like our PA System installed in 1978. But the real measure is how well the church fulfills its stated purpose. No history is complete, therefore, that does not acknowledge the countless unselfish hours of hundreds of men and women devoted, over the last 288 years, to fulfilling the mission and ministry of our church -- from teaching Church School to preparing church suppers, from supporting worthy causes to just being available for care and help wherever needed, from preaching to gathering to worship God.

And so this history is not complete. It is, in a sense, only the beginning, and subsequent chapters will be written by those who follow. This brief narrative highlights some of the main events, the "roots," and the humanity of our founders. We believe it also traces the finger of God in the affairs of men and women of faith, such that we can still gather in this community of faith 288 years after the primitive beginnings of Head of Christiana. May God continue to guide us in both our corporate and personal journeys of faith.

To have and To hold...

The Court action brought by the combination of the "loyal trustees" and two ruling elders (W.H.S. Bouchelle and Alexander D. Short) was instrumental in retaining the church property as a part of New Castle Presbytery and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. For a period of time while the church was closed; the remaining loyal members scattered to surrounding churches.

The dissident majority continued to meet in the home of Rev. Welbon until the construction of a church building on Main Street in Newark was completed, the first permanent home of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Newark. Later a new church was built on Possum Park Road, and the old building became the City of Newark's Police Station.

When services resumed in the Head of Christiana church building, under the leadership of a lay minister, as few as a dozen members were in attendance. It was not until 1940 that a permanent pastor, Evan W. Renne, was called to begin the restoration of a viable congregation.

The period 1940 thru 1961 saw three pastors: Rev. Renne, 1940 - 1948; Rev. James L. Getaz, Jr., 1949 - 1952; and Rev. Robert W. Tull, 1956 - 1961. Slowly but steadily the church recovered, and the familiar sight of automobiles in the parking lot reflected the many activities within. During Rev. Tull's pastorate, the present Education Unit was built and dedicated in 1959.

On July 9, 1961, the session issued a call to the Rev. Dr. Richard L. Loring to become the 17th pastor of Head of Christiana Church. Dr. Loring earned his Doctor of Ministry from Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, VA, in 1972. Under his able leadership, the church prospered and grew to a membership of 231 by 1981. Dr. Loring continued the traditions of Head of Christiana by bringing the Age-old Truths into our 20th Century world of television, space exploration and atomic awareness.

JANUARY 1994 -- UPDATE

Dr. Richard Loring continued to serve as our pastor until September 30, 1986. At that time, having completed 25 years of service, he elected to dissolve the pastoral relationship, and he joined the ranks of interim pastors. He is currently active in the Wilmington/Philadelphia area.

During the period of time that Dr. Loring was with us, our denomination (United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.) merged with

Presbytery, to have the ordinances of the Gospel administered with more convenience and nearness to the place of their abode, for the greater advantage and ease to their several families, promising, withal, due encouragement to the minister that shall be appointed thus to supply them."

Mainly because of this petition many early references to our church call it White Clay Creek. However, this reference to White Clay Creek in the Presbytery record is to the area known as White Clay Creek Hundred, which encompasses the upper reaches of the Christina River. White Clay Creek Presbyterian Church, in Millcreek Hundred, was organized in 1721.

Some of the founding families of Head of Christiana were members of the congregation at New Castle. It is probable that the distance from White Clay Creek Hundred to New Castle encouraged them to meet, at least occasionally, for informal worship services closer to home and ultimately to the above petition for a separate organization. Not unexpectedly this request was opposed by some of the congregation at New Castle, for at the same (May 18, 1708) meeting:

"This day was also read a letter from several persons in the town of New Castle, wherein they crave that the people of White Clay Creek may not be suffered to set up a meeting house in the country, that their meeting house and congregation in New Castle may not be damaged by the rupture of their fellow members of White Clay Creek."

The Presbytery responded with a compromise decision that denied the request for a separate church organization, but directed Rev. John Wilson, minister of New Castle and charter member of the Presbytery, to preach alternate Sundays in New Castle and in the country. Thus John Wilson, a native of Scotland who immigrated to America shortly after his ordination, became the first minister to preach to the congregation at Head of Christiana and served in that capacity from 1708 until his death in 1712. In addition, he also served both as moderator of the Presbytery (Philadelphia) in 1707 and as liaison with the Church of Scotland.

Buoyed by the Presbytery's compromise decision and the prospect of having a regular minister, albeit every other Sunday, the congregation set about constructing a permanent place of worship. Built in 1708, it was a log structure probably about 30 feet long and very roughly finished. It was located in what is now the old section of the cemetery where the Rev. George Gillespie, our first installed minister, is buried. The land was

owned by John Steel, who bought it (250 acres) at a sheriff's sale in 1707. Steel, an Irish immigrant who originally settled in Philadelphia, and John Gardner, formerly a member of New Castle Church, are the first known elders of Head of Christiana Church.

1713 - 1740 EARLY DEVELOPMENT

The first minister called to serve our church was George Gillespie, who was born and educated in Glasgow, Scotland. (He was a descendant of another Rev. George Gillespie, who was a prominent member of the Westminster Assembly which established many of the standards of the Presbyterian denomination.) He accepted the call from Head of Christiana and preached his trial sermon on May 27, 1713. The next day he was ordained and installed as minister, a position he ably executed until his death in January, 1760. Rev. Gillespie's 46 years as pastor is still the longest period of active service of any pastor in the history of our church.

By 1716 the Philadelphia Presbytery, which was organized in 1706 and had grown considerably, elected to split into four separate presbyteries united in a synod. The Synod of Philadelphia was composed of the presbyteries of Philadelphia, Long Island, New Castle and Snow Hill. The New Castle Presbytery had its first meeting March 13, 1717, at New Castle Church. It was comprised of the ministers of New Castle, Christiana Creek (Head of Christiana), Welsh Tract (Pencader), Appoquinimink (Drawyers), Patuxent and Patapsco. Attendees from Head of Christiana were Rev. George Gillespie and elder John Steel.

Minutes of the New Castle Presbytery meeting on September 14, 1719, document the first known reference to Head of Christiana Church members other than ministers or elders. At this meeting:

"Abram Emet Sr., a member of Mr. Gillespie's congregation, presented a paper to the Presbytery in his own and two of his sons' names wherein they desire either of two things viz. (1) to erect a new congregation in the upper part of Mr. Gillespie's present congregation or (2) to have their liberty to separate from said congregation."

This request was denied by the Presbytery. The Emets, who displayed a great deal of tenacity and persistence, appealed the decision which was

others. These ministers declared their intent to withdraw from the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The New Castle Presbytery, viewing this action as a defiance of the authority of the governing body of the Church, suspended Rev. Welbon and the others. Pastoral relations were dissolved in July, 1936, and a "trial" of insubordination was begun. Rev. Welbon refused to attend the "trial" and disavowed the authority of the Presbytery. He was found guilty in October, 1936, and was deposed from the office of Minister.

There was a basic disagreement between Laird, Welbon, et al, and the Presbytery of New Castle on the nature of the disagreement. The Presbytery's official position was that it was governmental -- the unwillingness to recognize the authority of the General Assembly and other governmental units of the Church. Those defrocked claimed the disagreement was doctrinal. Their position was that the issue was merely an example of the inroads being made by the "Modernism" doctrine.

When Welbon left Head of Christiana, three-fourths of the congregation supported him, leaving families divided and many friendships torn apart. A group of "loyal trustees," J.W. Milburn, W.B. McCloskey, F.B. Martenis and R.P. Mathias, locked the doors of the church and posted notice forbidding its use. Welbon, unknown to the trustees, had a key, and on advice of his lawyer, entered and conducted services. This infuriated the "loyal trustees" and a bill was filed in the Court of Chancery enjoining Welbon and his followers from using church property for worship or any other purpose. The church was closed!

The Court's decision was essentially based upon two points. First, that the trustees are the corporation and are responsible to hold and manage the property "to and for the use of their respective societies or congregations" and the congregation is subject to the doctrine and government of the higher judicatories (Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly). Therefore, the trustees are not privileged to use the property for any other purpose or to convey it to any other organization.

Second, the use of the property on which the church rests is subject to the conditions of the 999-year lease. Said lease provides that if "the Presbyterians should decline or cease so far that none of that Denomination of Protestants will be to continue that way of worship in this house," the heirs of the original owners of the property may repossess it. The Presbyterians spoken of had to be the ones exemplified by the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. since no other Presbyterian denomination existed at that time.

Rev. Welbon, like Dr. Vallandigham, was a talented historian. In 1933 he updated Dr. Vallandigham's 1876 historical discourse in a book entitled A History of Head of Christiana Church. This historian himself would play a major role in church history during the severe schism in the 1930's. In closing his historical update in 1933, Rev. Welbon, exhibiting a hint of disapproval of the trend toward liberalism, wrote:

"Time will mellow the failures and successes of this old church. Many of the former families have died out or moved away to the towns and cities both near and far. The farms of these godly people have been deserted, falling into the hands of foreigners, or those who have little regard for the church or for Christian fellowship. In spite of the fact that in recent times some of the faithful members have been slowly drifting away from this sacred place (for one cause or another); Head of Christiana may rejoice that in the providence of God her doors are still open, and that she is still able bravely to hold her own."

Three years later the doors were locked.

1933 - 1981

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY SCHISM AND RECOVERY

Opposition to liberalism in the church spawned an organization known as the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. It was formed in the 1920's by a group of dissident ministers who were alarmed by church policy that permitted missionaries (and others) to disavow some of the cardinal doctrines, such as the virgin birth and bodily resurrection of Christ. This organization was not sanctioned by the General Assembly which, in 1924, ordered all ministers to sever their relationships with the Independent Board.

Rev. Harold Laird, pastor at First and Central Presbyterian Church in Wilmington (whose congregation tendered the anti-liberal resolution to New Castle Presbytery in 1924), was a member of the Independent Board. He refused to resign and, after many years of argument and charges, was tried and defrocked in June, 1936.

Several area ministers, among them Rev. Henry Welbon of Head of Christiana, were sympathetic to Laird and disapproved of the rather arbitrary position of the General Assembly on this issue and several

again denied, this time by the Synod of Philadelphia. Finally, the Emets joined with others to organize Rock Presbyterian Church in 1720.


This predilection of congregations to split was manifested again four years later when a Pennsylvania contingent left Rock Church and organized New London Presbyterian Church. Rev. Gillespie wrote in 1723 about "the great many congregations erected within the past five years." He also mentioned at the same time that "about 200 families have come into our parts from Ireland" noting that neither the Anglicans, Quakers nor Pennsylvania Dutch liked them.

Besides Rock Church, organized in 1720, White Clay Creek was founded in 1721 and McKennan's Church (Red Clay Creek) in 1722. George Gillespie frequently preached in neighboring churches, most probably including Rock, White Clay Creek and Red Clay Creek.

During the first half of the 18th century there were several land transactions related to the church. These warrant recognition, if for no other reason than that they reveal the names of some of our early elders. On March 5, 1732, James Steel leased two acres and four perches of land to the church elders, who were Samuel Johnson and John Cross of New Castle County, Alexander White and William Semple of Chester County and David Alexander and Andrew Wallace of Cecil County. James Steel was probably the son of John Steel, who bought the 250 acre lot in 1707. The elders David Alexander (a weaver) and Andrew Wallace jointly owned land which the two families purchased in 1714 at New Munster in nearby Cecil County.

Rev. George Gillespie, by deed of gift dated July 26, 1733, conveyed to the church elders 100 acres of land. Elders named in this transaction were Andrew Wallace, Thomas Weir, John Rankin, Nathaniel Bryan, William Wallace, Joseph Wallace, Moses Scott, and John Steel (probably not the original 1707 land owner). This parcel was not at the current church site but, as we shall see, figured prominently in the construction of a brick edifice to replace the log church in 1750.

*Whereas George Gillespie
of White Clay Creek hundred...*



1741 - 1760
THE "LOG COLLEGE" SCHISM

George Whitefield was not a local preacher. In fact he did not even live in the American colonies, but he had a profound impact on Presbyterians and their churches. George Whitefield was a Church of England evangelist with an immense popularity in the colonies. He often preached to huge crowds in Delaware and the surrounding states. Whitefield's evangelistic manner, centered on emotional involvement, precipitated the Great Revival of 1740, and eventually polarized the Presbyterians into two factions.

But there was another cause of the schism of 1741. At that time the centers of learning and theological education were in Europe and New England. Because of the high rate of immigration and population expansion, new congregations were springing up all over the middle colonies. To help supply the increased demand for qualified ministers, William Tennent, pastor at Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, established a school to prepare young men for the ministry. Tennent's school was derisively called the "log college" by the conservative segment of the church.

These two forces (Whitefield's popular evangelism and Tennent's "log college") shattered the unity of the Presbyterian Church in America, creating the Old Side and the New Side. The triggering event was a Philadelphia Synod decision in 1739 to the effect that prospective ministers without degrees from European or New England universities should be examined by the whole synod instead of the individual presbytery. The intent of this ruling was obvious to William Tennent, who spearheaded the formation of the New Side Synod of New York; the conservative, majority Old Side remained in the Synod of Philadelphia.

The Old Side placed a high degree of importance on a minister's educational qualifications. These men were university bred and looked down on the "log college" graduates. The New Side, adopting the evangelistic philosophy and practices of Whitefield, esteemed enthusiastic spiritual endowments in ministers and promoted a striking emotional crisis of conversion.

These opposing forces penetrated Head of Christiana Church. George Gillespie, after an initial courtship with the New Side, came on strong for

German designs to rearrange Europe and their practice of sinking unarmed merchant ships. Of the war effort the New Castle Presbytery had this to say in 1917:

"...in view of the solemn position in which our country is now placed by reason of the action of Congress on April 6, 1917, declaring a state of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government, New Castle Presbytery takes this opportunity of expressing its approval of the course pursued by our President, Woodrow Wilson, who has labored unceasingly to persuade the German government to modify its inhuman policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. With the firm belief that our present civilization is in peril, we endorse the cause of our President for the people of the United States to unsheath the sword in the interest of humanity; we pledge to our common cause the lives and fortunes of our constituents and we invoke the blessings of high heaven upon our warriors in their struggle to drive from the world despotism and autocracy."

The people of Head of Christiana no doubt fully supported this resolution.

The second conflict related to a growing discontent with, as some perceived it, the liberal tendencies of the Presbyterian Church. This concern first surfaced in 1924 in the form of a resolution handed to New Castle Presbytery by the congregation of First and Central Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, DE. The resolution called for, among other things, that the Presbytery...

"...send to the General Assembly ... commissioners of undoubted orthodoxy who are in hearty accord with the five essentials."

This discontent over liberalism seethed for over 10 years before it erupted into a major schism in the mid-1930's.

Our thirteenth pastor was called as minister to Head of Christiana and Pencader on August 2, 1931, at the controversial salary of \$1,100 per annum. Rev. Henry Wilson, whose parents were missionaries, was born in Seoul, Korea in 1904. He attended high schools in California and Tennessee and graduated from Marysville College, Tennessee. He attended Princeton Theological Seminary and graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary in 1931.

serve, with great distinction, as pastor of White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana. Another revival in the fall of 1870 added 50 new members to Head of Christiana Church. In 1875 the Presbytery suggested a division of the congregations of White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana. Both churches tendered invitations for Rev. Vallandigham's services, but the call from White Clay Creek was ruled irregular (possibly for being made on the Sabbath), and the call from Head of Christiana was accepted.

In 1893 Rev. Vallandigham retired from his duties as minister, ending 40 years of faithful service. On July 2, 1876, he had delivered an eloquent discourse on the history of Head of Christiana Church. This discourse was subsequently published and served as one of the prime references for this narrative. Dr. Vallandigham continued as pastor emeritus until his death on April 10, 1904. He is buried in the cemetery adjacent to the church, of which he said in his discourse:

"Here, too, is the resting-place of the dead, where lie the remains of thousands of those who once worshipped here, their bodies awaiting the resurrection, their spirits before the throne. We cannot now, however, indulge the solemn reflections that naturally occur to the mind in such a place, and at such a time as this: we must proceed to present the facts of history."

1893 -1933 TWO CONFLICTS

The period from 1895 to 1931 saw six pastors come and go; it was the greatest turnover rate in Head of Christiana's history. The pastorates of our first six ministers spanned a total of 180 years compared to 36 for the second group of six. Of this latter group the longest tenure was the eleven years (1899 to 1910) of service by Joel Scobey Gilfillan who, besides being a faithful minister, gained a national reputation as an expert on the raising and handling of bees. The other five ministers were James D. Shanks, Adrian Van Oeveren, Walter R. Clyde, John W. McMurray and John H. Moore. The last three also served the Pencader Church, concurrent with their pastorates at Head of Christiana.

The latter half of this period was marked by two conflicts, one which drew Presbyterians into a unity seldom observed, and another which plunged Head of Christiana Church into the most serious schism in its history. The first conflict resulted from our country's disapproval of

the Old Side and preserved unity at Head of Christiana during this period of strife which permanently divided other congregations in the area.

Rev. Gillespie's association with the New Side was brief. In February 1744 he appeared before the New Castle Presbytery, which was...

"...convened at the New London tract, and then and there, in the presence of the said Presbytery, and of a very numerous congregation, confessed his error and sin in leaving them, and solemnly declared he was sorry he had ever joined the New Party: that he had acted rashly and deviously, and was led to it by the appearance of piety in some, and by not duly considering and comparing the protestation and the apology of the New Brunswick Presbytery."

His apology and explanation were favorably received and he was welcomed back into the Philadelphia Presbytery where he actively pursued the reconciliation that was finally hammered out in 1758.

A major milestone for Head of Christiana Church was the erection of a permanent brick building to replace the log structure which was built in 1708. This new church, built in 1750, served as a place of worship for 108 years before it was consumed by fire in 1858.

George Gillespie's gift of 100 acres to the church elders in 1733 was a key component of the fund raising drive for the new church building. Church members desired to sell the 100 acres to help pay for the new church, but the original deed of conveyance did not provide for this option. On November 15, 1749, the elders, by deed of release, conveyed the land back to Rev. Gillespie with the condition he release it back again to be sold by the church elders. Rev. Gillespie did convey the lot back to the elders for the express purpose of selling it, which they did on May 15, 1750, to George Gillespie, farmer and son of Rev. Gillespie. These transactions eliminated the legal obstacles which prevented the church from profiting from the sale of the land, left the building committee 50 pounds closer to its goal, and farmer Gillespie with some good grazing land.

Beginning at a white oak tree ...

Rev. Gillespie's long tenure ended with his death on January 2, 1760. His loyal congregation, which fully supported him during the "log college" turmoil, buried him on the site of the old log church building. His outstanding career is commemorated on the monument which stands over his grave:

Sacred to the memory of
THE REV'D MR. GEORGE GILLESPIE:
Who was a sound Divine,
An useful, practical Preacher,
Eminent for Piety,
Zeal for the Honor of Christ's House,
And every social virtue:
A tender Husband, an indulgent Parent,
A good Master, a warm Friend,
Courteous, hospitable, never discontented
With an income narrow and very uncertain.
He spent much time in Prayer and Meditation,
And longed to leave this world and be with Christ.

1760 - 1800 **THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR YEARS**

After Rev. Gillespie's death in 1760 the church was without a regular minister for 9 years. On May 9, 1769, the New Castle Presbytery met at Head of Christiana to hear our second minister preach his trial sermon. The next day John McCrery, a graduate of Princeton, was ordained and installed as minister of the combined congregations of White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana. One of his principal interests was church missionary work, as noted by the Synod decision in 1769 to award him "an additional allowance of five pounds" in recognition of his "great services on his mission to the western frontiers" of Pennsylvania.

An amusing anecdote has survived from Rev. McCrery's missionary work in the South, probably around 1771. Rev. McCrery, who was fond of tea, inadvertently discovered that tea drinking was not yet an established social custom in the South. He always carried a supply of tea with him and, on one occasion, presented a portion of his leaves to the lady of the house where he was staying, with a request to prepare tea for his dinner. Upon assuming his place at dinner that evening, the woman laid before him a plate with the steaming leaves. Rev. McCrery allegedly replied that he would much rather have had the broth.

Rev. John McCrery was pastor at Head of Christiana throughout the Revolutionary conflict with Great Britain. At this time the Presbyterians were by far the strongest denomination in Delaware, their 29 churches outnumbering the combined total of all the rest. These Presbyterians, not unexpectedly, were united and vociferous in support of the

split the country, and in the border states of Delaware and Maryland there were partisans of both sides. On at least one occasion Rev. Vallandigham was detained and questioned by federal authorities, presumably because the tenor of his sermons may not have satisfied the political sentiments of Republican Unionists.

What brought federal agents to this remote corner of Delaware in the first place, and why this concern over a country minister's sermons? The answer lies in a series of events that came to a focus in Ohio during late winter and spring of 1863. The Union cause was in trouble; its largest Army had recently suffered a humiliating defeat at Fredericksburg, Virginia, and was about to be further embarrassed at Chancellorsville. Anti-war sentiment was growing stronger in the North and each Union setback was followed by a chorus of "I told you so's." Unfortunately for the congregation of Head of Christiana and especially their pastor, one of the loudest of the dissenting voices belonged to the ebullient and persuasive Clement Laird Vallandigham, Ohio congressman, anti-war Democrat, and brother of James Laird Vallandigham.

Clement Vallandigham's round of anti-war speeches in Ohio put him on an irreversible collision course with Union Major General Ambrose Burnside, whose ill-fated attempt at command reduced the Army of the Potomac's rolls by 13,000 soldiers at Fredericksburg. Stripped of Army command, Burnside was sent to supervise the military district which included Ohio, where there was little chance of matching wits with Robert E. Lee. To Burnside, eager to regain the favor of Lincoln and incapable of discerning subtle shades of gray on issues he viewed as either black or white, Vallandigham's actions smacked of treason. Burnside ordered his arrest and, in a lightning series of events, Vallandigham was taken by force from his bedroom and imprisoned in Cincinnati where he successfully pleaded (to public sentiment) denial of his right to freedom of speech.

President Lincoln, who had infinitely better instincts for political survival than General Burnside, commuted Vallandigham's prison sentence and ordered him released behind Rebel lines in Tennessee. Vallandigham, by now a popular martyr, made his way across the Confederacy to Charleston, South Carolina, and eventually boarded a ship to Canada, where he ran, in absentia, for governor of Ohio. He later returned to the United States under disguise and lost badly in his bid for governor, but Clement Vallandigham gained international fame for himself and some unwanted attention for a Presbyterian minister in Delaware.

Occasional disfavor of federal authorities had no negative effect on Rev. Vallandigham's popularity with his congregations, for he continued to

"We commenced a series of meetings on the first day of November, and continued them for twenty-three days with three services each day. The first week we spent at White Clay Creek, the second at Head of Christiana, and the third was divided between the two places. In the meantime, there was preaching every evening in Newark. ... No attempts were made to create excitement; a most profound stillness and solemnity pervaded the meetings, interrupted occasionally by the signs of the anxious, or, as was the case in two or three instances, by the outcries of some more heavily burdened soul, who, in an anguish that could not be repressed, was writhing under a wound inflicted by an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty."

One of the fruits of this revival was the addition of 142 members to Rev. Vallandigham's three congregations: 71 at White Clay Creek and 71 at First Newark and Head of Christiana.

Undoubtedly some of these new members were among the congregation who were on their way to worship on March 14, 1858, only to find their church in flames. This spectacular fire ended 108 years of services in the church building which replaced the original log structure in 1750. Again in the words of Rev. Vallandigham:

"The congregation assembled that morning to find their ancient and beloved sanctuary in flames. They immediately convened in the session-house, and after a brief religious service, resolved to call a congregational meeting on the Thursday following. The meeting was held, and arrangements were made to rebuild at once."

For several months the congregation worshipped in neighboring churches, school houses and private homes. By August, 1858, the new building was far enough completed to accommodate services in the basement. The new building was finished in the spring of 1859 and, on March 9, the sanctuary in which we now worship was formally dedicated. The cause of the fire has been laid to some local boys who were attempting to smoke foxes out from underneath the church.

In 1860, the congregations of the three churches having been swelled by the 1854 revival, Rev. Vallandigham requested, and was granted, permission to relinquish his duties at First Newark to devote full time to Head of Christiana and White Clay Creek. These were troubled times for our new nation and, it seems, for our church also. The Civil War had

revolutionary movement. This solid unanimity was the result of many memories of imprisonment for preaching without a license, forced closing of churches and inordinately high taxes. So powerful was this feeling against England that some historians claim that the Presbyterians were the dominating force in the move to gain independence.

Head of Christiana Church members contributed substantially to the Revolutionary cause. The Delaware Archives hold these names of church members who gave their allegiance: First Lieutenant Thomas Rankin, Second Lieutenant Joseph Steel, and Privates George Gillespie, Jr., Robert Rankin, James Rankin, Obediah Sargeant, John Sargeant, (one wonders of these two were ever promoted), Allen Steel, William Simpson, James Simpson, John Scott and William Crawford.

Lieutenant (later Captain) Thomas Rankin was a notable figure in the Revolutionary Army. The son of Joseph Rankin, one of the earliest members of our congregation, organized a company of Delaware soldiers who distinguished themselves in the struggle for freedom. At the end of his outstanding career, he was buried, with military honors, in Head of Christiana Cemetery.

John McCrery served the congregations of White Clay Creek and Head of Christiana for 31 years until his death on June 18, 1800. He was married to Rebecca Wallace, daughter of Joseph Wallace and granddaughter of Andrew Wallace, one of the first church elders and resident of New Munster. During his pastorate he resided near the church in a house which was later owned by George Casho, a prominent citizen and leading industrialist in the Newark area.

1800 - 1850 A NEW CENTURY BEGINS

Another 12 years passed before the ordination and installation of our third pastor, Andrew Kerr Russell. From 1800 to 1812 the church relied on the Presbytery for supply pastors, most of whom were settled pastors obliged by the Presbytery to leave their own churches for a time to preach at churches without a permanent pastor. One of the supply pastors was Rev. John Waugh, principal of Newark Academy, who is buried in the cemetery adjacent to the church.

Rev. Andrew Russell also preached here occasionally as supply pastor prior to his installation as minister of Head of Christiana and White Clay Creek on April 8, 1812. Rev. Russell was born in 1780 in

Northumberland County, Pennsylvania. His mother was the daughter of Andrew Kerr, a church elder during the pastorate of John McCrery. After graduating from Dickinson College in 1806, with the highest honors in his class, he became Professor of Languages at Washington College, Pennsylvania. In 1811 he took over as principal of Newark Academy. For 27 years, until his death, he was pastor of the two churches and principal of the Academy. He was instrumental in the formation of First Presbyterian Church of Newark, although he died in 1839, a few months before the formal organization of the Newark Church. Charter members of First Newark included nine from the congregation of Head of Christiana.

A portion of the land on which the church and cemetery now stand was leased to church trustees in 1806 by Allan Steel and his wife Ruth, and James Steel and his wife Ann. This lot, about two and one-half acres, along with the 1732 lease of about two acres from James Steel and two small parcels purchased from Thomas Steel in 1859 and 1875, comprise all of the ground belonging to the church. The trustees listed in the 1806 lease were: William Price of Chester County, George Gillespie, Obediah Sargeant, John McBeth and William Anderson of New Castle County, and John Evans of Cecil County. The land was leased for 999 years at a rate of 6 cents annually, if demanded.

The oldest church records yet discovered were kept during Rev. Russell's time. These include a list of members of Head of Christiana in 1815, records of baptism from 1816 to 1838 and session minutes from 1818 to 1838. The records were found in the back of a book which contained similar records for White Clay Creek, whose congregation at the time was also led by Rev. Russell.

A receipt book, used by trustees from 1829 to 1912, preserves some interesting and enlightening transactions. On October 10, 1829, Rev. Russell was given, by trustee Mr. James Phillips, the sum of thirty dollars and sixty-nine and one-fourth cents "on account of salary due from Head of Christiana Congregation." On April 15, 1848, the minister Joseph Barr was paid thirty-one dollars and forty-seven and one-half cents in the way of salary.

In 1831 there was a religious revival which added 70 new members to the church roll in one year. This revival, as did the Great Revival of 1740, coincided with a schism which again split the Presbyterians into an old and new school. The causes of this split included dissatisfaction with the 1801 Plan of Union with the congregationalists and an old school fear of the growing abolitionist movement. The only apparent effect of this revival and schism on Head of Christiana was the

organization of two new area churches: Elkton Presbyterian Church in 1833 and First Presbyterian Church of Newark in 1839, both of which claimed leading members of our congregation.

The latter part of this period witnessed the pastorates of Elijah Wilson and Joseph Barr. Rev. Wilson, a native of Philadelphia, became blind while a student at Rutgers in 1835. He studied theology at Auburn and Princeton and was installed pastor of Head of Christiana and First Presbyterian Church of Newark in 1842. In 1845 he assumed supervision of the Female Seminary in Newark, but this job, plus two church pastorates, were too much for him. He resigned his pastorates in 1846 and later moved to Pennsylvania where he authored and published a book entitled The Living Pulpit.

Rev. Joseph Barr was installed pastor on May 8, 1848. He was born in New Castle and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1832 he was selected by the Presbytery to visit Africa on a missionary tour. During his five years as pastor of Head of Christiana he shared his time with White Clay Creek Church. He resigned in 1853 because of poor health and died a year later in Wilmington.

1853 - 1893

REV. JAMES LAIRD VALLANDIGHAM

In October, 1853, James Laird Vallandigham was elected pastor of the Presbyterian churches at Head of Christiana, White Clay Creek and First Newark. This event heralded one of the richest periods in our church history. Dr. Vallandigham was not only an effective and beloved minister, he was also a singularly articulate and devoted historian, and his 40 years as minister offered an abundance of material for his pen.

A son of Rev. Clement Vallandigham, who was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in New Lisbon, Ohio, he graduated from Jefferson College, taught school in Ohio and on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and practiced law before electing to enter the ministry. He was licensed by the Presbytery of New Lisbon in 1845 and ordained by the Presbytery of Baltimore in 1850. Before settling in Newark he was pastor of churches in Princess Anne and Rehobeth in Maryland.

Shortly after his installation as minister of the three local churches, Rev. Vallandigham was caught up in the whirlwind of the Revival of 1854. In the words of Rev. Vallandigham:

Other Clergy of Note from earlier years.

The Rev. John McCrery, 1769-1800 (pastor, Head of Christiana and White Clay Creek churches).

The Rev. John Waugh, (supply pastor and Principal of Newark Academy 1800-1812).

The Rev. Andrew Russell, 1812-1839 (pastor, Head of Christiana, White Clay Creek, and Principal, the Newark Academy).

The Rev. Elijah Wilson, 1842-1846 (pastor, Head of Christiana and First Presbyterian and Director of the Female Seminary, Newark, 1845-46).

The Rev. Joseph Barr, 1848-1853 (pastor, Head of Christiana and White Clay Creek).

The Rev. James L. Vallandigham (1853-1893). (pastor, Head of Christiana, White Clay Creek and Newark, 1853-1860) (pastor, Head of Christiana and White Clay Creek, 1860-1875) (pastor, Head of Christiana, 1875-1893).

The Rev Joel Scobey Gilfillan (1899-1910) developed the sanctuary alterations which provided 8 stained glass windows.

The Revs. Shanks, Van Oeveral, Clyde, McMurray (1910-31).

The Rev. Henry Welbon (1931-1936) split the congregation and was eventually forced to leave the ministry. The church was closed until 1940. He formed the Newark Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. Robert Tull (1956-1961) presided over construction of the Christian Education building in 1958-59 and modifications to the sanctuary in 1961. Rev. Tull is retired in Chesapeake, VA.

In conjunction with the Newark Heritage Alliance, Minster's Jewelers of Newark, is creating, for sale, a silver pendant commemorating each of the locations where a State Historical Marker is being placed. Over the next several years, forty of the markers will be memorialized with jewelry. The jewelry for Head of Christiana is a pendant depicting the "Shepherd" stained glass window from our sanctuary.

Service of Dedication

Historic Marker Erected by the State of Delaware

June 24, 2001

Prelude

Robert McKelvie, Piper

Ascription of Praise

Introduction of Honored Guests

Remarks upon Dedication

The Honorable Steven H. Amick

Litany of Dedication

Let us thank God whom we worship here in the beauty of holiness. Eternal God, the heaven of heavens cannot contain you, much less the walls of temples made with hands. Graciously receive our thanks for this place, and accept the work of our hands, offered to your honor.

We thank you, Lord.

For your presence when never two or three have gathered together,

We thank you, Lord.

For this sanctuary which has stood as a witness to your presence in the world, and as shelter from the storms of life,

We thank you, Lord.

In recognition of the 295 years of service to God and to the World, we place this marker so others may know our testimony to your faithfulness with us.

We thank you, Lord.

For the faith of those who have gone before us and for our encouragement by their perseverance,

We thank you, Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Reverend Christopher Schooley

Benediction

The Reverend Schooley

Postlude

Robert McKelvie, Piper

HEAD OF CHRISTIANA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The first Presbyterian services in this area were conducted by Rev. John Wilson in 1706. Then pastor of New Castle Presbyterian Church, Rev. Wilson came every other Sunday to minister to the many residents of this area who had immigrated from Scotland and Ireland. In 1708, a modest log structure was erected on land owned by John Steel. The first installed pastor was Rev. George Gillespie, a native of Scotland, who arrived in 1713 and served until his death in 1760. During his tenure the log building was replaced by a brick structure which served the congregation until it was destroyed by fire in 1858. Within one year, the present church was built, and while alterations have been made, the basic structure remains intact.

A number of critical issues have impacted the church over the years. Many members were ardent patriots and active participants in the struggle for American Independence. In the 19th century the question of slavery proved divisive, with partisans within the church on both sides of the issue. During the 1930's a dispute concerning theological matters resulted in an attempt to separate from the established church. For a time the church was closed, but the efforts of a few trustees and elders resulted in a court action that barred the move, and the building was reopened. Since that time the congregation has grown and prospered, adding new members, and expanding its ministry. In 1983, Head of Christiana Presbyterian Church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Text of Historic Marker

BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF THE CONGREGATION

Head of Christiana Church, begun in 1706, was among the first identified Presbyterian congregations founded in the state of Delaware. It took its place beside Newcastle and Apoquinimy as the first Presbyterian Churches in the not-yet-named colony. Churches in surrounding states included Snow Hill in Maryland, and Woodbridge and Freehold in New Jersey.

1705 John Steele purchases land given for the log church built in 1708.

1706 Residents of the area of the Christiana Creek, White Clay Creek Hundred, begin meeting for worship.

1708 A petition is sent to the newly formed Presbytery of Philadelphia (1706) requesting that a pastor be assigned here. A 30-foot long log church is built. The pastor of the congregation at "Newcastle" (John Wilson) is required to share his time between Newcastle and Christiana Creek.

1712 Wilson dies. The Rev. George Gillespie, member of the Presbytery of Glasgow (Scotland) arrives in the Colonies and is asked to serve the congregation in Woodbridge, New Jersey.

1713 The Woodbridge congregation continues its history of internal disagreements and Gillespie elects to not serve there. He receives calls from several congregations, but chooses that of the congregation in the White Clay Creek area. He is ordained and installed on May 27.

1750 The congregation replaces the original log building with a brick building and moves its location to adjacent land. This church stood until a fire on March 13, 1858.

1760 On January 2, Gillespie dies and is buried in the cemetery at the spot where the pulpit of the original log church stood. His gravestone is still legible in the lower portion of the cemetery.