

MILTON'S FIRST CENTURY
1807-1907

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THE HISTORY OF MILTON
(From The Delawarean (Dover), August, 1878)

We are told that the site on which the town stands was once an oak grove, and part of what was once a dense cedar swamp, in which various kinds of wild animals bounded. Here the Indians also ran wild, as unmistakable evidence shows of their having inhabited this place at that time--such as piles of shells on the banks of the creek, darts, stone-axes, clubs and many other relics of that race.

Milton was founded in the year 1763 by one Mr. Forcus, and is situated at the Head of the Broadkiln Creek or River. It was known at that time by the name of Landing, or the Head of the Broadkiln. The place of crossing the creek or swamp was near where the present grist mill stands. On the north side of the stream was the landing where vessels of very small size used to come for the general produce of the country. Soon after the settlement had commenced, a gentleman by the name of Baptis Lay, a German by birth, commenced and built the first vessel, and ever since ship-building has been one of the most important features of the town, and continues so until this day.

Somewhere near was built the first church, which was an Episcopalian, and founded by the Church of England and called St. John the Baptist; the date of its erection is lost. The second was the Methodist Episcopal, built by one Thomas Coulter, in the year 1802, dedicated by one Rev. Snyder, and called Goshen. In the year 1834 the Presbyterians built a very nice church, but made a very serious mistake in building it out of town; consequently, the society soon died, and the church became vacant. The Methodist Protestants were the next to try their hand. They succeeded, on the north side of the stream, in the year 1853, and are a flourishing society today. In the year 1876 the society of the Episcopalian was resurrected, and they have built a very nice house, which was dedicated by Bishop Lee, and called St. John the Baptist, after the former church of that name. The Methodist Episcopal, becoming dissatisfied with their old house, have erected one of the most beautiful houses of worship in the county, and it was dedicated on the 6th of August 1878, by the Rev. Harry Dashiell, and called Bishop Scott's Church of Milton.

The first school was started in the year 1816--prior to that time the schools, if they had any, were kept in private dwellings. The old academy, as it is now called, was built by a stock company, in the year 1818, and is supposed to have been the first schoolhouse built in the town, but has long since ceased to be used for school purposes. The ground upon which it stands was deeded to the town by one Arthur Milby, a very wealthy and influential citizen of that day. Since that time the public school law came in force, and the town was divided into two districts. Since, it has been divided and

Milton's first merchant was one Mr. Forgus who commenced business in the year 1763 at the Head of the Broadkiln Creek. On the north side of the stream was the landing where small vessels came for general produce of the county. Soon after the settlement, a gentleman by the name of Baptis Lay, a German by birth, built the first vessel, and we find on the ships registry of the port of Philadelphia from 1726 to 1776 in the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography an entry to the shallop "Broadkiln" built on that stream on April 16, 1737, owners Edward and Nathaniel Naws, both of Sussex County, capacity 10 tons. My opinion is that the "Broadkiln" was built near the Waste Gates. Since that time we have had many master builders. Cornelius Coulter engaged in ship building as early as 1800 and was succeeded by his brother, William Coulter, in 1825. Then came Jacob White, Samuel Martin, Samuel Stephenson, John Mustard, and George W. Atkins. The work increased until 1880 when it was no unusual sight to see three or four ships on the stocks at a time.

The principal builders of this time are David H. Atkins, Ponder and Russell, Cornelius C. Davidson, William C. Prettyman, William Lamb, Joseph and Thomas Black and B. F. Hastings. These employed about 100 men. Many are the ships built by these men, gone out to make fortunes for the Milton Academy boys and their families.

The first church was an Episcopal one, called St. John the Baptist and founded by the Church of England. Rev. William Beckett in a letter dated September 25, 1729, mentioned that his church is in a growing condition and that a fourth church built in the forest was opened about a year ago named St. John the Baptist with prospect for a good congregation. In a letter of September 26, 1742, he mentioned that all four of his churches were filled on Sunday and sometimes he had to preach outside under the trees. The church was built at the fording place of Long Branch in the forest at Broadkiln where the road crossed the stream and was at the time the road leading into Maryland. The church was under the charge of St. Peters Episcopal Church at Lewes. The building was used as a place of worship until 1800 and then used as a schoolhouse.

The first Methodist meetings in Milton were held in private houses. In 1801 the society felt the need of a regular place of worship, and a paper was drawn up and passed around among the citizens. On this paper \$328 was subscribed, and \$140 on another--a total of \$440. On January 16, 1802, the land was granted by John S. Conwell and wife to John Hazzard, Bevens Morris, Isaac Coulter, John Tilney, Samuel Ratcliff, Eli Hall, Morgan Williams and Thomas Coulter. Goshen Meeting House was commenced but not finished until 1820. The old church was bought by Daniel R. Burton, moved downtown and used by him as a store until it was destroyed by fire in December, 1890.

In 1815 an act of assembly was passed allowing Hon. Joseph Maull, John S. Conwell and William W. Coulter to build a dam across Broadkiln Creek near Fergus Bridge, then a grist mill was built which became the property of

Over the past hundred years that little single story school grew from one teacher to eighteen. One room with no equipment became a modern school. Visit the new building and then recall the old school of one hundred years ago. Thus one may realize that we are progressing and that time is dealing kindly and generously with Milton and its environs.

INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES

The principal industry of Milton was ship building. Baptist Lay, the pioneer of the business, built his first vessel a short distance from Milton over a century and a half ago. As early as 1800, Cornelius Coulter was extensively engaged in shipbuilding. He was succeeded by his brother William V. Coulter in 1825. At this time Jacob White and Samuel Martin, Samuel Stephenson, John Mustard and George W. Atkins were also in the business. The amount of work increased to 1861 when it reached its height. From that year until 1880 there were generally 3 or 4 ships on the stocks. The principal builders during this period of time were David H. Atkins, Ponder and Russell, C.C. Davidson, William C. Prettyman, William Lamb, Joseph L. Black and Brother and R.F. Hastings. Of recent date were the last two builders along with James P. Davidson and Captain Potter.

In 1815, Hon. Joseph Maull, John S. Conwell and William W. Conwell were granted permission by the General Assembly to erect a mill dam across Broadkill Creek near Fergus Bridge, which connected Front Street with Mulbury Street. The dam was completed and a grist-mill was erected by them which later became the property of Hon. Joseph Maull. He also purchased a saw mill on the same stream a short distance above. This was known as Draper Mill and in 1812 a half interest was conveyed to William W. Conwell by Isaac Clowes.

After Maull's purchase of the said saw mill, he erected a bark mill on said stream, opposite the saw mill, which was operated until 1845. After Maull's death these mills were sold and conveyed to Samuel R. Paynter. These ponds upon which stood the saw mill and bark mill together with the pond at the Head of the Broadkill are now the properties of Henry C. and William B. Wagaman.

John Clowes settled in this Hundred at an early date. His son John bought lands in the vicinity on September 7, 1772. His death occurred on February 24, 1790, aged 59 years 3 months 19 days. He was buried first in a vault at Heavelow's Landing, but his body was afterwards removed. His mill properties--grist mill, saw mill and cotton factory on Pemberston Branch went to Isaac Clowes in 1809. He did not live to establish what he had

VI--ECONOMIC PURSUITS

While most of the residents of Milton and the vicinity were farmers, gradually other enterprises developed. To meet the needs of the inhabitants of the village and of Broadkill Hundred, general stores, blacksmiths, preachers, school teachers, grist and saw mills appeared. Some business ventures supplied other than local needs. The manufacturing survey of 1832 mentions tanneries and the mining of bog iron as examples. The census of manufacturing in Broadkill Hundred in 1850 and 1860 lists saw and grist mills, tanneries and shipbuilding. This manuscript census of manufacturing is in the Delaware State Archives, and a xeroxed copy is at Eleutherian Mills Historical Library. Of special importance in the 1820s was the mining of iron ore, which was either carted to nearby Delaware Furnace in Millsboro or taken by shallpps to New Jersey. From a chancery case and also from correspondence about the operation of Delaware Furnace, we have evidence of its significance. By far the most important manufacturing enterprise in Milton was shipbuilding, using timber from nearby forests and employing many men in construction and in crews. We are fortunate to have the expertise of Captain T.C. Conwell to relate the history of shipbuilding on Broadkill Creek. By the end of the century shipbuilding was declining in importance. To some extent it was replaced in significance by canning, taking advantage of the suitability of Sussex County soil for the raising of fruit and vegetables. E.D. Bryan, M.D., of Dover shares his knowledge of this branch of manufacturing with us in a special essay

INDENTURE OF BAPTIS LAY TO JONATHAN OSBORN, "SHIPRITE" 1753

Baptis Lay, a miner son of Edward Lay, late of the County of Sussex, yeman ^[sic] deceased, aged eaughteen years, in July 1753, was this day (by his owne consent) bound unto Jonathan Osborn of Sd. County, shiprite and his wife with them to dwell & serve after the maner of an apprentice, untill he arive to the age of twenty one years, the Master to fine and provde sufficient meat, drink, washing, lodging and apperel befitting such an apprentice during the term afsd. and to teach or have Sd. apprentice to be taught the art, trade or mistrey of a shiprite after the best way and manner he can within the term afsd. and at the experation of his time to give Sd. apprentice, no other cloathing then what he had in waiping ^[?].

(Sussex County Orphans Court, March 13, 1753, DSA.)

SHIPBUILDING ON THE BROADKILL
by Captain T. C. Conwell

As the earliest settlers approached the entrance to the waterway they were to name "Broad Kill," the English and Dutch words meaning "broad channel" in those respective languages, they found their way obstructed by shifting sand bars. Early cartography was far from being an exact science, though it appears from old maps that the entrance to the Broad Kill approximated a half-mile in width. It is known that the shoreline in the vicinity of present Cape Henlopen and the colonial entrance to the Broad Kill is constantly shifting. Threading their way through the bars, the settlers soon found themselves on the water of a meandering stream flowing in a westerly direction, the Broadkill, as it is known today.

Viewed from the Delaware Bay by the early arrivals, the area of present Broadkill Hundred within their vision would disclose a shoreline of sandy beach with marsh lying beyond. In the background they would see that the country was blanketed by virgin forests, forests that would provide them with the very timber to build vessels to meet their travel and transportation necessities as well as timber for a shipbuilding industry that would prosper on the banks of the Broadkill for about 175 years. This timber was described in the Tenth Census of the United States, Volume 8, in these words:

". . . . The (ship-building) timber originally covered the whole face of the country from the Delaware River to the Chesapeake Bay and beyond, and the trees were so tall that the majority of them would yield logs 2 1/2 feet square and 60 feet in length without a spot or defect, the moist lands in which they grew and the exposure to the breezes of the sea being particularly favorable to the production of durable timber. Delaware . . . white oak became famous . . . for its lasting quality and its general excellence."

This bountiful source of quality shipbuilding timber also had a telling impact on the lives of many of Broadkill's native sons from the days of the commencement of the shipbuilding industry until years after it had faded into oblivion. The early vessels were built to meet the needs for local travel and transportation of products of forest and farm to markets, mostly Wilmington, Philadelphia and New York. When the very first new vessel splashed into the Broadkill, it immediately required manpower to guide it in the purposes which caused its construction. Local men and youths filled these requirements, many of them choosing a life at sea to the alternatives, a career as a shipcarpenter or as a farmer. Life at sea was quite harsh, though it probably held no more privations than life on a Broadkill farm in those days.

The Broadkill was the highway between the Landings along its banks, including Milton under its several names, and the markets. Existing roads being primitive at best, it may be assumed that before they had visited Dover or even Georgetown, many local seafarers became as familiar with the streets

of the market cities as they were with the roads of Broadkill Hundred. Indicative of this trend to the sea, on May 28, 1796, Congress passed an Act authorizing the issue to native seafarers of Sea Protection Certificates attesting to their citizenship, the purpose being to protect them against impressment into the British navy. A number of applications for these Certificates were made by natives of Broadkill Hundred. At least some of them survived the passage of time and in the mid-1970s they were found in the files of the National Archives, Washington, D.C. Photocopies were made, a panel was developed for them, and they now are on display at the Milton Historical Society.

Identity and description of the very first new vessel the settlers launched into the Broad Kill have not been found, if they were ever recorded. Some details about the earliest Broad Kill vessel discovered appear in "Ship Registers for the Port of Philadelphia, 1726-1775," the earliest existing records. At the Philadelphia Custom House on April 16, 1737, Nathaniel Naws registered the shallop BROAD KILL, stating that he was Master, the vessel's place of building was Broad Kill, she was of 10 tons burden and was owned by himself and Edward Naws, both of Broad Kill. Naws was then a prominent name in the area. A shallop is defined as "a light open boat, used chiefly on rivers, propelled by oars or sails or by both." This was a very popular type of craft in colonial days. They were used so extensively in trading along the western shore of the Delaware Bay that Joshua Fisher showed a channel particularly for them in his historic chart of 1756.

No knowledge exists as to the precise location of the site where BROAD KILL was built nor does the registration date of April 16, 1737, have any tie to the date the shallop was actually built. A building site was easily prepared at any place along the waterway where the water depth was sufficient to receive the new craft. The importance of the April 16, 1737 date is that it confirms that on that date a Broad Kill-built vessel was in existence, which, in this presentation, establishes the BROAD KILL as the first vessel launched into the stream of that name.

Everyone with even a casual interest in Delaware history is at least aware of the comprehensive historical research findings contained in Scharf's two-volume "History of Delaware" published in 1888. In writing of Milton in volume two he concluded:

"The principal industry in which the people of Milton were ever engaged was ship-building. Baptist Lay; the pioneer of this business, built his first vessel a short distance from Milton over a century ago."

The inventory of Lay's estate, dated March 15, 1793, almost fifty-six years after the BROAD KILL was registered at Philadelphia, contains a number of ship-carpentry tools and items of equipment, though it appears dubious that he built the BROAD KILL unless he lived to a very advanced age. In Sussex County files held at Georgetown there is evidence that Lay held land on the southeast side of the junction of the "great Creek" (Broad Kill) and Round Pole Branch, "a short distance from Milton." Also there is a record of Articles of

Agreement dated December 6, 1764, for Lay to build a schooner for Samuel Rowland, Jr., a pilot. The vessel was to measure 40 feet on the keel, 17 feet beam, 6 1/2 feet in the hold and to cost £160 with 12 months stated to be the building time. There is no question that Lay was a pioneer of Broadkill shipbuilding, though there is some doubt that he was the pioneer. His 1764 agreement to build the schooner does clearly establish him as the earliest Broadkill shipbuilder identified by existing documentation.

When Lay entered into the December 6, 1764 agreement to build the unnamed pilot schooner, he also formalized the beginning of the Broadkill's shipbuilding industry. Prior to his completing the schooner, there had been six Broadkill-built vessels registered at Philadelphia. (The pilot schooner has not been included in the tally of vessels built on the Broadkill because its name, identity, is not known.) Lay's schooner was followed into the Broadkill by 265 identified vessels between 1766 and 1915, a span of 149 years. Some were built to serve local needs, though most were built to serve the general commerce of the United States along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, to the West Indies, South America, Europe and North Africa. Many of the latter vessels were so large and deep that they were barely able to transit the restricted dimensions of the Broadkill in a completely empty condition to reach the open waters of the Bay. Over the years several shipyards operated along the waterway, giving employment to a considerable portion of the area work force. Many other natives elected to sail the locally built vessels, some of them eventually gaining command, management positions and ownership status. All of this developed from the virgin forests the settlers found in what became Broadkill Hundred and Milton.

On January 7, 1766, the schooner TRYAL was registered at Philadelphia. The place of construction was given as "Broad Kiln on Delaware," the first appearance of that spelling in a vessel document. The Fisher chart of 1756 shows the waterway as the Broad Kill and old maps show the small settlement at the location of Milton as Head of Broad Kill. As late as 1838 a vessel was originally documented at New Castle with the place of construction recorded as Broad Killen Creek! The use of "kiln," an oven, is senseless when used in this instance. One can only surmise that a slur in speech caused the TRYAL'S documenting clerk to understand the speaker to say Broadkiln instead of Broadkill when giving the vessel's place of construction. Apparently, through habit, this misnomer survived in some usage until 1975 when the Milton Historical Society, under the direction of one of its members, Captain Graham Dill, prevailed upon the Sussex County Council to establish officially Broadkill as the correct spelling. The Council declined to reestablish the original spelling, Broad Kill, because of the attendant expense of changing maps, signs and so forth.

BROAD KILL was the Broadkill's earliest vessel and only shallop. Twelve years later John and Joseph Cord registered the schooner BROADKILN ENDEAVOR. Another twelve years was to pass before the next vessel was registered. Commencing in 1760 vessels were quite frequently built on the Broadkill, a total

of 13 schooners and 1 sloop ranging in size from 7 to 30 tons were registered at Philadelphia between 1760 and 1773.

After the Revolution the transition of maritime record keeping from the British to the United States government may have caused some newly constructed vessels not to be documented. However, at Philadelphia on October 19, 1789, William Warrington of Philadelphia enrolled the sloop POLLY of 34 1/2 tons burthen. He recorded that the vessel "was built at Broadkill Delaware within five years past." The enrollment permitted the vessel "to trade between the different Districts of the United States." This was the first use of "United States" in a document covering a Broadkill-built vessel. In the spirit of the new era the schooner FREEDOM was launched into the Broadkill in 1792.

From FREEDOM through the first quarter of the 19th century, 16 schooners and 22 sloops were built on the Broadkill. Some of those vessels were built for owners in other places. Several of the schooners were capable of making coastwise voyages as well as engaging in trading to and from Milton. Sloops generally were restricted to sheltered waters, many of them routinely engaging in the grain and forest products trade from the Broadkill to Wilmington and Philadelphia. The record reflects that most of these locally trading vessels eventually passed to owners in other places, making way for new and larger vessels to come into the operations of local owners.

Ann Dorman, "of Sussex County" and considered to be of the Drawbridge area, achieved the distinction of becoming the only female routinely to own all of a Broadkill-built vessel. She enrolled the sloop THREE SISTERS of Milton at Wilmington on June 30, 1821, the earliest document to survive. The enrollment states that the vessel, of about 38 tons (measure) was built in Milton in 1814 and was then, 1821, commanded by Milton's Captain Nathan Clifton. Ann retained ownership exactly eighteen months, until December 31, 1822. (In 1892 ownership of another Broadkill-built schooner, the EMMA W. BURTON was held for a brief period by "C.W.W. Burton, executrix of the Estate of Daniel W. Burton, sole owner." In the latter half of the 19th century several women owned shares in vessels built on the Broadkill, usually in conjunction with ownership of shares by a family member.)

Milton and the nearby countryside through which the Broadkill flows eastward from Milton to the Bay must be treated as an entity when considering the economy of this area in the 19th century. The settlers gradually cleared the timbered land for agricultural purposes. In that process they used the prime timber for shipbuilding. Lesser timber and surplus farm products were shipped to markets in Philadelphia, New York and other places. Many Broadkill-built and owned vessels were used in this transportation, returning with manufactured and other goods not produced locally.

Sandy soil caused the hauling of products over the primitive roads to be extremely difficult, particularly in wet weather. This situation caused the settlers to survey the Broadkill for water of sufficient depth close to its banks to float a loaded vessel. At such favorable places Landings were established, an area cleared to accommodate the accumulation of a vessel

cargo and a road prepared from the back country direct to the Landing. In many instances a wharf structure was built to enable a vessel to lie securely alongside while discharging or loading. In this manner the vessel was brought as close as possible to the cargo, reducing to a minimum the hauling of materials to be shipped or received.

A government chart of 1872 shows these Landings with distances measured in miles from the mouth of the Broadkill of that era:

<u>North Bank</u>		<u>South Bank</u>	
Ore Bank	1/4	Robbin's	4 1/2
Hazzard's	1 1/2	Drawbridge	5 1/2
Wiltbank's	4	Hudson's	6 1/2
Russell's	4 1/2	Vaughn's	8 1/2
Cedar	7	Carey's	9 1/4
Heaveloe's	8	Martin's	10
Sampson's	9 1/2	Milton	10 1/2
White Oak	10 1/2		

Between Heaveloe's and Carey's, 1 1/4 miles, the chart shows three places as being a "Fishery." From the beginning and through those years the Broadkill abounded in fin and shell life, particularly shad, herring and oysters.

On the north bank Russell's Landing was also the location of the Russell shipyard where ocean-going vessels were built. Also on the north side Heaveloe's Landing was the shipping point for Benjamin Waples, a successful business man whose mill, store, residence and barns located at Waples Mill, about three miles northerly from the Landing made his enterprises have the appearance of a village. Heaveloe's is also the location of a burial ground dating from colonial days. Aletta Clarke, who kept the diary contained elsewhere in this volume and her father, John Clowes, Jr., the noted patriot of Revolutionary days are among those buried at this site.

On the south bank Drawbridge lies midway between Milton and the Bay. From colonial days a major north/south highway has crossed the Broadkill at this point. Through the 19th century the highway served to channel forest and farm products to Drawbridge for shipment by vessel to the same markets used by Milton shippers. The Paynter and Donnan families were prominent in this trade. One of them, Samuel Paynter, served as Governor of Delaware, 1824-1828. His palatial home at Drawbridge burned many years ago. A shipyard operated at this location for many years. For a large portion of the 19th century the bridge structure was a manually operated swing-type iron frame mounted on a center pedestal of timber. When in the open position the draw presented a passage 38 feet wide for vessel transit. Martin's Landing, also on the south bank slightly over one half mile downstream from the Union Street bridge was the location of the major shipyard of Samuel Martin.

Communities usually came into being at the head of navigation. Osborne's Landing/Conwell's Landing/ Head of Broad Kill/Milton being an example. In this case vessels were able to penetrate several miles of Sussex County, taking in necessities and taking out sizeable tonnages of local products. The many Landings along the Broadkill undoubtedly siphoned considerable quantities of products that otherwise would have been loaded aboard vessels at Milton's wharves. However, Milton was the closest point for shipment by water for several miles of the County lying to the north, south and west of the town. This countryside caused Milton's traders and vessel owners to prosper for many decades.

Early in the 1800s a rule was invoked requiring that an owner applying for a document for a new vessel, enrollment for coastwise or a register for foreign trading, must present a certificate executed by a Ship Carpenter that he had built the described vessel. Presumably this was to safeguard against fraud by obtaining a document for a non-existent vessel. The earliest known use of this certification in a Broadkill new-building was in 1815 when the sloop MECHANIC was "Built at Milton in the State of Delaware in the year Eighteen hundred and fifteen, as also appears by the Certificate of Thomas Lank, Ship Carpenter." All too frequently thereafter original documents contained "Builder's Certificate on file in this office." The Certificates did not survive for eventual delivery to the National Archives which caused those builder's names to become lost. Of the 271 vessels known to have been built on the Broadkill the names of the builders of 81 of them were not discovered during research of official records, mainly for that reason, though certificates were not required at the time the earlier vessels were built. Missing names would have been greater had not search of unofficial, though authentic records, produced the names of several builders during the second half of the 19th century.

Through the title did not appear in the Milton shipbuilding scene until the advent about 1850 of large, costly vessels with multiple ownership, the role of the Master Carpenter is most important in this accounting. He was a skilled craftsman in the art of assembling thousands of pieces of selected, sizeable timber into a complex structure that would safely transport varied cargoes of hundreds of tons under the stress of all sea and weather conditions to be experienced by any vessel. After acquiring these skills together with recognition by prospective ship owners that he could be entrusted with a contract to build such a vessel, a ship carpenter could establish himself as a Master Carpenter and offer his services as a contract builder. In this role he would select and employ ship carpenters to perform the work under his supervision. He would also arrange for and inspect the timber required for the construction. The performance of newly-built vessels was observed very closely by owners, prospective owners and insurance underwriters. Builders of vessels found to be good sailers and constructed of durable materials were often awarded additional contracts. From the Broadkill's Master Carpenters there was a continuity of buildings, one vessel after another over a span of years. Builders of one or two or a few vessels may have phased themselves out of the business for good and sufficient reasons.

A chart of the Broadkill in 1872 indicates that its controlling depth (low water) was about six feet. Without doubt it was subjected to steady silting from rain flushed top soil since the settlers commenced clearing the land, a silting which continues. In 1873 the government adopted a project to maintain a six-foot (low water) channel from the Bay to Milton. Sporadic federal dredging failed to maintain consistently the project depth, even in the days when the shipbuilding industry was thriving. With a tidal range of about four-feet the high water depth would be adequate if commerce could afford to await the rising tide. The major obstruction to vessel traffic was the entrance with its shifting sand bars. The sweep of the tides in and out of the Broadkill kept a passage open through the bars, though current knowledge of the exact location of the channel was necessary to ensure safe passage. Charted evidence is that the entrance channel was no deeper than the channel to Milton.

Two distinctive groups of vessels were built on the Broadkill. One comprised those built for trading to and from the area. These vessels grew in dimensions from those built in the 18th century to the maximum dimensions that could transit the waterway in a fully loaded condition, their prime restriction being the depth of water. A typical vessel was the ANNA L. PONDER (1892), measuring 80' x 25' x 5.6' and of 97 gross tons. The other group comprised those built for deep water trading. Over the years these vessels gradually grew in dimensions to meet the competition in the shipping industry until they reached a maximum in length, breadth and depth and still able to be floated completely empty out of the winding Broadkill, pass through the restricted passage in the drawbridge and reach the open waters of the Bay. In launching the larger vessels it may be assumed that the builders scheduled that event to coincide with high water of a spring tide. When the vessels were ready to leave the shipyards, they probably did so in conjunction with another such tide, particularly in respect to passing through the entrance channel. A typical vessel of this group would be the GEORGE TAULANE, JR. (1882) measuring 151.3' x 35.2' x 12.2' and of 465 gross tons.

As larger vessels were built it was found that Broadkill's forests did not contain suitable trees for their masts which approximated 85 feet in length, 24 inches in diameter, required to be perfectly straight and without appreciable flaws. Further, to install such spars together with a 48 foot topmast on each spar required substantial handling equipment together with a group of skilled riggers. The combination of all these factors caused these vessels to be towed to Philadelphia where a sizeable industry existed for masting, rigging and outfitting with sails and other necessary equipment large vessels built on tributaries of the Delaware Bay. It has been published that in the latter years of the 19th century the small steam tugs AMANDA POWELL of 80 horsepower and the IRENE of 31 horsepower were engaged in towing vessels between the Bay and Milton. Under favorable conditions they could handle a large new vessel and deliver it to a more powerful tug in the Bay for towing to Philadelphia.

Residents of the Broadkill area had a choice of transportation in traveling to Philadelphia. They could go by stagecoach or by water. Neither route offered much comfort, though under favorable conditions of sea, tide and weather the route by water was favored by those whose mission would not be adversely

affected by unforeseeable delays to the vessel. Descriptive documents covering vessels built on the Broadkill do not contain specific reference to their being fitted to accommodate passengers, though it is well established that a number of vessels did carry them in conjunction with cargo. The numbers of people travelling at a given time did not justify a vessel for their exclusive use. Obviously all of this traffic stopped during the presence of ice in the Broadkill, the Bay and Delaware River.

Passengers were also carried from the Broadkill to New York as evidenced by two of them, unidentified, being on board the HEPTIE J. DORMAN when she sailed from Drawbridge on December 3, 1885 for New York with a cargo of oak cord-wood. Encountering severe adverse weather, the vessel lost practically all of her sails and commenced leaking very badly. To save the lives of those on board, on the 9th, Captain Henry W. Johnson ran the vessel ashore on Long Island where all seven persons were rescued by the crew of the Shinnecock Station of the U.S. Life Saving Service.

More vessels were built on the banks of the Broadkill during the second quarter of the 19th century (1826-1850) than during any other such or similar period. Ninety new vessels splashed into the water way, 19 sloops, 70 schooners (2-mast) and 1 brigantine, an average of well over three per year. In 1826 the schooner CHANCELLOR became the largest vessel ever built on the Broadkill, measuring 66.8' x 22.2' x 6'. William Coulter registered the vessel at Philadelphia on November 29th, the register indicating that CHANCELLOR's maiden voyage was to a foreign destination, even though she would head into the wintry weather of the Atlantic.

The following year a large sloop, the ALFRED, was built by Samuel Dutton for Samuel Paynter and Samuel R. Paynter. Distinction was to come to this product of the Broadkill as ALFRED remained an active vessel in the U.S. Department of Commerce's "List of Merchant Vessels" until 1905, a span of 78 years! This length of service was never exceeded by any Broadkill vessel of record. Samuel R. Paynter was the first Master, followed during the next sixteen years by Captains Burton Robinson, Sylvester H. Rust, Seth Messic and David M. P. Robinson. In 1868 ALFRED's home port was Keysport, New Jersey. For the vessel's final twenty years, Perth Amboy, New Jersey, was the home port.

In February, 1828, ECLIPSE became the Broadkill's largest vessel with dimensions 69'8" x 23'2" x 7'9" and measuring 105 tons, the first vessel to exceed 100 tons. On October 10th of that year she was sold to a resident of Norfolk, Virginia. Subsequent to this sale an interest in the vessel was acquired by a Sussex Countian as reflected by this note on the margin of the enrollment of October 10th: "1/3 to Jno. Waples, Sussex Co., Del. \$1200." This transaction indicated that over 150 years ago a practically new vessel of this size had a value of \$3,600. In 1832 ECLIPSE returned to complete ownership in Sussex County. Also in 1828, Samuel Martin, age 22, built his first vessel, the schooner NORRIS of 63 tons measure. On the margin of the vessel's original document is written "Arthur Milby Sells 1/2 to Andrew M. Jones, Phila. \$1200." a transaction that apparently took place on March 31, 1829. Very few records have been found which indicate the cost of vessels built on the Broadkill.

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affected by unforeseeable delays to the vessel. Descriptive documents covering vessels built on the Broadkill do not contain specific reference to their being fitted to accommodate passengers, though it is well established that a number of vessels did carry them in conjunction with cargo. The numbers of people travelling at a given time did not justify a vessel for their exclusive use. Obviously all of this traffic stopped during the presence of ice in the Broadkill, the Bay and Delaware River.

Passengers were also carried from the Broadkill to New York as evidenced by two of them, unidentified, being on board the HETTIE J. DORMAN when she sailed from Drawbridge on December 3, 1885 for New York with a cargo of oak cord-wood. Encountering severe adverse weather, the vessel lost practically all of her sails and commenced leaking very badly. To save the lives of those on board, on the 9th, Captain Henry W. Johnson ran the vessel ashore on Long Island where all seven persons were rescued by the crew of the Shinnecock Station of the U.S. Life Saving Service.

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command of Captain Salathiel Baker of Indian River. DEFIANCE was the first Milton-built vessel to appear in the fleets of similar vessels engaged in general cargo trading between Atlantic and Gulf ports.

MILTON, the only Milton-built vessel to bear the name, was the 47th vessel built there since the town was officially given the name 23 years earlier. This delayed recognition, coupled with the recorded use of the earlier name after the naming Act of 1807 could reflect that in those years, the name, "Milton," was not popular with all its citizenry. Cornelius Coulter enrolled this typical local trading schooner at Wilmington on April 4, 1831.

Six vessels were built on the Broadkill in 1832, 4 in 1833 and 9, the all-time record number, in 1834. Those nine, in the date sequence of their original documentation, their rig, builders and measurement tonnages were:

PAUL JONES	Schooner	William V. Coulter	117 tons
CANTON	Sloop	Robert Russel	47 tons
HELEN	Sloop	Samuel H. Dutton	62 tons
ELIZABETH	Sloop	Samuel Martin	42 tons
CONSTITUTION	Sloop	Samuel Dutton	42 tons
COMMERCE	Schooner	James Robbins	65 tons
WILLIAM HENRY	Schooner	Joseph Cornwell	71 tons
MARTIN	Schooner	Samuel Martin	72 tons
MIERS BURTON	Schooner	Jacob White	71 tons

PAUL JONES, a sea-going vessel, was built for owners elsewhere. The remaining eight were built for Broadkill owners. These nine vessels totaled 589 tons. In 1861, twenty-seven years later, two vessels were built with a combined measure of 626 tons.

Commencing with COMMERCE (above), twenty-six schooners were to be built before another type, a sloop, was built late in 1839. The days of the sloop were rapidly drawing to a close. Only four more were to be built. From the early days the hulls of the sloops had grown larger and larger to serve the market and their single mainsail had been increased in size accordingly. Usually with only two or three men on board the large mainsail became too unwieldy to handle, particularly in an emergency. The schooner with its smaller sails carried on two masts was found to be a handier and probably more efficient rig. Of the 26 consecutive schooners, nine of them drew too much water for trading loaded to and from Milton, though the remaining seventeen were able to do so.

This schooner with the most unusual name of JOHN COOLEY & CO was built in Milton in 1838 by an unrecorded builder. Apparently Philadelphians were the principal owners, though Captain William R. Derickson and John Hickman, thought to be of Sussex County were part owners. In 1840 the vessel was listed as being in the New York-Philadelphia general cargo service of the Union Line. In 1842 she was listed as being in the Boston-New York service of the Merchant's Line. Queens of the Western Ocean (Cutler) is an authoritative volume covering American vessels in the days of sail. In its Appendix V entitled, "Fast Packet Passages" many fast voyages are recorded; among them being this entry:

New York to Boston. Sch. JOHN COOLEY & CO.
30 hrs. Arrived July 10, 1844. "The quickest
trip probably ever made by a sailing vessel
between the two ports." --New York Herald--
July 17, 1844.

Among vessel owners and operators such factual publicity further enhanced the reputation of Milton's Master Carpenters for their vessel hull models, construction materials and building skills. No doubt these qualities caused orders for new vessels to flow to Milton's shipyards.

The second Milton-built vessel to bear the name of this distinguished Delawarean, the JOHN M. CLAYTON, also had the distinction of being the only brigantine ever launched into the Broadkill. Built by Atkins & Prettyman, presumably George W. Atkins and William C. Prettyman, this was their only recorded joint undertaking. The vessel's dimensions were 82.3' x 23' x 8.8'; she measured 172 tons and was the largest vessel built at Milton. Peter C. Parker enrolled the CLAYTON at New Castle on August 19, 1843, recording that he was Master and that he, David Hazzard, Peter S. Parker, William C. Prettyman, all "of the State of Delaware" (actually Milton) and Edward Prescott of Boston, Massachusetts, were the sole owners. This was a true deep-water vessel. On September 29, 1843, forty days after the New Castle documentation and probably after the completion of a coasting voyage, a register for a foreign voyage was issued at Baltimore, Captain P.C. Parker in command. (Brigantine: a two-masted vessel carrying three or four square sails across the foremast and a fore-and-aft sail on the mainmast.)

In 1848 Samuel Martin built the schooner JOHN G. WRIGHT for New York owners. This was the first Broadkill-built vessel to exceed 100 feet in length, the WRIGHT's dimensions being 102'3" x 26'2" x 7'10". With those dimensions the WRIGHT also became the largest vessel, measuring 187 tons. The schooner apparently sailed from Martin's shipyard direct to New York, her home port, where she was originally documented on August 17, 1848.

Exceeding the 100-foot length was an accomplishment of great importance, a demonstration of shipbuilding "know how" in fastening together several thousand pieces of wood into a seaworthy unit. With this beginning there were to be built afterward on the Broadkill slightly more vessels of over 100' in length than less than 100'. A gauge often used to relate the length of an object is to compare it with the height of a building. In this instance a vessel 100 feet long would approximate the height of an 8 to 10 story building. The Broadkill's longest vessel measured 176.4 feet and many were over 140 feet long.

The schooner MARY C. TERBELL, 102'6" in length was built in 1850 by an unrecorded builder. By mid-July, 1853, she was owned in New England. At the outbreak of the Civil War the vessel was in New Orleans, going about her assigned tasks. On April 19, 1861 President Lincoln declared a blockade of the Louisiana ports. On April 25th the TERBELL was ready for sea and cleared New Orleans for New York where she duly arrived. This action caused the vessel to be included in the listing of "Ships that Tested the Blockade of the Gulf Ports, 1861-1865" (1951), the only Broadkill-built vessel to be named in such an activity.

During the third quarter of the 19th century the Broadkill's shipyards produced a variety of types of vessels. They comprised the final 4 sloops, 59 schooners (2-mast), 1 schooner with 2 decks, 12 three-mast schooners, 4 three-mast schooners with 2 decks, 2 brigs, 2 canal boats and 2 barges.

Peter Clinton, a coal merchant and vessel owner of New York City, brought more distinction to Milton's shipbuilding industry than any other person. Having learned of the quality of its vessels, his initial appearance was to engage Samuel Martin to build a schooner, which became the CLINTON, Milton's largest in dimensions, 108' x 27'4" x 9' and largest in tonnage, 237. Apparently this vessel went from Martin's yard direct to New York where she was initially documented on March 13, 1851. In the same year she was listed as being in the New York-Matagorda (Texas) general cargo service of the Star Line.

Clinton placed a second order, presumably with Martin, though the builder's name was not recorded, for a vessel that was among the very first of the nation's three-mast schooners and the first of the rig to be built on the Broadkill. Further the hull was so deep that a between-deck was required to give it necessary additional strength, the first time this was done in Milton's shipyards. The advent of this vessel, launched as the MOSES TAYLOR, was so noteworthy that Cutler wrote in his Queens of the Western Ocean (1961, p. 336):

. . . the three-masters came in a never-ending procession. They were launched from yards located all the way from Maine to Maryland. At least 44 were built in the ten years from 1851 to 1860, with the probability that the list was much longer. They included the 355-ton MOSES TAYLOR, built in Milton, Delaware, in 1852

Clinton placed his third and final order for an even larger vessel to be built by an unrecorded builder, though it is reasonable to think that he continued to do business with Samuel Martin. This vessel became the JOHN G. HECKSHER, 113.2' x 27.8' x 13.9' and of 393 tons. Carrying the rig of a three-mast schooner, the HECKSHER also had a between-deck to provide additional strength for the deep hull. Clinton registered her for a foreign voyage at Philadelphia on September 20, 1853. In 1856 the HECKSHER was the largest of nine schooners employed in the service of the Union Line between New York and Savannah. To recap Clinton's activities in the Broadkill's new vessel market, he was the sole owner of and obtained the original documents for these vessels, each becoming the Broadkill's largest:

CLINTON	New York	March 13, 1851	237 tons
MOSES TAYLOR	Philadelphia	March 25, 1852	355 tons
JOHN G. HECKSHER	Philadelphia	Sept. 20, 1853	393 tons

The distinction of being the Broadkill's largest passed frequently from vessel to vessel as new construction was launched and completed. Mention of this changing situation serves to present a gauge of the degree and rapidity with which vessel sizes were increasing. Throughout the construction of large

vessels Milton's shipyards continued to receive orders for the smaller vessels of no unusual distinction which were profitable in their particular trades.

Shipbuilders constructed vessels of the size and rig ordered by the purchasers. Clinton had a requirement for the three large vessels he purchased, though other owners who looked to the Broadkill for their new vessels apparently did not share his views on the new size and rig. It was thirteen years later, in 1866, that the next three-mast schooner slid into the Broadkill. In the intervening years a total of 40 two-mast vessels were delivered, some of them longer and beamier than Clinton's three-masters and larger than some three-masters to be built in future years. In vessels of equal size the three-mast rig permits the use of smaller and more easily handled sails to achieve the same square-footage of the larger and much heavier sails carried on a two-mast rig. The three-mast rig probably required an additional seaman or even two, and that, manpower cost, may have slowed the more universal adoption of the three-masters.

Milton and the surrounding countryside could very correctly be referred to as a seafaring community in the days of sail. Scores of its men looked to the sea for their vocation, and a number of them became casualties of the fury of the waters. Such was the fate of Milton brothers, Captain David Edwin Lank, age 25, and William P. Lank, age 20, who probably was sailing as Mate. Built at Milton in 1860, their vessel, the schooner JAMES SATTER-THWAITE, a large two-master, sailed from Wilmington, Delaware, in late December, 1883, with a cargo of fertilizer for Wilmington, North Carolina. It was recorded that on the night of January 8, 1884, a strong southeast gale accompanied by a heavy sea existed on the coast of North Carolina. The vessel disappeared with all hands and could have foundered that night. Goshen M.E. Church cemetery contains a monument erected to their memory. It reads, "Lost at Sea", as do others in Broadkill Hundred.

The two-masters ranged in size up to the MARY G. FARR, the largest such vessel ever launched into the Broadkill. Built in 1863 with dimensions 129.2' x 30.5' x 10' and of 356 tons, she came within a very few feet in depth of exceeding in all specifications the "largest vessel", three-master JOHN G. HECKSHER. Mechanical devices for handling heavy sails were primitive at best. Vessels of this description became known as "back breakers" because of the extreme physical burdens placed upon their limited crews.

The FARR went about her assigned work for a few weeks more than 23 years without recorded incident. By October, 1881, Captain John D. Conwell had become Master and owner of 1/16th interest in the vessel. Then tragedy struck.

Sailing from Baltimore on December 30/31, 1885 for Providence with a cargo of corn, the vessel was off the New Jersey coast on the late evening of January 8, 1886. A northeast storm had commenced earlier and a gale developed. By some unknown means a fire commenced on board the FARR, and the vessel drifted with the storm toward shore where she struck the outer bar, from 200 to 300 yards off Spring Lake. Heavy seas extinguished the flames before they wracked the vessel. All seven persons on board were lost, though

the life saving crews were present on the beach and made every effort to save them. Two days later the bodies of Captain Conwell and the steward, William W. Warren, were found on the beach. Both were returned to Milton for burial.

Almost forty-four years later the FARR was again in the news. In November, 1929, the Sheriff of Cape May County, New Jersey, made a liquor raid on the shore near Townsend's Inlet. He noted a barnacle-encrusted bottle which had been salvaged from the beach and was to be filled from the still. He broke it and found this written on a strip torn from an oilskin slicker: "Aboard the Mary G. Farr--Fire gaining in hold. Can no longer ride out gale. About to take to long boat. God help us all."

In his brief autobiography George Russell wrote of returning home in 1860 and commencing to build an unnamed brig at the Landing of the Russell farm close eastward of Drawbridge. (Brig: A two-mast vessel carrying square sails on both masts.) The brig, first of only two of the type built on the Broadkill, was launched in July, 1862, and taken to Philadelphia where she was outfitted, probably with masts, rigging, sails, equipment and so forth, at a cost of \$8,000. The name of this vessel came to light, when, in May, 1973, Mrs. William R. Macdonald came upon a copy of its original documentation in the National Archives. The name was recorded as S.I. CHRISTIAN, though further probing disclosed that it was SAMUEL J. CHRISTIAN. The document also revealed that the vessel had a between-deck, was 132.7' in length and 29.5' in beam. No depth was given. She measured 525 tons, which not only made her the Broadkill's largest vessel to date, but the size would not be exceeded for another 15 years! The Russells always used Milton as the home port of their vessels, and so had the name painted on the stern, which caused the town to become known in many domestic and foreign ports.

When ready for service the CHRISTIAN loaded full with general cargo at Philadelphia and sailed for New Orleans on or about July 31, 1862, under command of Captain William Russell. George and William Russell were each one-half owner of the brig. She arrived at New Orleans on September 1st, discharged her cargo, loaded a full cargo consisting of 400 hogsheads of tobacco valued at \$64,000 and several thousand pipe and barrel staves valued at \$982.50. Captain Russell cleared his vessel through Customs on September 22, 1862 for Bordeaux, France and presumably sailed promptly thereafter. Not too many years later Captain Russell was lost when his vessel disappeared while on a voyage from Pensacola to Philadelphia. In his memory there is a monument in Milton's Goshen M.E. Cemetery reading, "Lost at Sea March 1872".

No clue has been discovered as to the source of the rather prosaic name of the big, 315 ton, 2-mast schooner JOHN JOHNSON built by N.W. Megee in 1865 for himself (1/4 share) and Philadelphia owners. What made the JOHNSON distinctive is that she is identified as the principal recorded means by which Broadkill's five Megee brothers were nudged upward in their seafaring careers to command of sailing vessels. In succession over a period of eleven years, commencing July 7, 1873, Captains William H., John R.

and Theodore B. commanded the JOHNSON. As the years passed, they were joined by their younger brothers, George E. and Caleb R. (Noah Wiltbank Megee was their second cousin.) All five of these able captains commanded Broadkill-built vessels in the coasting trade and over the years moved upward to much larger vessels. This is the only known instance where five brothers reached command in sail and illustrates the influence of ships and the sea upon the young men of Broadkill Hundred.

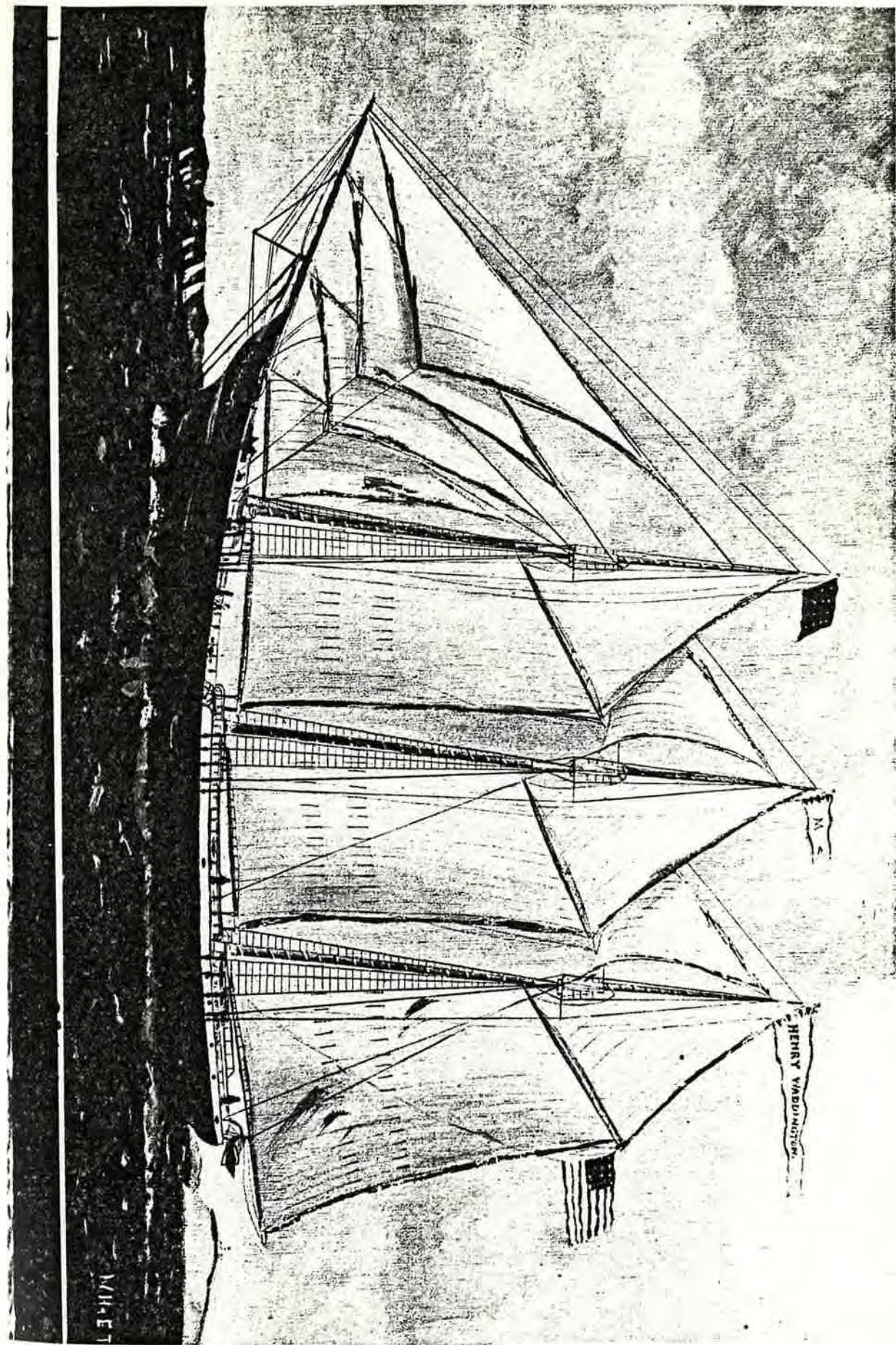
Shipbuilding on the Broadkill experienced a gradual decline during the fourth quarter of the 19th century, a trend which resulted in the demise of the industry in the early years of the 1900s. A compilation of buildings during the quarter shows 9 2-mast schooners, 19 3-mast schooners, 4 3-mast schooners with between-deck, 1 4-mast schooner, 1 3-mast barkentine with between-deck and 1 steam propelled. Four vessels were to be built in the 1900s, 1 2-mast schooner, 1 steam propelled and 2 motor propelled. These are included in order to make this an all-inclusive accounting. The final vessel of the 271 was built in 1915.

Among the interesting vessels of the fourth quarter was the 3-mast schooner GEORGE W. LOCHNER, named for one of its Philadelphia owners. A between-deck vessel built by J. L. Black & Bro. in 1877, the LOCHNER engaged in the sugar trade from the West Indies to U.S. Atlantic coast ports. While on a voyage from Richmond via Norfolk for Cardenas, Cuba, she grounded on a coral reef off Abaco, Bahamas on February 14, 1887. She was assisted off, towed to Nassau and found to be so damaged that she was deemed not worth repairing. As is usual in such instances the vessel was auctioned "as is" on April 29, 1887. A Nassau interest purchased the hulk. Apparently closer examination disclosed that it would be economically feasible to make the repair. After an expenditure of about \$17,000 the vessel received British registry on December 14, 1887 and resumed trading. After uneventful voyaging for over five years under the British flag the LOCHNER sailed with a cargo of sugar from Santiago, Cuba for the Delaware Breakwater for orders. On March 27, 1893, she was totally wrecked on Phillips Reef, Caicos. This position lies 110 miles northerly from Monte Cristi, Dominican Republic. It is likely that the LOCHNER's Broadkill timbers are outlined to this day by coral incrustation on Phillips Reef.

While the Blacks were building the LOCHNER, David H. Atkins was building the JOHN B. HAMEL JR. less than a mile away. The HAMEL, another 3-mast schooner with a between deck became the Broadkill's largest vessel, a distinction she held for about two years. John B. Hamel, Jr. & Co. were Philadelphia vessel agents and Hamel owned a 1/32 share of the vessel.

The HAMEL engaged in off-shore voyages. As examples, on August 16, 1884, she sailed from Philadelphia for Lisbon, Portugal, where she arrived September 16th. She sailed on October 14th for New York where she arrived November 29th. The next year she sailed from Boston on September 11th for Rosario, Argentina where she arrived December 19th. On January 15, 1886 she sailed for Motevideo, Uruguay, arriving on the 30th. Sailing on March 13th, she arrived at New York on May 11, 1886, exactly eight months after sailing from Boston.

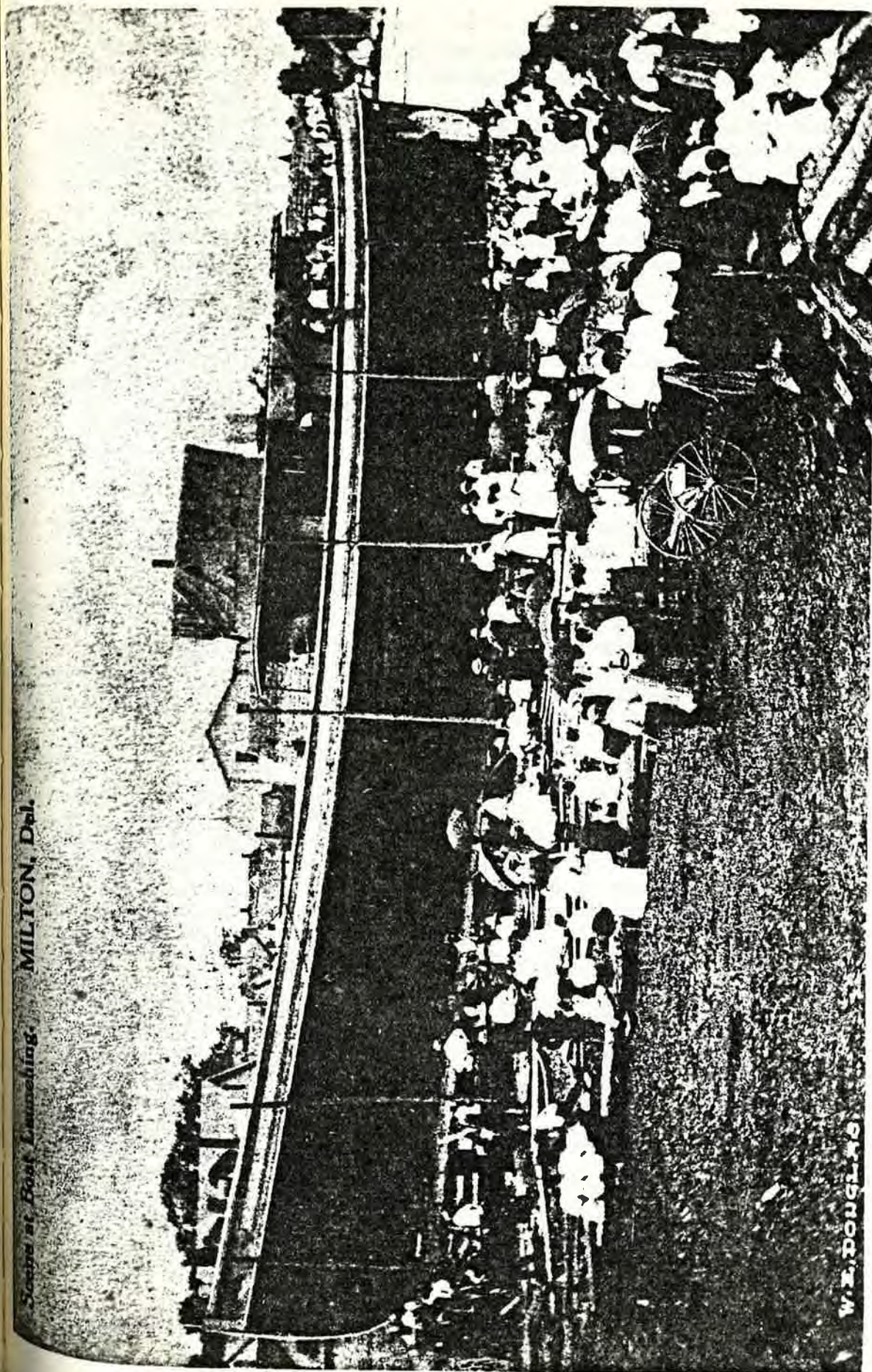
The HENRY WADDINGTON was built in 1881 by David H. Atkins for Milton's Captain William H. Megee and other investors, mostly Philadelphians. Measuring 139.71' x 35' x 12', she was typical of the many three-mast schooners built on the Broadkill for coastwise and foreign trading. The scene shows her sailing out of Boston. Captain Megee commanded the vessel for about ten years when she was sold. The WADDINGTON became unseaworthy and was abandoned off Cape Hatteras in February, 1892. Courtesy of Captain T. C. Orneall. Photograph copied courtesy of David Steinhilber. Orneall Papers, College of Maritime Studies, Drexel University.





Built in 1854 by Noah W. Megee for James and John Ponder the SALLY M. PONDER was a typical two-mast schooner of her era. With dimensions of 78' x 24'9" x 4' 10" she was ideal for trading to and from Milton though records reflect that the Ponders disposed of the vessel in 1862. In October, 1916 she Pilled and sank at a dock in New Bedford, Mass. Then nearly 62 years old the vessel was declared to be a total loss. The Edward W. Smith Collection, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Conn. Photograph copied courtesy of David Stuckweh, Otterbein College Learning Resource Center.

Scene at Boat Launching, MILTON, Del.



W. E. DOUGLASS

Of the 271 vessels built on the banks of the Broadkill, 263 were sailing types, wind propelled. Shown above, probably while awaiting exact high tide, is a 1907 launching day scene of one of the remaining 8, the incomplete steam-propelled BREAKWATER, the 270th vessel built. BREAKWATER was 105 feet in length. This apparently is the only existing photograph pertaining to a launching of a Broadkill-built vessel. Launchings were gala occasions, well over 100 persons attended this one. Photograph courtesy of Captain and Mrs. D. Anthony Potter, Lewes, Delaware.

The HAMEL and her Captain I. Fennimore were a remarkably successful combination. The vessel's name did not appear in any casualty reports until the one reporting her loss, thirteen years and two days after her original documentation. Enroute from Apalachicola, Florida, to Philadelphia with lumber, she encountered violent gales, began leaking beyond the capacity of her pumps and was abandoned on December 19, 1890 at a point 152 miles east of Jacksonville.

When David H. Atkins contracted to build the ELIZA J. McMANEMY, he could not have known that he was to build the Broadkill's largest vessel ever and the only vessel to be rigged as a barkentine. (Barkentine: a vessel with three or more masts, carrying square sails on the foremast and fore-and-aft sails on all other masts.) Launched on October 23, 1878, the McMANEMY was towed to Philadelphia for outfitting. She was registered by her Master, Captain George W. Fennimore on January 27, 1879—ready for sea. The register gives her dimensions as 152.5' x 34.5' x 18.6', fitted with a between-deck and of 785 tons. Slightly longer and slightly beamier vessels were to be built on the Broadkill, but the McMANEMY's depth caused her tonnage not to be exceeded.

On her maiden voyage the McMANEMY sailed from Philadelphia on February 1, 1879, for Lisbon, Portugal, where she arrived on the 25th. Later that year she again crossed the Atlantic to Passages and Bilboa, Spain, returning to Philadelphia. During the next few years she operated along the East Coast and to Cuba with a yearly voyage to Europe. In 1880 the European voyage was from Philadelphia to Rouen, France, and return; in 1881 it was from New York to Santander, Spain, and return to Baltimore; in 1882 again from Philadelphia to Lisbon and return, while the 1883 voyage was from New York to Santander with return to Philadelphia. The McMANEMY kept busy.

After loading a full cargo of lumber at Pensacola, Florida, the McMANEMY sailed on June 24, 1896 for Rio de Janeiro. On the night of July 5th the vessel was in the Straits of Florida about 55 miles east of Palm Beach. Unknown to her people, the vessel was experiencing an easterly set by the Gulf Stream, a set which caused her to crash into Memory Rock, Bahamas, and become a total loss. All ten persons on board were saved. The estimated value of the 18-year old native of the Broadkill was \$20,000. To be lost while "bound for Rio" was a distinctive way for the largest tonnage vessel ever to slide into the old waterway, a true deep-water trader, to close her interesting career.

Milton's Captain William M. Lank probably had a lot to do with the contract for the FLORENCE CREADICK, to be the Broadkill's only 4-mast vessel, being placed with Master Carpenter Cornelius Coulter Davidson. The local shipbuilding industry was entering its last period of prosperity. The CREADICK, a schooner, was delivered in 1890. Four 3-mast schooners were to be built in 1891, three of them by Davidson and the other by his cousin, James P. Davidson. After 1891 only six vessels were to be built.

On February 4, 1890, Captain Lank registered his new command at Philadelphia. He owned 4/64th of the vessel, which was as large a share as any and exceeded most. The CREADICK's dimensions were given as 164.4' x 35' x 13.3'. Her carrying capacity was about 1,000 tons. Had she been as deep in hull as

the McMANEMY she would have been the Broadkill's largest vessel ever. As it was, it was quite a ship-handling feat to move safely an object the length and breadth of the CREADICK through the winding Broadkill.

On February 6th, the vessel sailed from Philadelphia for Cardenas, Cuba, where she arrived 12 days later, a fast passage. Year after year the CREADICK went about her work and managed to stay out of serious casualty reports. She arrived at Ponce, Puerto Rico on March 24, 1917 and sailed on some unrecorded date for Philadelphia where she safely arrived. On April 6, 1917, the United States had declared a state of war with Germany, which caused the safety of all American ships at sea, particularly sailing vessels, to be in jeopardy. Then in her 28th year this aged vessel was about to sail on her great adventure.

World War I had caused great losses of ships and a severe shortage of ships by the spring of 1917. In this circumstance the CREADICK was chartered to load a full cargo of "heavy oil at Philadelphia for Le Havre, France. It is considered that "heavy oil" discribed lubricating oil, presumably in wooden barrels.

Vessel movements were not published under war conditions, though it appears that the CREADICK sailed in mid-June. By mid-July she neared her destination only to be sighted by an enemy submarine and torpedoed within 180 miles of Le Havre. The crew abandoned ship, but the old CREADICK refused to sink! Later, a tug found the drifting vessel and towed her to Brest where the cargo was discharged.

The CREADICK was drydocked and temporarily repaired. Later she was sold to Franch owners, permanently repaired and became the MOISE under their flag. In 1918 the MOISE was lying at a dock in Brest when she was rammed, sunk and capsized by the American S.S. SATSUMA! She was raised, repaired and resumed trading in the Eastern Atlantic. In December, 1919, a lifeboat was picked up at Burela, northwest Spain, bearing the name "MOISE-BREST." No word was published as to the actual fate of the old vessel or her crew. It may have not become known. To have lasted nearly thirty years was testimony that Davidson and his carpenters had fitted and fastened the CREADICK'S good Broadkill timbers with great skill.

Built in 1891, the JENNIE R. TOMLINSON was one of the smallest three-masted schooners built on the Broadkill. Measuring 117' x 28' x 7', she was smaller than many of the 2-mast vessels that preceded her, though exactly the size and rig that John B. Dorman required for his Drawbridge-based business. The TOMLINSON went about her assignments for a few years without particular incident; then tragedy struck. Sailing from New Bern, North Carolina about February 1, 1898, for New York with a cargo of lumber, the vessel became "overdue," a dreaded word in maritime circles. News reached Philadelphia on March 15th that "an upturned derelict, recognized as the JENNIE R. TOMLINSON had drifted ashore at Little Kinnakeet, N.C.," a few miles north of Cape Hatteras. Probably a winter gale and high seas combined in forcing the TOMLINSON over, the usual cause of capsizing and the only recorded such happening to a Broadkill-built vessel at sea. Her captain is remembered by a monument in Milton's Goshen M.E. Cemetery reading: "Capt. Geo. Le Kites, 1850-1898 Lost at Sea."

In 1892 James P. Davidson built the able 2-mast schooner ANNA L. PONDER for James Ponder. Two years later C.C. Davidson built the small, scow-type 2-mast schooner LYDIA AND MARY for Captain James B. Scull. Ten years later in 1904, the final sailing vessel, the small 2-mast schooner JOSEPH L. MULFORD, JR. was built by an unrecorded builder. In 1906 James P. Davidson built a motor-propelled vessel fitted with three masts for Captain George E. Megee for use in freight service between Milton and Philadelphia. It was not particularly successful. In 1907 Rouse T. Potter built a steam-propelled vessel, the BREAKWATER for use in his maritime salvage business. During World War I this vessel became USS BREAKWATER and after naval service in the Canal Zone apparently ended her career in Panama.

Eight years later in 1915, Rouse T. Potter brought the Broadkill's shipbuilding industry to a close in building the motor-propelled WILD CAT, a fishing craft measuring 56.6' x 15.2' x 5.6'. Her fishing career was to be brief, as she was sold to the U.S. Navy on July 5, 1917, and became USS WILD CAT, a formidable name for such a small craft. On April 21, 1919, she was loaded aboard the USS BATH for transportation to the Pacific Coast. In February, 1920, she was transported to Juneau, Alaska. She engaged in Alaskan hydrographic work until 1941 when she was declared unfit for service and stripped. Offered for sale, there were no bidders. On May 2, 1949, a very momentous event took place at King Cove, Alaska, in approximate Latitude 55 degrees North, Longitude 162 degrees West and far removed from the more gentle climate of the Broadkill. The final recorded financial transaction involving a Broadkill-built vessel took place when John E. Wickstrom purchased the remains of WILD CAT for \$1.00! Inquiry to the Postmaster, King Cove, failed to produce any additional information.

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To complete this review of the Broadkill's shipbuilding, some comment should be included about the locations of the shipyards which completely disappeared many years ago.

In the beginning the vessels were so small that they could have been built, and probably were, at almost any place at water's edge and launched in any direction up or down the channel, including directly across the Broadkill.

It is clearly established that Baptist Lay owned land, apparently 390 acres, on the east side of the juncture of Round Pole Branch and the Broadkill, also shown on early maps as the Great Creek. It is reasonable to believe that this site, located one-half mile down stream from Milton's Union Street bridge, is where Lay built vessels.

In 1833 William v. Coulter purchased from Arthur Milby a plot of land lying between Federal and Chestnut Streets and extending from Water Street to the Broadkill. Coulter is known to have built nine vessels between 1823 and 1838. It is reasonable to believe that he built some of them on his 1833 purchase. He could have built all of them there on a lease of the land before he made his purchase.

The shipbuilding industry existed for about 175 years and occupied many generations of shipbuilders. As one generation faded away, a new generation took over the facilities and continued the business. Such a transition is reflected in the 1868 Beers Atlas map of Milton, which shows "S. Martin Ship Yard" situated on the same land purchased by Coulter in 1833. This map also shows "Jas. Ponder Ship Yard" occupying the entire area bounded by Front Street, Round Pole Branch and a small branch near Walnut Street. Ponder was a prosperous merchant, vessel owner and politician--not a shipbuilder. He probably found ownership of this site to be profitable by making it available on some arrangement to shipbuilders. William C. Prettyman built seven vessels between 1844 and 1852. The Ponders, John and his son, James, owned in full or invested in each of them which leads to the conclusion that Prettyman used the Ponder site. Between 1854 and 1857 Noah W. Megee built four consecutive vessels in which the Ponders were investors, indicating that he, too, used the Ponder site.

As vessels increased in dimensions, particularly in length, suitable building sites became limited. Large vessels required building sites in bends in the channel where launching ways could be directed to the axis of the channel in order that vessels being launched had sufficient distance of water in which to "run" to a stop after sliding down the launching ways.

Samuel Martin found that his location between Federal and Chestnut Streets was not adequate for his business. He established a new facility on the south bank at the bend in the Broadkill about 500 feet down stream from Round Pole Branch.

Milton's waterfront between Chestnut and Walnut Streets offered a favorable site for shipbuilding because the Branch in the north bank provided additional distance for a vessel to "run" at a launch. No doubt this location had been used by several generations of builders. This was where Rouse T. Potter built Broadkill's final two vessels.

Drawbridge was a building site. The southwest bank at the end of the bridge provided a satisfactory depth of water for sufficient distance to launch vessels in a northwesterly direction. It is recorded that Samuel M. Simpler, John and David Lank, William F. Lamb, Joseph L. and Thomas Black and Theodore Wilson built vessels there between 1853 and 1882. It is reasonable to believe that many others preceded them.

The Blacks' business prospered and they decided that Samuel Martin's old site offered more benefits than did Drawbridge. At the Martin site they built five large 3-mast schooners between 1872 and 1882.

The Russells found that their Landing, east of and within sight of Drawbridge, was ideally suited for shipbuilding. At this location George Russell built five vessels between 1856 and 1864, one of them being the largest built on the Broadkill until 1877. It is indicated that his father, Robert, built six vessels there between 1827 and 1848.

An unusual shipyard development took place in the 1800s as the Broadkill shipbuilding industry was about to expire. Two channels, side by side, were dredged into the south bank at the Ponder shipyard and perpendicular to the Broadkill. These channels were to provide launching "runs" for the large vessels C.C. Davidson was to build. There in 1890 he built Milton's only 4-master and in 1891 built 3 3-masters. And that was the end of the requirement for such facilities. In a few years the site became the location of the tomato cannery of Goodwin Brothers & Conwell and has been the location of such an activity ever since.

The key factors upon which the Broadkill's shipbuilding industry prospered reached an end simultaneously. The market for wood sailing ships was in capacities twice as large or larger than could be floated out of the Broadkill and practically all of the local shipbuilding timber has been consumed by the vessels built over about the past 175 years.

The recapitulation of all the shipbuilding known to have occurred on the banks of the old Broadkill brings this history of its shipbuilding to a close.

The New Freight and Passenger Steamer

Mary M. Vinyard.



Will make trips as follows, between
MILTON AND PHILADELPHIA

Stopping at Drawbridge and Broadkill Beach
Leaves Milton During September 1904.

Thur., Sept. 1, 8 a.m.	Mon., Sept. 19, 8 a.m.
Mon., " 5, 9 a.m.	Wed., " 21, 11 a.m.
Wed., " 7, 11 a.m.	Fri., " 23, 2 p.m.
Mon., " 12, 2 p.m.	Thur., " 25, 4 a.m.
Thur., " 16, 5:30 p.m.	

Steamer leaves Drawbridge two hours after leaving Milton.

Returning steamer will leave Philadelphia from Pier 8 North Wharves (above Arch Street) as follows:

Fri., Sept. 2, noon.	Tue., Sept. 2, 4 p.m.
Tue., " 6, 6 p.m.	Fri., " 5, 8 p.m.
Fri., " 9, 8 p.m.	Tue., " 7, 11 p.m.
Tue., " 12, 11 a.m.	Fri., " 10, 1 p.m.
Fri., " 15, 2 p.m.	

The only steamer service running between Philadelphia and the lower Delaware-Maryland Peninsula.

All kinds of freight carried at low rates.
Covered deck for horses and all other kinds of live stock.

Freight consigned to Wilmington and Chester forwarded with dispatch.
First-class passenger accommodations.

Fare \$1.00 Round Trip 24.50
Children, 5 to 12 years, Half Fare.

Milton Steamboat Co.
MILTON, DELAWARE.

Milford Chronicle,
Apr. 16, 1904

The Milton Steamboat Company was incorporated on October 2, 1903, to construct or purchase steamships, operate steamship lines and to carry passengers and freight. Probably it operated only in 1904 and 1905. In 1904 it used the Milford-built screw steamer, Mary M. Vinyard, and it was not a "side-wheeler" in spite of the advertisement. The captain (master) was Andrew J. Davidson. In December, 1905, it was sold to the Va. and Carolina Coast Railway Co. and henceforth had no Delaware connection. It burned in 1912. After the new boat arrived in Milton, "the pride of Milton" was enlarged with an upper saloon with six staterooms and an after cabin. (From information provided by E.D. Bryan, M.D., of Dover.)

Andrew J. Davidson, 1871-1945, master of the steamer, Mary M. Vinyard, was the son of the Milton shipbuilder, James Polk Davidson. As a youth, he worked in a Milton shipyard, probably his father's. From 1890-1903 and 1904-1908, he worked on various lighthouse tender vessels as first mate or captain in the Lighthouse Service, U.S. Dept. of Commerce. In 1903 and 1904 he was a first class shipwright and worked at Philadelphia Navy Yard. From 1904-1908 he lived in Milton.

1815 1 sloop	1815 1 2-mast schooner	1816 - 1834 6 2-mast schooners
<u>Levin Lank</u> 1817 1 sloop	<u>McIlvain & Dutton</u> 1822 - 1824 2 sloops	<u>William McIlvain</u> 1824 - 1825 2 sloops 1 2-mast schooner
<u>William V. Coulter</u> 1823 - 1838 3 sloops 6 2-mast schooners	<u>Nathaniel Lank</u> 1824 1 sloop	<u>John Dutton</u> 1826 - 1831 5 sloops 1 2-mast schooner
<u>Samuel H. Dutton</u> 1827 - 1834 3 sloops	<u>Robert Russell</u> 1827 - 1848 2 sloops 4 2-mast schooners	<u>Samuel Martin</u> 1828 - 1861 4 sloops 18 2-mast schooners 2 barges
<u>Martin & Marshall</u> 1851 1 canal boat	<u>Peter Lewis</u> 1832 1 2-mast schooner	<u>James C. Robbins</u> 1834 - 1848 3 2-mast schooners
<u>Joseph Conwell</u> 1834 1 2-mast schooner	<u>Jefferis & Stevenson</u> 1835 1 2-mast schooner	<u>George W. Atkins</u> 1837 - 1865 7 2-mast schooners
<u>Isaac White</u> 1837 - 1861 3 2-mast schooners	<u>Isaac White & N.W. Megee</u> 1842 1 2-mast schooner	<u>John C. Truitt</u> 1838 1 2-mast schooner
<u>William V. Coulter and Jacob N. Coffin</u> 1839 1 2-mast schooner	<u>William Holland</u> 1839 1 2-mast schooner	<u>Elisha Prettyman</u> 1839 1 sloop
<u>Wm. C. Prettyman</u> 1840 - 1866 19 2-mast schooners	<u>Atkins & Prettyman</u> 1842 - 1843 1 brigantine	<u>Noah Wiltbank Megee</u> 1846 - 1874 1 sloop 12 2-mast schooners 4 3-mast schooners
<u>John B. Mustard</u> 1847 1 2-mast schooner	<u>Wm. Jefferies</u> 1847 1 2-mast schooner	<u>Samuel M. Simpler</u> 1853 1 2-mast schooner
<u>John Lank and David Lank</u> 1860 1 2-mast schooner	<u>George Russell</u> 1856 - 1864 1 sloop 2 2-mast schooners 2 brigs	<u>William F. Lamb</u> 1863 - 1883 6 2-mast schooners 1 3-mast schooner
<u>Joseph L. Black & Bro. (Thomas)</u> 1863 - 1882 1 sloop 1 2-mast schooner 3 3-mast schooners 2 3-mast schooners with between-deck	<u>Richard F. Hastings</u> 1866 - 1868 2 2-mast schooners 1 3-mast schooner	

David H. Atkins
1867-1887
1 2-mast schooner
1 2-mast schooner
with between-deck
10 3-mast schooners
4 3-mast schooners
with between-deck
1 3-mast barkentine
with between-deck

Theodore S. Wilson
1873-1883
5 2-mast schooners

Andrew J. Davidson
1873
1 2-mast schooner

Cornelius Coulter Davidson
1859-1894
3 2-mast schooners
10 3-mast schooners
1 4-mast schooner
1 steam propelled

James P. Davidson
1891-1906
1 2-mast schooner
1 3-mast schooner
1 motor propelled

Rouse T. Potter
1907-1915
1 steam propelled
1 motor propelled

Vessels Built by Unidentified Builders (Master Carpenters)

1 shallop
19 sloops
56 2-mast schooners
1 3-mast schooner
2 3-mast schooners
with between deck
1 canal boat

80 65 built between 1737 and 1850
14 built between 1851 and 1875
1 built after 1875

Recapitulation of all vessels known to have been built on the banks of the Broadkill:

1 shallop
47 sloops
170 2-mast schooners
1 2-mast schooner with between-deck
31 3-mast schooners
8 3-mast schooners with between-deck
1 4-mast schooner
1 brigantine
2 brigs
1 3-mast barkentine with between-deck
2 steam propelled
2 motor propelled
2 barges
2 canal boats
271 grand total

THE CANNING AND FRUIT DRYING INDUSTRIES OF MILTON
E.D. Bryan, M.D., Dover, Del.

This article is based mainly upon newspapers, especially the columns written by David A. Conner, for many years the Milton correspondent of the Milford Chronicle. The author feels a special indebtedness to Mr. Conner for his informative columns, which reflected his deep interest in, and love for Milton.

During Milton's first century, farming was the outstanding industry of the vicinity and of the State of Delaware in general. The land yielded abundant crops, including the famous Delaware peaches, and our farmers were easily able to meet increasing demands from nearby city markets. Foods could reach even more distant places if they were preserved, and commercial canning and drying factories appeared. The canning industry began in Delaware in New Castle County as early as the mid-1840's, and factories sprang up throughout the state in the 1850-1920 period. The cans of this early period were the hand-assembled cap-and-hole type. The product was put into them through a hole in one end which was sealed by a soldered-on cap. Cans could not be ordered from a manufacturer in the early days, so a work force at each factory was kept busy die cutting and soldering its own supply.

The first stirrings of this new industry for Milton was heralded by this terse announcement in a Milford newspaper, the Peninsular News and Advertiser in February, 1880: "Milton is to have a canning factory this spring." Further evidence that it actually happened appeared in the Wilmington Morning News in January, 1881: "A short distance from Milton is situated the canning factory of M.H. Davis, which does a large business during the canning season, giving employment to a number of both sexes, and is a source of considerable revenue to the town." This must refer to Mark Henry Davis of Cedar Creek Hundred, who was an extensive fruit grower. Tax records show that he never owned property or paid taxes in Broadkill Hundred. The factory "a short distance" from Milton must have been at his orchard lands at Jefferson's Crossroads or his farm in Prime Hook Neck, neither of which was over four miles from Milton. It is not known how long it operated, possibly only in 1880.

With the convenience of the Broadkill River and Milton-built ships, a cannery in town was not long in following. May, 1881: "Ex-Gov. James Ponder, Daniel R. Burton and Myers Reynolds will erect a large cannery in Milton for this season." The first two were prominent Milton capitalists, and the third was a recent arrival from Cedar Creek Hundred where he had been a farmer and a fruit grower. Deed and tax records, as well as newspaper accounts, fail to show where the factory stood. Reynolds & Co. was ready by the harvest season to can tomatoes and peaches, and in the fall, meats and poultry. The firm produced a pack of 75,000 cans of tomatoes in 1881.

The first supply of cans for the company ran short. August, 1881: "Recently the schooner P.J. Hart loaded at the wharf of G. M. Howell's cannery in Milford 50,000 empty cans for Reynolds & Co. of Milton."

EVERY EVENING
WILMINGTON, 1880

March The Breakwater Light (at Lewes) either gets the figures badly mixed in the following yarn or there must be some terrible woodchoppers in Sussex. It says: "An old fashioned wood chopping took place near Milton on Thursday afternoon of last week, under the supervision of Messrs. P. J. Hart and Charles Burton. There were 92 choppers in the party and they cut 450 cords of wood in 4 1/2 hours." This would be at the rate of about 11 cords a day for each man. As 2 cords is usually considered a fair day's work, perhaps the Breakwater Light really meant to say that 450 choppers cut 92 cords in the time stated.

1881

March The Breakwater Light reports that the ship carpenters of Milton are on a strike for an increase of wages from \$1.50 per day to \$2.00.

WILMINGTON MORNING NEWS
1881

May The smoke house or out kitchen of J. H.B. Mustard was destroyed by fire on Sunday morning, containing some of Mrs. Mustard's best table- and silverware. The structure was used as a summer kitchen. On the evening before the fire, company visited the family and took tea, and these articles were taken out to be washed and left there. At 3 o'clock on Sunday morning the church bell rang, and the call for "Help! Fire! Fire!" rang out through the streets of Milton.

June The handsome young women of Milton have lent themselves to a mercenary scheme to inveigle the unsuspecting into a 25¢ lunch in Lavinia Grove on the Glorious Fourth. Two ministers and a doctor are pushing the thing through.

July One individual in Milton will undertake to guarantee \$20,000 for a railroad direct from Milford to Lewes, and the merchants and influential citizens think that they can secure the right-of-way for such a road without cost to the corporation.

PENINSULAR NEWS AND ADVERTISER
MILFORD, 1880

March R. J. Betts, the builder and contractor, is repairing the M.E. church.
D.H. Atkins is constructing one vessel and has contracted to build a second.

April Thirty or forty new street lights have been bought for the town.
Thousands of cords of pine wood, "the so-called currency of Sussex County," are being cut within a few miles of

Sixty carpenters are now busy in the Milton shipyards. Thomas J. Atkins has finished building his new hearse, a fine specimen of workmanship and material. Daniel R. Burton & Co. are engaged in the phosphate business.

- May A committee has been appointed to build a new M.E. parsonage. The salary of the Rev. A.W. Lightbourne has been raised from \$700 to \$800.
- June Glass boxes have replaced wooden boxes in the postoffice. George S. Reynolds has received his new thresher. The new schooner, Captain Bonsall, being built by J.R. Black and Brother, will soon be launched.
- Nov. The Democrats celebrated their political victory with a parade in Milton and ox roast. A float entitled "The Old Constitution" came from Lewes and a similar one was prepared locally. Music was provided by the Georgetown Brass Band. Some houses were illuminated. Attention from the parade was diverted by a fight between two black men, one of whom died from stabbing.
- Dec. Our shipyards are busy and all hands in demand. Thomas S. Wilson is building a schooner of 100 tons for Captain Daniel R. Burton to engage in the Milton-New York trade. William Lamb is building a packet for travel from Milton to Philadelphia. David Atkins is building a large vessel of 1,000 tons for Captain Charles Megee, and C.C. Davidson has begun a schooner of 700 tons for Philadelphia parties.

MILFORD CHRONICLE

1880

- July Mr. Chandler has finished the census, and the population of Milton is 1,025--not 1,500 as many people have claimed.

1885

- April The mail route by stage between Milton, Drawbridge and Ellendale was awarded to David Lynch at a salary of 50¢ per day. He must keep three head of horses and has all revenue derived from the freight, express and passenger traffic.
- Aug. The dredging machine Atlantic is now engaged in digging out the creek from the mouth of the Broadkill to Milton. The appropriation made by the Government for this work is \$30,000, which is certainly a sufficient amount to make it a navigable stream for deep vessels.

1886

- April A Wilmington firm has presented a figure for building a steamboat for Milton. Will it be accepted? Milton has six physicians, four apprentice medical students and two drugstores. The schooner L.B. Chandler has left for the Chesapeake to secure oysters to plant at the mouth of the Broadkill.

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Messrs. C. Atkins, W.B. Tomlinson, and D. R. Burton are sending the Fannie for a similar purpose. Theodore S. Wilson, an agent for the nursery, has sold 26,000 peach trees in the vicinity.

More shad is being caught in the Broadkill than for many years.

- May Shipbuilding is depressed. A few ship carpenters have left to go to Wilmington to work for Enoch Moore, while others lounge on the street or play quoits.

The schooners Sussex and Eugene Cathrall are laid up because of dull sales and the low price of wood.

Robert Conwell has opened a bakery in Milton.

J.B. Dorman of Drawbridge has abandoned plans to float the Hettie J. Dorman, a schooner driven ashore on Shinecock Beach, Long Island.

- June Ex-postmaster John Polk has built a kiln and will burn 50,000 bricks.

The columnist predicted that the clouds of disaster would lift in the near future when vessels were again being constructed.

- July On July 4 the Georgetown Brass Band gave a concert in Lane's Park, D.A. Conner (the columnist) read the Declaration of Independence, and Joshua Bailey was in charge of ice cream and confections.

The steamboat J.S. Van Doren owned by H.M. Smith of Philadelphia will make two trips weekly from Milton to Philadelphia.

The camp meeting at Lavinia's woods included the celebrated walk-around at its conclusion.

The town council has decided to extinguish the street lights until the nights are longer and darker.

- Aug. Bentley & Walsh (Jeffrey O. Bentley and Moses A. Walsh) of Philadelphia purchased 62 acres of Joshua Carey on Broadkill Creek and will erect a building in which to manufacture chemicals. (According to Scharf's History, the firm manufactured mainly wood alcohol, charcoal and tar.) Ex-Governor Ponder will build a schooner 90 feet long, 27 foot beam, Captain Hunter. Work will soon begin on Mr. Dorman's vessel. The mechanics want wages of \$1.50 per day, rather than \$1.25. Milton was visited by an earthquake on August 31, but there was no damage and many who were in bed did not even notice it.

- Sept. Work has begun on Mr. Dorman's vessel in David Atkins' shipyard. (Apparently this was the new "Hettie J. Dorman" of 124 gross tons, with the registration number of 95918.) Let us hope that it ends business stagnation in Milton. Milton's first political demonstration of the season was undertaken by John Green who appeared in a wagon with 15 or 20 young ladies, making it a "woman's suffrage demonstration."

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pointed out that there would be no division in heaven. D.A.C., the columnist (Conner) asked, "Why not let well enough alone?"

- Aug. Peaches are selling for 40¢ per basket.
The camp meeting at Lavania's Woods is at the height of its glory. The circle has been laid out in the form of an octagon, and tents show good taste. Twenty-five conversions have resulted.
The Milton Brick Manufacturing Company lost a kiln of 150,000 bricks in an accident in the burning.
The most fearful storm for years took place on Monday, with the tide the highest in twenty years. Union Street was flooded on both sides of the bridge, and water rose within six inches of the flooring of the iron bridge. Communication between South and North Milton was by boat. After the water subsided on Friday, clothing and carpets of many residents were hanging out to dry. Only three of the 22 cottages at Point Pleasant are left in place. The schooner Annie Moore capsized at the mouth of the Broadkiln. The residents were rescued by the steam tug Irene. (This tug was built in Dover in 1883 by Thomas Draper for bringing vessels to his wharf there. In 1887, its home port was Milton, and the new owners included Charles H. Atkins, James Ponder, Daniel R. Burton, William T. Parker, and Charles M. Scott, all of Milton. Captains (masters) included Charles H. Atkins, and then James A. M. Lank and Charles R. Fowler. In 1890 the tug was sold to new owners in Milford, and its home port became Milford.)
- Sept. It is reported that thirteen families will leave Milton by the first of the year.
Captain James Conwell has contracted with C.C. Davidson for construction of a schooner 144 feet long with a capacity of 650 tons. It will be owned by the Captain and Philadelphia parties.
John C. Walls has resigned as collector of town taxes, town bailiff, and lamp lighter to move to Camden, N.J.
- Oct. Péter Shockley, formerly the proprietor of the Merchants' Hotel in Salisbury, has bought the good will and fixtures of Ponder House.
- Nov. Ex-postmaster Mustard who engaged in the mercantile business here has left to settle in Tecumseh, Nebraska.
Lodges are reviving: The IOOF is again meeting as is the Independent Order of American Mechanics.
The Milton Cornet Band is again active.
Captain J. C. Atkins & Son are enlarging their store building. Since Friday, the crack, crack, crack of breechloaders has been heard. Partridges sell for 10¢ apiece. One man bagged 33 the first day and 40 the next day.
In the presence of many people and with flags flying, the four-masted schooner Florence Creadick was launched

- schoolhouse which will be an ornament to the place.
- May The fact is notorious that Milton is behind all the other towns in the state in the condition and character of the schoolhouses.
- A three-masted schooner is now being built for J.B. Dorman of Drawbridge by C.C. Davidson. It is built of the best material, and the fine workmanship makes it a beauty. It is 105 feet long with 270 ton capacity. It will be launched next week. It is Mr. Davidson's first job as a contractor. The Rev. V.M. Riordan of St. John's Baptist Church was sent here by Bishop Coleman. He claimed to have been a Roman Catholic priest and also a Presbyterian minister. After a visit to Chicago, he began to drink heavily. Two men were employed to watch him. Accompanied by Dr. Gillespie, he has entered an asylum for inebriates in Philadelphia.
- The WCTU hopes to build a hall 40 x 60 feet.
- Captain R.D. Burton, age 56, died, leaving an estate worth \$50,000 to \$75,000.
- The schooner Jennie R. Tomlinson was launched, Captain R. Tomlinson.
- The school districts of North and South Milton are combined. The friends of the consolidation claim that Milton schools were lower in status than those of any town in the state and "a laughing stock." Such epithets were used as "barn" and "jail yard." David Lank is president of the new board of nine trustees.
- Isaac Nailor is building a two-story storehouse for Mrs. R.D. Burton 72 x 75 with French plate glass windows in front.
- June The Bentley Chemical Works have been rented by Bentley to James B. Scull of New Jersey for a saw and planing mill.
- July J.B. Dorman of Drawbridge shipped 6 cargoes of pine wood to Haverstraw, N.J., in one week--the largest shipment ever made by one shipper in such a short time. Dorman is the largest shipper of pine wood on the Broadkilm and perhaps in the county.
- On their picnic the members of the M.P. Sunday School enjoyed songs, croquet, ball, marbles, bean bag throws, games and hoop races.
- On July 4 Hart's Hotel had decorations and flags. Many houses displayed flags, and little boys had flags and fire-crackers.
- Four bids for the schoolhouse range from \$4,775 to \$5,300. C.C. Davidson will soon launch a coasting schooner built for Burton and Parker.
- J.C. Davidson has the contract to build the schoolhouse. A grand hop was held at the Hotel Arago at Point Pleasant on Friday.
- Aug. The schooner William T. Parker was launched, the owner being Burton Parker. His niece, Jennie Parker, did not break the bottle in three tries, and Captain Charles Burrows did the honors. He will be its commander.
- Ex-Governor Ponder has new sidewalks in front of the Ponder House and along Front Street up to Chestnut Street.

- The Milton Cornet Band will hold a festival to raise money to repair their musical instruments.
- The schooner C.C. Davidson owned by ex-Governor Ponder and Mrs. Burton was sold to New York parties.
- May M.T. Collins & Son, nurserymen, will ship blackberries to market beginning this week. The firm expects to ship 6,000 quarts.
- Captain Alfred Lekites now commands the schooner Joseph C. Atkins built 30 years ago by Captain George W. Atkins.
- William B. Tomlinson is in New York City selling the schooner William Potter Davis.
- (An article in the Milford section mentioned that DAC was ill and that he had lost his eyesight and could no longer communicate with his many friends through the columns of the newspaper. It was believed that his blindness was temporary. The Milford Chronicle expressed the hope that David A. Conner would soon recover and again submit columns. Temporarily he was replaced by "Max Wax.")
- June The schooner James M. Carey, Captain Carey Palmer, is being repaired here. It was built 20 years ago by David H. Atkins. Mrs. Jonathan Fox has purchased a handsome team of horses, and it is said that the madam can handle the ribbons with alacrity. "Max Wax."
- July The shipping of lumber in large quantities to Pennsylvania and New Jersey is an important business here. The Bentley Chemical Works were bought by a Pennsylvania party, and may be used to manufacture woolen goods.
- Aug. The cornerstone of the colored M.E. church has been laid in the corner of the old school building.
- Golden Rule Lodge of the Odd Fellows has bought four acres of the Hazzard estate for a cemetery.
- Sept. John Lucas & Co.'s (Ed. note: a large, national paint concern) advertisement on our canning factory roof, which is 300 feet long, just makes a splendid showing. The black and yellow letters are 4 feet square. They also lettered J.C. Atkins & Son's 80 foot square store roof the same way.
- Joseph H. Speakman & Co. arrived with their flying horses (merry-go-round) last Monday. It is the finest rig of the kind that ever visited Milton. The children have been saving their nickels. The performance is on Chandler's lawn. "Friend of Max Wax."
- One of our oldest citizens of North Milton got so bewildered looking at the flying horses Saturday night that in starting for his home he went in a directly opposite course. When he came to himself he was at Douglas's corner.
- Nov. Coles and Sparks presented a circus exhibit at Hart's Park. A large number of people attended, but the show was poor. John B. Barker, our tinsmith, has been awarded the contract to furnish the Mason Fruit Jar Co. (of Philadelphia) with small metal poles by the car load. These poles are used to handle the jars as soon as they are molded. (Presumably the company contracted with South Jersey glass houses to make the jars.) The firm of J.C. Atkins & Son furnish pine wood for the same company.

- Dec. Golden Rule Lodge bought 3 1/2 acres of John Wiltbank for a cemetery.
- Wilson & Conwell have bought 5,000 pounds of poultry for the Christmas market.

1895

- May (The correspondent, G.W. Atkins, returned after an absence of 7 months.) If a person who labored as a ship carpenter returned to Milton after an absence of ten or twenty years, he would see many changes. The shipyard of Black Brothers is covered over with brambles and brush. The shipyards of ex-Governor Ponder where schooners of heavy tonnage stood on the stocks, forty to sixty men worked daily, and timber was strewn on the ground, are under cultivation. "It is safe to predict that that industry has passed away from Milton, never to return as formerly, while new occupations will no doubt take its place."
- The removal of the beef shambles and water closet from the rear of J. B. Welch's drugstore is a great improvement. Parker and Chandler will close their store at eight o'clock in the evening, and employees of other stores hope their owners will follow.
- Strawberries have made their first appearance and are selling at 10¢ per quart.
- Robert Beardsley has tens of thousands of peach baskets ready for delivery.
- The Emma J. Meyer, Captain John Oliver, has been lost at sea in the Bermudas. It was built in 1884 by David H. Atkins for Captain John Megee.
- Aug. The steamer Varina is to run from Milton to Philadelphia and carry freight and passengers. The steamer is owned by Mr. Kiger of New Jersey. On Saturday a big crowd assembled to see her leave laden with peaches, potatoes, eggs and chickens. She came down from Philadelphia in 13 hours.
- Sept. Tomlinson & Atkins have had their large drier put in order to dry peaches.
- Oct. A magic lantern show will be presented at the M.P. Church. Contractor Nailor is building a shirt factory for T.H. Douglass and N.W. White, 25 x 50 feet, 2 stories high. The cannery closed last week after a most successful season. Professor Peter Page Atkins, the phrenologist, and wife returned to Milton after visiting their six married children for 21 months.
- Dec. Oh, there is nothing half so grand,
As Milton's dear old Cornet Band,
And what music they bring
With Dr. Rob and Starkey on the strings.
- 1896
- Jan. Over 200 people from Ellendale, Georgetown and Milton met in Assembly Hall to discuss building a railroad from Queen Anne via Denton to Lewes through Greenwood, Ellendale and Milton or through Bridgeville, Georgetown and Milton. The former

STEPHEN PALMER

He is an experienced and careful workman, whose services are always in demand.

W. H. MEARS

His tonsorial parlors are directly opposite the Ponder House. He has been conducting his business for 12 years, during which time he has established a paying trade.

PETER LEONARD

The young contractor and builder, who recently started in business, is paving the way to a good trade by his neat workmanship.

SAMUEL J. WILSON

The leading funeral director of Sussex County, has been engaged in the undertaking business for 26 years, and by his long experience he is able to give satisfaction. In connection with his business he has a furniture department well stocked with everything necessary to furnish a home in this line.

DOUGLASS AND WHITE

The bustling managers of the shirt factory are giving employment to about 75 women and girls, and at present are running on full time with enough orders to last several months. The large amount of goods hauled by these gentlemen gives proof of the excellency of their work.

FISHER AND ROBINSON

Proprietors of the large canning factory on the north side give employment to about 150 persons during the canning season, and their brand of goods is favorably known throughout the country.

JOHN MEGEE

The barber who recently opened a shop in North Milton is building a good trade from the people on the north side.

FAUCETT AND COMPANY

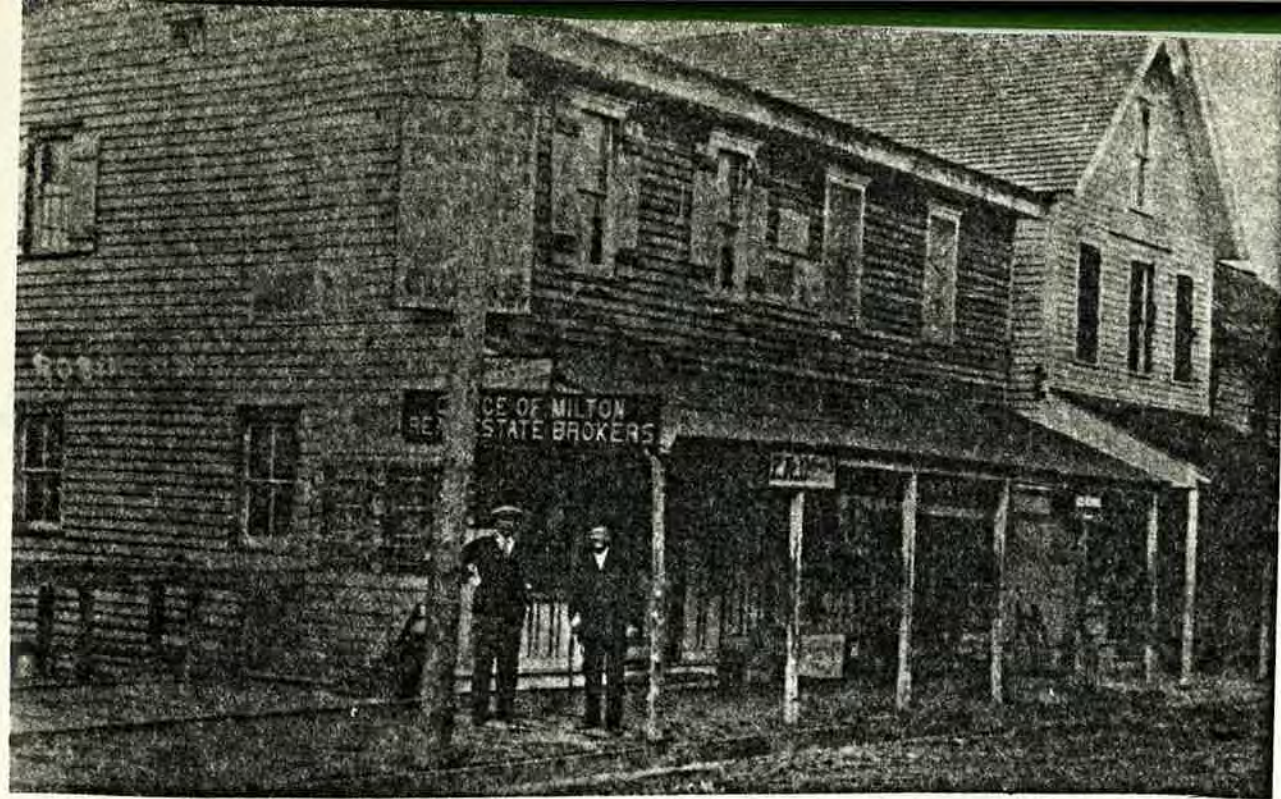
While these gentlemen are not residents of Milton, their interests are centered here. Their canning house on Atkins wharf gives employment to a large number during the summer.

ISAAC W. NAILOR

Although a young man, Mr. Nailor is by no means a novice at his trade. He has been connected with every enterprise which is for the betterment of his town, and has always been an earnest advocate of improvements. He now has several large contracts in view, which will give employment to a large number of carpenters the greater part of this year. Mr. Nailor has constructed many fine buildings in this county, including several residences in Lewes.

JOHN C. POLK

He has been engaged in the grocery business for a number of years and keeps a well selected stock of groceries, provisions, &c.



A Milton street scene about 1910 with H. L. Robinson and Captain H. Hudson. (Picture collection, DSA.)



Samuel Martin (1805-1879) was one of Milton's most productive shipbuilders (1828-1861) and also owner of a brick factory and general store. He was an elder of Goshen M.E. Church and one of Milton's first commissioners in 1865. He is the great, great, great-grandfather of Russell McCabe. 279



Colonel Samuel James Wilson (1850-1937) was a cabinet maker, owner of a furniture store and undertaker. A Democratic leader in Sussex County, he was appointed a Colonel on the staff of Governor James Ponder. He was appointed coroner of Sussex County. (Pictures of these two men are from the collection of Russell McCabe.)

DO YOU REMEMBER?

By Walt Atkins

At one time Milton was a big Ship building place. Capt. Potter built a large tug boat at Atkins warf. One was built at Blacks shipyard which was owned and operated by Black Brothers, Jack and Thomas. One was built at Schull Town, one where Molton had his factory, one in the old run.

Men from Milton did all the building.

Shipcarpenters that helped were John Waples, Harry Manship, Henry Atkins, George Sharp, Charles Sharp, George Davidson, Louis Mustard, John Mustard, Frank Walls, Josiah Davidson, David Lank, William Workman, P. Page Atkins, Harry Manship, Charles Davidson, George A. Bryan, Joseph Black, James, Marker, Albert Davidson, George Burris, Green Dutton, Hyson, Davidson, Joseph E. Lank, William Vent, Burt Johnson, James Hickman, John Black, and Clem Heart. The men that did the corking were Henry Sockum, Stowe Sockum, Jake Marshall, Joshiá Tingle and John White. Wages were \$1.00 a day for 10 hours.

That Milton had several sawmills?

One was at the upper mill pond, one at Scull town run by Charles Davidson and James Jester; one on the hill near the pumping station run by Robert Beardsley, Mrs. Ben Palmer's father. He made all kind of crates, baskets, etc. Also he worked up a lot of big poplar trees from Poplar Woods in Prime Hook Neck. They were from 5 to 7 ft. in diameter. He had a big timber cart made special to haul the logs with to the mill. He had a big up and down saw that would split them in half, then use a big circle saw to cut them up in timber. Doc Lofland was engineer, Walt Beardsley, Bob Palmer, Dorwin Beardsley, Ben Palmer, William Clemons, Tom Spencer, Clarence Welch and George Collins use to work there.

One mill was at Charles Waples lumber yard; one at the end of the lane operated by Nathan Williams; one on Sam Collins, operated by Harry Argo.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

By Walt Atkins

Broadkill Creek—After leaving the corner of the warf is a landing called Sand Hall, then one-fourth of a mile down at Parkers Run is where they found the body of Mrs. James Gordy. Mr. Gordy was hung for her murder. On down is Black landing where vessels were built and vessels were loaded with clay for a Philadelphia pottery factory. An old Log Cabin also stood here. Then Sampsons Landing where a big white oak tree stood and it is said that a man hung himself here and no one could tie a rope around it that would stay tied. Next is Heavelows Landing where there is an old brick vault about 10 feet long and 8 feet wide with a circle roof starting at the ground and about 6 feet high in the center. Then Careys Landing and then the Chemical Works where several large buildings stood and chemicals were made from Dockroots. Sam Reynolds Landing followed with Vaughn's Landing next. This is the location they claim James Gordy first took his wife whom he was supposed to have killed and rowed in a boat up the creek about 2 miles where she was found. Then old Orchard Landing, Sharps Landing, Jones' Landing and Cedar Landing where there is a natural spring and a cedar that looks like a big rocking chair. It was named "Devils Rocking Chair". Hollands Creek was next and then Drawbridge where a large 2 story store stands. Capt. Tomilson lived there and Mr. Lockerman kept store. It was a big business section at one time, houses, several graneries and the warf. It was operated by Mr. John B. Dorman. On down the creek was Robinsons Landing, Waples Landing, Black Landing and Oyster Rocks.

There has been a great opening place for several years. Then Old Mill Creek. The mouth of Broadkill has entirely closed from Lewes Creek all the way up to the Jetty. It is now filled with sand as high as the beach and grass is growing where the creek was. Part of the Old Rambo Lime barge is still at the Oyster Rocks where it sank and Green Island has all washed away. It is entirely under water and it used to be about 100 yards long with bushes growing. The first inlet was dug for the Denny Brothers of Penns Grove, N. J. to run the steamer "Pocnocut" from Milton to Philadelphia but was only able to use it one time before it filled up and another was dug but still not much good.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

by Walt Atkins

The old colored Camp Meeting Grounds—There used to be big meetings held at the camp grounds in the big Oak Woods, that stood in front of where Mr. Charles Wilkins now lives. People would travel there from all around to hear the singing and clapping of hands and could easily be heard a mile away. They have had a frame post filled with dirt and would build a fire on top these posts for the light.

When Mr. Wm. Fowler and Mr. Leonard used to do all the well digging around town, some times 40 ft. deep or more. They would dig so far and then slip a curb in to keep it from caving in on them. Everybody had a well. Later old modern top pumps came.

When Mr. William Clemons sold Hokey Pokey Ice Cream down town every Saturday. Two cakes for 5c.

When Tony Niebert made boots and shoes in the old Atkins house at the top of the hill. Also there was a Chinese Laundry in the same building.

When Nobe and Berry Ellingsworth kept fox hounds, also Mr. James Morris. They would take an old bag and work it in fish pickle. Then one would tie a rope to the bag and get on a horse and drag it all over town and around branches. When they would get 2 or 4 miles they would turn the fox hounds loose to run the trail. They would follow the trail as if it were a fox they were chasing. There used to be some big fox chases.

When Mr. John C. Hazzard was a surveyor. He had his office in a little building opposite the home of the late Halmarius Wiltbank. He did all the surveying around. He also owned lots of land. He had one son, Dr. Hazzard.

Early medical doctors were Peter R. Jackson, Wm. W. Wolfe, Joseph Maull and James A. Hopkins.

Earliest druggists were Louis Chandler, The DeShields Bros., Thomas Douglass, Wm. Starkey and John Welch.

Governors of the State of Delaware from Milton were Samuel Paynter, 1824-27, David Hazzard, 1830-33, Joseph Maull, (acting three months, till death in 1846), and James Ponder, 1871-75.

The second quarter of the nineteenth century could accurately be described as the 'flowering' stage in the evolution of our nation. Optimism and energy characterizes this period - when the country seemed to beliterally 'busting at the seams' with growth and development. A wave of nationalism swept the country as business and government became increasingly preoccupied with overall economic advancement. Great roads were built and canals dug to speed-up the flow of goods to market. Keeping pace with the rest of the country, businessmen in the Milton area were active participants in this new movement. The town's economy was rapidly changing as new businesses were established and older ones grew. A wide variety of products were being shipped from local wharves by an ever-increasing number of merchants. In 1826, there were twelve licensed retailers in and around Milton. They were viz; Milby & Ponder, Cornelius Coulter, Asa Haines (as agent for B.B. Howell), David Hazzard, Peter S. Parker, Aaron Marshall, Somerset Costen, James Barrett, Gideon Waples, John Starr, Samuel R. Paynter & Co. (of Drawbridge), and Abel Vent (of rural Broadkill Hundred). The large number of local retailers reflects the importance of commerce in the community. Trade expanded as Milton businessmen began aiming for national markets. A variety of products were being manufactured locally for export purposes. Traffic on the Broadkill was brisk, as commercial shippers transported goods such as grain, bog iron, quercitron (oak bark), leather and cloth, to distant markets.

Rapid industrial growth and diversification is perhaps the best indicator of the national mood at this time. Technological advances, coupled with a fervent desire for economic achievement, resulted in the establishment of new industries, and the expansion of old ones. This trend was immediately evident in the Milton community during this period.

Shipbuilding continued as the area's number one industry, despite the growth of other forms of economic opportunity in the community. The second quarter of the nineteenth century was to become the most productive period of vessel construction on the Broadkill. Over ninety new vessels splashed into the waterways - 19 sloops, 70 schooners, and one brigantine, at an average of over 3 launchings per year. (Conwell) The early to mid 1830's was an especially productive period for the local builders. Registration records indicate six vessels as being constructed locally in 1832, four in 1833, and nine in 1834. This last, record year, must have been a very busy one for the builders on the 'kill'. Types and sizes of new vessels became increasingly varied according to demand. The schooner JOHN G. WRIGHT, which was launched by Samuel Martin in 1848, became Milton's first vessel to exceed 100' in

Another manufactured product which gained importance during this period was quercitron, or "yellow oak" bark. Quercitron is a yellowish substance which is created by the grinding of oak bark (specifically black oak - mistakenly called yellow oak, due to its color). The finished product attained value through its use in tanning and dyeing operations. Proliferance of the black oak in Sussex, coupled with increased demand, led to the establishment of bark mills during the 1820's. By 1825, Dr. Joseph Maul (future Delaware governor) had established a mill of this type at his mill site on the Upper Pond. The 1832 manufacturing survey lists Gideon Waples and Dr. Maul as local producers. Bark production rapidly increased and quercitron was added to the list of products being shipped from the Milton wharves. During the next fifty years, bark milling would become a vital facet of the local economy. As many as four mills, whose principal business was quercitron production, would operate concurrently during this time.

As the local economy changed and diversified, there was rapidly increasing settlement in and around the town of Milton. Employment opportunities attracted growing numbers of persons from rural areas throughout the county. Among the newcomers were members of families which would have a significant impact on the future development of the community. A case in point is the migration, during this time, of members of the Atkins, Davidson, Megee and Lacey families - all originating in Indian River Hundred. Construction of new businesses, and the building of housing for the swelling population, literally transformed the appearance of the village between 1825 and 1850. The community of Milton was growing by leaps and bounds. In 1829, the state legislature passed the Public School Act. The town of Milton was then divided into two separate school districts - north and south of the Broadkill. A schoolhouse was constructed in the north district, while pupils in the southern district attended class for a time in the Milton Academy building. In 1833, local residents of the Presbyterian faith circulated a subscription paper for the purpose of constructing a church. Their efforts were successful and a building was erected in south Milton. Fraternal organizations were making great inroads in the community and during the 1840's, lodges of the Masonic order, and the Order of Odd Fellows, were established. By the year 1850, the town of Milton had developed into a bustling center of business and social activity. In a relatively short period of time, it had grown from a country crossroads into a village of substantial size and character.

In little more than fifty years, Milton had evolved from its infancy into a town of considerable means and substance. A wide variety of businesses were established and trade between the community and other ports was flourishing. Steady growth of the local population had resulted in the creation of a climate of social diversity. The economic and social development of the community, at this time, is perhaps best illustrated in the census of 1850. This seventh counting of the national population is especially valuable because of its detail. For the first time, names, birthplaces, ages and occupations of all citizens was recorded. Prior to this time only heads of households had been enumerated by name. An examination of the 1850 census of Milton provides a relatively detailed picture of life in the community during this period. The wide range of occupations is particularly noticeable. Among those recorded were; cabinetmakers, blacksmiths, coachbuilders, confectioners, physicians and harness makers. The most predominant occupations (by far) were those of shipcarpenters and sailors. It is obvious that the Milton of 1850 was a community of great versatility and growth.

Shipbuilding continued in its position as Milton's premier industry throughout this period. Larger vessels of more-varying design were being produced by the local yards. In 1852-53, New York interests gave local builders their first orders for three-masted rigs. This design was gaining popularity nationally as increasingly larger vessels made the traditional two-masted rigging obsolete. Construction of two-masters continued for some time, however, as many of the master builders (learned in the old school) remained skeptical of this new design. Outside interests became extensively involved in Milton shipbuilding as local yards made significant contributions to the nationwide merchant fleet. The mid-1860's was an especially productive period for the builders on the banks of the Broadkill. Records indicate four vessels as having been built in 1864, five in 1865, and six in 1866. Names and faces changed as many of the Broadkill's oldest and most productive builders, such as Samuel Martin and William C. Prettyman, retired in favor of a new breed. David Atkins, Black & Bro., and Cornelius Coulter Davidson characterize this newest (and virtually last) generation of master builders.

The local business community continued to prosper as trade and commerce sustained a growing mercantile class. Milton wharves were busy with departing vessels laden with the products of the area, and incoming vessels bringing goods to supply the needs and wants of the local populace. Grain, lumber and bark remained as the chief export products of the area at this time. Local businessmen continued to view Milton's economic future with considerable optimism, enthusiastically supporting development efforts.

The first serious attempts to establish a railroad connection with the town transpired during this period. In 1851, the state legislature passed an act incorporating the Broadkill Railroad and Plank Road Company. The purpose of the act was to provide financing for construction of a railroad or plank road between Milton and the county seat by selling stock. Two years later, in 1853, the legislature incorporated the Milton and Steam Mill Railroad Company with the intention of building a rail line from Milton to the central Sussex area. Neither of these efforts succeeded. Milton businessmen were concerned that the construction of a railroad from Wilmington to central Sussex might divert the shipment of goods from Milton via water. In 1869 a railroad station was established in southern Broadkill Hundred at Harbeson, and the following year another depot was built at Coolspring. Some local farmers and manufacturers used the speedy and efficient service provided by railroads, but the shipment of freight by water continued in the community, due to the significantly lower cost.

The Civil War period in Milton was characterized by bitterness and controversy. Some residents believed that the difficulties between the South and North should be settled peacefully, others wanted to preserve the Union, even if it meant going to war, and a few supported secession to the point of going South to join the armies of the Confederacy. In general, the Republicans supported the Lincoln administration and the use of force, while many Democrats wanted the controversy settled peacefully.

Many men from Milton served in the armed forces, especially in the Third Delaware Regiment. Some were killed, others were maimed or imprisoned. Feelings about the Civil War endured for many years in the community before they disappeared.

These differences of opinion came to a climax in the election of 1862 when federal troops appeared at polling places in Delaware. Republicans considered that the troops were sent to insure a fair election, while the Democrats felt that they were there to intimidate supporters of their party. Later the Democratic General Assembly investigated the election, and political leaders from both parties in Milton, as elsewhere in the state, testified. Their comments are printed elsewhere in this volume.

During the Civil War the economy of Milton prospered and was stimulated. There was a steady demand for new vessels, and the mid-60's were boon years for local shipyards. Trade was brisk as area merchants continued to ship local goods in large volumes to the hungry east-coast markets. The physical appearance of the town changed rapidly as many new homes and businesses were constructed. James Ponder erected a new steam saw and bark mill on the south bank of the Broadkill. Members of the Methodist Protestant Church built a house of worship on Union Street, and a new Odd Fellows Hall was dedicated in 1863. This expansive growth of the community stimulated interest in civic affairs and resulted in a movement towards the creation of a town government. On March 17, 1865, the state legislature passed an act incorporating the town of Milton, giving five commissioners governmental powers. A copy of this act is printed in this volume.

In retrospect we have seen that the town of Milton grew and changed considerably during the 1850's, 1860's and 1870's. Economic and social diversification continued as new homes and businesses were erected to meet the needs of the growing populace. Despite the controversy which surrounded the war years, local residents continued their interest in the development of the community and civic improvements. The state directory of 1868 noted that "Milton is one of the large, substantial places of Sussex County . . . has good schools . . . and a population that for intelligence and literary taste, it is said, is hardly excelled by any town of equal size in the county or state." Milton was obviously in tune with the times.

1875 - 1900 - GOOD TIMES/BAD TIMES

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the nation underwent a series of changes which altered the life style of the people. Electric lights, telephones, movies, and automobiles made their first appearance. Improvements in transportation and ever-increasing economic diversification created an environment of growth and change. Old practices and customs gave way to new ones as society became more mobile and less rural in nature. Periods of growth and prosperity alternated with times of depression and despair. These changes were felt throughout the country, including the little village of Milton.

Shipbuilding in Milton reflected these changing times. This activity was so important in the community that in January, 1881, the Wilmington Morning News observed that "about 75% of the men residing" there were employed in the village's three shipyards. But by 1886 newspapers reported that shipbuilding was depressed in Milton and that some of the shipwrights had gone to Wilmington to secure jobs.

Nevertheless, the last part of the nineteenth century was important in shipbuilding in Milton. In 1878, David H. Atkins launched the barkentine ELIZA J. McMANEMY, Milton's largest vessel by tonnage. Measuring 152.5' in length, 18.6' in depth, and 34.5' in width, its passage through the Drawbridge would have allowed only 21" on either side of the vessel. Another prominent builder of this period was Cornelius Coulter Davidson (1827-1917) who during a lengthy career constructed many large vessels, including Milton's only four-mast. In 1888, he launched Milton's first steam propelled vessel, the MARIHA E. McCABE, the longest vessel built on the Broadkill, being 176.4' in length. The following year Davidson constructed the FLORENCE CREADICK, the community's only vessel equipped with four-masted rigging. In 1891 four 3-mast schooners were built in Milton, three by C.C. Davidson and one by his cousin, James P. Davidson. After 1891, only six vessels were built in the yards along the Broadkill.

A variety of factors explain the rapid decline of the shipbuilding industry. A special report in the federal census of 1880 mentioned that "shipyard work in the lower part of the state is done in the old fashioned way, by handpower, requiring the expenditure of several hundred days more of manual labor" than if machinery were used. Prospective purchasers apparently placed great importance on the speed with which a vessel was completed and preferred to buy where labor-saving machinery more rapidly produced vessels. In addition, the Broadkill River became less attractive

for shipbuilding. Two centuries of agricultural activity along the stream led to the erosion of the soil and the silting of the river bottom. The erection of dams for milling purposes interfered with regular tidal activity. Some areas were so shallow that even smaller craft had difficulty in passing down stream. Efforts were made to clear the channel of obstacles, but they were too late to save the local shipbuilding industry. Many ship carpenters moved away, and those that remained at home pursued new careers.

New industries appeared to compensate to some extent for the decline of shipbuilding. In 1887 the Milton Brick Manufacturing Company began operations. Late in the 1890's the Douglass and White Shirt Factory opened, offering employment to about 75 women and a few men. The most significant new economic development was the introduction of the canning and fruit drying industries in the 1880's and 1890's, described in detail in a chapter by E.D. Bryan, M.D., in this volume.

Milton received some benefit from the establishment of a railroad from Milford to Georgetown in the mid-sixties, later extended to Lewes, but the lower cost of transportation by water made this means of shipping more attractive. It was not until 1897 that the Queen Anne Railroad opened, offering transportation to Lewes on the Delaware Bay and also to the Chesapeake Bay.

During this period important changes occurred in education. Since 1829 the town had been divided into two educational districts, but in 1891 they were joined into one. John H. Davidson was employed to build a new school, but prior to its completion it was burned by arsonists. Another building was then erected by Davidson on the site of the old Milton Academy, this venerable institution having been abandoned about 1880.

Religious activities continued to play a vital role in the social life of the community. The residents enjoyed camp meetings, revivals and ice cream socials. The Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant Churches prospered. Goshen M.E. Church outgrew its facilities and a new church was erected in the 1870's. The Episcopal congregation revived, and in 1877 a new one-story building was dedicated and named for the mother church of St. John the Baptist.

Civic organizations were active. In 1875 the Milton Library Association was formed for the purpose of establishing a community library. It was incorporated in 1883, and a case for books was purchased and placed in J.B. Welch's store. On July 4, 1889, the WCTU was formed to combat the evils of 'demon rum.' Two women from the National Woman's Suffrage Association presented a free lecture in the community in 1896, and this led to the formation of a local society with this objective. The Masonic order erected a new meeting place on Chestnut Street in the 1880's. The Odd Fellows Lodge purchased land on Union Street for a cemetery in 1893. In the same year that the railroad entered Milton, in 1897, the town acquired its first newspaper, the Milton Times.

During the final quarter of the nineteenth century the lives of the residents of Milton were significantly changed. Shipbuilding became unimportant, due to competition with technologically advanced yards in urban

locations. Fortunately new industries were established to provide employment. New organizations made citizens more aware of the world around them. The religious, educational and social institutions of the town improved.

AFTER 1907: A RETROSPECTIVE COMMENT

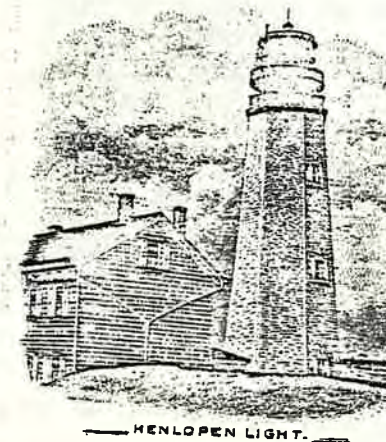
In the one hundred years since George Conwell had initiated settlement at the Head of the Broadkill, the town of Milton had grown into a substantial and prosperous community. There is evidence that various forms of development such as milling and ship construction were taking place in this area as early as the 1730's. As the middle section of Sussex County was settled, a need for an outlet to market and mill became evident. It was only natural that development would occur at the head of navigation. By 1800 a tiny settlement had developed at this location, and the residents were engaged in ship construction and the grain trade. Stores, churches and schools followed.

Looking for new economic opportunities, residents exported oak bark (quercitron) and crude bog iron. By the mid-nineteenth century, the town had become a thriving center of social and commercial activity. A substantial mercantile trade had developed, and shipbuilding was an important industry. In 1865 the town was incorporated and became self-governing.

In the 1880's shipbuilding became to suffer from competition from urban yards, which possessed time-saving, labor-saving machinery, and some ship carpenters moved elsewhere. Fortunately new industries appeared, of which the most important was canning and fruit drying. In 1900 Milton had a population of 948, a decrease of 126 since the census of 1890.

Milton experienced even more drastic changes after its first hundred years, but we leave that story to be told by another historian in the year 2007 when we hope that community action on the town's bicentennial will result in the history of Milton being brought up to date.

W. W. MAULL,
Blacksmith and Wheelwright.



HENLOPEN LIGHT.

No. Milton, Del.

The Lewes National Bank

Pay to the order of _____

Dollars