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An Act to Incorporate the Town of Laurel.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met: (Two thirds of each branch of the Legislature concurring) That John R. Wilson, Thomas C. Horsey, Daniel J. Fooks, Joseph F. D. Smith and William C. Wolfe are hereby appointed Commissioners, whose duty it shall be, and they, or a majority of them, are hereby authorized and empowered with the assistance of a skillful surveyor to be by them chosen, to survey and lay down on a plot the Town of Laurel, in Sussex County, establishing its limits, and making and describing its streets, alleys, lanes, and sidewalks, and shall, when the service is performed return the plot under their hands to the Recorder's Office, at Georgetown, to be recorded, and the original and the record, or a certified copy thereof, shall be evidence. The Commissioners and the Surveyor, before entering upon their duties under this Section, shall take an oath or affirmation to discharge them with fidelity, and the aforesaid return shall show that this qualification was complied with.

Section 2. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, That the Commissioners hereby appointed, and their successors in office to be chosen as hereinafter provided, shall be a body politic and corporate, in fact and in law, by the name of the Commissioners of the Town

of Laurel, and may sue and be sued, by that name. They shall, in addition to the power hereinbefore conferred, have power to regulate the streets, lanes, alley and sidewalks of said town, and may direct the latter, or such part thereof as they may determine, to be paved or otherwise improved at the expense of the owner of the ground adjacent, on complaint of any citizen to examine any chimney, Stoop pipe fixture or any other matter dangerous to the town, and if adjudged dangerous, to require and compel it to be repaired, remedied or removed; to prevent or remove nuisances therein; to prohibit the firing of guns or pistols, the making of bonfires, or setting off fireworks, or any dangerous sport or practice, and to prevent or suppress any noisy or turbulent assemblages of negroes, boys or other persons within the town, and generally they shall have all the powers which by any law of this State are conferred on the Commissioners of the Town of Dover.

Section 3. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, That the commissioners herein named shall continue in office until the first Wednesday in March A. D. 1884, on which day in that year, and on the same day in every year thereafter, there shall be held an election in the said town of Laurel, at the Academy therein, from the hour of two, till the hour of four O'clock P. M. for five Commissioners, who shall be residents of said town and freeholders therein. The said election shall be held by two persons chosen by the persons entitled to vote present, who

shall receive the ballots, ascertain the result, and certify the same in the books of the commissioners. At such elections every male taxable of said town above the age of twenty one years, and who shall have paid the town tax last assessed to him shall be entitled to vote. The persons aforesaid holding the elections shall be judges of said elections and shall decide on the legality of the votes offered. Which said commissioners shall hold their office for the term of one year or until their successors are elected. And if any vacancies shall occur in said board of commissioners, by death, resignation, refusal to serve or otherwise of any member thereof, the remaining commissioners shall have the power to fill such vacancy or vacancies.

Section 4. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, That there shall be four stated meetings in every year of the said commissioners, viz: - on the last Wednesday in March, June, September and December, at which meetings they may pass all such ordinances or rules for the good government of the said town, the improvement of the streets, the paving or other improving of the sidewalks, the planting and protection of ornamental trees, the repairs and making of public pumps, and for all other matters relating to the said town, its police, improvements, ornaments and general welfare as said commissioners may deem proper. Provided, the same be not repugnant to the Constitution and Laws of this State and of the United States. By such ordinances they may

impose fines, penalties and forfeitures, and provide for their collection. Also the Commissioners shall have authority to call special meetings of the Commissioners whenever they may deem such meetings necessary; and, at such meetings they shall have the right to transact any business that they may have authority to transact at regular meetings. and the commissioners shall receive for their services one dollar each for each of the four regular meetings but no compensation for services at the special meetings. The said Commissioners shall at their first meeting, after their election elect one of their number as President of said board of Commissioners whose duty it shall be to preside at the meetings of council: have the general supervision of all the streets, lanes, and alleys, in said town and of the persons who may be employed by the town commissioners; receive complaints of nuisances, and other complaints of citizens, of violations of laws and ordinances, and present the same to the commissioners at their first meeting for their action, and such infraction or violation of the law or ordinances as require immediate action, to cause the same to be proceeded on before the Alderman. He shall issue and sign all licenses for every exhibition within the town of Laurel, which by Section 1 of chapter 51, of the Revised Code a license therefor is required: he shall sign all warrants on the Treasurer for the payment of any money, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by any ordinance or ordinances of the town Commissioners.

Section 5. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, that the commissioners herein named, and their successors in office, shall, at their first stated meeting in every year, determine the amount of tax to be raised on said town for that year, not exceeding five hundred Dollars, including tax on real and personal property, poll tax and tax on dogs, and shall appoint one or more Assessors, which mayor may not be of their number, to make an assessment of persons and property in said town, and shall also appoint a Collector and Treasurer. It shall be the duty of the Assessor, or Assessors of said town, within two weeks from his or their appointment, to make a true, just and impartial valuation and assessment of all the real estate and assessable personal property within said town; and also an assessment of all the male citizens residing in said town above the age of twenty one years as well those owning real-estate as those not owning such estate within its limits at at least one dollar per head. And also to ascertain the number of dogs within said town and the owners of such dogs, assessing each male dog at fifty cents, and each female dog at one dollar to the owner or keeper thereof. And the said Assessor or Assessors shall, forthwith, after making such assessment, deliver to the Commissioners for the time being a duplicate containing the name of all the persons assessed, and the amount of their assessment, distinguishing the real and personal assessment of each.

When the assessment is returned, the commissioners shall give five days public notice of the fact, and they will sit together at a certain place, and on a certain day to be designated by them, from one till four O'clock in the afternoon, to hear appeals from said assessments. They shall have power on such day, to add to or decrease any assessment, except that of dogs and poll which shall always remain at the figures above stated. When the appeal day is past they shall, without delay, cause the assessment list to be transcribed, and the transcript to be delivered to the collector, who shall thereupon collect from each taxable his proportion of the tax laid, and pay over the whole amount, deducting commissions and delinquencies (which shall be allowed by the commissioners) to the Treasurer by the first day of September next after the receipt of his duplicate. The collector shall have the same power for the collection of said taxes, as are conferred by law on the collectors of county taxes. Provided however: that in making said assessment for the Town of Laurel, that all machinery in any manufactory now in said town or that may hereafter be erected shall be exempted from taxation for town purposes, and that only the real estate and buildings belonging to said factories shall be taxed.

Section 6. And be it further enacted, as aforesaid that the Commissioners, or a majority of them, shall have authority to

employ and use the money in the Treasury of the town for the general improvement, benefit, and ornament of the said town, as they may deem advisable, and all money paid out by the Treasurer shall be paid upon the order of the Commissioners or a majority of them. Provided, That said Commissioners shall have no authority to create debts on said Town to a greater amount than they are authorized to raise by taxation and collect from the country.

Section 7. Be it enacted, as aforesaid, That any ordinance for the paving or improving the sidewalks shall apply only to those persons owning the property fronting upon them, who and who alone shall bear the expense of making the pavements or other improvements ordered. If such ordinance be not complied with in three months the Commissioners may procure the materials and work to be found and done, and collect the expense of the same, on ten days notice by advertisement at three of the most public places in said town, out of the personal or real estate of the person in default situate in said town. The sale may be made by any person whom the Commissioners may depute for that purpose, and, if the proper notice has been given, the sale shall be valid, and shall transfer all the title of the person in default in such property to the purchaser, subject to prior liens and incumbrances. The money realized from the sale shall be paid to the Treasurer for the use of the town, but if there be any surplus after meeting the

claim for which the sale was made, such surplus shall be paid to the person in default. The Commissioners shall allow reasonable fees for seizing the property and making sale.

Section 8. Be it further enacted as aforesaid, That the president and commissioners for the time being, shall have the superintendance and oversight of all the roads and streets now open or hereafter to be opened within the limits of said town, and no overseer of any such roads or streets shall be appointed by the Levy Court of Sussex County, but the said Levy Court shall annually appropriate for the repair of said roads and streets, a sum of money not less than three hundred and fifty dollars, and shall make out order for the payment thereof to the treasurer of the town of Laurel, for the use of said town.

Section 9. Be it further enacted as aforesaid; that the Treasurer and collector shall be severally sworn or affirmed to discharge their respective duties with fidelity; such oath or affirmation may be administered by any person authorized by the laws of this state to administer oaths, or by the President of the board of Commissioners. They shall also, before entering upon the duties of their office, give bond to the town of Laurel, with sufficient surety, to be approved by the commissioners of said town, in the penal sum of double the amount of what may be likely to come into their hands, conditioned

for the faithful discharge of the duties of their said office, and for the payment to their successor in office of all sums of money belonging to said town which may remain in their hands upon the settlements of their accounts, to which said board and conditions, there shall be annexed a warrant of attorney for the confession of Judgement for said penalty. The said treasurer shall pay all orders drawn on him by order of said commissioners, and signed by the president thereof, out of any moneys in his hands belonging to said town. He shall settle his accounts with the said commissioners annually in the month of February, and oftener and at such other times as the said commissioners may require. The treasurer, clerk, and assessor of said town shall each receive a reasonable compensation for their services to be determined by the commissioners of said town. Provided, The compensation of the said treasurer, as such shall not exceed two per cent, on all moneys received by him belonging to said town, and of the treasurer acting as collector shall not exceed eight per cent on the taxes collected by him.

Section 10. Be it further enacted as aforesaid: That the town commissioners at their first meeting, or as soon thereafter as convenient, shall annually proceed to elect, by ballot, some suitable person, resident in said town to be Alderman of the town of Laurel, who may or may not be a Justice of the Peace, resident

of said town to serve as such for the term of one year, or until his successors shall be duly elected, subject, however to be removed from office at any time by a vote of two thirds of all the members of the Board of town Commissioners. Before entering upon the duties of his office he shall be sworn or affirmed by the president of the board of Commissioners or by any one of the commissioners, to perform the duties of his office honestly, faithfully and diligently, and all the provisions of section 3 and 4 of the "Act to reincorporate the Town of Milton" passed at Dover March 3^d A.D. 1881 shall apply to and are hereby extended and applied to the said Alderman of the town of Laurel.

Section 11. Be it further enacted as aforesaid: that the Commissioners of said town may appoint such number of town constables as shall be deemed necessary, who with the Constable of Sussex County residing in said town shall constitute the town police. The Commissioners of said town shall also have power and authority to remove any of the town constables at any time, and appoint others in the place of those removed, if it shall be deemed necessary to make such appointments.

Section 12. Be it further enacted, as aforesaid: That the Commissioners shall appoint a Town Clerk, who may or may not be one of their number, who shall keep a record of the proceedings

of the Commissioners and the same shall be evidence.

Section 13. Be it further enacted, as aforesaid: That it shall be the duty of the Alderman of said town and of the constable of Sussex County, residing in said town, and of the town constable, to suppress all riotous, turbulent, disorderly or noisy assemblages or gatherings of persons in or about any building used for any fair, festival, concert or any other social, literary, or religious meeting, or any entertainment whatsoever, or in the streets, lanes, squares, or alleys of said town at any time or season whatever, to prevent all gatherings whatever which may obstruct or interfere with the free use of the streets, lanes, alleys or side-walks, and for this purpose it shall be the duty of any of said constables to seize and arrest any such persons so offending and carry him or them before the Alderman of said town, whose duty it shall be to hear and determine the case, and upon conviction before him the Alderman shall sentence any such person so convicted, to pay a fine not exceeding ten dollars, and may commit the party or parties to prison for a period not exceeding thirty days or until said fine and costs shall be paid. It shall be the duty of the Alderman of said town upon complaint made before him of any such riotous, turbulent or noisy assemblages or gatherings as aforesaid, to issue his warrants to any of the constables aforesaid, commanding him to arrest and bring any such person so

offending as aforesaid before him for trial. It shall be the duty of the constable aforesaid, or any one of them, to arrest any drunken or disorderly person they may see on the streets of said town, and take such person so arrested before the alderman of said town who shall proceed forthwith to hear and determine the case, and upon conviction before him he shall sentence such person in the same manner and to the same punishment provided in this section for the punishment of persons brought before him for the offences in this section first enumerated. If upon view of the person or persons who may be brought before the Alderman of said town for violation of this section it shall appear to the Alderman that in his judgment such person or persons are not in a condition to be heard and tried, he may use his own discretion in fixing or appointing a time for trial of all such persons or persons brought before him for violating this section. The fee to the Alderman of said town for the trial of any cause under this section shall be fifty cents, and to the constable making the arrest fifty cents. In case of commitment the constable shall receive an additional fee of two dollars, and the Keeper of the jail shall be entitled to a fee of fifty cents for each commitment whether by a constable or by the Alderman of said town, and he shall be entitled to the same pay for board of the persons so committed.

as is allowed by the Levy Court for board of prisoners. Provided the town shall pay for the board of all prisoners committed to Jail for violation of the charter or By-Laws of the town of Laurel. And in all cases of fees for the Alderman and Constable not herein provided for they shall be entitled to receive the same fees as are specified by law to be paid to Justices of the Peace and Constables in like cases.

Section "14" Be it further enacted, that this act shall be deemed and taken to be a public act.

Passed at Dover April 13, 1883.

Samuel B. Cooper

Speaker of the Senate

Wm. H. Rely

Speaker of the House of Representatives

An Act
To Incorporate
The Town of
Laurel

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Senate

House

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Passed at Dover
April 13, 1888.

Senate No. 70,

An Act to re-incorporate the Town of Laurel.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met (two thirds of each branch concurring therein:)

Section 1. That the Commissioners of the Town of Laurel shall be and they, or a majority of them, are hereby authorized and empowered, with the assistance of a skillful surveyor to be by them chosen, to extend and re-survey and lay down on a plot the Town of Laurel. Provided however that the provisions of this Act shall not apply to that part or portion of the Town of Laurel within the limits of Broad Creek Hundred, unless a majority of the freeholders thereof shall assent thereto in writing," in Sussex County, re-establishing its limits and making and describing its streets, alleys, lanes and sidewalks, and shall, when the service is performed, return the plot, under their hands, to the Records Office at Georgetown, to be recorded, and the original and the record, or a certified copy thereof, shall be evidence.

Section 2. There shall be a board of Commissioners of the Town of Laurel, composed of One (1) Alderman and five (5) Commissioners. On the first Wednesday in March A.D. 1901, there shall be an election held for one Alderman and two Commissioners, to serve for one year or until their successors are elected, and three Commissioners, to serve for two years

or until their successors are elected; On the first Wednesday in March A.D. 1902, and every two years thereafter, there shall be an election held for one Alderman and two Commissioners, to serve for two years or until their successors are elected and qualified, and on the first Wednesday in March A.D. 1903, and every two years thereafter, there shall be an election held for three Commissioners to serve for two years, or until their successors are elected and qualified. The Commissioners shall be resident free-holders of the Town of Laurel at the time of their election, but any married man, resident of said Town, whose Wife is a freeholder of said Town, may be elected a Commissioner, although he may not be the owner in his own right of any real estate within the said Town. Any Commissioner whose term has expired is eligible to re-election. The election shall be opened at 2 O'clock P.M. and close at 4 O'clock P.M. and is to be held in the Council Chamber or some other suitable place designated by the Commissioners. At such election every man taxable of said Town above the age of 21 years, who shall have paid the town tax last assessed to him, and is qualified to vote for members of the General Assembly of the State of Delaware, shall be entitled to vote. The election shall be held by the Alderman and the two (2) holding over Commissioners, or by the three (3) holding over Commissioners, who shall receive the ballots, ascertain the result, and certify the same in the books of the Commissioners. Before entering upon their duties as Commissioners elect, they shall be sworn in at the first stated meeting or any subsequent meeting by the Alderman or one of the holding over

Commissioners. The Alderman and Commissioners or Commissioners aforesaid holding the election, shall be the Judges of said election and shall decide on the legality of the votes offered. If any vacancy shall occur in said Board of Commissioners by death, resignation, refusal to serve or otherwise, or if any member thereof, or of the Alderman thereof, by death, resignation, refusal to serve or otherwise, the remaining Commissioners shall have the power to fill such vacancy or vacancies.

Section 3. There shall be twelve (12) stated meetings in every year of the said Commissioners, namely; on the first-Menesday in March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December, January, and February, at which meetings they may pass all such ordinances or rules for the good government of the Town, the improvement of its streets, the planting of ornamental trees, and for all ^{other} matters pertaining to said Town. By such ordinances they may impose fines, penalties and forfeitures, and provide for their collections.

Also the Commissioners shall have authority to call special meetings of the Commissioners, whenever they may deem such meetings necessary, and at such meetings they shall have the right to transact any business that they may have authority to transact at regular meetings, and the Commissioners shall receive for their services one dollar each for each of the twelve (12) regular meetings, but no compensation for services at special meetings. The said Commissioners shall at their first meeting after their election, elect one of their number

as President of said Board of Commissioners, whose duty it shall be to preside at the meetings of Council, have the general supervision of all the Streets, lanes, and alleys in said Town, and of the persons who may be employed by the Town Commissioners, receive complaints of nuisances and other complaints of citizens of violation of laws and ordinances and present the same to the Commissioners at their first meeting for their action, and such infraction and violation of the law or ordinances as require immediate action to cause the same to be proceeded on before the Alderman. He shall issue and sign all licenses for every exhibition within the Town of Laurel which by Section 1 of Chapter 51 of the Revised Code, a license therefor is required. He shall sign all warrants on the treasurer for the payment of any money, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by any ordinances of the Town Commissioners.

Section 4. The Alderman so elected, may or may not be a Justice of the Peace, before entering upon the duties of his office, he shall be sworn or affirmed by the President of the Town Council or Commissioners or by any one of the Commissioners. to perform the duties of his office honestly, faithfully and diligently. It shall be his duty to execute all laws enacted for the government of the said Town, and to carry into effect all orders and directions of the Town Commissioners made in pursuance of

any law of this State, or any ordinance of the said Town Commissioner may legally make and establish. He shall have all the powers of a Justice of the Peace within the Town, and shall have jurisdiction and cognizance of all breaches of the peace and other offences in said Town, so far as to arrest hold to bail or fine and imprison offenders, and also of all fines and forfeitures which may be prescribed by law of this State or of any ordinance of the Town Commissioners regularly passed and established for the government of the Town, and also of all neglects, omissions, or defaults, of any Town Constable, Collector, Assessor, Treasurer, Town Clerk or any other Officer or person whose duty it may be collect, receive, pay over or account for any money belonging to said Town, or to execute or obey any law or ordinance thereof, provided that he shall not impose any fine exceeding twenty dollars, or have jurisdiction in civil matters exceeding one hundred dollars, exclusive of costs. His fee for any service under this section shall be the same as those of a Justice of the Peace for like service, and for any service or duty for which no fee may be provided by law, the fee may be established by ordinance of the Town Commissioners. If any Alderman shall be removed from his office by the Town Commissioners, he shall deliver to his successor in office, all the books and papers belonging to his office, and shall pay over to the Treasurer of the Town all moneys in his hands, belonging to the Town, within five (5) days after his removal. Upon his neglect or failure to pay over to the Treasurer of the Town within the aforesaid time, all moneys belonging to the Town, he shall be deemed

guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof by indictment, shall be fined not less than twenty nor more than One hundred dollars.

Section 5. The Alderman shall, at every regular meeting of the Town Commissioners, report to the Commissioners all fines imposed by him during the preceding month, and pay to the Treasurer of the Town of Laurel all such fines and penalties received by him during the said time, and in default of making such report or paying such fines and penalties for a period of twenty days after such report should be made and such fines and penalties should be paid as aforesaid, he shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof by indictment shall be fined not less than twenty nor more than One hundred dollars.

Section 6. The Commissioners and the President of the Board of Commissioners, as hereinbefore provided for, shall be and they are hereby created a body politic and corporate in law and equity, and shall be able and capable to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded in Courts of law and equity in this State and elsewhere by the corporate name of "The Town of Laurel" and shall have a corporate Seal, which they may alter, change or renew at their pleasure: and may purchase, hold and enjoy lands, tenements hereditaments in fee simple or otherwise, and also goods and chattels, rights and credits, and may alien, grant, demise and dispose of the same as they may deem proper.

and may do all other things which a body politic and corporate may lawfully do to carry out and effect the object and purpose of this act. The President, and Commissioners, for the time being, shall have the superintendence and oversight of all roads and Streets now opened or hereafter to be opened within the limits of said Town, and no overseer of any such roads or streets shall be appointed by the Levy Court of Sussex County, but said Levy Court shall annually appropriate for the repair of said roads and Streets a sum of money, not less than Six hundred dollars, (\$600.00.) and shall make an order for the payment thereof to the treasurer of the Town of Laurel for the use of said Town.

Section 7. The Town Commissioners shall have power, upon the application of ten or more citizens of the town, by petition for the purpose to locate, lay out and open, any new street, lane or alley, or widen any street, lane or alley heretofore laid out in said Town, or reopen any old street, lane or alley, now closed, or which may hereafter be closed, which ten or more citizens may desire to be located, laid out and opened, or widened, or reopened, allowing to the persons respectively, through and over whose lands such streets, lane or alley may pass, such compensation therefor as they shall deem just and reasonable under all circumstances, which compensation, if any be allowed, shall be paid by the treasurer of the town out of the moneys of said town upon warrants

drawn upon him by order of the Commissioners aforesaid.

Section 8. Whenever the town Commissioners shall have determined to locate and lay out, or widen any street, lane or alley, and shall have fixed the compensation therefor, it shall be their duty immediately after the survey and location of the said street, lane or alley, to notify, in writing, the owner or owners of the real estate through or over which such street lane or alley may run, of their determination to open or widen the same, and to furnish a general description of the location thereof and also the amount of the damages or compensation allowed to each, and if such owner be not resident within ^{the} said town to notify the holder or tenant of such real estate, but if there be no holder or tenant resident in said town the said notice may be affixed to any part of the premises. If any owner be dissatisfied with the amount of the compensation or damages allowed by the town Commissioners as aforesaid, he or she may, within ten days after such notice, as aforesaid, appeal from the said assessment of compensation or damages by serving a written notice to that effect on the president of said board of Commissioners or the person performing the duties thereof for the time being. In order to prosecute said appeal, such owner or owners shall within fifteen days after the expiration of the ten days allowed for appeal, and upon ten days notice to said president of the board of Commissioners, or the person performing the

duties of president thereof for the time being, make written application to the
 Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the State, resident in Sussex County for the
 appointment of a Commission to hear and determine the matter of damage or
 compensation, and thereupon the Associate Judge shall issue a commission under
 his hand directed to five free-holders of the said County, three of whom shall
 be residents of said town of Laurel, and two of whom shall be non-residents of said
 town, commanding them to assess the damages which the owner of the real estate
 through or over whose land said Street, lane or alley shall pass, who shall have
 notified the said town Commissioners of their intention to appeal, may
 incur by reason thereof, and to make return of their proceedings to the
 said Associate Judge at a time therein appointed.

The free-holders named in such Commission being first sworn or
 affirmed as in said Commission shall be directed, shall view the premises and
 they, or a majority of them, shall assess the damages aforesaid, and shall make
 returns, in writing, of their proceedings in the premises to the said Associate Judge, who
 shall deliver said return to said town Commissioners, which shall be final and conclusion. The said
 associate Judge shall have power to fill any vacancy in the Commission, The amount of damages
 being so ascertained, or the town commissioners may pay or tender the same to the person or
 persons, entitled thereto, within one month after the same shall be finally ascertained, or if
 the person or persons so entitled reside out of, or are absent from town, during said
 period of one month, or are minors, then the same may be deposited to his
 or her credit in the Sussex Trust, Title, and Safe Deposit Company of Laurel.

within said time, and thereupon the said property or land may be taken or occupied for the uses aforesaid. In the ascertainment and assessment of damages by the freeholders appointed by the Associate Judge aforesaid, if the damages shall be increased, the costs of the appeal shall be paid by the treasurer of the town out of any money in his hands belonging to the town, but if such damages shall not be increased the costs of the appeal shall be paid by the party appealing, the fees to the freeholders shall be two dollars per day to each, which shall be taxed as part of the costs. After the damage shall be fixed and ascertained by the freeholders aforesaid, the town Commissioners shall have the option to pay damages assessed, within the time aforesaid and proceed with the said improvements, or, upon payment of the Costs only, may abandon the proposed improvements.

Section 9. The town Commissioners shall have power to enact ordinances to prevent nuisances, to preserve the health of the town, and to prevent the introduction of infectious or contagious diseases, for which purpose their jurisdiction shall extend to any distance within one mile of the limits of the said town. The Commissioners may also pass ordinances to define and remove nuisances, to ascertain and fix the boundaries of streets, squares, lanes and Alleys, or to repair and improve the same, or to alter, extend or widen any street, square, lane or alley, or open and lay out new ones, subject to the provisions in that behalf hereinbefore contained: to regulate and fix the ascents and descents

of all streets, lanes and alleys, and the drainage thereof: to direct the paving or graveling of footways, and to prescribe the width thereof; to regulate and provide for the making of gutters, and the placing of gutter-stones or plates therein, and for curbing, whenever, in their opinion, such paving or graveling, making of gutters and the placing of gutter-stones or plates therein, and curbs, may be necessary or proper, to prescribe the extent of steps, porches, cellar-doors and other inlets to lots and buildings; to regulate the construction and repair of Chimneys and to provide for the keeping the same cleaned and in good order; to regulate the storage of gunpowder or any other dangerous or combustible materials, and to provide against casualties by fire, No person shall be obliged to pave any foot-way to a greater breadth than four and one-half feet in front of any vacant lot or lots not near or adjoining a dwelling-house, and no grading, curbing, or widening of sidewalks shall, after the same has once been established, be directed to be altered or changed for a period of five years, except upon the petition of a majority of the property owners holding land on such street or part of street when such alteration or change is proposed to be made, and upon such petition the town commissioners shall have the option to make such change or alteration, or not. The said Commissioners shall have power also by ordinance, to appoint a town surveyor to make a plot or map, showing the ascent and descent of all streets, lanes and alleys, the building lines on the same, and generally to do and perform all such matters and things as they may deem necessary for carrying into effect the provisions in this section contained.

Section 10. Whenever the said town commissioners shall have determined that any paving, graveling, guttering, placing of gutter-stones or plates in any gutter, and curbing, or any, or either, or all of them, shall be done, they shall notify the owner of the land in front of whose premises the same is to be done, particularly designating the nature and character thereof, and thereupon it shall be the duty of such owner to cause such paving, graveling, guttering, placing of gutter-stones or plates in any gutter, and curbing to be done in conformity with said notice. In the event of any owner neglecting to comply with said notice for the space of thirty days, the said Commissioners may have the same done, and when done, the Treasurer of the town shall, as soon as convenient thereafter, present to the said owner or owners of such lands a bill, showing the expense of such paving, graveling, guttering, placing of gutter-stones or plates in any gutter, and curbing, if such owner or owners be not resident in the town of Laurel such bill may be presented to the occupier or tenant of such land, or if there be no occupier or tenant resident in the said town of Laurel such bill may be sent by mail to such owner or owners, directed to him or them at the post office nearest to his or their residence. If such bill be not paid by the owner or owners of such within thirty days after the presentation thereof, as aforesaid, then it shall be the duty of the said town commissioners to issue a warrant in the name of the town of Laurel under the hand of the president of the board of Commissioners, and the seal of said Corporation, directed to the Treasurer of the town of Laurel, commanding him that of the goods and chattels, lands and tenements of such owner or owners he should cause

to be levied and made the amount of the said bill, together with all costs, it shall be the duty of the treasurer of the said town of Laurel as soon as convenient after the said warrant shall be delivered to him, and after ten days notice to the owner or owners of such lands, and after posting five or more notices of sale in at least five of the most public places in the town of Laurel at least ten days before the day of sale, to sell the goods and chattels of such owner or owners at public auction, or as much thereof as may be necessary to pay the amount of said bill with all costs. If no goods and chattels of such owner or owners can be found within said town sufficient to satisfy the amount of said bill with all costs, then it shall be the duty of said treasurer of the said town of Laurel, after ten days notice to such owner or owners aforesaid, and after posting five or more notices of sale in at least five of the most public places of the town of Laurel, for at least ten days before the day of sale, and after causing such notices of sale to be published twice in one newspaper printed in the town of Laurel (or, if there be no newspaper printed in the said town of Laurel, then in a newspaper printed anywhere in Sussex County,) to sell the lands and tenements of such owner or owners in front of which such paving, graveling, guttering, placing of gutter-stones or plates in any gutter, and curbing or either of them, have been done, or so much of said lands and tenements as may be sufficient to satisfy the amount of said bill with all costs, and a deed from the treasurer of the said

town of Laurel shall convey to the purchaser of such lands and tenements as full and complete title, in fee simple or otherwise, as if the same were executed by the owner or owners thereof. The claim for paving, graveling, guttering, placing of gutter-stones or plates in any gutter, and curbing, shall be a lien on the premises in front of which the said work was done, and said lien shall relate back to the time when the notice herein required shall have been served upon the owner or owners or occupants of said premises, and shall have priority over any lien, incumbrance, or conveyance suffered or made by the owner or owners after the service of said notice. It shall be the duty of the treasurer of said town, out of the purchase money of the said goods and chattel or lands and tenements, sold as aforesaid, to pay all costs arising from from the said proceeds and sale to the parties entitled thereto, and to retain for the use of said town the amount of the said bill as aforesaid, and the residue of the said purchase money, if any shall immediately be deposited in the Sussex Trust, Title and Safe Deposit-Company, at Laurel, to the credit of said owner or owners. The treasurer of the said town shall be entitled to receive five dollars for every sale of personal property under this section, and ten dollars for every sale of real estate under this section. together with all such additional sums as may be reasonable and proper for the keeping and taking care of such personal property, for selling the same, and for advertising

all of which shall be part of the costs to be paid out of the purchase money aforesaid. Any notice required by this section to one owner shall be notice to all, and in case no owner shall reside in said town, notice served upon the occupier or tenant shall be sufficient, or if there be no owner or occupier or tenant of said premises resident in the said town, it shall be sufficient to send notice by mail to any owner of said premises, directed to him or her at the post office nearest his or her place of residence.

The provisions hereinbefore contained in this section shall apply to any order made by the Commissioners of said town in respect to any pavement, sidewalk, gutter, placing of gutter-stones or plates in any gutter, or curb, heretofore made or done, which said Commissioners may deem insufficient, or to need repairing. The said Commissioners, in addition to the provisions of this section hereinbefore contained, shall have power and authority to enforce, by ordinance all the requirements of this section by imposing such fines and penalties as shall, in the judgment of said Commissioners, be necessary and proper.

Section 11. The Commissioners of said town may appoint such number of town constables as shall be deemed necessary, who, with the constables of Sussex County residing in said town shall constitute the town police. The Commissioners of said town shall also have power and authority to remove any of the town constables at any time

and appoint others in the place of those removed; if it shall be deemed necessary to make such appointments.

Section 12. The Commissioners of said town shall have power and authority to make such regulations and enact such ordinances relating to the travelling over and upon the streets, lanes and alleys in said town, and to the use thereof, and the standing or placing of Carts, Carriages, or other vehicles or obstructions in and upon any of said streets, lanes, alleys, or sidewalks, as they shall deem proper, to secure the free and uninterrupted use and enjoyment thereof, and if any person shall violate the regulations and ordinances of the said Commissioners in that behalf, every person so offending shall forfeit and pay to the Treasurer of said town, for the use of said town, a sum not exceeding ten dollars, to be recovered with costs, by the Treasurer of said town, in the name of the town of Laurel, before the Alderman of the said town or before any Justice of the Peace residing in said town, in the same manner as debts of like amount are recoverable by law.

Section 13. It shall and may be lawful for the Commissioners of said town to use the jail of Sussex County for the purpose of carrying into effect any judgement or sentence pronounced

under the provisions of this act, or for carrying into effect any ordinance or regulation adopted under the provisions of this act and it shall be the duty of the keeper of said jail to receive and lock up in said jail any person committed to his custody under the provisions of this act, or under the provisions of any ordinance of the Commissioners of said town.

Section 14. The Commissioners of said town shall have the power and authority to use the money in the treasury of said town, or any portion thereof, for the improvement, benefit and ornament thereof, as they may deem advisable. In the general performance of their duties, the acts, doings and determinations of a majority of the Commissioners of said town shall be as good and binding as the acts, doings and determinations of the whole. In case of a vacancy or vacancies in the Commissioners of said town, the remaining members, until such vacancy or vacancies shall be filled as hereinbefore provided, shall have the same power and authority as the whole.

Section 15. It shall be the duty of the Alderman of said town and Commissioners of said town, and the Constable of Sussex County residing in said town, and of the town Constables, to suppress all riotous, turbulent, disorderly, or noisy assemblages or gathering of persons in or about any buildings used for any fair, festival, concert, or any other social, literary or religious meeting, or any

entertainment whatsoever, or in the streets, lanes, squares, or alleys of said town, at any time or season whatever: to prevent all gatherings whatever which may obstruct or interfere with the free use of the streets or sidewalks, and for this purpose it shall be the duty of any of said Constables to seize and arrest any such persons so offending and carry them before the Alderman of said town, whose duty it shall be to hear and determine the case, and upon conviction before him the Alderman shall sentence any such person so convicted to pay a fine not exceeding ten dollars, and may commit the party to prison for a period not exceeding thirty days, or until such fine and costs shall be paid. It shall be the duty of the Alderman of said town, upon complaint made before him of any such riotous, turbulent, or noisy assemblages, or gathering as aforesaid, to issue his warrant to any of the Constables aforesaid, commanding him to arrest and bring any such person so offending as aforesaid before him for trial. It shall be the duty of the Constable aforesaid, or any one of them, to arrest any drunken or disorderly person they may see on the streets, lanes, or alleys of said town, and take such persons so arrested before the Alderman of said town, who shall proceed forthwith to hear and determine the case, and upon conviction before him he shall sentence such person in the same manner and to the same punishment provided in this section for the punishment of persons brought before him for the offenses in this section first enumerated. If upon view of the person or persons who may be brought before the Alderman of said town for violation of this section

it shall appear to the Alderman that in his judgment, such person or persons are not in a condition to be heard or tried, he may commit such person to the town lock up or jail to wait a trial at a time by him to be fixed; such time shall in no case be more than twenty-four hours from the time of commitment, unless the expiration of the said twenty-four hours would be on the Lords day, and then not later than ten o'clock on the Monday morning following. The fee to the Alderman of said town for the trial of any cause under this section shall be fifty cents, and to the Constable making the arrest fifty cents.

Section 16. The Alderman of said town, the Commissioners of said town, and the town Constables shall have power and authority to suppress, extinguish and prevent all bonfires in any of the streets, lanes, alleys, or squares of said town, and to suppress ^{and prevent} the firing of guns or pistols, or the setting off of fire crackers or other fire works, or the making and throwing of fireballs within the limits of said town, and the Commissioners of said town may, by ordinance or ordinances, impose fines and penalties upon the persons violating the provisions of this section, and may provide for the collection of such fines and penalties so imposed.

Section 17. The Commissioners of said town are hereby required and authorized to prohibit the use, maintenance or establishment of any building or structure wherein any cattle, sheep or swine are now, or may hereafter be slaughtered, and to further prohibit any offal or refuse matter from any such building or structure being brought within the limits of said town.

To cause all obstructions and nuisances that may at any time be and exist within the limits of said town whether in the streets, lanes or alleys, or on the sidewalks, or in any other place within the limits aforesaid, to be removed and abated. The commissioners of said town, or a majority of them, may proceed, either on their own view or upon complaint of any other citizen, in writing, stating the character of the obstruction or nuisance, and where the same exists. If the Commissioners of said town, or a majority of them, either of themselves or upon such information, or upon view, shall determine that an obstruction or nuisance exists and ought to be removed, they shall give notice in writing, signed by the President of said Commissioners, to the person causing the obstruction or nuisance, or who is responsible for its existence or continuance, to remove or abate the same, and if such person shall refuse or neglect for the space of two days after such notice to remove or abate such obstruction or nuisance, the Commissioners of said town shall have power and authority to cause such obstruction or nuisance to be removed or abated: and for this purpose the Commissioners of said town may issue a warrant in the name of the town of Lowell

under the hand of the president of the Commissioners, and the seal of said Corporation, and directed to any Constable of the town of Laurel, commanding him forthwith to remove or abate such obstruction or nuisance; whereupon the constable to whom the said warrant may be delivered, shall forthwith proceed to remove or abate the same, and for this purpose he shall have full power and authority to enter into and upon any lands and premises within the town of Laurel, and to take with him such assistance, implements, horses, carts, wagons, or other things, as may be necessary and proper, and do and perform all matters and things, right and proper to be done for the removal of such obstruction or the abatement of such nuisance. The costs and damages of all the proceedings shall be determined and adjudged by the Commissioners of said town, and if the same be not paid to the treasurer of said town for the use of the town, by the person causing the obstruction or nuisance, or who is responsible for its existence or continuance, within ten days after a bill stating the amount of such costs and damages shall have been presented to such person, then the Commissioners of said town may proceed to collect the same out of the goods and chattels of such person by warrant issued to the treasurer of said town in the same manner as provided in Section 10. of this Act for the collection of the expense of any paving, graveling, &c. and the treasurer of said town, upon the receipt of such warrant, shall have all the powers to see the goods and chattels of such person conferred and shall proceed in the same

mannu as directed by said Section 10 of this act, on warrants directed to him under said section to collect the expense of paving, graveling, &c, except that nothing in this section contained shall confer any power upon the treasurer of said town to sell any lands and tenements, If the person causing such obstruction or nuisance, or who is responsible for its existance or continuance, shall neglect or refuse to remove or abate the same for the space of two days after such notice aforesaid, he shall, in addition to the provisions hereinbefore in this Section in that behalf contained, forfeit and pay to the treasurer of said town for the use of the town the sum of five dollars, and one dollar additional for each and every day such obstruction or nuisance shall continue unremoved or unabated after the expiration of the two days notice as aforesaid, to be recovered with costs of suit, in the name of the town of Laurel, before the Alderman of said town or any Justice of the Peace residing in said town, as debts of like amount are recoverable. In ascertaining the amount of the judgment the person before whom the case is heard and determined shall compute the time beginning with and including the day following the expiration of the said two days notice up to and including the day on which judgment is rendered, if the obstruction or nuisance be then not removed or abated, or if then removed or abated, up to and exclusive of the day on which such obstruction or nuisance was removed or abated, and one dollar for every such day shall be added to the five dollar and judgment rendered accordingly.

If the amount of the judgment, exclusive of the costs, will exceed one hundred dollars, the case shall not be cognizable before the Alderman or Justice of the Peace, but in such case suit in the name of the town of Laurel may be brought in the Superior Court of the State of Delaware, in and for Sussex County. These last provisions shall be cumulative and additional to the provisions hereinbefore in this section contained.

Section 18. If any constable shall neglect or refuse to perform any of the duties required of him by this act he shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and it shall be the duty of the Commissioners of said town to present him to the grand jury of Sussex County, and upon conviction thereof by indictment, he shall be fined in a sum not less than ten nor more than one hundred dollars, and may be imprisoned, in the discretion of the Court, for any term not exceeding one year, and upon such conviction he shall forfeit his Office.

Section 19. It shall be the duty of the Commissioners of the said town, at the meeting on the first Wednesday in March in each and every year, or as soon as conveniently may be thereafter, to elect by ballot a Treasurer and Secretary, who shall hold their offices until the first Wednesday in March next after their election and until their successors shall be duly elected and qualified. The Treasurer and Secretary may or may not be the same person, and they may at same time hold the office of Commissioner.

The said Commissioners shall also have authority to elect by ballot a collector of taxes, who may or may not be a member of the Commissioners, in any year they may think proper to do so. The treasurer, before entering upon the duties of his office, shall be sworn or affirmed faithfully, honestly and diligently to perform the duties of his ^{said} office, which oath or affirmation may be administered to him by the President of said Commissioners, or by any member thereof, or by any Judge, Justice of the peace, or Notary Public. He shall also, before entering upon the duties of his office, give bond to the town of Laurel, with sufficient surety to be approved by the Commissioners of the town of Laurel, in the penal sum of twelve hundred dollars, conditioned for the faithful discharge of the duties of his said office, and for the payment to his successor in office of all sums of money belonging to said town which may remain in his hands upon the settlement of his accounts, to which said bond and condition there shall be annexed a warrant of attorney for confession of judgment for said penalty. The said treasurer shall pay all orders drawn on him by order of said Commissioners, and signed by the President thereof, out of any moneys in his hands belonging to said town. He shall settle his accounts with the said Commissioners annually, by the first Wednesday in February, and oftener and such other times as the said Commissioners may require. The Treasurer, Secretary and Assessor of said town shall each receive a reasonable compensation for their services, to be determined by the Commissioners of said town: provided, the compensation of said Treasurer, as such

shall not exceed five per cent, on all moneys received by him "belonging to said town," except moneys received from or on account of the sale of Bonds," and of the Secretary, acting as collector, shall not exceed eight per cent, on the taxes collected by him. The officers elected under the provision this section in 1901. shall continue in office until the first Wednesday in March, A. D. 1902, and until their successors are duly elected.

Section 20. That at the first regular meeting held in March 1901. and on the first regular meeting in March each year thereafter, there shall also be an assessor elected, who shall be an inhabitant of the town of Laurel, and who may or may not be a member of the town Commissionees during the year of his services as assessor.

Section 21. The commissionees herein before named, and their successors in office, shall, at their first stated meeting in every year, determine the amount of tax to be raised on said town for that year, not exceeding fifteen hundred dollars, (\$1500.00.) clear of all delinquencies and expenses of collection, including tax on real and personal property and poll tax. It shall be the duty of the assessor of said town within two weeks from his appointment, to make a true, just and impartial valuation and assessment of all the real estate and assessable personal property within said town, and also an assessment of all the male citizens residing

in said town above the age of twenty one years, as well those owning real estate and those not owning real estate within its limits, at at least one dollar per head. And the said Assessor shall forthwith, after making such assessment, deliver to the Commissioners for the time being a duplicate containing the names of all the persons assessed and the amount of their assessment, distinguishing the real and personal Assessment of each. When the assessment is returned, the Commissioners shall give five days public notice of this fact, and they will sit together at a certain place and on a certain day, to be designated by them, from One till four O'clock in the afternoon, to hear appeals from said Assessment. They shall have power on such day to add to or increase any assessment except that of Poll, which shall always remain at the figures above stated. When the appeal day is past, they shall, without delay, cause the Assessment list to be transcribed and the transcript to be delivered to the Collector, who shall thereupon collect from each taxable his proportion of tax laid and pay over the whole amount, deducting commissions and delinquencies which shall be allowed by the Commissioners, to the treasurer of the said town, by the first day of September next, after the receipt of his duplicate. The Collector shall have the same power for the collection of said taxes as are conferred by law on the Collectors of county taxes. Provided however, that in making said Assessment for the town of Laurel that all Machinery in any Manufactory now in said town, or that may be

Hereafter erected, shall be exempted from taxation for town purposes, and that only the real estate and buildings belonging to said factories shall be taxed.

Section 22. That all persons owning a dog or dogs within the corporate limits of the said town of Laurel shall, on or before the first day of July in each and every year, go before the Alderman of said town and there register said dog or dogs so owned by them, and pay to the said Alderman a tax or registration fee of one dollar for each male dog and two dollars for each female dog. The Alderman shall furnish for each dog so registered and on which the said tax or fee has been paid, an oval brass tag of not less than one inch in width and one and one-half inches in length, with a number stamped thereon, which said tag shall be worn on a strap around the neck of said dog so registered. The brass tag above mentioned shall be annually furnished to the Alderman by the Secretary of the town Commissioners, the cost of which tags shall not exceed ten cents each, to be paid for out of the moneys so collected as dog tax. All dogs, male or female, found running at large within the corporate limits of said town after the said first day of July, not wearing the brass tags as hereinbefore provided, shall be caught or taken up by a suitable person who shall be appointed for that purpose by the town Commissioners at their first meeting after organization, or any subsequent meeting, of each year, said dogs after being caught or taken up shall be kept in some suitable place to be provided by the said Commissioners, for the period of two days, during which time any owner

or owners can redeem said dog or dogs, by having the same registered as hereinbefore provided, and paying to the said Alderman, in addition to the tax or fee so paid, all expenses of taking and keeping said dog or dogs, if such dogs so kept are not redeemed within the specified time, it shall be lawful for the official so catching and keeping such dogs to sell them at a price not less than the cost of registration and the expenses of taking and keeping same, or upon inability to sell them, to kill or destroy them.

The town Commissioners are hereby authorized to expend any sum of money not exceeding the revenue derived from the registration of dogs, for the purpose of carrying this law into effect, fixing the compensation of the said official for catching and keeping the dogs as aforesaid, and any other expenses necessary for the proper execution of this law. The said Alderman shall keep a suitable book for such registration, and shall make settlement with the town Commissioners whenever called upon to do so. He shall be allowed eight per cent. on all moneys so received by him as dog tax, and shall pay over the remainder to the treasurer of the said town, taking his receipt for the same. If there should remain any surplus of dog tax so collected, after the expense hereinbefore mentioned shall have been paid, it shall be applicable in like manner as other taxes. On the second day of July 1902, and on the second day of July in each and every year thereafter, or as near that date as possible, the Alderman shall furnish to the collector of town taxes a complete list of the persons having paid

Taxes the year preceding, with number of tag so paid for. who have not re-registered their dogs and paid the taxes for the current year, and if such persons refuse to pay the tax within ten days, said dogs shall be caught or taken up and kept or redeemed, killed or destroyed, as heretofore provided.

Section 23. That in addition to the powers heretofore given to the collector of town or other taxes for the town of Laurel, it shall and may be lawful for the collector of the town of Laurel, after demand made by him upon the person against whom a tax may be assessed, either poll, personal, or real property, for the payment of the tax assessed, and the failure of said taxable to pay the same on said demand, to give written notice to any person or persons residing in Sussex County whom he may suppose to have in his or their possession any, goods, chattels, rights, credits, moneys, or wages belonging to or owing to said taxable, stating the amount of taxes due from said delinquent taxable, and if the person served with notice as aforesaid, shall refuse or neglect for thirty days after such notice to file a statement with the said collector, giving in detail the goods, chattels, rights, credits, moneys or wages in his hands belonging to said delinquent taxable and to deliver the same to the collector, or to pay into the hands of the collector so much money as will satisfy said town and other tax due and owing to said town of Laurel from said delinquent taxable, and all

costs incurred in and about the collecting of said town and other taxes from said delinquent, the collector may proceed by writ in the name of the Town of Laurel, before any Justice of the peace in the town of Laurel, against any person notified as aforesaid and failing as hereinbefore provided, and may recover against him, two or three a judgment for the amount of the town and other taxes due from said delinquent taxable, and all costs. The costs shall be fixed by the Justice of the peace and shall conform as near as may in amount as fees in cases now cognizable before Justices of the peace.

The process, mode of trial, right of appeal and form of proceeding shall be as prescribed in Chapter 99 of the Revised Statutes of this State. The cost for serving the written notice shall be the same as now provided by law in cases of attachment. The oath of the collector shall be sufficient evidence of the demand on the taxable and of the service of notice upon and refusal and neglect of the person in whose hands were or supposed to be goods, chattles, rights, credits, moneys or wages.

Section 24. The secretary, if the duties of the treasurer and secretary are not performed by one person, before entering upon the duties of his office, shall be sworn or affirmed, faithfully, honestly, and diligently to perform the duties of his office. Which oath or affirmation may be administered by the president of said Commissioners, or by any member thereof, or by the Alderman, Judge, Justice of the peace or Notary public:

he shall also, before entering upon the duties of his office, give bond to the town of Laurel, with sufficient surety, to be approved by the Commissioners of said town in the penal sum of three hundred dollars, conditioned for the faithful performance of his duties, and for the payment of all sums of money belonging to the town of Laurel collected by him to the treasurer of the town of Laurel at each and every regular or special meeting of the town Commissioners, and to settle in full on the first Wednesday in February of each year. The said Secretary shall also in any year when no collector of taxes shall be elected by commissioners of said town, and when required to do so by said commissioners, collect all the taxes assessed in said town as hereafter provided. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of said town to keep a true and faithful record of all the proceedings of the commissioners of said town at all meetings held by them, and to do and perform such other matters and things as may be required of him by this act, or which may be provided by any ordinance or ordinances enacted by said commissioners.

Section 25. That the Levy Court of Sussex County shall have charge of the following bridges, namely, the bridge over the Laurel River, at north Delaware Avenue, on the road leading to Seaford, and the bridge over run known as the "Little Mill Stream," at east Front Street, on the road leading to E. N. Twilley's Grist Mill, and the bridge over run known as the "Little Mill Stream," at north Willow Street, on the road leading to E. N. Twilley's Grist Mill, and the bridge over run known as the "Little Mill Stream," at east Market Street, on the road to the "Cooper Farm."

and the bridge over run at at 'Little Mill,' site, at east Sixth Street, on the road leading to Hearn's X Roads. The said Levy Court shall keep said bridges and abutments thereof in good order and repair, and shall, when necessary, rebuild the same. The said bridges shall be protected at the sides by a wall or railing at least three feet above the grading of said streets or roads. All work of rebuilding or repairs to said bridges to be under the supervision of the president of the said Commissioners.

Section 26. The act to incorporate the town of Laurel, passed at Dover April 13th, 1883, and an act to amend said act, passed at Dover, May 5th, 1891, and an act to further amend said act passed at Dover May 15th, 1891, and the several acts and parts of acts inconsistent with or supplied by this act are hereby repealed and made null and void, saving and excepting, however, from the effect of such repeal, and hereby expressly declaring that all the ordinances of the town of Laurel, heretofore enacted or adopted, and now in force in pursuance of any law of this State, shall continue in full force and effect until repealed, altered or amended by the Commissioners of said town, That all the acts and doings of the Commissioners of said town or of any Officer of said town, lawfully done or performed under the provisions of any law of this State, or of any ordinance of the Commissioners of said town, are hereby ratified and confirmed. That all debts, fines or penalties and forfeitures due to said town of Laurel, and all debts due from said town of Laurel, to any person or persons, whomsoever, or to any corporation, are hereby declared to be unaffected and unimpaired by this

repeal, and all laws of this State for the collection and enforcement thereof shall continue in full force until the same shall be fully paid and discharged,

That all the powers now conferred by law upon the Collector for the collection and enforcement of all taxes in said town heretofore assessed and uncollected shall continue in full force and effect until all of said taxes shall be fully collected and paid that the official Bond of said Collector, and other officers required to give Bond, shall be unaffected and unimpaired by this repeal, and that they and their sureties therein shall continue liable for any breach of any of the conditions of said Bonds, and that all proceedings heretofore commenced for the collection of any penalty fine, forfeiture, or debt due to said town, under any law or ordinance, shall not be affected or impaired by this repeal, but the same may be prosecuted to judgment and execution until the same be fully paid, liquidated and discharged.

Section 27. That this act shall be deemed and taken to be a public act.

H. C. Ellison.

^{Protempore}

President of the Senate.

Approved this the 16th day of March

A. D. 1901

John Linn
Governor

Jas. M. Commons

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Senate Bill.

No 34.

An Act to reincorporate
the town of Laurel.

Compared and approved

F. J. McNulty

G. M. O. Hark

(10-73)

3-16-1901

Passed at Dover
Feby 18th 1901.

An Act to amend an Act Entitled "An Act to incorporate the Town of Laurel, being Chapter 193
Volume 17 Laws of Delaware.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General assembly met two thirds of each branch thereof concurring therein.

Section I. That the Act entitled "An Act to incorporate the Town of Laurel" be and the same is hereby amended by striking out in the forty first line of section five of said act the word "County" and by inserting in lieu thereof the word "school" by inserting after the word "taxes" in the forty second line of said section the following "and The Collectors as aforesaid are hereby empowered, ordered and directed to collect any and all taxes as aforesaid which are delinquent and have not been paid for the years eighteen hundred and ninety six and eighteen hundred and ninety seven.

Section II. That this act shall be deemed and taken to be a public act.

Passed at Dover 3-1-98

Approved this the seventeenth
day of March A. D. 1898

Chas. M. Townsend
Governor.

Emory L. Piggins.
Speaker of House of Representatives
Wesley Harrington
Speaker of the Senate

1898

House Bill. No. 468

An Act to amend an act
entitled "An Act to incorporate
the Town of Laurel, being
Chapter 193 Volume 17 Laws of
Delaware.

By Report. 3.10.98. C. G. Thompson
" " 3.14.98. Samuel Hicks

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OK

3-17-1898

RECEIVED AND FILED
MAR 14 1898
J. P. Hughes
SECRETARY OF STATE

Passed at Dover. 3-1-98
W. C. C. 3-4-98



Trap Pond State Park

RECREATION

Laurel is the center for a variety of recreational and sightseeing activities with family appeal.

The clear, quiet ponds of Laurel — Trap Pond State Park, Records Pond and Chipmans Pond — have public and private facilities for swimming.

The ponds, lakes and shore areas in and around Laurel offer an abundance of fresh and salt water fishing opportunities.

There is also good hunting in season in the Nanticoke Refuge and on private property with owners' permission.

At nearby Trussums Pond, visitors may view the northernmost cypress swamp in the United States. In Delmar, just seven miles south, there is an original Mason-Dixon marker. Northwest of Laurel, Woodland Ferry offers an unusual attraction to visitors. The three car barge, the Virginia C, plies the Nanticoke River and is one of the oldest water transportation facilities in the nation.

Erected in 1771 as a Chapel of Ease in Stephany Parish, the Old Christ Episcopal Church is an excellent example of Early American Georgian Colonial architecture. The church is located on Chipmans Pond, east of Laurel off Delaware 24.

The town of Bethel, just four miles northwest of Laurel, has been a historical point of interest since its old ship building days. The town has been referred to as a "toy village come to life" by National Geographic, and the entire town has been put on the National Register of Historic Places.

Visitors are encouraged to spend an evening of thrills at the MarDel Tractor Pull at the Laurel Farmers' Auction Market or watch the stock cars and high octane dragsters at the Delmar Dragway. Yes, there's time for fun for everyone in Laurel in Southern Delaware.

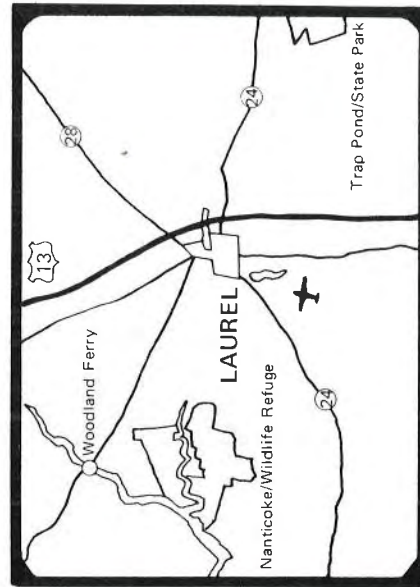
Experience the Fun. Experience the History — Experience Laurel

For more information, contact:
Laurel Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 696, Laurel, DE 19956

or

Call Laurel Town Office
at 302-875-2277

DELAWARE
SMALL WONDER



Partially funded by grant from Delaware Development Office

EXPERIENCE

LAUREL

in Southern Delawâre



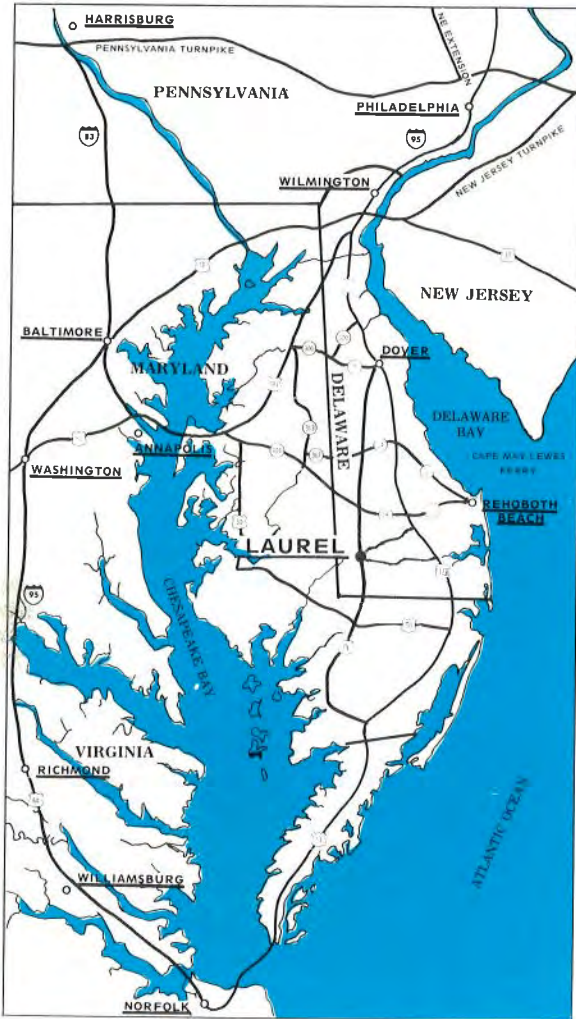
Incorporated 1883



Laurel Farmer's Market

**"A full-service community
with a hometown flavor"**

LOCATION



Historic Bethel

SHOPPING

There are unique shopping experiences waiting for you in Laurel. Stores in the town offer a variety of products to meet vacationers' needs. Thousands know Laurel for the fine collection of antiques available in area shops. The Southern Delaware Truck Growers' Association, located on U.S. 13 on the outskirts of Laurel, is the largest farmers' auction market in Delaware, selling in excess of \$2 million each year. Strawberries, cucumbers, cantaloupes, tomatoes and watermelons are among the farm fresh produce to be found at the auction and roadside stands. Two major flea markets on U.S. 13, outside of Laurel, offer something for everyone. And best of all, there is no sales tax.

WHAT'S AVAILABLE

City Services:

All utilities with a modern waste disposal plant, which features four waterwells and two elevated storage tanks with a capacity of 450,000 gallons. Full ambulance service and police and fire protection. Two full service hospitals are located within 14 miles of Laurel to serve your emergency and medical needs. A small airport, one mile outside of town limits, accommodates private planes of visitors and residents. Full service public library conveniently located downtown near post office.

Schools:

Accredited public school system with competitive academic and athletic programs. Vocational and trade needs are met by a joint program with Sussex Vocational-Technical Center nearby. Delaware Technical and Community College, 12 miles away and Salisbury State College, 14 miles away, offer a variety of course selection and training areas.

Laurel is centrally located in Western Sussex County. Main highway routes leading directly into Laurel include U.S. 13 and Delaware routes 13A, 9 and 24. You will find you are located less than an hour from Delaware's beautiful beaches.

Laurel is also centrally located on the Delmarva Peninsula and is only a few hours' drive from many major cities. Located within a 150-mile radius from:

Washington, D.C.	90 miles
Philadelphia, Pa.	121 miles
Norfolk, Va.	140 miles

ACCOMMODATIONS

Relax under the pines of any of the private or public recreation campgrounds. Facilities are available for tents, campers, and camper trailers. No matter where you want to go in Delaware, you will never be more than two hours away from your vacation home in Laurel. For those who want the comforts of home while they vacation in Laurel, courteous service can be yours from our comfortable, modern motels, or a quaint bed and breakfast inn. For further information about accommodations contact the Laurel Chamber of Commerce.

HISTORY

Laurel, on the banks of Broad Creek in Sussex County, Delaware, has a history of nearly three hundred years dating back to the time when Nanticoke Indians freely roamed through the dense pine forests and the first European settlers arrived and christened the land Greenland and Bachelor's Delight.

By 1711, Old World settlers had made their mark upon the land and created the rich dark sandy loam-fertile land that still produces abundant harvests of fruit, vegetables, and grain. For the Indians, the Maryland Assembly reserved 3,000 acres along Broad Creek.

Barkley Townsend bought most of the land upon which the town of Laurel was built, and in 1802, plotted the present town. By the time Laurel was incorporated as a town in 1833, it was considered the wealthiest in the state due to its booming lumber and produce markets.

Like every town, Laurel had its hours of tragedy. In the early morning of June 24, 1899, a lighted kerosene lamp began a fire which destroyed most of downtown. On these ashes, Laurel was rebuilt of brick. Today, Laurel remains a quiet, peaceful community, a center for agriculture and industry with nearby ponds and parks providing a setting for a truly relaxing and enjoyable vacation.



Woodland Ferry

#1^e
Low

The
Flower
of the
Diamond State!



Laurel,
Delaware

REGIONAL

UTILITIES

INDUSTRY

TRANSPORTATION

HEALTH

RECREATION



- At the hub of the Delmarva Peninsula
- Less than three hours driving time from four Great Metropolitan Areas
- Modern business district providing services for more than 15,000 people
- All city conveniences with open country only minutes away in any direction

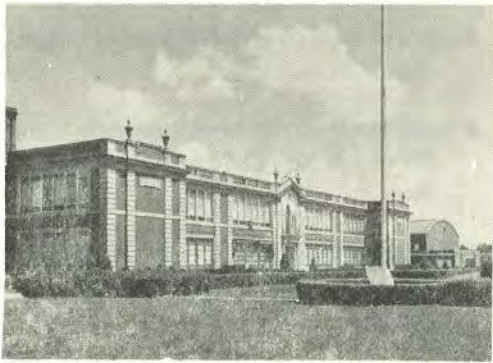
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- Excellent sanitary facilities built with expansion in mind
- Electric power plentiful
- Natural gas line connections
- Abundant water supply

++

- Famous Farmers' Auction Market grosses over a million dollars annually
- Center of large Broiler Industry
- Many large hatcheries, feed mills and integrated allied industries are located here
- Many other small diversified industries

TRANSPORTATION
 REGIONAL UTILITIES
 HEALTH
 RECREATION
 INDUSTRY



- School system second to none, offers the best in education
- Modern air-conditioned public library source of culture
- Active youth programs include Boy and Girl Scouts and extensive facilities in churches

++



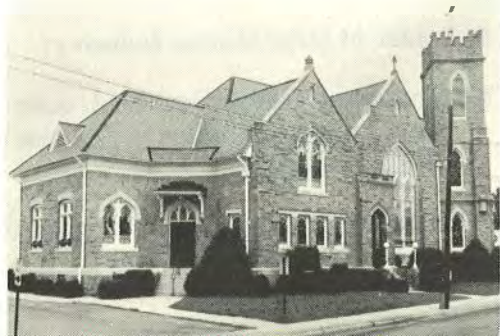
- Twenty-four local clubs and organizations insure a full social program, as well as a lively interest in civic affairs

- Many groups for art and cultural interests

- Attractive developments offer both old and new homes with friendly neighbors

++

- Laurel has nine churches of most denominations within the town, and a score of churches within 15 minutes driving distance



- On main line of Pennsylvania Railroad
- Well-kept airport offers adequate facilities for private planes
- Excellent super highways to all points, connecting with Chesapeake Bridge-Tunnel, Lewes-Cape May Ferry, Chesapeake Bay Bridge, and Delaware Memorial Bridge
- Fast and convenient regularly scheduled bus service
- Overnight fast freight trucking services to major cities

++



- Two leading modern hospitals just minutes away

- Boasts seven local practicing Doctors of Medicine

- Modern police and fire protection

- Community - minded active Town Council

++



- Fishing, boating & camping areas at Trap Pond State Park and other nearby lakes and ponds

- Delaware's famed ocean and bay resorts are less than an hour away

- Laurel can't be beat! A mild climate, rolling land, winding streams and lakes furnish every recreational pleasure.



Laurel

the Flower of the Diamond State, is a town of gracious aspect and historical interest. It was incorporated by an act of the Delaware Legislature on April 13, 1883.

Laurel's history goes back to 1632 when it was part of the grant given to Charles Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, by Charles I. It has had a colorful, varied history in its growth, and at one time was part of a grant known as Batchelor's Delight.

Laurel's location on Broad Creek, a tributary of the Nanticoke River, lent itself to an early history of shipbuilding and lumbering operations. While most of the waterways, ponds and lakes are used for recreation, Broad Creek is navigable and some commerce is carried on by boat.

Laurel is not only a progressively growing community, but it also offers much appeal in that it still retains the small town charm of good-will and neighborliness that makes living a real delight.

**VISIT LAUREL AND SEE FOR
YOURSELF!**

For further information
write to
Laurel Chamber of Commerce
Laurel, Delaware

A Walking Tour of
**Historic
Laurel**



Presented by the

**LAUREL
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

REVISED AUGUST 2001

History of Laurel

The site of present day Laurel was from two patents of land known as "Bachelor's Delight" and "Greenland". Boundaries of both of these tracts were described as beginning at the "wading place on Broad Creek" which was between Delaware and Central Avenues.

From 1711 to 1768 it was part of the 3,000 acre Nanticoke Indian reservation authorized by the Maryland General Assembly. In the meantime William Penn considered the land part of his Three Lower counties and the dispute over the proprietorship of this land continued for years. The people of the area did not relinquish their loyalty to Maryland until 1775, when the commonwealth of Delaware was considered a separate state.

Barkley Townsend acquired the land and laid out a village of 32 plots by 1802, and named it Laureltowne because of the great abundance of laurel bushes which grew and bloomed along Broad Creek.

By 1859, Laurel was the largest town in Sussex County. The Victorian era brought prosperity to the area as it reaped the rewards of abundant forests and farmland.

Laurel enjoys the largest designated historic district in the state of Delaware. The Laurel community is presently engaged in the process of preserving the elegance of this past era, with a concerted effort to refurbish historical properties and attract compatible businesses in the area.

We trust that you will enjoy this brief walking tour of some of Laurel's finer structures.

Walking Tour Sites

1. 206 Delaware Avenue

The Laurel Trading Company

This two story building is documented as being a sewing factory prior to 1915.

2. 112 Market Street

The Vaughn Home

In 1907, this became the home of Dr. W. T. Jones and his wife, Florence. The physician's offices were on the west side accessed by a separate door from the home entrance. Beside the door was a speaking tube which connected to his bedroom, so that patients could reach him during the night.



3. Market Street & Delaware Avenue

Bank of Delmarva

This building was constructed in 1923 as the Peoples National Bank. It has since been the Farmers Bank of Delaware, Girard Bank, Mellon Bank, and Bank of Delmar. The Caleb Ross home stood here and faced Market Street in about the area of the drive-in exit. Caleb was the father of William Ross, who was the Governor of Delaware 1851-1855. The home in which Governor William H. H. Ross was born on July 2, 1814 was demolished for this construction.

4. 106 Market Street

Bev's Specs

The dated stone at the top of the building on the SE corner of Market & Central reads "Bacon's Block 1899." When this building was completed after the Great Fire, it was occupied by tenants such as Long & Short department store, Peoples National Bank, The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co., and Bata shoes. The second floor was known as Bacon's Opera House. Musicals, dances, entertainments, and high school graduation ceremonies were held

there. The buildings in this block have been invited to participate in "Operation Facelift", a revitalization effort sponsored by the Laurel Redevelopment Corporation (LRC), a group of citizens financed by private contributions.

5. 312 S. Central Avenue

Walt's Barbershop

The brick frame of this building (underneath the permastone siding) withstood the disastrous fire of 1899 which destroyed all other buildings in the two block area. It was then the Sussex Trust Company, and when the vault was opened, all contents were in perfect condition. In the 1940's it was the popular Bill North Restaurant, with a juke box and dance floor in the rear section.

6. 408 E. Fourth Street

The Dunn Home (Dunn's Haven)

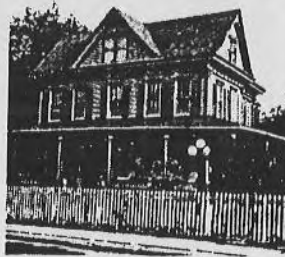
This lot was owned by Cyrus Cannon in 1825. Cannon conveyed the property in 1830 to William B. Cooper, 32nd Governor of Delaware. The will of Daniel Rodney indicated that there was a house on the property in 1838. The center of the house as it stands today was the original house. By 1861, a large room was added on the front by Asbury Parker, a blacksmith and a trustee of Old Christ Church. The early summer kitchen was moved and attached to the house about 1903. The property features several outbuildings, including an outhouse with porch that has been completely restored.



7. 302 Fourth Street

The Hubler & Parker Home

Having been recorded in the court records since 1844, this five bay, two-story edifice with Italianate brackets originally had a flat tin roof. During the Victorian period it acquired a gable roof with flared eaves. This home is known to local Laurel historians as the Benjamin Fooks house, a previous owner between 1888 and 1895 who was one of Laurel's wealthiest citizens.



8. 101 E. Fourth Street

Laurel Public Library

This building was erected in 1951 by Walter S. Carpenter and his sons in memory of his wife and their mother, Mary Wootten Carpenter. She was a Laurel native, reared in a large home near the NE corner of Market St. and Delaware Ave. Cement steps leading to the former home-site are still in place at the "top of the hill".

9. 404 S. Central Avenue

The Fooks House

This was the home of Daniel Fooks, an extensive land owner and banker. He was an incorporator and first president of the Sussex Trust Co. now Wilmington Trust Co. It features a jig-saw porch, gable roof, pseudo-palladium window and sawn bracket work, along with other Victorian architectural features.

10. 403 S. Central Avenue

The Lopes Home

Referred to locally as the Ellegood house, this home was a wedding gift from William W. Dashiell to his daughter, Marian, when she married Dr. Joshua Ellegood in 1884. Later owners were Thomas C. Horsey and A. Paul Robinson, Sr., who were both Presidents of Marvil Package Co., which put Laurel on the map with annual production of over three million baskets. One of the most elegant homes in Laurel, it features butterfly-carved front double doors, Queen Anne style windows with colored glass panels. The original doctor's offices were on the northeast side, and stone still outlines the driveway which led patients to the porte cochere, which provided shelter for those getting in and out of carriages.



11. 504 S. Central Avenue

The George P. Phillips Home

Laurel's prosperity in the 1880's is evidenced by this imposing residence featuring a five bay structure, truncated hip roof, facade cross gable and double bracket trim. After the Great Fire of 1899, this home briefly served as the town Post Office, as it was then

the home of Postmaster George E. Smith, and in the 20th Century as a florist shop and funeral home. The home now is a private residence.

12. 509 S. Central Avenue

The Stuchell Home

The rear section of this structure is known to have been standing by 1868. After the Great Fire of 1899, the widow of William Dashiell, bought the property and added the five bay structure and the front porch. Her home on the NE corner of Market and Central was destroyed by the fire.



13. 105 W. Sixth Street

The Phillips Home

Laurel's prosperity around the turn of the 20th century sparked construction of a number of commodious homes for the prosperous merchant class. Included among these is this home which was built by Hermus Hastings, a local merchant. This house was built in the modified four square Classical Revival style. Of architectural interest are a Palladian window with keystone in the attic, fish scale shingles on the dormers, and the original screened front door. The yard is enclosed by one of Laurel's noted spear-design wrought iron fences.



14. 106 W. Sixth Street

The West Home

Built in 1880 by Orlando V. Wootten, a gentleman farmer and ship owner, the house has ornate fleur-de-lis trim and lancet upper windows. A 19th century carriage house and a summer kitchen survive in the rear of the property. After only eight years of marriage, Wootten met tragedy when his bride literally burned in the garden, having caught fire while burning trash. A second marriage produced a son, Orlando V. Wootten, Jr. The Wests maintain a beautiful fenced garden.



22. Poplar Street

Cemetery

William W. Dashiell, one-time largest landowner in Sussex County is buried here with wife Miranda. Also buried in this cemetery is Dr. A. Mauch, one of Laurel's first doctors. He is listed as Physician and Surgeon in an 1868 directory. Industrialist J.R. Wilson, one of the founders of Marvil Package Company is buried here. His home on Central Avenue is locally called "the Sallie Dolby" property. Many grave sites were moved to Odd Fellows Cemetery to accommodate the enlarged church building of 1912.

23. Market and Poplar Street

Centenary United Methodist Church

This church of Port Deposit granite was built in 1911-12. The fourth church to stand on this very corner, originally Back and Corn Streets, since 1802. This lot is Lot 31 on the original plot of 32 lots laid out by Barkley Townsend. Centenary Church is known for its beautiful stained glass windows, some of which are signed "Wm. Reith Studios, Philadelphia, PA". Reith was known for his "jewels", a circle of Bohemian glass cut into many facets to reflect the light and placed strategically in his designs. Records indicate stained glass windows were installed in the previous building in 1895, and some of them were re-installed in this building. Other original windows have recently been found stored under the building, and they have been restored and placed inside the building.

24. 120 Market Street (at Poplar)

Commercial Building

There was a private-or subscription-school on this corner as early as 1801, which was the forerunner of the public school system in Laurel. The two-room building burned in 1888 when a boy who started the fire in the heater forgot to open the damper.

Hastings brothers began a business here later that same year, and the present building was constructed following the 1899 fire. There were apartments upstairs and porches which extended over the street. This protected pedestrians from the elements of sun, rain, and snow. The iron bars on the windows on the Poplar Street side were added when the post office was located here prior to its move to Central Avenue in 1935. The 1935 post office was closed in the summer of 2001 and replaced with a new one on south Central Avenue.

15. 104 W. Sixth Street

The Vickers Home

The structure features a jigsawn bracework porch with decorative trim. The most distinguishing feature of the house, however, is its three story Queen Anne tower with fish scale shingles, applied bull's eyes, curved window glass, and witch's cap finial.



16. S. Central Avenue

St. Philip's Episcopal Church

The construction of this church, originally termed St. Philip's Chapel, began in 1848 by the authority of the Vestry of Christ Church Broad Creek, the mother church of Western Sussex County. St. Philip's was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. Alfred Lee after its completion in 1850. Rev. Lee served the Diocese of Delaware from 1841 to 1887 and was elected Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States. The original building was moved to Spruce Street and the present building was completed in 1870. The present building originally faced Sixth Street, and was moved to face Central Avenue. Brick veneer was added to the building in 1924. The Parish House was donated in memory of Harry K. Fooks by his widow, "Miss Nan," following his death in 1936.

17. 107 Carvel Avenue

The Carvel Home

Laurel's most honored citizen has been elected two times as Governor of Delaware - in 1948 and again in 1960. This house originally had a turret, or tower-like addition, on the east side. The Carvel home was completely reconstructed in 1951 to enlarge rooms, add closets, and add a third floor - all to meet their family needs.



18. 200 W. Sixth Street

The Davis House

This residence is one of two dated residences in Laurel. An ornate cornice and sunburst design highlight the 1888 date located at the top of the Sixth Street facade gable. Owner Harvey Marvil installed Laurel's first elevator here.



19. 321 Poplar Street

The Johnson Home

One of Laurel's oldest surviving structures, this federal-style dwelling was originally built on Central Avenue. Owner George B. Phillips apparently moved it about 1880 to make way for his new home (504 S. Central - No. 11 on this guide). What is now the garage was once attached to the house and was probably the kitchen.

20. Poplar Street

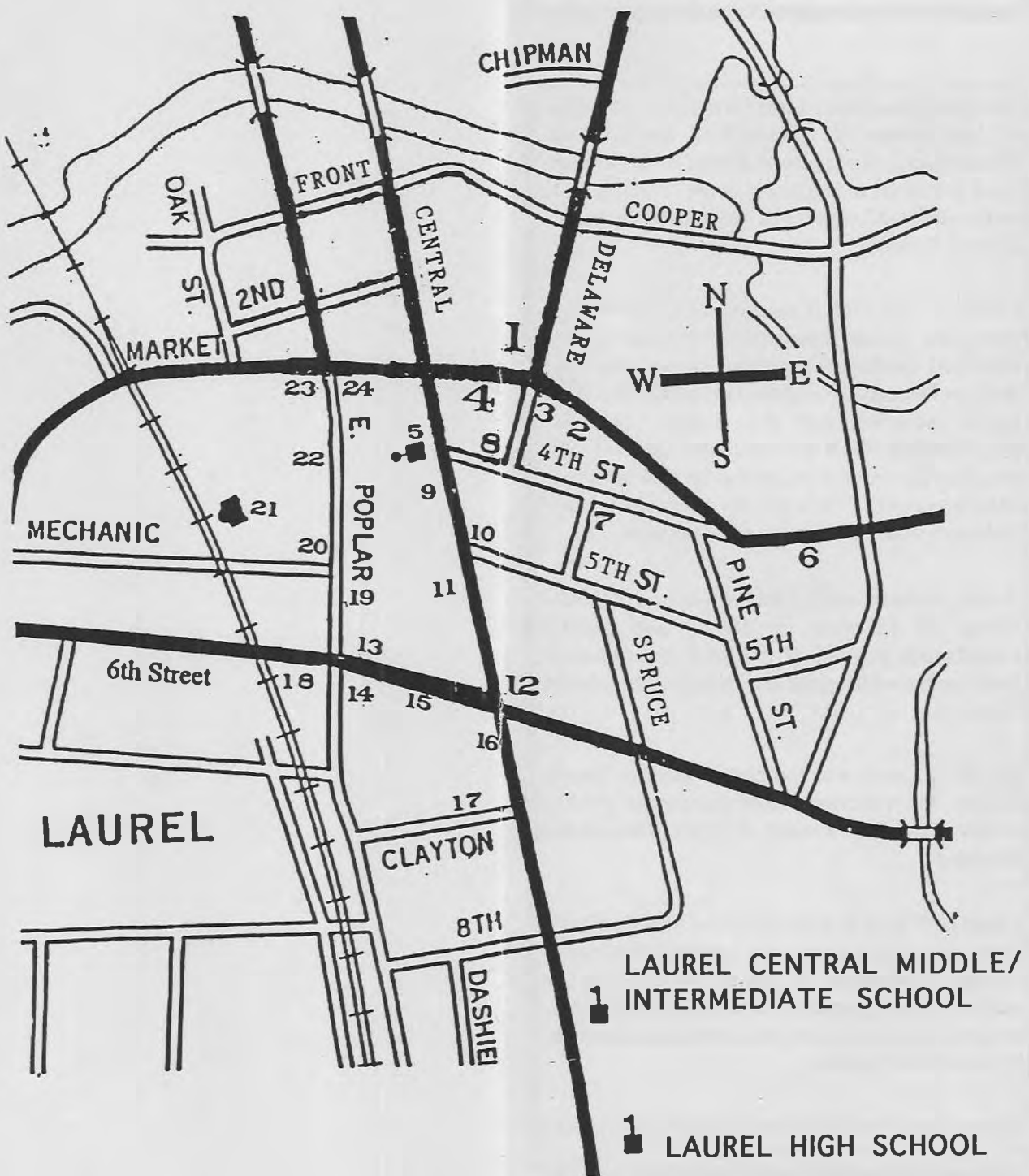
Town Hall

This structure was built in 1937 to house the firehouse, jail, and town offices. The second floor served as a social center for the town. Due to growing demands, the fire department moved to its present location on Tenth Street in 1977. This building was renovated in 1993 and currently houses the municipal offices.

21. Poplar Street

Old Railroad Station

This station was built in 1907 and later served as the Town Hall. Plans are underway to restore the Railroad Depot to its original state and use it as a town museum. An earlier station was on Poplar Street at the west end of Clayton Avenue, now Carvel Avenue, previously named Depot Street.



Della - Laurel

LAUREL

DOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

DOVER, DELAWARE

in

**Southern
Delaware**

PROPERTY OF

DOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

DOVER, DELAWARE



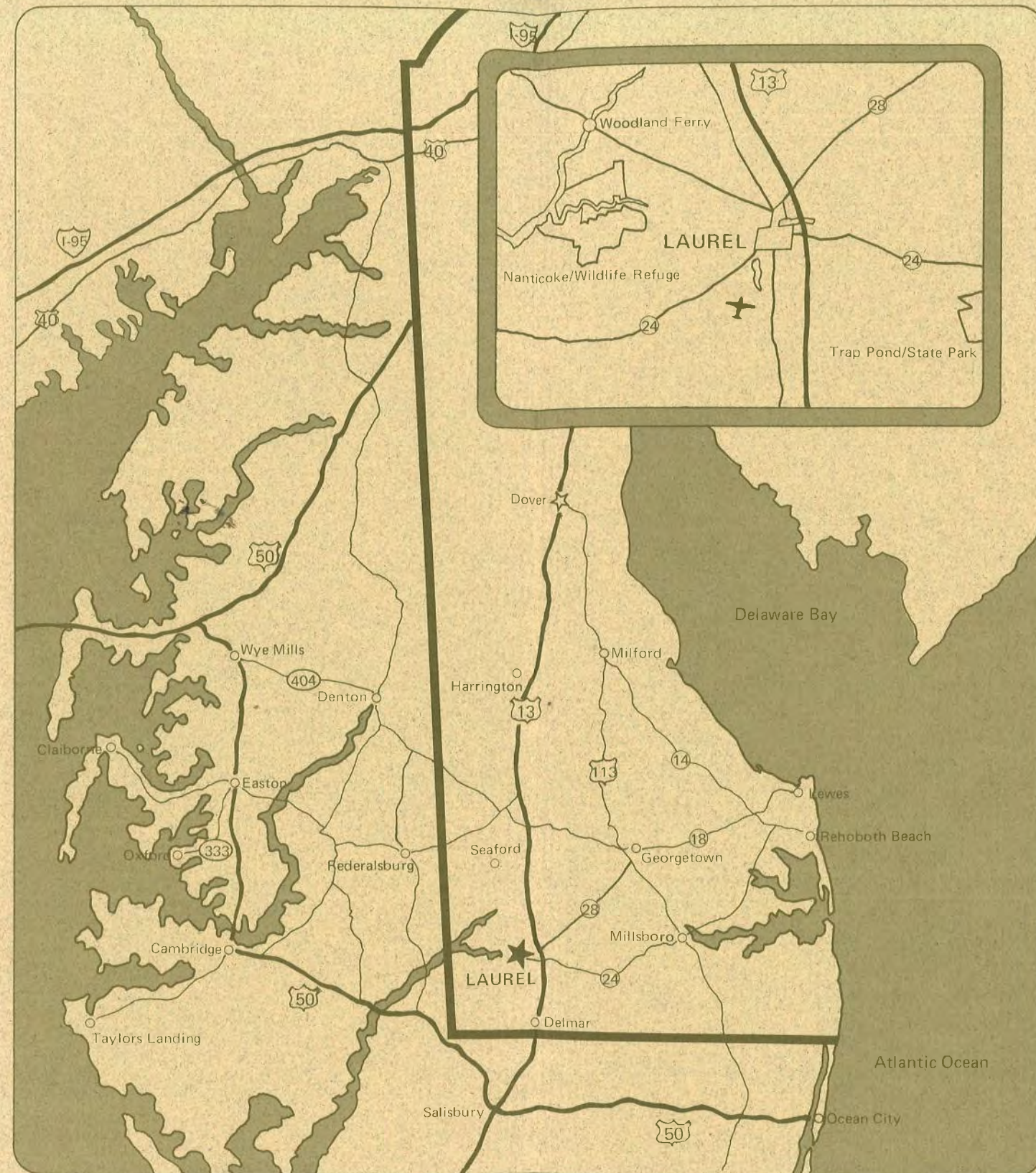
SWIMMING

Family swimming in clear, quiet ponds and lakes or in the pounding surf of the Atlantic Ocean is just minutes away from Laurel. The ponds of Laurel — Trap Pond, Records Pond and Chipman's Pond have public and private facilities for swimming. Children wade safely in the shallow waters near shore while deeper water beckons the experienced swimmer and diving enthusiast. Route 24, east of Laurel, leads directly to America's finest family beaches. You are just 45 minutes away from the Atlantic Ocean where you can stroll along the Boardwalk of Rehoboth Beach or play in the broad sandy beaches of Cape Henlopen and Delaware Seashore State Parks. There's every water sport — swimming, surfing, water skiing, boating or just bathing in the bright summer sun along the beautiful white beaches of Delaware's ocean shoreline.



FISHING

The ponds, lakes and shore areas in and around Laurel offer an abundance of fresh and salt water fishing opportunities. Bass, pickeral, yellow perch, crappies and blue gills are among the species to be found in Records Pond, Trussum Pond, Trap Pond and Chipman's Pond. Launch your own boat at private and public facilities at the ponds. You can rent a boat at Trap Pond, located in one of Delaware's beautiful state parks. Nearby shore points, only 45 minutes east of Laurel on Route 24, open the way to incomparable salt water fishing. Blue fish, striped bass, trout, squid, seabass, flounder and white perch can be found in the waters off shore. You can combine surf fishing with a family picnic on the beach or thrill to deep sea fishing with marlin as your quarry — a memorable experience for both the novice and the dedicated sportsman. Charter boats are available from April through October from several points along the ocean and Delaware Bay.



**LAUREL'S
166th
BIRTHDAY**

**September 26 - 27 - 28
1968**

Your Hosts Are

**Adkins and Son
Bata Shoe Store
Borden Ice Cream Co.
Frank Calio and Son
Carey's Service Station
Chipman's Shoes
Connor's Pharmacy
Herb Dayton
Don-Louise Shop
Dukes Lumber Co.
The Elizabeth Shop
Farmers Bank
Heath's Pharmacy
Preston J. Hudson
Johnny Janosik, Inc.
Charles N. Landon, Inc.
Laurel Distributors, Inc.
Laurel Variety Stores, Inc.**

**J. Ernest Marine
Roy Mitchell and Sons
C. C. Oliphant and Son, Inc.
A. H. Phillips Co., Inc.
Marshall Pusey Agency, Inc.
Safeway Stores, Inc.
Silco Cut Price Store
State Register Printing Co., Inc.
Sussex Trust Co.
Taylor Hardware
Tyndall Pools, Inc.
Valliant Fertilizer Co.
The Waller Studio
Waller's Junior Center
T. J. Wallers Sons
Wee Gift Shop
Wheatley's Ladies Store**

PROGRAM

Welcome Meril L. Dunn, President, Laurel C. of C.
Happy Birthday Laurel High School Pep Band
Mr. Robert Bouknight
Cutting Cake Honorable Elbert N. Carvel
Mrs. Golda Slatcher
Mayor Joshua Bethards
Council President Herbert Dayton

ACTIVITIES

Thursday:

Bus Tours (free) Leaves Laurel Municipal Building
10:15 a.m. 12:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m.

1. Trussum's Pond - Northern most cypress lake of any size in the United States - 15
2. Trap Pond State Park - Contains 928 acres - 15
3. Old Christ Church - Built in 1772 - 15
Chipman's Pond
4. Records Pond (Laurel Lake)
5. Horsey's Pond
6. Phillips Landing - 15
7. Portsville Pond
8. The New Bethel Bridge
9. Woodland Ferry

Thursday (continued):

Scenic Air Tour 10:15 a.m. to 6 p.m., Laurel Airport
\$1. per person - Minimum 3 per flight
Purchase tickets at information booth

2:45 p.m. Laurel High School Band
Mr. Robert Bouknight

Art Show Laurel Library, all day

Special Displays Safeway Store, all day

Merchants' Windows

Diamond State Telephone Co. - Farmers Bank

Stores Open until 9 p.m.

Friday:

Bus Tours -- (same schedule as Thursday)

Scenic Air Tours -- (same schedule as Thursday)

2:45 p.m. Laurel High School Band

Art Show -- (same schedule as Thursday)

Special Displays -- (same schedule as Thursday)

Stores Open until 9 p.m.

Saturday:

Bus Tours -- (same schedule as Thursday)

Scenic Air Tours -- (same schedule as Thursday)

Art Show -- (same schedule as Thursday)

Fire Engine Rides, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Laurel Municipal Bldg.

Stores Open until 6 p.m.

Nov, 1968

Program Chairmen Charles Thomas, William Payne,
Meril L. Dunn

Display Credits:

- Fire Engine Laurel Fire Dept.
- Oil Truck Bruce J. Farrelly
- Shrubbery John T. Wiest
- Antique Auto John Dickerson
- Pool Tyndall Pools, Inc.
- Antique Auto Club of America, Brandywine Region,
Wilmington
- Diamond State Telephone Co.



Thank you for being our guest and we hope
you have a wonderful day.

The Laurel Chamber of Commerce



Be sure to take home your free gift. They are
available from any merchant listed on front
page of program.



LAUREL
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Nineteenth Century Laurel:
Change and Continuity

by

Keith J. Phillips

and

Edward L. Fowler

This pamphlet is part of the Laurel Historical Society's celebration of its twentieth anniversary in 1997.

This booklet is intended to partially fill the gap in the availability of written material on the history and architecture of Laurel. Dr. Harold Hancock's The History of Nineteenth Century Laurel is excellent, but has been out of print for many years. The only information on Laurel's architecture is contained in an essay written by Madeline Dunn in Hancock's book, and in the handbook prepared by the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. Obviously, trying to cover so much material in so few pages means the authors had to be very selective. We hope that our pamphlet is interesting and that it will be useful.

Our thanks to Ruth Ann Phillips and Mary Ellen Taylor for their efforts in editing and proofing.

Much of the information in this pamphlet is contained in Dr. Hancock's book.

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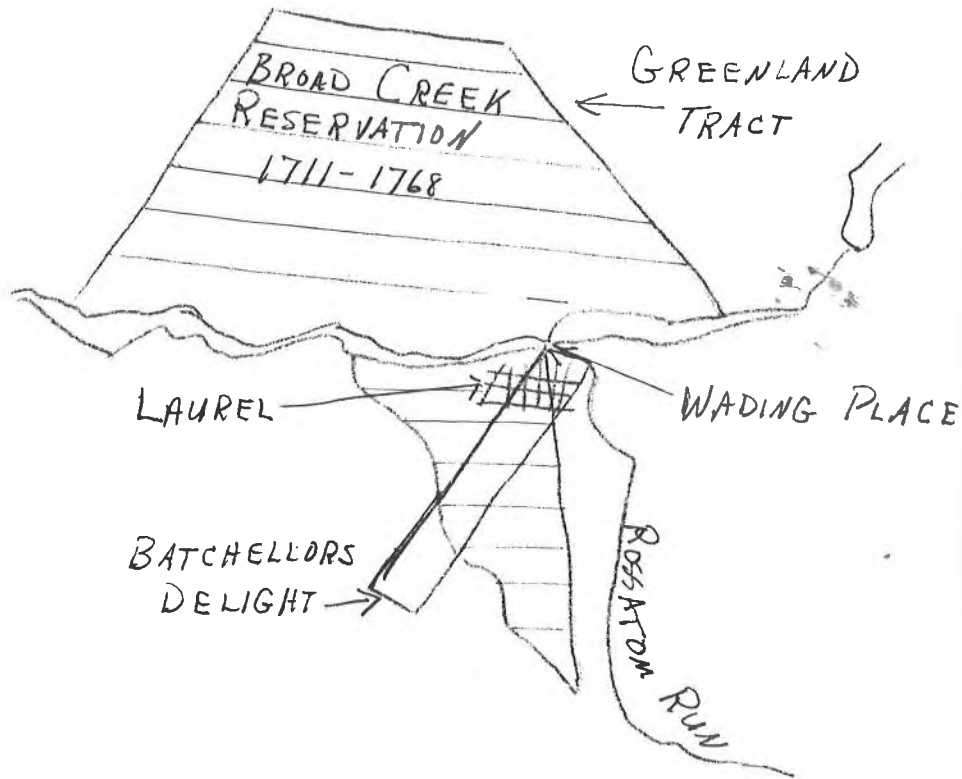
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386 of 500

In examining the history of any town, two of the most obvious questions are when and why was it founded. The why for Laurel is easier to answer. The "wading place" on Broad Creek was the first location where one could cross on foot what was a major tributary of the Nanticoke River. Down river from that point, fairly large shallow-draft vessels could sail west to the Chesapeake Bay. The area also was close to the headwaters of Broad Creek, offering the opportunity of water power for mills through the building of dams and spillways. It is reasonable to assume that the settlers seeking land in the Laurel area were doing so for financial reasons, and the creek, providing for transportation of produce and reliable sources of power, would improve their chances of success. Thus, we can conclude that geography was the primary reason settlers selected the site.

Determining when Laurel began to exist as a town is somewhat more difficult. The Laurel area was a part of Maryland until about 1770. The first land grant of what would become modern Laurel was "Batchelor's Delight," some 250 acres south of the "wading place" on Broad Creek, ceded in 1683 to James Wyeth and Marmaduke Master. In 1689, 2500 acres north of Broad Creek were given to William Green, but, because of the resentment of the Indians living in the area, both of these grants were rescinded in 1711 to create an Indian reservation. This reservation was closed in 1768, allowing whites once again to seek title to land. Most prominent among these was Nathaniel Mitchell, who had a large plantation on the north side of Broad Creek, and Barkley Townsend, who, by 1789, had surveyed a town of 32 lots south of Broad Creek. At the time of Townsend's death in 1802, these lots

SKETCH OF ORIGINAL WADING PLACE
Based on work by H. H. Hutchinson



From the collection of Madeline Dunn

were resurveyed to settle his estate. Most historians consider the latter date to mark the founding of Laurel. Long before then, Laurel had become a part of Little Creek Hundred, Sussex County, one of the three lower counties of Pennsylvania, and, after 1775, part of the state of Delaware.

By the end of the first decade of the 19th century, Laurel was described in Scott's geography book as, "a small post town, situated on both sides of Broad Creek . . . It contains about 40 houses, a Presbyterian and Methodist church." Although the population of Little Creek Hundred was about 1900 free persons and 250 slaves, Laurel itself probably had only about 250 free persons and somewhat less than 100 slaves. The most common occupation in the area of Laurel was that of agriculture, but there were also shopkeepers, smiths, saw and grist mill operators, and artisans. Most of the people probably were fairly poor and lived in simple homes with few possessions. A very few, however, such as Nathaniel Mitchell, had accumulated considerable wealth, including an imposing plantation house, Rosemont, plus fine furniture, and coin silver.

Laurel's economy had already developed the characteristics that would make the town increasingly wealthy for the rest of the century. It had become a trans-shipment point for the agricultural and forestry products from the surrounding area. From Laurel, these products could be shipped to the Chesapeake Bay and then to Baltimore or down bay to the Atlantic Ocean. After 1859 and the coming of the railroad, Wilmington, Philadelphia, and northern cities became metropolitan markets open to Laurel.

The 1832 census of manufacturing concerns listed only 4 such concerns in Little Creek Hundred. By 1850, there were 41 such enterprises in Little Creek and Broad Creek Hundreds. The 1860 population was 1200. When Beer's Atlas was published in 1868,

Laurel had two hotel keepers, four doctors and a dentist, four lumber dealers and grain buyers, ten storekeepers, two druggists, six manufacturers, and several miscellaneous shopkeepers. By 1887, the population was estimated at 2500, and, not only had the number of stores doubled since 1860, but two large basket manufacturing plants also had been established. The financial well-being of Laurel at the end of the 19th century is evident in the large number of very impressive Victorian mansions that were built then. This economic growth continued well into the twentieth century.

Facts, dates, statistics, and the like, however, are not, in the end, what history is really about. Above all, history is the story of people, people very much like all of us in their humanness, but living in a different time and in a way of life that might seem harsh and alien. We can find many of the facts about the "official" and legal history of Laurel through tax rolls, court cases, petitions to the state legislature, and so forth, but it is much more difficult to find out what life was like for the average man. The personal aspects of history, the story of people, are found in such sources as newspapers, letters, and oral family histories. Unfortunately, there are very few surviving Laurel newspapers from the nineteenth century. Accounts of Laurel found in the newspapers of other communities are sporadic and very selective. Few letters or other unofficial documents survive from the earlier years. And, so many years have passed that the fabric of family histories has turned to legend. Thus, it is not possible to be very specific about daily life in Laurel. Instead, we can only generalize. But, relying on what is known of life in other towns on the Peninsula and in the rest of the country, we can get an accurate picture of what life was like for the people of Laurel when it was surveyed in 1802. We can then look at how life had changed by the end of its first hundred years.

First, we must create a frame of reference to understand that life. People of the late twentieth century are frequently overwhelmed by information, but at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the scarcity, or even total absence, of news was commonplace. There were no televisions, no radios, no movies, no malls, no telephones - almost none of our current sources of information existed. Travelers were eagerly greeted for the news of the outside world that they might bring. The arrival of a stagecoach from Wilmington with passengers and newspapers was a welcome interruption in the humdrum routine of daily life. Life changed but slowly, and the pace of life itself was slow and repetitive. Living in town meant that news and entertainment were somewhat more available than if one lived in the country, but even in town, one day was very much like any other day.

Although people spent an inordinate amount of time working, at least by today's standards, when they were not working, they spent a great deal of time talking with one another. Some of what they said was, of course, pure gossip, but there was also a great interchange of information, thoughts, and ideas. Time for talking existed because there were very few other things to do.

Travel was difficult, at best. People living along Broad Creek could use boats, but elsewhere they traveled by horse or on foot. Roads were few, and not that well maintained. The citizens of early Laurel sent many petitions to the state legislature requesting the building of a bridge over Broad Creek and roads. And after they were built, they sent petitions asking the state to maintain them. One such petition from 1798 for a bridge states:

And whereas the erection of a bridge across Broad Creek . . . would be of publick utility and would greatly relieve your petitioners from great inconvenience which they labour under for want of a bridge across said

Creek . . . at a place formerly called the wading place . . . which is not fordable at high water and with difficulty at Low water . . .

Another pastime of today, an afternoon of shopping, was certainly not a possibility. Stores were stocked with the necessities, and a very few luxuries, that could not be grown or produced at home. Dresses, suits, shoes, hats, and practically everything else were made to special order; there was no such thing as "off the rack." And, going to the store was an easy task only for those living in town.

There were no labor saving devices, no fast food restaurants, and no microwaves. People worked extraordinarily hard. Everything was done by hand, or with the assistance of animal power, or, infrequently, water power. The length of the work day followed the rhythms of the seasons but was nearly always sunup to sundown. Houses, for the most part, were small and furnishings scarce. A workingman's or small farmer's house might consist of only one room with a loft over it. Typically, a large chimney dominated one end of the room. This fireplace was the only source of heat and also was where the women of the house cooked the family's food. Light came only from fat lamps, rushlights, the fireplace during the winter, and, on special occasions, candles.

Food was usually plentiful because of the bounty of the land, but meals became monotonous during the winter as people were forced to eat the same foods day after day. In the spring, farmers plowed their fields and planted a vegetable garden for house food and grew wheat and corn as their "cash" crop. Throughout the summer and fall, crops, wild berries, and nuts were harvested and preserved by drying as they matured. In the late fall came butchering, and the meat was preserved through salting and smoking. What the family put away and

what wild animals or fish could be caught were what fed the family until the following spring. People in town lived much the same way. In the state archives of petitions from Laurel to the state legislature asking for the passage of ordinances are several petitions complaining of hogs running loose in town. Townspeople also kept chickens, turkeys, milk cows, horses, and had their own vegetable gardens. Tradesmen, smiths, and artisans bartered their wares and services for those foodstuffs they couldn't grow themselves, such as corn and wheat. Millers took a share of the grain they ground as payment for their services. The local economy operated for the most part on barter. Money was scarce and was used only when absolutely necessary. Even taxes could be paid in grains.

The first bank in Laurel, The Farmers and Mechanics Bank of Delaware, did not appear until 1812 and closed a dozen years later. Only the most affluent could afford to shop for all manner of things; most people bought only those things they could not produce themselves.

It is nearly impossible for modern man to fully understand how difficult life was when Laurel was established. Everyone of that time was personally familiar with disease and death. Most families could expect to lose at least one child to commonplace illnesses that today are medical curiosities. Diphtheria, smallpox, yellow fever, typhoid fever, whooping cough, sepsis, and scarlet fever carried both children and adults away in large numbers. Even as late as 1881, the Delaware State Journal reported on May 5, that "Joshua Collins of Portsville has smallpox." A few days later it added he had died and that, "His neighbors propose burning the house. He was buried at the door of the house." On May 19, it reported that his wife had also died of smallpox. A burst appendix was a death sentence. People of all ages, but especially the elderly, succumbed to pneumonia. Doctors were scarce, and their knowledge limited. Even more limited were the

treatment options. There were no hospitals, no antibiotics, no anesthesia for operations. Not even aspirin was available at the beginning of the century. People of all economic classes suffered, in silence or otherwise. Walking through a nineteenth century graveyard and reading the dates of birth and death provides an education in the medical technology of the 19th and even the early 20th centuries.

Truly, there was no sense in complaining, for life was as it always had been. People dreamed of a life of leisure, but very, very few would ever experience it. Parents hoped that their children would have easier and better lives than themselves but probably were not very confident of it happening. Education was available for some of the children who lived in town. The first school in Laurel was established in 1801, but that school was open only part of the year; certainly, not all children attended. People were born, did their best to support themselves, raised families, attended church, and trusted in God's promise of an afterlife. Lest we think of their lives as being too hard to bear, remember that life was easier and better in 1802 than a hundred or two hundred or five hundred years earlier. The average man could own his own land, and if he did, he could vote for those he wanted to represent him. He was not permanently bound to a social class by a rigid society, and he had the chance, however slim, to succeed beyond all expectations. If he were black, however, he was probably a slave and would remain so until 1865. Some masters in Laurel were "good" slave owners, and some were bad. The latter would abuse their slaves on a whim and sell all or part of a family "down south." During these years of slavery, the underground railway operated in Delaware, and slaves from Laurel fled north to freedom. There were advertisements in the newspapers of neighboring towns offering rewards for the return of runaway slaves.

If a person had been born in 1802 and lived for eighty or ninety years, think of the changes he would have seen. The pace of that change would have been slow by today's standards, but, looking back over his life, such a person could have said to a grandchild, "Lord, child, the changes I've seen," and yet, for all those changes, there were many things that remained the same.

The state did build a bridge at the wading place, and maintained it, sometimes better, sometimes worse. Roads were built and improved. In good years, people could build new houses, or even more frequently, add a new section to the one room house in which they were living. In 1845, some of the citizens of Laurel requested the legislature to extend the town limits to the north side of Broad Creek. In 1859, the railroad came to town, opening up a whole new world. For the first time, Laurelites could travel north in comfort and relatively quickly.

On the eve of the Civil War, the people of Laurel had a large variety of tradesmen and craftsmen to attend to their needs. A list of such persons prepared by Dr. E. D. Bryan of Dover shows furniture and cabinet makers, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, dress makers, tailors, shopkeepers, boot and shoe makers, confectioners, doctors, leather goods makers, milliners, sawyers millwrights, jewelers and watchmakers, lumber dealers, carriage builders, millers, hotel keepers, and even a photographer. Although stores of the late 1850's were certainly far better stocked than stores in the early 1800's, it is obvious that many people still preferred buying items individually produced for them. The list of enterprises in Laurel shows no large manufacturing enterprises of any kind, so employment remained much as it had been sixty years earlier. Most people either farmed, or they worked as tradesmen or craftsmen.

The Civil War not only changed the political

structure of the nation, but also quickened industrialization. This quickening combined with a population movement from rural areas to the cities and a growing number of immigrants, many of whom remained in the cities, increased the demand for agricultural products. Laurel, because of the soil of the surrounding area, its proximity to several metropolitan areas, and especially its excellent water and rail transportation, was thrust into the rapid economic growth that characterizes much of late nineteenth century America. Although grain was still grown, farmers increasingly switched production to peaches, strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries. In good years, farmers could make an excellent profit from such crops. For example, in 1869, Martin Ellis of near Laurel received \$.35 a quart for 1400 quarts of blackberries that he sold in New York. All the fruit crops were very perishable, thus demanding not only rapid transportation, but also new methods of preserving them. So it was that in 1867, Laurel's first industrial enterprise, a canning factory, opened. It was followed four years later by the founding of Marvil Packing Company, established to meet the huge demand for shipping containers for the various fruit crops. Within a few years, Marvil Packing employed over one hundred workers. Another though smaller basket company was that of N. Ward & Co. In 1882, a large fruit drying factory was built on the west side of the railroad tracks opposite the end of Clayton Street. Here fruit of all kinds were dried in large ovens, offering an alternative to canned fruit. At one time, it employed over sixty people.

It is important to understand that the people who worked in these factories were industrial workers. They worked ten hours a day for \$1.50 for skilled hands and \$.75 a day for common laborers. Women were generally paid at a piece rate for such tasks as assembling baskets or for packing processed fruit in containers; children were paid by the day or piece, but usually at a lower rate than adults. All the workers were dependent on their factory jobs

for nearly all of their income; when the factories closed down, temporarily or permanently, they were without income. Although the factory owners such as Joshua Marvil played a major role in operations, more and more they were becoming somewhat distant figures as most workers were supervised by a foreman. This is not to say that such jobs were comparable to working in a General Motors plant of five thousand, but they most certainly were far different jobs than had existed in Laurel just a few years earlier.

At the prevailing wages of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a working man could expect to earn between \$4.50 to \$9 per week, and, if extraordinarily lucky, he would work every week of the year. There was, of course, no overtime, no paid vacation, no medical coverage, no 401k plans - just a basic wage. What would this wage buy? Staying in a hotel in Laurel would have cost him \$1.50 a day. A quart of strawberries cost \$.06 - \$.10 and peaches \$.25 a basket. Chicken was \$.10 a pound, ham, \$.16, coffee, \$.25, and beef from \$.06 to \$.13. A suit of men's clothes cost \$5.00 to \$10.00. So, even though prices were obviously much lower than they are today, a comparison of prices to wages shows that the working man of the late nineteenth century had little surplus income unless times were very good. Then, he could accumulate cash to the point where he might purchase a small house.

By the end of the nineteenth century, there were labor saving devices such as sewing machines and hand-powered washing machines, castiron stoves provided heat and an improved method of cooking, and steam engines provided sources of power for machinery of all kinds. The telegraph and daily trains kept Laurel in touch with the rest of the world, and, even though the average man still had to work very hard, life was definitely easier. He also had more wealth than at the beginning of the century. Steamboats plied Broad Creek and trains to many points stopped in Laurel every day, but most

people still traveled most of the time by horse, mule, or foot. A trip to town by a country family could easily take an hour by mule-drawn wagon, and thus was a special outing usually reserved for Saturdays. Disease was still a constant threat to a family's happiness as medical technology had improved but little. Although most doctors recognized the sources of infection, there were still no antibiotics and few other disease fighting drugs.

Although many aspects of life had changed for Laurelites during the nineteenth century, there was still a comforting rhythm and harmony about life. In The History of Nineteenth Century Laurel, Dr. Harold Hancock summarized accounts of Laurel that appeared in the newspapers of surrounding communities and in the very few existing copies of Laurel newspapers. In reading these accounts, one is struck by the same kinds of stories appearing again and again at the same time of the year, year after year, and yet, these events, once so commonplace are today curiosities frequently not understood.

For example, by January or February of many years, one newspaper or another was commenting on whether or not Laurel's ice houses were filled up. What did such stories mean? In a time when there were no electric refrigerators, people depended on ice "harvested" in large blocks during the winter from Adams Pond (Laurel Lake) and stored in ice houses. These blocks, covered with sawdust as insulation, were sold after the weather turned warm to put in ice boxes to help keep food and to use in making ice cream and lemonade. If the weather was not cold enough to get ice locally, then it had to be imported from the "North."

But the extreme cold weather, so necessary to produce sufficient ice, was a threat to the peach crop. This threat was a most serious matter to an area that was considered the first or second most

important place in the country for raising peaches. One very harsh year, 1881, Joshua Marvil cut the limb off a peach tree after the temperature had plummeted to -18 degrees. He placed the limb in a water-filled bucket in a heated room and waited for it to bloom. When only two out of over five hundred buds blossomed, he predicted that the peach crop would be a total failure. The Wilmington Morning News that April reported that he was right; both the peach and blackberry crops failed. In other years, however, huge crops were harvested. One newspaper account reported that twenty-seven boxcars of peaches had been shipped from Laurel in a single day.

Laurelites would be astounded today if over four-hundred migrant workers showed up to pick strawberries as happened in May 1893, for Laurel was also a very prominent berry producing area. On June 3 of that year, fourteen boxcar loads of berries were shipped from Laurel. On June 4, 1898, twenty-one boxcar loads of berries were shipped. In 1886, William S. Moore of Laurel grew over 90,000 quarts of strawberries. Special freight trains of nothing but boxcars loaded with fruit had clear tracks to move berries to Wilmington and points beyond. Laurel berries were sent as far away as Boston, Massachusetts.

In the late summer and fall, the grain crops were harvested and taken to grist mills where long lines of mule-drawn wagons formed as farmers waited their turns to have corn and wheat ground into usable meal and flour. This waiting was not looked at as an inconvenience, but rather as a social occasion where the men could catch up on news and gossip. They would seek shade as the millers' helpers carried in the grain and the huge griststones mounted on wooden axles would be turned by water to the accompaniment of much creaking and groaning and clouds of grain dust. After each man's share was loaded back on his wagon, he would bid farewell to his neighbors, cluck to his mules, and

head home to store the meal and flour for future need. Mill day was a part of the annual rhythm that created stability in the farmers' lives. In bad years, the wait for milling would not be so long, but the worry of how they would make it through the winter would be greater. The last chores of the fall were to dig pits to store vegetables. These pits would be lined with straw, covered with tin, and then dirt would be piled on top of the tin. They would hold potatoes, cabbages, sweet potatoes, and apples. As the winter went by, the vegetables would be dug out as needed. Hog butchering was also vital to a family's survival, both in town and in the country. Hams and bacon would be cured with salt, pepper, brown sugar, and nitre. Every night for a few weeks, the man of the house would take the hams and slabs of bacon off the hooks in the smoke house and rub salt into them by hand until they began to "sweat." Then they would be hung back up. There was never starvation around Laurel, but if families did not plan well and were not frugal, some winters would be hungrier than others.

In those newspaper accounts cited by Dr. Hancock, most of which are from the years 1880 to 1900, are numerous stories of the various churches in Laurel and the many activities they were involved in. In January or February of every year were revival meetings designed to lift up the spirits of those who might be straying and to win new converts. In July or August of each year came the camp meetings held at various spots in the country. Not even religion was safe from the incursions of the world, however, as the Every Evening reported that several people had lost robes and cushions from their carriages to thieves while attending prayer meetings at Moore's Grove in July, 1894. One gentleman from Concord, I. J. Morgan lost his carriage and horse. To top it off, a heavy rain forced the ending of the meeting. Throughout the year, churches played important parts in weddings, christenings, and funerals, and, of course, they were very involved in Christmas.

The yuletide had not been totally commercialized in the late 1800's, but there were numerous mentions of store windows being more heavily stocked than at other times during the year. More typical are the comments of December, 1893, from the Every Evening which reported that Christmas entertainments had been presented in the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal churches. St. Philip's and the Methodist Protestant churches had held Christmas suppers, and St. Philip's had even treated its children to a "Christmas tree and treats as well as a stereoptician exhibit by the pastor." The same newspaper regretfully announced that not as much holly and evergreens had been shipped from Laurel as anticipated, a most serious situation as many farm families depended on selling such products for Christmas money. Less typical was the Delawarean report of January, 1880, that Christmas had passed in Laurel quietly enough except for "damage done to door steps, fences, carriages, and some fighting."

Whether peaceful or otherwise, Christmas was a great deal simpler than today. Only the most well-to-do families could provide their children with many toys. In far more families, children received an article of clothing and maybe an orange and some candy. Frequently, parents went without any gifts for one another so they could give their children those simple presents.

After Christmas came the harshest part of the winter. Although the frightfully low temperatures of the winter of 1880-1881, which totally froze up Broad Creek, were never exceeded, there are numerous reports of temperatures several degrees below zero, of blizzards when even trains could not run for two or three days, of peoples' fears that they would run out of firewood and coal before they ran out of cold weather. And, just as today, the lack of care on the part of young people could lead to near tragedies as when, in January 1881, during a temporary thaw, six young women in a skating party

broke through weakened ice and had to be rescued. Sometimes the harshness of winter ended early as it did in 1882 when the first herrings were caught on February 17. By early March, both herring and shad were in plentiful supply, selling for \$.18 and \$.15 a dozen, respectively. Men and boys with bow nets would gather at the end of Adams and Co. mill race and along the banks of the Rossakatum to dip up great masses of wiggling fish. Men who had boats could put out gill nets or float seine nets and fill up their boats. The fishing would continue until there was such a glut of herring that people would use them as fertilizer, dropping a herring into a hole, covering it with dirt, and then adding corn seed.

Early or late, eventually, the passing of the seasons brought relief from the cold of winter, but people were still subject to the whims of the weather much more so than today because they had no weather forecast to warn them of what might come. In August, 1879, a dam above Adams Mill broke, resulting in a rush of water which swept over the town bridge and flooded many houses along the creek. In March of 1881, much of the low lying areas along Broad Creek were flooded by heavy rains and the overflowing of the creek. In other years, drought was the rule as only half or even one-quarter of the usual strawberry crop was harvested.

Although the repetitiveness of the seasons and events must have created a strong sense of continuity in people, it also must have caused a great hunger for anything that would relieve the tedium. For the farmer, it was events such as "mill day," "town day" and picnics that interrupted the humdrum of farmers' daily lives. For those who lived in Laurel, it was the associations, "secret societies," and clubs that offered relief. The newspaper accounts cited by Dr. Hancock mention the Redmen, the Odd Fellows, the Cornet Band, the Masons, the Grange, the Laurel Dramatic Society, and the Temperance Alliance, all of which gave

Laurelites the chance to socialize for serious or light reasons. The Laurel Dramatic Society, organized by Dr. William S. Hitch, not only gave local performances, but even traveled to New York state for that purpose.

The WCTU and the Temperance Union both met on a regular basis year after year in an attempt to control "demon rum." They entered candidates for political office and supported those who favored temperance. Sometimes they were successful in preventing such local enterprises as the Cannon House, a hotel, from getting a liquor license. In May, 1886, the Temperance Alliance held its annual organization meeting and elected Benjamin Hitch as president. That same month, Joshua Marvil paid for two carriages to take delegates from Laurel to the temperance convention in Georgetown. When the new constitution for the Alliance was adopted, it allowed women members. Yet, just four months later, it was reported that "Never has there been a time when so much liquor has been drunk in Laurel as this past Saturday night." Was it coincidence that the people of Laurel felt an earthquake that same month?

Up to this point, very little has been mentioned about the children of Laurel. Did they spend most of their time in school then as today, or were their lives different? Children did attend school, but attendance was frequently sporadic. Many went only through the sixth grade, few went through the eighth grade, and fewer still graduated from high school. In 1897, for example, the graduating class consisted of only nine students, seven girls and two boys. At the time, Laurel had a population of over two thousand. Children were far too valuable as workers for them to waste their time in school. By the time they were teenagers, children were expected to do an adult's day's work, and, in fact, there were few if any distinctions in the way teenagers and adults were treated in factories. Younger children might be treated

somewhat more gently. Farm children were put to work at an early age, for there was always some kind of chore that could be done by a child as young as four or five. As they got older, the expectations of the amount of work they could do would increase.

A story, although from the 1920's, told by a former older resident, illustrates those expectations. When he and his cousin were about thirteen or fourteen, his father and uncle carried them to East New Market to buy two milk cows. The boys had to walk the cows to their home, which lay between Sharptown and Laurel. The walk took the boys all night. On a farm, there could be no coddling of the young, for the vast majority of farm work was still done by man- and mulepower. On small farms, there would be few pieces of mule-drawn equipment. At the end of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, a scythe with a grain cradle attached was not something that you saw in antique shops, but rather was a tool that a man or a teenage boy could be expected to swing eight or ten hours a day. A boy was just right for milking cows or cleaning out the mules' stalls or following a pair of mules and a plow all day. In a dry year, he was just right for using a bucket to fill up a wooden barrel placed on a sledge and then guiding it and a team through a cornfield so he could use a ladle to water each individual corn plant. A girl learned to cook, clean house, sew, bake bread, make butter, put up preserves, and can meat early in her life. Which child, the farm child working in the fields or house or the town child working in the factories, had the better life? What excitement was in their lives? Sometimes, not very often, the circus came to town. On Saturdays, the farm families came to town, allowing the farm boys and the town boys to determine who was the more valorous. On Sundays, they went to church, and after the services, before their parents carried them home, they could talk to their friends and cousins that they might not have seen since the previous Sunday. Were children bored or resentful?

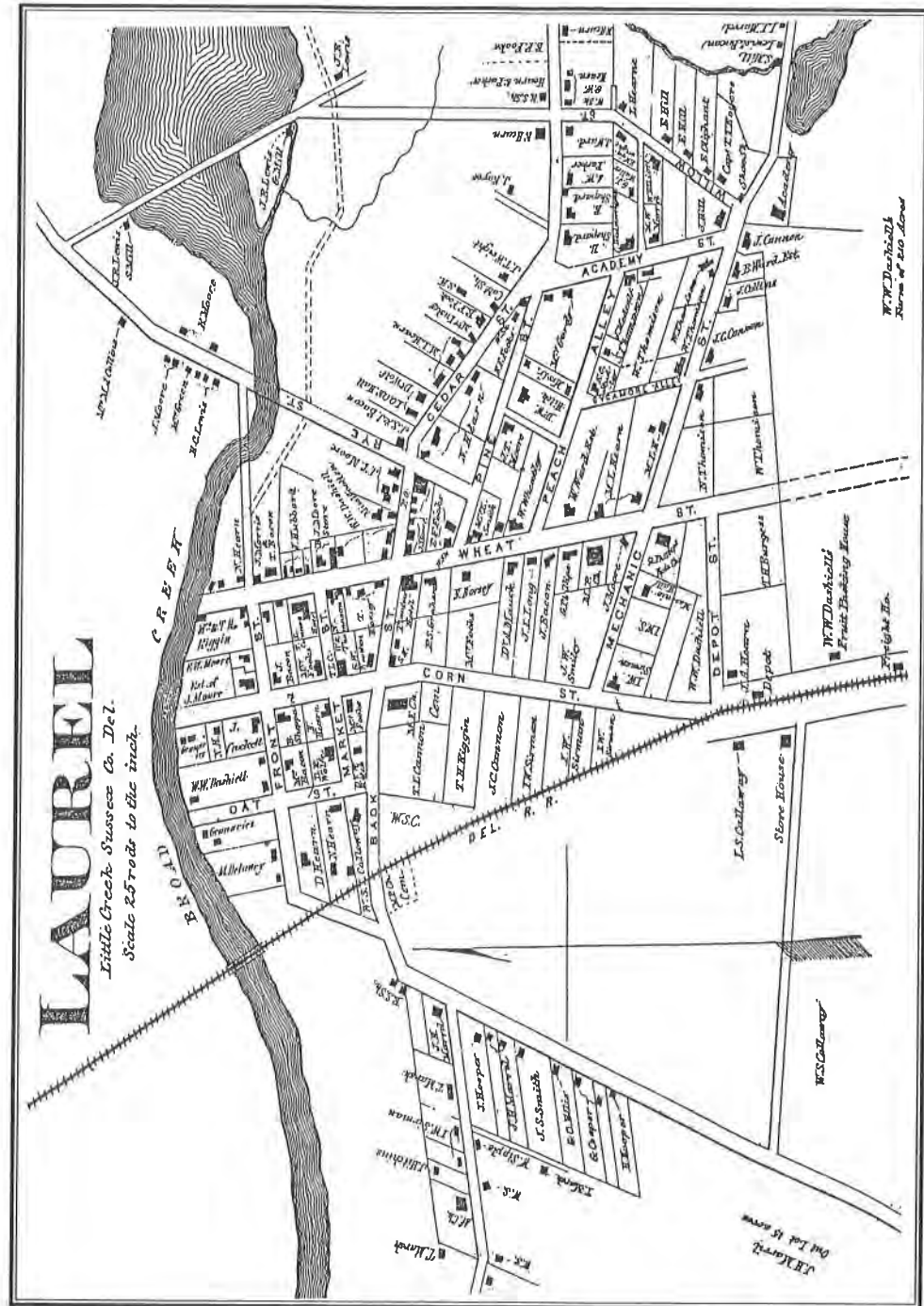
Probably not - they were too busy to be either, and besides, their lives were little different and certainly no harder than the lives of their parents. And children, like their parents, hoped to share in the general economic advancement that many enjoyed. And, for many, many people, times were good.

In reading the summaries of newspaper articles prepared by Dr. Hancock, the major, overriding trend of the twenty years from 1880 to 1900 is that of strong economic growth. Laurel felt the effects of national recessions that affected every decade of the nineteenth century, but the town seemed to bounce back very quickly from all. As shown above, Laurel had experienced fairly steady economic well-being during most of the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, but during the last quarter of the century, this steady growth turned into near boom times. The factories of Joshua Marvil and N. Ward, the mill of Adams and Company, the canning and drying plants all gave direct employment to many workers. The basket companies created a large demand for local lumber, primarily gum trees, that might not otherwise be used. (An older resident tells of how, in the 1920's, when gum trees were delivered to Marvil's by boat, some would fall off the boat during unloading. Frequently they would be left in the water a day or two before being hauled on shore, giving an enterprising local the opportunity to sneak close to Marvil's wharf at night in a rowboat with muffled oars, and to steal the floating trees. He would tow them back home on a falling tide, load them on a truck and haul them to Salisbury where they would be sold to one of Marvil's competitors.) These factory workers, in turn, spent almost all of their earnings in Laurel, giving employment to shopkeepers and tradesmen. The owners of the factories and businesses gave employment to carpenters, masons, plasterers, and painters as they built houses suited to their new wealth. This exuberant building program not only took over empty lots in town, but in numerous cases, perfectly good but outmoded buildings were torn down

to be replaced by "bigger and better." A comparison of the location of existing buildings constructed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century with Beer's map of 1868 shows that many of the houses were constructed on sites occupied by earlier houses that were torn down or moved elsewhere.

For example, the Morning News of September, 1880 reported that the old "unsightly" hotel on the southwest corner of Central and Market was being demolished so that a new one could be built. The penitentiary, the house built by Barkley Townsend, was torn down to make room for a new house. In December of that same year, the Odd Fellows moved into the new building they had just constructed. In May, 1881, a large storehouse was constructed on Market Street. In November, 1882, the Morning News reported that there was so much constructing and repairing of buildings in Laurel that all carpenters and mechanics were employed. In fact, the same paper reported on many new buildings under construction and on many real estate transactions throughout the 1880's and 1890's. In November, 1897, the Every Evening reported that in the previous three months, sixteen houses, one store and a shuck (mattress) factory had been built in Laurel. The following month the same paper reported that the demand for houses in Laurel far exceeded the supply.

There are also numerous reports throughout this same twenty-year period of other indicators of economic activity such as the dredging of Broad Creek on several occasions to increase its depth to accommodate larger vessels. There are also numerous references to steamer passenger service to Baltimore and up to three passenger sailings a week from Laurel. Travel in town was improved through the use of tens of thousands of bushels of oyster shells to pave the streets. Board sidewalks were gradually replaced by brick ones. In 1883, Laurel was incorporated as a town. In 1885, the old wooden bridge over Broad Creek was torn down and replaced



by an iron one. By 1893, people were petitioning the town commissioners for a waterworks and for electricity. In April, 1894, telephone service came to Laurel. New enterprises continued to be opened; most were stores, but some were new mills or factories. For example, in January, 1898, the Laurel Shirt Factory began operation, and just one month later was running day and night.

The building boom was helped not only by demolition of older buildings, but also by numerous fires, most accidental, but some set on purpose. At the end of the nineteenth century, Laurel was a mixture of buildings that dated back to the late eighteenth century and quite new ones, but nearly all were wooden. The Morning News reported as early as April 1882, that the Laurel correspondent was alarmed at the danger fire posed, especially since most of the Crisfield business section had been recently burned down. The correspondent went on to say that Adams and Co. had bought a fire engine for its own use and had offered it to the town if the commissioners would but buy 200 feet of hose for it. The town, however, had taken no action. Scattered throughout the newspaper summaries are accounts of individual house fires in Laurel destroying or damaging individual homes, but there had been no large fires. In August 1886, this good fortune ran out when the six-year old Laurel Hotel, its outbuildings and stables, the Old Tavern, and the old Presbyterian church were destroyed by fire. Fortunately, small fire engines belonging to Marvil Packing and Adams and Co. were able to control the flames somewhat. Help was requested from Wilmington, but by the time companies from that city arrived, the fire was out. Even after this warning, no action was taken by the town to improve fire protection. So it was that the stage was set for the disastrous fire of June 24, 1899, which was unique to Laurel, but certainly not to the country as many towns and cities had such catastrophic fires in the late nineteenth century. The excellent

telling of the story of Laurel's fire by Dr. E. D. Bryan can be found in Hancock's history. A summary of the costs of the fire are impressive enough - eleven acres were burned in the heart of Laurel's business section, destroying sixty-two stores, twenty-eight houses and about thirty stables. For the most part, the only things standing in those eleven acres were chimneys. The exceptions were the only two brick buildings in the business section, the ice house and the Sussex Trust, Title, and Safe Deposit Company. Only the relatively rapid arrival by train of volunteer fire companies from Salisbury, Pocomoke, and Wilmington prevented the destruction from being much worse. Ironically, both the Laurel water pumping station and firehouse were under construction at the time of the fire. The cause of this disaster remains unknown though foul play was suspected at the time.

In less than a month, the people of Laurel had begun to bounce back. New buildings were under construction, this time of brick, stores had reopened, and even the post office had reopened on the front porch of the postmaster. But the June 24 calamity was not to be Laurel's last trial by fire. In the ensuing four months, there were eight additional fires, some minor and explained, some major and mysterious. The most serious of the latter occurred in October when the granary of Horace Moore in the Brooklyn section caught fire. Before the fire was over, the granary, the houses of Horace Moore and Thomas Oliphant, and eight other buildings had been destroyed. Two suspects were arrested after this fire, but their guilt was never proven. The October fire became another incident of the mystery, and it was to be the last fire in Laurel before the founding of the Laurel Fire Department. Perhaps by coincidence or perhaps by the replacement of so many burned wooden buildings by brick, there were to be no more major fires in Laurel for some years.

Laurel, of course, did not live in some kind of "splendid isolation," but was always affected by outside events, and experienced many of the trends that affected the entire nation. For example, during the Revolutionary War, the population was split between Whigs and Loyalists, as it was in all the colonies. Although Sussex County was solidly Federalist in the early 1800's, the area changed its support to the Democratic party during Jackson's presidency in the 1830's and continued to support the party until the end of the century. The Democratic Party, with its emphasis on the small farmer and small towns, must have seemed a better choice than the Republican Party, which tended to be more closely associated with big business. During the Civil War, Laurel sent its sons, fathers, and husbands to fight and die for both the Union and the Confederacy. Federal troops were sent to Laurel to supervise the election of 1862, and arrested several men who tried to vote for the Democratic candidates. Dr. William S. Hitch, a Laurel physician and a Democratic member of the state legislature, and several other Laurelites, were imprisoned for a period of time in Ft. Delaware on suspicion of treason. These divided loyalties caused hard feelings among the citizens of Laurel which took many years to heal, just as animosities did in the rest of the nation. But, by the time of the Spanish-American War some thirty years later, the young men of Laurel showed that they shared the strong nationalism that arose in the rest of the nation by enlisting in Company I of the Delaware National Guard. They were federalized in April of 1898. Five months later they returned, never having been sent overseas. Their only casualties were deaths from disease. One such casualty was Eugene Phillips, whose body was sent home from Camp Ebe B. Tunnell in Middletown. E. B. Riggin and Company, carriage makers and undertakers, charged somewhat over \$19 for his funeral; the state paid slightly over \$12 as its share.

National tragedies were also felt in Laurel. Throughout July, August, and September of 1881, local churches offered prayers for President Garfield's recovery from an assassination attempt, but to no effect, for he died from his wound in late September. On October 1, business in Laurel came to a standstill to mourn his passing. And, of course Laurel had its own homegrown heroes who came back to Laurel to be buried. Joshua Marvil, after only three months in office as governor of Delaware, died in April 1895. Over three thousand attended his funeral; a special excursion train was run from Wilmington to carry mourners to his funeral.

As the world, the nation, and Laurel approached the end of the nineteenth century, even with the absence of so many things that modern man considers essential, Laurel must have been a very exciting place to live. It would have been easy to be very optimistic about Laurel's continued growth and improvement. It was the end of the Century of Progress, the century in which more change had occurred than in any previous century in the history of the world. People living at the beginning of the nineteenth century lived a way of life that would have been recognizable to those who had lived two or even four hundred years earlier. Of course, there were many different things, but there were even more things that would have seemed familiar and comfortable to a person of 1402. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Industrial Age was in full vigor. The man of 1402 would not have recognized a train or a steam powered factory or an electric light bulb or the telephone or so many other things. How had the people of the nineteenth century dealt with so much change?

The answer to that question lies not in the convenience of machinery and sources of power, nor in the changes which had made life easier, but rather in the continuity of family, religion, and the rhythms of the passing years. People had the firm foundation of the past to rely on. Their faith

in this past and their belief that the future would be even better enabled them to deal with changes that were difficult to make. This faith and belief allowed them to still live in innocence.

The innocence and the vigor of Laurel that resulted from the growth of the late nineteenth century stood the people of Laurel in good stead through the mid-point of the twentieth century by allowing them to deal with two world wars and a major depression. And, for the first half of the century, there was still much continuity in their lives. The stories from the 1920's (supplied by my father, Samuel L. Phillips) could just as easily have occurred fifty years earlier. The story of herring fishing comes from my own boyhood memories and also could have occurred fifty years earlier. The large number of Laurelites carried away by the flu epidemic of 1918-1919 demonstrated that life was still hard and that man hadn't conquered disease even after a century of progress. Even this susceptibility contributed to the sense of continuity. What has happened in the last half of the twentieth century?

Somewhere along the way, the horrors of this century, economic changes beyond the control of any Laurelite, and too rapid change have resulted in a Laurel that would have made the people of late nineteenth century Laurel sad. They might well ask, "What happened to you and to our town?" And, we might well answer, "We search for we know not what." Perhaps what we and Laurel need are the ties to and faith in family, religion, and the past that gave our ancestors the sense of continuity which allowed them to live with such confidence and to eagerly anticipate their futures.

The discussion of Laurel's economic growth in the nineteenth century centered in many cases on building as a major indicator of that growth. The question arises of exactly what was it that Laurelites were building in the nineteenth century.

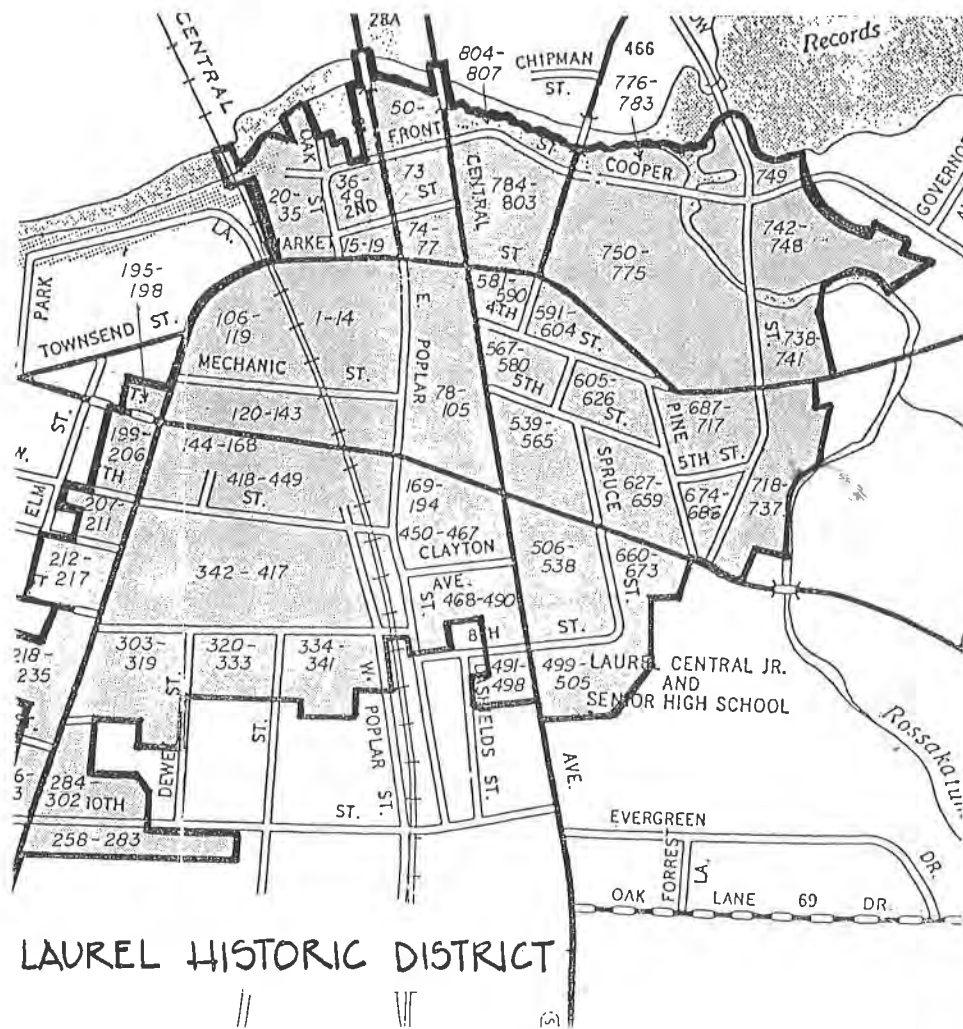
An examination of the architecture of Laurel provides one type of the continuity that we so badly seem to need.

LAUREL'S ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of a community is directly related to, and is generally reflective of, its prosperity. Economic growth and stability bring about building rehabilitation and renovation, as well as new construction. The Laurel Historic District, as a case study, offers conclusive evidence to support just that. Examine the key factors and time periods in our town's economic development, and one will detect concurrent trends in building.

Along with the need for building practical living quarters and new or expanded commercial ventures came an increased consciousness of social stature. Once the basic creature comforts were satisfied, one aspired to surround himself with a residence and furnishings equal to his position (or, at least, what he thought his position was) in society. What was newer, of course, was considered more fashionable. New architectural styles swept across the nation during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the well-to-do sought to demonstrate their wealth.

Building style is no different than any other fad or fashion. Generally associated with a finite period in time, it is easily identifiable and carries common traits. Just like the harvest gold and avocado green kitchen appliances of the 1960's, shark fin Cadillacs, and women's hair and fashion throughout the years, architecture carries a stamp with its own personality. Laurel's streetscapes, indeed, are evidence of this natural progression in building design over the course of nearly two



centuries. Not a static community frozen in time like Williamsburg, Laurel and its architectural style is still evolving.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of what we are today and how we got to this point, we need to examine our beginnings. From the earliest times, European settlement of the Chesapeake region moved up the bay from the Virginia and Maryland colonies with stations established along major tributaries, until it finally arrived at the upper reaches, or headwaters, of the many rivers and creeks which drain into the Chesapeake basin. Settlement in these outermost regions generally occurred closest to major waterborne trade and transportation routes.

For the most part, these newly-arrived folks came from the British Isles, and with them came the building traditions from their homeland. Although meager by today's standards, these first-period settlement structures were Anglican in scope, yet adapted to the building materials and labor resources readily available in the New World.

From 1711 until 1768, the area around present-day Laurel comprised part of a Nanticoke Indian reservation, as decreed by Maryland's General Assembly. As might be imagined, not much occurred here in the way of settlement until after the sale of these lands to the general public. Other than a few plantation scattered here and there about the countryside, it probably wasn't until close to the end of the eighteenth century that building on any scale developed in these parts. Consequently, it seems safe to state that no structure in the Laurel Historic District predates the turn of the nineteenth century.

With village lots and streets laid out in 1802, construction, no doubt, followed in close pursuit. These first abodes were obviously quite basic, with probably not much attention to frills. Essentially

like their precedents on the Lower Shore, they most likely followed a fairly common pattern of an eighteen by twenty feet one-room frame structure housing a large working fireplace, a rather steeply pitched roof, and a loft area reached either by ladder or winder staircase. Through various interpretations, this basic style remained in vogue throughout the greater part of the 1800's. Although probably dating from the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the eastern most section of the Laurel Historical Society's Studley House at 200 East Sixth Street (Figure 1) is a good example.

These early Tidewater buildings, first erected as simple shelters, took on change in response to owner's needs and fortunes. What began as a one-room plan with loft grew to feature additional, and often more pretentious, sections of varying size, height, and roof lines. The Studley House is again a good reference point, because that is precisely what occurred with it as well. To the earlier, lower section were added two others, each a bit grander in scale than the last, until the western most section grew to a full two stories in height.

Let's use the Studley house as a starting place for a tour of Laurel's Historic District, for its style can be seen everywhere. You have to look closely, however, for it has been transformed into a smorgasbord of varying shapes and sizes. Nonetheless, it's still the same basic theme, but with alternating variables. Instead of having the usual two or three window and/or door openings (also known as bays) across the main facade, or front, of a building, there may be five bays, that is, a central doorway flanked by two windows on each side. A second story with full or partial attic dormers might be included, as might also be a near lean-to or fully developed addition or service wing. To this general configuration of one or more sections are added any number of decorative details, each peculiar to the whims of prevalent architectural style. This is what is referred to as a Delaware

FIGURE 1: 200 EAST SIXTH STREET



FIGURE 2: 413 FOURTH STREET



vernacular house: in general, a three or five bay rectangular main block with gable roof, and then varying decorative details depending upon preference, prevailing taste, and fortune. Such structures were built in and around Laurel well into the twentieth century. Check out 500 Fourth Street, 503 South Central Avenue, and 413 Fourth Street (Figure 2) to see an example of the Delaware vernacular. Earlier examples will have square attic windows, but later ones will most regularly feature those of horizontal design.

With the emergence of our nation as a new republic, Americans soon embraced a different way of thinking about their homes and lifestyles. Laurelites were no different. With profits reaped from forest products from the nearby Cypress Swamp, shipping, and milling interests, local building took on a different, albeit simple, bent. This new building tradition would be called the Federal style. Its popularity was generally in the years between 1790 and 1820. Keep in mind, however, that here in rural America we were oftentimes slow to adopt newer styles than did those living in urban areas, and were slower to give them up, once they had fallen from fashion. Thus, dates for any style period are only indicators.

A surprisingly large number of homes in the Laurel Historic District date from the Federal period, the first real spurt of economic growth in the region. These structures are scattered throughout town, but can primarily be found in the area south of Broad Creek west of Central Avenue (the site of Laurel's earliest lots and thoroughfares) and in the neighborhood of Fifth and Pine Streets. Why is this? Because these sections of town were left unscathed by the Great Fire of 1899.

Local Federal period homes can be distinguished by several characteristics: beaded clapboard siding, brick piers (as compared to solid foundations), exterior end chimneys, multi-paned windows, and square attic windows on the gable ends. They may be embellished with door transoms, louvered shutters, thin beaded corner boards, and rather light molding or other decorative detail. Prominent examples are located at 321 Poplar Street (Figure 3), 404 East Fourth Street, 104 Front Street, and 502 Spruce Street.

A return to the ancient Greeks classicism brought about a new wave of architectural development from the 1820's until roughly 1875. Called Greek revival, this new style found local reception generally limited to decorative motifs rather than fully-developed temple-fronted mansions. Common here are: door sidelights; pilaster corner boards; gable end returns; columned porticos; larger but yet multi-paned windows; pediment-shaped window heads; and generally taller first floor windows (Figure 4). The porticos on 501 Pine Street, 103 Front Street, and on 104 Front Street are of note here.

The latter structure, known locally as the Annie Bacon House (Figure 5), is an excellent example of the many modifications that houses often undergo. This building sits on one of Laurel's earliest lots and, most probably, is the first and only ever to sit on this site. One of fewer than a dozen residences in town still possessing its original beaded clapboard, it was built in the early nineteenth century, embellished later with a Greek Revival portico, updated during the late nineteenth century with a full second story with Queen Anne detailing in the eastern most section, and finally had a side porch extended across the east side at some time during the twentieth century. Few, if any, edifices survive in their original unaltered state. To survive the tests of time, they demand updates, modernization, and change. Such structures

FIGURE 3: 321 POPLAR STREET



FIGURE 4: GREEK REVIVAL PORTICO



should not be regarded as mongrels or anything less than purebreds; they are simply reflective of where they've been, and what they have seen. Such examples are illustrative of how one town has adapted national building trends to local use - sort of like Greek Revival with a Laurel twist.

But this is the real world and an everyday working community. To piece together the architectural jigsaw puzzle of an old house can be quite a challenge. This process requires an inquisitive mind and, all too often, a heightened imagination. Buildings have been moved from one site to another, reoriented in another direction, and renovated by adding new roof lines which hide their original faces. They've been remodeled and/or remuddled, have had porches added on and taken off, have lost or accumulated door and window openings, and yet still survive under a layer of vinyl siding. Particularly pleasant surprises are the properties located at 301-303 Front Street, 502 Spruce Street, 108 Fifth Street, and 500 South Central Avenue - all wonderful Federal period houses. As one National Trust for Historic Preservation consultant recently put it, Laurel has been gift-wrapped for future generations under these protective layers.

As we return to the past, we can focus on the coming of the railroad in 1859, an event which would forever change the face of downstate Delaware, and Laurel in particular. Transportation by rail opened up new markets for area products, providing for expanded economic opportunities for local entrepreneurs. What came along as a byproduct, though, was eventually more evident: the importation of new styles, ideas, and building materials from off the Peninsula. For really the first time, Laurel's gentry had access to the rest of the world, its customs, its traditions, its luxury goods, and its styles in fashion, art and architecture. Building style thus became less localized and regional in scope, and instead more generic. One could travel to upstate New York, for

FIGURE 5: 104 FRONT STREET



FIGURE 6: 205 WILLOW STREET



example, and see basically the same house being constructed as in Laurel.

The style next in favor was the Gothic Revival, popular across the country roughly in the years from 1830 to 1860. Laurel retains a charming example of this school in the Hitchens house (Figure 6) at 205 Willow Street. Other examples are located at 206 Fourth Street and at 108 West Sixth Street. Epitomizing the architectural romance of Sir Walter Scott's English novels, structures from this period have lancet windows, gingerbread barge boards, pointed arches, and board and batten finish.

The onset of the War Between the States resulted in few new construction starts in town. Local fortunes were lost. Money was scarce. For these reasons, we see few local structures of the pure Italianate style, the prevalent trend of the time. Seen mainly from the 1840's to the 1880's, Italianate homes were generally rectangular (almost square), with wide eaves usually supported by large paired decorative brackets, tall thin first floor windows, and a low-pitched roof topped by a cupola. The residences at 105 West Street, 302 Fourth Street (Figure 7), 408 Fourth Street, and the 1880's George B. Phillips house at 504 South Central Avenue exhibit some of these features.

In 1871, Joshua H. Marvil patented his improved fruit basket. With seventeen more patents in the ensuing eighteen years, he and his Marvil Package Company put Laurel on the map with annual production of over three million baskets. Baskets meant money, and money meant buildings. Lots of them. The Marvils, their executive hierarchy, and their factory workers all demanded housing. Thus began a building boom the likes of which Laurel had never seen.

In vogue during the 1880's and 1890's, Queen Anne Revival was the style in vogue. With towers and turrets, rounded porches, a variety of cross-

gabled roof lines, projecting attic gables supported by brackets, pseudo-Paladin windows, flared eaves, and jigsawn rafter ends, they represented the new wealth of Laurel. Such houses abound today, and make up in sheer numbers our largest architectural inheritance. The 1888 house at 200 West Sixth Street, the Orlando Wooten house at 106 West Sixth Street, the Charles Hastings house at 507 South Central Avenue, the 1885 Dr. Joshua Ellegood house (Figure 8) at 403 South Central Avenue, the Governor Joshua Marvil house at 606 West Street, and the Daniel Fooks house at 404 South Central Avenue are all noteworthy examples. Each is a mansion in its own right, reflecting the varying tastes and wealth of its occupant.

The Queen Anne style wasn't limited to just the homes of the well-to-do, but was also found in homes built for the rising middle-class. Examples may be found at 204 West Sixth Street (Figure 9), 113 Clayton Avenue, and 508 Pine Street. Factory workers' houses which also copied the Queen Anne Revival style may be found at 242 Tenth Street and 230 West Seventh Street.

The turn of the twentieth century and continued agricultural prosperity brought the Colonial Revival style, which flourished up until about 1920, but which is actually still alive and well here in the 1990's. This movement was signaled by a return to an updated, and often romanticized, version of what one might have thought existed in Colonial America. The grand residence (Figure 10) built by Mrs. William W. Dashiell at 509 South Central Avenue is perhaps the best example. Also noteworthy is the Harry K. Fooks house at 807 West Street - a wedding cake of Colonial Revival taste, replete with a grand double-decker portico supported by Scamozzi columns.

At approximately the same time, Laurel was experiencing the construction of a good number of "four square" houses, mostly with Colonial Revival

FIGURE 7: 302 FOURTH STREET



FIGURE 8: 403 SOUTH CENTRAL AVENUE



detail. These structures line the southern end of the town's main thoroughfare, such as at 804 South Central Avenue, and may also be found on West Street. A particularly fine example is at 105 West Sixth Street (Figure 11).

World War I and, ten years later, the Great Depression, brought an abrupt halt to the local construction of "grand" houses. The bungalow style, which emerged sometime before the 1940's, was in part a response to difficult economic conditions. The house at 906 West Street (Figure 12), the George Otwell house at 402 East Fourth Street, and the residence at 406A East Fourth Street immediately come to mind. Porch piers, shed dormers, wood shingle siding, tapered porch posts, and gables roofs facing the street are all common traits.

Every now and then along the way, bits and pieces of other national building trends surfaced locally. Among these can be counted examples of Tudor Revival at 702 West Street, Spanish Colonial Revival in the Globe Building on Market Street, Prairie School at 900 West Street, and Dutch Colonial at 800 South Central Avenue. Mellon Bank, situated on the southeastern corner of Market Street and Delaware Avenue represents the Neo-Classical style. The Second Empire style, popular from 1860 to 1890, demolished Barnett house on Second Street. Elegant parquet floors found in some Laurel houses were shipped by rail from John Wanamaker in Philadelphia. Some people claim a house still standing on West Street came from the Sears-Roebuck catalog.

Commercial structures in Laurel parallel the diversity of residential buildings. Generally more utilitarian in design, they still contribute to what makes Laurel unique. Of notable mention are the storefront at 115 East Market Street, built of brick after the 1899 fire which destroyed most of the commercial district; the early twentieth century rusticated concrete block original town power plant

FIGURE 9: 204 WEST SIXTH STREET



FIGURE 10: 509 SOUTH CENTRAL AVENUE



between Delaware and Central Avenues along the south side of Broad Creek; the early twentieth century Rigbie Hotel on North Central Avenue, the pre-1918 Pennsylvania Railroad Station north of Mechanic Street, and a handful of frame structures originally built as canneries, fruit evaporating plants, warehouses, and garment factories. Of singular distinction is the frame structure hugging the Broad Creek shoreline at the Poplar Street Bridge. Built in the first half of the nineteenth century, it is, no doubt, Laurel's earliest surviving commercial structure and was originally built used in maritime commerce. Also notable are outbuildings, such as the privy at 408 East Fourth Street and several sweet potato and carriage houses.

Very prominent in our streetscape are three churches: the 1850 Gothic Revival St. Philip's Episcopal Church at 600 South Central Avenue; its neighbor to the north, Christ Methodist Church, built in the Romanesque Revival style; and the 1911 Centenary United Methodist Church, on the southwestern corner of Market and Poplar Streets. All three have lovely stained glass windows, but those at the latter are especially notable. All these windows are gifts of the same Laurel elite who worked, lived, and built here.

These folks lived fairly ordinary lives, for the most part. Little did they realize, though, how enduring their mark would be on Laurel's future. What they left behind is a legacy - a treasure trove of architectural design, but seasoned the way only Laurel could do it. A second-story sleeping porch here, a detached summer kitchen there, or maybe one of those wrought-iron nineteenth century fences - all tell the story of our triumphs and failures, our need to conform, our aspirations and hopes for the future, and our love and appreciation for order and beauty.

Examples of the most prominent vestige of this proud past are all over town - on bracket trim of porches both grand and not so grand, and on residences of varying age and period. Possibly having originated from the Samuel Bacon and Sons lumber mills along Broad Creek, the Laurel fleur-de-lis symbolizes the never-dying hope that Laurel will one day again blossom.

FIGURE 11: 105 WEST SIXTH STREET



FIGURE 12: 906 WEST STREET



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