

Marie's

THE DESERTED VILLAGE



974.749

Hawley

The Deserted Village* and the Blue Brook Valley

Between the first and second mountains, which constitute a part of the Watchung Range along the east branch of Green Brook, called Blue Brook, lies the Deserted Village. There can be little doubt that in this protected valley between the two mountains, was located, in early times, an Indian village. Throughout the narrow valley have been found numerous implements used by the Red Man, and on the neighboring hillsides still others have been turned up by the farmer's plough. The Indians came regularly from some distance to this region for protection during the winter period. This seems to be an established tradition preserved by descendants of old settlers both on Staten Island and near Plainfield: that the Indians, even at a comparatively late date, lived in the out-buildings of the whites, when they left their villages on Staten Island and those along the Raritan Bay in the autumn, to winter in the sheltered valley at the foot of the Watchung Mountains. It is altogether probable and quite possible that Warinanco and Mattano, who sold this land to the white men in 1664, spent their winters in this valley. The Indians of this region named the Watchung Range "Wach Unks," which in English means High Hills.

Early settlers found trails used by the native Red Men which in part at least were widened and developed into roads. The fact has been well established that the Old New Providence Road and the Cataract Hollow Road were once Indian trails that led to this valley. Should further evidence of the presence of the Red Man in this region be necessary, there are the two famous trails, whose names have been preserved and their general location established, viz., Mo-no-pe-nouk and Wa-ha-kick.

*Variously known as "Feltville," "The Deserted Village," and "Glenside Park," in New Providence Township, now (1964) in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey and included in the Watchung Reservation, Union County Park System.

The Deserted Village and The Blue Brook Valley

Prepared and Edited by

JAMES B. HAWLEY

Chairman, Trailside Museum Association
Program Committee

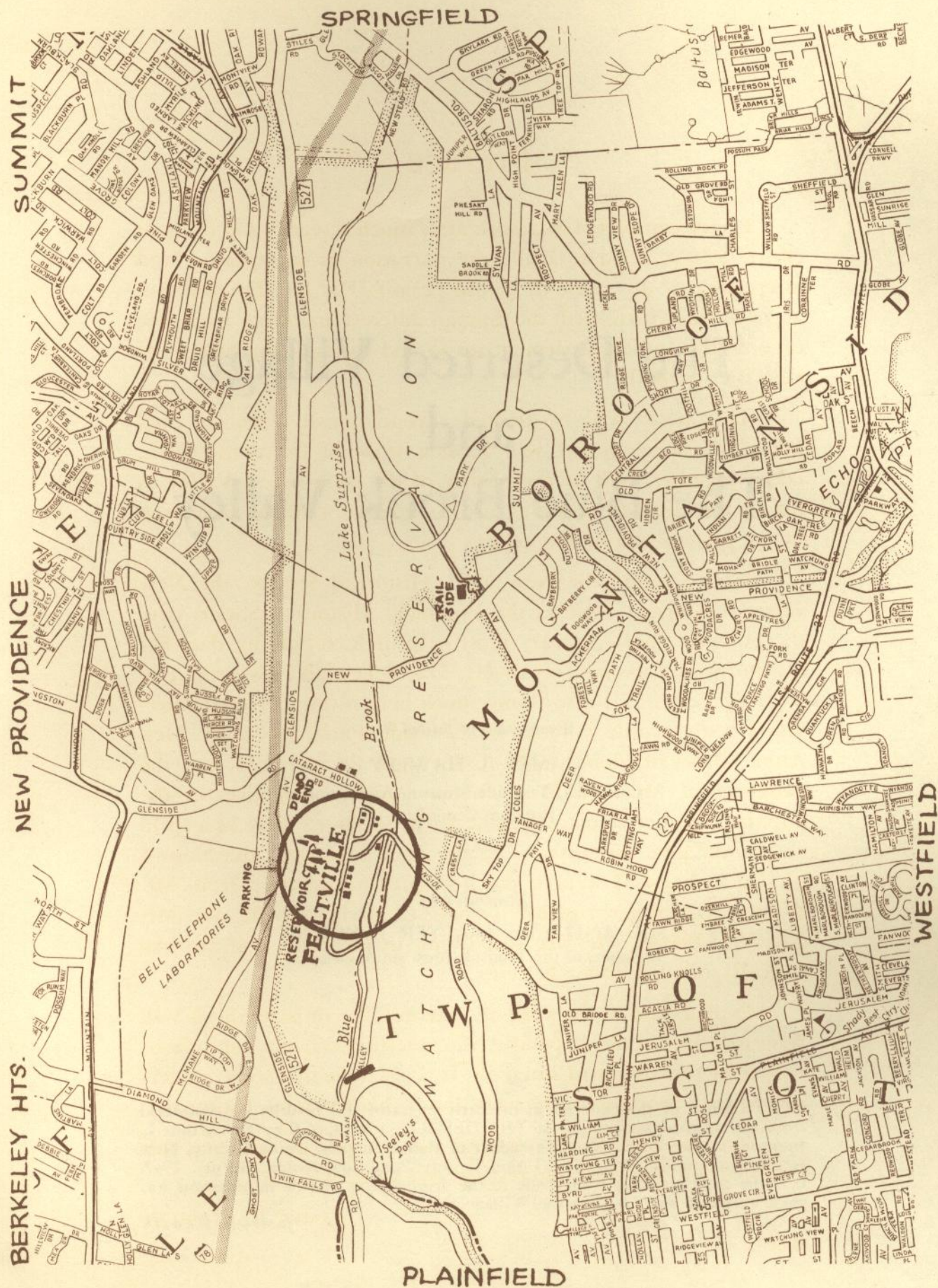
Illustrated by

MR. AND MRS. WALTER J. YOUNG

Members of the Trailside Museum Association

NOTE: Much of the material in the early pages of this booklet was extracted from the original publication of THE DESERTED VILLAGE by Dr. Arthur L. Johnson, former County Superintendent of Public Schools, Union County, New Jersey, and published by The Union County Park Commission in July, 1947. In some areas revisions were made to the original text as new information was made available on "The Deserted Village."

JAMES B. HAWLEY



HOW TO FIND THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Preface

I have completed this book after much research and diligent effort. I have tried to make the narration as informative and interesting as my research would permit. The late Dr. Johnson as co-author furnished the human interest material from the time of the Indian settlement up to and through the history of Feltville to 1860.

This book will be treated chronologically; that is each period of development will have a story of its own, which, taken together, will be the history of the Blue Brook Valley as far as the life and economy are concerned, with the exception of the eastern end of the valley.

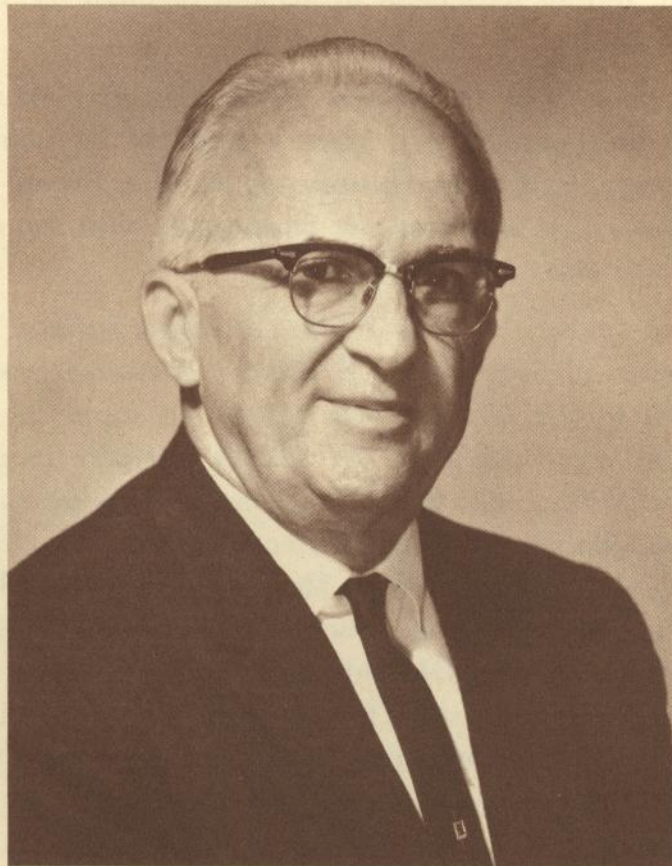
I have found the New York Historical Society, the New Jersey Historical Society, the Plainfield Historical Society and the Summit Public Library most helpful in supplying data for my purpose, especially as to Mr. David Felt and his project in creating Feltville. I also found much help in my personal interviews with people who knew Glenside Park, especially Mrs. Anna Walsh of Mohawk, N. J. She, now 84 years old, was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Molloy, managers of the popular summer resort, Glenside Park. She lived there as a child and could give me answers to the many pertinent questions I needed to know. I secured much helpful information from Mr. Walter K. Wipperman, Mr. George C. Barberich, Jr., and Mr. John L. Osborn, who are still living in Glenside, and are historically minded about Feltville.

Explanation of the symbols: the number in parenthesis will refer to a note in the Appendix. The question mark in parenthesis will refer to a doubtful situation. It is my hope that some readers can furnish more accurate facts about this for some future use.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Young and I hope you will find this *Deserted Village* book interesting and worthwhile.

JAMES B. HAWLEY

Spring 1964

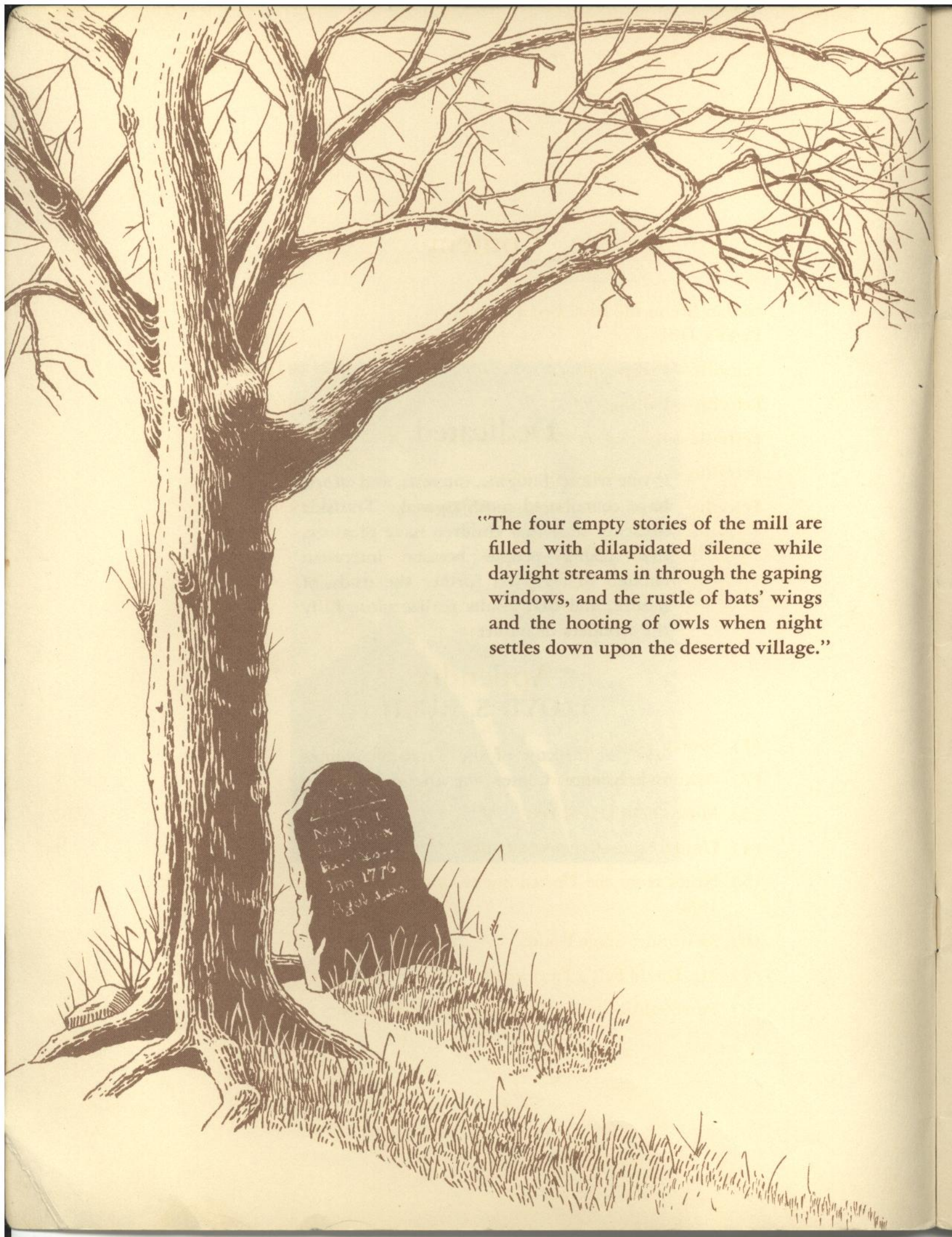


Dedicated

to one whose thoughts, interests, and efforts have contributed much to make Trailside Museum such that children have pleasure, that young people become interested enough to carry on further the study of nature, and that adults realize more fully the wonders of nature:

LLOYD S. RUCH

assistant director of the Trailside Nature and Science Center for the past fifteen years.



"The four empty stories of the mill are filled with dilapidated silence while daylight streams in through the gaping windows, and the rustle of bats' wings and the hooting of owls when night settles down upon the deserted village."



1850 map of the first settlers of the Passaic Valley. Note interesting family names and landmarks. It is reported that the water in this area made especially good paper. See four paper mills.

The level spot high above the brook where the village stands was the site of native habitations, and in those distant days before the white man came, the hunter brought his deer to the wickiup. There the Indian women pursued their domestic occupations, while little children played before their doors or with bow and arrow wandered along the brook in search of small game to add to the family larder.

The natural location, with numerous springs and with beaver dams across the brook, flooding a large area of the valley, provided an abundance of fish and a natural retreat for wild fowl. The deer came frequently to the stream for drink and to browse upon the succulent green plants and young undergrowth found on the banks of Blue Brook. Further evidence that the Indian occupied this area before the white man is again apparent, for the first settlers discovered a sulphur spring, which was known at the time as the Indian Spring—the all-healing spring. Later when an analysis was made, it was found to contain magnesia and iron and thereafter was called the Magnesium Sulphur Spring.

There was a small stream varying in depth, called Salt Brook, presumably an outlet of a salt spring located somewhere on the mountain. This brook was frequented by the deer and other wild animals in search of salt. Tradition states that the first settlers in this region secured their salt from this stream by the evaporation process. There is another tradition that the Revolutionary soldiers encamped on the plains along Green Brook during the winter of 1779-80 obtained their salt from this source. An early map of this region, irretrievably lost, gave all the streams and springs Indian names, but whatever these were or their significance are now forgotten.

Peter's Hill 1736-1845

Peter Willcox, who so far as is now known, was the first settler, received a grant of this land from the Elizabethtown Associates. His purchase consisted of four hundred and twenty-four acres of land, "lying along the east branch of Green Brook, called Blue Brook." It is recorded that he took possession of his grant in the year 1736. Establishing themselves at the same time were John and Phoebe Badgley, who probably occupied a holding east of Peter Willcox, including a part of what is now known as Lake Surprise.

Peter Willcox and the Badgleys are believed to have come from Long Island, although from another source of information, Peter Willcox is said to have emigrated direct from England. These two families were soon followed by other settlers, who came direct from England, Wales and Scotland, although the larger number came from Long Island and were descendants of early colonists of New England. While the names of the other early residents of this region are known, the two families previously mentioned are the only ones immediately connected with the Deserted Village.

It might be well, at this point in the narrative, to insert parenthetically that after Peter Willcox had established himself on this grant, this region was known thereafter as "Peter's Hill."

Peter Willcox, being an enterprising man, early conceived the idea of building a grist and lumber mill to serve the settlers who were now taking up land in constantly increasing numbers. At the foot of the bluff upon which his house was located was a beaver dam, which appeared to him fruitful with possibilities. Utilizing the rocky boulders on the sides of the hills and the logs from his clearings, he constructed a dam across the brook on the site of the old beaver dam. Below the dam on a natural level space of ground he built this mill fed by a mill race, which ran from the breast of the dam along the face of the bluff to the mill. Here he installed his machinery probably brought from Elizabethtown by ox carts. That the venture was successful is evidenced by the fact that roads were soon built which were called mill roads.

The undertaking prospered and continued in operation during and after the period of settlement. During the Revolution, the mill was converted into a powder plant for the manufacture of coarse powder to be used by the artillery and again it was utilized for the same purpose during the War of 1812. (There is an interesting tradition, still repeated by the descendants of the early settlers, that the British possessed knowledge of the existence of a powder factory in this region, and, that the attempt of the British army to penetrate the interior, which resulted in the Battle of Springfield, was in reality for the purpose of destroying this mill. This, however, *may have no foundation in fact* but the persistent repetition of the story from various sources may possess an element of truth.) That the mill continued to operate and to provide the settlers with their needs is beyond the region of doubt, for apparently it was still in operation at the time of its purchase by Mr. David Felt in 1845.

Like many rural sections similar in character, this agricultural community, Peter's Hill, followed in the even tenor of its way. The early settlers fulfilled their simple mission and passed from the scene giving place to a new generation following in the footsteps of their ancestors. The gradual extinction of families led to the injection of new elements until today (1964) the region is largely populated by various families, whose ancestral roots were established in various and somewhat distant sections of our country. This has resulted in a change in community character, but the Deserted Village still remains as a symbol of a past never to return.

So from this point on an effort will be made to reconstruct Feltville, the Deserted Village, making use of the new source material found in:

- (a) the United States censuses of 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880
- (b) the New York Historical Society's documents
- (c) old available maps and photographs
- (d) the New York City's business Directories — 1840-1873
- (e) the establishment of Feltville Post Office found in John Hayward's *Gazeteer of the United States* 1853
- (f) the George Felt genealogy compiled by John E. Morris, 1893
- (g) old business journal kept by Samuel Badgley 1816 (pg. 6)
- (h) the brochure of Glenside Park.

Feltville 1845-1860

*A*t this time Mr. David Felt bought about 760 acres with all the water rights in this section of the Blue Brook Valley. He decided to settle here because it already had two mills available and he learned that the water was exceptionally good for making paper. Further he said, "It would be an ideal spot on which to found a village where the inhabitants would be removed from the temptations and sorrows of city life and would enjoy goodness, peace, and plenty."

Due to the natural isolation of the property, Mr. Felt was compelled, not only to import his skilled workmen, but also provide homes and necessary facilities for their general welfare. It then became obligatory to erect a village surrounding his industry with such provisions as were needed in a community so far removed from other settlements. (4)

In order to provide for all the requirements of his employees, he erected thirteen double houses, that is, twenty-six dwellings for his workmen, two dormitories—one for single women and one for single men—a manor house, a school house, a large building for a general store downstairs and a church upstairs, a building for storage, a barn, and blacksmith shop. In addition, he reconstructed the mills and installed such machinery as his business required. All of this construction, surprisingly enough, required less than two years for completion.

Samuel Badgley's
 Book of accounts kept by him, he being
 one of the overseers of the Highway for the
 year 1816 in Supervisor's township
 35

New Providence	1:51	1:51
1:51	1:51	1:51
57	57	57
3:37	3:37	3:37
4:54	4:54	4:54
1:51	1:51	1:51
3:04	3:04	3:04

John & Wilson Dr on the Road
 one dollar and fifty one cents
 \$ 1:51

1847	David & John Cr	2 00	48 20
23	Michael & John	2 00	
	Edward & John	1 00	
	James & John	1 50	
	Richard & John	1 00	
	Patience & John	1 00	
	Robert & John	1 00	
	Stephen & John	1 00	9 50
10	L B Whitney	1 00	
	James & John	1 00	
10	Master Reeves Cr	15	75
10	day 1 day	3 1/2	3 1/2
	James & John	15	50
	day 1/2 day	15	
	David & John	18 00	
	day 1/2 day	2 38	
	James & John	4 50	
	day 1/2 day	85 70	



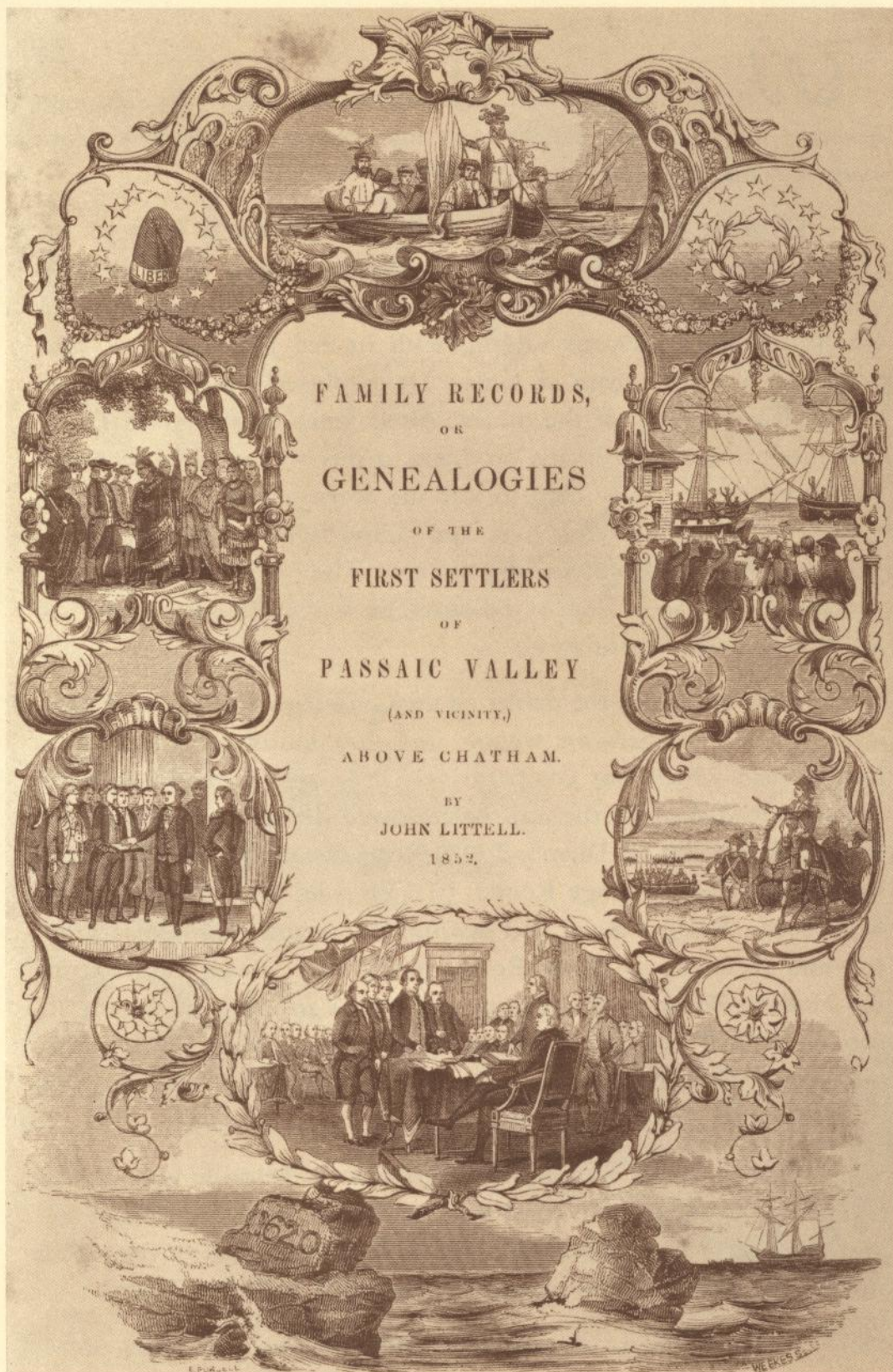
General Store and Church. Cupola was not there in Feltville time.

*A*s the people moved in, the Village grew and developed faster than other villages of those days. It soon had a church and a minister, a school and a teacher, a general store with its Post Office and all the immediate needs not only for the residents of Feltville but also for the farmers living in the vicinity. See illustration, page 16 and 17.



A good picture of the way the factory looked in 1850.

Some time in 1846 Mr. Felt was ready to start production. Soon he was able to produce a good quality paper, and paste board for binding books. From these he made pads, blank books, all forms of business journals, and letter paper with lines. One of the new improvements in his factory was the installation of a dye-house and equipment for making marbled paper for the endpapers of books. Since his factory had a complete outfit for the typographer's trade, he was able to print tracts and books. The only volume which remains as a testimony of his book business is Littell's "Genealogy." Also extant is a tract by Austin Craig, clergyman of Feltville. It has the title, "Ourselves, Our Principles, Our Present Controversy, and Our Immediate Duties." It was a sermon Mr. Craig delivered at the Annual Conference of Christian Ministers and Churches held in Camptown, now Irvington, N. J., May 18, 1850. Since this tract or sermon was numbered 5, it is possible that David Felt also did the first four and perhaps others thereafter.



STATIONERS' HALL PRESS, FELTVILLE, N. J.:
DAVID FELT AND CO., STATIONERS AND PRINTERS.

1851.

Page Nine

With the village built, and production under way, the next question was, How did Mr. Felt get his products to his New York store and his mail-order customers?

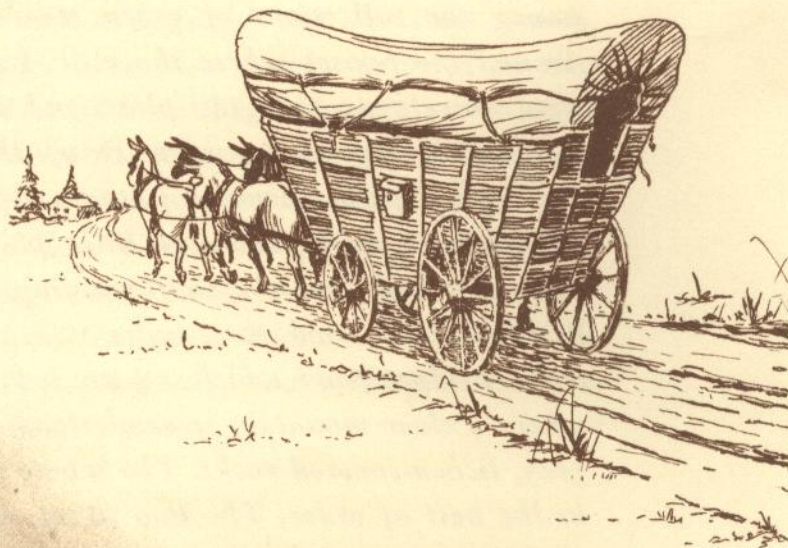
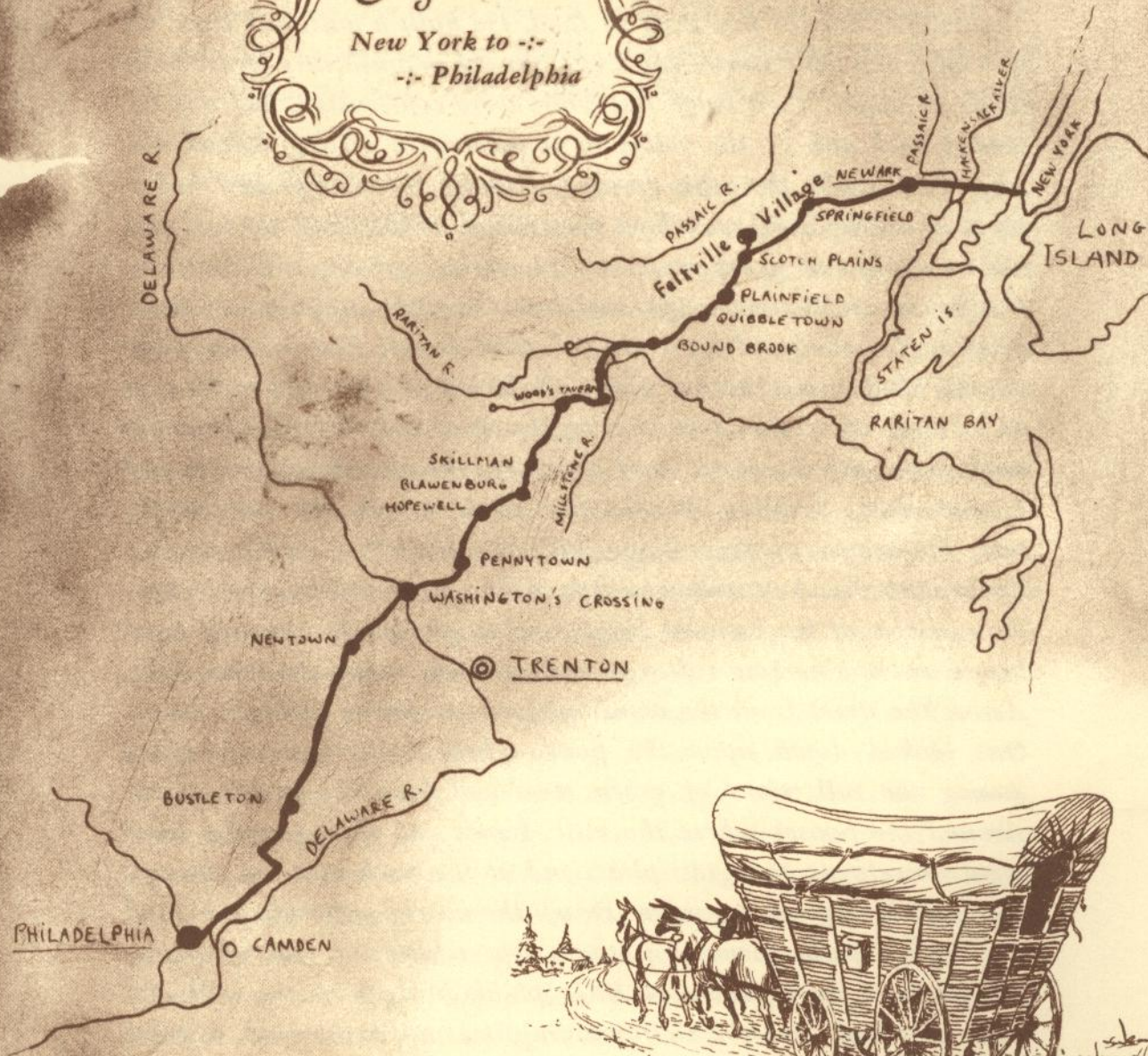
He must have had a large mail order business because the United States Postal Department established a post office in Feltville. Thus one means of shipment was by mail. The other means was to use his Conestoga wagon, with its red running gear, blue body and a double team of mules. He employed a man named Jerry Redden as driver of the mules. About once every month David Felt made a shipment of his products in this wagon, driven always by Jerry Redden. They used to tell the story about Jerry; that he wore a big high hat, frock coat, and riding boots which were spotless when he started out for the big city. The roads were so muddy and dusty that, according to the story, he was a different sight when he arrived at his destination.

What route did the driver of the Conestoga wagon take? With a heavy load, cumbersome wagon, and slow mules Jerry must have used a road which was comparatively level and in good condition. After he loaded up at the mill he followed the road along the Blue Brook, turned left on Diamond Hill Road toward Scotch Plains and into the Swift-Sure Stage Route. (6) Then he drove on to Springfield, Seven Bridges Road and Springfield Avenue through Irvington and Newark, to Plank Road, Jersey City, steam ferry across the Hudson River to Manhattan and thence to one of the many locations he had had: Wall Street, Pearl Street, West Street, Beekman Street or Maiden Lane. (Mr. Felt seemed to move his business quite often.)

The following interesting description of Feltville was written in 1882 by a writer who lived not far distant from the village and was intimately acquainted with its establishment and development during the period it was owned and operated by David Felt:

"Summit, N. J., August 19, 1882.—About four miles southwest of this place, in a narrow but fertile valley through which Blue Brook winds on its willow-shaded way to meet the Raritan

Swift Sure
Stage Route
New York to :-
:- Philadelphia

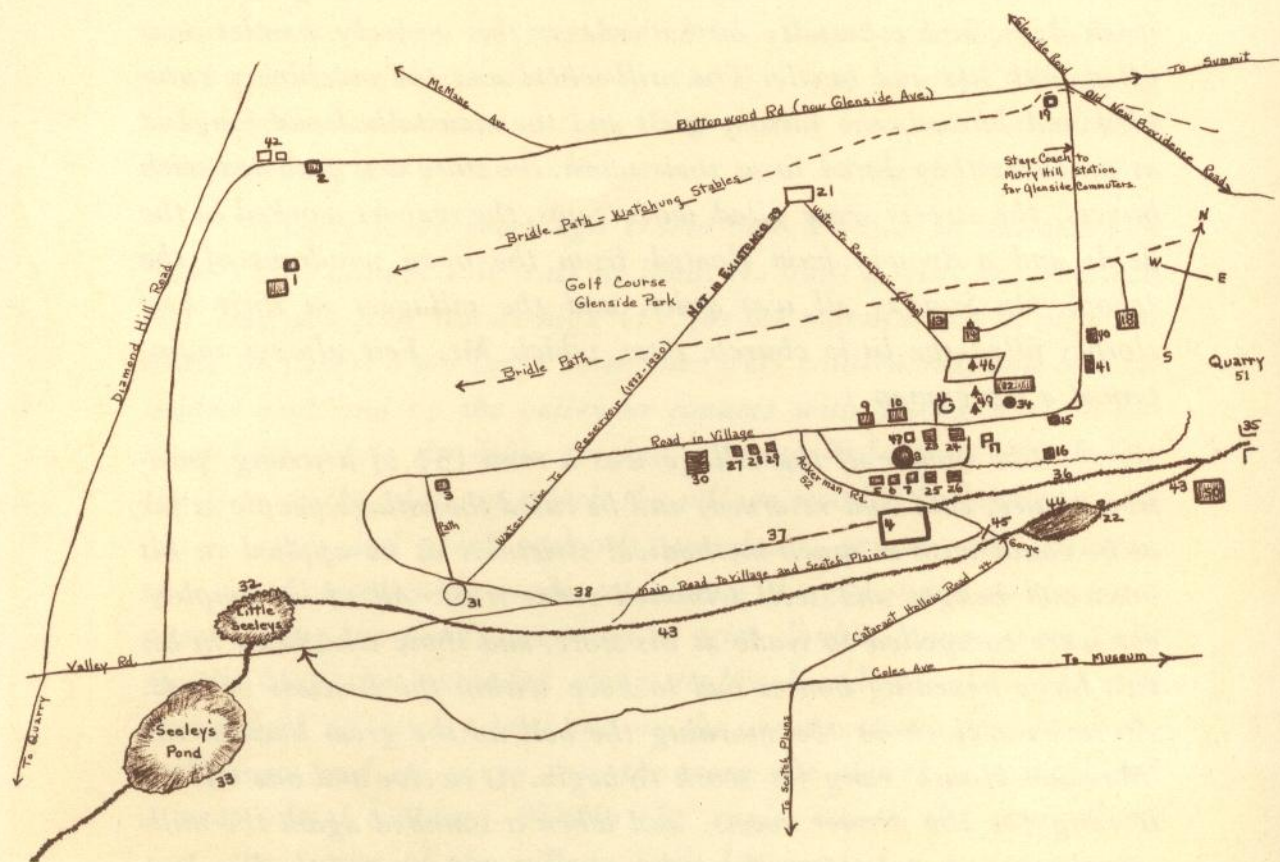


River, lies the deserted village of Feltville, in the midst of nearly eight hundred acres of meadow, orchard and woodland. Thirty years ago Feltville was a thriving factory and farming village of two hundred inhabitants as of 1852 with a busy mill, a bustling country store, one room school, and a well attended church.

"Nearly forty years ago David Felt, a dealer in stationery in New York, bought this tract of land. He built a mill, one hundred feet long and four stories high (?), for the manufacture of different kinds of paper. Two large reservoirs were constructed, and one extended back and up the valley to connect with a long narrow natural lake, while the other formed a pretty little pond just below the turn of the bluff on which the village stood. The land was laid out in apple and peach orchards, meadows, groves and pastures; two broad streets were made, which met at right angles on the point overhanging the pond; two rows of trim double houses were built on the bluff that extended along the brook and rose above the mill to a height of seventy feet; and on the street running back from the millstream and its gorge rose the store, the church, a cottage and a neat school building. Within the angle where the two streets met, the owner of the village built for himself a statley country house with broad verandas on two sides, commanding the picturesque views of the wooded heights across the gorge, the mill pond below and the narrow valley extending back among the green hills. Across the street from the mansion were two pretty summer houses. One looked down upon the pond, where light rowboats floated among the reflections of green trees and blue sky in the water. Around the houses where the mill hands and their families lived were flowerbeds and grass-plots, and at the back of some cottages was a little vegetable garden. Down the nearly perpendicular bluff ran zig-zag paths formed of stone steps which led from the tenements across the mill-race on little plank bridges to the mill. Between the mill and the swift-running stream was the road to Scotch Plains and Fanwood, three miles away. The brook was crossed by a rustic bridge, from which a path led up into a deep rocky glen where a clear mountain streamlet foamed in the cool depths among gray, lichen-covered rocks. The whole village was kept by its owner in the best of order. The two streets were as smooth and hard as if they were macadamized. They were shaded by long rows of elms

and maples, and bordered by smooth sidewalks of flagstone. On week days, and especially on Saturdays, this orderly hamlet was filled with life and bustle. The mill-wheel and the machinery rumbled and buzzed, the factory girls and the men talked and laughed as much as they dared to at their work, the store was crowded with buyers, the streets were filled with teams, the reapers worked in the fields and a drowsy hum floated from the open windows of the school. On Sunday all was quiet, and the villagers in their best clothes filled the little church, over which Mr. Felt always maintained a clergyman.

"The owner of the village was a man (3) of a strong, positive nature, cold and reserved, and he ruled the village people as far as he could with as much methodical strictness as he applied to his boxwood hedges and well trimmed cedar trees. All of his employees were compelled to trade at his store, and those who lived in his two large boarding houses had to keep within the strictest bounds. At seven o'clock in the morning the bell on the great barn at the 'Mansion House' rang for work to begin. At twelve and one o'clock it rang for the dinner recess, and when it sounded again the mill-wheel stopped and the mill hands came trooping out of the big door and climbed the winding paths beneath the trees on the bluff for their suppers. When night had fallen and nine o'clock came, the bell rang out again, and ill-fared the youth and maiden who were found strolling in the rocky glen or beside the rushing millstream, for a rigid rule was laid down that all in the village must be within doors when the last bell echoed through the darkened woods. How often must young couples have been rudely surprised by that unwelcome sound in the midst of some low whispered sentence, or when gazing silently from the rustic bridge at the pale evening star gleaming low in the west through pendant branches of elms? For many years the life of the village flowed on quietly and prosperously in the picturesque valley. There were births and marriages and deaths. There was work in the mill and on the farm, and there were entertainments at the Mansion House and holidays, when the village green was gay with merry-makers.



Done by James B. Hawley - 1964.

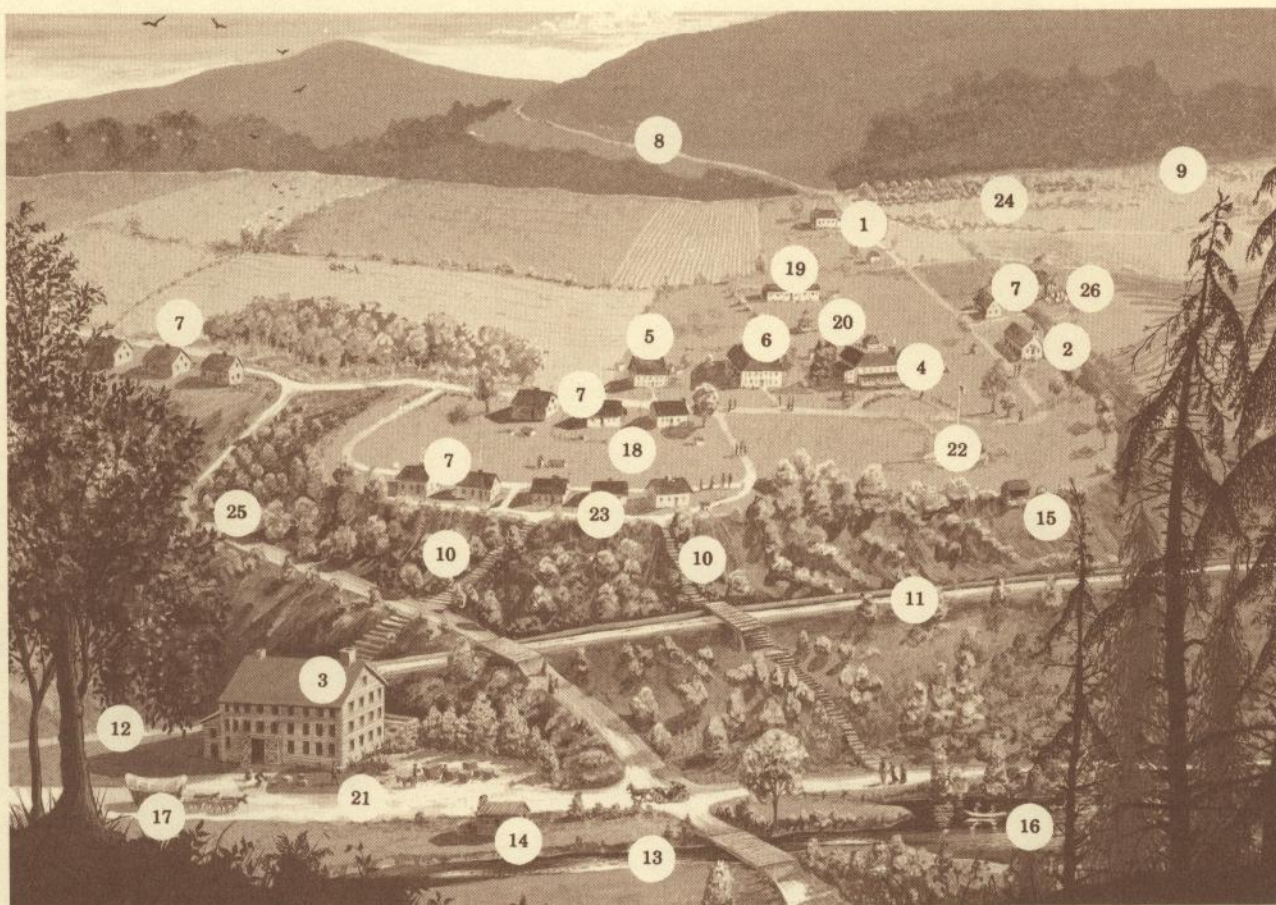
Map of Feltville, 1845-1964, done by James B. Hawley and Mrs. Robert Badgley.

The following items are no longer in existence.

- 1., 2. Old Drake Farm
3. Hermit House—Glenside era
4. Felt paper factory
- 5., 6., 7. Original cottages
8. Large well
- 9., 10. Dormitories for single men and women
11. Fire gong—put up 1930
12. David Felt Mansion
- 13., 14. Barn and storehouse
- 15., 16. Summer houses
17. Flagpole—Glenside era
18. Cemetery
19. Schoolhouse
20. Greenhouse—Glenside era
34. Well
35. Bulwark for original dam
39. Pipeline to reservoir
44. Pond—Feltville era
47. Original cottage
50. Second Feltville mill

Items in this column may still be seen today.

21. Reservoir—Glenside Park period
22. Electric water pump
- 23., 24., 25., 26., 27., 28., 29. Original Feltville cottages
30. Maskers—Glenside Park
31. Pumping station
32. New Pond, built during depression
33. Seeleys Pond
36. Mill race
37. Tail race
38. Valley Road for Feltville
40. Original cottage
41. Church and store for Feltville (now a double cottage)
42. Property of E. Grassman of Elizabeth, N. J.
43. Blue Brook
45. Bridge over Blue Brook
46. Tennis court—Glenside Park days
49. Original Hemlock row
51. Stone quarry
52. Road built by Ackerman—Glenside Park era



See illustration next page.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Schoolhouse | 15. Summerhouse |
| 2. General store and church | 16. Pond |
| 3. Book factory | 17. Conestoga wagon |
| 4. The mansion | 18. Community well |
| 5. Men's dormitory | 19. Animal barn |
| 6. Women's dormitory | 20. Storehouse with bell which rang out the time for entire village |
| 7. Mill hands cottages | 21. Main road to Scotch Plains |
| 8. New Providence Road | 22. Summerhouse |
| 9. Buttonwood Road | 23. Service road |
| 10. Steps to factory | 24. Fruit orchards |
| 11. Mill race | 25. Road put in later, in Glenside Park era |
| 12. Tail race | 26. Village cemetery |
| 13. Blue Brook | |
| 14. Blacksmith's shop | |





FELTVILLE
1845-1860

(see key on preceding page)

... "in a narrow but fertile valley ... in the midst of nearly eight hundred acres of meadow, orchard and woodland ... Feltville was a thriving factory and farming village of two hundred inhabitants ... with a busy mill, a bustling country store, one room school, and a well attended church."

So the life and economy of the village moved along in a successful manner until late in the 1850's, when Mr. Felt planned to retire and in August 1860 he completed the sale of the village to Mr. Amasa Foster. Then he returned to New York City and carried on the David Felt Stationery business at 112 Chambers Street.

This has been the story of Feltville—a most active and apparently “successful venture by Mr. David Felt, the owner of a business called ‘Stationers Hall Press,’ Feltville, N. J.” Dr. Johnson says that Mr. Charles Drake told him how his father accompanied David Felt to the railroad station (?) after he had severed all connections with Feltville and gave Mr. Drake this prophetic farewell, “Well, King David is dead, and the village will go to hell.”



The Old Mill converted into an animal barn. (1885)



General store (downstairs) and church (upstairs). Cupola was not there in Feltville time.

Feltville 1860-1882

David Felt sold all his Feltville property to Mr. Amasa Foster who sold it to Dr. and Mrs. Samuel P. Townsend in 1864 when they became owners until 1882. They struggled nobly to establish a successful industry. Since the value of the mill lay chiefly in its cheap water power, the Townsends first effort was to produce bottled sarsaparilla which they manufactured so profitably in New York City. Then they tried to grow and sell fruits; next they tried to cultivate tobacco and make cigars; and lastly they tried to use the factory as a turning mill. All these efforts failed and the Townsends became bankrupt, and Feltville was sold at auction for \$11,450. By 1882 the economy of Feltville was worthless. The residents had moved away and most of the cottages had fallen to decay, the factory, store house and other large buildings had become ruins. It was now showing signs of being a Deserted Village, and attracted many curious visitors for miles around.

*H*ere is another quotation from the same author describing the extent and character of the desertion.

"Then the village was sold and its orderly owners moved away. The mill was closed, the water fell unused over the dam, and one by one the operatives drifted away from the village, or found other employment in the vicinity. The mansion, the church and the store were closed and the school dwindled slowly to a ghost of its former self. The farm work was continued fitfully for a time, and then a large mortgage on the property was foreclosed. The place changed hands again and fell little by little into the melancholy state of ruin in which it is today. (1882) It requires a strong effort of the imagination to realize that the now silent and grass-grown streets, the ruined mill and the windowless houses were once filled with busy life. The flagstone sidewalks have disappeared entirely or are partly hidden by a thick sod of many years' growth. The double row of cottages above the ruined mill are still standing. Rugged clumps of thorny shrubs before them show where climbing roses grew and covered open doorways through which busy housewives were once to be seen and heard singing at their work. The mill-wheel has gone, and one lonely looking fly-wheel of wood attached to an iron rod is all that is left of the whirling machinery. The cold spring that bubbles up among the great boulders in the rocky glen across the brook is all that is left of the foaming mountain stream, and is called the Washington Spring. The store is standing with empty shelves and counters, but the wooden steps outside, where the male gossips of the village were wont to gather of summer evenings have vanished. The straightbacked seats still remain in the church, but the altar is bare and worm-eaten, and the font where many an infant was christened has gone. The school building stands beneath the trees where two roads meet and seems to gaze toward each direction in blank despair from its open windows, as if waiting in vain to see the old troops of children come loitering with books and luncheon pails in hand up the roads."

There is no more melancholy or suggestive spot in the whole village than where the cemetery is located. (across the gully in the rear of the church and general store) It was an area about fifty by fifty feet and enclosed by an iron picket fence with posts set in

cement. As late as 1915 the cemetery yard contained many brown stone head and foot markers. Over the years since then all the markers have disappeared except one head stone for John Willcox, son of Peter Willcox, the original founder of Peter's Hill. This stone has been stored away for safe keeping, since it has been stolen twice.



Cemetery marker of one of the sons of Peter Willcox, original settler.



GLENSIDE PARK is located on the southeast slope of the mountain, 385 feet above sea level, and three miles from Summit, N. J.

ADVANTAGES. Among the many advantages of this resort are its easy accessibility to New York, 24 miles away, and good train service on the D., L. & W. R. R. to Murray Hill station. Guests, by communicating with the proprietor of "Glenside," will be met by carriage on arrival of any train at Murray Hill and taken to "Glenside" for 50c. each. Weekly commutation rates to and from trains will be made reasonable.

GROUNDS. Glenside Park covers a tract of 125 acres, with roadways, walks and lawn kept in perfect condition and well lighted all night by electricity. The whole place is well sewered and supplied with pure water from mountain springs. The spacious grounds afford ample room for golf, tennis, croquet, baseball, &c. All games, both indoor and outdoor, that will add to the pleasure and amusement of guests will be encouraged.

Brochure printed for Glenside Park era.



Cottages on the lower road in the Glenside Park era.

Feltville 1882-1916 Known as Glenside Park

On August 9, 1882, Mr. Warren Ackerman (8) of Scotch Plains purchased the Deserted Village property for \$11,450. Shortly after the transfer of title to him, the long silence and lone desertion of the once famous spot were transformed into scenes of energy and bustling activity. An ideal summer retreat with all the comforts and conveniences of modern refinement was being constructed. Through the munificence and generosity of Mr. Ackerman, the roadways were macadamized and a new road was constructed down to the mill and up over the hill to meet the Cataract Hollow Road into Scotch Plains. A large number of cottages were restored, beautified, and furnished. What was Feltville in 1850 and the Deserted Village in 1875 became an attractive summer resort called Glenside Park. This transformation was done by Mr. Ackerman's managers, Mr. Frank Hasniger (8), and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Molloy. (8)

Glenside Echo.

VOL. I. No. 1.

GLENSIDE PARK, N. J. AUGUST, 1898.

PRICE, TEN CENTS.

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STAFF:

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OUR PAPER.

No community is complete without its paper; and as a person is known and judged by his friends, so the community is known by its paper. On that plea we push aside the curtain of formality and burst unceremoniously upon our dear friends with sincere hopes of patronage and a non literal criticism by them of our work.

We have no past; we are on the threshold of our career. We have nothing to recommend except our subject matter, everything to hope for; nothing to lose (save money), experience to gain, mistakes to correct and English to conquer.

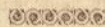
Our chief object is the uplifting of our patrons: to point out their faults, to teach them better things and instill good morals, to censure, to criticise, to applaud where applause is due, to ask questions and answer them—if they are not too difficult, to descend to trivialities, and to leap at a bound and pluck the highest branch from the tree of knowledge, to amuse and entertain, unwittingly, we fear. Comedy may usurp the realms of dignity and cause harsh laughter where dramatic effect alone was intended.

Suffice it to say: we are launched,

and remember a friend should bear a friend's infirmities. We have spared no expense for the collection of interesting and lasting news and the manufacture of opalescent fiction. Our editorial staff shall run a perpetual sky blockade for every nebulous sail and shooting star.

In the bureau of agriculture our highest proprietor, Mr. Malloy, holds sway. He knows more about vegetables than a vegetarian, while he is a perfect Armourer on dressed beef; but modestly pleads ignorance of beef in the middle. The bureau of sports claim the time and work of us all, and so those in that department may be able to obtain a vacation if the pressure of business is too hard. Anyone doing anything worthy of note in an athletic way may claim a column of our paper. We shall have a reporter constantly on the golf links to do everything from swearing for the ladies to being their caddie. Please don't tip him in the latter capacity, but if you fail to do so his account may be biassed. This is not blackmail but a warning. You will know this young man by the red coat he doffs. It was originally the shirt of our anarchistic friend, William Jennings B——, who handed it to him at the close of our late political campaign, seemingly on account of the danger it provoked. The tennis department is in charge of the most proficient man in the business. He is thoroughly acquainted with the game and knows he is; so what more can we do? He is unquestionably the best dressed man in the Park; all that see him on the court cannot help but compare him to the exquisite Beau Brummel. We deem it essential to have a policeman around, whether better employed, to

ESTABLISHED 1840.

**F. R. LITTELL,****Staple & Fancy Groceries.****SUMMIT. N. J.****JOHN H. RIDGWAY,****Caterer,**

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MURRAY HILL, - - N. J.**JOHN F. WAHL,****Horseshoer & Blacksmith.****NEW PROVIDENCE, N. J.****Jobbing of all kinds neatly done.****CRANE BROS.,****Dealers in General Merchandise,****Flour, Feed and Grain,****P. O. Box 33,****NEW PROVIDENCE.****Agent for the Hartford Fire Insurance Co.****THE UNION HOTEL,****New Providence, N. J.****Mrs. G. H. HARRISON, Proprietor.****Ample Accommodations for Travelers.**

THE CLIMATE. The air is dry, clear and entirely free from even a hint of malaria, while the temperature is such, that there are many days and evenings even in July and August when a fire is a necessity.

LAUNDRY. First class laundry in the Park. Rates reasonable.

COTTAGES. There are fifteen cottages, besides The Inn, in the park, containing from six to ten rooms each and completely furnished, excepting linen. Each cottage has from two to four fireplaces, with bath, toilet, running water and electric light.

OUR RATES. Cottages rent for the season from \$100 to \$250. Table board at The Inn \$9.00 per week; children under 14 years of age \$7.00; servants according to requirements. Transient rates from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per day. For meals served in the cottages a reasonable charge will be made.

We aim to meet the wishes of those who desire the accommodations that may be expected at a first-class resort, and have placed our rates at the lowest possible sum that our service will warrant. Guests at "Glenside" can estimate in advance the cost of their stay. We don't load your bill down with uncalled for extras. We give good service at fair rates.

TABLE. The table will receive the special personal attention of the proprietor, and will be supplied with fresh butter, eggs and milk direct from the adjoining farms, and vegetables from our own garden. Cuisine and service will be made as perfect, pleasant and home-like as possible.

MAILS. Two mails daily to and from Glenside Park.

STABLES. The stable affords ample accommodations for those who wish to keep horses and carriages or automobiles.

"Glenside" will be open from June 1st to November 1st.

For further particulars address

D. W. BOGERT, Prop.,

Murray Hill, N. J.

Glenside Tel. 70—R—Summit.

City address:

836 Jefferson Avenue,

City Tel. 1583—R—Richmond Hill.

Richmond Hill, L. I.



One of the cottages in the Glenside Park era.

What did Glenside Park have to offer the families coming from the cities during the summer season? It offered an Inn for dining and for social affairs like dancing, whist, and other indoor games; a stage coach service for the commuter to business; spacious areas for golf, tennis, croquet, baseball, riding, hiking, and fishing in Feltville Lake. When Labor Day came the families returned to their homes contented because of a summer in the country. Incidentally, Mr. Molloy gave each family a barrel of early apples for the fall months. So Glenside Park made Feltville a successful project for nearly twenty years.



Stables and garage at Glenside Park.



Cottages at Glenside Park.

This group of cozy villas nestling quietly among the well wooded mountains has a charming attractiveness of its own and was a popular retreat every year for a few selected families from New York, Newark, the Oranges, and other suburban communities.

Then in 1905 the Molloy's retired. They felt it would be advantageous to leave, foreseeing that the automobile would become the family car and would take the families farther away from home. Instead of the coachman they had the chauffeur. By 1916 Glenside Park had lost its appeal to summer guests and another Feltville project folded up.



Feltville School House. Little porch added in late 1880's.

Feltville 1916-1964 Known as Glenside Village

The present Glenside began with the sale of the Warren Ackerman Estate's Feltville property to private individuals between 1919-1927. Two of the cottages were purchased by Mr. L. A. R. Kufner and Mr. William T. McLaughlin of Scotch Plains. The remainder of the Deserted Village was bought by Mr. Edward J. Grassman of Elizabeth, New Jersey. Mr. Kufner and Mr. McLaughlin restored their cottages and immediately took residence. Mr. Grassmann, meanwhile, installed a caretaker and furnished one cottage as a retreat for transient guests. The first guest was an artist who stayed for sometime and busied himself by decorating the walls with life size murals in the style of the Mexican artist, Diego Rivera.

In time the Union County Park Commission bought all of Mr. Grassman's property. Early in the Depression Period, the Commission restored the cottages and rented them for small amounts to families who had lost their homes and properties. Soon all the cottages were occupied and a community spirit of good will was created. At one time the tennis court, a heritage of the Resort era, was restored and a lively tennis association flourished for several years. A monthly newspaper was published for a year under the leadership of Mrs. George Pfouts. In 1949 the Deserted Village Association was formed and promoted many civic projects. Annual clean-up weeks were held in the spring and summer. There was mutual help in some of the severe snow storms. During the war years of the 1940's a community vegetable garden was kept in the fields back of the site of the old mansion. Christmas decorations and maintenance of the grounds about the cottages were projects for competition and small prizes. There were week-end chats at the "Green Spot." Until recently the old fashioned iron fire gong and sledge hammer was used also for emergencies and informal assemblages. An outstanding contribution of this Association toward a good community spirit was the promotion in 1964 of a successful picnic for

the many residents who had lived in Glenside Village since 1932. The following is report of the picnic committee:

"A picnic to get together former residents of Glenside Village, with members of the present Deserted Village Association, was planned early in the present summer and held in the area near the barn on August 29, 1964, starting, at 2 p.m. and ending at dark. About 100 adults and children attended the picnic . . . there were about 42 young children present. They played in the barn, hiked the trails, played badminton, tennis etc. and seemed to enjoy the day very much, as did the adults, mostly talking over the earlier



The Old Mill with a shed attached.

days in the village. Because of the response of so many, we were obliged to ask all to bring their own lunches but we supplied various drinks, paper plates, etc., and watermelon as dessert. The weather was about perfect and conditions in general almost ideal . . . with much opportunity to get acquainted and re-acquainted." Mr. and Mrs. Laurie Chattin, Sr. of New Tripoli, Pa. came with a representation of 22. Reported by John L. Osborne, cottage No. 12.

This brings up to date the story of the life and economy of Feltville in the Blue Brook Valley between the first and second Watchung Mountains.

Fall 1964.

Appendix

Source Material (1)

(a) Contemporary of the period (b) Not contemporary (c) Deceased

1. Genealogy of First Settlers of Passaic Valley. John Littell, 1852 (a) (10)
2. U. S. Census for 1850, 1860, 1870 and 1880.
(a) Excellent for identification and occupations
3. Road Book by Samuel Badgley. 1816
(a) He was Overseer of Highways. David Felt's account began April 27, 1846 (3) (7) (10)
4. Maps:
(a) State Atlas of New Jersey. 1872 by F. W. Beer. Map of the surrounding area. 1845 by John Littrell. Another map of the area. 1850
5. Photographs of the mills and cottages. (b)
6. Gazetteer of the United States. 1853 by John Hayward
(a) For Post Office
7. Brochure of Glenside Park advertising the attractive summer resort from 1885 to 1915 (a)
8. The Felt Genealogy, a record of the descendants of George Felt of Casco Bay, Me. Compiled by John E. Morris, (Hartford, Conn.) 1893 (b)
9. A Deserted Village. By Elizabeth Shepard. In the Boston Evening Transcript, November 7 1888 (b)
10. The Deserted Village. By Mr. C. B. Leonard of the Plainfield Courier News. (b)
11. The Deserted Village. By Dr. Arthur Johnson (b)
12. Drake Spins Yarns of the Deserted Site. Courtesy of Mr. Walter K. Wipperman of Glenside (b)
13. Wills of: Peter Willcox, Peter Willcox, Jr., and others all found in the files of Union County Park Commission (a)
14. New York City Business Directories from 1842-1857 and 1873 (a)
15. Newark Daily Advertiser. For stage and Ferry Information 7/9/1859 (a)
16. Valuable first hand notes on Glenside Park by Mrs. Anna Walsh who lived there as a girl and returned in 1914 in an official capacity. (a)

Acknowledgments (2)

In my efforts to secure historical material, pictures, books, maps, advice, anecdotes, proof-reading, editing and encouragement I am grateful to each of the following for their contribution which has been so willingly and generously given:

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Mr. Gale M. Hoffman

Mrs. Arthur L. Johnson
Mr. Howard E. Johnston
Mr. Jacques E. LeGrand
Miss Mabel B. Littell
Miss Frances Lord
Mrs. Eleanor Lowell
Mrs. Roy T. Jenkins

Mr. Wesley L. Oaks
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Mr. Walter H. Van Hoesen
Mr. Wordsworth D. Williams
Mr. Walter K. Wipperman

This story and the artistry of design and arrangement by my associates, Mr. and Mrs. Walter J. Young, have made possible this book titled, "The Deserted Village."

David Felt (3)

David Felt was born near Boston, Massachusetts, in March 1793. He had a stationery business in Boston. In 1833 he moved to New York City and continued this enterprise, becoming widely known as a successful manufacturer and stationery dealer until his death in September 1873, aged 80, at his home in 323 West 34th Street. He was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, New York, N. Y.

David Felt was a large man with gray hair and a flowing white beard. He was a perfect type of country gentleman, demanding and securing the respect not only of the people of the village but also of the surrounding area. In fact he was affectionately known as King David. He was a deeply religious man and required all the villagers to attend church on Sunday. As one may imagine, this was a hard task for some. He lived luxuriously for the time and surrounded himself with servants and all the appurtenances wealth could provide. While nothing is known of his early educational advantages, he was apparently a great reader and a well-informed man, for his manor house contained a large library which in all probability was not used merely for ornamental purposes. With such a man at its head, Feltville's success was a certainty.

Not only did Mr. Felt gain income from manufacturing, but it is interesting to note how he helped reduce the amount of his annual tax bill. He put his men and oxen (sometimes mules) to repair and keep up the roads in the vicinity. He would submit his bill to the overseer of highways in New Providence Township who in turn would give him credit on his tax statement. The authority for this is found in an old road book dating from 1816-1848. This interesting and revealing book gives the names of the early residents and lists the wages for men and boys. See p. 6 for pictures of a sample page and the title page.

The United States Census of New Providence Township (4)

A. The population according to the census of 1850 was 174

B. Population according to place of origin:

Ireland	49	Massachusetts	5
England	41	New Jersey	44
Germany	9	New York	24
Elsewhere	2		

C. Males 77 Females 97

D. School enrollment in the village:

Attendance 16 — 4 boys 12 girls

Distribution as to age:

boys:	age	number	girls:	age	Number	age	number
	5	1		4	1	11	3
	9	1		6	2	12	2
	10	2		8	3	15	1

The total enrolled at the school was larger, since the boys and girls from the vicinity also attended.

E. Occupations listed were: superintendent, bookbinder, printer, paper ruler, paper colorer, card maker, blacksmith, porter, tailor, shoemaker, overseer, farmer, cook, matron and laborer.

Census Notes on Feltville 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880 by Mr. E. A. Baldwin (5)

It was fortunate for Feltville research that its 1850 census enumeration was taken by John Littell, who authored the important genealogical book that was published there in 1852.

The fact that Littell was engaged on this genealogical work must have prompted him to take the job of census-enumerator in 1850, because it gave him an official entree into every New Providence family, and an unusual opportunity to check on the background and records. Further, as a family historian he was ideally fitted for this work; in the case of Feltville, in particular, he conscientiously footnoted the information that all the dwellings numbered 176 to 202, inclusive, comprised the village proper.

The 1860 New Providence census was enumerated as of August 1, 1860 by George J. Trussler. (Littell had died in the interim.) It listed very few factory employees. This fits in with the fact that Felt had to curtail the business activities, or else that operations had been reduced in anticipation of the sale of Feltville. We know that on August 17, 1860, Felt sold the village with its 760 acres to Amasa Foster of Brooklyn, N. Y.

In 1860 census David Felt is listed as 67 years old and his birthplace as Massachusetts. His wife Sarah is not recorded, but a Caroline Felt, aged 65 years, is listed with him. The census enumerator did not otherwise identify her; therefore she was either David Felt's second wife or a sister or other relative brought in as housekeeper. Felt's original superintendent was no longer there; his place had been taken by a George H. (or W.) Felt, age 23 years and a native of Massachusetts who is listed as "Paper Factory Superintendent." George's wife, Mary A. Felt, aged 23 years, was born in New York.

As would be expected, David Felt's name is absent from the 1870 census report. However, we know from the Summit-New Providence map in the 1872 Atlas of New Jersey that the "W. H. Trafton Turning Mill" was now operating there (Feltville). In the 1870 census this person is identified as William H. Trafton, 51 years old, birthplace Maine, and occupation "Publisher." His wife, Catherine E. Trafton, 46 years old, was born in New York. Two young men living in the Trafton household are listed "Work in Paper Factory." The numerous paper factory employees of the David Felt enterprise are conspicuous by their absence.

It cannot be ascertained from the 1870 report, which, if any, of the Feltville dwellings were occupied, and whether or not Trafton himself lived there. In this connection, it is significant to note that the 1872 map listing the "W. H. Trafton Turning Mill" shows the residence of W. H. Trafton on Glenside Avenue, about one half mile towards Summit. William H. Trafton's name does not appear in the 1880 census report, so he must have left New Providence.

The Swift-Sure Stage Route (6)

The Swift-Sure Stage Route was the inland stage-coach route between New York City and Philadelphia, Pa. It came through Plainfield, passing by the old Drake House on Front Street to Scotch Plains, turning left at the Stage House Inn on Park Avenue to Mountain Avenue, thence to Springfield, Newark, Irvington, Old Plank Road, Jersey City, to Manhattan by the steam ferry. Early in the nineteenth century Mr. Recompece Stanberry, Jr. with several other business men organized the first mail and passenger service through Scotch Plains, between New York and Philadelphia. It was called the Swift-Sure Mail and Passenger Stage Line. There were five 4-horse stages used on this line. The horses were selected animals, the drivers were careful and civil, and every attention was paid to the passengers. The fare was four dollars; the schedule three times per week.

A Sample of David Felt's Credit for Road Work (7)

Mr. Jacob F. Badgley, bookkeeper for the road work in New Providence Township.

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. Credit David Felt for road work in 1846 | \$20.75 |
| " " " " " 1847 | 45.50 |
| " " " " " 1848 | 40.91 |
2. The use of oxen and/or mules one dollar per day. Men receive one dollar per day, boys one half dollar per day.
 3. One may wonder how long it took David Felt to construct all the cottages, dormitories, mansion house, barns, and to rebuild the mill and install the machinery? At least a part of the construction must have been done late in 1846, since one does not start paying taxes on real estate until it is ready for occupancy.

Glenside Park 1882-1915 (8) Personalities That Made Glenside Park a Successful Summer Resort

WARREN ACKERMAN of Scotch Plains. He was a successful manufacturer of rubber goods for the United States War Department during the Civil War. When he purchased the Feltville property, he divided it into two parts: one was for Glenside Park summer resort, the other was for farming. Mr. Ackerman made certain important changes:

(a) The property was fenced and a rustic gateway prevented access to the village from the east.

(b) He built a road from the village down to the old mill and up the west side of the first mountain to connect the Cataract Hollow to Route 29 (now 22) and to Scotch Plains.

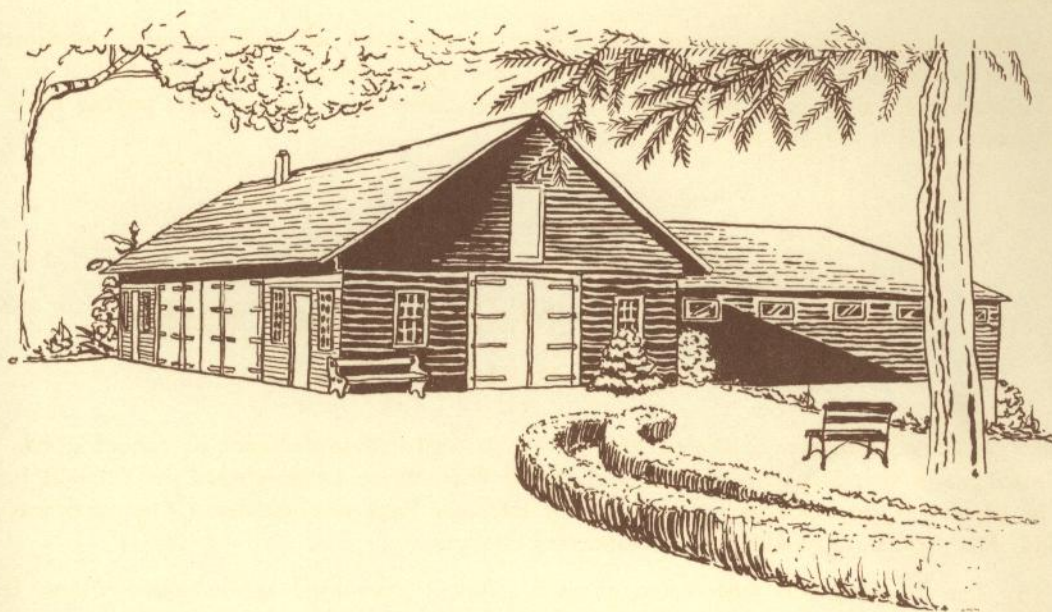
(c) The lower mill was converted into a building to house the stock and the second mill was torn down.

FRANK HASNIGER of Scotch Plains. He was Mr. Ackerman's general manager of this new purchase. He was a capable and dependable all around man who knew about farming, gardening, landscaping, building, and plumbing. He laid out the grounds, roads, paths, flower beds, supervised the entire renovation of the cottages, and installed the sewer system. In 1888 he was drowned at the dam of Lake Surprise while trying to open the flood gates near the base of the dam.

MR. AND MRS. FRANK MOLLOY of Newark, N. J. They supervised the whole operation of establishing and maintaining a most successful summer resort. Mrs. Molloy managed the dining cottage which provided food and entertainment for all the guests at the resort. Mr. Molloy, after careful training by Mr. Hasniger, was able to maintain and operate everything necessary to keep the resort in the most attractive and effective order. This meant he used the greenhouse for raising annual plants for landscaping, he operated the stage for the commuters, cared for the fruit orchards of apples and ox-heart cherries, maintained the steam laundry and pumping station, and cared for the lawns, tennis courts and golf course.

THE TRAILSIDE

Nature and Science Center



Trailside Museum is operated and maintained by The Union County Park Commission with the cooperation of the Trailside Museum Association and numerous affiliated Nature- and education-minded clubs and individuals. Its purposes are threefold: Nature education, Nature conservation, and Nature recreation. Its staff will be happy to help you in the identification of plant or animal specimens and in the answering of questions about almost any phase of Nature. Most of the material on exhibit in the Museum's rooms has been donated by public-spirited citizens to help further its work. We solicit more such donations so that we may ever expand our exhibits and increase our service to the community.