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Welcome to the second newsletter of 2014. Unintentionally it has stories in pairs: two about life in Chester, one from 1794 and one from the 1950's; two stories about lives lost, one with a World War I mystery and one we know well. Finally there are two stories about CHS' two regular fun events. Communicate your comments at (908) 866-6717 or email to chester.historical.society@gmail.com .

Cazenove's Black River Visit

By John Pfaff

October 25, 1794, imagine the buzz in the rustic village of Black River, as an elegant coach, drawn by four horses, one with a driver astride, pulls into town and a coachman, a valet and an aristocrat disembark at Drakes Tavern. The aristocrat is Theophile Cazenove, new world



entrepreneur, but lucky for us, an obsessive chronicler. It is from his journal¹ that we

have a vivid description of life in Chester, before it was even known as Chester. His account contains much detail and his reports were remarkably exact in regard to industrial and farming conditions. It is through his 1794 Journal that Black River comes to life even though Drakes Tavern is long gone.

Cazenove, descended from a branch of the French Cazenove family that migrated to Switzerland in the latter half of the 16th century, was born in Amsterdam on October 16, 1740. In his early career, he was associated with Dutch financiers who made loans to the struggling new republic of the United States of

¹ Cazenove Journal 1794. Translated from the French. Edited by Rayner Wickersham Kelsey. 1922. The Pennsylvania Univ. Press. CHS archives and online at <https://archive.org/stream/cazenovejournal101caze#pag>

[e/12/mode/2up](#). Working in our archives, John Pfaff inventoried and read the paper version and was inspired to write this article. See Joan Case's article in the March newsletter to find out the fate of Drakes Tavern.

America. After some business reversals in later life, Cazenove decided to visit America in person. After making arrangements with four of the strongest Dutch banking firms in Amsterdam to carry on their financial operations in the US, he arrived in 1790. Within two years after his arrival and based on his reports, the Dutch financiers became attracted to investments in public lands and formed the Holland Land Company, which dealt extensively in New York and Pennsylvania properties.

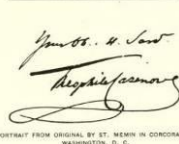
Theophile Cazenove was the first General Agent of this company. It was his early interest in land speculations that persuaded him to make his trip through New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Cazenove reported that the average farm size in our area was 150-200 acres. He travelled to Black River from Morristown, describing the ground as "...very broken; high hills and not very good soil; partly uncultivable because of the sand or the declivity; partly large level fields, pasture, or corn, buckwheat. The hollows between the hills make fairly good pasture; especially [are there] many large orchards of apple trees, the product of which is important to the farmer, who generally distills his cider."

Cazenove described the economics of the distilled cider, better known as Applejack, or Apple Brandy. He reported that 65 - 70 apple trees, planted 20 feet apart, can be planted on an acre of land, and in a good year produces 250 bushels of apples. It takes 8 bushels of apples to make 1 barrel of cider; a barrel is 32 gallons, and 32 gallons of cider yields 4 gallons of Applejack. This finished product was sold for 6 shillings² or \$1.43 a gallon. If a farmer

² In 1794 one pound was worth \$4.75. There were 20 shillings per pound. So each shilling was worth 24 cents.

were to do all the work himself (growing and picking the apples, pressing the cider, fermenting the cider and distilling the hard cider, he could yield about \$179 per acre of apple trees. However, most farmers sold their cider to a distillery, which fermented and distilled the final product. The farmer only received two thirds of the value of the cider. More importantly he noted that "when the spirits extracted from the cider is old, it's not unhealthy, but it is so when new." A statement true to this day!



FORNBY FROM ORIGINAL BY ST. MEXIN IN GORDONIAN WASHINGTON, D. C.

He reported "*Land in these heights and meadows, cleared, and soil not very good, generally in farms of 200 acres, sells for £3 an acre; and the best ones without many stones £4 an acre; in those 200 acres one has 100 cultivable acres, 4 up to 10 in orchard, 30 in meadow, yielding 1 ton per acre, a farmers house and out-houses.*"

The land had to be enriched with lime, which was available for sale at 1 shilling per bushel at the furnace and with manure from their cattle. A pair of oxen for ploughing cost £20 and a single plough horse cost £25-£30. A workman at harvest time cost 6 shillings a day and 4 shillings a day at other times.

Cazenove reported that farmers became very rich in the district and used their surplus to buy more land. They could also easily find tenant farmers who would farm their property for half the produce. The "spirits of cider", Applejack, was a very important economic driver for this part of New Jersey. The Applejack was exported to New York, and from there to the South.

Cazenove apparently learned all this while lodging at Drake's tavern, where on a Saturday it was the local custom for the farmers to gather at the inn to talk and drink. The weather was very bad, and the night dark, yet about fifteen farmers gathered that day and shared their information with this fascinating traveler. ■

A Snapshot of Chester

By Helen Kossow Jones & Bob Jones

I grew up in Chester in the farmhouse on the corner of Hillside and Furnace Roads and Bob moved here from Flanders when we were married. We both went to Roxbury High School. As seniors, we would meet in Zezzo Hall at the Congregational Church with their youth group and our Young People's Group from The Federated Church (Presbyterian).

We were married after college in The Federated Church. (I was baptized there also.) Our reception was in Fellowship Center at the church - fancy sandwiches and fruit punch. My aunt Helen Dickerson served her famous rum punch at my parent's home after the reception.



Bob commuted to Rutgers for his masters degree (no Rt. 287 then). We moved into the garage apartment on my parent's property which Bob and my dad were still finishing. We stayed there until we had four children, Suebeth (1957), Robbie (1959), Caroline (1962) and Kerrin (1963). In 1963 we moved to our present home on Parker Road, a pre-cut home built by Bob and his brother, with carpenter Fred Shann.

I taught first grade in Chester. Mr. Williamson had been my teacher for seventh and eighth grades. In the spring of my senior year at Trenton State Teachers College I met him on the Chester School

driveway when stopping at school to see my mother. I said, "Mr. Williamson, do you have a job for me next year?" and he said, "Yes." That was it.

My mother, Mabel Dickerson Kossow, taught the other first grade class. There had been only one first grade until a couple of years earlier when she had 47 first graders - and the new class was added. She taught from 1943 until 1969. I was lucky to have my mother, one of the best, teaching across the hall and keeping me on track. I finished my teaching in Chester after two years when Suebeth was born. I did go back to teaching in 1969 in Mendham Borough and retired in 1996.

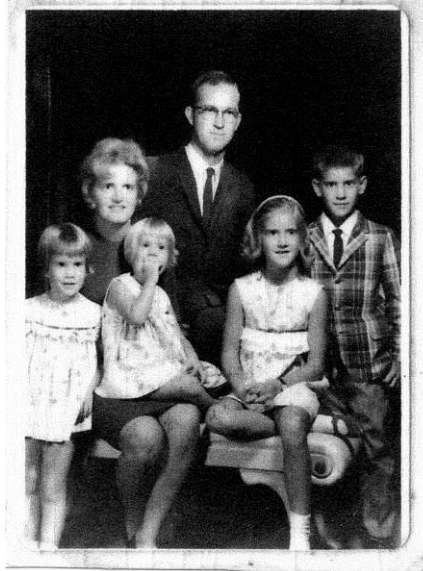
When Bob finished college he worked at Brookside Research Labs with Lindley Cook taking soil samples and consulting with farmers. In the 60's he could see farmland decreasing as development took over. So he began teaching high school science in Newton in 1961. In 1963 Don Mills, Superintendent of Schools, told him about an opening in Chester and he taught seventh and eighth grade science until he retired in 1994.

Our first daughter, Suebeth, was born in July 1957. I had taught in Chester for the two years before, and when Jane Whiting couldn't teach for the first few days of September, I agreed to substitute for her. We left Suzy with Doris Bischoff a few houses up 206. Our apartment on the corner of Hillside Rd. and Furnace Rd., was 1 block from 206. As a child I would lament that I lived so close to a highway and there was no traffic on it! Rude awakening - we walked down the highway with Suzy in the baby carriage and cars and trucks were whizzing by. Scary!

In the 1950's our telephone company had an office at 87 Main Street with local girls at the switchboard. Our number was 14-R-3 and later 408. On the night before June 5, 1959, our second child Robbie warned us that he was ready to be born. Bob tried to call Dr. Kossman in Long Valley to tell him, but no phone service. So we drove to the telephone office, Bob pounded on the door, woke up the operator who told us through the door to go to the corner of 206 and 24 and use the pay phone there. We did, and Robbie was born June 5, 1959 at Somerset Hospital.

There were several shops in town but our major food shopping was in Dover at the Acme. My family started going there during the war when my mom had rented a frozen food locker at Dalrymple's in Randolph. We used the IGA in Chester, just past the Publick House, for a few items. We were happy when the A&P opened in the late 60's where the Rite-Aid is now.

When my children were young, we had a membership at Grogan's Pond for swimming, site of the present Chester Springs Shopping Center (Shop-Rite). After the shopping center was built there was no public swimming area until June Hinds' bequest was used to build the Chester Area Pool on North Rd. Until I was 9 we swam at my Uncle Lou McDavit's pond off Parker Rd., now a tiny water hole. After that Mother would take us to swim by the dam at Hacklebarney Pond. We walked to Milltown to swim by the Rt. 24 bridge in the small millpond made by the river.



For entertainment Bob and I would go to the movies or bowling and to the beach in the summer. Our church had a couples group, the Tandem Club, which was a social group for young marrieds. With our family growing, we didn't have much time for outside activities. The grandparents were a big part of our lives and our children's; family was important to us all.

When I moved to Parker Rd. the women often had a coffee klatch at a home. On one occasion in the early 60's, a new neighbor had moved into the stone schoolhouse on the corner of Schoolhouse Lane. I was dismayed - and a bit insulted - when she said that she was embarrassed for her friends to drive through Chester, it was so run-down. I loved my town, but I did notice that many buildings looked very old. At that time many of the buildings on Main Street were still homes. But that changed in the 70's as people began moving into town and new businesses started up.

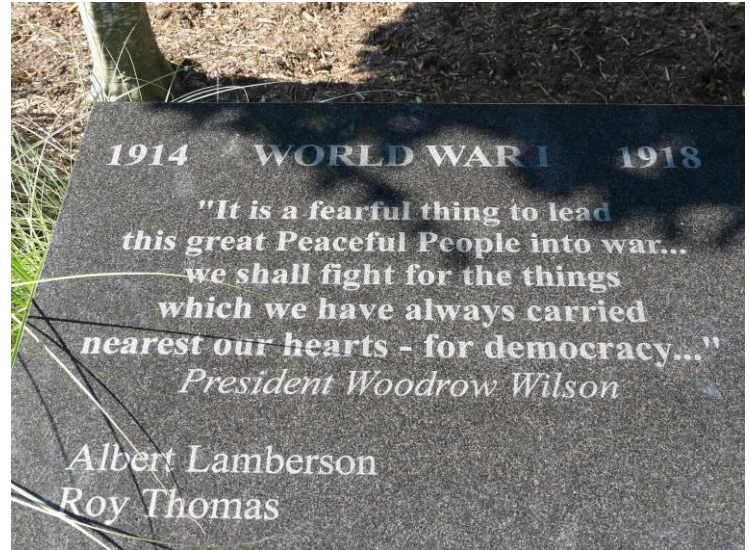
About 1980, the residents of Parker Road became concerned about the numerous large garbage trucks traveling day and night to Coombs Landfill (formerly Filiberto's). These trucks were from all over, even out-of-state. To record this in hopes of bringing attention to this health problem for us, we parked our motor home on the front lawn and neighbors sat inside and took turns recording the trucks that passed. Shirley and Kurt York worked with our Township Council, then the state got involved and the dump was finally closed - thank goodness!

When I was growing up in Chester I didn't realize that someday I would be the history. I love Chester! ■ (Pictures courtesy of the Jones)

Chester and the Great War: Correction Needed!

By Edward Ng

In World War I 3,836 New Jersey soldiers died. Two were from Chester. "Albert Lamberson" and "Roy Thomas" are the two names listed on the WWI plaque on Chester's Memorial Island (shown right). 2014 is the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I. Though the USA did not enter the war until 1917, I wanted to include a commemoration in this year's newsletter. It would be appropriate to start by honoring these two men. A check of Frances Greenidge's Scrapbook of History – Chester, NJ provided background information and some moving letters from the war. Greenidge recounts lines from a memorial service held in 1921:



**The men in uniform were called by some, "Chester's 46 Sons."...
Of the "46 sons," Albert Lambert and Roy Thomas were killed in action.³**

Which was correct "Albert Lamberson" or "Albert Lambert"? The plaque or the quote? Out of respect for Albert's sacrifice, we needed to get it right. The book, The Soldiers of the Great War⁴, was a ready if cumbersome resource available on Google Books. The three volumes list the deaths by state, then rank, then cause of death. New Jersey is in Volume 2 and Corporal Roy Thomas from Chester was found on page 254 as being killed in action. Neither Albert Lambert nor Albert Lamberson could be found in the New Jersey section. Helped by Ancestry.com, I found an Albert Lambert from Chester, Pennsylvania, on page

146 in Volume 3. It is plausible that a mistake was made by the compilers and it really should have been Chester, New Jersey.

A draft registration card for Albert Lambert. The card is numbered 2213 and contains the following information: Name in full: Albert Lambert #62; Age in yrs: 22; Home address: Califon, New Jersey; Date of birth: March 22, 1895; Place of birth: Califon, New Jersey; Where born: Califon, New Jersey, USA; Occupation: Farm laborer; Employer: George Schuyler; Marital status: Single; Race: Caucasian; Signature: Albert Lambert.A Registrar's report for Albert Lambert. The report is numbered 29-3-20-A and contains the following information: 1. Tall, medium, or short (specify which): Medium; 2. Color of eyes: Blue; Color of hair: Dark Brown; 3. Has scars, cuts, or other marks on face, head, feet, or hands: No; Signature: George Hillbrand; City or County: Califon, New Jersey; Date of registration: June 5, 1917.

dark brown hair, and worked as a farm laborer working in Vernoy, NJ when he filled out the registration form.

³ Frances Greenidge. 1974. A Scrapbook of History-Chester, NJ. Page 135. Greenidge's material came from *World War Heroes*, (program of a commemorative service) 1921.

⁴ The Soldiers of the Great War. In 3 volumes. Compiled by W.M. Haulsee, F.G. Howe and A.C. Doyle. 1920.

In terms of military service, the “World War I Casualties: Descriptive Cards and Photographs” database, accessible from the New Jersey State Archives⁵ was very informative (below left).

Lambert, Albert 545,609 *White *Colored x
 Residence: Califon, N. J.
 *Entered Service: ~~Califon, N. J.~~ *Inducted at Flemington on Nov 20 1917
 Place of birth: Califon Age or date of birth: 22 8/12 yrs
 Organizations served in, with dates of assignments and transfers: 15 Co 4 Trng Bn 158 Dep
 Brig Nov 10/17 to Nov 26/17; Co F 311 Inf to Dec 13/17; Co B 30
 Inf to July 15/18
 Grades, with date of appointment: Pvt Nov 20/17; Pvt 1st Apr 20/17
 Engagements: Marne River, near Magy
 Served overseas from Apr 2/18 to July 15/18 from to
 *Killed in action *Date July 15/18
 Other wounds or injuries received in action:
 Persons notified of death: Mrs. Catherine Lambert, Mother,
 Chester, Pa.
 Remarks:
 *Strike out words not applicable. *Dates of departure from and arrival in the U. S.

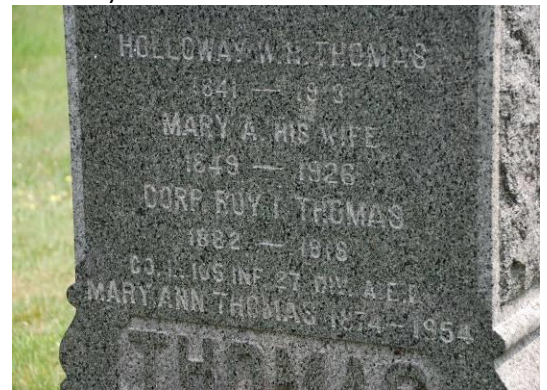


Albert Lambert served overseas with Company B, 30th Infantry, Third Division, as a private first class. The 30th Infantry Regiment operated in the Marne area⁶ fighting alongside French troops. I assume he was killed during the Second Battle of the Marne which started on July 15, 1918 with a massive German bombardment and attack. The New York Times front page headline on the battle was: “AMERICANS DRIVE GERMANS BACK OVER MARNE: TAKE 1,000 PRISONERS AND CHECK BIG DRIVE; GERMAN ATTACK ON A 60-MILE FRONT FAILS.”⁷ Private Lambert was one of over 1,400 Americans who died in the battle. They gave their lives to help win the pivotal battle of WWI.

Albert Lambert is buried in the Fairmount Cemetery, near Tewksbury. His headstone was found using

*findagrave.com*⁸, a very helpful site.

Pictures of the headstones are from that site. There is no doubt that “Albert Lambert” should be on the WWI



plaque on Chester’s Memorial Island. The error was apparently made on the original “white memorial boards” from which the names on the plaque were taken. The Historical Society will work with the Memorial Island stewards to correct the plaque. Not explained is why Albert was named as being from Chester, while living in Califon. No matter, Chester would be honored to include Albert Lambert and Roy Thomas as two of our “46 sons”. ■

⁵ <https://www.net1.state.nj.us/DOS/Admin/ArchivesDBPortal/WWICards.aspx>

⁶ http://s12.zetaboards.com/The_Trench_Line/topic/5017452/1/

⁷

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/0715.html?module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3Ar%2C%7B%221%22%3A%22RI%3A9%22%7D#article>

⁸ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=30143633&PIpi=13089092> Roy Thomas is buried in the German Valley Rural Cemetery, Long Valley, NJ. His WWI story is being researched and I hope to recount it in the future. More mystery!

Marie Ruzicka (1923-2014) – A Winner!

By Edward Ng

Marie Ruzicka was a winner. Not only because she received many awards, but because she made winners of so many of us. One of her many CHS activities, Marie took delight in acquiring and dispensing door prizes at our picnic and holiday parties. Her frequent small acts of kindness would make Santa look like a miser. The door prizes weren't grand, but came with lots of her joy. Books, bookmarks, bottles of cheer, totes, lithographs of Chester, picture frames, silver bowls, "scripture jars", tea pots, vases, ceramic "gathering baskets", olden days style journals, fan dishes, woven latticed baskets, decorative swags, Christmas containers, and of course dozens of the "Aw-Shucks prize" - sacks of Cooper Mill flour.

Marie was head of the Publications Committee for 30 years and was instrumental in the production and sales of many of our books. She had a passion for selling, going to Dover, Rockaway Mall, the Cooper Mill, Craft Shows, and locales along Main Street, often in costume, to sell [A Stroll Through the Old Village of Chester, N.J., Chester, New Jersey – A Scrapbook of History](#), and our cookbook, [From the Hearts](#)

of Chester. To help sell the cookbook her committee made up samples from the recipes, like 10 Minute Fudge, and lured potential buyers with them on Main St.

Marie received many awards. They ranged from best costume at the Brookside 4th of July parade to the "New Jersey Woman of Achievement Award" from the New Jersey Legislature in recognition of her many civic and community accomplishments. In between she also earned the "Chairman's Award" from the Morris Museum, the "Heritage Award" from CHS.

Marie Antoinette Ruzicka, born August 19, 1923,



Marie with Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen in 2000 (CHS Archives)

passed away on April 17, 2014. Her enthusiasm, can do attitude, love of history, and generosity will be missed. ■

2013 Holiday Party at Highland Farm (Formerly the Chubb Estate)

Our Holiday Party last year was held at Mae and Barrie Ellison's lovely home at Highland Farm. We would like to thank the Ellisons for their wonderful hospitality and generosity. I would like to thank Members who brought fabulous appetizers, sides, and desserts. We are scheduling our 2014 Holiday Party for Sunday, December 14. Please save that date!



Mae and Barrie Ellison welcome guests to their home.



Barrie recounts the history of Highland Farm and Chubb estate.



As snow falls, we depart with many warm memories.

2014 Picnic at the Township Barn

Our annual Picnic was held September 14 at Highlands Ridge Park, at the newly renovated Barn. After a lovely lunch, former Mayor Ben Spinelli provided a history of how the land and Barn were acquired from Telcordia, one of the spinoffs from AT&T. Mayor Bill Cogger talked about how the community came together to cooperatively renovate and equip the Barn. We would like to thank Mayors Spinelli and Cogger for sharing their stories with us.



Lovely day for a picnic.



Lots of space in the Barn.



Great food, enjoyed by all.

Program Past: The Musical World of Thomas Jefferson



In June, CHS and the Chester Library sponsored an entertaining and educational program. Music drawn from Jefferson's extensive 1783 inventory of musical holdings was performed by John Burkhalter, on the recorder, and Donovan Klotzbeacher, on the harpsichord. Not only great music, but John is a great story teller about personalities, politics, and intrigues of the times. Which brings us full circle: while Thomas Jefferson is playing Handel's Violin Sonata at Monticello, Cazenove is chatting up Black River farmers while quaffing a tankard of local apple cider or applejack in Drake's Tavern!

Grateful thanks to the Chester Township DPW, CHS members Alison Dahl, Anita Rhodes, Sandy Jacobsen, John Pfaff and Matt Koppinger for moving the CHS Archives to its new room.

Future Programs

- **11/1 Quilt Show & Historic Tour First Congregational Church of Chester.** Celebrating the Church's 275th Anniversary. Saturday 10am – 3pm. Free. www.fccofchester.org
- **11/1 Industrial Heritage Walk to the Chester Furnace with Joe Macasek.** Saturday 10am meet at Hiker's Parking lot just before Lamplighter Restaurant on Hwy. 513. Free for CHS members. Wear sturdy shoes and bring water and snack. For details and updates see <http://historicchesternj.com/programs.html>
- **11/22 Morris County Iron Forum at Hanover Township Community Center Saturday.** 9am – 1pm. Twelve informative and intriguing talks about 300 years of the Iron Industry. Free. Register at www.whippanong.org
- **12/14 Chester Historical Society Members Holiday Party.** Save this date! More details will be forthcoming.

CHS Officers:

President & Archives – Edward Ng
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Newsletter Editor – Edward Ng

Pictures by Ed Ng except as noted. If you have stories or pictures to share with us, please contact us.

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