

Foreword

At the initial meeting of the Bound Brook Bicentennial Committee on January 29, 1974, many ideas for the celebration of our nation's birth were put forth. Among the suggestions was a proposal for an historical booklet on Bound Brook.

Church records, historical documents and early issues of the *Bound Brook Chronicle* have provided the authors with much valuable information. It should be stressed, however, that the booklet's writers—Helene Kuhn, Jane Spangler and David Steele—do not pretend to be professional historians. Thus, this booklet is not intended to be a complete history, but rather, an outline, and we urge the reader to utilize the vast resources of Bound Brook's Public Library for more complete information on the Borough's history.

Many of the events of the 1700's and 1800's are covered in the publication with a lesser emphasis on the 1900's. We have left the 20th Century for the tercentenary committee to reflect upon.

This booklet is dedicated to Dr. Emerson F. Hird, physician and longtime Bound Brook resident, whose persistent efforts helped to preserve the Council Oak Tree, and to our young people through whose efforts our national and local heritage will continue to be preserved.

JEAN FINLAYSON
Chairman Bicentennial Committee
May, 1976
Bound Brook, N. J.

Cover painting done by Clementine S. Smith, and pictures courtesy of the Bound Brook Memorial Library.

THE COUNCIL OAK

Under the Council Oak on Maple Avenue is where it all began. Of course, it wasn't Maple Avenue then, it wasn't even a street, it was just land. Land owned by the Lenni Lenape tribe. Here the Indians conducted ceremonies, rites of all types and council meetings; in short, here they solved all their problems.

They were peace-loving Indians. In fact, they were spurned by the area's other red men because of their lack of warring zeal. The men spent their days hunting and in general entertaining themselves, while their squaws stayed at home working in the fields, washing, bringing up the children and keeping their husbands happy.

Their wigwams and teepees were set up in what we currently call "Indian Village" or Metape. Apparently the Indians lived here only during the wintry weather and when it grew warmer they headed for the shore for fishing and life in the sun.

On May 4, 1681, an unusual ceremony took place. Gathered under the Council Oak were eight white men and two Indians. It was a peaceful gathering, which is good to note, for all such transactions in the Colonies were not made in friendly fashion. The white men were buyers, buyers of land—land known as Racahova-Walaby (or, the round plain by the crooked valley). This land extended from the mouth of the stream along the Raritan on the north side to a brook called Raweighweros (now known as Middlebrook). It went northward to Stony Hill then in an easterly direction to Metape (the Lenni Lenapes' home) at the mouth of the Cedar Brook where it became one with Green Brook and then meandered southerly along the Bound Brook (known to the Indians as Sacunk). Included in this area is what is now known as the Borough of Bound Brook.

The two Indians, Konackama and Queromak, were there as the real estate agents. The buyers, Proprietors as they were known, were New Jersey Governor Philip Cartaret, John Palmer of Staten Island, Gabrielle Minville, Thomas Codrington, John White, John Delaville, Richard Hall and John Royce. Communication must have been difficult, because the Indians spoke no English, and the buyers were probably not too conversant with the Indian tongue, but, presumably, using a form of sign language the participants managed to agree upon a price—100 pounds of various goods. Like other real estate transactions of the time, it was a pretty good deal for the white men when one considers the acreage involved: Messrs. Royce and Codrington were allotted 877 acres each and the remaining Proprietors each got 1,170 acres.

Mr. Codrington must have liked it here because he built himself a home in the area, the only one of the Proprietors to do so. On September 25, 1685, he received his land which was in the area known as Racawahana and his house was built on the west side of this parcel. Using current geographical reference, its location would be between the Middlebrook and Middlebrook and Vosseller Avenues where the house "The Evergreens" now stands.

Thomas Codrington was a member of Governor Barclay's council, being

appointed in 1684, and he was reappointed by Lord Neill Campbell in 1686 and by Governor Jeremiah Boss in 1698.

In 1700 he sold his house to Aaron Lazaider, a retired merchant from New York. Mr. Lazaider had already built a home in Bound Brook just west of where the Lehigh Valley Depot now stands, in 1698. His first house, in the unfortunate vernacular of the day, was popularly known as the "Jew House," and Tobias Van Norden opened a store there in 1738. Following Mr. Lazaider's death in 1744 his grandson inherited the Codrington House. He, in turn, sold it to Michael Van Tule, then Alexander Campbell purchased it, after which Dr. Samuel Swan and George La Monte, successively, became owners.

Mr. Lazaider's first house, the "Jew House," was inherited by his daughter, the wife of John Myers. She lived there until her death in 1762 and her daughter then received the home.

During the Revolutionary War the house was used as headquarters by Lord Cornwallis, and Aaron Lazaider's granddaughter, a widow, became friendly with one of his officers. A marriage ensued and she left the country, never to return. The estate was confiscated in 1785, sold to Tobias Van Norden, then Elias Campbell, and finally to Jeremiah Fisher, by whom it was eventually torn down.

John Campbell, son of Lord Campbell, came to Bound Brook in 1684 and built a residence on the north bank of the river, directly opposite where the railroad depot now stands.

These were the only houses in Bound Brook up to 1700 but settlers began to trickle in and slowly, very slowly, the population grew.

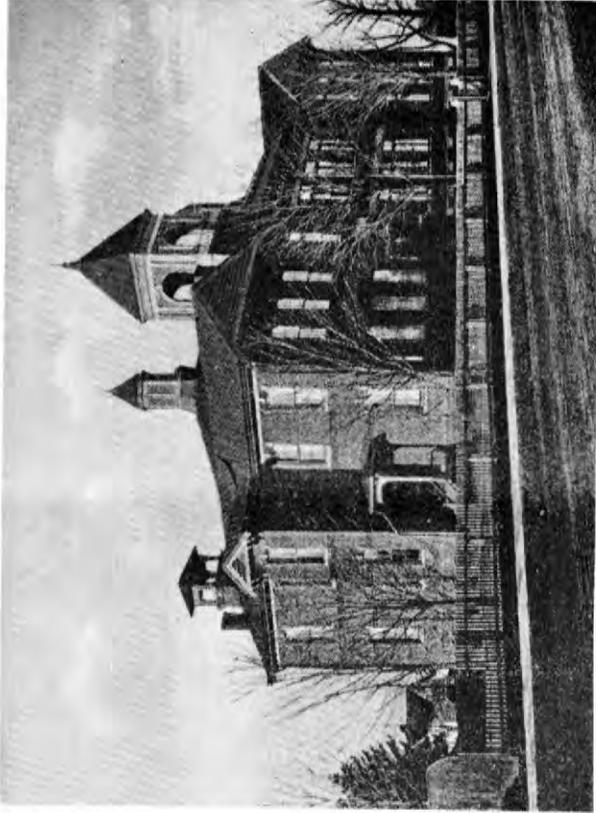
A GROWING VILLAGE

John Royce, who had been allotted 877 acres from the original purchase from the Indians, never came to Bound Brook or to the area and he eventually sold nearly all his land to George Cussart, Jacob De Groot and Samuel Thompson.

Mr. Thompson built his home in 1700 east of what is now Vosseller Avenue at the juncture of Main Street and Vosseller avenues on a 438-acre tract of land. Through the years it had several owners, including Thomas Clawson, William Wortman, Dr. Clarkson Freeman and Tunis Van Eick. It was ultimately sold to the trustees of the Presbyterian Church and became the church parsonage in 1783.

Mr. De Groot purchased 585 acres from John Royce, but all in all his estate was over 1,000 acres with its eastern boundary falling on what is now Mountain Avenue. It was Mr. De Groot who opened the Frelinghuysen House on Main Street in 1700.

Tobias Van Norden continued to operate his store in the "Jew House" until 1744 when he built his own place. This unique structure was a long and low one-and-one half story building with a gambrel roof. In the two front rooms the merchant had his general store and in the rear there was a bakery. Mr. Van Norden sold ship bread, which was sent to the West Indies after



THE ORIGINAL Lafayette Elementary School which was built in 1883.

being carried to New Brunswick by wagon from Bound Brook. Peter Van Norden, his grandson, was the first person in the area to build a two-story house and to his friends and neighbors it was known as "Van Norden's folly."

As the town grew there developed a natural need for institutional buildings and in 1742 a building originally erected as a meeting place for religious purposes was used as the first schoolhouse. It was a long, one-story building and John Wacker became the first schoolmaster, or tutor. He was succeeded by William Hedden in 1768 and then Peter Walsh. The first school's enrollment is not known but doubtless all the pupils were boys because girls did not attend classes in those days. They were taught, in the home, how to cook, sew and keep house and they married very young.

Bound Brook had its taverns as did every other New Jersey settlement. In fact, a local ordinance was passed requiring and controlling the establishment of such businesses. They were used as places for meetings, entertainment, and lodging for travelers who were passing through. Bound Brook's first official hotel was The Fisher Hotel.

TRANSPORTATION

Before going further with houses and such, however, it might be wise to stop and build the lifeblood of any fledgling community—roads.

One of the first major arteries serving Bound Brook was the Great Raritan Road—which connected Piscataway with Bound Brook and traveled along the north branch of the Raritan River almost to Somerville. There is no official record of the opening of this road, but apparently one reason for its construc-

tion was a trespassing incident rather than a "master plan" of commerce. John Campbell (one of the early settlers) was escorting some of Lord Neill Campbell's servants to a meeting in Woodbridge. Since there was no road, they made their way over property that belonged to another of the area's early residents, John White. As they approached a gate, Mr. White stopped them and angrily told them they were trespassing. The landowner took his grievance to Governor Laury, but when Mr. Campbell and his companions were summoned by the Governor they explained that there was no alternative but to cross Mr. White's land. The Governor, persuaded by his constituents' lobbying, thus decided that the Great Raritan Road should be built.

Another major artery, Old York Road, was completed in 1764. Its course was through Mt. Airy, Ringoes, Readville, Three Bridges, Centerville, Raritan, Bound Brook, New Market and Plainfield.

At that time, of course, roads were rough and winding and they crossed streams through which horses had to wade or swim. There were few bridges throughout the colonies, ferries being used to a great extent. Bound Brook's settlers felt it would be to their advantage to have a bridge built across the Bound Brook to facilitate transportation to New Brunswick. Discussion of the erection of a bridge lasted for years, no doubt much of it taking place at one of the taverns, and finally in 1727 the State Assembly passed a law to build such a structure. The expense, however, was to be borne by those who sponsored the idea and so three more years passed without construction even beginning. In 1730 a new law, amending the first, ordered the counties of Middlesex and Somerset to share the expense of building the bridge and the work began with the money coming from the now familiar method of a lottery. Upon completion it was known as the Stone Bridge and parts of it can be seen today when crossing the Queens Bridge into Bound Brook.

THE REVOLUTION

The first stirring of troubles between the Colonies and Great Britain apparently did not have an immediate impact on the settlement of Bound Brook because many small communities remained somewhat divorced from the King's pressures. Taxes and navigation embargoes did not hit Bound Brookers as acutely as in some other colonies, but they did feel the aftermath.

Most of the people in the community were farmers and the village of Bound Brook was still a small place: at the dawn of the revolution in 1775 there were approximately 35 houses in the area, a blacksmith shop, two hotels, several taverns, a general store and a church.

It wasn't long after the start of the conflict, however, that Bound Brook played, and payed, its part in the war.

In July of 1776 Hendrick Fisher, who was President of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey, aroused local patriotism when he stood in front of the Frelinghuysen House and read to the citizens the Declaration which declared independence from England. According to one report of the day, the widely cheering group, upon conclusion of the reading, mounted the Governor on their shoulders and paraded him through the streets while the bell hanging

in the belfry of the Presbyterian Church was rung. Cannon were fired, continues the report, toasts were drunk, and a general air of happiness and excitement prevailed.

Shortly thereafter, part of the Continental army moved to Middlebrook and established camp. This, of course, really made the local settlers realize that a conflict which had a direct effect on them had begun. The first encampment was a brief one but it was long enough for General Washington to realize that this area was a perfect location from which to keep an eye on British activities. Thus, for the winter of 1777-78 the army returned to the Bound Brook area.

Out of necessity the General established his headquarters a good distance away from his army's campgrounds. There simply wasn't a house in this locale large enough to accommodate Washington and his staff so he eventually moved into the Wallace House, which was enlarged for his use, in Somerville.

The Continental Army was bivouacked all over this part of the country. General Schuyler was stationed at the Van Horne House; General Nathaniel Greene at the Van Veghton house in Manville; Baron Von Steuben at the Staats House in South Bound Brook; and General Benjamin Lincoln in the Williams House at the east end of Bound Brook.

Life in Bound Brook, of course, was changed considerably by the proximity of both armies. A number of citizens worked for the Continental army and a slaughterhouse was set up in what is now the center of Bound Brook's business district. (As we shall see, it was probably this slaughterhouse that would be the cause of much confusion some 120 years later.) The quartermaster's stores of provisions were kept in the village and manned by local residents. Times were hard for the citizens, for the soldiers did not hesitate to steal what they wanted, and there were constant forays by British soldiers from their nearby camp.

One area that must have thrived was the tavern business. Even General Washington patronized the Middlebrook Hotel, where Masonic meetings were held, though he was always surrounded by his bodyguards because of the nearness of the Redcoats.

One of the stories that is told about local residents and the British concerns Jacob de Groot, an ardent patriot and one whom the British were particularly anxious to capture. The King's forces made several attempts to grab Mr. de Groot and eventually they tried to surprise him at his home. His wife, however, saw the kidnappers coming and threw her husband into a large oven in which she was about to bake a cake. Though they searched the house from corner to corner, the British troops didn't think to check the baking chamber and Mr. de Groot escaped. History does not describe his condition after being in an oven already heated for baking.

BATTLE OF BOUND BROOK

General Lincoln had built a block house at the "Battery" (opposite where Bolmer's garage now stands) in front of which cannon were placed to guard the river and road from invaders from New Brunswick. On April 13, 1777, a Sunday, General Lincoln was rudely awakened by the sound of gunfire from

Lord Cornwallis' army, and the attack signalled the beginning of the Battle of Bound Brook.

The British attack took the Continentals by such surprise that it was impossible to make a defense and General Lincoln's battery was quickly abandoned. Local inhabitants fled their homes and, according to legend, the sole occupant of the town after the battle was a dead soldier on the floor of the block house.

Though the Battle of Bound Brook is the best known of the skirmishes in this area, another British attack at the same time was led by Lieutenant Colonel John Simcoe, commander of the Queens Rangers, a group of native Americans, or Tories. The Colonel's force landed at Amboy and proceeded, by way of Quibbletown (New Market), to Bound Brook. They burned some shops and raided the Washington House, a public house next to Frelinghuysen House, owned by Peter Staats. They also looted the Middlebrook Hotel and from there marched to the abandoned camp grounds where they unsuccessfully attempted to burn some of the huts.

Their major targets were flat-bottomed boats which were moored at the Van Veghten Bridge at Finderne. They also hoped to capture New Jersey's Governor Livingston, who was reportedly staying at the Van Horne House. The Tory group missed the Governor but did manage to take three prisoners and they eventually burned 19 flat boats at the bridge.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Although Bound Brook was the earliest settlement in Somerset County, the beginning of the 19th Century found it still a straggling village, not unlike many others that began to dot the map of the now independent United States.

After the Revolution, according to a description in a Bound Brook Board of Trade pamphlet published in 1917, Bound Brook settled down to a placid existence. "It was a place where people lived quietly, in peace with each other and their neighbors."

But the village's development as a major transportation center was to change all this.

In 1800, New Jersey was becoming prosperous from its production of leather, lumber, iron, and livestock. To reach the markets, there was need for roads, and it was then that the era of the turnpike began. Six years after the turn of the century, construction began on the first New Jersey Turnpike, a toll highway from New Brunswick to Phillipsburg via Bound Brook and Somerville, and in 1808 a turnpike from Perth Amboy and Metuchen joined the New Jersey Turnpike at Bound Brook.

According to historian James Snell, there was heavy travel to convey produce to the market at New Brunswick from Sussex and the northern part of the state through Bound Brook, and the keeper of the toll gate at Middlebrook said that 500 vehicles went through in one day in route to New Brunswick.

One of those gate keepers was David Talmage, who lived in the toll-gate house on the old New Jersey Turnpike between Easton and New Brunswick. Mr. Talmage, who later became a state senator, was the father of four sons,

James, John, Goyne and Thomas DeWitt, all of whom became outstanding ministers. The borough's present Talmage Avenue was named for this illustrious family.

The Swift and Sure Coach Line, established before the Revolution, still ran between Philadelphia and New York over the Old York Road through Bound Brook, and in 1826 it was still making three trips a week. The mail stage connected with the steamboat "John Marshall" at Elizabethtown Point for New York and the fare was \$4.25.

THE CANAL

According to the *Centennial History of Somerset County*, "The prosperity of Bound Brook dates from 1830 when the Delaware and Raritan Canal was begun. Previous to that, it was as ragged a little town as one would wish to see. What the canal began, the railroad completed and now (1878) Bound Brook is one of the most prosperous villages in the state."

A plan to build a canal to connect the Delaware and Raritan Rivers had been considered as early as 1800 and was designed to exploit the anthracite trade between Philadelphia and New York. In 1823, the state legislature finally authorized a survey and in 1830 a construction permit was granted. Irish immigrants began work on the main 44-mile-long channel which was to provide a water highway across New Jersey from the Delaware River to Raritan Bay, connecting the two largest cities in America, New York and Philadelphia.

During the construction, a 4,000-pound boulder was brought to light by the pick of one of the workers and it lay on a sandy bank in South Bound Brook until it was moved to Bound Brook to mark the site of the Revolutionary battle here. Located for a time on the Pillar of Fire property on East Main Street, it now stands in the old cemetery behind the Memorial Library, the restoration of which is the community's Bicentennial project. The graveyard was probably opened around 1700 and reportedly 70 or so soldiers from Washington's army were buried there. The cemetery was behind the Presbyterian Church, until that structure was destroyed by fire in 1896. The Gateway, which faces East Street, was erected in 1929 in remembrance of George M. La Monte.

The canal was completed in 1834 after many delays, including a cholera epidemic. On the opening day in May, Governor Peter Vroom traveled the whole length of the waterway. Built at a cost of \$2,830,000 the canal was the missing link in inland navigation from Newtown, N.C., to Providence, R.I. Open from April to December each year, it carried its maximum traffic during the Civil War.

There was an unending procession of barges night and day during its peak years and those who lived along the canal became familiar with the sounds of the tinkle of mule bells and of the boatman's horn as the mule-drawn canal boats paused at the locks. One of these, Ten Mile Lock, was two miles from Bound Brook.

Though other canals, such as the Erie, are better known, during the mid-18th Century, the Delaware and Raritan Canal carried more freight than

any other American canal. Records of 1871 showed that 1,545 steamers, 668 sailing vessels, 13,215 canal boats and 434 rafts carried three million tons of cargo over the waterway that year.

Although most passengers preferred the railroad and the canal was used mainly for freight-carrying, an interesting account of canal travel, "Snubbing through New Jersey" (1887), includes this note, "Early in the morning, the locktender came on board with the mail which he had thoughtfully picked up at the Bound Brook postoffice some three miles away."

In 1867, the canal passed into the hands of the New Jersey Railroad and Canal Company and was leased to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. By 1900, facing stiff competition from the railroads, the canal was losing money and all traffic on it ended in 1933. The iron horse had overtaken the live mule.

THE RAILROADS

In 1831, just a year after the canal was begun, a railroad from Elizabethtown to Somerville was built by the Elizabethtown and Somerville Railroad Company. The road reached Bound Brook in 1838, and in 1860 the link was extended to Jersey City. Later, the Jersey Central was built as far west as East Bound Brook, making Bound Brook a commuter town.

As George LaMonte wrote in a Bound Brook Board of Trade pamphlet in 1917, "The spirit of the newer Bound Brook was developed by the building of what was then called the "Air Line" to Philadelphia (now the Philadelphia and Reading) which was rushed through to be open for service at the time of the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876.

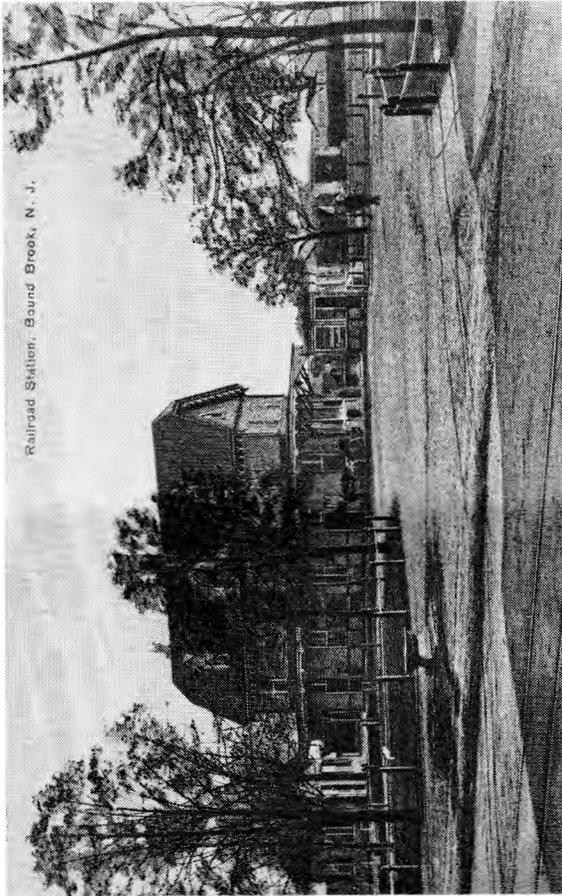
"Shortly after that, the construction of the Lehigh Valley Railroad made Bound Brook a real railroad center. The countryside is now studded with residences largely occupied by New York businessmen who wish to enjoy the beautiful scenery and peaceful country life and yet be within an hour of Broadway."

At one time, the Jersey Central, the Baltimore & Ohio, the Philadelphia & Reading, the Lehigh Valley and the Port Reading railroads sped 100 passenger and freight trains through town each day. At the west end of town, where the tracks crossed Main Street in two places, there were many serious accidents when horses were frightened by the noise of the locomotives.

The period between 1886 and 1890 saw the introduction in New Brunswick of yet another mode of transportation, the horse-drawn street car. In 1895 it was converted to an electric system known as the Brunswick Traction Company, and in 1897 the company began expanding the route via River Road to Bound Brook, Somerville, and Raritan.

But another company, the New York, Philadelphia Traction Company, attempted to block the project. It went so far as to employ an engineering concern in Maryland to construct two miles of a finished electric rail system over the right of way. The work was completed by using hundreds of imported Negro laborers on a Sunday when no one was around to intercede.

The late Harry Seals, a longtime Bound Brook resident who died in 1975 at the age of 100, was home on leave from the Spanish-American War at the



Railroad Station, Bound Brook, N. J.

RAILROAD STATION for Bound Brook, which at one time was the transportation hub of the state.

time of the incident and remembered hearing the laborers singing as they worked.

Finally, the New Brunswick Company started litigation and bought up the assets of the other company, and in 1898 the New Brunswick to Raritan link was completed.

As Bound Brook became a transportation hub, it flourished and its population grew.

In 1830, when the canal and railroad were in their infancy, Bound Brook had a population of only 84 families, or 520 people, living in 75 houses. Dr. Joseph Kler notes in his *God's Happy Cluster*, a history of the Bound Brook Presbyterian Church.

But from Barber and Howe's *Historical Collection of the State of New Jersey* we get a picture of Bound Brook just 16 years later in 1846.

"The village of Bound Brook is in the line of the Elizabethtown and Somerville road and the New Brunswick and Easton Turnpike, four miles east of the county seat. It derives its name from the brook which runs just east of the place and from the boundary line between Somerset and Middlesex counties. The village is about one mile in length and the upper part is called Middlebrook.

"The Raritan River is crossed by a substantial wooden bridge. (Later, in 1875, a whipple truss bridge 438-feet long of malleable iron and steel supported by two tiers and two abutments replaced it, at a cost of \$75,000.)

"There are here a Presbyterian Church (a neat wooden structure), an academy, 10 stores, several mechanics, two grist mills, two tanneries, one apothecary, one hay press, two lumber yards, two coal yards, four taverns, 80 dwellings, 90 families, and 566 inhabitants. This is a thriving place, and at

certain seasons a very large business is done in the purchase of grain as uncommon facilities are furnished for freighting to New York either by canal or railroad."

From 1874 to 1896, Bound Brook more than doubled its population, reaching 2,030 and by 1898 it had jumped to 2,600.

Neil Mackenzie of Bound Brook recorded the growth of industry in the community in an article written for the Bound Brook Chronicle's "Salute to the Bicentennial" column this year.

In his research, Mackenzie found that John Herbert bought the Van Horne House of Revolutionary fame in 1835 and shortly afterwards built a large grist mill just west of the house. It had the largest water wheel in the state and was a well-known landmark which lasted until 1903.

In 1841, he notes, John Busch came to Bound Brook and in partnership with S. Ayers, Sr., started manufacturing hats on a site along the south bank of the canal just west of South Bound Brook. Their business was later moved to Bound Brook.

The first industrial establishment in the modern sense was founded in 1855 under the name of John Smalley and Company to make agricultural implements and machinery, including the Whitenack mower and reaper with which he won first prize in the 1855 Somerset County Agricultural Fair. The reaper sold for \$150 and the mower for \$130. His factory on Main Street between John and Church streets was in business for 12 years.

In 1878, Smalley began a new business in town, the manufacture of anti-friction bearings for machinery, which later became the Bound Brook Oil-Less Bearing Company.

A map of Bound Brook in 1860 shows Cook's Lumber Yard, Young and Coddington's lumber and coal company, and a larger beer saloon.

Later in the century, the Bound Brook Woolen Mills, a major industry, was established on the banks of the Raritan. In 1880, it had 300 employes.

Between 1874 and 1896, the Bound Brook Electric, Heat and Power Co. was organized as was the Bound Brook Water Company.

With the development of transportation and the growth of industry and population here, the school system expanded, too.

Bound Brook was fortunate in that one of its early residents, Michael Field, who had died in 1792 at the age of 92, was a philanthropist who bequeathed some of his money to build a free academy here about 1800.

Peter Walsh was the first teacher, and he was succeeded by Isaac Toucy, who was to become President James Buchanan's Secretary of the Navy. While Toucy was in charge, a female department was in existence of the second floor under the supervision of Miss Joannah Dees. The building was demolished in 1857.

In the 1870's, the red brick, cupolaed Lafayette School was built on West High Street. In 1879, according to Snell's *History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties*, the board of education spent \$829 for the salaries of the 19 teachers who were instructing 189 students. This school building was in use for about 80 years until it was razed to make way for the present structure.

THE BURNING ISSUE

Slavery, the burning moral issue of the 19th Century touched Bound Brook, too, for there were in Somerset County many bondsmen who had indentured themselves in exchange for payment of their passage from Europe to America as well as some Negro and Indian slaves.

The first state legislative action toward abolition came in 1821 when it was voted that children of all slaves born in the state after July 4, 1804, should be free when the males reached 25, and the females 21.

It was during the ministry of the Rev. John Boggs (1815-1828) at the Bound Brook Presbyterian Church that the slavery issue became a matter of conscience in the village. Negro slavery abated in 1820 and gradually waned, Dr. Kler tells us in *God's Happy Cluster*. In 1840, there were only 674 slaves in the state.

When the issue erupted into civil war between the North and South, many young men from Bound Brook served in the Union Army.

One episode which has been recorded in several histories concerns the Rev. Ravaud K. Rodgers, pastor of the Bound Brook Presbyterian Church during those years. The minister was called on by a mother and father, members of his congregation, who were in deep distress because their son had been sentenced to die for deserting the Army. They begged him to intercede, and the Rev. Mr. Rodgers, accompanied by the young man's wife and child, journeyed to Washington to call upon President Lincoln, who granted the reprieve.

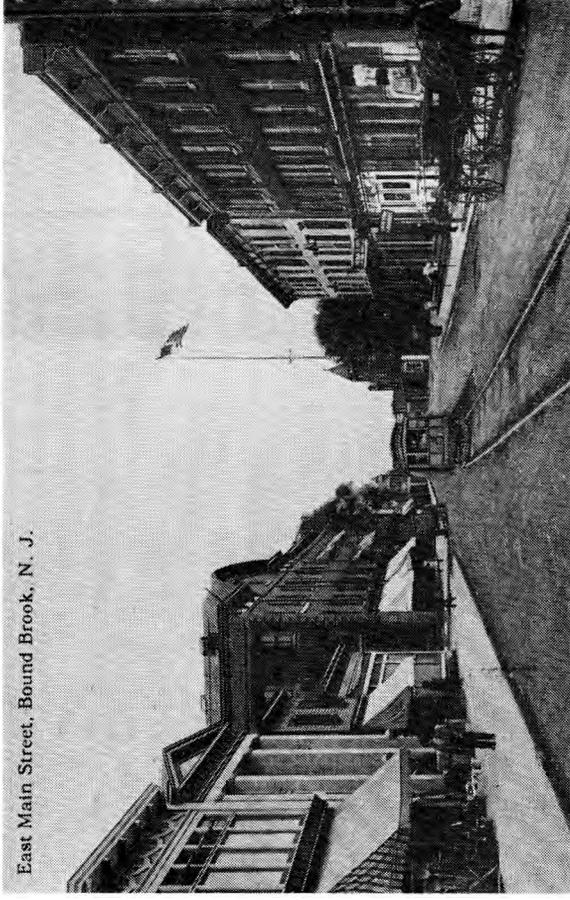
In the old Presbyterian graveyard are buried three veterans of the War of 1812, one of the Mexican War, and five of the Civil War.

Until 1846, the Presbyterian Church was the only house of worship in Bound Brook, but in that year the Dutch Reformed Church of Bound Brook was founded, followed by the Methodist Church in 1848, St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 1852, and St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in 1876.

An atlas of Somerset County, published by Beers, Comstock and Cline of New York in 1873, reveals several interesting facts about the town after the Civil War. East Street was known then as Patterson Street. The Presbyterian Church was at the corner of Main and Patterson streets with the parsonage to the west of it and the free school next door. Second Street was known then as Front Street and Church Street, north of Union Avenue as Ross Avenue. This map also shows the Cook lumberyard on Hamilton Street, backing up to the Presbyterian Church, a happenstance which was to spell disaster on Feb. 6, 1896.

The *Bound Brook Chronicle* of the following day recorded the day's tragedy in these words: "The Presbyterian Church and the Cook Lumber Yard burned. All the conditions were favorable for the flood. The ground was frozen and covered with snow when the rain began to fall early Thursday morning. That was Feb. 6, 1896. The water came down unceasingly for many hours, filling the small streams and raising the river until all residents shook their heads and predicted a heavy freshet. At 6:30 p.m., the flood had reached a point on Mountain Avenue opposite the Chronicle office and one half hour later, it was on the office steps."

East Main Street, Bound Brook, N. J.



A VIEW of East Main Street in the horse and buggy and trolley era.

"The water continued to rise until about 10, when it was at the steps of the first floor of this office.

"At about 9:30 p.m., the flood reached the lime house at the L. D. Cook and Company Lumber Yard. The lime was unslaked, but the water quickly did its work, producing spontaneous combustion. The fire blazed up and soon had the lumber yard in flames.

"Fortunately, the firemen had removed their hose to places on the hill and those who were not hemmed in by water were soon at work. Their faithfulness deserved the highest praise. Many stood waist-deep in the raging flood directing the water from the hydrants to the Berkeley Hotel livery stable. They not only saved that building but prevented flames from spreading in that direction.

"In this they were aided by the strong wind from the west, which gale, however, carried sparks to the old Presbyterian Church. This venerable structure caught fire near the belfry and was not long in yielding to the destructive power of the conflagration. It was a most beautiful, though terrifying sight, and was witnessed by many people."

THE RESIDENTS

Bound Brook was home to many prominent men in the 19th Century, including the aforementioned Talmage family.

In 1828, Dr. Sylvester Graham, the developer of the graham bread and crackers which were to bear his name, accepted his first pastorate here as minister of the Presbyterian Church at a salary of \$300 a year.

Dr. Graham, who advocated a meatless diet and was a strong proponent

of temperance, later became a celebrated lecturer. After his death in Massachusetts, he was brought back here for burial, and is one of those who lie buried in the old graveyard.

Dr. Graham, besides being an ordained minister, was also a medical doctor, one of many who resided in Bound Brook during the last century.

Historian Snell lists as members of the Somerset County Medical Society such prominent physicians as Dr. Chauncey M. Field, son of Richard R. Field, who was well-known in the woolen trade, and a descendant of Michael Field, who left a legacy to the Presbyterian Church to establish a free school. Dr. Field began practice here in 1875.

Members of the Somerset County Bar who practiced in Bound Brook were R. V. Lindabury and S. S. Phillips, and in the law enforcement field, Israel Harris served as sheriff of Somerset County.

TRACING THE HISTORY

Although the shelves of the Archives Room of Bound Brook's Memorial Library are lined with many books and pamphlets which document the 295 year history of the community since Governor Philip Carteret and other purchased the land from the Lenni Lenape Indians, none captures the flavor of everyday life in the town as do the old copies of the *Bound Brook Chronicle* which are preserved on microfilm.

One is transported back 85 years in time to the "Gay Nineties" when W. B. R. Mason, who was to edit and publish the newspaper for 53 years, had been at its helm for eight years.

Unfortunately, the editions of the *Chronicle* for 1892 are the oldest newspapers available to researchers, although the *Chronicle* was not the first journalistic venture here.

According to *History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties*, the first newspaper publisher here was the *Bound Brook Argus*. It was in existence for only six months in 1870 with Noah Clapp as editor and was succeeded in 1878 by *The Rock*, a publication founded in Dunellen in 1877 but later moved to Bound Brook.

The proprietor and editor was Charles E. MacGeachy, once a humorist writer on the Danbury, Conn., *News*. For a brief time, *The Rock* was the most widely circulated newspaper in central New Jersey until Mr. MacGeachy had the temerity to caricature prominent men of the county in articles and cartoons. Within six months *The Rock* had crumbled!

What was to become the *Bound Brook Chronicle* was begun in Whitehouse as the *Family Casket* in 1868. Published and edited by A. J. Shampayne, it took a decided stand in favor of temperance and in 1871 and 1872 it was the organ of the Good Templars.

In December of 1877 the *Family Casket's* editorial and printing office was moved to Bound Brook and in January, 1879, the paper reappeared. In April, just about the time that *The Rock* went out of business, the name of the *Family Casket* was changed to the *Bound Brook Chronicle*.

In 1884, W. B. R. Mason, a newsman who had worked at the *Unionist-*

Gazette in Somerville under A. V. D. Honeyman, became the *Chronicle's* editor and publisher, a post he was to hold until 1937.

From his new office at 16 Mountain Avenue, which was to house the *Chronicle* for nearly 80 years longer, Mason editorialized on the need for good roads and eradication of a dangerous grade crossing on East Main Street.

There were no "lead" stories in those early editions of the *Chronicle*. The front page was a collection of single-column stories detailing doings in the Borough, and in Green Brook, Dunellen, and "Across the Bridge" in South Bound Brook.

A sampling of what was deemed newsworthy in those days: "One of Butcher Kreyling's horses broke a leg and had to be killed; it is rumored that Henry Reimer of Somerville has bought the business block on Main Street next to the Annex for \$10,000; work on the track-laying for the Port Reading Railroad has progressed from the junction near Weston to East Bound Brook."

Advertisements were published on the first page, too. In one, the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, an internationally known local minister, was extolling the virtues of a particular brand of cough syrup and Peter Staats noted that he was taking orders for New York horse manure. (How it was superior to the New Jersey product remains unclear!)

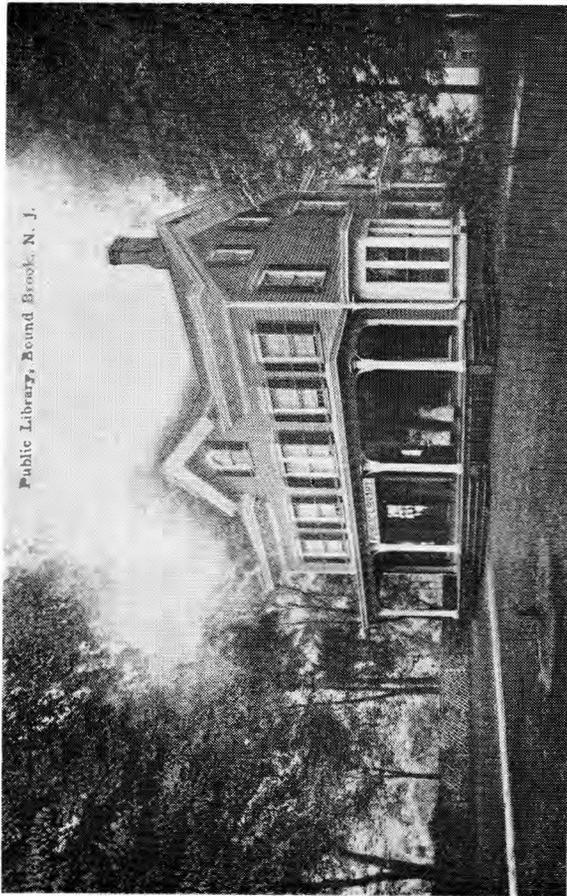
Other advertisers in Mason's paper included Schure's Bakery, which delivered fresh baked bread to homes; the Lehigh Valley Railroad, which listed 10 trips to New York daily and 15 westbound trains; J. S. DeMott, who combined his furniture store with an undertaking parlor in the Ramsey Building; S. D. Gillespie, who ran a livery stable; and Parker's, makers of a ginger tonic which, for 50¢, cured consumption, indigestion, and a long list of other ills.

Mr. Mason, whose masthead boldly proclaimed the *Chronicle* a "Republican Journal" nevertheless backed the candidacy of George LaMonte, who was vying with C. Howard Perry in 1892 for the mayoralty. In a biographical sketch, the editor depicted LaMonte, then 57, as a "staunch Methodist of sterling Democratic background."

The borough form of government had been approved on February 10, 1891, by a vote of 176-120 and William R. Whiting was the first mayor. The first meeting of the town council was held at the home of Mayor Whiting and the members of that first council were: George Stryker, Woolsey H. Alpaugh; Peter H. Smith; Mervin W. Baxter; William W. Smalley and Alfred H. Ryan.

Near the end of 1892 the *Chronicle* almost had a "scoop" but it fizzled out as editor Mason noted: "While grading High Street in Bound Brook last week and when opposite the home of Richard Brokaw, workmen excavated two wagonloads of bones. Rumor had it that an old slave burying ground was discovered. Judge Joseph DeGrote formerly occupied the plantation and had 60 slaves. But it was found on investigation that the bones were all from horses and that it was the site of an old slaughterhouse." This, presumably, is the same slaughterhouse as that used by the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

In 1937, Mr. Mason, then an octogenarian, sold the newspaper to Irving



THE ORIGINAL Bound Brook Public Library.

Reimers and in 1959 the newspaper was sold to its present owners, the Bate-man family of Somerville. Irving Reimers remained as editor until his death in 1960 and was succeeded by Robert Meyer, then Jack Reimers, then Rich-ard Carmen. In 1968 Thomas Evans took over as editor and in 1973 Mildred Raiffelt became the Chronicle's first woman editor.

In the second half of the 19th Century, Bound Brook was a town of many organizations.

One of the earliest was the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, organized in October of 1877 with 14 members from various churches in the area.

Others included the Literary Club, founded in 1885. In the 1890's, its members borrowed a few hundred books formerly used in a reading room of the Reform Club and opened a library on Maiden Lane.

Camp Middlebrook Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, was organized in 1893 with 14 members, and Nathan Hale Chapter, Children of the American Revolution, in 1886.

One of the earliest fraternal organizations was Eastern Star Lodge, F&AM, organized in 1870, which was followed six years later by Somerset Lodge 561, Knights of Pythias.

Two banking institutions were founded here in the late 1880's, the First National Bank and the Building and Loan.

In the Board of Trade pamphlet F. N. Voorhees wrote of Bound Brook in 1891 that it "had no paved sidewalks and the street lights were kerosene." But in 1898, with its population nearing 3,000, Bound Brook boasted phone service provided by the Somerset County Telephone Company.

With the 1900's right around the corner, ladies sported bustles and

gentlemen wore hats and carried canes. Transportation around town was by bicycle or horse-drawn buggy.

Despite a little fracas known as the Spanish-American War, it was the "Gay Nineties" here as elsewhere. The 20th Century with its global conflicts had not yet erased the peaceful, slow-paced way of life.

20TH CENTURY GROWTH

As the 19th century gave way to the twentieth, Bound Brook began to grow. At the turn of the century its population was over 2,600 and only 10 years later it had grown to nearly 4,000. Then the census of 1920 indicates that the town had almost 6,000 people and by 1930 this had increased to 7,300.

The reasons for the borough's growth had become apparent as Bound Brook developed into a transportation hub. However, historical material does not indicate that the village ever strived to become a metropolis, or boom town, settling instead for a more peaceful existence and "contained" growth.

One of the town's most prominent citizens, George LaMonte, wrote an article in 1904 for the "Suburbanite" in which he emphasized the town's posi-tive points: "The fact that there is scarcely a vacant house here is sufficient evidence that Bound Brook is growing in favor as a popular suburban place of residence and that it will continue to grow. Naturally a place of great beauty with an individuality and character of its own, the Central Railroad has made it accessible, by giving it 35 trains each way to and from New York with a schedule time of 50 minutes to an hour, and what is perhaps more to the point, the trains run on time."

As a footnote to that, commuters not only had convenient and reliable means by which they could travel to New York, but the monthly fare in 1917 was only \$8.80.

Local transportation needs were also being met adequately. Trolleys had come to Bound Brook in 1897 and in January of 1899 a flag was raised over the Chronicle's office in honor of "the opening of the through trolley line from New Brunswick to Bound Brook, thereby connecting with the roads to Somerville and Plainfield."

Shortly after the through route was opened, however, Mayor Richard H. Brokaw made a strong appeal to the trolley company to lower the speed of its cars to the prescribed 10 m.p.h. limit because a number of injuries caused by speeding trolleys had been reported.

By the turn of the century the town's network of roads and the traffic levels had increased enough that in 1898 two men were hired on a full-time basis to maintain village streets.

A publication issued by the Bound Brook Board of Trade during the first decade of this century contained advertisements for many of the local busi-nesses. Among them were Gano & Byer, located in the Voorhees Building; the Berkeley Hotel, Leo DuFour proprietor; funeral director William Edgerton; the Unique Emporium on east Main Street, and the Annex Hotel and Restau-rant.

The thrifty could earn 3½% on their savings at the Bound Brook National Bank, and newcomers to the area could settle down fairly cheaply: a

six-room house could be rented in this area for only \$10 a month, though in 1917 one study noted that 90% of all Bound Brookers owned their own homes. An 88-acre farm in the Bound Brook area, complete with a 9-room house, could be purchased for \$6,000 and sites for cottages and bungalows were available at Creighton Manor, located in Middlesex, for only \$100-\$300. And, if a new homeowner wanted all the conveniences, Public Service Corp. of New Jersey was advertising "Light by electricity—we will wire at cost."

The town was characterized by a strong sense of community and newspaper items concerning projects in which many residents participated were not uncommon. For example, in 1905 some 610 people took trains to the shore for the Union Sunday School Excursion and the outing earned \$15 for each participating Sunday School.

There was also diversity. Publications of the day, even those promoting Bound Brook as a place to settle, would often note that the village's Italian community lived on the west side of town and pretty much stayed to itself, and some of the village's biggest boosters made it clear that many residents of Bound Brook preferred it that way.

And, not all of those who came to the village were welcomed. In the Spring of 1899 a Chronicle article reported, with obvious relief, that a "band of gypsies that have been encamped along the Middlebrook, near Main Street, for several days, moved on Tuesday morning."

Though it began to develop a thriving business district of its own, townspeople used surrounding communities for much of their shopping. The Chronicle, for example, carried advertisements at the turn of the century for J. & A. G. Nevius of Somerville, Flemington, New Brunswick and Trenton; Woodhull & Martin in Plainfield (which emphasized that it offered the famous S & H trading stamps); and Garretson Cycle Co. in Somerville which offered phonographs carrying the name of New Jersey's own Thomas Edison at prices from \$10-30.

Many of the stories carried in the newspapers of those days are unfamiliar to the modern reader: in January of 1904, for instance, the Chronicle noted that there was a surplus of nearly \$3,000,00 in the State treasury from the year before.

Other stories, of course, describe issues which still stir controversy. The Governor's annual message in 1904 mentioned a proposal to get rid of the 1,601 signs that lined the railroad tracks between Jersey City and Trenton because they spoiled the view.

Though the "good old days" are often remembered fondly, it was not an idyllic existence for everyone. Tracing Bound Brook's history through its newspapers, one is struck by the number of injuries, often fatal, which were reported about railroad personnel. Almost weekly during that period of time when Bound Brook was the railroad hub of the State, reports appeared about railroad employees being injured or killed on the job.

And, Bound Brook saw its share of railroad disasters too. In January of 1899 16 people were killed in a collision at West Dunellen, one mile east of Lincoln Avenue when a Lehigh Valley eastbound train on an excursion from Shamokin, Mt. Carmel and other parts of Pennsylvania rammed head on into

a west bound train. The cause of the accident was traced to only one track being used between Bound Brook and New Market because of a freight breakdown.

ACTS OF GOD

Bound Brook has also seen more than its share of natural disasters. The flood and fire of 1896 is generally considered the worst; the blizzards of 1888 and 1899 paralyzed the village; the floods in September of 1938 and September of 1942 are also characterized as being particularly heavy as was Hurricane Diane's effect on the Borough in August, 1955.

Efforts to fight a fire in January of 1904 were hindered by 20-degrees-below weather and four businesses were wiped out before the fire was contained, including George A. Caw's Grocery; O. K. Inderkied's store; Applegate & Grace meat market, and the store of confectioner G. Musa.

Like many other small towns which were not in a financial position to support a full-time fire department, Bound Brook developed a well-equipped—and dedicated—volunteer force. Ivy Hook & Ladder No. 1 was organized in 1889 and Hose Company No. 1 was started two years later, as was America Hose Company No. 2. The Watchung Fire Company was formed in 1907 and Relief Fire Company No. 4 was organized in 1914.

A "Martin Pumper," the department's first piece of motorized equipment, was bought in 1917.

No discussion of the natural tragedies which have beset Bound Brook would be complete without referring to the one which most area residents remember most vividly—Hurricane Doria in late August of 1971.

In the Chronicle for September 2, one picture was captioned "Main Street Mess—Main Street in Bound Brook was passable only by boat Saturday afternoon (August 28.)"

Eyewitness accounts of the first stages of flooding were numerous, and the Chronicle noted, "Residents of the west end are still talking about the 'wall of water' which thundered into the area about 6 a.m. Saturday." The newspaper also reported that the realignment of Middle Brook, though not yet completed, had saved many homes.

Doria had caused the floodwaters on the Raritan to crest at a peak of 37.47 feet, topping the previous high water mark established in 1903.

Another story in the Chronicle noted that American Cyanamid had "closed indefinitely" because of the flooding and the 2,500 workers were not expected to return for at least a month.

Mayor Samuel Patullo estimated the damage caused by Doria at \$17,000,000, including damage to Borough property of \$400,000, and an 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. curfew was imposed to discourage vandalism and looting.

The disasters through the years were costly in terms of property, and often lives, but there was one lighter note that was discussed in a 1971 Chronicle story about flooding in Bound Brook. According to the article, "For a number of years chronic flooding at one point in town, the South Main Street underpass, remained a mystery, particularly so because a valve had been installed for the express purpose of controlling the rising waters of the Raritan

River. In March, 1953, Borough engineer Wallace M. Graves discovered an open gravity-flow pipe that should have been closed as soon as the river began to rise to flood stage. An investigation revealed that when the river reached a certain height after heavy rain the water was backing up through the gravity line and filling the underpass.

"Maintenance crews assumed they were solving the problems by shutting the valve when the river reached a certain height. What they didn't know was that the valve they turned was not a customary right-hand variety but a stronger, but rare, left-hand thread type, and they were unwittingly causing the flooding. The notoriety of Bound Brook's valve spread throughout the country and the Borough's history records 1953 as 'The Year of the Left-Hand Valve.'"

THE GREAT WAR

The relative tranquility of turn of the century Bound Brook was interrupted by the War To End All Wars—World War I.

The Chronicle was filled with news of soldiers coming and going, shortages of materials, and programs to aid the war effort in the U.S.

In July of 1919 the Washington Camp Ground Association issued a souvenir booklet as part of a welcome home celebration for those from Bound Brook, South Bound Brook and Middlesex who had served in World War I. The booklet contains the names of the following from those areas who died, either in action or otherwise, in the Great War: Holmes Marshall, Michael Perone, Philip Biondi, Thomas Biondi, Carmine Cavoliere, Harry Corsini, Pellegrino Cofasso, Joseph Patrick, Edward Smith, Judson C. Manta, Gaitano Malatesta, Benjamin H. Giles, Russell Hall, Clarence R. Hodge, Nicholas Barnardo, William R. French, Emil Anderson, Robert E. Casey, Clarence M. McGill, Anthony Muskal, John H. Dorn and Russell Ferguson.

According to the booklet, some 500 men from the three villages had served overseas during the conflict.

THE ROARING TWENTIES

Bound Brook has always been justly proud of its school system. At the end of World War I the town already had Lafayette Elementary School (built in 1883 and rebuilt in 1961); LaMonte Elementary, which was started in 1914 and added to in 1923, and the High School, which was constructed in 1907 and expanded in 1924 and 1958.

In 1951 another elementary school, Smalley, would be built to join the two other public grammar schools and the three—St. Joseph's, St. Mary's and Temple Christian—private elementary schools.

Bound Brook entered the Roaring 20's with its industrial and business sector growing and expanding. The town boasted two theatres, and one, the Palace, offered vaudeville performances complete with a stringed orchestra. One of the well-known movie distributing companies of that era, Pathe Motion Pictures, had located in Bound Brook in 1907.

Organizations also flourished. The Community Chest was incorporated in



THE BOUND BROOK Post Office early in the 20th Century.

1924 and the Bound Brook Hospital was founded in 1927 as a private facility. then turned over to trustees 10 years later. The Rotary Club was established in 1922 and the Chamber of Commerce in 1929 (the latter by W. B. R. Mason, the publisher of the Chronicle).

In 1908 the Women's Literary Club, one of the oldest clubs of its kind in the State, had sponsored the first agency in Bound Brook for health and welfare services and this later developed into the Family Counseling Service. The building on West Second Avenue in which it currently is headquartered was donated by Caroline B. LaMonte.

The police department was organized in 1917 with William F. Nash as its first chief, a position he would hold for nearly 23 years. By 1930 village officials thought the town's growth would be more orderly with a planning board and in 1932 the first master plan was issued.

The Public Library moved into its current building in January of 1925 from the house in which it had originally started in 1902.

In 1933 a band was organized by the Monte Carmelo & G. Garibaldi Society, which had been founded in 1904 by a group of 34 Italian immigrants. The society bought its present lodge on Talmage Avenue in 1934 and its ladies auxiliary was formed in 1939.

One of the popular authors of the early 1920's was Lawrence (Larry) Evans, who had articles published in magazines such as "Saturday Evening Post" and had the four novels which he wrote all made into movies. Mr. Evans grew up and went to school in Bound Brook, and when he died of tuberculosis, while still a young man, in 1925, he was buried in Bound Brook Cemetery.

INDUSTRIAL STABILITY

Between 1930 and 1940 the Borough's population grew by less than 250 people to 7,616. But even though the 1930's saw little population growth in Bound Brook, there was industrial stability, at least during the early years of the depression.

According to an article in the *Journal of Industry & Finance* in 1931, Bound Brook's industrial activity actually grew during the early years of the depression. The article noted that in that year the Borough had 48 industrial establishments employing 5,000 and supporting a payroll of some \$7,000,000 a year. And, the village was still an important transportation hub with some 130 trains a day using its facilities.

A publication in the early 1940's which promoted Bound Brook's commerce mentioned many of the major industries in the area, including Calco Chemical (formed in 1915, it became a division of American Cyanamid in 1929); Johns-Manville (established in 1912); Bakelite Co. (established in 1932, it later became a part of Union Carbide); Sherwin-Williams; Bound Brook Oil-less Bearing; Chipman Chemical; R. B. H. Dispersion; National Broadcasting; Research Corp.; Causse Manufacturing & Importing; Silvray Lighting; L. D. Cook Co.; Runyon Field Co., and L. Gidding Co.

Among the familiar businesses mentioned were The Brook Theater, Archie's Men's Shop, and Efinger Sporting Goods.

As the 1930's gave way to the '40s, residents could still live cheaply in the Bound Brook area, regardless of whether they bought or leased. An eight-room house in the Borough, for example, could be rented for \$50 a month; an eight-room house in the Watchung mountains (with two baths) could be leased for \$75 a month, and a new six-room home in the Bound Brook area could be purchased for less than \$4,000.

And other items were also cheap. In early 1941 Applegate's market advertised center cut pork chops for 27¢ per pound; prime rib roast for 32¢ a pound, and chopped beef for 29¢. A new De Soto Sedan could be bought at Bolmer Motor for only \$898 and if you couldn't afford a car and had to walk Triangle Shoes was offering loafers for \$1.98 a pair.

A DAY OF INFAMY

Bound Brook was shattered by the news of Pearl Harbor just like every other community in America. The front page of the December 4 Chronicle had rather calmly discussed a Red Cross drive in progress, the high school play, pollution of the Raritan, and "cold patches on the sidewalk."

But the December 11 issued screamed that war with Germany and Italy had been declared, too, and the paper reported that Bound Brook's industries were ready to meet the challenge. Mayor Charles H. Fetterly, in a message to the village, noted that "For the past two years a Defense Council has been operating in Bound Brook. It has been carefully built up for instant functioning, notwithstanding there was a popular conviction that the U.S. would not be drawn into the war."

The December 18 issue of the Chronicle recorded the anguish that many

Bound Brookers with sons stationed in the vicinity of Pearl Harbor had gone through. Among the names that the newspaper mentioned over the next few weeks as being in the Pearl Harbor area on that fateful day was Henry Peppe who was with an anti-aircraft battery at Honolulu and sent his father a telegram that read: "Safe-Well. Henry."

Also named were: Edward A. King, the brother of Mrs. Vincent James; First Lieutenant Victor Crowell, who was in Manila; Privates Alexander Komorowski and William S. Garretson; Petty Officer Edward A. King, who was on the U.S.S. Trenton in the Pacific; Philip Klompus, and Daniel Meyer.

Naturally, war-related news dominated the local paper's headlines for the next few years, but other activities continued. Thus, a front-page story in the December 18, 1941, Chronicle concerning Christmas assemblies at the public schools shared space with an article about air raid instruction.

At the nearby Johns-Manville plant, as elsewhere, the newspaper noted that "full steam ahead, seven days a week, if necessary, is the order of the day." Johns-Manville employed some 3,000 workers at that time, many of them Bound Brook residents, and as the war started the minimum pay there was 55¢ an hour, with no male employe getting less than 60¢ an hour.

By the following spring, the rationing board was in full gear, with Isadore Kruman as its head, and the Chronicle noted that the board had finished with sugar registration and was starting on gasoline.

The Borough did its part to pay for America's role in the war. One activity was the "1944 Greater Bound Brook Exposition" which promoted the sale of war bonds with an outdoor display of industrial products manufactured in this area and a community pageant.

A MODERN BOUND BROOK

Bound Brook has changed little since the end of World War II. New businesses have moved in while many of the older establishments have closed their doors. And, of course, the town reflects the technological changes that have affected all American communities. But essentially the Borough is home to a diverse population, just as it always has been in this century. Workers at nearby industrial or other type of facilities still find Bound Brook a convenient and pleasant town in which to live, as do commuters who are still relatively close to "Broadway" just as they were in George LaMonte's day. And commuters and resident workers alike appreciate their town's proximity to open country side, the shore and the mountains.

In 1940 the number of people living in Bound Brook had inched forward to 7,600 and 10 years later it reached 8,374. The steady, but slow, growth continued into 1960 when the population reached 10,300 and by 1970 it leveled off to 10,450. The village now covers some 1.6 square miles of land with 19 miles of borough roads; 3.7 miles of county roads, and 2 miles of state roads.

By no means have the years since the war been free from local controversy. Residents have been up in arms about any number of issues—from a reservoir at Chimney Rock to selection of a new police chief. And the issues of the 1970's insure that there will always be more controversy to come.

But an interested, concerned citizenry is the very essence of any community's vitality. Had Bound Brook not had devoted, spirited citizens ready to sacrifice time and effort for their community, then it would have "died" as so many towns of all sizes have across the United States.

Instead, Bound Brook is celebrating the 85th anniversary of its incorporation as a borough this year and in just five years it will mark the 300th anniversary of the year in which two Indians, under the Council Oak, bartered the land on which the village now stands. That record—one of continued, but contained, growth—can be matched by few communities in this country and every citizen of Bound Brook has a right to be proud of that fact.