

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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NEW LIGHT ON NEHEMIAH GREENMAN PASTOR OF PITTSGROVE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1753-1779

By Bruce Bendler

On April 9, 1779, the Philadelphia Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relationship between the Pittsgrove Presbyterian Church and Nehemiah Greenman, who had ministered to that Salem County, New Jersey congregation for nearly twenty-six years. The congregation had set forth a number of accusations against Greenman; most of them charged their pastor with neglecting his pastoral duties. Greenman, who had absented himself from Pittsgrove for a number of months for fear of capture by the British in 1778, won some sympathy from the Presbytery because he “appear[ed] to have suffered in several respects.” Even so, Presbytery would not charge the congregation with “injustice or inhumanity.” The end of Greenman’s pastorate came after a long and sometimes rocky relationship with the Pittsgrove congregation. Much of this relationship has already been



Pittsgrove Presbyterian Church, erected in 1767 in Daretown, NJ.

(Courtesy Library of Congress)

chronicled.ⁱ This paper adds material that has more recently come to light and which further explains Greenman’s ministry.

The congregation at Pilesgrove (later Pittsgrove), New Jersey, called Nehemiah Greenman to fill its pulpit in December 1753.ⁱⁱ Over the years, the congregation had not always been faithful in meeting its financial obligations to its pastor. On more than one occasion, Presbytery had to intervene to insure that the pastor received compensation for his labors.ⁱⁱⁱ Even so, the church had apparently grown in numbers during Greenman’s pastorate, and a new brick church building, completed in 1767, replaced the log structure in use since the time of the church’s organization in 1741. Born in 1722 in Stratford, Connecticut, Nehemiah Greenman was the son of Jeremiah and Sarah (Blakeman) Greenman.^{iv} As a young man, Greenman attracted the attention of David Brainerd, the noted missionary to Native American peoples. Brainerd offered financial support, and no doubt spiritual encouragement, to young Greenman, enabling him to obtain an education at Yale College. After graduating from Yale in 1748, the Suffolk (New York) Presbytery licensed Greenman to preach the Gospel. He served briefly at Mariches and Quoque on Long Island, and was then called to serve at South Hanover in New Jersey on April 4, 1750.^v

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Message from the Administrator

Another winter has begun to abate here at the Salem County Historical Society and our hearts turn to spring. The Society has been busy on a great deal of internal matters over the winter, all centered on improving the care of our Library and Museum collections. Since acquiring a collections storage facility in the fall, the staff, Committee members, and Trustees have been working toward getting the building ready to begin moving materials in over the spring and summer. Needless to say, this challenging project is vital to the future of the Society and our ability to preserve and protect our vital historical materials. This is perhaps the biggest task the Society has ever taken on, and so far we are making excellent progress to make sure that it is not just done, but done correctly.

This spring also means the return of the Spring Open House Tour. On Saturday, May 7th, the Society will host one of our most popular events, our open House Tour. We are very excited to be featuring historic homes and sites that have never been on the tour before or have not been featured for many years. See page three of this newsletter and our website for more information on the House Tour.

The Society is always seeking to improve the condition of our collections as well as their storage. The Society is pleased to announce that we have received a grant from the Salem County Cultural and Heritage Commission for the conservation of one of our most important objects. The Sarah Hancock Sinnickson dress has been dated to the 1770’s and is believed to have been worn when she and her husband, Thomas Sinnickson, attended George Washington’s first inauguration. This textile is an outstanding period piece with connections to some of the oldest families in Salem County. Work on the project will begin soon. Keep an eye on future newsletters and our website and Facebook page for updates as the project goes along.

It is never too early to think about new exhibits, and the Historical Society is looking ahead to our next temporary exhibit in 2017. The next exhibit will focus on the decade of 1910 to 1919, with an emphasis on technology changes, social changes, and World War I through the eyes of Salem County natives and residents. The second decade of the 20th century brought great changes and big events to our communities, and to tell this story the Society will be seeking related objects and archival material for loan to the exhibit. Materials related to life in the county at that time, businesses founded or operating at that time (the Chambers Works for example) and local World War I participants are just some of the things we are looking for. So spread the word, and if you or anyone you know has relevant material that you would be willing to loan to the exhibit please contact us at the Society and let us know.

As we move into our spring programs and projects, we are always aware that what we do would not be possible without the support of our members and volunteers. We have some great tasks ahead of us in the coming year, and that support is more important than ever. We thank you, and encourage you to continue your support by visiting our facilities and see what we are up to. We look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Andrew Coldren
Administrator and Curator

The *Quarterly Newsletter* is published by the Salem County Historical Society Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Salem County Historical Society is to seek, document, preserve, interpret and perpetuate Salem County's heritage, and to enhance the awareness and appreciation of that heritage, through its research, collections, functions, exhibits, educational programs and publications, for the benefit of future generations and for the betterment of the community.

Research Library & Museum Hours

Tuesday through Saturday
 Noon - 4PM
 Admission Fee \$5.00
 Free for Members

www.salemcountyhistoricalsociety.com

Address Correspondence to:
 Salem County Historical Society
 83 Market Street
 Salem, New Jersey 08079
 Tel. (856) 935-5004

This publication may include historical materials that contain language or stereotypes reflecting the culture or language of a particular period or place. These items are presented as part of the historical record.



Please Recycle your newsletter.

Calendar of Events

- ◆ **Sunday, March 6, 2016**
Open House sponsored by the Historical Society of Penns Grove, Carneys Point and Oldmans Township (Penns Grove, NJ) featuring a new exhibit, *See You at The Y*
Time: 1:00PM-3:00PM
- ◆ **Sunday, March 13, 2016**
Quarterly Meeting 1:30PM Friends Village in Woodstown, NJ
Speaker: Anthony Melita Topic: Philadelphia Campaign of the American Revolution
- ◆ **Tuesday, March 15, 2016** Lecture at the Atlantic County Historical Society in Somers Point, NJ
Topic: New Jersey Women in World War II Time: 7:00PM
- ◆ **Saturday, April 2, 2016**
Genealogical Workshop at the Atlantic County Historical Society in Somers Point, NJ Time: To be announced.
- ◆ **Saturday, April 23, 2016**
Fort Mott World War II Reenactment, "Battle for the Rhine"
Time: 10:00AM-5:00PM
- ◆ **Saturday, May 7, 2016**
Salem County Historical Society's Open House in Fenwick's Colony Tour Time: 10:00AM-4:00PM
- ◆ **Sunday, June 12, 2016** Quarterly Meeting 1:30PM Friends Village in Woodstown, NJ
Speaker and Topic to be announced.

Society News

The Historical Society has welcomed two new volunteer interns in the last few months. Christie Nelson of Pennsville is a graduate of Farleigh Dickinson University with a degree in History. She is working on reorganizing our Church and Cemetery files and reaching out to Churches to update these files. She is also a volunteer at Independence National Historic Park.

Our second new intern, Ellen Durham of Elmer, is a graduate of Wilmington University with a degree in Behavioral Science. She is working on filing research requests for the Librarian.

On February 4th, the Historical Society hosted the Salem County Cultural and Heritage Commission meeting at our Grant House headquarters. The meeting was a great chance for the Society to liaison with the Commission about future projects and cooperation.

On February 9th, Rich Guido, the Administrative Librarian spoke on New Jersey in the French and Indian War at the meeting of the Genealogical Society of Salem County.

The Society will host its next Quarterly Meeting on Sunday, March 13th, at 1:30 p.m. at the Friend's Village in Woodstown. The speaker will be Anthony Melita, and he will be speaking on the Philadelphia Campaign during the American Revolution.

The Historical Society will again host the Spring Open House Tour, on Saturday, May 7th. This year the tour will feature historic houses, churches and other sites, many of which have either never been featured on the tour or have not been featured for many years.

The Society's current exhibit, "How to Make It in Salem County: Stories of Creativity, Craftsmanship, and Industry" remains open through the beginning of 2017. It features the Nobel Prize of Charles Pedersen, Salem County glass, samplers, pattern bricks, quilts, original local art and much more. If you have not seen it, please stop by and visit us.

Salem County Historical Society's Open House in Fenwick's Colony

The Salem County Historical Society's *Open House in Fenwick's Colony* tour committee is pleased to announce that plans for our Spring Open House Tour are well under way. This year the tour will be held on Saturday, May 7th from 10AM to 4PM.

When John Fenwick and his company arrived in 1675 they found a place that was already relatively diverse in its inhabitants. In addition to Native American populations, Swedish and Dutch settlers had made the journey to what would become the Garden State. Certainly the architecture found in Salem County reflects this great diversity and rich history; Few places in our nation can boast of the gems found right here and the 2016 tour will highlight a few of those gems.

We hope that you will support the Salem County Historical Society by becoming a Patron of the Tour. Your generous donation of \$50.00 will bring you two (2) tickets to the *Open House in Fenwick's Colony* tour. Members can also purchase additional tickets at the advance price of \$15.00 each. Please contact the Society for more information. Thank you and hope to see you in May!



David Davis House, Our Featured Home for this year's Tour

Membership and Public Outreach

We have continued to reach out to our members and the community during the past several months. In December, we were open during the Yuletide Tour, and we held our Quarterly meeting. In preparation for the meeting, we sent our first email reminder to members and friends of the society. If you did not receive an email and would like to be added to the list to receive future notices of upcoming events, please send your email address to VPresDevelopment@salemcountyhistoricalsociety.com. As we prepare to promote the society at events this spring, we could also use a few volunteers to help sit at our booths and share what our society has to offer. Please let us know if you can help in this way. Hope many of you are able to enjoy our upcoming events, especially the Open House Tour on May 7th, which will include sites in the Pittsgrove, Upper Pittsgrove, and Alloway regions!

--Bonny Beth Elwell



Our speaker for the December Quarterly Meeting was Peter Harp, Trustee and volunteer at the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse in North Wildwood, New Jersey. His presentation involved a discussion on New Jersey lighthouses along with an accompanied musical performance.



Brian Duffy, above, plays Christmas music in the Keeping Room during the Salem City Annual Yuletide Tour

New Jewish Synagogue

A Jewish Synagogue has been opened in the Rumsey Building with a membership of over twenty-five families. The present pastor is Rev. Schachetr. *Salem Standard and Jerseyman*, Salem, NJ, March 14, 1917

Annual Appeal Donors

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ALEXANDER'S ANNALS

50 YEARS AGO

Pennsville Progress

March 1966

- 150 acre farm sold on South Hook Rd. for Game Refuge by Dimitri & Helen Knejethe.
- Gary Seagraves—Pennsville Memorial High Senior—Rotarian of the Month.
- Third G. I. dies in Vietnam—Marine Private First Class Charles R. Wetzel following Charles Frederick Coiner and Captain Richard N. Gereau.
- Butler Gardens—Canton—Grand Opening Saturday.
- “Al and the Echos” plan to cut first disc—Al Henderson, Warren Sparks, Bobby Smith and Howard Herrmann.
- The Driftwood Inn—Pennsgrove—St. Patrick’s Day Party—Ham & Cabbage—50¢.
- Pennsville Jaycees acquire title to the Finns Point Lighthouse.
- Sharp Cheese—69¢ lb.—Food Fair.

75 YEARS AGO

Salem Sunbeam

March 1941

- Sears, Roebuck store to move from Walnut to West Broadway.
- Edward Linski buys Canton Cannery erected in 1881.
- Mt. Pisgah Troop #49 receives Boy Scouts of America Charter.
- Measles epidemic hits 300 children in Woodstown.
- “The Philadelphia Story” is at the Palace Theatre.
- Masonic Lodge, Mt. Moriah, No. 3 of Salem celebrates 122nd anniversary.
- Catalano’s Cafe—29 5th Street, Salem—Chicken and Spaghetti—also Music and Dancing.
- W. O. Schalick buys old Orthodox Meeting House on West Broadway—erected 1857.

100 YEARS AGO

Penns Grove Record

March 1916

- The new duPont Men’s Club now has 245 members.
- Russians begin new drive—1,500,000 more men ready.
- Seth Cuff born in Quinton, December 1, 1812, died in Atlantic City last week—103 years old.
- Ground broken for Camp Meeting Tabernacle — It will front on East Harmony Street and is 250 feet from North Broad Street.
- Charles Norton is the policeman on the beat from Union Corner to the Cove.
- Carney’s Point Post Office will open March 1st—West side of Shell Road at the south side of the permanent village next to the Kidd farmhouse.
- Best eatables in Penns Grove at Union Corner dispensed by Frank Sells and George Hill—“The Restaurant and Cafe”.
- Ordinance drafted to require Penns Grove streets to be curbed and cement sidewalks to be laid.

ASTRONOMY

The Ladies and Gentlemen of Salem, and its vicinity, are respectfully invited to attend an ASTRONOMICAL LECTURE to be given by the subscriber THIS EVENING, (Wednesday) at Sherron’s Tavern, to commence at 7 o’clock. An apparatus consisting of an Orrery, Magic Lantern, Globes, and Diagrams, will render the illustration perfectly plain to every observer. *ASAPH BUCK*

February 25, 1822. [*Salem Messenger*]

Tickets to be had at the Bar, or at the Door.—Price 25 cents.

Library Acquisitions:

Bunting, Dorothy M. Pennsville, NJ. Materials relating to Salem High School including reunion booklets and class trip photographs ranging from 1941-2014. (2015.058)

Heckler, Clyde. Haddon Township, NJ. Three photographic prints of the Abel Nicholson house in Elsinboro Township, New Jersey taken in October 2015. (2015.061)

Parvin, Patricia (in memory of Kathryn and Warner Parvin). Merchantville, NJ. Records, deeds, and photographs related to the Garton, Hanthorn, Shafer, Parvin, Supple and Young families. (2015.059)

Poss, John. Gastonia, NC. Envelope addressed to Richard M. Acton, Salem, New Jersey. (2015.051)

Powell, Jim (in memory of the Alloway families). Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Two 19th century photographs taken of George and Lydia Townsend by photographer G.H. McCall of Salem, NJ. (2015.063)

Taylor, Hal. Berlin, NJ. Book entitled, *The Illustrated Delaware River*, by Hal Taylor. (2015.064)

Library Purchases: Pennsville, NJ. Book entitled, *Early Wood Architecture of Cumberland County, New Jersey*, by Joan Berkey. (2015.056)

Museum Acquisitions:

Greever, Matthew. Alloway, NJ. One trophy top and two trophy plaques from Salem Boat Club Inc. dated August 1953 and September 1954. (2015.050)

Hoffman, Laurel Crispin (in memory of Florence Patrick Crispin). Oreland, PA. Quilt made by Florence Patrick Crispin and the Crispin family chamber pot. (2015.034)

Jones, Thelma. Salem, NJ. 1976 glass bottle depicting the John Jones Law Office on one side and the ship, *Griffith* on the opposite side. (2015.035)

Munyon, Alan (in memory of Ruby S. Munyon). Mannington, NJ. Glass bottle manufactured by Thomas Harkins of Salem, NJ and Daniel Brown Bottler also of Salem, NJ. (2015.021)

Conservation

The Salem County Historical Society has received a grant from the Salem County Culture and Heritage Commission for the conservation of the Sarah Hancock Sinnickson dress. This dress is perhaps the most important textile in our collection. Worn by Mrs. Sinnickson when she and her husband, militia leader and Congressman Thomas Sinnickson, attended George



Washington’s First Inauguration. The dress a rare, largely unaltered example of a dress from the 1770’s-1780’s. The conservation work will be done by Polly Willman of Gaithersburg, Maryland. Ms. Willman has been Conservator and restorer for the National Museum of American History and the Brooklyn Museum, and currently works as a conservator in private practice. The Society is very excited about this project, and will post updates on our website and Facebook page as it progresses.

(continued from Cover)

Greenman's early efforts as a minister earned the favorable attention of the great New England pastor and theologian Jonathan Edwards. Edwards praised the young pastor in two letters to his Scottish colleague William McCulloch. After the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s, Edwards perceived a decline in spirituality by 1750. In his own parish of Northampton, Massachusetts, Edwards voiced concern and grief over that decline, noting that "iniquity abounds" and that the "love of many waxes cold." Furthermore, "great contentions" and "separations and confusions" tore apart many local congregations. Edwards surely prayed for a new generation of pastors to arise and revive the revival.

Jonathan Edwards did not abandon hope. He saw signs of "reformation" in "one of our colleges" and signs of ongoing spiritual renewal in areas of British North America outside of his native New England. Edwards pointed to New Jersey as one location where the flames of revival continued to burn. There, "particularly through the efforts of Mr. Greenman," the Gospel witness persisted. Edwards gave some credit to David Brainerd for those successes, since Greenman had obtained his education through the "charitable expenses" of that "pious and eminent" missionary.^{vi}

Nehemiah Greenman also benefited from the spiritual and intellectual support of Connecticut theologian Joseph Bellamy. On January 16, 1750, Greenman wrote Bellamy to praise Bellamy's recently published *True Religion Delineated*.^{vii} Greenman told the author that, except for the Scriptures themselves, he had "never read any book that gave me more light and satisfaction."

True Religion Delineated provided Greenman a "method that suited the bottom of my heart so well." Indeed, Greenman even inserted a poetic tribute of praise to the author in his letter.

Greenman determined to use Bellamy's work to benefit his congregants in South Hanover. He read portions of it at his Wednesday night lecture, pronouncing its contents as true as the dichotomy between darkness and light, good and evil, or the product of two times two, four. Even so, Greenman confessed to some depression as he wrote from "solitary lonely" South Hanover. His "poor state of health" and "melancholy thoughts" persisted in spite of the spiritual boost gained by reading Bellamy's book. But the book clearly provided some much needed encouragement to the young pastor.^{viii}

In his second letter mentioning Greenman, Jonathan Edwards remained confident that he would prove useful in maintaining or reviving spirituality wherever he ministered. After expressing thanks to God for "small movings and revivals" in parts of Long Island and New Jersey, Edwards then recounted

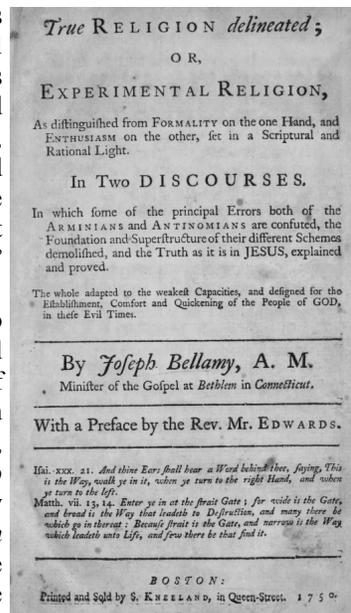
a meeting between himself and Samuel Davies, who had planted Presbyterian churches in central Virginia. Edwards noted that the New Light Synod of New York had appointed Robert Henry and Greenman to build on Davies's efforts. Edwards again praised Brainerd's role in Greenman's education, and hoped that Greenman would strengthen the Presbyterian witness in the Anglican Old Dominion.^{ix}

Nehemiah Greenman did not go to Virginia.^x Rather, he accepted a call to the Pilesgrove Presbyterian Church in Salem County, New Jersey. That congregation had recently suffered the loss, by death, of its organizing pastor David Evans. Greenman had joined the New Light Presbytery of Abington, Pennsylvania, in May of 1753, and the Pilesgrove church installed him as its pastor on December 5 of the same year.^{xi} In calling Greenman, the Presbyterians of Pilesgrove shifted their allegiance from the Old Light Synod of Philadelphia to the New Light Synod of New York. David Evans had firmly attached himself to the Old Light Synod but, by 1753, tensions between the two factions were subsiding and negotiations had already begun for a reunion of American Presbyterians, which took place in 1758.

Periodic revivals continued for decades after the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s. Greenman would witness one of them in nearby Cumberland County. In 1765, a revival broke out in the Cohansey congregations of Fairfield, Deerfield, and Greenwich, in Cumberland County, New Jersey. Pastor William Ramsey of Fairfield testified to a "remarkable and amazing Out Pouring" of the Holy Spirit which spread to neighboring congregations. As more and more folks made professions of faith, the Presbyterian pastors in the Cohansey watershed sought to insure that their new converts thoroughly understood their newly-acquired or reinvigorated faith. In the context of such revivals in congregations near his own, Greenman, now a twelve-year incumbent at Pilesgrove, wrote to the venerable evangelist George Whitefield.^{xii}

During the Great Awakening, Whitefield had indeed preached before an estimated 2,000 hearers in Pilesgrove on November 14, 1740, as he journeyed up and down the Atlantic coast. Greenman had no doubt met Whitefield at some point, perhaps during the course of his preparation for the ministry. In any event, the two had stayed in touch with each other through the years. When he wrote Whitefield, on May 20, 1765, Greenman expressed his gratitude for a "short but sweet" letter sent to him by the great evangelist, by then on his sixth journey to North America. Whitefield had written Greenman just before continuing that journey "to the southward."

Greenman first expressed his desire to see Whitefield in person, but he noted that "my lameness prevents the pleasure." The Pilesgrove pastor then confided to Whitefield that he frequently felt discouraged and despondent as he sought to accomplish his pastoral duties. Greenman placed part of the blame for that on his own spiritual shortcomings. He saw the Lord's "hand" and "rod" upon him because "I am not more distressed for myself and others." He remarked on God's "amazingly stubborn wrath," but attributed the persistence of that wrath to being "so long in correction but not yet humbled." Greenman characterized himself as "the vilest brother you ever had or can have."



Title page of Bellamy's, "True Religion Delineated."

Perhaps Greenman's discouragement and self-abnegation sprung from word of the revivals in Deerfield and Fairfield, six and twenty miles away respectively. But the Pilesgrove pastor expressed hope that the revival would spread to his own congregation.

"I am informed it has reached my own stupid congregation," Greenman noted. A "solemn assembly" on the previous day and several inquiries from individuals about spiritual matters overcame Greenman's despondency. In addition, he had been informed of "sundry others" searching for spiritual illumination.

Indeed, the reported stirrings brought a sense of euphoria to Greenman's heart as he pondered them. He pointedly asked Whitefield, "Is the millennium come?" Greenman evidently believed, as many theologians of that day did, that the thousand year reign of Christ prophesied in the Revelation of St. John would follow a widespread revival on earth. Greenman pondered the local stirrings, coupled with reports from New England, New York, and East New Jersey, to speculate about the divinely ordained consummation of history. Expressing his own "astonishment" and "a kind of unbelief," Greenman nonetheless saw the divine hand unexpectedly at work.^{xiii}

Even as Greenman and Whitefield corresponded about their possible role in abetting divine plans, the British colonists in North America moved toward a different type of historical reckoning with their colonial masters in London. In 1765, Parliament had passed the Stamp Act, requiring payment of a duty on a wide array of paper items. Despite the efforts of the colonists to reform the imperial order from within, the dispute eventually led to a constitutional crisis and the independence of thirteen British North American colonies. Nehemiah Greenman would find himself in the middle of that conflict, and he felt its severe impact on New Jersey.

But before Greenman became involved in the conflict with Britain, he faced a conflict with Andrew Hunter, Sr., one of his colleagues in the ministry. At a meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia on November 9, 1773, Hunter complained that Greenman had "treated him in an injurious manner with respect to his moral character." Presbytery called upon Hunter to furnish Greenman with "a copy of the particular charges, with the time and place and evidences, whereby he designs to support them." Both Hunter and Greenman were ordered to attend the next meeting of Presbytery "with all their evidences prepared for a trial."^{xiv}

Both men did appear at the meeting of Presbytery on April 5, 1774. Presbytery was "sensibly affected" that the "flames of contention" had arisen to "such a pitch between them." Nonetheless, Presbytery concluded that judicial process "could not attend to edification." Rather, it urged Greenman and Hunter to exercise "mutual forgiveness and forbearance" and "cultivate a spirit of love and peace, as being the very spirit of the Gospel we preach."^{xv} Presbytery's exhortation evidently proved successful. On May 28, 1774, the assembled elders appointed Greenman to a committee to oversee the trials of Andrew Hunter, Jr., for licensure to the ministry.^{xvi}

A few years later, Greenman became personally involved in the war for independence from Great Britain. The American defeat at the Battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777, and the subsequent British occupation of Philadelphia, brought the war very close to home. Like most Presbyterians, Greenman

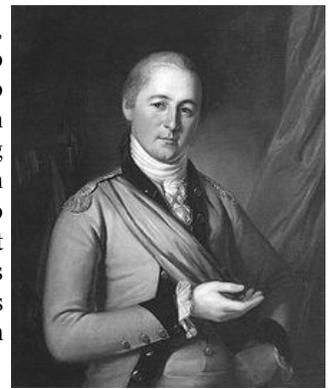
identified with the Patriot cause, and he affirmed his allegiance to the cause by offering assistance to a ranking officer from his own state of New Jersey, and a leading patriot from Delaware. Greenman offered shelter and protection to both men, and in so doing, put himself in considerable danger, as British raiding parties made forays into West New Jersey from occupied Philadelphia.^{xvii}

Among the Americans seriously wounded at Brandywine was Major Joseph Bloomfield of New Jersey, a future governor of the state. In his journal, Bloomfield reported that, after the battle along Brandywine Creek, he "was carried to Salem County" on October 3, several weeks after the battle. The next day, he was at Greenman's home in Pittsgrove. The young wounded officer recorded that he was there "safely lodged and well attended" until October 22. Dr. Isaac Harris treated his wound, and the major then proceeded further south into Cumberland County.^{xviii} Greenman then provided protection for an even higher ranking patriot, George Read of Delaware. Although Read had initially opposed independence in July 1776, he signed the Declaration and continued to represent Delaware in the Continental Congress, firmly identifying himself with the Patriot cause. When the British occupied Wilmington and threatened other parts of northern Delaware in the aftermath of the Battle of Brandywine, Read crossed the Delaware River into Salem County seeking refuge. During that sojourn in Salem County, Read spent time at the home of Nehemiah Greenman.

On January 31, 1778, Read, who had returned to his home in New Castle, Delaware, wrote a letter thanking Greenman for his "hospitality and kindness" when "in your neighborhood and under one roof." Read's family had accompanied him to New Jersey and had lodged with Greenman's neighbors, the Shinn and Howell families. Furthermore, George Read's wife, Gertrude, and Nehemiah Greenman's wife, Mary, discovered they had been acquainted with one another earlier in their lives, but, unfortunately, "could not renew their acquaintance" because of the "extreme hurry" of events.

Read reported that his return to Delaware was a little perilous. When crossing the river, a boat crew "belonging to one of the enemy's tenders" stopped Read's vessel and asked about its origin and destination. Read opined that a potentially more dangerous situation was avoided only because no British officer was on board the tender. Even so, Read sent his family westward toward the Susquehanna River while he remained in Delaware. Read also feared that with the melting of ice in the Delaware River vessels of the Royal Navy were "daily expected up." On a more positive note, Read reported that a Continental force under the command of General William Smallwood of Maryland had secured Wilmington.

George Read took Greenman into his confidence, speaking openly with him about military matters, confirming Greenman's loyalty and devotion to the Patriot cause. The Delawarean expressed his hope that the states would "fill up" the Continental regiments and make a "decisive blow" against the British force



Joseph Bloomfield, 1753-1823

occupying Philadelphia. Read believed that British occupation of the capital by so “inconsiderable a force” was “a ground for reproach against the middle states.” Finally, Read hoped to reclaim his carriage, “at your neighbor Newkirks.”^{xix}

Greenman replied to Read on February 9, 1778, after receiving another letter from him dated February 2. After acknowledging Read’s letter as “a token of your unmerited favor,” Greenman expressed his fears of British designs on Salem and adjacent counties. Greenman reported a communication from his colleague in the ministry, Reverend Samuel Eakin of Haddonfield, stating that folks there and in Burlington were already “packing up.” Greenman hoped that the weather would prove an ally, and deep snow would impede a British march into Salem County. Even with this danger facing West New Jersey, Greenman still expressed his concern for the Reads’ unsettled state and his disappointment that Mrs. Greenman and Mrs. Read could not renew their old acquaintance.^{xx}

The British army did evacuate Philadelphia in the spring of 1778, but not before Nehemiah Greenman’s life was greatly disrupted. The upheaval undoubtedly further impaired the pastor’s often fragile health. In March of that year, Greenman fled to Egg Harbor, where he had frequently supplied the pulpit in years past and where he remained for six months in 1778. His efforts to protect Bloomfield and Read no doubt heightened his fear of reprisals as British detachments conducted forays into Salem and adjacent counties.^{xxi} But his own congregation in Pittsgrove no doubt felt abandoned and thus complained to Presbytery, leading to the dissolution of the pastoral relationship in April of 1779. Presbytery did allow Greenman to supply the Pittsgrove pulpit after the formal dissolution, but even this arrangement abruptly ended with Greenman’s death in July 1779.^{xxii} A long, often fruitful, ministry ended on a sad, almost pathetic, note.

ⁱAllen H. Brown and Jown Ewing, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Pittsgrove in Salem County, N.J.* (Woodstown, New Jersey: The Printworks, 1991). Reprint of the original edition (Philadelphia: James B. Rodgers Printing Company, 1893). See also a typescript history of the church at the Salem County Historical Society, Salem, New Jersey.

ⁱⁱThe church was originally situated in Pilesgrove Township, and then fell within the boundaries of Pittsgrove Township when that township was established in 1769.

ⁱⁱⁱBrown and Ewing, 19-22.

^{iv}Stratford, Connecticut, Vital Records LR2:483, retrieved on Ancestry.com.

^vRichard Webster, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1858), 654-6.

^{vi}Jonathan Edwards to William McCulloch, July 6, 1750, in George S. Clayhorn, ed., *Jonathan Edwards’s Letters and Personal Writings* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 356-9 in Harry Stout, general editor, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* 16.

^{vii}Joseph Bellamy, *True Religion Delineated* (Boston: 1750).

^{viii}Greenman to Joseph Bellamy, January 16, 1750/1, *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society* XVI (Hartford: by the Society, 1916), 29-31.

^{ix}Edwards to McCulloch, November 24 (NS), 1752, in Clayhorn, *Letters*, 542-5.

^xThe Synod of New York had encouraged him to do so in its meeting on May 17, 1750. See *Records of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 241.

^{xi}Webster, 654-6.

^{xii}For a description of events in the Cohansey region, see John Fea, *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 49 ff.

^{xiii}Nehemiah Greenman to George Whitefield, May 20, 1765, Photostat copy in Religious Folder, University of Chicago Special Collections, Chicago, Illinois. Also in

the George Whitefield papers, Volume II, on microfilm at the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

^{xiv}Minutes of the (First) Presbytery of Philadelphia, 160. Microfilm at The Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

^{xv}*Ibid.*, 166.

^{xvi}*Ibid.*, 175. Andrew Hunter, Jr., was nephew of Andrew Hunter, Sr.

^{xvii}For an account of Revolutionary activity in Salem County, see Frank Stewart, *Salem County in the Revolution* (Salem, New Jersey: Salem County Historical Society, 2004), reprint.

^{xviii}Mark Ellender and James Kirby Martin, eds., *Citizen Soldier: The Revolutionary War Diary of Joseph Bloomfield* (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1982), 127-9.

^{xix}George Read to Nehemiah Greenman, January 31, 1778, in William T. Read, *Life and Correspondence of George Read Signer of the Declaration of Independence with Notices of his Contemporaries* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1870), 295. The original copy of this letter, and Greenman’s reply of February 9, 1778, is in the Richard Rodney Collection of George Read letters, Folder 27, Delaware Historical Society, Wilmington, Delaware.

^{xx}Greenman to Read, February 9, 1778, in William T. Read, 297.

^{xxi}For an account of these, see Stewart 45-70.

^{xxii}Minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, 213-5.



BRUCE BENDLER earned his Ph.D. at the University of Delaware in 2000. His dissertation was entitled The Emergence of Rural Federalism: Political Culture in Delaware 1760-1812. Bendler teaches history at the University of Delaware. He contributed two articles to a history of Newark, Delaware, published on the occasion of the city’s 250th anniversary in 2008. He has also published articles in *Delaware History* and *New Jersey History* and the *Quarterly Newsletter* of the Salem County (NJ) Historical Society. He is a contributing author to *New Jersey in the Revolution: Where the Battlefield Meets the Home Front*, published by Rutgers University Press (April 28, 2015). His current research interests focus on political history in Revolutionary and early Federal Delaware and New Jersey.

2016 Upcoming events

Pittsgrove Presbyterian Church:

March 20th at 3:00PM - Dueling Organs by organists Gordon Turk and Michael Stairs

April 30th - 275th Anniversary of the Church’s incorporation

May 7th - The old church building will be one of the sites on the Society’s Open House Tour

June 5th- Annual Memorial Service at old church building

September 10th - Daretown Day Festival

Church Mortgage Burned

The congregation of **Mt. Hope Church** on Sunday had a gala day in the nature of a mortgage burning. Former Presiding Elder Rev. A. R. **Shockley** conducted the service. The officials stood around the altar while Mrs. Sarah **Hopkins** and Miss Sadie **Mills** burned the paper. The mortgage was taken on the church property on Eakin Street, January 16th, 1906, and closed with the Franklin Loan and Building Association June 30th, 1916. Dr. F. H. **Butler**, of Philadelphia, will preach at Mt. Hope Church, to-morrow evening at 7:30 o’clock at the re-union of the Shining Star Club.

Salem Standard and Jerseyman,

Salem, NJ, November 1, 1916

MARSHALLTOWN: CALL FOR PEOPLE

Marshalltown is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which affirms that it is a significant place of historic African American agency and autonomy. This antebellum free-Black settlement in Mannington Township goes back to the 1830s. Its preservation will depend on the community knowing and sharing its story. I am seeking descendants of people who lived in Marshalltown, recent or passed-down stories of Marshalltown, and anyone who might be interested in Marshalltown's history and preservation, who may wish to participate in future research efforts, such as oral history and archaeology.



Stories may reveal events that took place for which there are no records, such as migration from the South, including self-emancipation by enslaved people. Were there Native Americans here as well?

Family names from Marshalltown include Adams, Anderson, Beckett, Brooks, Burris, Carter, Cooper, Daniels, Dunn, Gibson, Giles, Graves, Green, Hackett, Harris, Hersey, Jefferson, Johnson, Kelly, Marshall, Mink, Moore, Morris, Myers, Netter, Newman, Nutter, Patterson, Pickney, Porter, Reason, Richman, Richmond, Russ, Russell, Sanders, Saunders, Sawyer, Scott, Seals, Shadrack, Shields, Shockley, Shorts, Spencer, Thomas, Trusty, Tunis, Turner, Valentine, Viney, Wesley, Watson, Williams, Wilson, Young, and others. White families associated with Marshalltown include Ale, Jacquet, Bassett, Bilderback.



Contact Janet Sheridan at 935-7635 or jlsheridan@verizon.net to be put on a contact list for future activities.

Alloway Now Has Electric Lights

Current Applied Wednesday Last By Mary H. Ewen, Aged 94 Years

Salem Standard & Jerseyman, Salem, NJ, February 1, 1922

Townspople Celebrate

History was made at Alloway on Wednesday last and the date—1922 will long be remembered as the day when the residents discarded their old kerosene lamps and fixtures for the modern system of lighting—electricity. It was a great event for the townspeople and many former citizens joined with them in celebration.

How appropriate it was, too, for the oldest person in the town, Mrs. Mary E. Ewen, lovingly known as "Grandmother Ewen," to apply the switch that gave Alloway its first electric current for street lighting and for homes and business places.

Electric service was made possible through the untiring efforts of the Alloway Chamber of Commerce, of which Rev. A. G. Graham, Jr., is President; Dr. W. T. Good, Vice President; William F. Eisensmith, Secretary and Wade O. Ewen, Treasurer. Some obstacles were encountered in promoting the project but this organization of live wires kept plugging along until they accomplished their purpose.

It was just 6:55 o'clock Wednesday night when "Grandmother" Ewen turned on the current and there was a rousing cheer as the lights blazed forth. What a moment this must have been for this estimable old lady. One who had experienced the days of the tallow candle, then the oil lamps and now electricity.

With the town lighted a banquet was given in Dunham's Hall and until eight o'clock a sumptuous repast was served by some of the women of this place. During the evening music was furnished by an orchestra from Penns Grove.

Donald J. McCloskey, of Penns Grove, a member of the firm of Summerill & McCloskey, electricians, officiated as toastmaster and briefly related how it had been made possible for Alloway to get electric service. Rev. A. G. Graham, Jr., and Rev. C. S. Lawrence, the local pastors, complimented the citizens on this great improvement and praised the Chamber of Commerce members for giving their hearty and united support to the project from its first inception.

Julius Theobald, General Manager of the Electric Company of New Jersey, the corporation furnishing the current, made a most interesting talk on "How to Keep Abreast with the Times." Mr. Theobald said the town was fortunate to have a set of live energetic men who are eager to keep pace with the times and are imbued with civic pride. He predicted that many more good things would come to Alloway in the future through the activities of the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Theobald extended thanks for himself and those who worked on the line for the assistance given and by the many acts of kindness the work progressed smoothly and pleasantly at all times. Mr. Theobald said he knew the people of Alloway would enjoy and appreciate the value of electric service and would soon wonder how they ever got along without it these many years.

The entertainment consisted of music by the orchestra, vocal selections and readings and impersonations. Miss Betty House won prolonged applause with a solo and impersonation, as did Mrs. A. J. Brant by her clever recitations. Both had to respond to encores.

The celebration was a great success, everyone was in the happiest mood, and retired quite content that Alloway is now as up to date as most places of her size in the State.



In the town, twenty-one street lights have been installed, approximately sixty houses are supplied with current and also with porch globes that help illuminate the street, and most of the business places are lighted. Both the churches also are furnished with current. The housewives were not content to have the up-to-date lighting but have equipped themselves with modern appliances to lessen their work.

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Membership Report:

<u>Individual</u>	<u>In Memoriam</u>
Sharon DePamphilis , Harrisburg, PA	Carol Bautista , Salem, NJ
Peter Harp , Beesley's Point, NJ	Joanne Davis , Pennsville, NJ
Mike Zappala , Woodstown, NJ	

Albert Johnson, a son of William A. Johnson, the painter, is the first to start a Jiminy service in Salem and began business last Wednesday. *Salem Standard and Jerseyman*, Salem, NJ, June 30, 1915

Volunteers

Bruce Bendler, Ph.D.	Peggy Kavanaugh
Robert A. Brooks, Ph.D.	Noel Kemm
J. Harlan Buzby	Ronald E. Magill
Gretchen Buzby	Craig Maue
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Dave Culver	Dale Murschell
Peg Danner	Barbara Nathan
Michael Dixon	Dennis O'Hare
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Brian M. Duffy	Christie Nelson
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Call (856) 935-5004 or visit

www.salemcountyhistoricalsociety.com

**Opening of Palace Theatre
New Playhouse Crowded
Monday Evening**

The new Palace moving picture theatre located on West Broadway through the enterprise of Allen Peterson, was opened on Monday night and a large crowd attended the initial performance.

This playhouse, which is a decided credit to South Jersey, will hold approximately twelve hundred people and it was filled to its capacity on the opening night. Many were the expressions of praise heard concerning the new theatre. The seats are very comfortable and the house well lighted and the decoration has been done in the best of taste.

Mr. Peterson had for his opening show a very high class film and the large audiences the first night not only enjoyed the new movie house, but also the picture itself. [Cecil B. DeMille's *Forbidden Fruit* with Agnes Ayres, Theodore Roberts, Kathlyn Williams, and Forrest Stanley.]

The people of Salem will hope that abundant success will follow Mr. Peterson in his venture.

Salem Standard and Jerseyman, Salem, NJ March 16, 1921

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RETURN TO: SCHS, 83 Market Street, Salem, NJ 08079

PHOTO ID PLEASE!



The Old Jail—We have received from Mr. **McCall**, photographer, an admirable “counterfeit presentment” of the venerable stone pile on the corner, which has had a close connection with genuine judicial presentments for nearly a century. Those of our citizens who desire a memorial of the ancient structure, which will soon be removed, should secure a copy of the picture from Mr. **McCall**.
Salem Sunbeam,
Salem, NJ,
June 8, 1866.

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QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER
Volume 60, 2015**
To receive your index please send **\$2.00** to:

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Salem County Historical Society
83 Market Street
Salem, NJ 08079

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Unidentified photographs in the collection remain a perennial perplexity!
Please help in the identification of the persons in this group photograph located in the Acton family file captured by the Salem photographer G. H. McCall.

The Salem County Historical Society receives general operating support grants and project grants from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of the State. Additional funding has been made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of the State, through the Salem County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Salem County Cultural and Heritage Commission.



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