

Scrapbook



The principle fight was over the Township Committee. Three men were chosen, instead of five, and they were all Republicans—Henry C. Randolph, Lewis W. Miller Jr. and John J. Marsh. Stites M. Parse was elected Freeholder in place of Charlie Martine; and Sam Ball, who was good at picking winners, succeeded John Darby as Assessor. Tom Nichols, an out-and-out Democrat before he took office, was reelected. Like most successful Town Clerks, he was a poet and story teller, and avoided all political arguments. George Squier, another Democrat, was reelected Collector. He was considered

the best all 'round hand shaker in the county. The Election and Town Meeting was held at the house of Excelsior H. & L. Co. at Scotch Plains. The volunteers asked only for \$100, and it was considered a modest appropriation and everybody voted for it. Another item which helped out in the emergency was the increase in the appropriation for "incidental expenses" from \$100 to \$300. Before he voted, the Town Wag asked the Judge of Elections, Dan Perry, if incidentals covered "still alarms". It remains to be noted that Scotch Plains has been a Republican town ever since.



Eggs Fusticated—1895

Peg-Leg Charlie Holmes rested his wooden member upon the dashboard and clucked, "Go 'long, you, Mabel, go 'long!" The owner of a castoff spring wagon and a boney mare, recently given to him by neighbors who thought the Negro would be better off ricocheting than hobbling into town, he felt proud as a peacock. The mare limped, the wagon creeked and Charlie crooned. It was a big day—Saturday!—on his calendar. He was gwine for to see his Rachel, at Missus Peddies.

Rachel was cook at Peddies. Energetic, efficient, plump and good natured, she commanded the high wage of \$15 per month and board. She went by the name of Holmes and was said to be Charlie's wife, though she seldom visited him at his cabin on Summit Road, preferring the comfort and gratuities of the Peddie mansion to that "smelly ole place Charlie libs in." But she was devoted to the crippled Negro. On Saturday mornings, she met him in the driveway near the barn, with a new-made lemon meringue pie, a loaf of bread, and a package of choice Havana cigar butts for his pipe. On this morning, she had a big "s'prize" for him—a small basket filled with eggs (secretly gathered from the coops in the "ebenin"), which she placed cautiously on the seat beside him. Then she told him to hold out his hand. "Dere you is," said she, and laid in his eager palm a bright silver dollar. "Dat's for you to get some woolen mittens and wristlets. Winter soon be here, chile, an' you needs 'em drivin'.

Charlie's eyes sparkled with admiration. He kissed her. "I'll get dem mittens sure 'nuff, honey," he said. "Yes, ma'am!" Resolution failed, however, when he reached town. He couldn't make the mare go straight to the store. "Jus' natchully" she stopped at the hitching post in front of the hotel, and he had to step in for a minute to talk with Mr. Coombs, the proprietor. . . .

Late that afternoon, Alzamora Buck, Esq., paused in his walk homeward to observe a curious spectacle. A mare attached to a spring wagon was munching grass contentedly under the big oak tree in the bend on Mountain Avenue; while its owner, stretched upon the seat, his wooden leg projecting over the front wheel, snored, and from his wooly-black head there dripped a filmy yellow substance. Mr. Buck poked the sleeper with his walking stick. "Charlie!" he called, "wake up! Your eggs are scrambled!"

Charlie groaned and opened his eyes. Blinking, he lifted his stocky body into an upright position. "Ugh! Ugh!" Something seemed to tell him that the wicked debil had got the better of him again. Ugh! Who was that gen'lman standing there, grinning at him? Sure 'nuff, it was Mr. Buck. He bowed politely and smiled. "Good ebenin', Suh;" then raised his hand to his cheek. Something was wrong there; it felt greasy. He looked at his hand. "For de Lawd sakes, dem's eggs!" he exclaimed. "Yes, suh! But dey ain't scrambled, Mr. Buck. No, suh! Dey's fusticated. Dat's what dey is—fusticated!"