

HISTORY OF OLD SCOTCH PLAINS

It's Churches



ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH on Park Avenue, between School No. 1 and the High School, is the second subject in our series of histories of Scotch Plains' churches.

Seventy three years is not a very ripe old age as other parishes count their years. Nevertheless All Saints' can trace her beginning of active life when Scotch Plains and Fanwood were very small communities to the growing communities they are today.

It was on All Saints' Day, November 1, 1872, almost 73 years ago, when the Rev. Dean Rodman, then Rector of Grace Church, Plainfield, and the Rev. Father Ward of Holy Cross Church, North Plainfield, conferred with Charles Kyte of Fanwood, Township of Scotch Plains, under the direction of the Church Extension Society and decided that Episcopal services should be maintained in this section.

The following year, 1873, it was decided that a church should be erected if possible, but at least regular services be maintained and through the assistance of neighboring and visiting clergy this was done.

The Rev. Charles Sykes became Priest in charge of the then small mission when, in 1874, the activities had expanded so as to require a permanent priest in residence.

Services were held first in the old Baptist Church and then later in the Fire House in Scotch Plains.

Land located in Front Street was donated for the erection of a church building, but because it was felt a church building should be built between Scotch Plains and Fanwood, the Front Street property was sold. The land on which the church now stands was given by the late Dr Christopher Bell.

The cornerstone of the present church building was laid April 29th, 1882, just ten years after the need for Episcopal services in this community was first discussed. Services began the latter part of October in that year and at the opening service the choir from St. Anne's Church, in Brooklyn, N. Y., sang the service and the late Bishop Walker of Western New York preached the sermon. The Rev. Charles L. Sykes was priest in charge of the new church.

The church was free from debt in 1893 and consecrated by the late Rt. Rev. John Scarborough, D. D., of the

Diocese of New Jersey on All Saints' Day of that year.

In 1889, the Rev. Charles Sykes was succeeded by the Rev. William M. Reilly. Other priests who served the parish are, the Rev. William Mulford, the Rev. Edward Gabler, the Rev. B. S. Levering, the Rev. G. H. Butler, the Rev. Oscar S. Michael, the Rev. F. Verdoja, the Rev. George Gruman and the Rev. C. M. Budlong.

Many memorials have been presented to the Parish and the interest on an endowment fund is used for repairs. A memorial organ installed in 1936 bears a bronze tablet with the words, "Memorial Organ Given by Friends of All Saints' in Memory of Loved Ones."

The Rev. William F. Bassill, the present Pastor, came to All Saints' in 1932 from Princeton, N. J., where he was assistant rector at Trinity Church. He served overseas with the AEF in World War I, and is chaplain of Community Post 209, American Legion, a member of the Forty and Eight, chaplain at Bonnie Burn Sanatorium and a director of the Union County Tuberculosis League.

The church service flag contains 60 stars.

The Parish during the years of its existence as a spiritual center serving both Scotch Plains and Fanwood has grown from very small beginnings. The names of many of the early founders are now written on the Scroll of those who have fought the good fight and now rest from their labors.

Pfc. Walter R. Huckins, of Fanwood, a patient in the Army's Valley Forge Hospital, Phoenixville, Pa., recuperating from wounds suffered in the Sicilian invasion, spoke of his experiences on the "Vox Pop" radio program some weeks ago.

A bazooka gunner, Pfc. Huckins has been confined to the Army Hospital for the past 13 months. Wounded in action rescuing another wounded soldier while serving with the Paratroopers in Sicily, he has lost his right eye, his senses of taste and smell and was made deaf in one ear when hit by shrapnel. The 14th American to land in the Sicilian campaign Pfc. Huckins was wounded the fifth day of the invasion.

He has received the Purple Heart. He has been stationed in thirteen hospitals abroad and three in this country. He also was wounded while serving with the Paratroopers in North Africa previous to the Sicilian invasion and was returned to duty after a brief period of convalescence.

Walter has been doing swell work on speaking tours to assist in Red Cross drives and to promote the sale of War Bonds.

A rehabilitation organization to aid returning service people of Scotch Plains has been set up with Wm. L. Sampson as chairman and is ready to function in regard to all phases of the Federal and New Jersey G I Bill of Rights. A similar organization in Fanwood is headed by Forey D. Stonehill. George Rockwell is general chairman. More details will be given in subsequent issues.



Second Lieutenant William Kitz recently entered the aerial offensive against Germany on an 8th Air Force bomber attack against the marshalling yards at Rheine, vital supply line with the Nazi front lines. Bill is the pilot of an 8th Air Force B-17 Flying Fortress in the 305 Bombardment Group commanded by Col. Geo. Y. Jumper of Natoma, Calif. His group is a part of the famed Third Air Division, the division cited by President Roosevelt for its now historic England-Africa shuttle-bombing of the Messerschmidt airplane factories at Regensburg, Germany, 1943. Bill joined the Enlisted Reserve in December, 1942, and was called to active duty in February, 1943. He received preliminary training at Albright College, Reading, Pa., and was classified as a pilot at Nashville, Tenn. He received his pre-flight training at Maxwell Field, Ala. Was stationed at Bennettsville, S. C. for primary flight training; Shaw Field, S. C., for basic and Freeman Field, Seymour, Ind., for advanced. He was graduated and received his commission Apr. 15, 1944 at Freeman Field and went to Columbus, Ohio, following his graduation. He is a graduate of SPHS and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kitz who live at 2104 Westfield Avenue.



Les Thompson, leaving for home, gives Bill Kitz the low-down on how it's done.

The 1945 municipal budget was adopted by the Township Committee at its last meeting. It provides for an estimated tax rate of \$5.01, an increase of 22 points over 1944. A large number of citizens voiced objections to items in the budget.

Karl A. Lindner, 53, general manager and director of research for the American Smelting and Refining Co., died Saturday, March 3d, at his residence, "Idle Meadow Farm" on Cooper Road where he had resided for nine years. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mary Louisa Johnson Lindner.

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