

## INNS AND INNKEEPERS

One of the most interesting landmarks in Scotch Plains, and probably the oldest for many miles around, is the old tavern at the corner of Front Street and Park Avenue, "The Road to the Mountain." This old house bears the date of 1737 on a stone in the fireplace. No proof has been presented that it was built to be used as an inn, or tavern. There was very little need for an inn at that time; there were few travellers, and the roads were poor. However, some time before the Revolution, in 1769, a new route was arranged by the Swift Sure Stage Line, which ran from Philadelphia, through New Hope, Flemington, Somerville, Bound Brook, Scotch Plains and Elizabeth-town. Reference: "Early Transportation in and About New Jersey," page 113 of the Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society, April 1924—C. C. Vermeule.

Great changes were taking place; a political storm was brewing; many messengers were riding up and down the country-side—on the King's business, as well as many who—later—were to be called "rebels." Weary travellers found refreshment—for man and beast—at the Inn of Jonathan Osborn, as early as 1771. This is the first reference I have found for an Inn-keeper in Scotch Plains (New Jersey Archives, Newspaper Extract for 1771).

Osborn's Tavern was located on (present) Front Street, midway between Park Avenue and Terrill Road; as shown