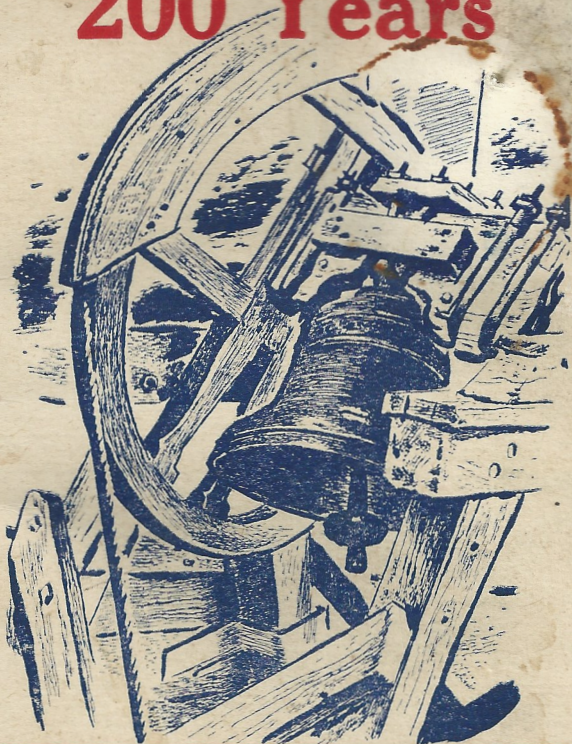


200 Years



Cumberland County

1748 NEW JERSEY 1948

*This PDF was created by the
MRT Heritage Society*

200 Years



CUMBERLAND COUNTY

1748 ^{NEW}
JERSEY 1948

Compiled By
J. Meade Landis

Important dates in the History of Cumberland County in New Jersey from the beginnings to the war for the Preservation of the Union.

All vacant lands being vested in the Crown according to the law of Great Britain, in

- 1663—King Charles II in accordance with the royal privilege granted to his brother, The Duke of York, afterward King James II, a territory extending from the Delaware Bay to what is now the eastern part of Maine, together with the right of government.
- 1664—The Duke of York, conveyed all of what is now New Jersey to John Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret.
- 1673—Lord Berkeley conveyed his undivided half of New Jersey to Major John Fenwick, a veteran of Oliver Cromwell's army and a convert to the Quaker principles.
- 1675—John Fenwick, being in debt, conveyed all but a tenth of his holdings for the benefit of his creditors

with the result that a group of Quaker businessmen, notably William Penn, subsequently obtained substantial control. The same year, in June, John Fenwick arrived from England in the Delaware Bay to claim his property.

1676—New Jersey was divided. Carteret taking all north of what is now Burlington County and calling it East Jersey. The balance was called West Jersey and John Fenwick had designated his remaining tenth part "Salem". Powers of government were still vested in the proprietors, and full religious freedom was proclaimed.

1682—West Jersey was divided into two counties, called Burlington and Salem.

1683—The Great Street in Greenwich. This street was planned by John Fenwick and laid out 100 feet wide for about a mile northward then 90 feet and 80 feet as it came to the Head of Greenwich.

1686—Richard Hancock erected a sawmill on Mill Creek (in what is now Bridgeton in the neighborhood of Pine Street.)

Gloucester County was established.

1687—Bowentown Site of early Baptist Church. On the old Bowentown road, a short distance west of the corner, once stood a Baptist Church. These Welsh Baptists had migrated from Swansea, Mass. in 1687. Their pastor, who came with them, was Rev. Timothy Brooks, whose farmhouse home was on the south side of the road nearly opposite the church building. In later years this pastor and some of his people united with the Cohansey Baptists then near Sheppard's Mill.

1690—Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers throughout West Jersey in full practice of their religion.

1690—Old Baptist Burying Ground. The Cohansey Baptist Church was organized in a log house on the south side of the Cohansey River. In

about 1710 they united with some of the Welsh Baptists of Bowentown and built a frame meeting house between Sheppard's Mill and the Cohansey River. In that locality the Cohansey Baptists remained until they built a church at Roadstown in 1802. In the burying ground will be found the grave of Deborah Swinney, "the first white female child born in Cohansey." (Greenwich)

1692—Cape May County was established.

1700—The Presbyterian Church at the Head of Greenwich. This church was organized about 1700. By 1735 they built their first brick meeting house in what is now their old cemetery on the west of the road at the Head of Greenwich. Their present commodious brick edifice was erected one hundred years later in 1835. The land for the first meeting house was given by Jeremiah Bacon, son of Samuel Bacon, who founded Bacon's Neck in 1682.

1702—After experiencing much difficulty with governmental administration, the people of New Jersey petitioned the English Crown to assume its responsibilities and "Our Sovereign Lady Anne" named Lord Cornbury the first Royal Governor of New Jersey.

1709—The bounds of Salem County were redefined and west side was divided into North and South Cohansey Precincts.

1716—The first bridge was built over the Cohansey at the head of Tidewater.

1720—Though not formally laid out Fairfield and Greenwich were recognized as townships.

1725—Deerfield. This place began to be settled in 1725 by persons from the Fairfield district. In 1737 a log meeting house was erected for the Presbyterians just south of the present structure. The original brown-stone building was erected in 1771.

1729—St. Stevens' Episcopal Church was built at Greenwich.

1730—The Gibbon House in Greenwich. Built by Nicholas Gibbon who, with his brother, Leonard were offered 6000 acres of land in Fenwick's West Jersey, if they would leave England and settle in this English province. They came in about 1725. Leonard built a grist-mill on Newport creek, now Davis' Mill.

1731—Old Stone Tavern in Greenwich. Located on Main Street opposite to the Dr. Wood mansion. The stones used were, probably, field stones, noted mined stones, in which case these stones were carried here by glaciers in prehistoric times. The first sessions of the Cumberland County Courts were, probably, held in this building in 1748.

1731—The Bond House and St. Stephen's Church. Nearly opposite to the Tea-burners' monument on the Main Street of Greenwich is a house built about 1731 with high steps in front. That part of the dwelling was the home of Dr. Levi Bond. The house

is sometimes called the rectory of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

1733—Unsuccessful effort to form North and South Cohansey Precincts into a new county to be called Greenwich.

A NEW COUNTY IS BORN

1748—On January 30 the Colonial Legislature passed a bill erecting the west side of Salem County into a new county to be called Cumberland. It was named by Governor Jonathan Belcher to honor the Duke of Cumberland, brother of the King and victor over Prince Charles, the Young Pretender to the throne of England, whose hopes were forever quenched at the battle of Cullodon. The bill divided the county into townships: Greenwich, Hopewell, Stow Creek, Deerfield, Fairfield, and Maurice River. The population of the new county was "less than three thousand." The first Court was held at Greenwich.



This PDF was created by the
MRT Heritage Society

1748—In December, Cohansey Bridge (now Bridgeton) was chosen the county seat by a vote of the inhabitants.

1752—Cumberland County's first court house was erected in the center of what is now Broad Street at the top of the hill and was ready for occupancy.

1754—Surveyor Daniel Elmer laid out for Alexander Moore on the east side of the river at Cohansey Bridge a formal plan for a town to be called Cumberland.

1755—The first bridge was erected over Maurice River.

1756—First bridge is built across the Maurice River.

1760—"The Hospital". On the Roadstown road to the Head of Greenwich beyond the first turn on the right a farm house occupied by Dr. Elizah Bowen, Jr., between 1760 and 1783. He collected leaves, barks, and roots from which to make his medicines. He gave special attention to the treatment of cancer.

1765—Cohansey Bridge was formally designated "Bridgetown".

1768—The Sheppard House in Greenwich. This brick dwelling at the foot of the great street, and facing a roadway to the wharf is on the site of the house built by Mark Reeve in 1686 and a part of the house may be the original structure. John Sheppard lived here in 1768 when he started a ferry to the south side of the river. This ferry was operated for seven years. The old sycamore tree in front of the house was planted by John Sheppard in 1770.

1770—The brick residence at the northeast corner of the cross roads in Roadstown built for Ananias Sayre. The adjoining store building has been used for more than 125 years.

1770—The second house on the left going south on the Roadstown road, is a part brick house built by David Bowen. He was the last Royal Sheriff.

1771—Orthodox Friends' Meeting House in Greenwich.

1772—Cumberland first elected two separate representatives to the Colonial Legislature. Theretofore Cumberland and Salem had sent representatives jointly.

1772—Downe Township was erected. This township was named for the wife of Governor William Franklin, son of Benjamin Franklin. Mrs. Franklin's maiden name was Downes.

1773—The first school established in the county seat.

1774—On the night of December 22nd, a group of patriotic citizens of the county, disguised as Indians, seized a quantity of British tea lately arrived at the Cohansey River in the brig Greyhound and burned it in the market square in Greenwich as a protest against British tyranny.

1775—The first company of Cumberland County marched off to the Revolu-

tionary War. Grand Jury refused to indict the tea burners. "Plain Dealer", called New Jersey's first newspaper, published in manuscript at Potter's Tavern opposite the County Court House.

INDEPENDENCE

1776—Declaration of Independence was read from the Cumberland County Court House steps and the Liberty Bell was rung. State Constitution of 1776 ratified.

"No other county has a brighter record for self-sacrificing patriotism than has Cumberland. The ravages of war did not touch her borders, but she was prompt to assist in the defense of the adjoining counties, and her sons fought gallantly from the disastrous battle on Long Island to the glorious consummation of American hopes at Yorktown."

POST-REVOLUTIONARY HIGHLIGHTS

- 1780—The Old Stone Church at Fairton was erected.
- 1790—Population of Cumberland County 8,248 by actual count.
- 1791—The General Giles house was erected on the north side of Broad Street, just west of Giles Street in Bridgeton. General James Giles was a Revolutionary War Veteran, the County Clerk. He was the first Worshipful Master of Brearley Lodge, F and A. M.
- 1793—Post office established in "BRIDGETOWN WEST", so designated to distinguish it from "BRIDGETOWN EAST", now Rahway.
- 1794—"Argus and New Jersey Centinel", the county's first printed newspaper started in Bridgeton.
- 1795—Bridgetown Presbyterian meeting-house, now called Old Broad Street, opened for worship. Pronounced one of the finest examples of Colonial Georgian church architecture in the country.

1795—The Wood Mansion. This brick Colonial house was erected by Richard Wood.

1795—Just across Bacon Street, in Greenwich, from the Dr. Wood mansion, is now and long has been a general store known as the store of Richard Wood. Greenwich early became a noted shopping center.

1800—Population of Bridgetown was 400.

1801—Glass manufacturing, the first in Cumberland County, started by James Lee at Port Elizabeth. Iron works in operation on the Manumuskin under management of Eli and Wesley Budd.

1801—Millville Township erected.

1802—At the east edge of Roadstown, formerly called Sayre's Crossroads, stands the Colonial meeting house of the Cohansey Baptist Church.

1803—Joseph Buck laid out the town of Millville.

1806—Glass manufacturing begun in Millville by James Lee.

- 1810—The Brown Stone School House in Greenwich.
- 1811—Cumberland County's first public library organized and called Bridgetown Library Company.
- 1812—Cumberland County's citizens prepared defenses in the second war against Great Britain.
- 1815—Benjamin and David Reeves organized the Cumberland Nail Works, Bridgeton's first factory.
- 1816—Cumberland Bank, the first financial institution in southern Jersey, commenced business in Bridgetown.
- 1820—Population of Cumberland County 12,668.
- 1827—The Reinhardt House in Greenwich is built of brick showing the architecture of that day. The mounting door on the south side is very unusual.
- 1828—The first steamboat, the "Essex", ascended the Cohansey River to Bridgeton.

- 1834—The Ewing House in Greenwich. This house, situated on the great Street, opposite to the road from Sheppard's Mill was built by James Josiah Ewing, a grandson of one of the tea-burners. This brick house is a good example of the best Colonial architecture with its ample fire-places and floors of varying levels.
- 1836—The Hicksite Meeting House. About 1836 there were some differences of opinions among the Friends. At that time a few members withdrew and erected the Hicksite meeting house midway between the great street and the Head of Greenwich.
- 1836—Stratton Buck and Company commenced the manufacture of glass in Bridgeton.
- 1844—Cumberland Mutual Fire Insurance Company was organized.
- 1845—Regular steamboat service was established between Bridgeton and Philadelphia.

1854—West Jersey Academy, south Jersey's first preparatory school, was opened in Bridgeton.

1857—Millville National Bank chartered.

1858—Gas for illumination introduced in Bridgeton.

1860—The county's population had increased to 22,605.

1861—In July, Charles K. Landis of Philadelphia, made his 30,000 acre purchase agreement with Richard Wood. On August 8th, he drove a stake in the center of a mile square town plot and named it Vineland.

1861—Cumberland County rallied to the defense of the Union pouring more men into the ranks of the Army than any other community of its size in the nation, with the exception of a community in Massachusetts. South Jersey Institute opened up in Bridgeton. Landis Township was erected. With the reestablishment of Peace, Cumberland County, with the rest of the nation, embarked on a new era of growth and prosperity.

200TH ANNIVERSARY

PROGRAM

9:00 A. M. Historical Tour. Leaves from Court House.

1:00 P. M. Parade.

4:00 P. M. Address, Hon. Charles Brannan, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture. Reviewing Stand, Court House.

8:00 P. M. Musical Festival. Bridgeton High School Stadium.

10:00 P. M. Fire Works. Bridgeton High School Stadium.

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY'S
200TH ANNIVERSARY**

Board of Chosen Freeholders

Planning Committee

Walter H. Myers, Director

Edgar Hand, Chairman

Roy Yates

John Shannon

Amos Haines

David Thomas

General Committee

Herbert W. Letts, General Chairman

W. Lowell Campbell, Assistant General Chairman