

The Story  
of  
Long Island Presbytery  
and Churches  
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# *The Story of Long Island Presbytery and Churches*

The 250th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, seemed a propitious moment for a backward glance at Long Island Church history. Two of these churches can go back 316 years, only 20 less than the Pilgrim Fathers' landing at Plymouth. The story of Long Island is the story of the early churches. These Settlements centred round these independent congregations which formed the nucleus of Presbyterianism in this country. These early churches preceded the first Presbytery by 66 years; they also preceded the Westminster Confession of Faith which became the doctrinal basis of Presbyterianism.

It is the proud record of Presbyterianism that it has contributed more to the early shaping and character of the American nation than any other church.

Old Presbytery and Church records are not always exciting reading and I have endeavoured to put into a more popular form some of the old facts, so that this brief narrative may have a wider acceptance.

It has been prepared at the request of the Long Island Presbytery and I am grateful to the Rev. Paul Bahner, Stated Clerk, and the Rev. W. Coyle, Stated Clerk Emeritus, for their help in giving me access to old Presbytery Records.

GEORGE NICHOLSON

## THE STORY OF LONG ISLAND PRESBYTERY AND CHURCHES

- 1609 Henry Hudson, English navigator working for the Dutch, landed at what is now Coney Island and left his name on the famous Hudson river.
- 1614 Another early visitor was Adriaan Block, a Hollander, on the good ship "Restless". He rounded Lange Eylandt and also left a mark of his own in Block Island off Montauk.
- 1620 The Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth. They were not excursionists. They meant to live here and die. Their spiritual leader was a layman, Elder or Presbyter Brewster. This democratic spiritual leadership was to characterise and shape American Church history.
- 1627 John Endicott started the Massachusetts Colony. Like the Pilgrim Fathers they were Puritan in thought but unlike the Fathers they were not Separatists. They wanted traditional Church purified. This was the Colony which was to make fastest headway. Among the colonists who flooded in through this Settlement many were Presbyterians. The majority of the English Puritans in the 17th century were actually Presbyterians. They became "Congregationalised".

### ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRST LONG ISLAND CHURCHES (From 1640 to 1700)

#### 1640 — SOUTHOLD

Precisely on October 21, the Rev. John Yonges (Young) came with some Settlers across the water from Newhaven Colony to Southold. They were chiefly English emigrants from Norfolk, England. Yonges' father was Vicar of Southold, England hence the name of the new Colony. They established a Committee to scrutinise newcomers to the Settlement. The first Church was located a short distance west of the present edifice and is now marked by Founders Monument. Yonges died in 1672. The Settlers then turned to Boston to seek "an honest and godly minister".

Southold was slow to relinquish its independent status. Its ministers became members of Presbytery when that was possible, but Southold as a Church remained 196 years separate before actually uniting with the Presbyterian Church.

The first church, probably built of logs, was erected in 1641 and made into a jail in 1684 when the new church was built.

The date was March 14 but the place was Lynn, Mass. when some Settlers got together to plan a move south, to Long Island. These original "Undertakers" drew up "The Disposal of the Vessel", a document in which they declared their intentions to "go to the place where God shall direct us to begin our intended plantation". This place turned out to be Southampton. They also agreed in the new Settlement "to lay downe all power of ordering or disposing, at the feet of Christ and His church". Incomplete without a spiritual guide it was a sure instinct which led them to invite the Rev. Abraham Pierson of Boston to accompany them. Pierson was a Yorkshireman, graduated at Cambridge in 1632 and emigrated to Boston in 1639. The site of the original church of the Settlers is behind the Southampton Hospital (marked by a plate). The first Settlers carried their guns to the church and stacked them during the service. They were also summoned to the church by the beating of the drum. The praise was led by a Precentor.

A catechism specially written for the Indians was a reminder of the presence of a large number of Indians in Long Island.

Pierson later founded what is the Newark Presbyterian Church, New Jersey. His son, Abraham Junr. became the first President of Yale.

The next minister was the Rev. Robert Fordham, installed in 1649 (memorable year because of the beheading of King Charles I). Fordham was 'passing rich' on "three score pounds" per year. English currency was in use and was the equivalent of \$300.

A new Church in 1652 told of quick expansion. This Meeting House was 30 feet by 24 feet. In the graveyard at this time was laid Phoebe, wife of Thomas Halsey murdered by two Pequot Indians that year. Men sat on one side of the Meeting House; women on the other. Boys were in front. Bad behaviour and restlessness not tolerated. All went to church.

In 1679-80 Eighteen Pounds fifteen shillings was given by the Town of Southampton, a free will offering towards the relief of the "Captives which are in slavery in Turkey".

The third Meeting House here arose in 1707 a year after the first Philadelphia Presbytery meeting. More important to the "Undertakers" was the fact that it was in "the eighth year of our Sovereign Lady Queen Anne". The purchase deeds expressly stated that the new building was to be used by "the Congregations of Christian Protistants usually known and distinguished by name or stile as Presbiterians".

BRIDGEHAMPTON — So called because of "a bridge made in the early settlement over Sagg Pond". Southampton had spilled over to Mecox and Sagaponack and this became the village of Bridgehampton. A church was erected in 1670. But it was not till 1695 that the Rev. Ebenezer White was installed as first minister. In 1712 Southampton gave land to Bridgehampton "for the use of the Presbyterian Church and no other".

Church goes at that time had a two hour sermon in the morning and then went home and ate lunch cooked on Saturday. Forthwith they returned for another two hour sermon in the afternoon, measured by the hour glass which was duly turned at the end of each hour in the pulpit. There was no heat in the church. Foot warmers contained a pan of burning charcoal. Pews were boxed in to prevent drafts.

EAST HAMPTON — Settled in 1648 also by families from Lynn, Mass. They named it Maidstone, the town in Kent, England from which they had come. In 1662 it was renamed East Hampton. The first church was erected in 1652 (20 feet by 26 feet) it was enlarged in 1673 and again in 1698. The first minister the Rev. Thomas James emigrated to the New World in 1632. The Rev. Nathanael Hunting who was to leave a mark on this town went in 1696 (installed 1699). He was there for 50 years and took the Church through momentous days.

1655 SETAUKET — A small group of men from New England settled near Setauket. "This Long Island territory was controlled by 2 of the 13 Indian tribes viz the SEATALCOTTS (north) and the UNKE-CHAUGS (south). On April 14, 1655 land was purchased for 10 coats, 12 hoes, 12 hatchets, 50 muskets, 100 needles, 6 kettles, 10 fatheom or 60 feet of wampum 7 pep (a measure) of powder, a pair of child's stockings, 10 pounds of lead and 12 knives." A pioneer group explored the site, made the agreement and then the main group followed. The name given to the place was ASHFORD after the English town of that name. Later it was changed to Brookhaven. The Indian name of Setauket still remains.

The Rev. Nathanael Brewster, grandson of Elder Brewster of the Mayflower came in 1655 to visit his 3 sons who had settled there. He became minister. A Meeting House was built following a vote to erect one in 1671.

## BEGINNINGS IN WEST LONG ISLAND

(17th Century)

**GRAVESEND** — Bounded by Conynen island (Coney Island). One of Hudson's crew was killed here by an arrow shot by a native. First patentee was Antonie Jansen de Salee (1639). Lady Deborah Moody and Sir Henry Moody were given a general patent for this place in 1645 by the Dutch. English people from Massachusetts began to settle here also. In 1657 Quakerism came to the island and George Fox also paid a visit to this spot.

**FLATBUSH** — An order was issued by Dutch Governor Stuyvesant (1654 Oct. 13) to permit Rev. Johannes T. Polhemus to preach at Mid-wort and Amersfort (Flatbush and Flatlands). Probably this part was settled long before. Earliest purchase from the Indians in Long Island is dated 1635.

**HEMPSTEAD** — On Dec. 13, 1643 Chief Tackapousha and "The One Eyed Sachem" along with other Indians conveyed to the Rev. John Fordham and John Carman (agents of the Settlers) 64,000 acres covering today's Hempstead Township for the equivalent of 100 dollars. First minister of Hempstead was Richard Denton ordained in England by the Church of England in 1623. Services were non-denominational following the usual early settlement pattern. Independents and Presbyterians were to feel the hand of ecclesiastical oppression here and later, infamous Governor Cornbury settled a minister against the will of the people, turning the Church over to Episcopalians. The Manse and church lands were also confiscated. The Rev. John Thomas writes "After much trial and fatigue I am through God's assistance, safely arrived . . . at Hempstead. They are generally Independents or Presbyterians and have hitherto been supplied ever since the settlement of the town with a dissenting ministry. The country is exceedingly attached to a dissenting ministry and were it not for His Excellency . . . we might expect the severest entertainment here. . . . The people are all stiff dissenters not above three church people in the whole parish. . . ." (By "church people" he meant "Episcopalians.")

**FLUSHING** — Settled under Dutch patent in 1651.

**JAMAICA** — First called Rusdorpe (it meant "quiet village"). Settled in 1656 by the Hempstead folk under Governor Stuyvesant. The Church was built in 1662. Later The Rev. George McNish the Scot brought over by Makemie was to become Pastor in 1712. It was definitely Presbyterian at that date, if not before.

**BROOKLYN** — The first European family lived here in 1625. In 1659 owing to the bad condition of the roads from Flatbush the Governor

was asked for permission to call a minister. The Rev. Henry Solinus from Holland came in 1660.

**MANHATTAN** — The present MARBLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH (Fifth Avenue) claims to be the oldest Protestant Church in America with a continuous service (328 years) dating from 1628 when New York was New Amsterdam. Dr. Vincent Peale (author of "Positive Thinking") is minister.

## THE FIRST PRESBYTERY 1706 AT PHILADELPHIA

The inspired idea of establishing an American Presbytery is credited to the Rev. Francis Makemie. Makemie had been ordained by the Presbytery of Laggan, N. Ireland. He had responded to an appeal for ministers by the Ulster Scots Settlers in Maryland. He landed in 1683. He was a merchant as well as a minister. He lived on the Eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay. His zeal and wealth enabled him to move through the Colonies and in the Barbados and after labouring in various places returned after 19 years to London to appeal for funds and to find men. His previous itinerant evangelistic missions had given him a real conception of what the new country was needing. He saw that the establishment of a Presbytery would give organisational unity to scattered congregations as well as organisational authority. This power to license and ordain ministers without reference to any ecclesiastical Body overseas established Presbyterianism as an American Institution thirty to forty years before any other ecclesiastical denomination.

Seven ministers came together for that first, fateful Presbytery in 1706. This was also the year Benjamin Franklin was born. They made Makemie Moderator. They gathered at the church of Jedediah Andrews whose Philadelphia church was composed of Presbyterians, Baptists, Independents and Quakers. Others were Rev. John Hampton of Ulster, the Rev. George McNish, Scottish Presbyterian who had been recruited by Makemie and was not yet settled. Also the Rev. John Wilson of New Castle, Delaware, the Rev. Nathanael Taylor of Patuxent, Maryland, and the Rev. Samuel Davis of Lewes, Delaware. None was from Long Island, at this time.

Soon after this Makemie and Hampton were arrested as "Strolling Preachers" or preaching without the Governor's permission in New York and Long Island respectively. They were two months in jail without trial. At the trial Makemie made his own brilliant defence and the verdict was "Not guilty". This did not stop Governor Cornbury from charging him £83 for costs, a big sum in those days. By this time public opinion was thoroughly roused.

The persecution and trial focussed attention on Presbyterianism and from that time it never looked behind.

## PRESBYTERIAL BEGINNINGS IN LONG ISLAND

(1716 - 1800)

- 1716 The Presbytery of Philadelphia met with "forceful" McNish as Moderator and by now minister of JAMAICA church. The Rev. Samuel Pumry (Pomeroy) of Newtown was also present. At this meeting "A call from the people of South-Hampton on Long Island" to a Mr. Gelston is presented "wherein the said people do subject themselves to us in the Lord."

Thus the total to date was two ministers and three churches representing Long Island.

At this same meeting the Synod of Philadelphia was formed of four Presbyteries viz Philadelphia, New Castle, Snow Hill (never constituted) and Long Island. Long Island was thus part of the first Synod.

- 1717 This first Synod met at Philadelphia in September and reported progress. Mr. Gelston had been installed at Southampton by the separate and new L. I. Presbytery with McNish, Pumry and the Rev. George Phillips of Setauket. Joseph Lamb was ordained at Mattituck. The settlement of the Rev. Joseph Anderson in New York City was effected and both he and his church were added to the L. I. Presbytery. Clearly Presbyterianism was on the move. Makemie's inspired act has given Presbyterianism almost half a century lead. The system became self propagating by being grafted on American soil. Other churches had no organisational unity as they were always looking across the seas for direction.

In 1723 McNish died and the Presbytery suffered a decline. Doughty McNish had combatted "with Scotch energy and resourcefulness" . . . "the Episcopal piracy in Jamaica".

There was trouble in the New York City church. Congregations were slow to submit to Presbytery. This congregation left the L. I. Presbytery which developed so slowly that in 1738 it was linked with East Jersey to form the Presbytery of New York. Travel difficulties were the greatest obstacle. A visit to the Philadelphia Synod meant one week of the two was spent in travelling. The first Synod represented 19 ministers, 40 churches and 3000 members.

- 1729 So far Presbyterianism had concentrated on government and organisation. It was inevitable that a doctrinal basis must be established. At the Synod of 1729 it was agreed that ministers must

accept the Westminster Confession and the Longer and Shorter Catechism. These classic writings have nourished the faith for nearly three centuries and have been responsible for putting content and depth into Presbyterianism.

- 1740 A great Quickening swept the land like a tidal wave and many were initiated into a personal experience of God. Organisation was impossible to hold or contain the unpredictable outbursts of God propelled men. As often happens it was accompanied by some distasteful excesses of zeal. The conflict of the radical and conservative forces; the New Lights and the Old Lights split the Synod of Philadelphia and caused inner disharmony for 18 years. The New Lights were given to flaming oratory, fierce spotlighting of sin, and unreserved emotionalism. The Old Lights kept to a reserved dogmatic and reasoned theology. The New Lights emphasised revelation and regeneration; the Old Lights organisation and education. The initiative lay with the New Lights who preponderated in ability and zeal. The split was healed in 1758.

The College of New Jersey which was at Elizabethtown, after removal to Newark was finally located at Princeton.

Lack of Presbyterial control in Long Island resulted in the fierce rivalries of the Great Revival having no forum. It touched only individuals and local churches, here and there.

- 1747 Meantime the Long Island Presbytery started to write a new chapter of Presbyterianism on the Island and the earliest preserved minutes began . . . "At Southampton on April 8, 1747. . . . Having taken into consideration the broken State of the Churches of Christ within Suffolk County, the Prevalency of Separations and Divisions together with the growing mischiefs those disorders are big with. . . . They declare adherence to the Westminster Confession, the Larger and Shorter Catechism . . . and agree to make the Directory of the Church of Scotland on congregational and classical Assemblies their guide. . . .

. . . To adhere to the Synod of New York and Philadelphia."

Ministers: Ebenezer White, Nathl Mather, Ebenr Prime, Ebenr Gould, Sylvanus White, Samuel Buell.

Laymen: Isaac Jefsup, Josiah Howel, Nathl. Hunting Junr., Daniel Osborne, James Hains"

James Reeve and Henry Wells were present unofficially from Mattituck and signed seperately.

Most of the Presbytery business of these days was concerned with the examination of candidates for the ministry. This was not merely a searching academic affair but an inner pry for which

there was, one inevitable phrase viz "an experimental knowledge of religion".

Very rarely was there trouble before the Presbytery but when there was, none of the harrowing details was omitted, even in moral offences.

Mediation by the Presbytery between a pastor and church in Bedford and Hanover revealed that the Presbytery's jurisdiction at that time extended to the mainland.

- 1764 was the date of the one and only Synodical review of Presbyterian Churches in L. I. Churches were willing to have Presbytery aid to find supply or officiate at ordinations but chary in accepting supervision by inclusion as members.

American Presbyterianism was Presbyterianism blended by something from Switzerland, France, Scotland, England and New England with the chief shaping force coming "from the mighty men whose seed plot was the small but wonderful Province of Ulster".

A New England contribution was the ingrained reverence for the title of Deacon as against Elder.

- 1764 "Came a great religious movement which burst forth as a life giving fountain in Easthampton and spread all over Long Island and far beyond it. In two years it doubled the membership and strength of many churches far and near". Thus in twenty years after the formation of Suffolk Presbytery there has been made from Montauk to Newtown, a religious revolution as marvellous in degree and excellence as the civil revolution which soon thereafter followed, and made the separate Colonies one united Nation, with freedom in Church and State, from the Penobscot to the Mississippi".

(Between 1700 and 1800 no less than 385,000 Ulster Scots came to America. They were predominantly Presbyterian. Most were absorbed in the frontier area of Pennsylvania. They formed the hard core of the Revolution. Driven from their homeland by harsh treatment they had no love for the Crown. Credably too they were ripe for independence. Presbyterianism through its church courts and its democratic set up, provided ready made machinery for making vocal the revolutionary sentiment. The Presbyterians were often completely identified with the Colonial cause. It was a Presbyterian Minister The Rev. John Witherspoon who was one of the signatories of the Declaration of Independence.

Presbyterianism whose bedrock principle was "constitutional republicanism" possessed at the time of the Revolution "the most powerful inter-colonial organization on the continent in this yearly

Synod. Eleven of the fifty-five members of the Continental Congress who signed the Declaration of Independence have been identified as Presbyterians. Walpole, Prime minister of England called it a "Presbyterian rebellion".

The Long Island Churches reflected this attitude and took their share of the war.)

- 1775 Presbytery did not meet for nine years from this date "by reason of the calamity of civil war". Churches were used as barracks. Active patriots escaped to Connecticut. The Rev. Joshua Hartt was fired upon when preaching at Smithtown. Later he was imprisoned and chained to a negro. British officers quartered themselves on aged Mr. Prime's manse with little improvement of books and furniture.
- 1789 National Presbyterianism seems to step in pace with National Government and the first post Revolutionary General Assembly met in Philadelphia on May 21, 1789 (three weeks after the inauguration of President Washington).
- 1790 The Presbytery of Suffolk which had been organized in 1747 now became the Presbytery of Long Island with all Long Island churches under its jurisdiction. After 19 years the three churches west of Suffolk County were again transferred to New York

### LONG ISLAND CHURCHES CONTINUED (1700 - 1800)

SOUTHOLD — The quiet parish of Southold was shattered by the advent of the Rev. James Davenport, fanatical New Light adherent. Whitefield also came to America in 1739. "He preached a few sermons (some of them forty times). They were adapted to produce emotion and rouse excitement among the people. They abounded in denunciation; and our politicians know that this is the road to popularity. Among his converts were Jonathan Barber and James Davenport. Both became insane; but Davenport later recovered his health and reason" writes Whitaker, the wise "Nestor" of the later Presbytery. Whitaker is a bit harsh.

The genesis of this revival is traced to Jonathan Edwards who began as a Presbyterian minister in New York with little initial success. When he was at Northampton revival broke out in 1734. "No longer the tavern but the ministers house was thronged". It spread to the Middle Colonies. The Presbyterian Tennents were in the van. Gilbert Tennent spearheaded the revival and Whitefield on his first visit joined him. It was at the Philadelphia Synod that Davenport met Whitefield, which was to have such repercussions on Long Island. Davenport's evangelistic zeal was charac-

terised by crude excesses. Davenport with Barber (of Orient) calling themselves Jonathan and his standard bearer invaded on one occasion Hunting's parish of East Hampton. Hunting showed charity and restraint in spite of personal attacks on his character. Years later Davenport was big enough ("recovered his reason" Whitaker) to make a generous apology. Few mention that it was at Davenport's campaign at Bridgehampton in 1744 that Peter John Cuffee was converted and later became the revered minister of the Shinnecock Indians to which he belonged.

A vivid picture is drawn of Davenport in Prime's history. Southold was split by him. He drew a strong line between the converted whom he called "brethren" and the unconverted whom he called "neighbours," which was not entirely appreciated by the "neighbours" who were excluded from the sacrament.

The year 1740 also brought a Southold lad to the fore—Azariah Horton who until 1750 worked devotedly for the Indians.

Pointer to Revolutionary feeling was shown by the Rev. John Storrs fleeing from Long Island to become a Chaplain in the Revolutionary army. He returned in 1782 to find his manse wrecked.

A domestic matter was raised through Southold in 1757 when one of the members married his deceased wife's sister, causing "uneasiness and grievance" in the parish. Presbytery was asked for an opinion. Presbytery is never lacking in its willingness to do so and their verdict is that "it is unlawfull and finfull (sinful)". The couple are debarred from the sacrament.

**SOUTHAMPTON** — Southampton began the new century with a great new bell brought from England and weighing 173 pounds. It was landed on the ship "European" and taken off at North West, the port of East Hampton and carried by ox team to its destination.

At the helm from 1727-82 was the Rev. Sylvanus White, and so excellent was his grip that this congregation was undisturbed by the New Light-Old Light split, or by Davenport's fiery harangues or even the Revolutionary war. He helped Azariah Horton with his work and the Shinnecock Indian Church was their memorial.

In 1729 French Huguenot Boyer gave silver mugs to the church.

Religion was still a grim business in the 18th century and the Rev. Herman Dagget (1791-5) seemed to have the approved behaviour for the minister of those times. Dagget was a man of undoubted talent "is a scholar, circumspect, social and cheerful BUT "was never known to laugh". He was considered "just the man to preach to ministers".

**BRIDGEHAMPTON** — A long minute about trouble with the Separatists of the New Light era was recorded in Presbytery minutes. It is difficult to read this 200 years afterwards and to glimpse the passion of these people who met in Captn Job Pierson's house at 9 a.m. and deliberated with Presbytery with no visible success till noon. They adjourned and resumed with "much scorning stiffness". A compromise was reached at the end of the day. The contention of the elect ones was that "Mr. White's ministry is not agreeable to the rules of Christ's visible kingdom". The meeting was resumed at 7 a.m. next morning and a reconciliation effected. It broke out again when they next saw Mr. White. He again appealed to Presbytery. They counselled patience and "pray God to support you under all your Afflictions and Trials . . . for your eternal advantage, to be your staff in Old Age, your Comforter in the hour of death and grant you a happy translation from this world of Sin and Sorrow".

Itinerant preaching was frequent in the old days. Tennent the great Presbyterian evangelist preached here in 1741, holding the first evening meeting ever held here. He was merciless to some girls "whispering and trifling" in the gallery. It was effective. People were astonished and asked the aged Pastor "What preaching is this?" He replied "He sows good seed but harrows it very mightily".

In 1764 there was a season of revival under Mr. Brown.

During the revolutionary war there were troops in this vicinity and services were suspended.

Diminutive but pious Aaron Woolworth came in 1787. It was a church which was developing a reputation for ministers who stay a long time.

**EAST HAMPTON** — Erudite Nathaniel Hunting had the pleasure of seeing a new Church built in 1717; the largest and best on the Island, complete with bell and clock. During his term the East Hampton Trustees "voted right or wrong the town money shall go to ye payment of Mr. Hunting's taxes". Why right or wrong? Because in 1691 a Law had been passed in N. York Colony providing for the settling of the ministry and raising a maintenance. By "ministry" the Colonial Assembly meant Puritan Clergy as well, but the Governor rejected this interpretation. The Long Islanders however refused to contribute by law to the Church of England but only to the Church of their choice. East Hampton like the other early Island Churches was a Town Church. "They were all alike Town Churches, and all possibly Presbyterian in doctrine. Some called themselves Presbyterian. Others deemed it prudent,



very early (Hempstead for example) to name themselves churches of Christ only" Whitaker).

In 1746 Samuel Buell began a long and fruitful ministry. Next year the Church joined Presbytery of Suffolk.

Note 1764 for it was the year of Revival when 150 were added to this church.

MISSIONARY—At this time Samuel Occum emerges as the most colourful figure of that time. Born of the Mohegan Tribe in Connecticut and converted at the age of 18 in the '40 revival, he sought education and became first a teacher and later a minister in Long Island, chiefly to the largest Indian tribe at Montauk. Occum's progress stimulated the Rev. Whitaker of Norwich to think of a College for Indians and Occum went with Whitaker to England to canvass for "Moor's Charity School" (later Dartmouth College). Occum the Indian preacher was a novelty in Britain. He collected £7000 in England (the King subscribing £200) and £3000 in Scotland. He met with a chilly reception from the professionals (the bishops etc.) Says Occum . . . "they are indifferent whether the Indians go to heaven or hell" and "they never gave us one single brass farthing".

Occum taught the Indians letters with wooden blocks. He was versed in the use of herbs. A musician too; he left three hymns.

His weakness? "He was overtaken sometimes by the besetting sin of the poor Indians" and confesses to the Presbytery about being "shamefully overtaken with strong drink".

EDUCATION—Clinton Academy, East Hampton, was built in 1784 and named after the Governor, George Clinton. This put East Hampton on the educational map.

Buell mitigated some of the severity of English occupation during the Revolution.

At the close of Buell's ministry "infidel sentiments" began to be disseminated (the year was 1789 and may be atheistic sentiments were given great impetus by the French Revolution). An "infidel club" was formed by a few local men with talent and education. They held "soirees." It was alleged that "even boys on the streets were arguing that it was impossible for a whale to swallow Jonah since a whale's throat is no bigger than a junk bottle". (Shades of the science-religion struggle which was to emerge).

Buell at 80, rode 14 miles and preached, and rode back again. He saw another revival in 1791 but not so intense as the '64 revival when "the whole town bowed as one man. Every day the church was filled with worshippers at 9 in the morning".

Buell was also responsible for a Lending Library as far back as 1753.

BOOKS—Books were costly and rare in 1700. Minister Huntting had actually written out by hand "Willard's Body of Divinity".

It was at Philadelphia that Franklin had first introduced America to the idea of a literary world first hand through a Lending Library. Also in the Presbytery Minutes reference was made to that fact that Franklin in 1788 when he was 82 years old had given a Library to a Mass. town on condition that it should bear his name. The Rev. W. Emmus had accepted a call to the church of that town subsequently in preference to other places with better prospects and wider opportunities and stayed there for 54 years simply because of the choice library. Incidentally the same man trained 87 candidates for the ministry. Books as Whitaker says are "more than tools to the mechanics or utensils to the farmer" . . . "the soul without knowledge it is not good" (Whitaker was a real Presbyterian).

[The Pilgrim Fathers were slow in valuing education in spite of the fact that they had lived in Leyden the centre of learning and had seen in Holland free schools supported by public taxation, and where every inhabitant could read and write. Brewster had a library of 40 books and Bradford had 80. Yet Bradford's wife was illiterate. Maybe their attitude was due to their hard existence on the American shores and the traditional place women held in domestic life.]

The end of the century saw the advent to East Hampton of a man who was to go down in the annals of the American Church—Lyman Beecher.

THE MINISTER AND SABBATH — In these early days the minister mattered. His better education and high calling placed him on a pedestal. Everything was more clearly defined. If anybody wanted to know what 'prayer' was, it was down in black and white in the noble words of the Catechism. "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession for our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies." No more, no less. The minister knew what he had to teach and do. The congregation understood no less what was expected of it. Religious authority walked hand in hand with cultural and educational eminence. No ears were to be tickled by fancy doctrines. He had no rivals. People moved little from place to place and it was well for them to obey the written laws and the unwritten sanctions in those small communities if they were going to get along with the neighbours.

The Puritan Sabbath was also one of the Institutions of the early American church. In fact 'Puritanism' and 'painful Sabbatarianism' were synonymous. Calvin was a liberal so far as the Sabbath was concerned. He believed the Roman Church had been riddled with too many 'Holy' days. Holiness on Holy days meant too much 'unholiness' in between. Dedicate all days to God, was his belief. King James' I published "The Book of Sports", re-issued by King Charles I and it was virtually a command that sports be played on Sundays. This only made religious people more strict.

Religion was a serious business. There were no competing interests for the activities of people. Time didn't matter. A service could begin with a prayer 20 minutes long. The Communion Table was 'fenced'. Preparation services were held on Thursday and Friday and Saturday before the Sacrament was dispensed.

In East Hampton neglect to attend church resulted in a fine of 3 Shillings. Work on the Sabbath meant a 10 shillings fine. Refusal to pay meant the stocks. East Hampton appointed R. Syme a "common whipper" at a fee of three shillings for every person he had to whip.

**BROOKHAVEN** — Early Settlers naturally came from New England so that the first settlements on Middle Long Island were on the north shore. But meadowland and whales gradually centred more people on the south shore, and a well beaten track connected Setauket and Fire Place, across the island. South people could not go to Setauket on Sundays easily and even in 1695 a meeting was held at Corum, the half way point.

A new Meeting House was built in 1714.

In 1725 a congregation was organised. They built a beautiful church in 1730 (still standing) and clamoured for town privileges as accorded to the Presbyterians.

In 1740 the break between town and church came and this made it easy to commence a South Haven Church, strategically situated at the "going over" on the Connecticut river, and made of hewn oak, and local pine trees, hand made nails, and clear glass from Connecticut. With the first settled Pastor who came in 1748 this church served the south from Babylon to Southampton for half a century.

The first settled minister was Nehemiah Greenman a protégé of Brainard who financed him and there are frequent references in Brainard's diary to Moriches and Fire Place. But Nehemiah failed to live up to Brainard's expectations. A Presbytery minute of 1747 complains that "the people of Mastic (Mastic) groan at the infincerity (insincerity) of Nehemiah Greenman". The reason is

that he won't give them a decisive answer about his settlement until he hears from a parish in "Jerfeys" (Jersey). Clearly Nehemiah intends to go places.

Azariah Horton had done a better job with the Indians, traveling from New York City to Montauk, four or five times a year and getting down to the business by eating Indian food and sleeping in Indian wigwams. He too held meetings at Moriches and records "Preached. Some deeply distressed and . . . appear serious and thoughtful".

Abner Reeve the next minister also presents a problem. He drank heavily after his wife's death (Rum rations were part of a minister's salary in these early days). Abner was dismissed but fought his problem and was reinstated by Presbytery.

People were well versed in the "fundamentals". They observed family worship. The Shorter Catechism was automatically memorised. The psalms in metre were sung led by a Precentor. There were no organs till 1861. Saturday evening was a good night to read "Pilgrim's Progress" or Baxter's "Saints Everlasting Rest". The sermon was expository and doctrinal.

Abner fell again but made a magnificent come back as minister of a church at Orange County.

Priest Rose became next minister and stayed for 33 years. Under him South Haven became the mother church of Middletown in 1766. He moved around with his bible, and drugs in his saddle bags. "A Scotch Presbyter agrees as well with an absolute monarch as God with a devil". Such sentiments made Rose a marked man and he had to flee during the revolution.

From this parish came Col. Wm. Floyd (later General) who urged the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. The British ruined his 4000 acre estate at Mastic. Another village Colonel, later Gen. N. Woodhull defied Governor Moore and at Jamaica the day after the battle of Long Island was killed. (At Huntington the Presbyterian Church was pulled down by the soldiers and made into barracks).

This parish suffered more than most through the Wars because of devotion to the Cause. There was a big task of reconstruction to do after the war.

Rose became Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. In 1792 he preached an election sermon at Corum, a reminder of the days when the minister used to preach at the booths on voting days and earlier when the civic affairs were controlled and conducted by the Church.

**CUTCHOQUE** — In 1732 Cutchogue still bearing its Indian name built a church with more "antique features" than any other church on the Island. Its unique pulpit is the only one of its kind. It was here that Seth Wells lived who became a leader of the Shakers although Shakerism met with little response in these parts.

**MATTITUCK** — The first piece of land for a church was donated in 1715. The church still stands on this half acre given by James Reeve "unto ye saide Inhabitants and to their Heirs and Successors forever". Fire destroyed the original building made of oak but only after it served for 115 years and after that, standing for many years at Greenport where it was moved, being drawn by oxen.

In 1749 came young Dr. Derby. He was in for a brief and stormy time. At the end of his first year he provided Mattituck with its one and only heresy trial. A scrutiny of his manuscript sermons did not fully justify the allegations brought against him. However he didn't stay.

In 1775 came the Rev. John Davenport son of the excitable James, formerly of Southold.

Then the Rev. Mr. Barker who seemed to have done a real job but his ministry is not without trouble. He complains of his parishioners to the Presbytery, about "their Failing in his support as to the Temporals and declining to pay his expenses to and from. . . ." The Presbytery was only too sympathetic. Do what you think best, they advise. Mr. Barker left the niggling folk of Aquebogue and gave all his time to Mattituck. (Mr. Barker was not the only one. The Rev. Sackett of Hannover complained of this same "disinclination to assist in the Temporals". Later East Hampton was to lose one of the best ministers of the age—Beecher—because of insensitiveness about the same "Temporals".

**SHELTER ISLAND** — Take a deep breath if you want to say this original Indian name of Shelter Island viz MAN-HANSACK-AHA-QUASHU-WORNOCK (lit. an island sheltered by islands). The Indian tribe was the Manhassetts. An appendage of Southold parish, it was settled in 1652 but in 1730 became a separate municipality.

George Whitefield preached here during the mid-century revival. "Shelter Island is become another Patmos" he writes. Early Shelter Islanders used to attend Southold Church. They went over by barge rowed by negroes.

**SAG HARBOUR** — Just a few cottages in 1730 and then a considerable population in 1760. The reason was the magic word "whale". All the east Island churches are incomplete without the story of whaling.

Sag Harbour was the scene of a successful "commando raid" during the Revolution. Some daring souls stole out of Newhaven and destroyed provisions laid up for the British forces in Sag Harbour.

Samuel L'Hommedieu of Sag Harbor was converted during the Whitefield Revival. He helped to make a raft to convey Whitefield with horse and carriage from Southold to Shelter Island. This L'Hommedieu is worthy of his name (Man of God). Whitefield's visit put his feet on the road to purpose. He became a Senator and initiated legislation for the incorporation of Churches. He died 1834.

## PRESBYTERY LANDMARKS

(1800 - 1900)

1800 In this year the population of America was 5¼ million, rising by 2 million every ten years.

1801 Presbyterians and Congregationalists adopted a Plan of Union for frontier cooperation.

The century started with many churches and few ministers. There were 449 churches and 219 without a pastor.

In 1807 there were 558 Presbyterian churches with a membership of 17,871. Twenty years later it was to be 2,865 churches with 173,329 members. Presbyterians found it hard to adapt themselves to frontier religion and many withdrew when faced with jerks, tongues, trances and ecstasy. They were also unwilling to compromise educational standards for its ministry. Other denominations were not so scrupulous. "Knowledge is good, but saving souls is better" was the opinion of most sects. Presbyterians maintained that "knowledge is necessary for the saving of souls".

1811 The Temperance issue which was to loom large in this century now made its appearance and the Presbytery vote "that ardent spirits and wine should take no part of its entertainment". In 1833 because of "uncontrolled and excessive alcoholism" the Presbytery agreed on abstinence. Not only drink but tobacco too. An anti-Tobacco Society was formed.

[No mention is made of tea although the Americans were no less doughty tea drinkers than the English but the Boston incident made tea an unpatriotic commodity. Church Divines in Britain had roundly condemned tea drinking as pernicious. Wesley condemned it on moral and religious grounds although he left behind a half gallon tea pot rendered more acceptable (?) by the inscription of a suitable evangelical invocation to the Deity.]

- 1814 L. I. churches failed to observe the day of "fasting, humiliation and prayer" appointed by the General Assembly. The reason was that they didn't know in time. They decided to hold their own day. It was a year before Waterloo and world turmoil may be the reason for the Day of Prayer and "the increasing judgements of God".
- 1815 A storm in Presbytery because a School Officer objects to ministers teaching the Catechism in Public Schools.
- 1830 There were now 15 Congregations in the L. I. Presbytery—
- |                  |            |                          |             |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Brookhaven       | 52 members | Bridgehampton            | 121 members |
| Brookfield       | 50 "       | Southtown                | 43 "        |
| Shelter Island   | 50 "       | Fresh Pond               |             |
| Canoe Pla.       |            | and Islip                | 122 "       |
| West Hampton     | 120 "      | Independent Congregation |             |
| and Union Parish |            | (Oyster Ponds)           |             |
| Sag Harbour      | 131 "      | Independent Congregation |             |
| Middletown and   |            | (Cutchogue)              |             |
| Southaven        | 149 "      | East Hampton             | 254 "       |
| Southampton      | 121 "      |                          |             |
- 1831 Significant entry in Minutes of Pres. "Revivals of religion are the acknowledged life of the church".
- A reference to the wonderful revivals which began in Southampton and West Hampton and spread to almost every parish, some churches doubling their membership. "Revival has succeeded revival with unexampled rapidity as to appear more like a dream than a delightful reality".
- 1831 The Presbyterians had in their possession a large majority of the Colleges in America.
- 1832 A Second Presbytery of Long Island was formed, and includes Setauket, Middletown, Brookfield and Moriches with 7 Ministers, 9 Churches and 770 members. This left the First Presbytery with 12 ministers, 12 churches and 1445 members.
- 1836 Agreed "that the practice of whale fishing on the Sabbath is a moral evil which might come to an end". This Presbytery resolution was appointed to be read in churches. Next year they agreed that the "observation of the Sabbath is highly creditable, but during the summer months the Lord's day is badly violated chiefly by seamen in our ports, and pleasure loving visitors from the city".
- 1838 Schism came in the church. Revivals generally brought also division. When religion became vital it became challenging. There emerged a New School and Old School which was generally an-

other variation of the educated literalist and the experimental zealot. The Second Presbytery of Long Island adhered to the Old School. The First Presbytery protested against the division of the whole Church and sent no Delegates to the General Assembly and so avoided supporting either party. Its sympathies however were on the side of the New School and later when the split was a fait accompli sent Delegates to the New School Assembly. This in turn divided the Presbytery and the South Fork ministers who favoured the Old School withdrew. Happily only temporarily.

- 1841 The Second Presbytery and the Old School Section of the First Presbytery united under the title of the Old School Presbytery of Long Island and all churches from East Hampton to Jamaica were under the same jurisdiction.

(Hitherto there had been an almost negligible Roman Catholic population in America. The Catholics were not a formative influence at all in the colonial days, nor in the Revolution. Now in 1840 the Roman Catholic population suddenly became one fifth in size of the American Churches. This was partly due to the influx of South Irish Catholics driven out of Ireland by economic blight. They were mostly illiterate.

After the Revolution the Anglican Church had come to terms with the new Order. It became the Episcopal Church of America and the Prayer Book was revised with prayers for the King changed to Prayers for the President).

- 1842 "There is not now a licenced drinking house within our limits", says Presbytery. The same year the Presbytery resolve that "the Church psalmody be recommended to our congregations".
- 1843 A new sense of responsibility was developing in this part of the century for the heathen lands. Presbytery reflected this; "our churches manifest far less interest in Foreign Missions than the wants of the perishing nations and the commands of our Saviour require".
- Meantime an economic revolution followed the building of the L. I. Railroad and farmers were brought into easy touch with city markets. This was reflected in the increased church membership and increased benevolences.
- 1858-61 Civil War. "Slavery (not in name but substantially) was a principle cause for the split" in the Old School and New School. It was now a national issue. Old School, South Fork ministers were mostly men who had trained in Princeton. Early Princeton Professors were mostly born and reared in the slave holding States. The New School held convinced antislavery views. The split was finally geographic

with economic determinism playing a large part. (Abraham Lincoln during the War attended prayer meetings at the Presbyterian Church, Washington. Lincoln's pew is built into the New York Avenue Pres. Church).

- 1860 In spite of the war a new question came to the fore which was to loom large in American life in days to come—divorce. A minister has married a woman who for a very real cause had divorced her husband. The Presbytery Committee considered the matter. Their findings were published in 8 Suffolk newspapers: "Adultery and wilful desertion . . . is cause sufficient for dissolving the bonds of marriage". Yet that does not mean that the parties can marry again. With careful Scriptural scrutiny they say " . . . it is better to endure whatever trouble may show itself in the marriage state". Church members remarrying after divorce were to be excommunicated. They add " . . . if the evil which is growing be tolerated, it may not be long before the church is blasted and blackened by it. . . ."
- 1865 A request by the Presbytery . . . "to devote one hour to religious exercises appropriate to the funeral of Abraham Lincoln".
- 1869 After the war, expansion proceeded at an accelerated rate and one reminder was the fact that Dr. Jackson planted a string of 10 Presbyterian Churches along the United Pacific Railway spanning the land to the west.
- 1870 The Reunion established the Synod of Long Island which included the three Presbyteries of Long Island, Brooklyn and Nassau. They had been New School (Brooklyn) and Old School (Nassau).
- 1871 There was a protest by Presbytery about the "bare subsistence which ministers have".
- 1875 Christmas Day became a legal holiday for the first time. The early American had the Reformed attitude towards Christmas.
- 1900 There were now 1,803,592 Presbyterians in this country. [The expectation of life in 1900 was 49 years. Today it is nearer 70. This factor naturally makes the 1900 figure very impressive.]

## LONG ISLAND CHURCHES (Continued)

(From 1800 Onwards)

SOUTHOLD — When the Rev. J. Hunting came in 1806 Southold had 58 communicants (including 9 slaves). Hunting rejected the "Half-way Covenant" and in 22 years the membership doubled. It was in 1832 that Southold stopped playing the "lone wolf" and decided to join the Presbytery.

It was Dr. Ephraim Whitaker who dominated the Southold scene from his installation in 1851. He was scholar, writer and Presbytery Clerk (a position he held for 47 years). It was also an era of immense expansion. The Long Island Railroad was already built and in 1858 Presbytery asked the Directors to "discontinue the said train of cars on the Sabbath". The same Presbytery that year expressed gratitude to God for the laying of the Atlantic telegraph cable and see in it "a bond of peace between two leading christian nations of the world". Also in 1858 the General Assembly met in Chicago and became memorable because of "revival" at its meetings. At Presbytery there was a preachment on "The Great Revival of 1858".

Southold was able to have a tercentenary celebration in 1940. It is a far cry from the days when the "iron triangle" was used to call the worshippers to church and when the first pitch pipe was used by the Precentor who "lined out" the psalm to the congregation. Southold replaced pipe by a cello, then a melodeon and finally the organ.

A tile from the floor of St. Edmund's church, Southold, England (built in 1460) was presented in 1940 to the L. I. Southold congregation. Communion cups made by Simone Soumaine (an early American silversmith) were used until recently when they were deposited in the Metropolitan Museum, N. York.

MATTITUCK — Mattituck and Aquebogue were united in 1817 and were known for the next 40 years as Union Parish. The Middle District found it inconvenient and Franklinville (now Laurel) emerged. In 1853 the third Mattituck church was built (enlarged in 1871). Dr. Charles Craven who succeeded Whitaker wrote a fine History of Mattituck.

CUTCHOGUE — This church with Southold had the honour of being the first in America to contribute to Foreign Mission enterprise. The date of this new awareness was 1811. The original Young family was represented by the Rev. Ezra Young who became minister in 1828.

GREENPORT — Formerly called STIRLING, this growing village with more than half a dozen ships in its excellent harbour decided to build a Presbyterian Church in 1833.

SHELTER ISLAND — The 1743 church built in a central half acre site donated by Jonathan Havens stood, until a convenient and notable storm in 1815 provided fallen oaks and hickory trees for the new building in 1817. This beautiful Colonial Structure was destroyed by fire in 1934 and rebuilt in 1935. Chief spiritual landmark of the

century was the revival under the Rev. D. Lord. Then was a time of preaching from house to house. There were private fastings and public confessions. "A divine life is pervading the place and one sixth of the Island feel the power of an endless life".

The Presbytery report of 1857 shows a 10% increase of members (Shelter Island 40%). Presbytery is also deploring at this time the loss of young people who are going west (to Brooklyn and New York) in search of work and careers.

**SHINNECOCK** — At Shinnecock near Southampton lived the remnants of the Shinnecock tribe of Indians. The first church stood within sight of the isthmus called Canoe Place. The Church was organised by the L. I. Presbytery in 1819. This became extinct.

The Rev. Peter John Cuffee, convert of the fiery Davenport, had a grandson Paul who after sowing his wild oats experienced a dramatic conversion, "... so intense and overwhelming that like Saul of Tarsus, he fell to the ground and for a time, his entire physical strength was prostrated". This was in the 1778 revival. He was ordained in 1790 and worked among the Long Island Indians at Montauk and Canoe Place. His native eloquence and imagery made him a powerful and acceptable preacher in all churches. Lyman Beecher was a great friend of Cuffee and Harriet Beecher Stowe "immortalised him in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' by the use of the common Long Island saying 'As grand as Cuffee'".

So the Shinnecock Indians gradually were separated from "the fins and tails" of whales which were a venerated part of their superstitious rites and led into Christian ways.

Although the Indians were too proud a race to make profitable slaves, some had been pressed into slavery so that the Abolition Laws affected them as well.

A vital contribution was made by the Rev. T. C. Ogburn, born into slavery in the deep South. He had been in charge of work among the Oklahoma Indians.

Meantime the east of L. Island, former hunting ground of these tribes was becoming a playground for the wealthy and "the site of the wigwams of Nowedonah became the national golf links of America". This necessitated "coloured" labour. The Southampton negro population began to expand and Bethel Church was founded in 1917.

The present Shinnecock church after severe damage by the 1938 hurricane was restored in 1939 and dedicated with Southampton Vice-Moderator of the General Assembly Dr. Jesse Halsey, present.

Wickham Cuffee at the end of last century was the last to hear and speak the Shinnecock tongue in ordinary conversation. Today Lois Marie Hunter (Princess Nowedonah) lives in the Reserve and is historian of the tribe. This gracious lady is a descendant of Sachem Nowedonah and the Rev. Paul Cuffee.

**SAG HARBOUR** — "God's old barn" is how the Meeting House was first known. It is "a wooden building of uncouth shap". It stood on a hill where the stocks had stood. The village also had its "whipping post". The congregation carried their own lanterns and tallow dip as well as footstoves in winter.

The West Indian trade prior to 1800 had brought many craft here but the Napoleonic wars brought a slump. Then the disastrous fire of 1817 and Sag Harbour reached rock bottom. Whales revived it. There were only 4 ships in 1807 but in 1844 there were 61 ships and 300 men of Sag Harbour who live on "the vasty deep". Whaling voyages were from 2 to 3 years.

The new church was dedicated in 1844 in the presence of 1000 people. Some whalers postponed their sailing to be present at the great opening ceremony. The church was another "Solomon's Temple" with two immense pillars called "Jachin" (He shall establish) and "Boaz" (It is strength). A huge steeple 200 feet high crowned the edifice which was the marvel of builders. Built section by section, each part was hoisted telescope fashion through the preceding lower one and all powered by oxen. After 94 years it was sent crashing in the 1938 hurricane. The ponderous bell carrying the inscription "Praise God in His sanctuary" still can ring out but now from the lobby of the church.

Dr. Hopper minister in 1852 wrote a characteristic hymn in "Jesus Saviour Pilot Me". He was also a zealous abolitionist.

The 100th anniversary of this Whalers Church was celebrated in 1944 by services and a pageant. The glory of the once first port of the United States is now a memory but the witness goes on.

The *raison d'être* of the Church of 1844 was as usual traceable to the 1842 revival starting in the Fall and continuing over the winter. Religion became a bigger talking point than whales. Whales also lost out in 1849 when the California Gold Rush attracted 500 people from Sag Harbour alone. (At Rutgers St. Church, New York, the Rev. Woodridge at this time was asking to be sent to California. He sees more than gold there. He sees souls in need. He goes and the Presbyterian Church became the first church in that Gold Field).

**SOUTH HAVEN** — Slavery began to emerge as a conscience issue in the church at the beginning of the 19th century. In 1771 there were



1452 slaves in Suffolk County. The 1799 Act required registration by Owners of children born to slaves. South Haven liberated 66 slaves from 1795 to 1831. Conscience was beginning to quicken. So was the traffic. The Long Island turnpike opened 1801. In the emerging Civil war no less than 15,000 men were to join the Northern army from Long Island.

The Rev. Herman Daggett left Southampton to minister in South Haven. It is the same Daggett who "never smiles". Solemnity was synonymous with piety in these days.

Herman succeeded Dr. Chapman who ultimately became President of N. Carolina's young University. Expenses per student per semester were advertised "Diet \$30; Tuition \$10; Room rent \$1; Servant hire \$1.50; Library 50c; Washing \$8; candles and wood \$4; Bed \$3.50. Total \$58.50. Plainness of dress and manners will be the rule."

Herman was nephew of Naphtali Daggett who was President of Yale College in the trying war years when classes were "staggered" and "held in different towns for safety's sake". Herman's thesis for his Master's Degree was to be the first book published on Long Island by the first Publisher, David Frothingham. Frothingham came from Charleston, Mass. to Sag Harbour and issued on May 10, 1791 "Frothingham's Long Island Herald" the first Long Island newspaper. Daggett's book was on "The Rights of Animals" which is perhaps a pointer to the times.

Herman was a theological hair splitter. He had previously turned down Southold because of his views on "The Half Way Covenant". By this children of believing (regenerated) parents could be baptized and included in the Covenant. But when they grew up and did not experience regeneration could they be partakers of the Covenant? In other words, could children go into the Kingdom on the push of their parents? Herman said "No". These were not just theological subtleties. They mattered to these folk. They involved the issues of life and death and eternity. Daggett was a rigid Calvinist with "one eye on the retributions of the world to come".

Finally Daggett became Head of a unique project—a Mission School for the Foreign Missions at Cornwall, Conn. It was finally closed because of some mixed marriages which ensued.

The next 29 years pastorate at Southaven and Middletown was that of Ezra King who had been trained at Clinton Academy and served under Beecher. King saw the present church (the 3rd) erected around 1828 in which pews were sold to help meet the cost (Half cents also were in circulation at this time). Unlucky

pew No. 13 found no bidders so it was assigned to the clergyman's family. Glass and paint were now in more common use. Watt's hymns were cautiously introduced at the back of the Psalm Book. (The Bay Psalm Book was the first printed book in America. It was meticulously literal. It was a new version of the metered psalm book the Puritans had brought from England. It was used by the Colonists for 150 years. The preface was quaint and explicit

"If Therefore the verses are not alwaes so smooth and elegant as some may desire or expect: let them consider that God's altar needs not our polishing. . . . Conscience rather than Elegance, fidelity rather than poetry. . . .")

A text to justify the new addition headed the Watt hymns. It was Revelation 5:9 "And they sang a new song".

[This same Hymnal played a part in the Revolutionary War. In a New Jersey battle the soldiers ran out of wadding for their muskets. They went to a nearby Presbyterian Church and took the Watt Hymnals to use for this purpose. The Commander urged them on with the cry "Give 'em Watts'.]

East Connecticut river helped to make South Haven strategic. This river turned Carmen's mills. Here the weekly stage coach from Brooklyn and Sag Harbour made a stop. The river was the best trout river in the country. In 1823 an outside trout was observed. Tradition tells of Daniel Webster worshipping under "Priest" King who in his sermon had arrived at his "ninthly" point when a negro tiptoed into the church and whispered to him that this great trout had been seen. Webster made his exit and the congregation realising what it was, also began to dwindle. King accepted the situation and pronounced a speedy benediction and also went out to see a record trout of 14½ pounds being caught.

A spiritual decline in 1820 was followed by a revival in 1826. The cause? An epidemic of cholera in New York City was sweeping off scores every day. New Yorkers started to flee into Long Island. Never were they less welcome by the Islanders.

Mid century alterations to South Haven church didn't improve the building. In 1884 the steeple was struck by lightning. During the repairs, the "Amen pews" were taken out. These were so named because of the more vocal worshippers who voiced approval of points in the sermon by "Amens".

SETAUKET — The damage of the Revolution occupation was repaired but in 1811 it was decided to build a new church, to be known as the First Presbyterian Church of Brookhaven, later changed to Setauket, thus preserving the old name and a witness which is now over 300 years.

**CENTRE MORICHES** — In 1748 Suffolk Presbytery records state "Directed Mr. Greenman to preach at Moriches as a Probationer". Moriches was territorially a part of the old South Haven Church, but it was not till 1809 that formal church meetings were held in this area. This modest church was used by Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Coincident with the reunion of the Long Island Presbytery in 1831 it was agreed to reorganise a church at Moriches, continuing the joint use of the church with the Strict Congregational Church. After another 18 years it became virtually Presbyterian. The year 1850 was a spiritual flood tide and again in 1878. Sankey came at this time and brought Francis Crosby, the blind American song writer to the church. The Church was rebuilt in 1886 and an extension added in 1931, the date of the 100th anniversary.

**BROOKHAVEN AND BELLPORT** — Bellport originally (called Occumbomuck) was named after the pioneer settlers J. and T. Bell who attended South Haven church. Tomlinson of Bellport Academy succeeded "Priest" King as minister of the parish. The first Bellport services were held in the Academy by King. The advent of a Congregational Church divided the religious adherence of many in this area. A Church was erected in 1850 and was regarded as one of the finest specimens of Colonial architecture. Bitter feelings arose between the denominational factions. Was the Church in fact Presbyterian? The law agreed that it was and it was received into the Presbytery in 1852. The Presbyterians won the fight but eventually lost the area. Today Bellport is Congregational whilst a thriving Presbyterian church exists at Brookhaven.

**EAST MORICHES** — Identified for many years with Centre Moriches, eventually East Moriches became established with a church in 1870, and recognised by the Presbytery in 1902. Memories of the San Francisco earthquake are revived by the entry in the Church records of a gift of money by this congregation in 1906 to help rebuild the churches destroyed.

**REMSENBURG** — The original white chapel of Remsenburg dates to 1853 when it was erected at Speonk. The present red brick edifice was the gift of Dr. Charles Remsen in 1896. Both stand and work together.

**WESTHAMPTON** — Known in the early years as Ketchabonack, the first church was established at Beaver Dam. The original congregation, an off-shoot of old South Haven claims 1755 and even 1742 as the date of its first beginnings. As usual revival and expansion are related and the 1831 revival made them decide that the distance from Quogue to Beaver Dam was too great and that they should have their own church. The congregation moved east in

1832 to its present location. The present building was erected in 1888.

**MIDDLE ISLAND** — The history of South Haven is also the story of Middle Island. 1766 was the date when a piece of ground at Half Mile Pond road and Middle Country road was purchased from Selah Brown for "ye freeholders and commonalty of ye Middle of ye Island, for ye use of building a Presbyterian Meeting House upon, forever and no other use". (Selah like so many of the early folk and places derived her name from the bible. Selah is a pause or musical note which breaks certain passages in the psalms. Long Island has its Jericho turnpike, "Promised Land", Babylon, Canaan, etc. The early settlers were familiar with the WORD of GOD).

Presbytery recognised this "First Presbyterian Church of Middletown" as it was called till 1820. The old Meeting House was replaced in 1837.

**YAPHANK** — A project of Middle Island Congregation this church was built in 1851 in southern Middle Island at Milleville later changed to Yaphank (an Indian name, literally meaning "the bank of the river"). It was later organised by Presbytery in 1871 with 70 members.

**CENTREREACH** — Established after a survey in 1953. It is a venture in "co-operative Protestantism", since all churches aided in the survey. It was declared a Presbyterian Community Church, and seems to be destined for rapid growth.

**PORT JEFFERSON** — From 1848 to 1870 this church was a mission of the old Setauket Church. The old building used from 1854 to 1912 is now a Masonic Lodge. The original 48 charter members have expanded to a church roll of 452. The Port Jefferson "child" has outgrown the "mother" Setauket, and the new church of 1912 is already inadequate for the growing community.

**EAST HAMPTON** — Lyman Beecher perhaps the best remembered of the great East Hampton ministers became a national figure through a sermon on the evils of duelling following the death of a man killed in a duel. It is a pointer to the times that this was a national issue and the sermon was widely distributed. Beecher had a great zest for life. He was an eloquent advocate of temperance. His was also a strong voice for orthodoxy against Unitarianism which was also a strong and peculiarly American theological issue. It was natural that a man of such forthright views should himself be a target of criticism. Beecher experienced season of revival in East Hampton and on one occasion spoke of 50 persons being brought in. Beecher's distinguished family were to make a mark



on American life and letters. His removal from East Hampton turned out to be a good thing for in Cincinnati the family came up against the slave problem in a big way. This was the raw material for the famous serial "Uncle Tom's Cabin" which roused the American conscience as much as anything.

The present spacious church in East Hampton was built in 1860 under the Rev. S. Mershon. This is one of the loveliest villages in America. Here it was that the famous song "Home Sweet Home" was inspired. For more than 300 years this Town Church or Presbyterian Church has pointed the people to God.

**SPRINGS** — A branch of East Hampton Church. Commenced under the pastorate of Rev. J. D. Stokes the church was built in 1882. At the 1886 revival 40 people were added. A new and handsome Hall has been completed in 1955 under the Rev. P. Bahner.

**AMAGANSETT** — Amagansett (lit. the place of the many wells) as early as 1700 was spoken of as a thriving village. Its proximity to East Hampton made it a sharer in that historic church. The East Hampton pulpit giants from Buell to Beecher included Amagansett folk in their congregation.

It was in 1860 that 82 people in Amagansett formed a separate congregation and in that year laid the cornerstone of the present church. The Parish House was built in 1925. The 1938 hurricane took away the tall steeple and it was replaced by the present one which is crowned with a whale for a weathercock. It has been a village of "few changes, strict morality and little crime".

**MONTAUK** — This beautiful place on the tip of Long Island was the traditional home of the Indians. The unspoiled fishing village became a scene of dramatic activity when Carl Fisher got a vision of Montauk as a summer resort for New York City and decided that it could be the "Miami of the North". So many families of varied background were introduced into this area and became part of a permanent population. Some felt that a church was necessary to meet the need of this new community. It was agreed that a Community Church under the Presbyterian Denomination should initiate and control the religious ordinances. Services were held in the Theatre Building (now the Post Office). Enthusiastic efforts soon resulted in the present beautiful Church which was opened Easter Sunday 1929. The Miami expansion did not materialise and Montauk has settled down to a more gradual development.

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