

The History of the DeLancey United Presbyterian Church

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I have sought to pull together the history of the DeLancey church from records available. I was able to lean heavily on some unfinished work of Jennie Chambers a member who died in the 1960's. There are obvious omissions, but I have sought to use that which was available. I regret any errors or omissions. The work here is also contained on a flash drive so it can easily be updated and corrected.

I recommend that the leaders seek to find a secure place to house the records. I grew up in this church and the foundation of my faith was developed through the men and women of God that were active in this place. To them I give my thanks and I give this write-up as a token of that thanks.

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The History of the United Presbyterian Church of DeLancey, New York

By Louise Little and Jennie Chambers¹

The United Presbyterian Church of DeLancey was organized February 26th, 1849 and was a union of the Associate Congregation (of Delhi) at the Turnpike² and the Associate Congregation of Hamden.

The origins of the Turnpike Group.

The Turnpike refers to the *Sopus Turnpike* from Kingston to Ithaca, NY. It includes the road that now connects DeLancey and Andes. The first minister to preach to the families gathered at the Turnpike was Rev. Mr. Maxwell.³ He was pastor of the Presbyterian church referred to as the "Flats church" that was located on the flat area south of Delhi near the current golf course. The cemetery related to the Flats church remains today. Mr. Maxwell rode horseback for the five miles over Scotch Mountain to the "Turnpike" to preach. Prior to that the Wight's and other residents traveled that distance to worship at the Flats church. According to the history of George Wight written by his grandson⁴, "some dissatisfaction arose about going to the Flats church in Delhi. George Wight was very loyal to Mr. Maxwell and joined with a few of the others nearby to make a place for a church closer to where they lived. It is not known how Mr. Maxwell divided his time between the two churches because in those days church services consisted of two long sermons each Sunday, often with a lunch in between. One person would not be able to travel the distance and lead the two worship services at each place. There is some suggestion that these outlying smaller congregations that were serviced by a pastor from another church may have met on Saturday or Monday. Mr. Maxwell was in rather delicate health at this time.

They fitted up the old meeting house for a house of worship at the Turnpike. It was first situated about a quarter of a mile east of the Big House (Hall's Tavern)⁵, where the road passes down a little incline. It was out of repair and also the road and the creek were so close there was little room to tie horses or place wagons. It was plain that a new site must be found. Many wanted to take it nearer to Cabin Hill, but some of the Scotch Mountain folks objected to this idea. The site finally chosen was west of the Big House. It was a nice level location with plenty of room on both sides of the road for the horses and wagons. The old meeting house was moved and considerable money was needed to fix it up. It was raised by subscription. The interior was readied hastily so that services could be held in warm weather. It was never plastered inside, but the seats were in their places and they had just started holding services when Rev. Maxwell died in 1840. He was 56 years of age. This left them without a preacher. All signs of the foundation of the old church have long since disappeared. In the meantime a movement sprang up at Cabin Hill and a new congregation was organized in 1833. A new congregation at Cabin Hill was the result.

George Wight was active in the Flats church prior to starting the Turnpike church.

George Wight (1789-1875) was one of the first elders ordained in the Flats church.⁶ He served under three ministers there until the 1840's. George Wight and his wife Jane Little Wight were Scottish and came to Delaware County in 1818 with their first son John Lyttle Wight, a baby in arms. Their original farm was nearby the Turnpike Meeting House. . It is on Huska Road, the side road from the Tavern and is now known as the Stoop farm. George was 76 when they moved to the Marcus Bostwick farm in 1865. This farm is on Route 10 on the curve north of the DeLancey intersection and was called Spruce Lodge for many years when son George Wight and Emma ran it as a resort for New York City folks summering in the area. He and his son George and wife Emma were active leaders in the DeLancey church. George Sr. was a founding elder in the Lansingville congregation. The files of the Old Scotch Presbyterian Church of Delhi contain the following: "George Wight and Jane Ann Little Wight took their letters from the Flats Church at Delhi on June 16, 1855 to the Hamden Presbyterian church." (Lansingville was a village in the town of Hamden so this was not a reference to the village of Hamden.) It is curious that his letter wasn't transferred prior to 1855.

George and Jane Wight died within four days of each other of very different causes. A double funeral was held at the Flats church. They are buried in the Flats cemetery. Now back to the Turnpike church story.

The death of Rev. Maxwell left the Turnpike church which they had been striving so hard to get started quite abandoned. It never had regular preaching after that. A Sunday school was organized and continued for some time with George Wight as the Superintendent. In the absence of preaching and a church service, that Sunday School was 'not exactly a success'. Although they started with quite a good attendance, the school faded out. One or two of the most determined ones joined the Bovina Presbyterian Church although it was twice as far away as either the Presbyterian Flats Church at Delhi or the one at Cabin Hill

Below are lists of the pupils and teachers from the roll book from that Sunday School on the Turnpike covering times from 1833-1845 with the spelling as it was in that old book. The numerical entries are number of Bible verses memorized, Psalms memorized or questions answered. The 55 pupils listed in that school record for the first year were:

Class Girls First Division: Teacher: Mrs. Beardsley. Cristina George, Catherine Hinmonth, Eudilla Moar, Mirziah Maison, Nancy McNee, Emeline Beardsley, Harit Beardsley, Hellen Dugal, Catrine Dugal, Charlet Emri.

Girls Second Division: Teacher: Mrs. Mary Ann McNee. Jaine McFaddine, Catherine Leamond, Elisabeth Wight, Jenet McNee, Margt Moan, Marey Ann Biglo, Agnou Foster, Jean Tomson.

Girls Third Division: Teacher: Rebakey Meray Basony. Nancy Birch, Suson Jean Crage, Aanour Fouster, Ellen Wight, Marey Limon, Marey Ann Baron, Batesy McArter, Ann McArter, Fannee Baron, Jean Smith, Margret Ann Wight

Boys First Division: Teacher: George Wight. George Moscrip, John Wight, Daniel McMillen, William McNea, James McNea, Robert Crage, Willim Crage

Boys Second Division: Teacher John George. Aaron Moscrip, Daniel Arbuckel, William Whitten, Robert Craig, William Craig, John Hodge, Robert Wight, Samel Watterbarg, David Birch, Pamer Birch.

Boys Third Division Teacher David Tallor. John Crogg, James McNea, John McNea, Archibald Lemont, Alexander Shaw, Daniel Shaw, William Wight, Petter McNee.

The 55 pupils appear to be from about 35 families. The attendance dwindled with time, but the effort must have revitalized in 1848 when the initiative to establish a union with Hamden began.

Turnpike Group: “**July 1st, 1848** The ‘Associate Congregation of Delhi at the Turnpike’ was organized and Mr. John McFadden and Mr. George Wight, (the later having been formerly an elder) were ordained and installed to the office of Ruling elder. There were 11 members.”

“After the Session had been constituted by prayer by Mr. Cleland, the following persons were received into the communion of the church. Mrs. Wight, Elisabeth Wight, Mrs. Euphemia McFaddon, Margaret McFaddon, Mr. Robert Smith, Mrs. Moscript, George Moscript, Mrs. McNea and Mrs. Shaw.⁷ The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was dispensed upon the following Sabbath by Mr. Cleland.”

The Bovina and West Delhi connection. In nearby Bovina the Rev. John Graham was active not only in the church there but in neighboring gatherings in homes. He had come from Scotland in 1831 and was called to the church in Bovina in 1832, continuing there 20 years. When convenient he traveled over the hills to the West Delhi church to preach for 14 years until it was started in 1847. The Rev. William J. Cleland was then appointed their supply preacher for a year. They later called him to be their pastor.

Graham stated in his book that a few years after the church at West Delhi was established with the Rev Mr. W.J. Cleland as minister, that a new preaching station was started in the house of John Bryce who then lived up Launt Hollow, on the farm above the Salton place that is now (in 1960’s) owned by Doc Choate. At Hamden they started with very small beginnings and considerable opposition. He said that he and Mr. Cleland frequently went down and preached and encouraged them. Mr. Graham said “I remember when they had no place of worship, of assisting in the dispensation of the Supper in the Socinian Meeting-house in Lansingville; where the great majority present denied the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I preached the action sermon from John 10: 11-‘I am the Good Shepherd.’”

Hamden Group: And in 1848 they were organized into the Associate Congregation of Hamden.

“**October 21st, 1848** Associate Congregation of **Hamden** organized in full when Mr. John Bryce and Mr. Thomas Lawrence, both of whom having been previously elected, were ordained to the office of eldership. After their ordination, the session was constituted with prayer by the Rev. W. J. Cleland when the following persons were admitted to the full communion of the church, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Lawrence, Mrs. Crawford John Nichol and wife making a total of about 20 members. (The other members of the congregation having been received at a previ-

ous meeting, March 20th.)

Upon the following day the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed by Mr. Cleland."

The following is a report of the committee, which had been appointed at a previous meeting in the village of Hamden to wait on the Brethren of the Congregation at the Turnpike in reference to a union between the two congregations.

"Your committee would respectively report that (they) waited on the leading members of the Congregation at the Turnpike, viz: Messrs. George Wight, John McFaddon, Robert Smith and George Moscript with whom (they) had a conjoint conference in the Village of Delhi on the 20th (of Feb.). And they manifested their willingness to unite with their brethren of Hamden and form one congregation with the understanding that the church be in Lansingville."

Feb. 21, 1849 The above report was accepted and adopted and it was accepted unanimously agreed to unite with the Congregation at the Turnpike and build a house of worship in the Village of Lansingville as soon as practicable and until a house could be erected, it was agreed to obtain if practicable, the use of the church in the village (of Lansingville). A committee was appointed for that purpose consisting of James Renwick and George Adam.

On February 26th, 1849, Rev. Mr. Graham of Bovina assisting the above Congregation by **unanimous consent** (to) unite together and agreed to build a house of worship in the village of Lansingville and to go under the name of the Associate Congregation of Lansingville.

. "To assist them (Lansingville) the congregation of Bovina gave them \$100 and the frame of their old church, which was hauled all the way on the snow, chiefly by John Bryce." ⁸ There were 40 members of this new church.

The Associate Congregation of Lansingville was thus organized on February 26th, 1849.

Rev. William J. Cleland served the congregation one-third time as "stated supply" between 1849 to 1856. The remainder of time was to the West Delhi congregation who in 1856 desired that he become full time.

Two years after organizing the congregation a Church building was built by the congregation costing over \$1000. Prior to that the worship service were able to use the church building of the Christian Society in Lansingville part of the time and the remainder of the time they used the school house. The new church was a substantial building capable of accommodating about 300. The parsonage was worth \$1600.

Lansingville was without a regular pastor for three years. They relied on occasional "supplies" as

they were called. That refers to ministers who came for an occasional worship service. They usually were from the Albany Presbytery. They felt the need for a settled ministry and called Rev. R.D. Williamson, who was ordained and installed in May 5, 1859. Rev. Mr. Lee of Bovina preached from Psalms 72:19 at the installation service. He served until his resignation two years later.

June 18, 1860 new elders were elected and agreed to serve. George Adams and Robert Ballantyne were ordained and installed on Oct 5, 1860. A full list of the elders over the years appears in the Appendix.

Lansingville becomes DeLancey

The village name of Lansingville was used as early as 1843 but was changed in 1872 to DeLancey. The reason for the change was that the New York State had another post office named Lansingville. The name, DeLancey, is taken from that of James DeLancey Verplank, who owned land in the village vicinity, and there is no doubt that the derivation of Lansingville had a similar basis. It was Charles Hathaway, Esq. agent of the lands who suggested both names. It was in 1884 that the name of the congregation was changed from Lansingville United Presbyterian Church to DeLancey United Presbyterian Church.

The sequence of other churches in the Delaware Presbytery of the United Presbyterian denomination are shown in the Appendix.

The records report that in 1869, the minister was paid \$700.00 yearly salary. There were 65 members. The count for 1886 was about 150 and by the 1890's the number of members was about 230. The numbers of all the churches in the Delaware Presbytery in 1886 and 1930 are listed in the Appendix.

Discipline by the elders: In the 1800's the elders were responsible for discipline of members of the church. The standards as recorded were ascribed to when a member joined the church. The list of standards are listed in the index of this document. On one occasion in 1860, a member was considered to be "lying out of church privileges for some time past on account of his connection with the Odd Fellows Society"⁹. Later minutes showed that he now disclaimed any connection with it and desired to be restored to former privileges. Session readily granted his request. In another instance, the session noted that an infant of a couple had been born too early after their marriage. This was discussed with the couple and after due sincere repentance to God, their association with the church was continued and participation in communion was allowed.

If people had not communed for a period of time and had not supported the church with attendance and giving, they were contacted to determine the reasons for non-participation. It was possible during some periods of time to be placed on the inactive list so that the per capita donation to the presbytery was not invoked for those on the inactive list.

In addition to the ten commandments, the following were listed as part of the code for living:
Article 16 That the sale and use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage is a positive evil, and no member of the church should lend his influence to sanction it either directly or indirectly.

(The Standing Roles of the Session and the action of the U.P. General Assembly against the sins of social visiting on the Lord's Day, dancing, lotteries, raffling, betting, card playing and neglect of the ordinances of the church, are not inserted in this Manual. This reference to these rules is deemed sufficient for publication.)

People of serious faith: It is straightforward to point out the differences of expected conduct of Christians in the days when the church was formed compared to now. More importantly it should be noted that those who were leaders and members were serious and devout in their reliance on the God of Creation and the God of their fathers for all manner of conduct with each other. It was evident that they were men and women of faith and prayed fervently for the will of God in their lives and the lives of our church and nation. These attributes are not as readily seen in the minutes of the session, but occasional reference was made to the sweet time of prayer that they enjoyed. Joining in worship on the Sabbath was a joyous occasion and learning the word of God was a privilege not to be taken lightly. The Lord's Supper was a serious sacrament and until the 1970's there was usually a separate service prior to the time when communion was served that was devoted to prayer and fasting in earnest repentance of sins so as to be worthy of the sacrament.

It was considered an honor for the church to have someone from its ranks go forth into full time ministry. These numbers and names were frequently cited in Presbytery reports of history. In 1974, it was reported that six young men entered the ministry from the DeLancey congregation. Rev. Donald McLachlan, his brother Rev. Alex McLachlan, Rev. John Ballantine, Rev. Maurice Seaman, Rev. Gerald Wheat and his brother, Rev. George Wheat. Rev. John Ballantine served in India until his death. His four daughters carried on mission work in Asia. Janet Ballantine White and Margaret Ballantine Alter were still serving in 1974 in Pakistan and Miss Mary Ballantine in Japan. Miss Agnes Ballantine had retired and Dr. Margaret Ellen White, the third generation of this dedicated family was in 1974 a Medical Missionary in Pakistan. Miss Blanche Chambers served as a teacher at Presly Memorial Institute in Assuit, Egypt until illness in the family forced her to return home. Her intense interest and efforts for the causes of missions left a deep imprint upon the Congregation. These people's lives help explain why the DeLancey church has a legacy of interest in and support for missions. In addition several of its ministers had either been missionaries or became missionaries after serving at DeLancey.

There were three Missionary Woman's societies for many years. The Women's Missionary Society organized on December 5, 1903; the Emma Dean Anderson Society came into being on November 26, 1910 and the Elsie French Society was established in the early 1940's. These were each woman's groups and were for older women, middle aged woman and teen-age girls respectively. As participation dwindled in each, a single group was formed for all women in the

church in 1972 and was called the Women's Association. In 1971, the Couples Club was formed.

Music seems to be a bone of contention in old times as well as modern times. Disagreement among generations is evident. In the first years of the church, there was the singing of Psalms and no other music was considered appropriate. As stated in the standards, music from uninspired authors was prohibited. The manual of the United Presbyterian Church of Bovina, NY dated May 1876 stated in: *Article 17 That it is the will of God that the songs contained in the Book of Psalms be sung in his worship, both public and private, to the end of the world; and, in singing God's praise, these songs should be employed to the exclusion of the devotional compositions of uninspired men.*¹⁰

The records do not show when that change occurred to include hymns other than psalms, but the difference of opinion regarding the type of music was evident on one occasion when new hymnals were purchased. One member, Mrs. Bagley conveniently and secretly took the old hymnals and hid them at her house so the wish of the minister to have the new hymnals used was facilitated.

In the mid 1900's I remember the primary hymnal was a Psalter Hymnal, with about half of the selections directly from the psalms and the remainder other hymns.

At the beginning it was also not considered appropriate to use musical instruments in the worship service. A tuning fork was used to set the pitch and singing was without piano or organ or other instrument. The young people petitioned the elders to purchase an organ. There was considerable and prolonged discussion on this topic and the voting ultimately was by secret ballot, a technique rarely used by the elders. At least one elder abstained from voting. The vote passed to obtain an organ and the decision was supported by the congregation.

Ministers: The growth of the church continued and ministers served the congregation. A list of the ministers appears in the appendix. The records report that in 1869, the minister was paid \$700.00 yearly salary. There were 65 members. The count for 1886 was about 150 and by the 1890's the number of members was about 230. During the big Depressions the minister offered to receive a lowered salary in recognition of the stress of the economy. We are reminded of the differences of days of yore by the notation in 1897 that \$2.00 would be paid to Mr. Oliver for caring for horses during the previous meeting of the Presbytery.

In the 1960's many churches in our country saw a decline in interest and attendance. Denominations sought ways to counter this trend and had seminars and programs about a variety of organizational structures to address the problem. Both the Hamden and DeLancey Presbyterian churches could recognize that they could be part of the statistic of a church closing. It was in 1967 when the two churches made the decision to co-yoke pastors. This was not an easy decision because each church had a rich history and sentiment for their own church. The new ar-

rangement provided for the governance of each church to remain independent but the services and payment of the minister was shared in this new organizational arrangement. At times the services were held jointly and the location of residence of the minister was varied. The manse not used by a minister was rented.

Other changes were noted when the first woman elder was elected in 1962. That was Helen Russell. A list of all the elders since the church was formed is found in the appendix. The first woman minister was called in 1995 when Leigh Holder was installed as minister of the congregation. The current guideline of the Presbytery is that the ratio of men and women in positions of authority reflect the ratio of men and women members of the church so the presence of women is no longer a rarity.

The House of Worship of the Congregation

1948- “To assist them (Lansingville) the congregation of Bovina gave them \$100 and the frame of their old church, which was hauled all the way on the snow, chiefly by John Bryce.”¹¹ There were 40 members of this new church. (1848). The first new house of worship was built two years after in 1851 at a cost of about \$1,000. It could accommodate about 300 people. This was repaired and enlarged in 1882 and it burned down in December, 1896.

The 125th anniversary booklet describes the fire as follows: *“In December 1896, just before Christmas fire destroyed the church. Although help was soon on hand after the alarm went out, because of a lack of water the fire was soon beyond control. Fortunately the roof of the building was covered with snow, which served to deaden the flames. Had it not been for this the fire would have undoubtedly spread to other buildings and proved disastrous to the village. Nothing was saved except the pulpit, chairs, bookcase, the Bible and some small chairs. All but two of the sheds were saved. (The sheds were probably the buildings to house the horses and wagons during church services.)*

Earlier in the afternoon children and their helpers had been at the Church practicing for the Christmas program. It no doubt was caused by the furnace.

The Christian Church kindly offered the use of their Church for the Christmas exercises and other services. Immediately plans were made to replace the church.”

The following newspaper article describes the present church when it was built in 1897.

The new U.P. church which was dedicated at DeLancey, Thursday, is of gothic design with four gables. It is 50 by 70 feet with a tower that is 12 by 12 and is painted French gray with white trimmings. The auditorium is 42 by 50 feet separated by sliding doors so arranged that both a rear Sunday School room and audience room can be one. This provides seating capacity of 400.

The sanctuary room is finished in oak, including wainscoting, casings, doors, etc. giving evidence of skilled workmanship. The walls are smoothly plastered and decorated in distemper

colors. The ceiling is of metal, a pretty design and handsomely tinted. This work was done by Wood Brothers of Utica, who are artists in this line. The sanctuary is in a semicircle with seats of elm.

The Sunday School room is finished in oak with decorated walls and ceiling and seated with chairs. A basement under the whole structure gives ample room for furnace, kitchen, dining room, parlors etc.

There are three large Gothic shaped stained glass windows. Two on each side of the sanctuary and one in the Sunday School room facing the street. In the sanctuary there is a smaller window on each side of the large one and two smaller ones in the front. They are all of handsome and appropriate design and rich colors. They are an honor to the church and a credit to the donors.

The stained glass windows are all memorial windows, except two, one in the cloak room and one in the vestibule. The first to be mentioned is the large one on the right of the sanctuary, which, like all the large windows, is in three parts. The center bears the name of Bryce, on the left Wight and on the right McLaughlin each with appropriate emblems. These family names have been prominent in the history of the church from its foundation to the present time, even unto the second and third generations. To the left is the Knowles window, rich in coloring, emblem a calla lily. To the right is a window inscribed to the memory of Dr. James Clifford Lewis, who was baptized in this church and reared in the Sabbath School. On the opposite side of the room is a large window to the memory of James A. Chambers, for many years an elder and a prominent worker in this church, presented by his widow and children. This has three emblems, a cross, an anchor and a tablet with the commandments and an open Bible with "Thy word is Truth". The window on one side is to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. John S Murray, and the emblem is a crown. On the opposite window the emblem is a lily and to the memory of Mrs. Jane Salton, a charter member of the church, presented by her four sons, John e, Robert, George and Thomas Salton. To the rear of the pulpit one window is to the memory of Mrs. Louisa Lenox Crawford, who was also a charter member, presented by her daughters, Misses Jennet and Louisa Crawford. The other window is to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Bagley and has the emblem of an open Bible with the words, "Is my name written there?"

The large window in the Sabbath school room was a donation through the efforts of the Missionary and Ladies Aid societies, with a smaller window on each side. One was presented by the Christian Endeavor Society and contains the Christian Endeavor emblem. The other window was presented by the juniors with the emblem, a bible with the ext, "Suffer Little children to come unto me." The necessary funds for this window were raised through the efforts of the juniors by selling photographs of the old church and thus the shadow of the old sanctuary was helpful in rearing new.

The pulpit furniture is of black walnut, the upholstered in plush. The chairs were rescued from the flames when the old church burned. A new pulpit to match was purchased with funds presented by the Walton United Presbyterian congregation. The auditorium is lighted with a double burner Bailey reflector which not only gives ample light to every part of the room but is

very ornamental.

With wide substantial stone steps and six foot stones making a walk across the lawn leading to each entrance, the church presents an attractive appearance and has been a source of wonder and remarks by the strangers, visitors and workmen who have come to our village this summer. How so handsome a church could be built in so small a place. But when told that people come from miles around, over the hills and up and down the valleys here to worship, the mystery is explained.

The cost of the new church and furnishings was approximately \$5500. which does not include the voluntary labor, no small item for the people had a mind to work, such as hauling lumber a, sand and stone, excavating, grading etc.¹²

The Christian Church of Lansingville The other church of DeLancey, The Christian church of Lansingville was a portion of the Delhi Society in the beginning, but built their own church that was dedicated January 1, 1847. It cost \$1500. They generously allowed the newly formed Presbyterian church to use its facilities. Today it makes us wonder how such a small village could support two churches. The memberships of both grew and it is described in the Presbytery History that it was deeply frowned upon for a person of one Protestant faith to enter the church of another Protestant faith.

The History of the denominations in the DeLancey church:

The origins of a **Presbytery** is a local group of churches which combine with other Presbyteries to form the regional governance body called the **Synod**. Synods collectively make up the national denominational body called the **General Assembly**.

How did the first groups get started? Rev. Graham¹³ “noted a sketch of the rise and progress of that congregation. About the beginning of the present century (1800’s) when the country was a wilderness densely covered with timber all over those mountains, emigrants began to come in, and to choose their locations; among whom were two or three families from Scotland, who belonged to the Associate Presbyterian Church. These people clung to each other, as was natural, coming from the same country, and being brought up in the same church. They met regularly in each others’ cabins on the Sabbath, gathered their little ones around them, and spent the day in religious exercises; they also met at a prayer-meeting during the week. This they continued to do while struggling with untold hardships for many years. But ‘the Lord hearkened, and heard,’ and answered, ‘the prayer of them that feared Him and thought upon His name. Others came from the same country, the society in due time increased, and they became more encouraged. They longed to have the gospel preached and divine ordinances dispensed among them and their children; in connection with a church of whose doctrines and practices they could conscientiously approve; and these they found exhibited in the ‘Narrative and Testimony of the Associate Synod of North America’. Accordingly, after much deliberation and prayer, they agreed to petition the Associate Presbytery of Cambridge to send them supply of sermon for a few Sabbaths.”

“The first Presbytery assumed the name “The Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, subordinate to the Synod of Edinburgh. That was the first Presbytery constituted in U.S. in connection with the Secession Church of Scotland and which afterward gave rise to the late Associate and Associate Reformed Synods, which united in 1858 to form the United Presbyterian church of North America (UPNA).”¹⁴ **Delaware Presbytery** was organized by an act of the Synod of New York (UPNA) on the second Wednesday of November, 1859, at West Delhi. It included the Associate Presbyterian churches at Bovina, DeLancey, West Delhi and New Kingston; and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian churches of Andes, Burlington, Cabin Hill, North Kortright, West Kortright, Hobart, Middletown and West Springfield. In 1866 Kortright and South Kortright were added. Hobart and East Springfield later became affiliated with the Otsego Presbytery.

1959 Jan. 20-21, The Delaware Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church of North America (15 churches including DeLancey) and the Presbytery of Otsego (28 churches including Hamden) of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (28 churches) merged to form **The Presbytery of Susquehanna** of the United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. Both of the former presbyteries covered nearly the same geographic area of Otsego and Delaware Counties.

1965 The Presbytery of Binghamton and Presbytery of Susquehanna merged to form **the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley** of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America. In 1983 at the national level the present **Presbyterian Church in the United States** was formed by the uniting of the “southern branch”, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and the “northern branch”, the United Presbyterian Church in the United States.

APPENDICES

A. CHURCHES IN PRESBYTERY IN 1933 page 17

Date of origin, present size

B. MINISTERS OF DELANCEY CHURCH page 18

1848 to present

C. ELDERS OF THE DELANCEY CHURCH page 20

1847 to present

D. LIFE ON A SCOTCH MOUNTAIN FARM 1865-1935

Andrew J. Nichol page 22 Churches in the Delaware Presbytery of the

United Presbyterian Church : Status 1933¹⁵

Congregation	Year founded	Original names	Dis- Organized	Members		220	45
				1858	1933		
Gilchrist Memorial	1785		Kortright Associate Reformed				
S. Kortright	1792	Stamford Associate Reformed		139	200		
Bovina	1809	Delhi Associate, Little Delaware		270	300		
Cabin Hill	1833	Associate Reformed		84	70		
Andes	1834	Associate Reformed					
Burlington	1835	Associate Reformed	1914	100			
East Springfield	1851	Associate Reformed	1867 to Albany presbytery				
West Delhi	1841	Delhi Associate		130	72		
DeLancey	1848	Lansingville Associate		60	208		
N. Kortright	1850	Associate Reformed		128	88		
West Kortright	1850	A. R. of Kort. and Meredith		120	64		
Hobart	1852	Associate Reformed	1868 to Presb'n	60			
New Kingston	1853	N.K. Associate & Middletown A.R.					
Walton	1865				499		
Davenport	1868				83		
Meredith	1870		1894				
Garrattsville	1879				46		
Delaware	1879		1928				
Mundale	1881	North Hamden			135		

Shavertown	1886	1912	
Rock Rift	1888	1912	
Oneonta	1889		230

“The new denomination, The United Presbyterian Church of North America was organized in October of 1858 which in effect combined the Associate and Associate Reformed Presbyterian denominations. The Presbyteries were formed the following year and the Delaware Presbytery comprised all the congregations in the counties of Delaware and Otsego In New York State. The vote to form this presbytery was on October 5, 1859. The members of the church in this territory were to meet at West Delhi, the second Wednesday of November, 1859, at 11 A.M.. The Presbytery took its name from the county from which the larger portion of its congregations was found. The county itself being so entitled because in it are found the headwaters of the noble stream, named by the British in honor of Lord De la War. It is interesting to note that the Indians, the northern reaches of whose hunting grounds were found in our county, were likewise called the Delawares. Of this connection was that noble redskin described by Cooper in “The Last of the Mohicans ”. Of course they did not call themselves Delawares, but in their own language, Lanapes, meaning “males” or “men”.”¹⁶

Ministers of DeLancey United Presbyterian Church

1849 to present

Name	Years of Service	Comments
W.J. Cleland	1849-56	Supply 1/3 time with W. Delhi
R.D. Williamsen	1859-1861	First Full time pastor
D.S. McHenry	1867-1876	Left due to failing health
Thomas Park	1877-1891	Period of steady growth and repair and enlarging of church
John A. McConnelee	1893-1895	Went to Mission field in India
Nicholas Luther Heidger	1895-1899	1896- fire destroyed church
A.M. Milligan	1900-1908	Resigned due to ill health.
James Springer	1910-1911	Resigned because of low salary
Alexander Mitchell, PhD	1911-1914	Manse was built.
H.J. McClure	1915-1923	A successful pastorate
William M. Barr, D. D.	1923-1938	Emeritus status granted; effective & beloved by the congregation
Howard D. McMurray	1938-1943	Faithful pastor
John H. Egner	1944-1949	
Paul L. Downes	1950-1953	Former missionary to Central America; went to Toledo, Ohio
Thomas R. McMillan	1955-1957	New seminary graduate.
Lyle E. Brown	1960-1961	Board of Deacons added.
C. Thomas Lane	1962-1965	

Joseph Lewien Hamden	1967-1973	Beginning of yolked pastor with
John Howard	Jan-June 75	Relationship dissolved.
Robert Richardson	1976-1979	
Jeffrey W. Palmer	1980-1982	
Stephen Row	1984-1989	
Donald T. Buddle	1991-1994	
Heather Leigh Holder	1995-2000	First woman pastor.

Elders of DeLancey Presbyterian Church

	Initial Installation
George Wight Sr.	1849
John McFadden	1849
John Bryce	1849
Thomas Laurence	1849
George Adam	1860
Robert Ballantyne, Sr.	1860
George Wight Jr.	1882
James Chambers	1882
John B. Mable	1882
James Kent	1894
George W. Salton	1894
Robert Chambers	1894
Alexander Bailey	1911
John M. Bostwick 1962 –emeritus	1911
James A. Ballantyne	1916
Hugh D. Clark	1916
Robert Ballantyne	1916
H. S. Covert	1921
Edmund Calhoun	1940
Peter Stoop	1940
Everett Holley	1945
James O. Fyffe	1949
William McNee	1950
Maurice Russell	1951
Frank S. Kubin	1953
Robert Mabon	1960

Cornelius Stoop	1960
Edwin Aitken	1960
Robert McNee	1961
Clifford Sprague	1961
Tracey Neish	1962
Helen Russell	
First woman elder	1962
John Newkerk	1963
Salenda Bush	1963
Margaret Ruff	1964
Albert Whittaker	1964
Anita Calhoun	1965
David Holley	1965
Freda Birdsall	1968
David Carroll	1969
Lynn Liddle	1969
Elsie Wheat	1969
Leonard Shepard	1969
Fred Ford	1969
Norton Holley	1970
James Ottman	1970
Emma Wilbur	1970
Thomas R. Hutson	1971
James Newkerk	1971
Henry E. Little	1972
George Verspoor	1973
Elden Moody	1974
George Bolles	1974
Patricia Worden	1976
Wesley Burzcak	1978
Susan R. Reynolds	1979
Mary Forrest	1980
Marie Renner	1981
Olive Hoag	1981

Ray Hamilton	1983
Arthur Aikens	1984
James Birdsall	1985
Charles Calhoun	1988
Emily Wager	1988
Linda Caputo	1989
Ralph Reynolds	1993
Molly Franklin	1993
Betty Bowers	1994
Karen Graves	1998
Ellie Klukkert	1999
Jean Liddle	2000
Michelle Gutliph	2003

Below is a description of life written by William Nicoll's son for an anniversary of the Delhi newspaper. Written in 1935, it describes farm life 70 years previous- 1865

FARM LIFE in 1865 DESCRIBED BY ANDREW J. NICOLL in 1935

Dear Mr. Editor:

In answer to your request for some early recollections of farm life for your anniversary edition. of The Republican, will begin by saying that I cannot remember when The Republican did not come to our home. Father moved to the Scotch Mountain farm in Sept. 1865. I am sure that I have read it at least 70 years. When I moved to Delhi village in 1890, I became a subscriber and it has made us a weekly visit since that time.

Seventy years is a long time when we look ahead but in looking back it impresses us in a different way. Father bought the old farm right in the high war prices (Civil War) and it was rather a hard task to pay for it during the depression that followed and support a family of nine children. For many years the subscription to the Republican was paid with a load of wood which I am sure was delivered on time.

Farmers complained of the hard times we have been passing through, but I wonder how many of them deny themselves the comforts and submit to strict economy and continuous hard work that made it possible to pay the interest on the mortgage when due 70 years ago. It was impossible for the receipts from the farm to meet the payments and keep the family so we cut wood and drew it to Delhi, five miles away—often two loads a day after cutting it with his ax. Our food was almost entirely obtained from the farm.

A "fallow" that was an acre or two of the woods was cut over during the early summer. After haying it was burned over. Then came the logging bee, putting the logs in heaps. After the heaps were burned and the land cleared, rye was sown and dragged in with the old fashioned A drag. It was a great day for the boys when the "fallow" was burned. In addition to the rye some winter wheat, eight rows yellow corn for husking, oats and

buckwheat were grown. The soil was rich in humus and no fertilizers were needed. We took the rye, wheat, buckwheat and corn to the Lake Mill at Lake Delaware where Dowe Ferguson made the highest quality of product from grain. No such rye flour and corn meal can be bought now. Of course we grew all kinds of vegetables, including bean and peas to shell, for winter. Apples were plenty and of fine quality, and an ample supply was dried for later use. No insect pests or fungus diseases troubled us. The coddling moth and potato bug had not appeared. We made our own sugar, syrup and soap. Sometimes ashes were gathered from the log heaps in the fallow, made into soap, which was sold to the Penfield Woolen Mill in Delhi and used to full the woolen cloth. Sheep were kept and a few fleeces were taken to Penfield Mill and carded into rolls which Mother spun on the old wheel. Mrs. Blair, our neighbor then wove the yarn into cloth. From this cloth was made almost everything required to clothe the family.

Remember we had no sewing machine. Mother did it all by hand and knit the stockings for us all with the help of the girls as they grew up. Many a time she has worked on a garment till midnight on Saturday that it might be worn to church on the Sabbath Day. How one pair of hands ever did so much and did it so well and without a word of complaint is marvelous to us today.

In the fall Father would take a few calfskins, the skin of a yearling that we called "kip skin", and a cow hide to the tannery in Delhi where it was tanned for half. Then later an old shoemaker by the name of Brace would come and make the needed supply of shoes for the family. We children wore, the same shoes at home, at school and at church. Father had a pair of fine boots and Mother a pair of calfskin shoes. Ours were kip skin or crew hide. At frequent intervals the shoes were greased with tallow and set up by the stove for it to dry in. As soon, as the weather became warm we went bare-foot. I have heard my grandmother tell that, when they walked from Wolf Hollow to the Flats Church, a distance eight miles, they carried their shoes and put them on at a rock near to the present reservoir that supplies water to the County House.

Seventy years ago the hay was cut by hand and on most farms raked by hand; the grain cut with the cradle and in the "fallow" the rye was reaped with the sickle and on most farms threshed by hand. Most of the maple trees were tapped with the ax and a spike driven into the circular cut made by a cap-gouge under the slanting cut made by the ax on the tree. It required skill to tap with an ax. First horizontal slanting cut was made, and then another on an angle of 45 degrees to intersect it when if well done the chip came out. The sap then followed this out down to the spike described above. The spikes dropped into either the shallow pans used to raise the cream or into sap troughs made from a section of a tree 4 ft. long split in two parts, each of which was shaped into trough. The sap was dipped from the troughs and carried by hand to the boiling place where it was boiled down into syrup, taken home and sugared off.

The cows came fresh in late April or May. No grain was fed in winter and in the spring after freshening only what was raised on the farm. They were dried up by Thanksgiving. They were milked in the milking yard and the milk set in the old fashioned shallow pans on the "milk rack" where the cream was raised. The cream ripened and then was churned in the old dash churn by dog power on the old tread mill machine. The butter was washed by the ladle in the tub where it was salted one oz. to a lb. and packed in tubs until grass time; then in 100 lb. firkins which were stored in the cellar and sold in the fall or early winter. Soon after the war the price fell to about a shilling a pound.

Shipping milk to New York City began about 1890 when it was shipped direct by the farmers in 40 qt. cans to the dealer. The farmer had to furnish at least five or six sets of cans. Often they came back unwashed. Most farmers felt that it was morally wrong to ship milk on the Sabbath Day. I well remember Mrs. William Wight warning her son, David L., that we would have to account for thus desecrating the Sabbath.

In, my boyhood home the Sabbath Day was strictly kept and I thank God that I was brought up in that kind of atmosphere. Everything was done in preparation for the day. Nothing that could be put off till Monday was done on the Sabbath. The question of church attendance never came up. We expected to go to church on the Sabbath as we expected to go to school or to work on Monday. Seventy years ago we went in the lumber wagon, until we could afford one with springs. Family worship was observed morning and evening and the Shorter Catechism was committed, and recited each Sabbath night. Each of us was expected to commit (to memory) some portion of Scripture. As I look back I never remember the Sabbath Day as long or burdensome. Rather we looked forward to it as the "Day of all the week the best"

A. J. NICOLL¹⁷

Land, Fla., Feb. 20, 1935.

¹ Jennie Chambers in the late 1940's and 1950's spent much effort compiling history of the DeLancey UP church and evidence remains in a handwritten draft of many pages and letters received from family members of former pastors. Louise Little in 2006 used her written draft as the basis for this document.

² The Turnpike refers to the road between Kingston and Unadilla, specifically the road between Andes and DeLancey, also called Bagley Brook road..

³ Mrs. Maxwell was the daughter of and also housekeeper for Judge Foote who occupied a pretentious residence on the south side of the Delaware River about three miles below the church, later known as the John D. Clark home which served to assist in the underground movement of slaves to freedom in the mid 1800's.

⁴ The Little Family History by Louise Little, 2000. Available at the Cannon Free Library in Delhi and the County and State Historical Society.

⁵ The Tavern was an inn for travelers to stay overnight and rest their horses. The Tavern was later converted to a house now situated at the corner of Huska Road and Bagley Brook Road, about 6 miles from DeLancey.

⁶ George Wight was one of the first elders ordained in the Flats church ⁶and served under Rev Maxwell, who was installed in 1812 and died July 2, 1840. Wight also served under Rev. McEwen, 1841-1845. Then the Rev. Herey was called in 1845 and dismissed in 1849. George Wight was one of two founding elders from The Turnpike church to start the Lansingville church.

⁷ DeLancey Session minutes

⁸ Graham, John "Autobiography and sermons of Rev. John Graham"

⁹ *Article 15*: That all associations, whether formed for political or benevolent purposes, which impose upon their members an oath of secrecy, or an obligation to obey a code of unknown laws, are inconsistent with the genius and spirit of Christianity and church members ought not to have fellowship with such associations.

¹⁰ Manual of the United Presbyterian Church of Bovina, N.Y. , May 1876 George S. Ferguson, Printer 714 Sansom Street Philadelphia , PA pgs 25-26.

¹¹ Graham, John "Autobiography and sermons of Rev. John Graham"

¹² Newsclipping, source unknown.

¹³ Graham, John, "Autobiography and Reminiscences of Rev. John Graham" Wm. S. Rentoul: Philadelphia, 1870, pg. 48

¹⁴ Graham, John, "Autobiography and Reminiscences of Rev. John Graham" Wm. S. Rentoul: Philadelphia, 1870, pg 126

¹⁵ Stewart, Rev. Alvin W., A Brief History of the PRESBYTERY OF DELAWARE of the United Presbyterian Church of North America 1773-1933. 1933

¹⁶ Stewart, Rev. Alvin W., A Brief History of the PRESBYTERY OF DELAWARE of the United Presbyterian Church of North America 1773-1933. 1933

¹⁷ **The Nicoll and George families**