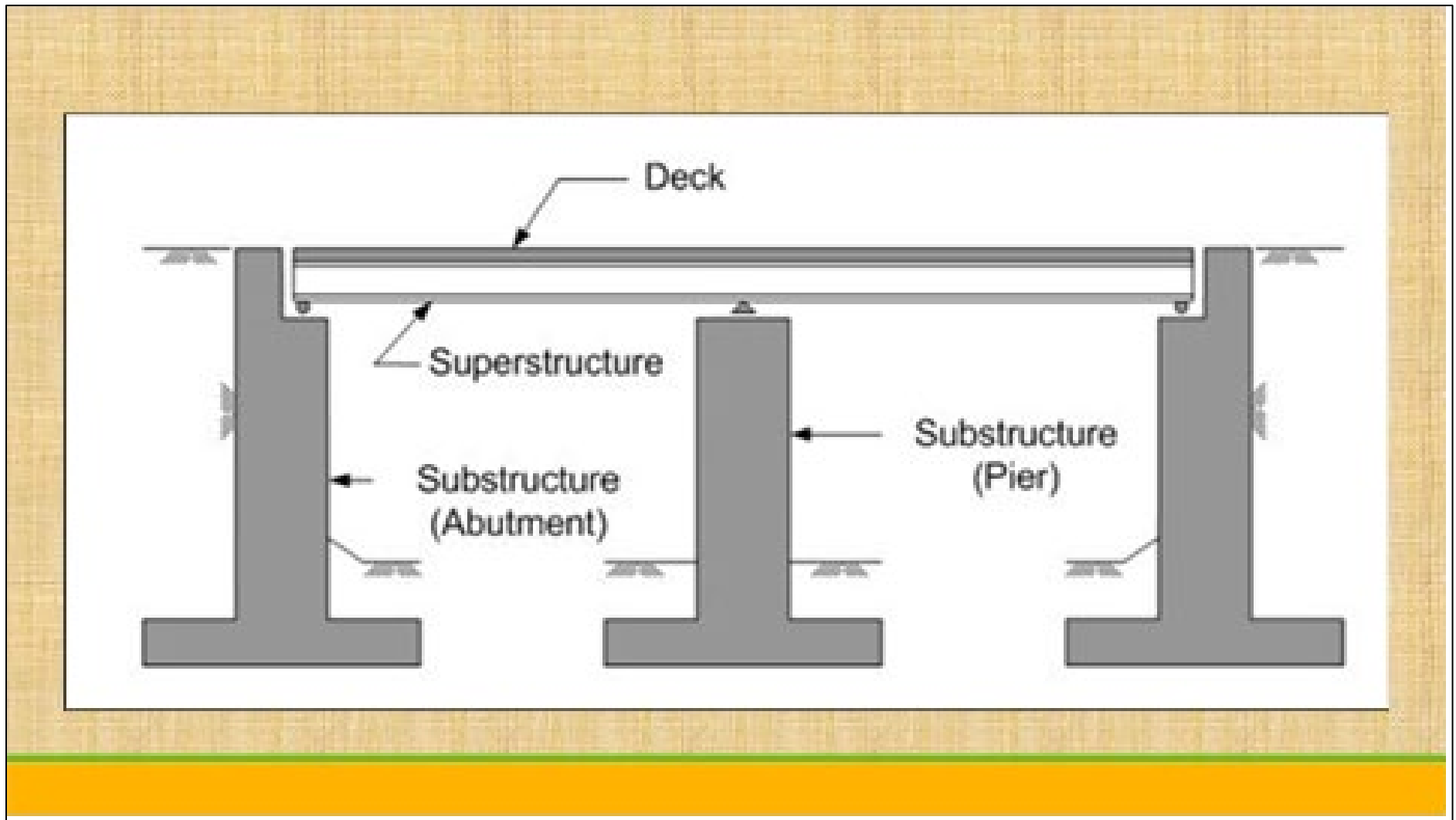


An Enduring Crossing: New Hope-Lambertville Bridge's History





Before discussing history, there is some essential bridge terminology people might want to know. Bridges have two major components: substructures and a superstructure. Every bridge must have two substructures called abutments. These are on land, one at each end of the bridge. Longer bridges are likely to have additional substructures called piers. These can be on land or in the water. The bridge at New Hope-Lambertville has five in-water piers with portions dating back to 1813. A superstructure rests atop the substructures. Superstructures come in many varieties. The current bridge between New Hope and Lambertville is a six-span steel Pratt-truss superstructure. Previously, the bridge here was a covered wooden structure.



Bridges also move. The current bridge expands in the heat of summer and contracts in the cold of winter. Each of the six spans expand toward Pennsylvania and contract toward New Jersey. The trusses move on bearings installed on top of the abutments and piers. This photo shows two types of bearings atop a typical pier. The left bearing is an expansion bearing. Note the grease on the right side of the left bearing. The grease lubricates a set of rollers below that triangular-shaped connection with the large bolt. This device is called a roller nest. The bridge truss expands and contracts on those rollers. The right bearing is called a fixed bearing; it doesn't move at all. This simple 19th-century technology works to this day.



DRJTBC photo

Here's what a typical set of bridge-bearing rollers can look like. These are from the Calhoun Street Bridge at Trenton, the oldest vehicular superstructure in operation between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



Photo courtesy of Fred Eisinger of Lambertville Historical Society

To appreciate the timeline of events leading to the first bridge between what is now New Hope, PA. and Lambertville, N.J., we should go back to the Native Americans. They did not consider rivers to be an impediment. Instead, they considered the Delaware River to be an ancient highway, a means of travel with the seasons.



European settlers viewed rivers differently. To them, rivers like the north-south-flowing Delaware River were impediments to east-west travel and eventual westward expansion. This gave rise to multiple ferries across the Delaware River in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Some ferries even operated into the 20th century. There were several ferry operators over the decades in the vicinity of the New Hope-Lambertville location, the most famous of which were John and Abraham Coryell and their namesake Coryell's Ferry.



In the late 18th century, early stagecoach services sprang up between larger destinations like Philadelphia and New York. This was an uncomfortable and time-consuming means of travel. A stagecoach trip between New York and Philadelphia took two days – if you were lucky.



TO THE PUBLIC

A NEW STAGE IS ERECTED TO GO FROM
 NEW YORK to PHILADELPHIA, by Way of
 POWLES-HOOK from thence through Newark and
 Elizabeth-Town to Bound-Brook and the North
 Branch of Rariton, to Coryell's Ferry, the only Ferry
 between Newark and Philadelphia, noted for its Shortness
 and Convenience over the River Delaware.

This Road is known by the Name of the Old York Road
 through the finest, most pleasant and best inhabited Part
 of New Jersey. It is proposed to set off from Powles-
 Hook every Tuesday Morning by Sunrise.

The Waggon from Philadelphia sets out also on every
 Tuesday Morning from Josiah F. Davenport's at the
 Sign of the Bunch of Grapes in Third Street and proceeds
 over Coryell's Ferry to the South Branch of Rariton
 where they meet the Newark Waggon. The Price
 for each Passenger from Powles-Hook to Philadelphia
 will be Twenty Shillings Rec., or Ten Shillings to each
 Waggon, Ferriage to the Passengers free. All possible
 care shall be taken that Justice be done the Public that
 shall please to employ

Their very humble Servants,
 JOSEPH CRANE
 JOSIAH F. DAVENPORT.

September 25, 1769
 New York Gazette

Courtesy of Fred Eisinger
 Lambertville Historical Society

This is a newspaper advertisement for a New York to Philadelphia stage starting in what is now Jersey City and crossing here at what is now New Hope and Lambertville. At the time of this 1769 advertisement, both sides of the river here were called Coryell's Ferry.

SWIFTSURE LINE OF STAGES.



THE SAFEST AND CHEAPEST
Conveyance from Philadelphia to New York,

Starts from the Green Tree Inn, No. 50, North Fourth Street, every morning, precisely at 8 o'clock, (Sundays excepted,) dine at Buckingham, lodge at Somerville, breakfast next morning at Plainfield, and arrive at Powles Hook, at 11 o'clock, A. M. This line is in complete order, the roads are excellent, and the country through which it passes more pleasing to travellers generally, than any other route between the two cities. No exertions shall be withheld by the proprietors in rendering this line pleasing and comfortable to those that may please to favour them with their patronage.

Stage Fare only FIVE DOLLARS through, with a generous allowance of baggage. Charges for accommodation 50 cents per meal, lodging 25 cents. All Packages and Baggage will go at the risk of the owner, unless insured and receipted for by the Clerk.

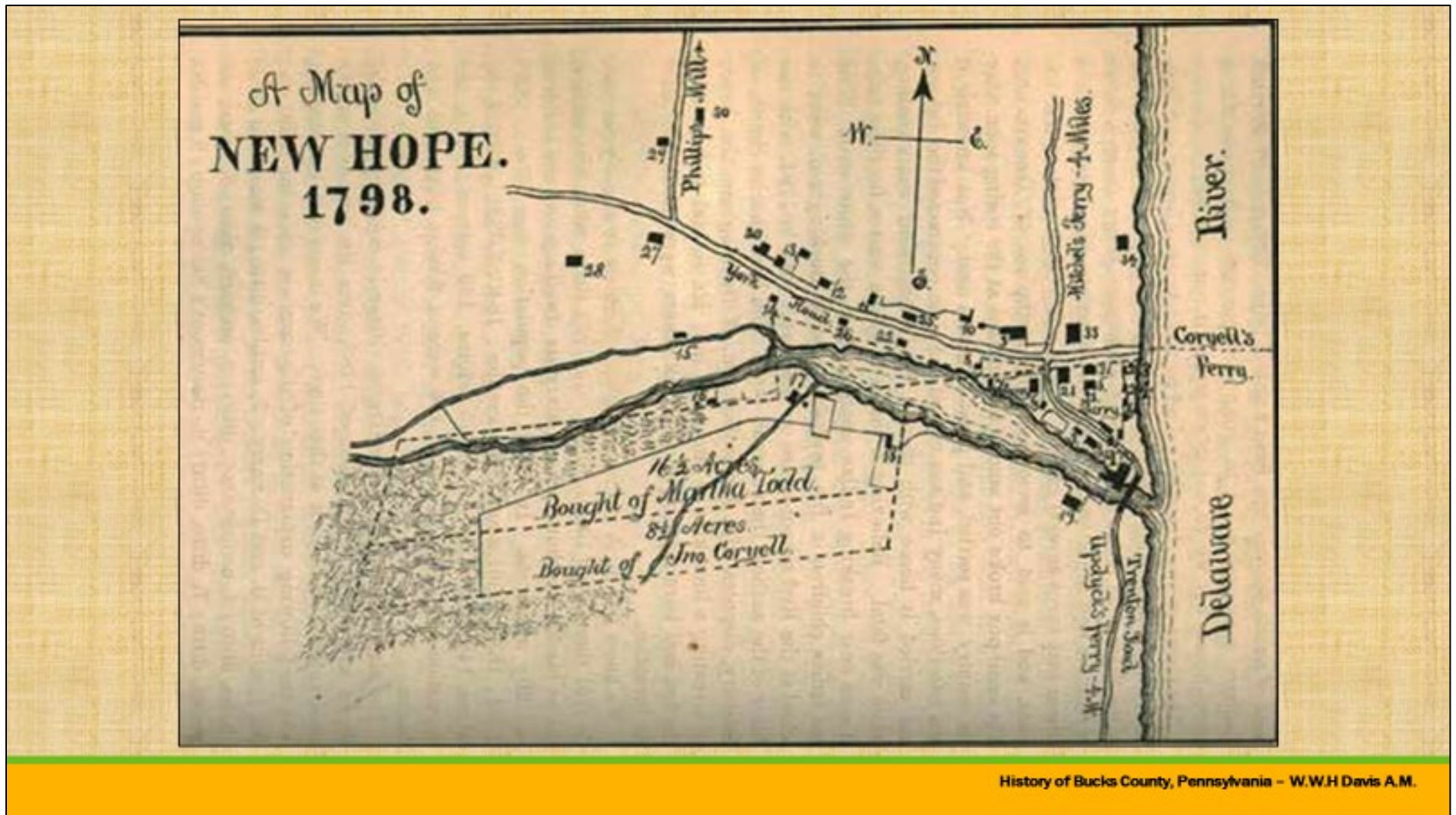
November 29—iffmwtf

ALEX. M'CALLA & CO.

One of the stagecoach enterprises that crossed at Coryell's Ferry was the Swiftsure Line.



This is a map of some of the ferries that once crossed the Delaware River in Bucks County, PA. The names of these ferries changed often over time with new owners. The last owners of the ferry rights between what is now called New Hope and Lambertville were John Beaumont on the Pennsylvania and Joseph Lambert on the New Jersey side.



Neither New Hope nor Lambertville were municipalities when the first bridge opened. New Hope was an unincorporated village and just a small part of Solebury Township. The Pennsylvania Legislature didn't designate New Hope as a separate municipality until 1837.

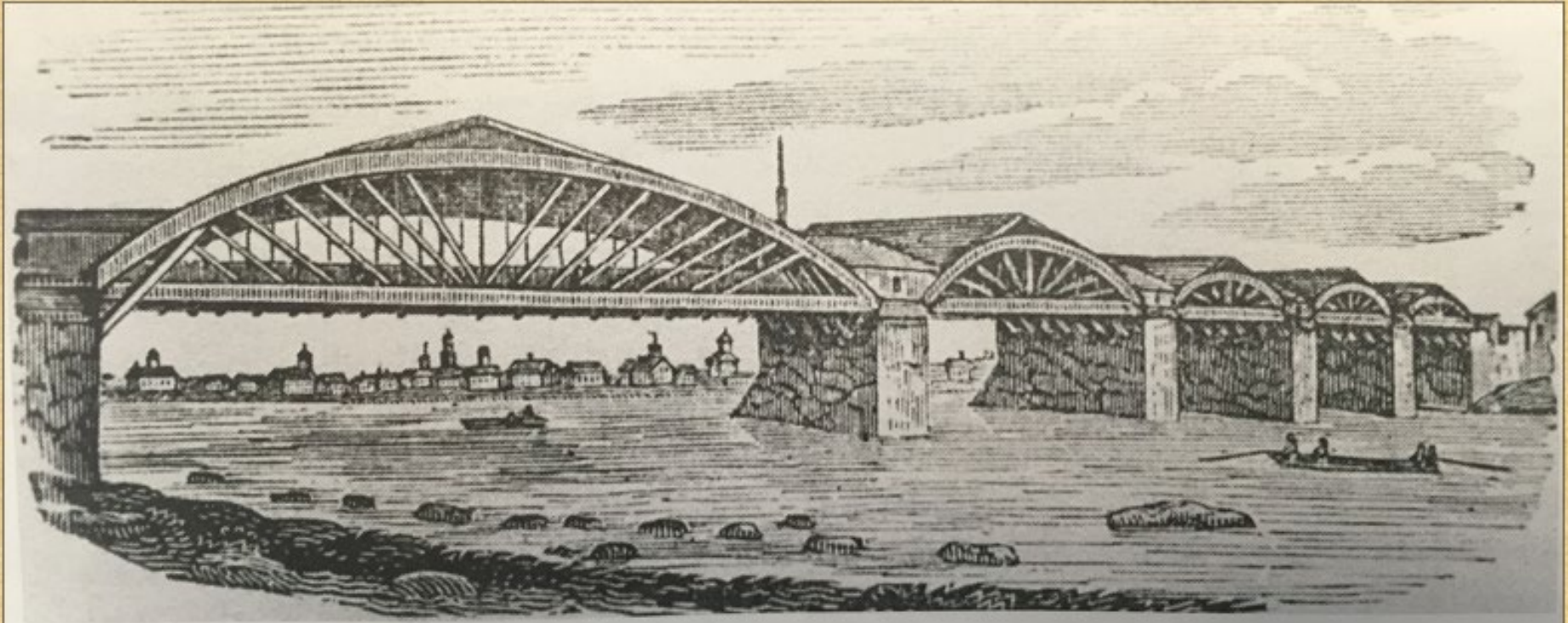


Amwell Township - 1708

- 200 square miles
- Included:
 - Delaware Township
 - Raritan Township
 - Readington Township
 - East Amwell Township
 - West Amwell Township
 - Flemington
 - Lambertville
 - Stockton
 - Portions of Clinton, Lebanon, and Tewksbury Township
- Fully dissolved in 1846

Farmers/Businessmen's Directory 1914/ Goodspeed Histories.com

New Hope was easily the more populated and industrious side of the river when people began discussing building a bridge in the early 1800s. The name Lambertville wasn't even conceived yet. The area of the New Jersey side of the river was still called Coryell's Ferry, but it was just a little unincorporated speck in a massive former municipality called Amwell Township. Amwell was 200 square miles when established in early 1708. Over the next 140 years, it was slowly whittled into smaller municipal units. Lambertville did not become an incorporated municipality – originally with a town form of government – until 1849.



Burr used an unorthodox roof on America's first interstate covered bridge at Trenton

Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey, John W. Barber/Henry Howe - 1844

The first bridge to be completed along the Delaware River opened at Trenton on January 30, 1806. Like all bridges constructed along the river in the 19th century, it was a privately owned and operated tolled crossing. The first bridge at Trenton was a magnificent, innovative structure. It was unlike any bridge anyone had seen before. Huge arches. Open sides. Rooves that ran perpendicular to the cartways. The floor was suspended from the arches with steel chains. It was designed by Theodore Burr, one of America's three pioneer bridge architects. This was the second covered bridge in America. It was so strong that it later carried railroad traffic.



Bridge on the Delaware at Trenton, New Jersey, William Constable, Sept. 10, 1807
Special Collections, Firestone Library, Princeton University

Here's a view of Burr's masterpiece in an 1807 drawing sketched by a young aspiring engineer from England.



Upriver, the second bridge to cross the Delaware opened at Easton, PA. on October 14, 1806. This bridge was designed by Timothy Palmer, another of America's three pioneering bridge designers. Palmer previously designed the country's first covered bridge across the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. The distance between the Trenton and Easton bridges was slightly more than 50 miles. It wasn't long before agitation began for another river bridge between those two cities, but the citing of the next bridge became a contentious and protracted affair.



For roughly four years, two ferry locations competed to be the next bridge site. One location was Mitchell's Ferry (formerly Howell's Ferry) at what is now Centre Bridge-Stockton. The other location was Lambert's Ferry (formerly Coryell's Ferry) at what is now New Hope-Lambertville. The advantages of a bridge over a ferry were obvious to anyone. Hunterdon County historian Marfy Goodspeed explains the dynamic: *"A bridge avoided the biggest problem associated with ferries: it could be crossed in almost any kind of weather. Ferries could not run during spring freshets, or when the river was frozen over, or in the summer when the water level dropped too low. It is true that in some of those cases, horse-back riders could simply ride across the river, but often they could not and would have to wait in a nearby tavern for conditions to improve. Bridges, especially sturdy covered bridges, were the answer. But these were not taxpayer-funded bridges. They were built by private companies, which explains why the bridges at Trenton and Easton were toll bridges. The companies raised funds for construction by selling shares, like any private company could. But the profits, which went toward bridge maintenance and to shareholder dividends, came from the tolls."*

Legislature of New Jersey.

A petition from sundry inhabitants of Hunterdon was presented by Mr Wilson on the 13th inst. praying a law to authorise the building a bridge across the Delaware, at Coryell's Ferry. Read and committed.

The same day the bill to authorise the building a bridge across the Delaware at Howell's Ferry, was taken up, considered and postponed.

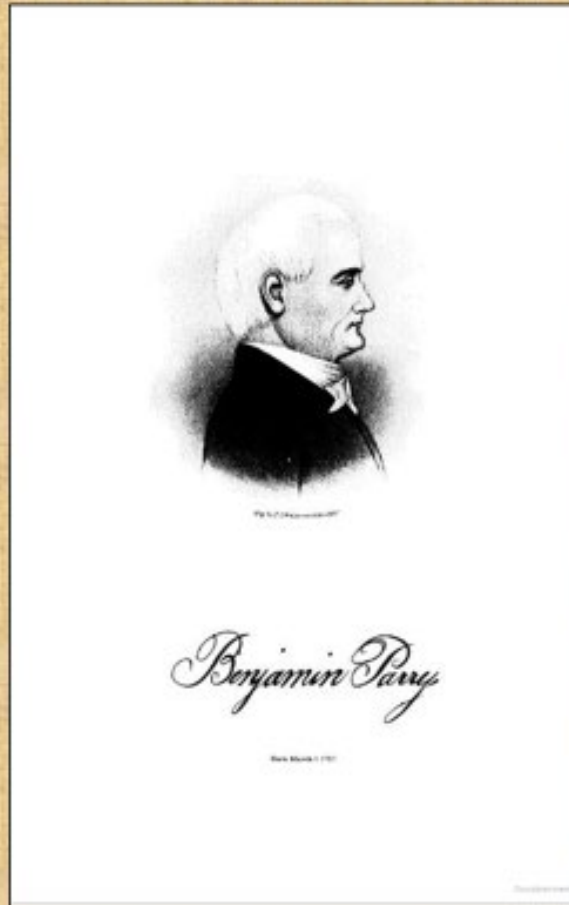
On the 17th Mr Wilson presented a bill to authorise the governor to incorporate a company to build a bridge across the Delaware at Coryell's Ferry, which was ordered a second reading.

Pennsylvania Correspondent & Farmers' Advertiser - Nov. 27, 1809

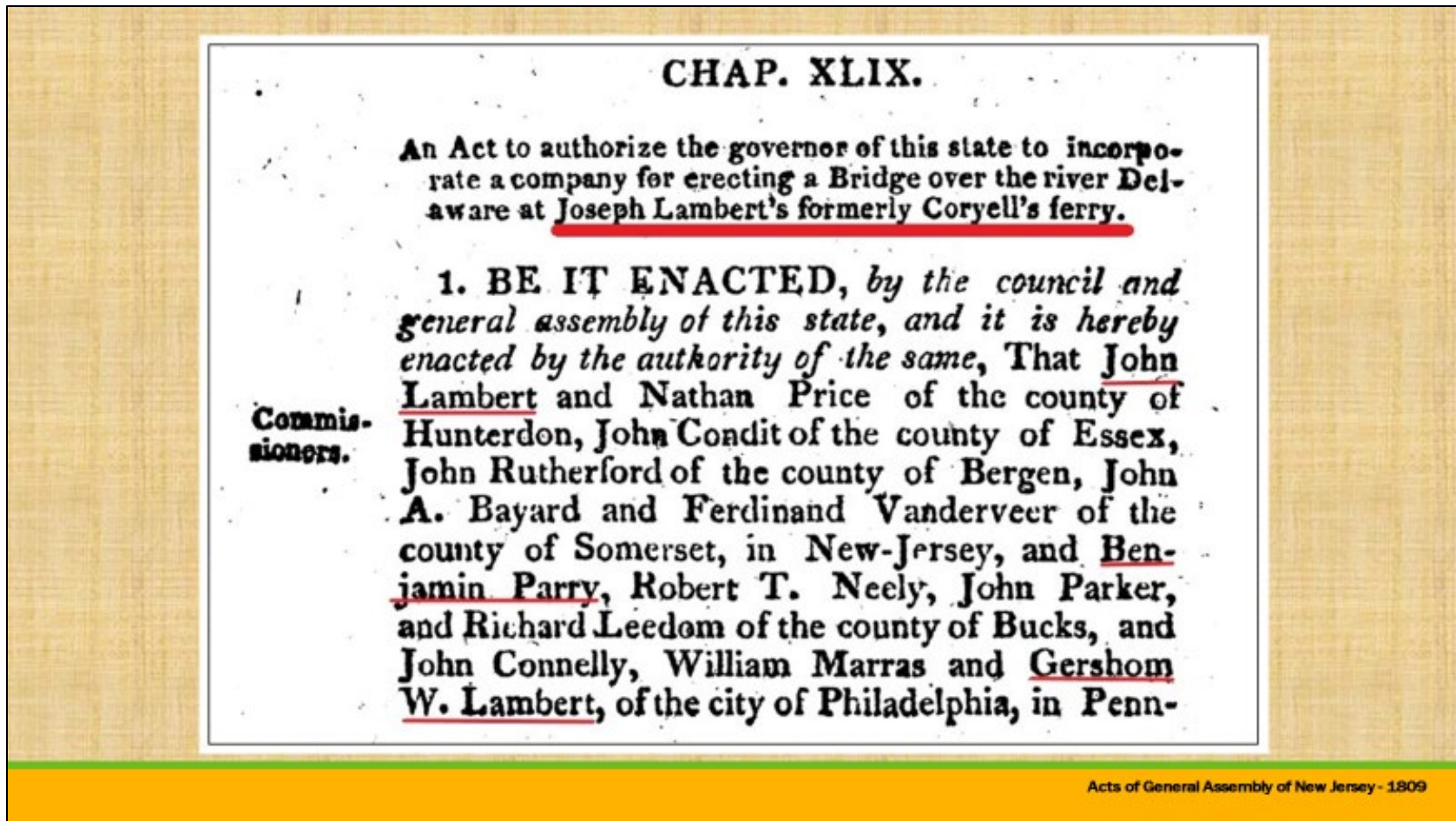
By late 1809, the agitation for a bridge between Easton and Trenton became a legislative matter. In one corner were proponents of Coryell's Ferry, now owned on the New Jersey side by Joseph Lambert. In the other corner – four miles upstream – were proponents of Howell's Ferry, then operated by a Pennsylvanian named William Mitchell.



Anyone with a horse or mule knew that a bridge was someday going to be needed in the area of the Old York Road in Amwell Township, N.J. and Solebury Township, PA. The question was: where? The competition attracted some heavy hitters, including this gentleman – U.S. Senator John Lambert of Amwell, N.J. He was a former acting governor and the brother of the local ferry rights owner, Joseph Lambert. While in Washington, Senator Lambert later helped maneuver a postal designation for Lambert's Ville, a manipulation that proved beneficial for a nephew, Capt. John Lambert, who became the first postmaster. It was of little consequence to Senator Lambert because he never resided in Lambert's Ville. He lived up near the back side of Mount Gilboa in what is now Delaware Township.



Another notable Coryell's Ferry proponent was Benjamin Parry, a wealthy Quaker and miller who conceived New Hope's name in the late 1700s after a mill fire. He is widely regarded now as the "Father of New Hope."



Despite New Hope's prominence at the time, New Jersey was the first state to legislatively engage the issue of creating a toll bridge company at the Coryell's Ferry vicinity. Legislation introduced in 1809 to authorize a bridge company at "Joseph Lambert's formerly Coryell's ferry" identified 13 individuals from far and wide to raise capital for an envisioned bridge. The representation was skewed between the two states, though. New Jersey has six named incorporators while Pennsylvania was endowed with seven incorporators. The New Jersey men named in the bill included John Lambert and Nathan Price, a Flemington tavern owner and politician. Vanderveer and Bayard were judges in Somerset County. Condit and Rutherford were former U.S. Senators from New Jersey. The measure also named a second Lambert -- Gershom W. Lambert, a Philadelphia merchant who was Joseph Lambert's son and the nephew of Senator John Lambert. Another interesting name in the legislative measure is William Marras of Philadelphia. The last name here could be a misspelling of William Maris, who would later become an infamous president of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company. Maris was a merchant in Philadelphia at the time of the legislation, a partner in the South Wharves firm of Maris and Evans. Benjamin Parry, the previously mentioned New Hope miller and potentate, also figured in this initial legislative attempt.

This act
not in force
till concurred in by
Pennsylvania.

Bridge to
be begun
in 3 and
completed
in 7 years.

power any person subscribing as aforesaid, or shall give any power or authority to such subscribers to do any act, matter or thing herein mentioned until such time as the legislature of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania shall by law vest the like power and authority in such subscribers, to erect the said bridge, and extend the same from the shore on the west side of the river, at Joseph Lambert's formerly Coryell's ferry across the same to its opposite shore, with as full and ample powers, privileges, franchises and emoluments as to the subscribers are hereby given, and the said subscribers, having such authority, shall be incorporated as aforesaid, and shall proceed in the said work with all convenient speed, and if the said company shall not proceed to carry on the said work within the space of three years after they shall have been incorporated, or shall not within the space of seven years from the passing of this act complete the said bridge, it shall and may be lawful for the legislature of this state to resume all and singular the rights, liberties and privileges hereby granted to the said company.

A. Passed at Trenton, Nov. 27, 1809.

New Jersey became the first state to pass legislation for a bridge here on Nov. 27, 1809. The bridge location was identified as Joseph Lambert's ferry (formerly Coryell's Ferry). Unfortunately, the legislature also had passed a competing measure to authorize the establishment of a bridge company four miles upstream at Mitchell's (formerly Howells') ferry. Rancor between the competing Coryell's Ferry and Howell's Ferry proponents ensued as New Jersey sent the competing bridge bills to Pennsylvania for concurrence.

Thursday, January 18.

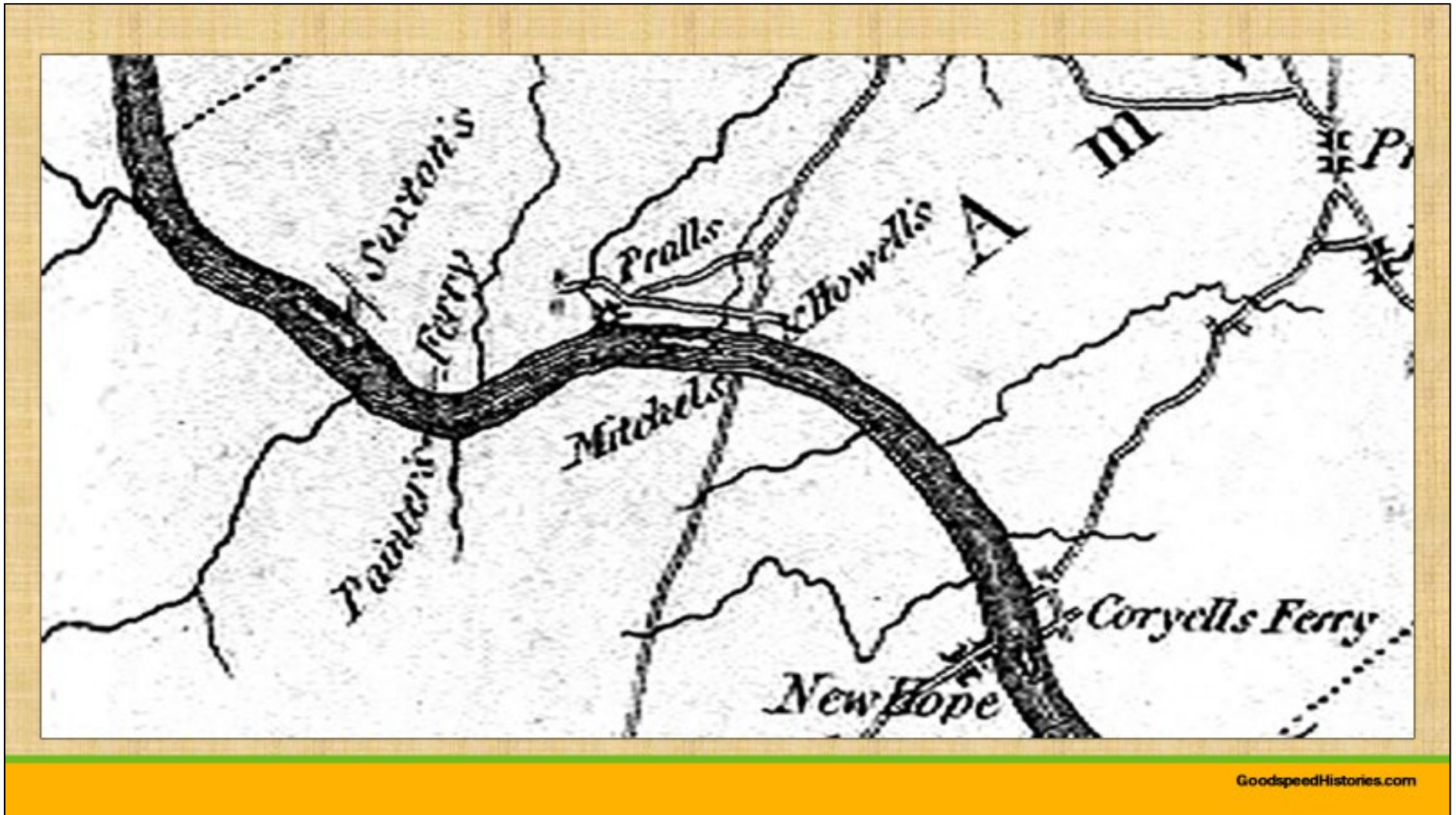
Mr. Roberts, from the committee to whom was re-committed, on the fifteenth inst. the bill entitled, "An act authorizing the governor of this commonwealth to incorporate a company for erecting a bridge over the river Delaware, at Mitchell's and Howell's ferry."

And also on the sixteenth instant, The bill, entitled. "An act authorizing the governor of this commonwealth to incorporate a company for erecting a bridge over the river Delaware at or near New Hope;" reported

A bill, entitled, "An act authorising commissioners to fix upon a site for the erection of a bridge over the river Delaware, between Howell's and Wells' falls, and for other purposes;" which was read the first time.

Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser - Monday, Feb. 12, 1810

The fight shifted to the Pennsylvania Legislature in early 1810. As the bill for a bridge at Marshall's/Howell's Ferry began to advance through the PA House of Representatives, the Lambert's/Coryell's Ferry proponents petitioned PA legislators to combine the two competing bridge acts into a single measure directing the formation of a commission to then determine which of the two sites would be more worthy for a bridge. The February 1810 news items shown here explains this New Hope-led gambit. The resulting bridge-selection-committee measure subsequently was enacted by the PA Legislature. This, in turn, was sent back to New Jersey for concurrence. At this point, another group of bridge proponents entered the competition.



This third group petitioned for a bridge farther upriver at Bull's Island. These proponents were led by Nathaniel Saxton, a real estate investor in Delaware Township's Raven Rock section. New Jersey legislators reacted by adding Saxton's site to the mix. The result: a Feb. 18, 1811 act appointing commissioners to choose among the three competing prospective bridge sites. Oddly, none of the New Jersey commissioners selected for the decision-making task hailed from Hunterdon County where the three bridge sites were located. New Jersey sent its revamped commission legislation back to Pennsylvania for concurrence. This 1812 map shows the three prospective bridge locations.



Pennsylvania mercifully ended the back-and-forth by approving New Jersey's hybrid commission measure on March 23, 1811. On September 9, 1811, the panel of commissioners from the two states – three from each state -- met at William Mitchell's ferry tavern to consider the bridge locations between Black's Eddy and Well's Falls. After discussions – and conceivably some libations – the commissioners choose the site of their host – Mitchell's Ferry. The old Coryell's Ferry proponents apparently left feeling the fix was in.

CENTRE.
DELAWARE BRIDGE.

NOTICE is hereby given, agreeably to an act of Assembly in that case made and provided, that the books will be opened by the Commissioners for receiving Subscriptions to the stock of the Company for erecting a bridge across the river Delaware at Mitchell's and Howell's Ferry, on the 14th, 15th, and 16th days of November ensuing, at the Coffee house in the city of Philadelphia—at William M'Calla's, in Jenkintown, and at John Marple's, at the Crooked-Billet, both in the county of Montgomery;—at the house of William Hart, Cross Roads, and at John Ruckman's and William Mitchell's, in the county of Bucks.

Thomas M'Euen,
James Hart,
William Hart,
John Wilson,
William Mitchell,
Samuel Johnson,
Watson Fell,

Commiss'rs for the State of Pennsylvania.
Mitchell's Ferry, Oct. 3d. 1811 79 4t

Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser - Oct. 21, 1811.

The Mitchell's/Howell's ferry supporters immediately jumped out of the gate in securing shareholders to raise capital for their location, which they soon called Centre Bridge. The Centre Bridge Delaware Bridge Company achieved its requisite amount of stock in just under a year. The company subsequently was chartered by New Jersey August 17, 1812 and Pennsylvania September 1, 1812. This is a Centre Bridge Company advertisement for prospective shareholders.

The first effort to organize a company was made September 25, 1811 at the public house of Garret Meldrum, in New Hope. Benjamin Parry, Samuel D. Ingham, Joseph Lambert, Cephas Ross, and Jeremiah Kershaw were constituted a committee of ways and means. The company was incorporated by the legislatures of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, December 28, 1812.

History of Bucks County, Pennsylvania - J.H. Battle, 1887

The shunned Coryell's Ferry proponents nonetheless redoubled their efforts. Sixteen days after the states' commissioners chose the Centre Bridge location in 1811, the New Hope proponents held a meeting to appoint a "committee of ways and means" to build their own bridge. They petitioned the Legislatures for approval again, but their effort took over a year to accomplish as noted in this excerpt of text from J.H. Battle's History of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. (Important note: Battle obviously was incorrect in stating that the Sept. 25, 1811 New Hope meeting was the "first effort" to organize a bridge company at the Coryell's Ferry location.)

AN ACT to incorporate the subscribers to
the New-Hope Delaware bridge company.

WHEREAS it has been satisfactorily represented
to the legislature, that a number of the inhabi-
tants of this state and of the state of Pennsyl-
vania, have associated together under the name
and style of the "New-Hope Delaware bridge
company," for the purpose of erecting a bridge
over the river Delaware at New-Hope, (former-
ly called Coryells ferry,) and it is desirable that
the legislature would pass a law to incorporate
said association, to enable them to carry their
laudable undertaking into effect—Therefore,

Preamble

Sec. 1. BE IT ENACTED, *by the council
and general assembly of this state, and it is hereby
enacted by the authority of the same,* That the
capital stock of the New-Hope Delaware bridge
company, shall amount to fifty thousand dollars,
that the same shall be divided into one thousand
shares of fifty dollars each, and the persons, co-
partnerships or bodies politic, who have thereto
subscribed or may hereafter subscribe, their heirs,

Capital
stock.

Here's the top of the New Jersey law authorizing creation of a New Hope Delaware Bridge Company. New Jersey approved this act on January 23, 1812. Pennsylvania's concurrence, however, wasn't achieved until December 22, 1812.

Newhope Delaware BRIDGE.

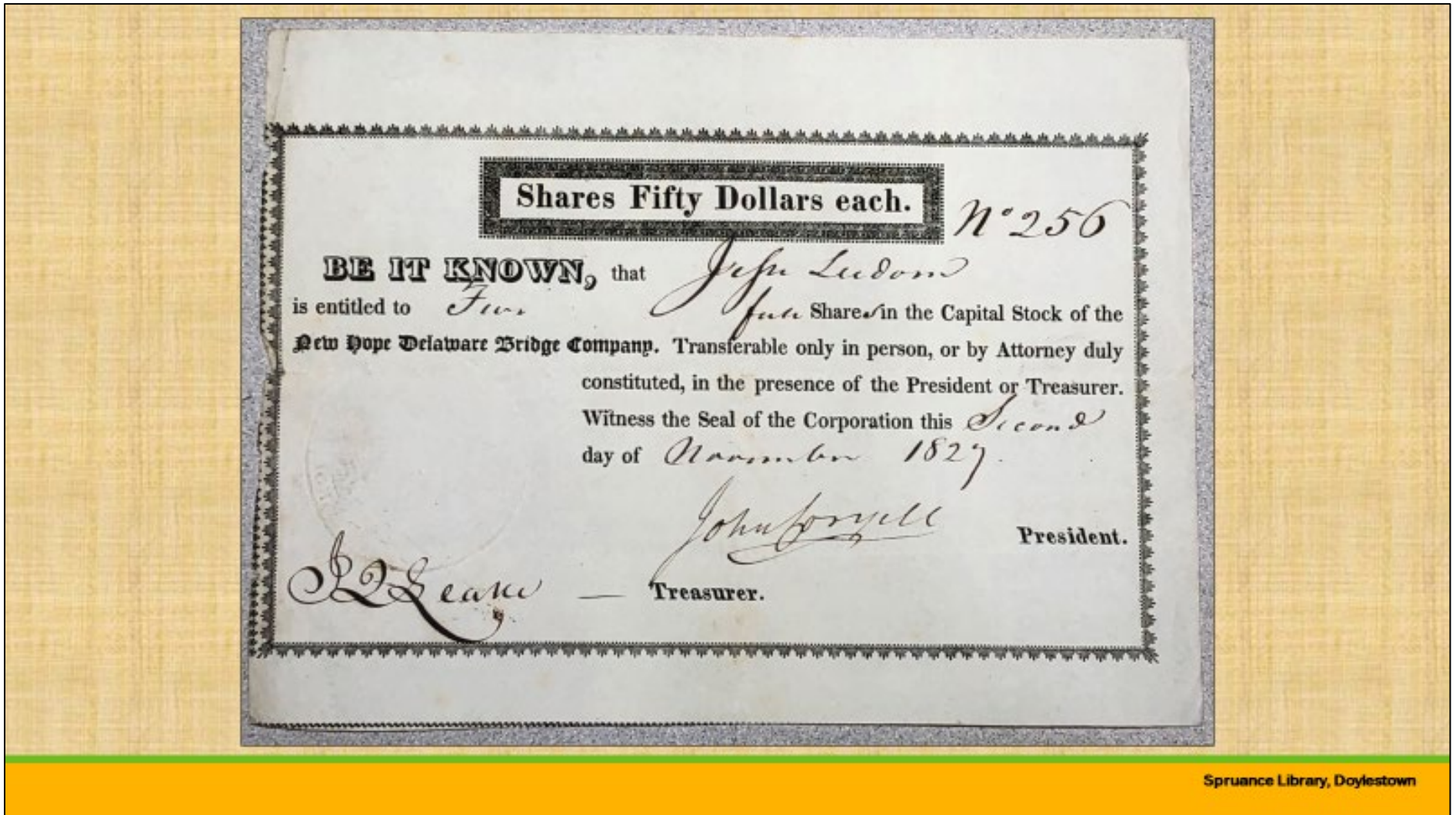
THE subscribers to the Stock of the *Newhope Delaware Bridge Company*, being now incorporated into a body politic, are requested to meet agreeably to the provision of their act of incorporation, at the house of *Garret Meltrim*, in Newhope, on the 13th of January next, at one o'clock—for the purpose of electing a President, six Managers and a Treasurer for said Company.

*Benjamin Parry,
Sam. D. Ingham,
Lewis S. Coryell,
Daniel Parry,
John Ely, jun.*

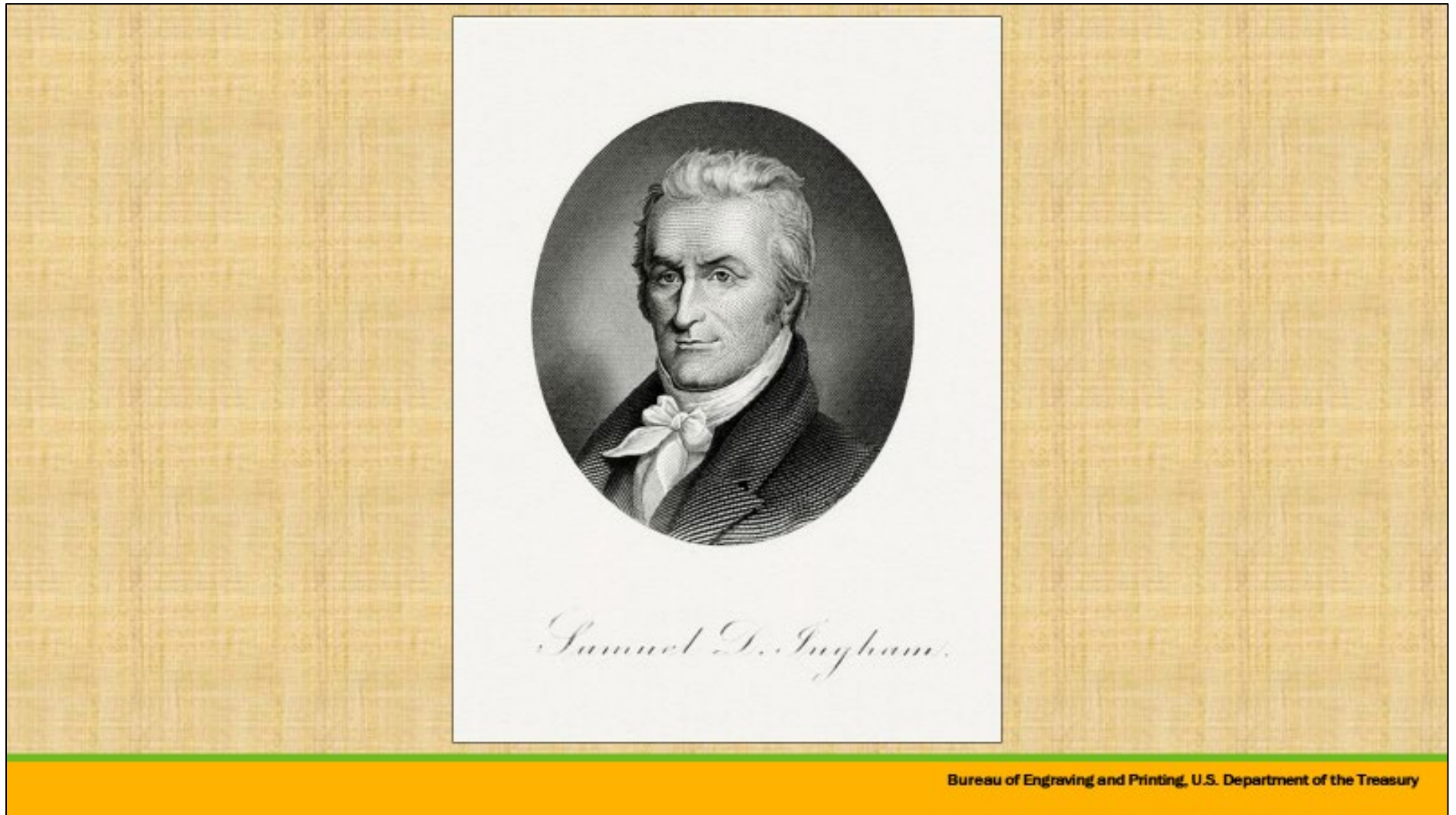
Dec. 26. 43

Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser, Dec. 28, 1812

On Christmas Day, 1812, the New Hope stock subscribers authorized placement of advertisements to attract prospective shareholders. They had a lot of catching up to do with respect to raising capital construction funds through sales of the bridge company's stock. This legal ad shows the major players, all living on the Pennsylvania side of the river. This is reflective of the fact that the village of New Hope was much larger than the little community on the opposite side of the river. You now had a situation where there were two bridge companies ostensibly attempting to subscribe shareholders in the same general area. As R. Scott Bomboy explains in his book – *Wooden Treasures, the Story of Bucks County's Bridges* – the competition between the two companies became fierce. "The Centre Bridge group claimed the law permitting the New Hope Company's bridge construction was unconstitutional. Mr. Sitgreaves, the Centre Bridge Company's secretary, called the New Hope board 'bad men' for trying to steal investors from his company."



All totaled, 16 private bridge companies eventually succeeded in constructing timber-covered carriage-way bridges across the Delaware between Pennsylvania and New Jersey in the 1800s. These companies sold shares of stock to raise capital to build and maintain bridges and then charged tolls to pay back investors. This is a stock share sold in 1829 when John Coryell of Lambert's Ville in Amwell Township served as the bridge company's president.



Prominent and well-connected individuals, locally and even nationally, were major investors in the budding New Hope Bridge Co. They included Samuel Ingham, a manufacturer and friend of New Hope's Benjamin Parry. Ingham served in Congress at the time of bridge company's creation and later served as President Andrew Jackson's Treasury Secretary. Ingham became the New Hope bridge company's first president.



Another prominent investor was Commodore Charles Stewart. He first gained distinction during the War of 1812, a conflict that was fully underway throughout the bridge company's infancy.

New-Hope Delaware Bridge.

NOTICE is hereby given to the Stockholders of the "New-Hope Delaware Bridge Company" that the President and Managers have contracted with Mr. LEWIS WERNWAG for the erection of a bridge across the Delaware at New-Hope.

It is therefore required that each Stockholder pay into the hands of *Hugh Ely*, Treasurer, at New-Hope, *Five Dollars* on each Share by them subscribed, on or before the first day of April next ; also the further sum of five dollars, on or before the first day of May next ensuing.

By order of the board.

Lewis S. Coryell, Secretary.

New-Hope, February 10.

50

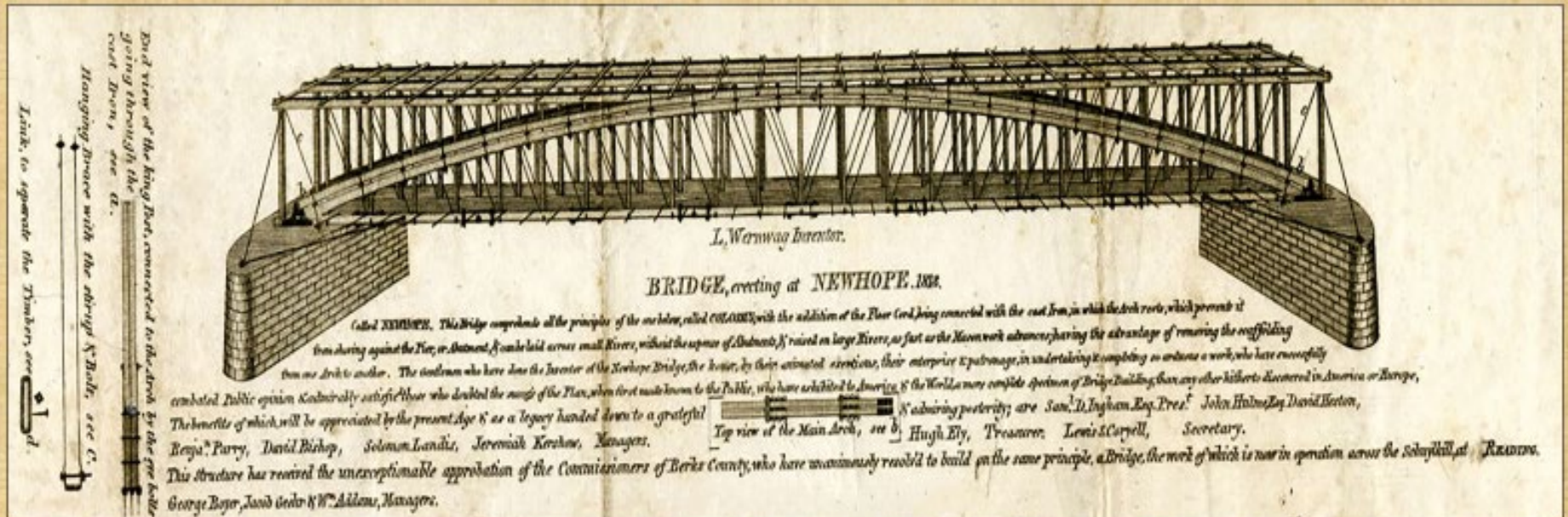
Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmer's Advertiser, Feb. 15, 1813

The New Hope bridge company held a rapid succession of meetings during the early winter of 1813 for purposes of hiring a bridge-building contractor. The bridge company's managers reviewed various plans, choosing the submission from Lewis Wernwag (pronounced Vern-vahg). This February 10, 1813 advertisement announces Wernwag as the lead contractor. Note the bridge company secretary's name on this advertisement – Lewis S. Coryell of New Hope.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lewis Wernwag". The signature is written in black ink on a white rectangular background, which is centered on a larger, textured, light-brown surface. The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the word "Wernwag".

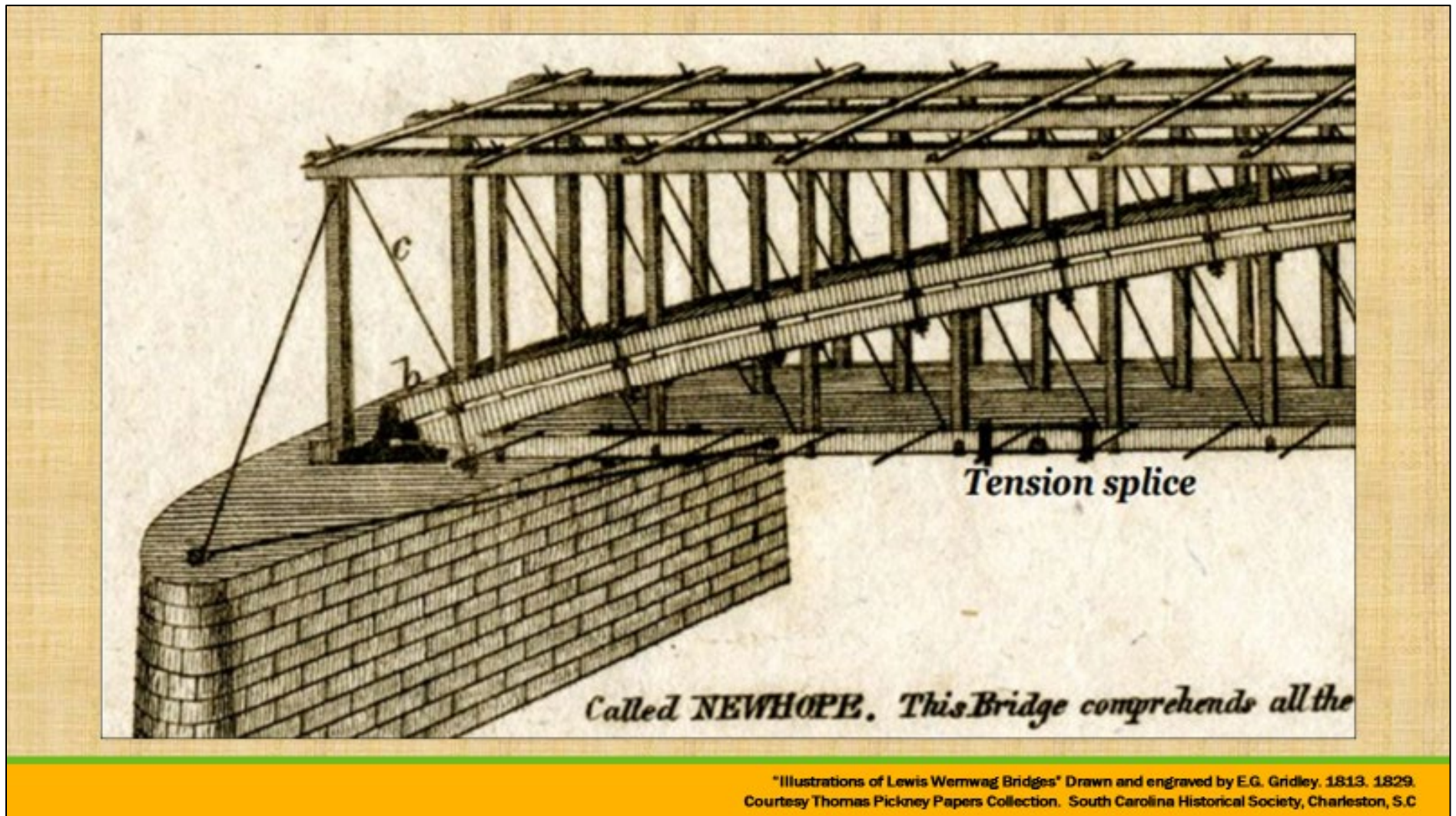
"Illustrations of Lewis Wernwag Bridges" Drawn and engraved by E.G. Gridley, 1813. 1829.
Courtesy Thomas Pickney Papers Collection. South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, S.C.

Wernwag is regarded as America's third great pioneering covered bridge designer. Born in Germany in 1769, he avoided military service there as a young man by living with a shepherd in the mountains. He later made his way to Philadelphia, using his engineering prowess to build mills and eventually bridges, first at Neshaminy Creek. In 1812-13, he constructed his famous Colossus across the Schuylkill. The structure had 340-foot-long arches – the longest ever erected for a wooden bridge. New Hope was his next successful project; his first multi-span bridge. He constructed 29 bridges during his career. Sadly, no images of this master bridge architect are known to survive. Many of his records and drawings were destroyed in an 1870 Shenandoah River flood that claimed 42 lives at Harper's Ferry, W.V.

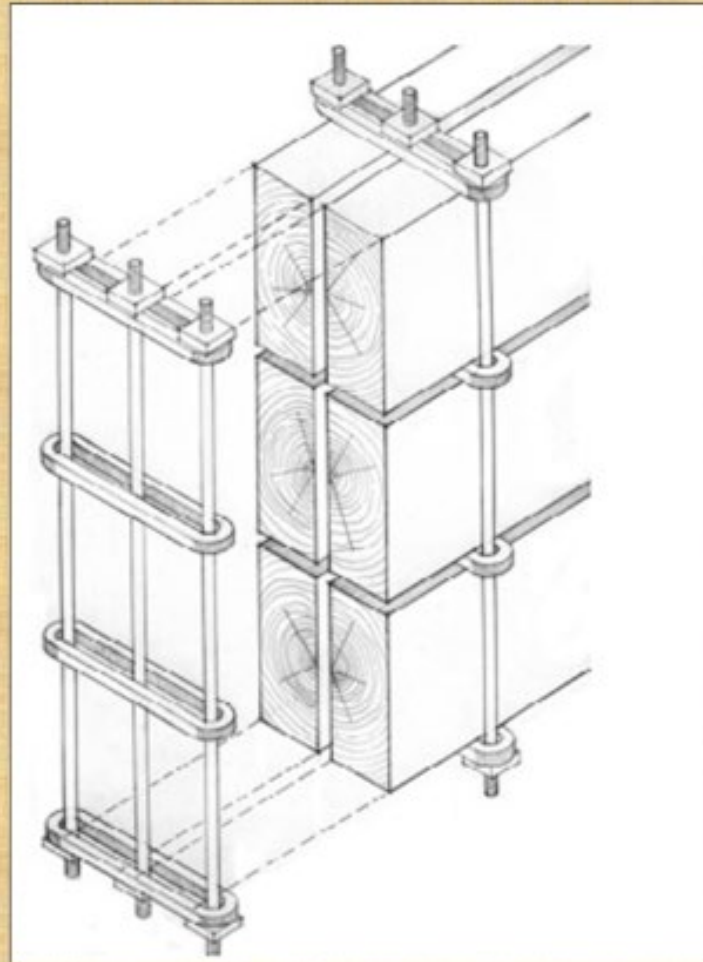


"Illustrations of Lewis Wernwag Bridges" Drawn and engraved by E.G. Gridley. 1813. 1829.
Courtesy Thomas Pickney Papers Collection. South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, S.C.

Here's what Wernwag conceived for his bridge at New Hope. This design had many innovations, notably numerous iron connections and rods. It's unclear if this concept was fully achieved at New Hope, but many elements of this drawing apparently were utilized. Unlike his groundbreaking Colossus Bridge on the Schuylkill, this New Hope structure had a level floor.

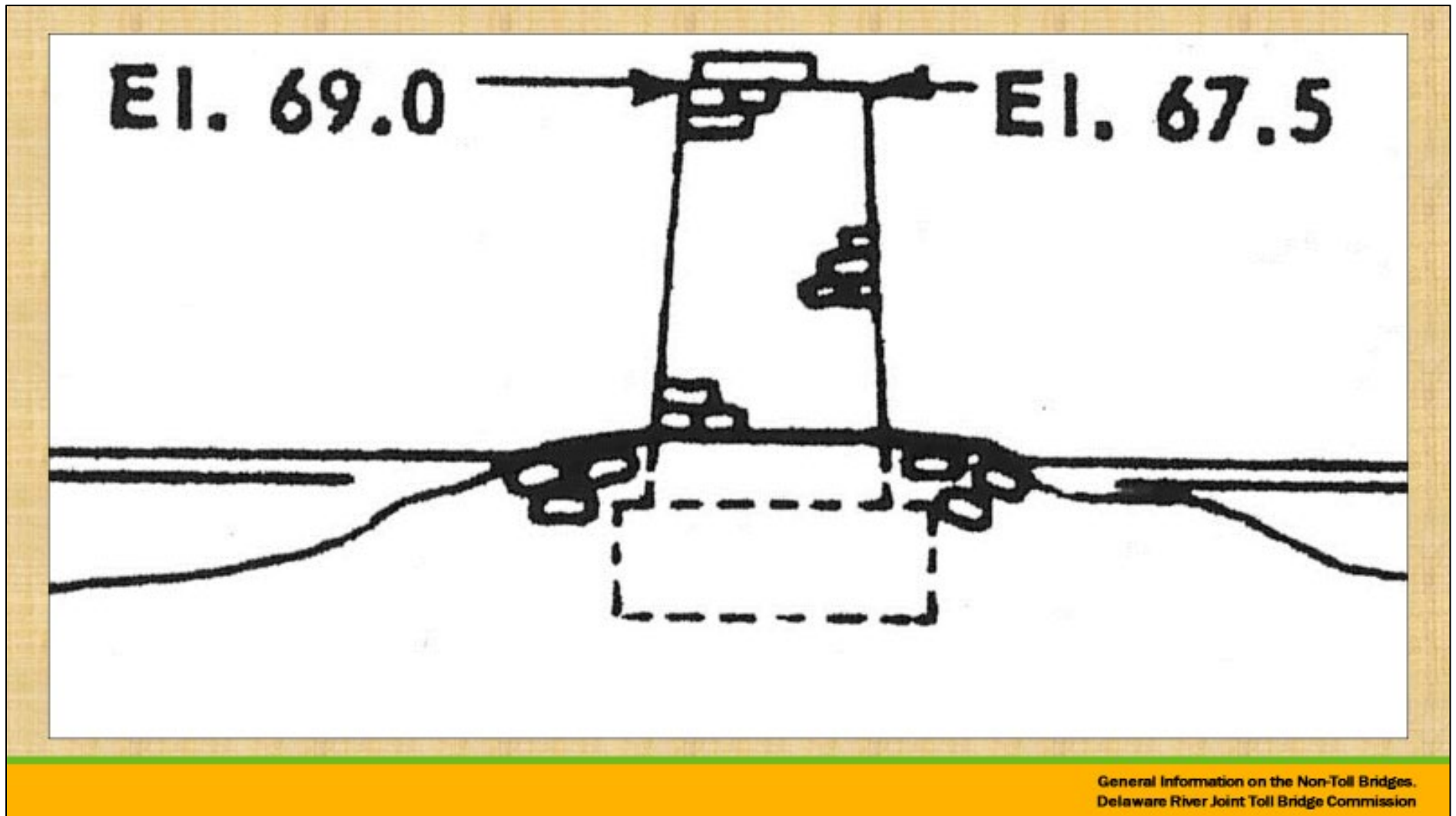


This open frame appearance is how the bridge looked when it opened and operated through its first winter between 1814 and 1815. Wernwag intended it to be an uncovered structure. The bridge company subsequently covered it. Why were bridges covered? They were covered to extend the service life of the bridge's deck.



Detail of iron rings and timbers making up the lower chord. Drawing by Christopher H. Marston, from a drawing by Lee H. Nelson. Historic American Engineering Record.

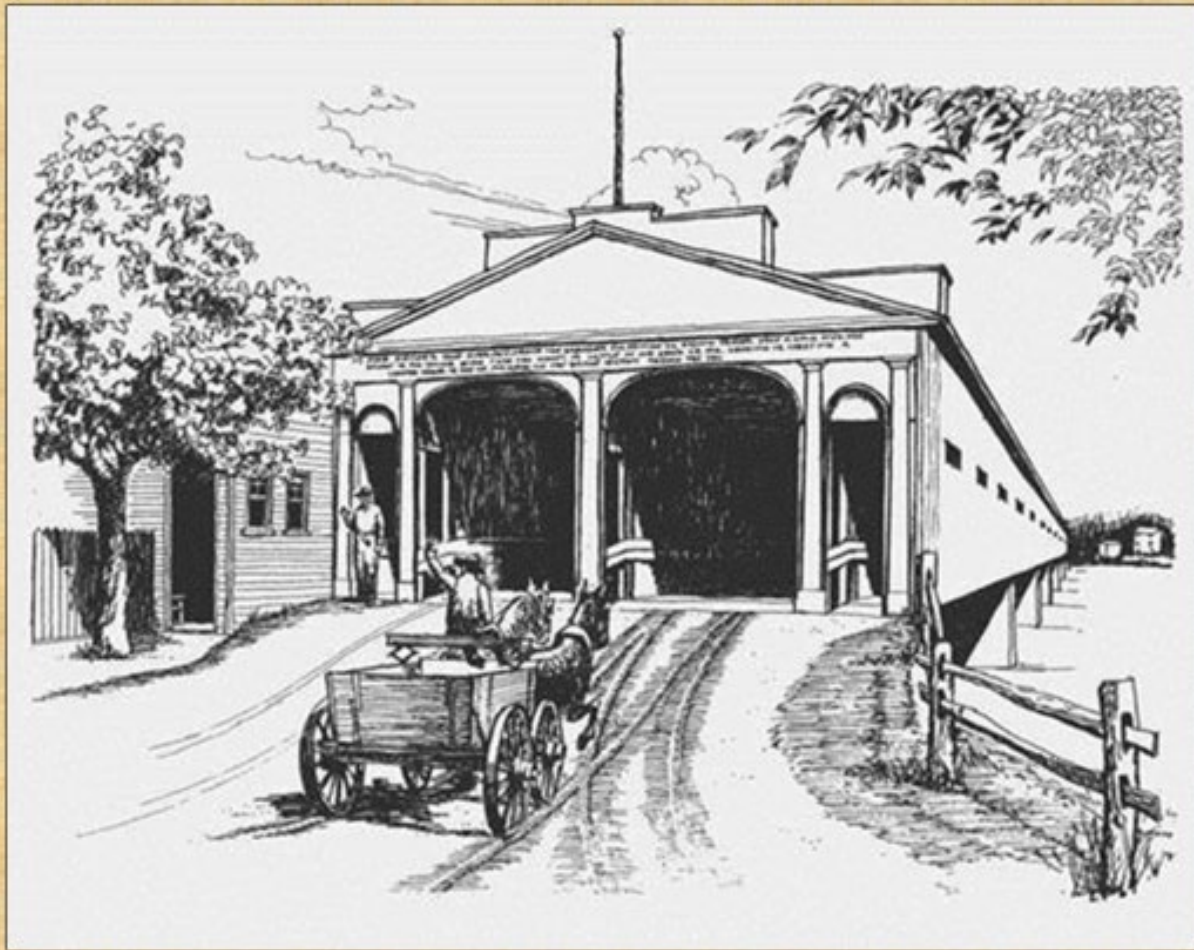
As in his other bridges, Wernwag sawed all the timbers through the heart to detect unsound wood and to reduce the greatest width of a timber to six inches. Iron collars introduced between the various parts of the rib allowed a free circulation of air. Wernwag reasoned that this helped to mitigate decay.



Wernwag originally attempted to use cofferdams to build the piers for supporting the bridge's six spans. When the river's rocky bottom made that infeasible, a decision was made to sink stone-filled cribs into the river bottom. The timber crib frames are still out there, buried up to two feet below the river bottom. Wernwag's piers were completed in 1813. They were partially reconstructed and even modified after major river floods in 1841 and 1903. They remain in service to this day.

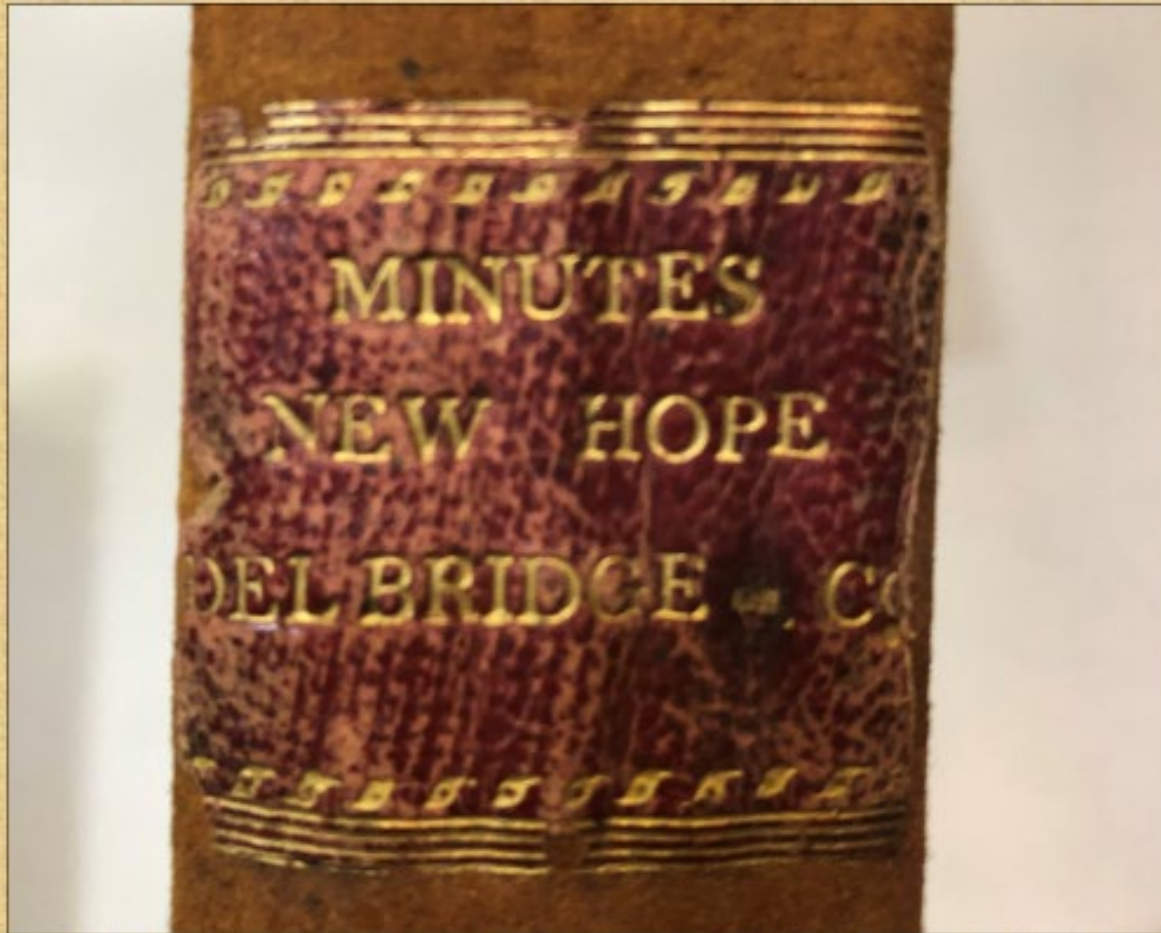
Lewis S. Coryell & Co.

After approximately 15 months, the bridge company officials inspected the bridge on Sept. 12, 1814 and declared it “ready for crossing.” A meal was arranged for the contractors and workmen. W.W.H. Davis’s History of Bucks County states the first carriage passed the same day. A toll taker was on the ground, having been chosen months earlier. This was the fourth bridge to be constructed along the Delaware River. As previously noted, the bridge initially operated as an uncovered superstructure. Under a separate contract authorized December 31, 1814, the bridge company hired its own secretary -- lumberman and carpenter Lewis Slate Coryell – to cover and enclose the bridge and furnish footwalks on each side of the bridge. Coryell also was hired to build a toll house.



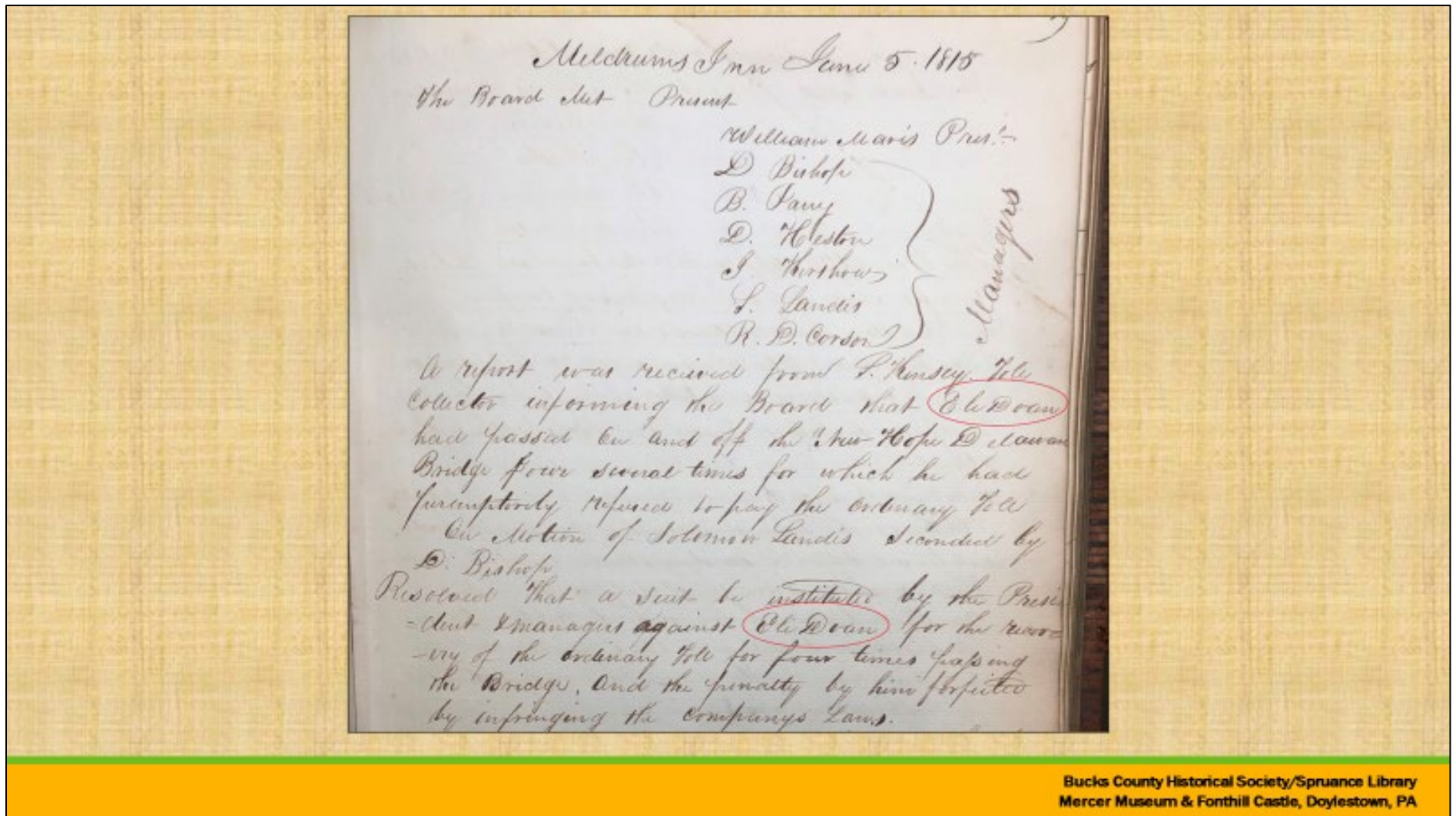
Rendering by the late Dennis L. Gerhart

The bridge project was not declared fully completed until the bridge company's Nov. 20, 1815 meeting. The various project costs were listed as follows: Wernwag contract \$50,000; purchase of ferry rights from Joseph Lambert and John Beaumont for \$3,800; covering the bridge and entrances, \$7,449.87; toll house, \$900; and contingencies \$5,786.50. This image of the fully completed Wernwag bridge was drawn by a Bucks County artist, Dennis Gearhart, in the early 2000s. No known images of the fully completed Wernwag Bridge exist from the time that it was in service. Note the step portals. This trademark feature was often found on Wernwag bridges elsewhere in the country.



Bucks County Historical Society/Spruance Library
Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle, Doylestown, PA

The total project outlay was \$67,936.37, according to bridge company minutes. The New Hope Delaware Bridge Company's meeting minutes book at the Spruance Library makes for some very compelling reading – if you have the time and patience to read early 19th century penmanship.



One curious entry in the bridge company minutes concerns the antics of the bridge's first toll scofflaw – a man named Eli Doan. On June 5, 1815, the stockholders authorized legal action against Doan for crossing four times without making payment.



The Heavy Anglophile Orthodox

Unfortunately, we'll never know if Eli Doan was any relation to Bucks County's notorious Doan Gang. The toll evasion nonetheless casts further shade on the Doan family name. Perhaps Eli was a budding apprentice in the Doan family's Bucks County legacy?

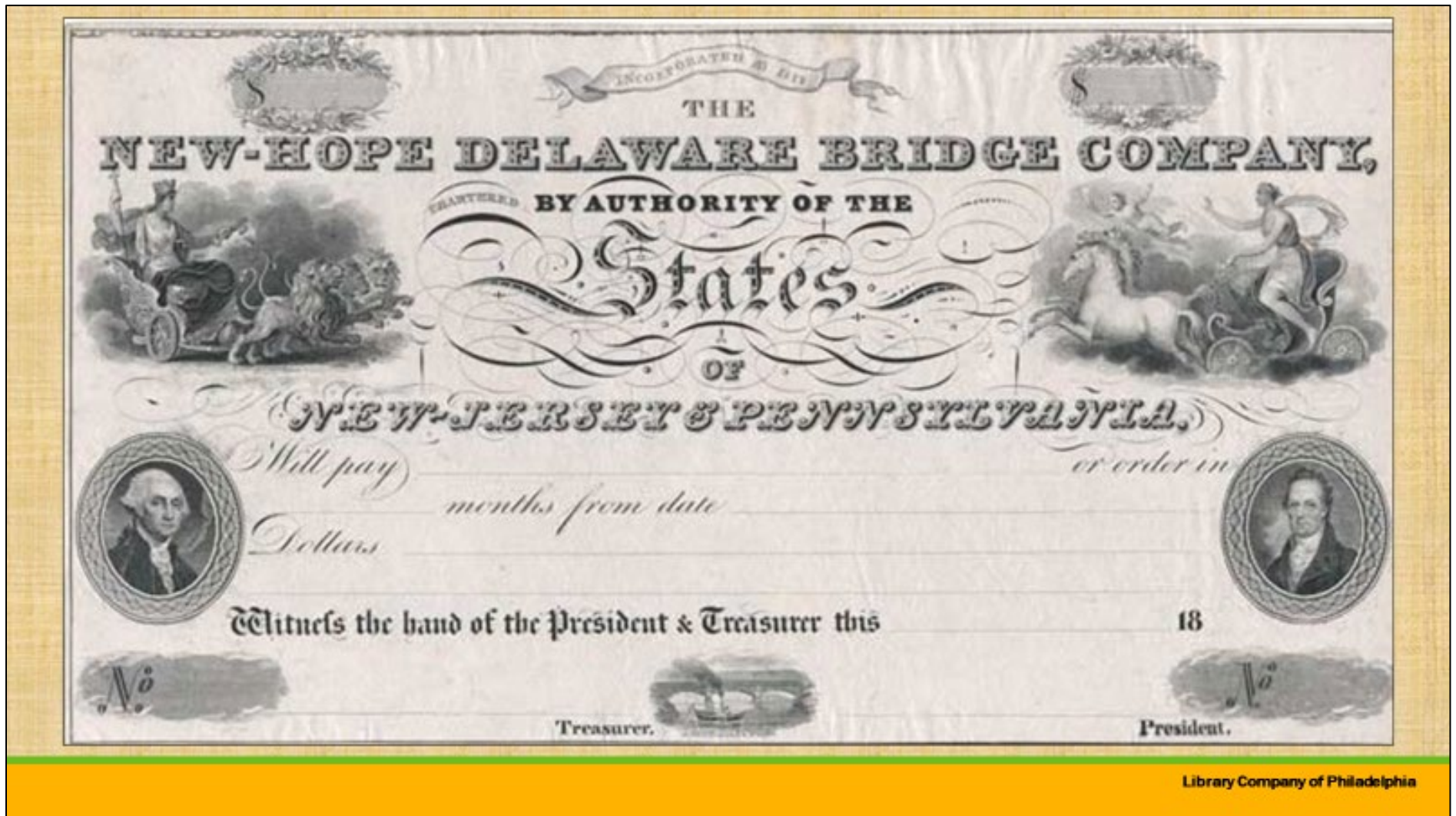


Library Company of Philadelphia

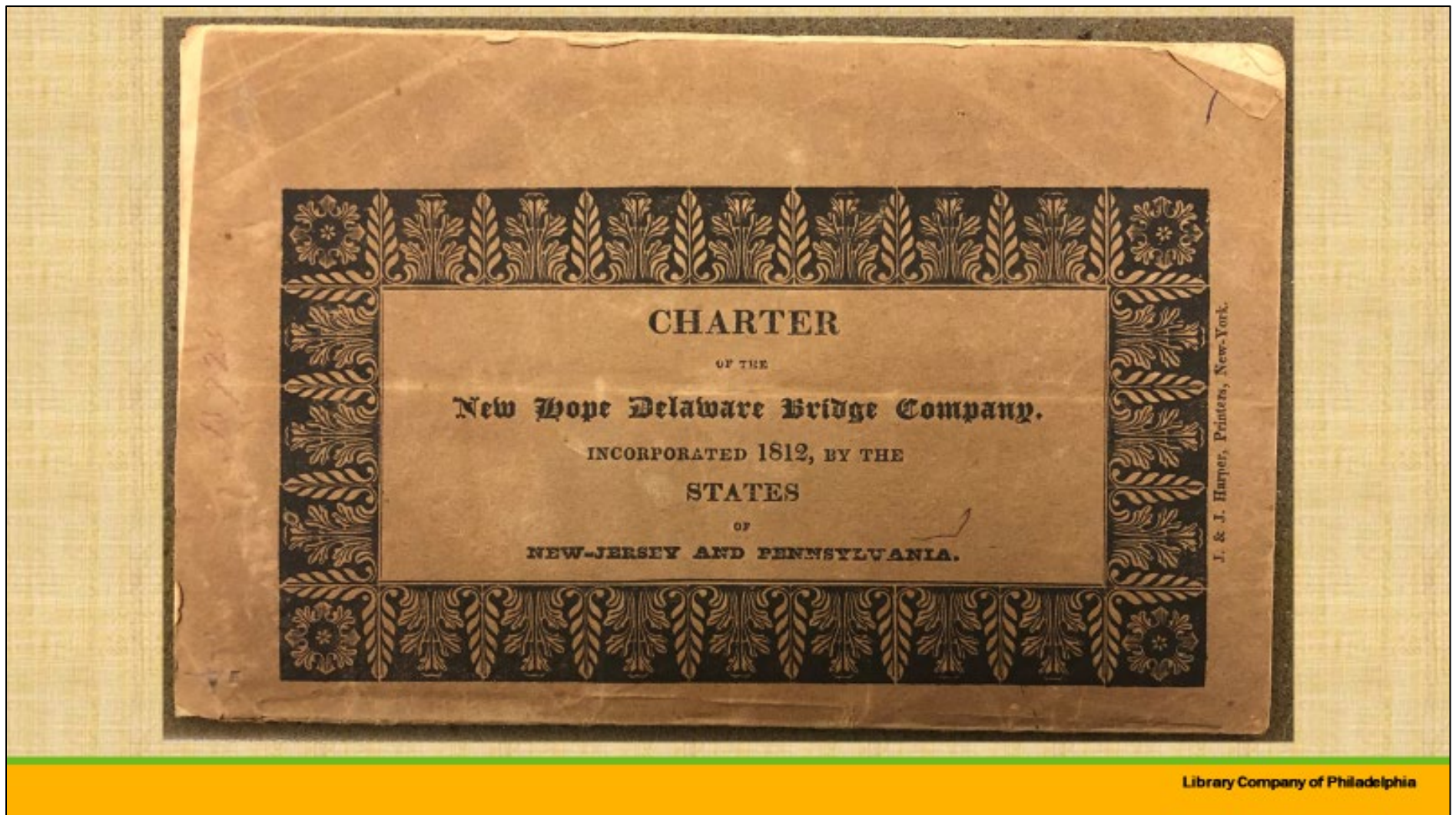
The bridge company minutes show the fledgling concern had more pressing matters than a rogue toll evader. The company still had to attract more stockholders. It had a contractor and other debts to pay. The Nov. 21, 1814 meeting is particularly interesting. A mere three months after the bridge's opening, a relative newcomer to the area became the bridge company's president. His name was William Maris, previously a Philadelphia waterfront merchant. His line of trade was dry goods in both Philadelphia and New York. City. Maris took the bridge company's helm in tandem with the appointment of 29 new stock subscribers that included a young John Coryell, Esq. from across the river in Amwell Township. In today's parlance, the change in the bridge company's control might be considered a hostile takeover.



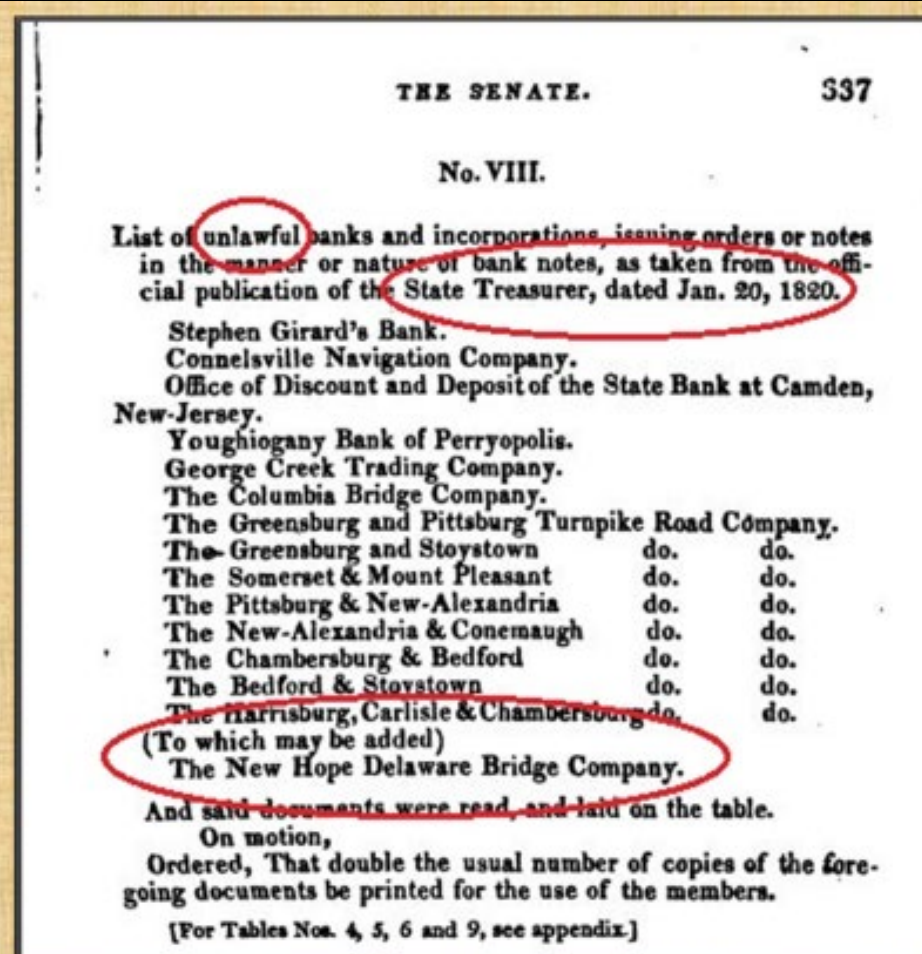
The new regime authorized Maris to procure engraving plates and paper to begin producing \$3, \$2, \$1, 50 cent, 25 cent, 12-1/2 cent, and 6-1/4 cent notes and to have them printed. These were promissory notes. Other bridge companies along the river also issued such notes from time to time, but only as a stopgap measure during one of the budding nation's financial panics. None of the other bridge companies ever produced notes on the scale of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company. This is one of the bridge company's early notes, made out to Samuel Ingham and signed by William Maris.



In the ensuing months, the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company authorized a committee to procure more plates and paper so that \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100 notes also could be printed. Over the years, the bridge bank notes became more ostentatious and numerous.



At the bridge company's Nov. 20, 1815 meeting, the emboldened Maris-led stockholders went beyond mere note printing. They went rogue. Seizing on an obscure legislative charter clause that permitted bridge companies to dispose of surplus revenues at their pleasure after completing construction of a respective bridge, the president and managers in New Hope – artfully, but clearly unlawfully – went into wildcat banking.



The stockholders approved Maris and any two managers to be a Committee of Finance to make loans of "surplus funds." Maris and Benjamin Parry, one of the company's old-line managers, were appointed a committee to write bylaws for the new finance committee to guide the issuance of loans. Neither of the two unincorporated riverside hamlets had banks, so there clearly was a void that the Bridge Company could fill. In early 1820, though, Pennsylvania's State Treasurer declared the bridge company's note issuances "unlawful." This is noted in the Senate minutes of the 1819 session, which were published in 1820.



Joe Donnelly photograph

So, where did the bridge company operate its bank in New Hope? Initially, it was at a spare room of an inn – on the site of the current Logan Inn. Later, when more space was needed, the bridge company's offices and bank were moved to what is now 24 W. Bridge St. – ironically a building built by William Maris. The roof gables are a tell-tale Maris highlight. This would have been a federal-styled building at the time of bridge company's occupation. The two-story set of bay windows and the Victorian porch were elements added in the 1890s. By that time, the bridge bank was history.



Joe Donnelly photograph

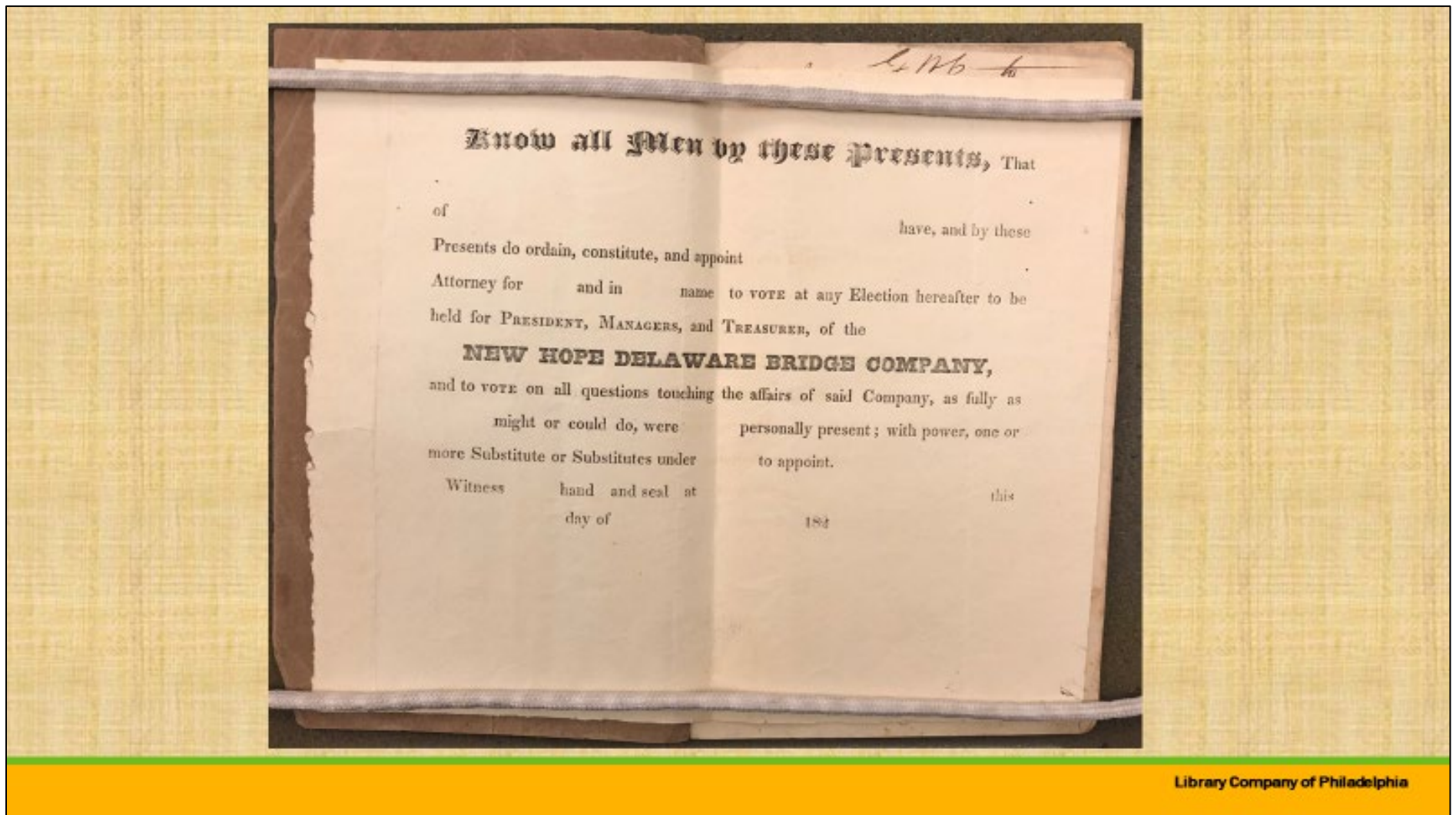
Several years back, the owners allowed me inside to photograph the weathered door of the bridge bank's cellar vault. The owners said they hoped to one day turn the space behind the door it into a wine cellar.

From the Philadelphia Democratic Press, Feb. 10.

A committee of the *New Hope Delaware Bridge Company* have published a report from which we learn the following particulars. On the 14th September last, William Maris, the President of the company, was indebted to it individually and as a partner with others in the immense sum of *one hundred and twelve thousand nine hundred and seventy nine dollars*, being more than three times the amount of its active capital, of this sum Wm. Maris had overdrawn the office individually *forty four thousand nine hundred and twenty seven dollars*. Of these debts and overdrafts the managers of the company, "were kept in utter ignorance," and the information did not come from Wm. Maris. The committee state various propositions which had been made to William Maris, which he had rejected and various promises which he had made and failed to perform. There is little prospect that any of the notes will ever be paid. The Legislature are now in session and it is hoped they will pass a law against Swindling. This case and the case of the *Northern Liberties Bank*, and many recent occurrences call loudly for some prompt and efficient legislative interposition.

New York Evening Post, Feb. 19, 1823

The illegal banking enterprise faced its first significant crisis in 1822, when Bridge Company managers discovered that William Maris managed to extract \$112,977 from the operation – three times the amount of the company's capital. Interestingly, Maris was never held accountable for his apparent embezzlement, which made news in Philadelphia and New York City newspapers. This 1823 New York Evening Post item news item cites a need for a new law: "The Legislature are now in session and it is hoped they will pass a law against Swindling." This was the first in a series of failures for the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company's illegal bank, a saga that would carry on for another 25 years of so.



Maris did more than enrich himself. He extended credit to Union Mills, his business venture with Lewis Coryell. Maris also channeled money to another Coryell-owned company. Both loans were made without the bridge company's knowledge. The bridge company stockholders soon elected new management. Samuel Ingham returned as president in 1823 and Coryell's tenure as bridge company secretary ended. This is a picture of a stockholder proxy form from the 1820s.

NOTICE.

THE President and Managers of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, inform the Creditors and the Public, that on the 9th. ult. they made an assignment of their Estate and Effects for the payment of their debts, to John C. Parry, Seth Craig and John Bowne; the two last named persons having declined accepting the trust, the Creditors of the said Company were informed thereof, at a meeting held on the 2d. Nov. inst. when after a conference between the President and Managers of the said Company, and the Creditors then met, it was unanimously agreed, that John Buckman, of Philadelphia, and Mahlon K. Taylor, of Bucks County, should be substituted in the place of Seth Craig, and John Bowne, who had declined accepting the trust, and the respective Attornies of the said Company, and the Creditors, were directed to prepare the necessary writings, to give legal efficacy to such substitution; this was accordingly done and perfected on the 11th. Nov. inst. and all persons who may be in any manner whatever interested, are hereby requested to take notice, that John C. Parry, John Buckman and Mahlon K. Taylor, are the legally authorized Assignees of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, with full power and authority to do and perform all matters and things appertaining to their trust, as set forth in an assignment, bearing date the 9th. Oct. 1824, and recorded in the proper office, in Doylestown, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. on the 3d. day of Nov. inst.

S. D. INGHAM, President.

ELIAS ELY, Treasurer.

Nov. 13, 1824.

[25—law2m*

NOTICE.

PUBLIC Notice is hereby given, to all persons interested, that the President and Managers of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, have assigned the proceeds of the tolls of the New Hope Delaware Bridge, and all the real and personal property and effects of said Company, for the payment of their debts, in the manner set forth in two instruments of writing, executed and bearing date the 9th. day of October last past, and recorded in the Recorder's Office of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. All persons having claims against the said President and Managers of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, are hereby notified, that all such claims must be presented at the Office of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, within twelve months from the ninth day of October last, or be excluded from the benefits of the said assignment agreeably to a provision therein made.

The undersigned assignees will meet at the Office of the Company, at New Hope, on the 1st. Wednesday of every month, till the 9th. October, 1825, for the purpose of receiving claims and transacting business, under the said assignment.

JOHN C. PARRY, New Hope.

JOHN BUCKMAN,

No. 19 Sansom-street, Philadelphia.

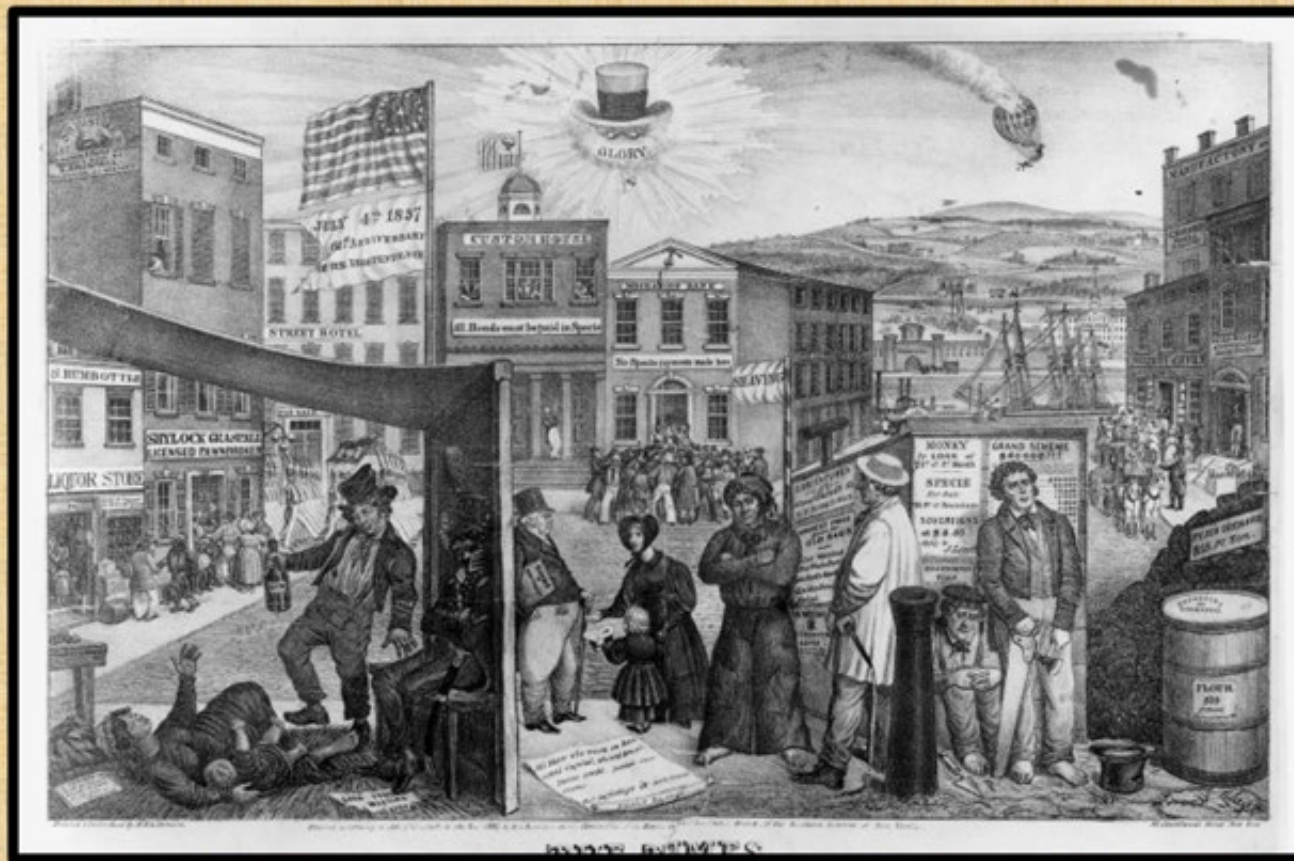
MAHLON K. TAYLOR,

Taylorsville, Bucks County, Assignees.

Nov. 25, 1824.

[lawt90*

Ingham – who was again in Congress – and the company stockholders attempted to right the ship. Trustees were assigned to put the company's bridge and other assets up against a mortgage to pay the company's debts. These are two advertisements published in late 1824. The one on the left announces the appointment of assignees for the bridge company. The one on the right is the assignees announcing that they will receive claims for payment of the bridge company's debts. Remember the bridge? With all this other nonsense going on, you might be wondering how it is doing out there on the river.. Well, Mr. Wernwag's bridge is now 10 years old and it is working splendidly. (Note the inclusion of Mahlon K. Taylor's name on the right news clipping. He was a prominent member of the Taylor family, namesakes to Taylorsville, PA. now called Washington Crossing. His mansion still stands to this day, immediately downstream on the Pennsylvania side of the Washington Crossing Bridge.)



Old Merchants of New York City - 1863
Joseph Alfred Scoville

Regrettably, the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company's affairs never got fully righted. The bridge bank's collapse soon attracted the attention of some nefarious individuals who operated on the margins of the unregulated banking, merchant and financial markets in Philadelphia and New York City. Most of these individuals were plugged into early Wall Street financial and merchant houses. They apparently smelled opportunity in the bridge bank's affairs along the Delaware River. There were repeat instances of initial infusions of cash, eventually followed by another bank failure. At some point, the bridge company's banking operations moved from New Hope across the river to what people were calling Lambert's Ville. During the late 1830s, when a man named Samuel Norris from Philadelphia's Kensington section served as the bridge company's president, the bridge company managers even opened a bank office in Congress Hall at the intersection of Chestnut and Sixth streets in Philadelphia. There also are indications that the bank may have operated for a time in Jersey City, N.J. The bridge company sold its former bank building in New Hope in 1839.

1831. Rept. of committee (Marshall) apptd. to examine the charter of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Co.; exercise of banking privileges. (Votes of Assem. 1831/2: 75; 322.)

New Jersey Assembly Minutes - 1831

The bridge bank's questionable affairs increasingly caught the attention of lawmakers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, but to no avail. This is an excerpt from 1831 New Jersey Assembly minutes showing the limited extent of government intervention: the appointment of a committee to read the bridge company's enabling legislation for purposes of determining if the bridge company was ever actually granted banking privileges.

NOTICE.

THE Managers of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Co., have declared a dividend of EIGHTY CENTS per share, being four per cent on the capital stock for the last six months, payable on and after the 10th prox. Shareholders standing on the books in the city of New York, will receive their dividends at the Phoenix Bank. The Transfer Books will be closed from the 3^d to the 10th prox.

sep 30—dt 100 T. DAVIS, Cashier.

The National Gazette, October 10, 1836
Philadelphia, PA.

The extent of bridge bank chicanery was boundless. In October 1836, the bridge company declared a rare stockholder dividend – a heretofore unprecedented 80 cents per share. The advertisement above -- in a Philadelphia newspaper, no less -- suggests that the fix was in for Wall Street insiders to collect their dividends at the Phoenix Bank in New York. The Phoenix Bank was, at the time, one of New York's largest banks. The bank – also spelled as Phenix – later came on hard times, not so much due to financial difficulties as corruption.



There were many iterations of New Hope Delaware Bridge Company notes. The value of the notes fluctuated widely and often could only be redeemed at less than the printed value. The challenge of getting payment worsened as a litany of conniving rogues and rascals managed to wrest control of the bridge company. Their interest clearly was banking – if you could call it that – and not transportation, which was the stated purpose of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company in the first place. Notice how this note makes token notion of “New Hope” while hyping “Delaware Bridge Company.” Delaware Bridge was the often-used name of the more substantial and successful bridge downstream at Trenton.

*State of New Jersey, } ss.
County of Hunterdon, }*

Before me, Samuel Evans, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for the county of Hunterdon, personally appeared Samuel Norris, President of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, and Jonathan Fisk, Cashier thereof, the former alleging himself to be conscientiously scrupulous of taking an oath, and being duly affirmed, and the latter being duly sworn on his solemn oath, do both severally declare on their affirmation and oath aforesaid, that the foregoing answers are true, full, and perfect answers, without any evasion or concealment to the several interrogatories propounded to them by the act of the State of New Jersey, entitled, "An Act to provide for an investigation of the condition of the Banks of this State, and for other purposes;" passed the eleventh November, 1837.

**SAML. NORRIS, President.
JONA. FISK, Cashier.**

Affirmed, sworn, and subscribed before me, this fifth day of January, A. D. 1838.

SAML. EVANS, J. P.

*State, city, and county } ss.
of New York, }*

Before me, William H. Maxwell, commissioner under the act of the legislature of the State of New Jersey, &c. personally appeared Marcus Wilbur, Joseph D. Beers, Lewis Curtis, and Henry F. Tallmadge, managers of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, and being by me severally and duly sworn, on their oath, depose and say, and declare, that the foregoing answers are true, full, and perfect answers without any evasion or concealment to the several interrogatories propounded to them by the act of the State of New Jersey, entitled "An Act to provide for an investigation of the condition of the banks of the said State, and for other purposes;" passed the eleventh November, 1837.

**Marcus Wilbur,
J. D. Beers,
Lewis Curtis,
H. F. Tallmadge. } Managers.**

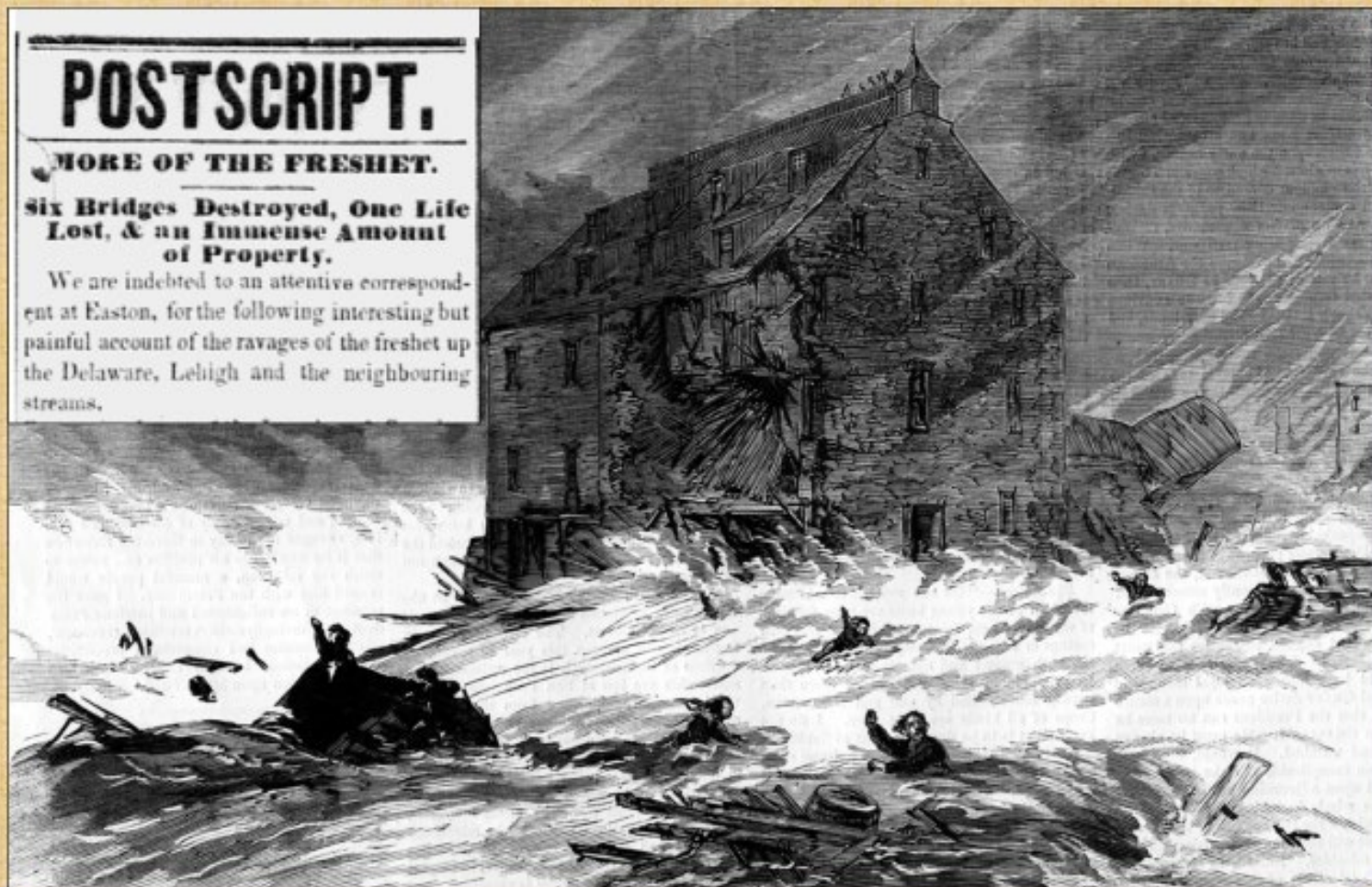
Subscribed, sworn before me, at the city of New York, this 6th day of January, 1838.

**WM. H. MAXWELL,
Commissioner, &c. &c.**

Following the severe Financial Panic of 1837, a New Jersey Assembly Committee in January 1838 took testimony on the financial condition of all banks operating in the state. The official record of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company's responses to the investigative committee's questions is quite revealing. It shows how individuals from outside Lambertville and New Hope controlled the bridge bank. Sadly, a month later, the state made matters worse by passing a law to apply a state tax to the bridge bank. This amounted to tacit recognition of the ostensibly illegal banking enterprise. One exception is worth noting here: the bank cashier, Jonathan Fisk, did live for a time in Lambertville and later provided sworn testimony about the bridge company's banking affairs.



In 1840, a new person became the bridge company's president. And once again, he was an individual interested more in banking than transportation. His name was Ancel St. John. He learned the banking trade as the cashier for the Bank of Ithaca in the 1820s and early 1830s. Records show St. John was still employed at the Ithaca Bank in 1835, a significant year for he and his wife because they lost two children – ages 7 and 2 – that January. When exactly St. John came to Lambertville is unknown. What is known is this: An unprecedented catastrophe confronted St. John shortly after he became the bridge company's president.



On January 8, 1841, a major flood called The Bridges Freshet struck the river region. Six bridges were completely or partially destroyed. At the New Hope Bridge, as it was then known, the three bridge sections on the New Jersey side were swept away. It's believed that ice-engulfed remnants of the Centre Bridge had contributed to the partial destruction of the New Hope Bridge. Let the record show: Lewis Wernwag's full six-span bridge had lasted 26 years, three months, and 27 days. Wernwag's three surviving spans, though, continued in service for six more decades.

A NARROW ESCAPE.—Among the incidents of the late freshet in the Delaware, one is the narrow escape of Mr. George Fell, of Centreville, above New Hope.—He was standing on the bridge at that place, looking at the turbulent waters, when crash went the bridge and he along with it, and dashing down the current on one of its timbers, he was carried under and passed New Hope bridge, and was not extricated from his perilous situation until he reached Yardleyville, a distance of sixteen miles from where he started; a few minutes afterwards the New Hope bridge itself was cut in too; the Centreville bridge going clear through it, carrying away three arches and two abutmen's.—*Boston Transcript.*

Daily Evening Transcript, Boston, MA. - January 13, 1841.

The 1841 Bridges Freshet now ranks as the fifth highest flood on record for these parts. One interesting side note on this flood is the miraculous survival of George B. Fell of Centre Bridge. Fell was filling in as a toll taker at Centre Bridge upstream when the raging river of ice and debris overwhelmed it. Fell managed to get onto a piece of the toppled bridge and floated downriver. He apparently passed beneath the New Hope side of the bridge before the three spans on the New Jersey side gave way. Fell somehow managed a harrowing descent through Wells Falls before continuing another 10 miles downstream. A man in a rowboat near Yardleyville later managed to rescue Fell back to land. As this news clipping from a Boston newspaper attests, Fell's plight garnered national attention. Fell died two years after the incident. His family felt he never recovered from his chilly and frightful experience in the January 1841 freshet.

New Hope Delaware Bridge Company.—This company have contracted with Mr. Emmat for rebuilding their bridge across the Delaware. The whole work, we learn, will be so far completed as to admit of crossing early the present fall. The Hunterdon Gazette says—

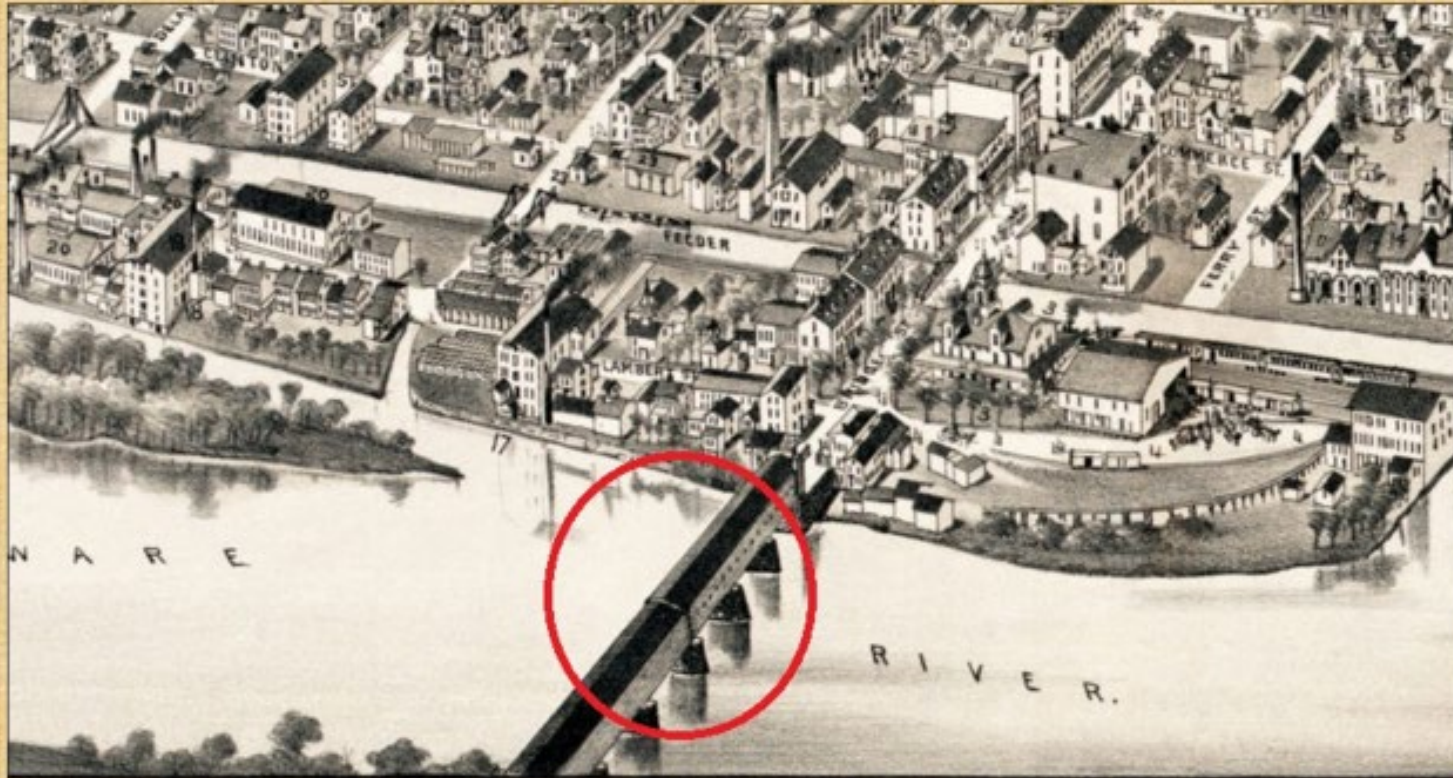
The specimen of the work in progress is creditable to the contractor, who is said to be well qualified for the undertaking. The Pier on the Jersey side, lately erected, gives general satisfaction, both in regard to construction and workmanship. The company have had many difficulties to encounter, after the loss of their bridge; but their exertions to keep up the ferry and accommodate the public crossing have been unceasing.

Centinel of Freedom (newspaper), Newark, N.J. – August 10, 1841.

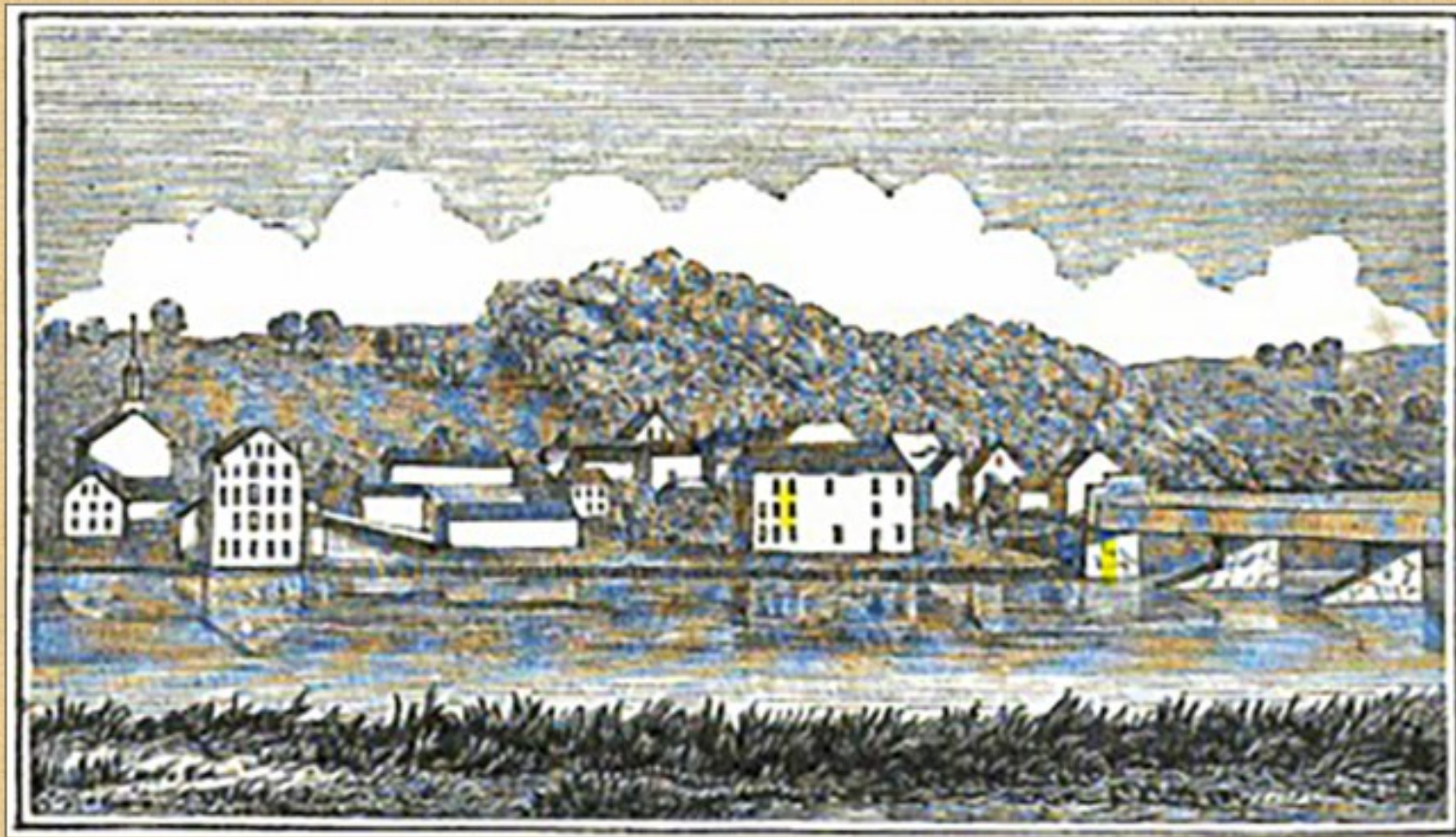
Nobody knows all the details, but the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company somehow managed to replace the three missing spans. This August 1841 news item identifies the lead contractor only as “Mr. Emmat.” This name could be an error. Name aside, this brief article provides some pertinent information. It says the contractor was making good progress and the pier on the New Jersey side – conceivably the one with the concrete slope on the upstream side – had been reconstructed. It indicates a potential fall re-opening and says a ferry was in operation while the bridge was out of service.



An 1848 New Jersey legislative report stated the bridge repair cost \$12,000. Unfortunately, no images exist of the entire bridge at the time of repair. What we do know is that the three replacement spans were different from the original Wernwag spans. Among other things, the three new spans had a higher roofline and a different arch setup. This vintage 1883 aerial view of the City of Lambertville shows the different heights of the old spans and the new ones – if you look closely.

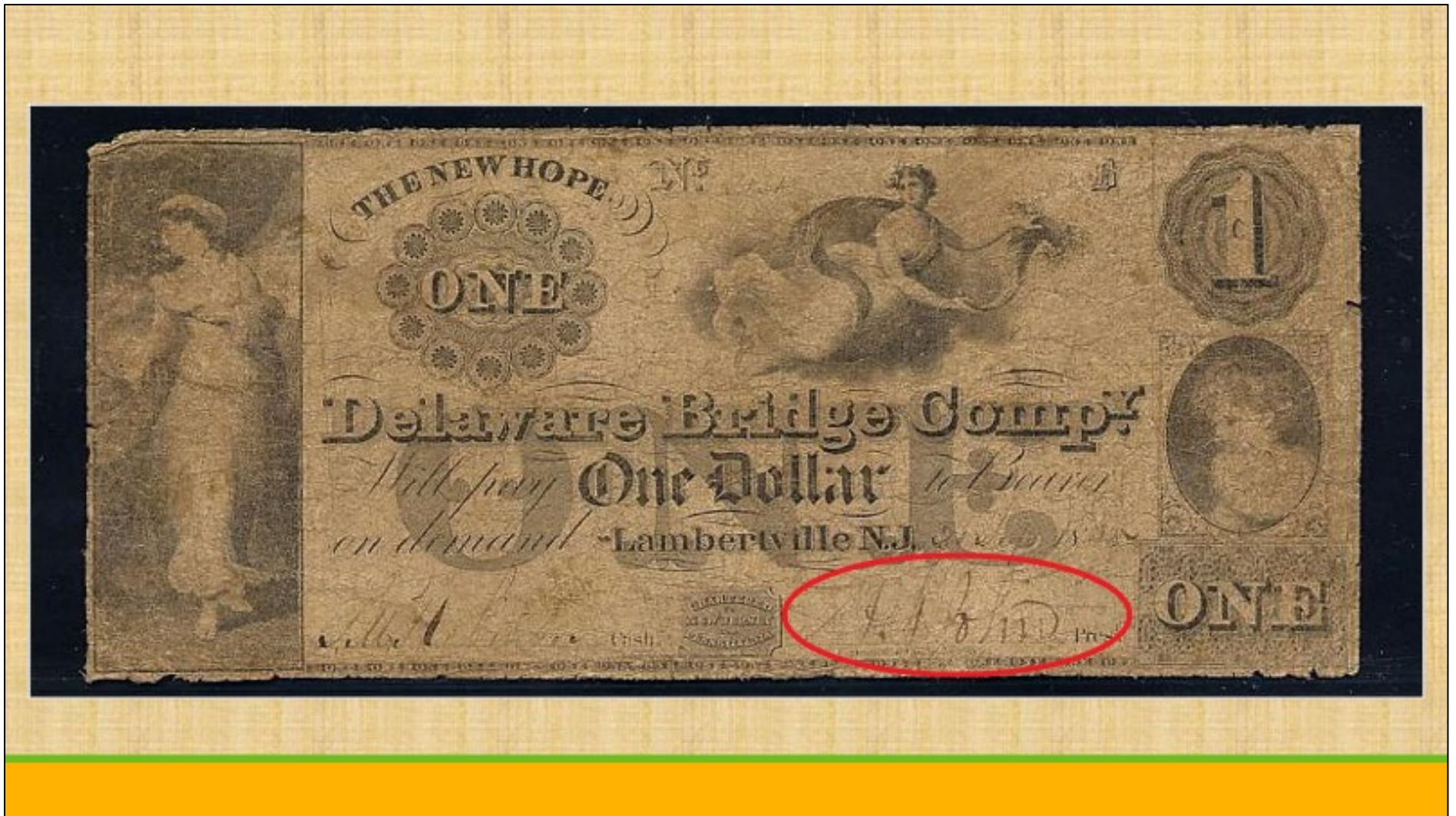


Here's a closer view of that. The remaining three spans of Mr. Wernwag's lower-profile bridge are on the New Hope side. "Mr. Emmat's" higher-roofed replacement spans are on the Lambertville side, which can be seen in this drawing excerpt.



Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey - 1844
John W. Barber and Henry Howe

It must have been a major accomplishment for Ancel St. John to get the bridge back online. At the very least, he had made a good first impression in Lambertville, which was still an unincorporated village in Amwell Township. According to Barber and Howe's volume on New Jersey history, St. John later became involved in petitioning for a Masonic lodge in Lambertville, serving as one of Amwell Lodge No. 12's first officers. Barber and Howe also identified St. John as one of the incorporators of Mount Hope Cemetery. This woodcut from Barber and Howe's volume shows how Lambertville looked during this period.



As good as the bridge repairs were, there is no escaping the fact that there was a dark side to St. John's tenure in Lambertville. Under his tutelage, the bridge company's banking affairs worsened. More notes were issued without commensurate capital reserves to support their issuance. In one notorious exchange, a stack full of discounted notes were relayed to a scandal-ridden insurance company in Ohio. The bridge bank continuously engaged in a series of sketchy transactions to generate capital to stay afloat., including a \$28,000 mortgage with John Holcombe that was secured with the bridge company's property. This is Ancel St. John's signature on this apparently widely exchanged old bridge note.

BANK FAILURE.—Thompson reports that the New Hope and Delaware Bridge Company Bank has failed.

The New York Evening Post - December 27, 1847

The death knell of the bridge company's Lambertville-based bank came on December 27, 1847, when New York City evening newspapers reported that the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company had failed again. The "Thompson reports" reference in this New York Evening Post article probably is John Thompson, the publisher of the widely read and respected Thompson's Bank Note Reporter. Bank note and counterfeit detectors were 19th century periodicals that identified counterfeit bank notes and the discount rates for notes issued by distant banks.

NEWSPAPER POSTAGE ONLY IS CHARGEABLE ON THIS SHEET.

THOMPSON'S Bank Note REPORTER.

Daily, — \$12.00; Weekly, — \$2.00;
Semi-monthly \$5; Monthly, \$10.00

NEW-YORK, APRIL 14, 1849.

Containing a Coin book; pay
attention must be to the engraving.

**Thompson's Bank Note Reporter,
AND
COIN CHART MANUAL.**
COMPILED BY
J. THOMPSON, Bank & Exchange Broker, 64 Wall-st., N.Y.
PUBLISHED DAILY, BY Wm. W. Loomis, 12 SPRING STREET, N.Y.

Copies supplied at 21 Wall-street; 12 Spring Street, second
floor, and at Murphy & Pears, 374 Pearl Street.

Dealer Bookkeepers, 41 Ann St., N.Y., GENERAL AGENTS,
By whom Dealers will be supplied at our trade price.
T. W. Peterson, 101 Chestnut-st., Agent for Philadelphia.

Latest Communications.
10's on the American Bank, N. H.—Virginia Declaration
of Independence, on the left of the bill.
10's, on the Bank of Orange County, Chelack. Same plate
as the above \$10 note.
5's, on the Dayton Bank, Ohio. Page 25.
2's, on the Union Bank, Providence. Page 9.
2's, on the State Bank, at Camden, N. J. Page 26.
2's, on the State Bank, at New-Brunswick. Page 26.
10's, on the State Bank of N. C. Page 25.
10's, on the Boston Bank, Mass. Page 8.
10's, on the Fallmouth Bank, Mass. Page 5.
10's, on the Bank of Salem, N. Y. Page 25.
2's, on the Mechanics' Bank of Burlington, N. J. Page 26.
10's, on the Adams Bank, Mass. Page 4.
5's, on the Greenfield Bank, Mass. Page 5.

Pasting operation.—This mode of making false
notes has of late become so prevalent that scarce a bank
escapes its practice. To counteract all the attempts these
made would be to fill the List with detailed descriptions,
when a single statement would suffice. Every merchant

A Californian Specimen.



The above are profile views of a specimen of
virgin gold, taken from the 'dry diggings' in Cali-
fornia.—It is $\frac{7}{16}$ fine, and weighs 2 oz. 15 dwt.
—Value \$51.17. It is a powerful incentive of
the Californian fever. Unbelievers can see it at
our office, 64 Wall street.

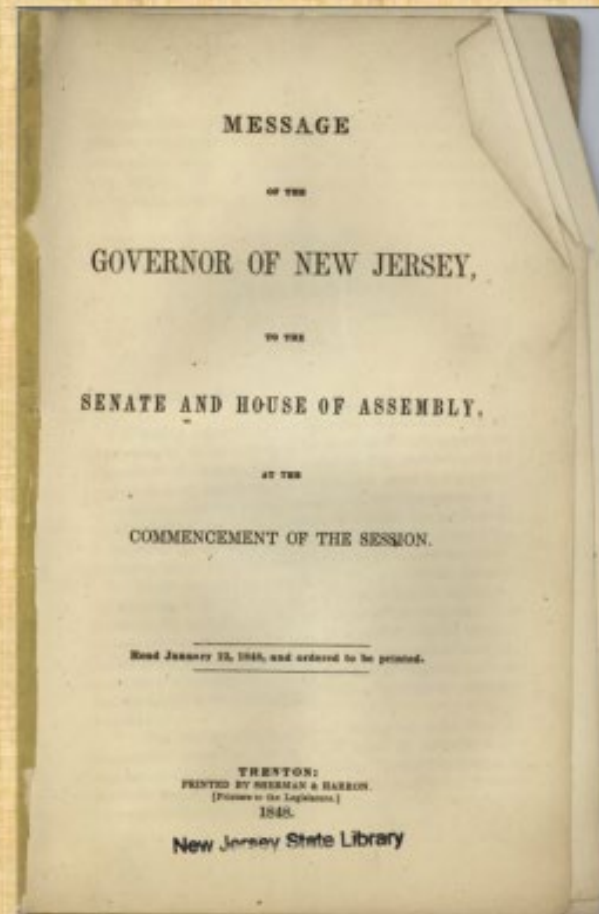
The Broken Banks.

Bank	Failed.	Selling at.
Bank of Newark, Ohio,.....	Jan. 3, 1849.	20 cents
Bank of Newbury, Ohio,.....	Dec. 8, 1848.	27 cents
Bank of New Hope, Ohio,.....	March 29,	20 cents
New Hope Delaware Bridge Co.,.....	Dec. 27, at 10 a.m.,	20 cents
Bank of New Hope, Ohio,.....	Dec. 27, at 10 a.m.,	20 cents
Lewistown Bank, Pa.,.....	Nov. 20, 1848,	20 cents
East Bank, Pa.,.....	May 24,	20 cents

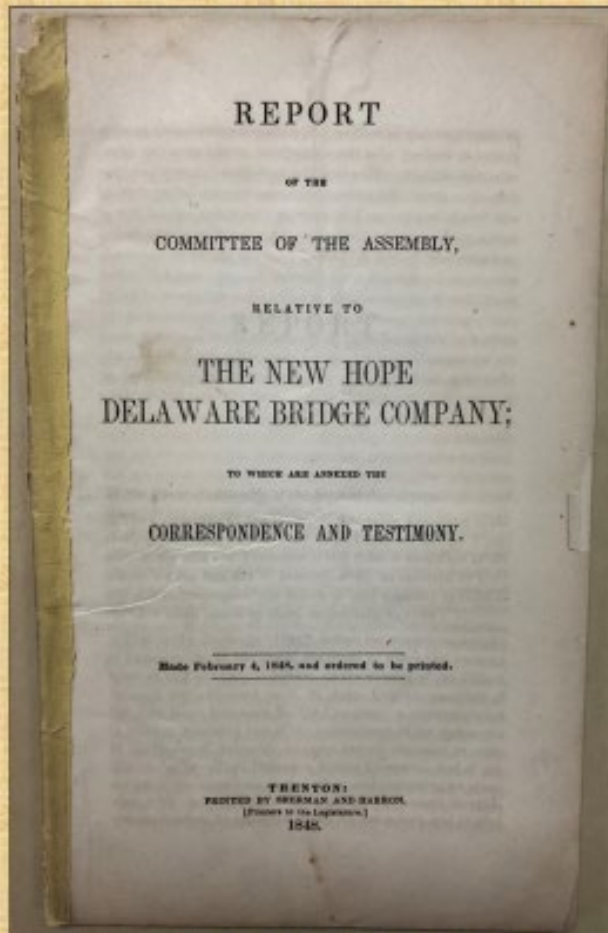
Here's how a Thompson's Bank Note Reporter's front page looked. This one is from April 14, 1849. It's an interesting edition because it still lists the New Hope Delaware Bridge Co. as a "broken bank" and says the bridge bank's notes are worth only 20 cents on the dollar. This edition also is interesting because it shows a drawing of a gold nugget from California. Former Lambertville resident James Marshall had discovered gold at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, Ca. in January 1948. Apparently, there still were skeptics about Marshall's discovery. The text below the gold-nugget images states that "unbelievers" can see the gold piece at Thompson's Wall Street office.



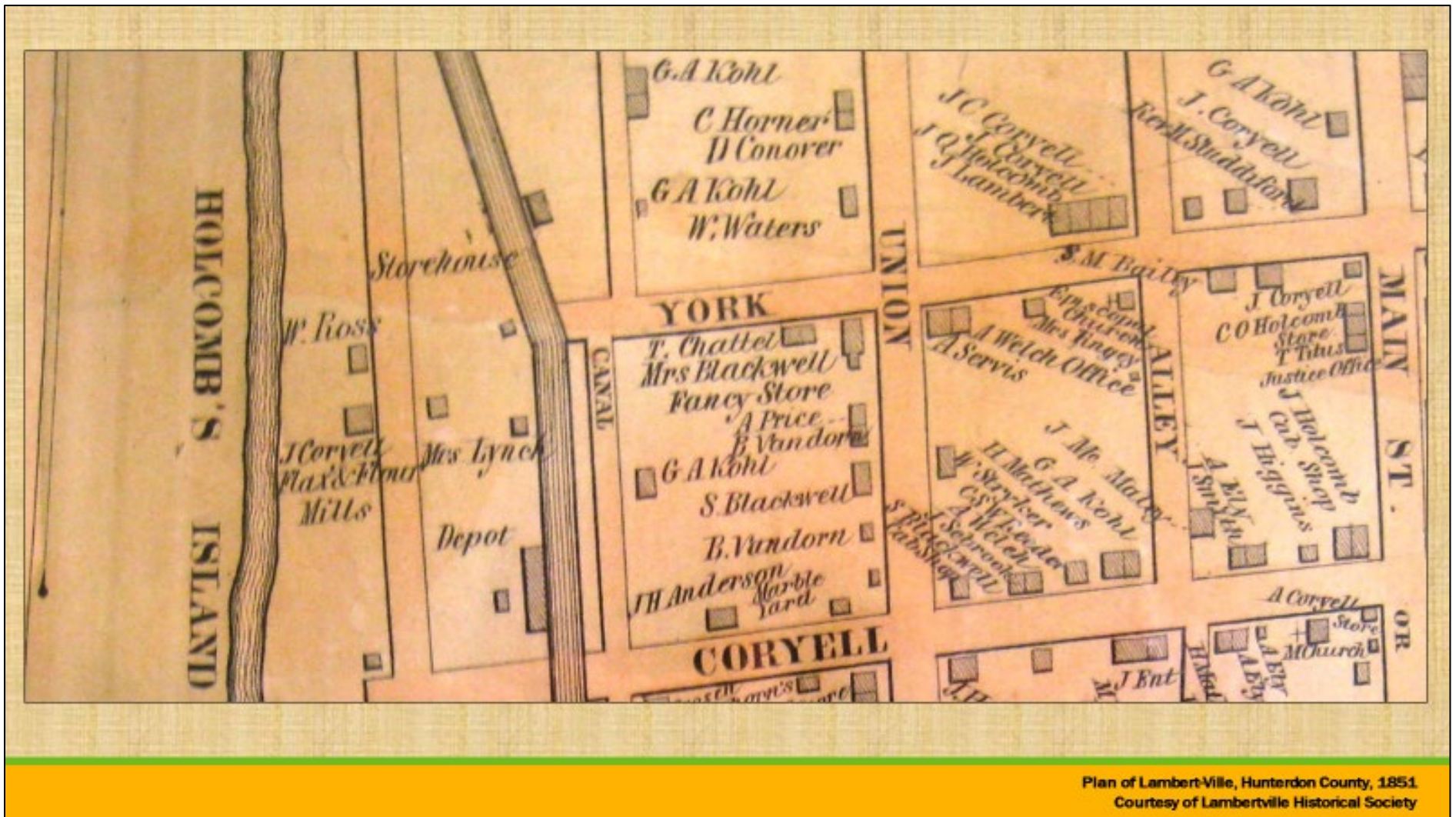
Charles C. Stratton
(1845–1848)



The bridge bank's December 27, 1847 collapse triggered some heightened scrutiny. Seventeen days after the bank failure, New Jersey Governor Charles C. Stratton – the first man ever to be elected directly to that post by voters – used a portion of his final legislative address to call for action against the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company. Stratton said the bridge bank had recently failed for “the third or fourth time.” He then noted the bridge company banking office ‘s location on the Jersey side of the river, stating “the odium of their frequent failures attach to this state.”



The Legislature's General Assembly soon empaneled a committee to investigate the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company and its failure to file financial disclosures and its inability to redeem its bank notes. In less than a month, the committee issued a scathing 34-page report. Among the findings: only two dividends issued since 1820; suspended payment and redemption of its notes four times; the community sustained losses from the depreciation of the bridge bank notes; and the company had committed frauds and misused the powers claimed under its charter. The jolt of government attention in early 1848 died down as the year progressed. This left bridge company's creditors in the lurch.



You might be asking where the bank operated in Lambertville. Well, nobody knows for sure. There are vague indications that it operated for a time on Bridge Street before relocating to a former building at the corner of York and Union streets. See the building identified as “A Servis” on this map, which dates from four years after the bridge bank’s failure. That’s where the bridge bank eventually ended up, with Ancel St. John’s family also residing in that building.

OLD NOTES USED BY BRIDGE COMPANY'S BANK FOUND WHEN HISTORIC BUILDING IS RAZED

Interesting Papers Have Laid For Years in Crvice Bensath Ancient Vault, But Are Still in Splendid State of Preservation — Some Now in Possession of Trentonians.

With the razing of the old building formerly used as a banking institution by the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, at Lambertville, there came to light several notes of the type used by that institution years ago. Then the banking house was the only one for miles around and did a flourishing business.

The notes in question represent several denominations and all are in as fine a state of preservation as though they had just been taken from the engraving stone. The notes were found beneath what was used by the banking institution as its vault. In some manner the notes had fallen through a crevice, and how they managed to remain in such perfect condition through the years which have intervened since the closing of the bank, is a mystery. Aside from their historic value, little store is set by the notes, for the bank, known far and wide as St. John's Institution, after thriving for years, finally went into the hands of receivers. Through these procedures there were several persons who lost money, but most of those who held notes succeeded in cashing them in some manner for some portion of their face value.

The old bank building was torn down by the Montgomerys some months ago and it was then that the notes were found. The notes drifted into the pos-



J. S. HOCKENBURY.

which he secured some of the notes he made considerable money. After the lapse of five years, the judgment was paid with interest.

WAS ONLY BANK.

The old institution was in those days

J. S. Hockenbury of Stockton, Who is Believed To Be Only Living Man Who Had Dealings With Defunct Institution, Tells of Bank's Experience Way Back in 1842.

tract. Throwing away all of the tobacco in their possession at the time, the men shook hands on the agreement and went their way.

After the agreement had been in force for a long time Rittenhouse became a candidate for the Assembly. He found it hard not to use tobacco, and especially not to smoke, while campaigning. So he decided to ask Mr. Hockenbury to relieve him from the pledge until the close of election day. Mr. Hockenbury agreed to this and Rittenhouse told him that he also might smoke and bought him a box of five cigars.

While not having smoked a cigar for a long time, after dinner the following Sunday Mr. Hockenbury lit one of the Havanas. He continued to smoke until election day, and, forgetting, kept right on the day after. Mr. Rittenhouse also forgot and during the day the men met, each with a lighted cigar in his possession. The \$20 clause of the agreement was not enforced and each then stopped smoking again until the expiration of the three years.

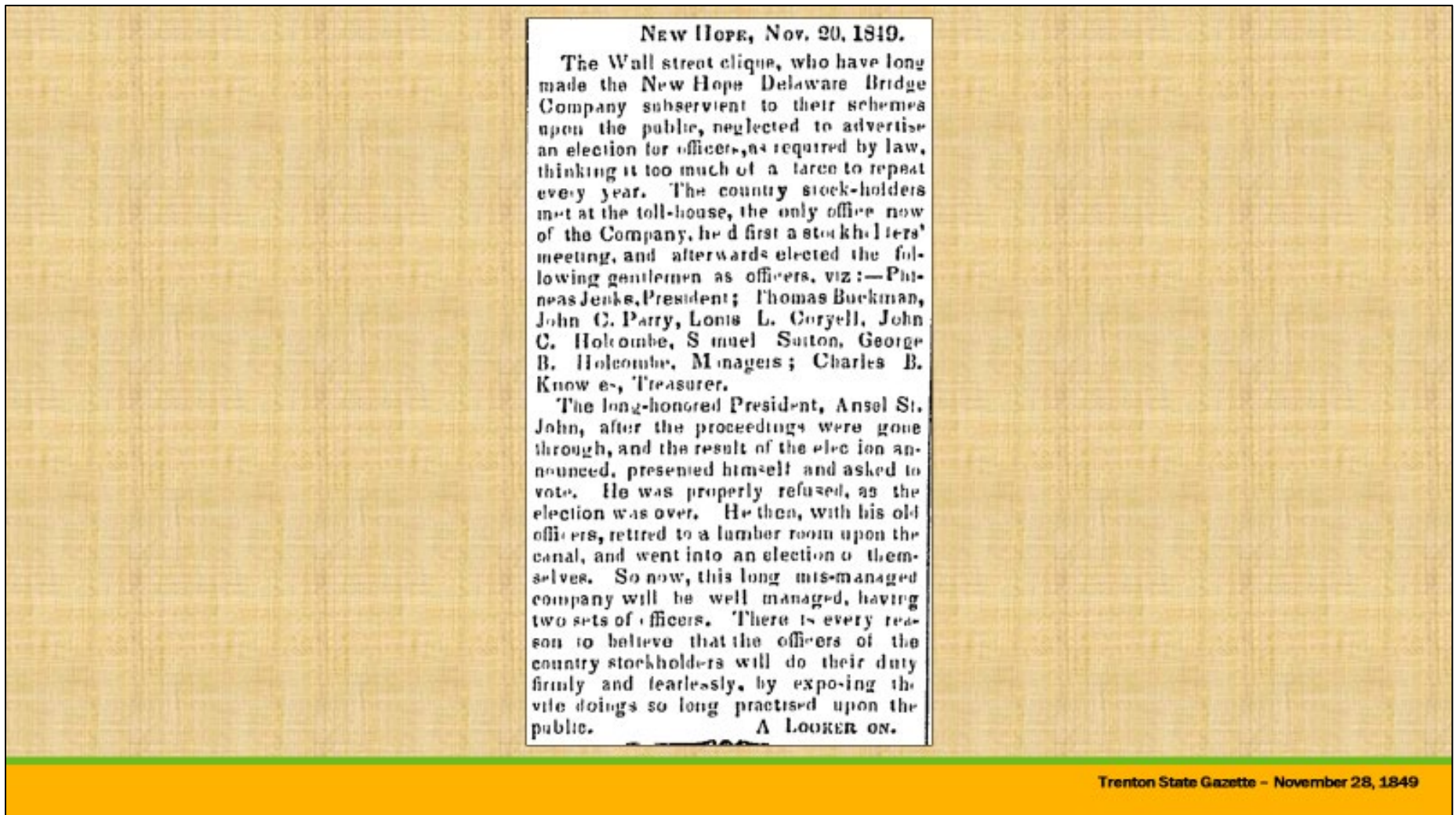
HOLIDAY VISIT.

Asked if he ever went away from Stockton, Mr. Hockenbury replied, "Oh, yes."

He then told of planning a visit to this city for the holidays. It is con-

Trenton Evening Times - January 27, 1912

Another clue to the bridge bank's former location is this article that appeared 110 years ago in the Trenton Evening Times. It explains how sheets of bridge bank notes were found under an old safe in a building that had been razed at the corner of York and Union streets. The article mentions the building was once used as the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company's bank. It references the bank having been known in local sectors as "St. John's Institution." It says the demolition had been done by the Montgomerys, an apparent reference to Robert A. Montgomery who lived at 82 North Union and was a contractor known locally as the "quarry king."



Nearly two years after the bank's failure, disenchantment reached a boiling point among stockholders not aligned with bridge company president Ansel St. John. On November 20, 1849, an old guard of long-time local stockholders armed with the bridge company's bylaws and requisite impartial observers in attendance, held a meeting to elect new company officers. According to this Trenton State Gazette article, Phineas Jenks, a well-respected Newtown physician and former Pennsylvania legislator, was elected president. The list of new company managers included John C. Parry, the first burgess of New Hope. There also were two Holcombes, one Coryell and a Buckman. One of the new company managers was immediately dispatched to collect tolls at one end of the bridge. A subsequent news item referred to the reformers as the "country stockholders" and Ansel St. John's cadre of supporters as the "Wall Street Clique."

The Battle of the Bridge.

During the past week the toll-house of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, on the Pennsylvania side of the river, has been the battle ground between the newly elected board of managers and the officers previously in charge. On Monday afternoon a meeting of the new board was held in the toll-house the

Lancaster Examiner and Herald - December 12, 1849

After getting wind of the takeover gambit, Ancel St. John gathered his supporters to hold their own meeting to reelect their usual management team. They then appointed one of their own to collect tolls at the other end of the bridge. A squabble even occurred over control of the bridge gates. For several days, there were two collectors on the ground attempting to collect what they could from individuals entering the bridge. News accounts of the "Battle of the Bridge" stated that three suits for assault and battery were filed in the squabble's aftermath.

AN ACT to appoint trustees for the creditors and stockholders of
the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company.

WHEREAS the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, *Preamble*
which was incorporated by a joint act of the legislature
of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, has neglected and re-
fused to pay its debts, and the bridge erected by said
company across the Delaware river is represented to be
in an unsafe condition, and without any provision for its
repair, and numerous creditors are deprived of the means
of compelling a just distribution of the property of said
company, in payment of their lawful debts; and whereas
the said New Hope Delaware Bridge Company have

x•

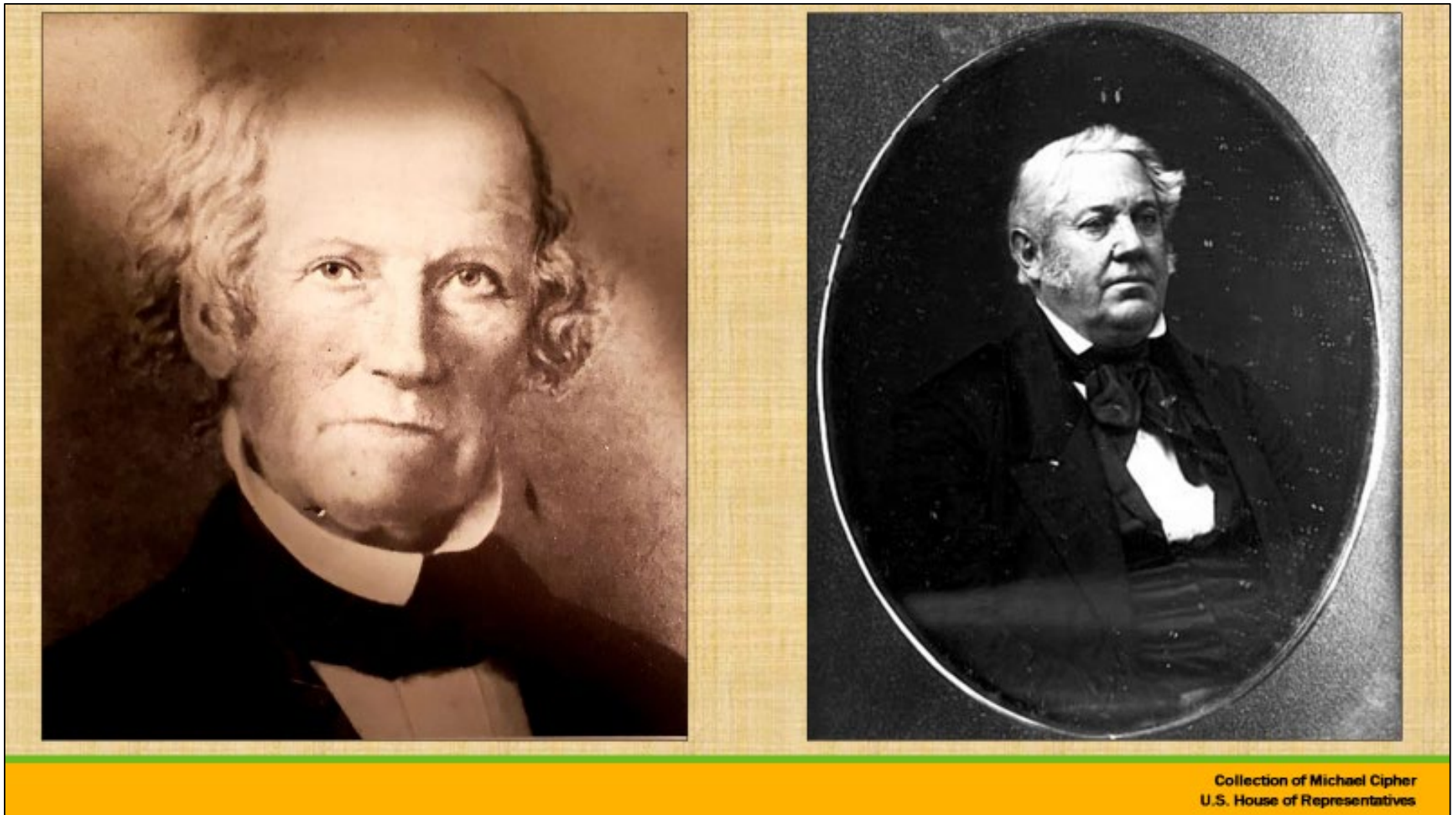
Acts of the Seventy-Third Legislature of the State of New Jersey

The revolt subsided and the charges of assault and battery were later dismissed. The so-called “country stockholders” pulled back their toll taker and – after news of the little conflict spread far and wide – they took a different tact. They petitioned the New Jersey Senate to appoint trustees who would take charge of the bridge company, abolish the illegal bank, and sell the bridge and other properties to pay back long-frustrated creditors and noteholders. The New Jersey Legislature quickly responded this time and moved a bill into law that put the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company into receivership.

NEW HOPE DELAWARE BRIDGE CO.
THE RECEIVERS for the creditors and stockholders of
the New Hope Delaware Bridge Co., in pursuance of an
order of the Court of Chancery of the State of New Jersey,
dated the 24th day of June ult., do hereby give notice to the
creditors of said bank to present and prove their debts, claims
and demands against the same to the Receivers, at their office
in Lambertville, N. J., within six months from the date of said
order, or that they will be excluded from the benefit of such
dividends as may thereafter be made and declared by said
Court of Chancery, of the proceeds of the effects of said cor-
poration.
JOHN RUNK,
ADAMS C. DAVIS,
JOHN H. WAKEFIELD,
Receivers for the creditors and stockholders of the New
Hope Delaware Bridge Co.
Dated, Lambertville, July 1, 1850. Jy15-orw3m

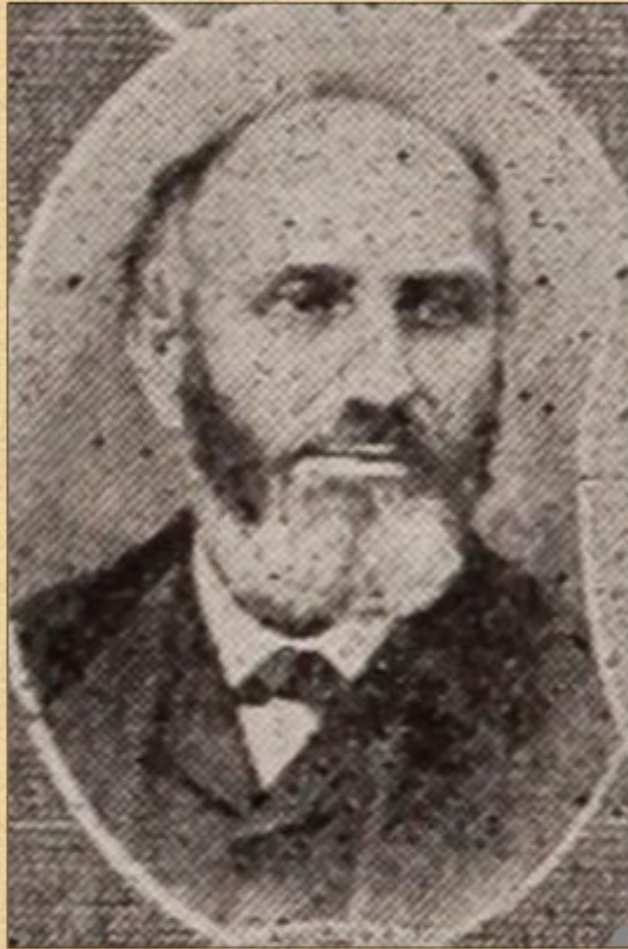
Trenton State Gazette

The measure was signed into law in March 1850. Receivers were promptly empaneled: Whig Party U.S. Congressman John Runk from Hunterdon County and two prominent Lambertville men -- retired General Adams C. Davis and John H. Wakefield. The receivers -- presumably with a sidearm-packing county sheriff in tow -- reportedly took possession of the bridge and associated real estate on or about March 21, 1850. This is a July newspaper advertisement directing creditors of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company to submit proof of debts, claims and demands to the empaneled receivers.



Collection of Michael Ciper
U.S. House of Representatives

In 1851, Pennsylvania representation was added to the blue-ribbon receivership panel: Dr. Phineas Jenks of Bucks County. That's Phineas on the left. Jenks unfortunately passed away during the receivership process and was later replaced by a former Pennsylvania Whig member of the U.S House of Representatives – Michael Hutchinson Jenks. He also hailed from Bucks County. That's him on the right.



John Wakefield also died during the receivership process. Mr. Wakefield's replacement was another distinguished individual – Dr. Samuel Lilly. Lilly was Lambertville's first mayor. The community was legislatively established as a town form of government in 1849. It had been a small part of neighboring West Amwell Township for three years after the remnants of the once-200-square-mile Amwell Township were cleaved into East and West Amwell in 1846.

Sale of a Bridge.

LAMBERTVILLE, N. J., Nov. 30.—The New Hope, Delaware Bridge, together with its franchises and charter, was yesterday sold by the Receivers, at public auction, and purchased by John G. Michiner and James Gordon, Esqs., of Philadelphia, for the sum of \$44,250.

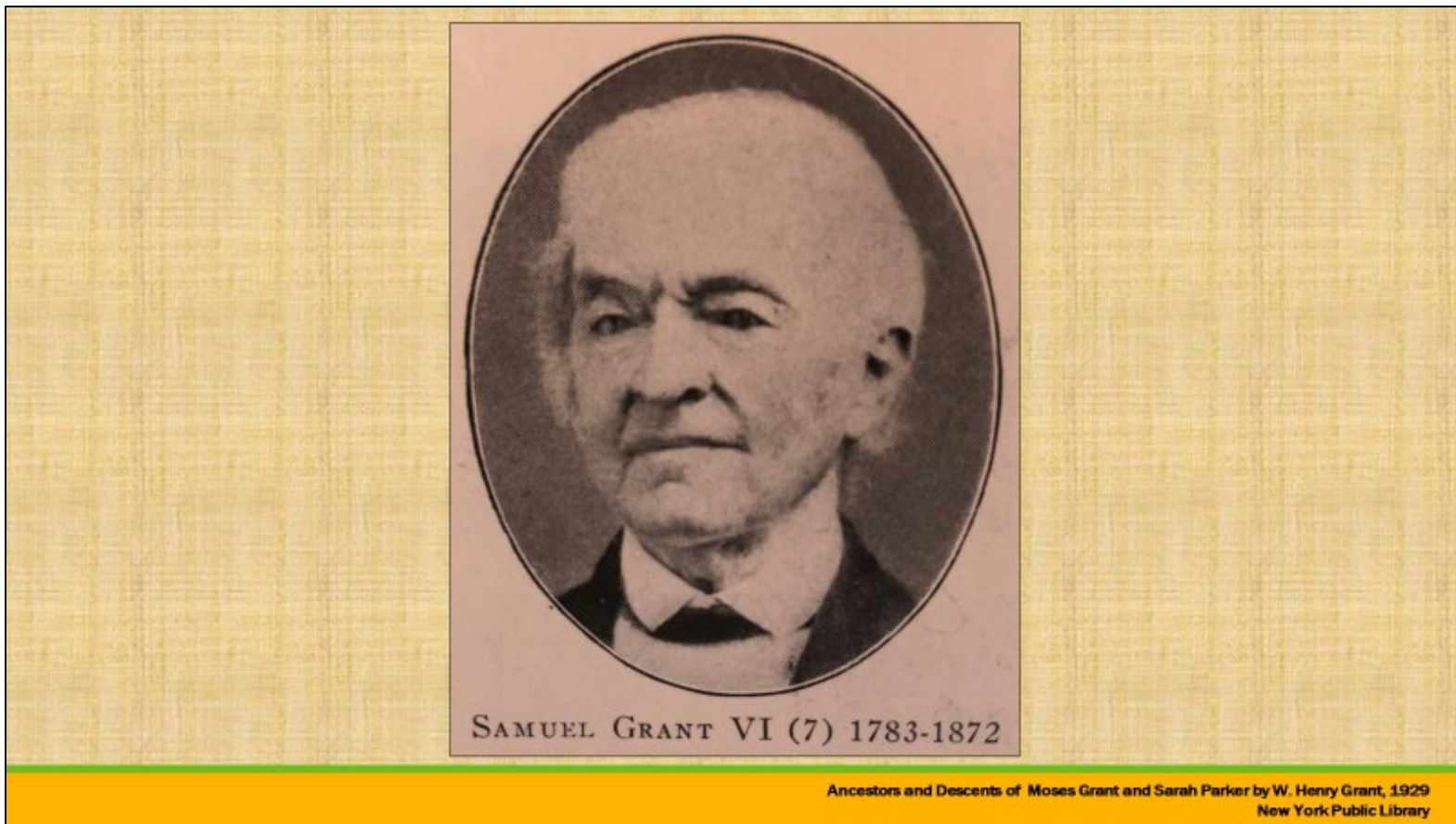
The Baltimore Sun, December 1, 1853

The receivers auctioned off the bridge for \$44,250 on November 29, 1853. According to this news item, the winning bidders were two Philadelphia lawyers named John Michiner and James Gordon.



Joe Donnelly photo

Unfortunately, the individual who had the largest stake in the sale, John Holcombe of Lambertville, had passed away at age 82 on Sept. 30, 1851. This is Mr. Holcombe's gravestone on the grounds of the First Presbyterian Church in Lambertville. The receivers' work dragged on through the 1850s due to legal entanglements. Conceivably, a prime mission was to return as much money as possible back to Holcombe's widow.

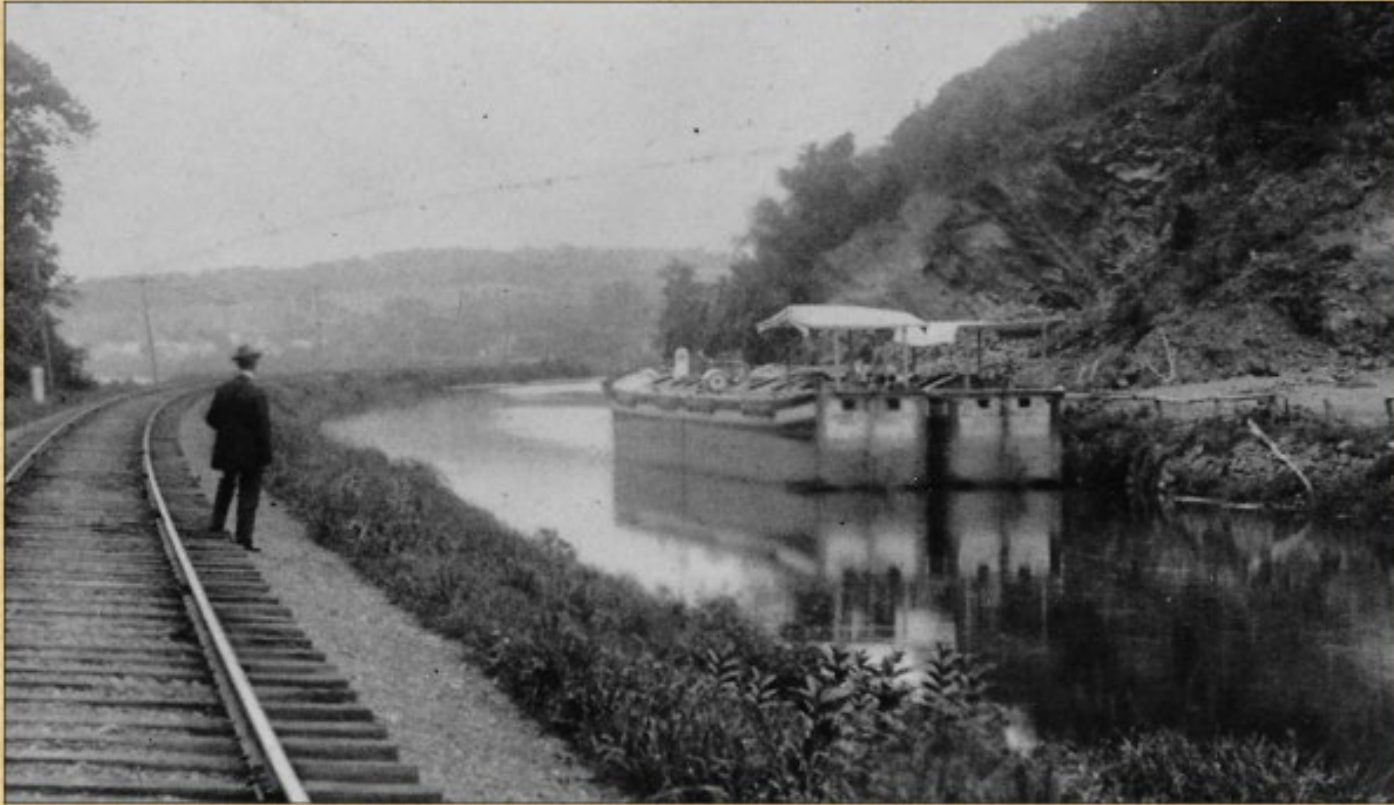


This is Samuel Grant of Philadelphia. On November 8, 1855, he completed a purchase of the bridge from Philadelphia lawyers John G. Michener and James Gordon. He is the only person ever to individually own one of the 16 privately owned covered toll bridges that once spanned the Delaware River between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Grant was the patriarch of a prominent Philadelphia family. He was a highly respected Philadelphia waterfront merchant, packet-shipping-line operator, and a business agent for Barings Brothers & Company in London and the DuPont de Nemours Company in Delaware. DuPont happened to do a lot of business selling gunpowder during the Civil War years of Grant's bridge ownership. Grant was the descendant of a prominent Boston family during that city's port and shipping years. Grant's father, Moses Grant, was Boston's leading wallpaper dealer before and after the Revolutionary War. The elder Grant took a leading role in the Boston Tea Party incident, serving in the same battalion as Paul Revere and playing a key role in a heralded "removal" of two cannons from that city's British-controlled armory. Samuel Grant, as the old saying goes, came from good stock. He and his wife had nine children. He even served one term as Philadelphia's Guardian of the Poor. He was not related to Ulysses S. Grant. It's widely thought that Grant Avenue in Northeast Philadelphia was named in honor of Samuel Grant and not General Grant.



DRJTB Archives
Image by Ken Stryker

It's unknown why Grant decided to buy the forlorn bridge between New Hope and Lambertville. I reached out to a New York attorney who married one of Grant's descendants and he expressed amazement that Samuel Grant ever owned a bridge. What is known about Grant's bridge-ownership tenure is: 1. nothing scandalous happened, 2. the structure was kept in good condition, and 3. he hit the sweet spot in terms of a sound investment. This photo dates from the railroad station construction in the 1870s. The bridge portal can be seen in the background.



Delaware and Raritan Canal State Recreation Area

The Town of Lambertville grew rapidly during Samuel Grant's ownership years, giving new reasons for people and more commerce to travel across Grant's toll bridge. There was increased commerce, like Pennsylvania coal boats that came to town as the result of the Delaware and Raritan feeder canal's widening and inlet locks in the late 1840s.



Metrotrails Group, Facebook

On February 2, 1851, the Belvidere Delaware Railroad train line between Lambertville and Trenton opened. This afforded quickened access to Philadelphia, and New York. When Samuel Grant acquired the bridge a few years later, Lambertville was a well-established rail stop with connections to Phillipsburg and Belvidere to the north. (Note: The photograph here was taken many decades later.)

LAMBERTVILLE
BOARDING AND LIVERY STABLES.
Connected with the
"LAMBERTVILLE HOUSE,"
NEAR THE RAILROAD DEPOT,
LAMBERTVILLE; N. J.
FIRST CLASS Carriages at all hours. Careful
and experienced Drivers. Good care of
Boarding Horses GUARANTEED.
Wm. THATCHER,
Proprietor.
January 27th, 1875. t.a.p-1.

Lambertville Record, February 17, 1875

Newspaper advertisements from the 1850s to the 1870s point to an expanding economy in Lambertville that would have fueled tolled crossings of Mr. Grant's bridge. This advertisement is for a livery stable near the railroad depot and the Lambertville House hotel.

Boozer's Hall, - Lambertville
FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY,
Tuesday Evening, May 5th, 1863.

THE FAR-FAMED
SANFORD
OPERA TROUPE:
Oldest Company in the World!
SAMUEL S. SANFORD, MANAGER.

Mr. Sanford will have the honor of presenting the Best Troupe of the Era
that has ever been introduced into the city, including -

Operatic Talent, Tragic Merit
COMIC ABILITY,
Delineations of Men, Manners & Customs:
And the Special Lots, as given with

UNBOUNDED APPLAUSE
At his Opera Houses, Philadelphia and New York.
Sanford Appearing Each Evening!
1863

STAR TROUPE

Lambertville also offered live entertainment.

MISS CLARA KOONS.
(PUPIL OF PROF. CHARLES GROBE.)
**Teacher of Instrumental Music,
PIANO AND ORGAN.**
PRactice and Instruction Room in the Young Ladies'
Seminary, kept by Miss E. L. Knowler, on Delaware
Avenue, Lambertville, N. J.
Lambertville, Sept. 3, 1873.

Lambertville Record, December 17, 1873

And music lessons. You name it, and there was a good chance Lambertville or New Hope might have had it.

Lambertville Savings Bank,
S. E. CORNER UNION AND CORYELL STREETS,
LAMBERTVILLE, NEW JERSEY.

CAPITAL \$100,000. May be increased to \$200,000.

Stockholders Personally Liable to Double the Amount of Their Stock.

OFFICERS: SAMUEL LILLY,
President. **Wm. V. COOLEY,**
Cashier.

DIRECTORS: SAMUEL LILLY,
JOHN A. ANDERSON,
RICHARD McDOWELL,
Wm. L. HOPPOCK,
Wm. V. COOLEY,
HENRY C. HOOKER,
GEORGE A. ALLEN,
JOHN GROMAN,
ASHBEL WELCH,

Bank open daily from 9 o'clock A. M., to 3 P. M.; and Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8 o'clock.

Interest allowed on Deposits as follows:

12 months, or more, 6 per cent. 6 months, and less than 12, 5 per cent. 3 months, and less than 6, 3 per cent. No interest allowed for part of a month or fraction of a dollar. No deposit received of less amount than one dollar.

On the first days of January and July, interest not drawn will be credited to depositors on all sums that have been on deposit one year or more.

Deposits made by married women, or by minors, in their own name, cannot be withdrawn by their husbands, fathers or guardians, without their order or consent in writing.

Special deposits may be made upon specified terms, for which certificate of deposit will be issued, or a general deposit book given. Such deposits will be governed by the terms of the certificate or of the deposit book given, and may be drawn by check in accordance therewith.

May 5, 1875-6m.
May 5, 1875.

Lambertville Record, November 3, 1875

Burgeoning Lambertville also soon had legally endowed banks where people could confidently leave deposits. The reasons why people and commerce crossed Mr. Grant's bridge were virtually endless and it's safe to assume a portion of the collected tolls made it into his pocket.



Courtesy of New Hope Historical Society

When and how the Philadelphia-based Grant managed to collect the bridge's toll proceeds is uncertain. What we now know is that in the latter years of his life, he bought a property on the New Hope side of the bridge. This building at 11 East Bridge Street in New Hope is what the Heritage Conservancy in Bucks County calls the "Samuel Grant" house. This photo of the house is from 45 years ago and probably closely resembles how it looked when Grant owned it.



Joe Donnelly photograph

The building was sold through Mr. Grant's estate in 1877. Today, it houses – surprise! – an art gallery.



Photo by Mary Phelan
Find a Grave.com

Samuel Grant passed away in 1872. He was 89. Lambertville had grown dramatically during Grant's stewardship of the covered bridge, so much so that the NJ Legislature re-incorporated Lambertville from a town to a city the same year that Grant died. Grant is buried at Philadelphia's Laurel Hill Cemetery, a forgotten owner of the venerable wooden covered bridge that once connected New Hope and Lambertville.



Ancel St. John's gravestone at Mt. Hope Cemetery

Photo by Joe Donnelly

Since we're talking gravesites here, it's a good point to revisit catch up with the whereabouts of former bridge bank president Ancel St. John. This is his gravestone up at Mt. Hope Cemetery here in Lambertville. St. John went to Wall Street in the 1850s, working as a banker and broker. He lived on Manhattan's Lower East Side, near Tompkins Park. A city directory from that era also lists him residing in Brooklyn. During the early stages of the carpetbagger era immediately following the Civil War, St. John showed up in Herndon, Va. – a community roughly 25 miles west of Washington, D.C. According to research by Herndon historian Barbara Glakas, St. John and a man named "Thompson" bought land in Herndon in 1865 – roughly 200 acres each – before a railroad came through. Glakas says St. John played a pivotal role in the community's development and had a hand in establishing some of Herndon's early churches and schools. Glakas reports that a woman who lived there at the time described St. John as a "smart fair dealing man, who was large, handsome and wore a red wig to distinguish himself." In the end, however, St. John appears to have been as enigmatic in Herndon as he was in Lambertville. When Herndon was incorporated in 1879, Glakas says, St. John was elected to town council and the council attempted to designate him as the town's first mayor. St. John declined.

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

SEE PENALTY FOR NON-REPORT.

1. Full name of deceased Amos St. John
(If the father was married, give name)

2. Age 82 years 7 months 6 days Color white

3. Single, married, widow or widower (From all of the above) Occupation Retired Gentleman

4. Birthplace Marion, Maryland, U.S. (State or county. If of foreign birth, give home town in United States.)

5. Last place of residence Plainfield, Union Co. (If city, give name; if not, give county and township.)

6. How long resident in this State 40 years

7. Place of death Plainfield, Co. 9th Union St.
(If in a hospital, give name and street number; if in a nursing home, give name and address; if in an institution, so state.)

8. Father's name Amos St. John Country of birth U.S.

9. Mother's name Amos St. John Country of birth U.S.

10. I hereby certify that I attended Amos St. John
during the last illness, and that he died on the 1st day of April, 1882; and
that the cause of death was Pneumonia

Requested, but Optional.

a. Primary disease Pneumonia Length of sickness Seven days

b. Secondary disease, (how long) None Horley L. Smith M.D.
Medical Attendant

c. Remarks None Residence Plainfield, N.J.

Date April 2, 1882

Name and residence of Undertaker Amos St. John - Plainfield, N.J.

Place of Burial Samuel L. Smith - Plainfield, N.J.

St. John and his wife apparently lived in nearby Washington, D.C. during the Herndon years. They last resided in Plainfield, N.J.; either at the home of a son, Edward, or a married granddaughter's home. St. John died April 1, 1882, age 82. His death certificate on file at the New Jersey state archives says that he died after a seven-day bout of pneumonia. The death certificate states that he had been a New Jersey resident for "40 years." The document identified his profession at the time of death as "retired gentleman."

RATES OF TOLLS.

The following Rates of Tolls to be charged at New Hope Delaware Bridge on and after the 1st day of April, 1877:

SIX HORSE WAGON, FOR ONE WAY,	52 cts.
FIVE " " " " " "	48 "
FOUR " " " " " "	40 "
THREE " " " " " "	32 "
TWO " " " " " "	25 "
ONE " " " " " "	12 "
HORSE AND RIDER, " " " "	8 "
EXTRA HORSE, " " " "	6 "
FOOT TOLL, " " " "	2 "
CATTLE, " " " "	3 "
SWINE, " " " "	1 "
SHEEP, " " " "	1-2 "

Merchants, Manufacturers and Millers, living and doing business in New Hope or Lambertville, when taking their goods over the bridge, to be charged as follows:

TWO HORSE WAGON LOAD, BOTH WAYS,	35 cts.
ONE " " " " " "	20 cts.

Grain, one cent per bushel, provided enough is hauled to pay the toll one way, and then add one cent for every bushel up to the rates for both ways. All over the toll not charged for.

Lime, one cent per bushel, subject to the same rules of grain.

Passengers may be taken to the depot the same as before, if that is their only business.

All persons when hauling their goods under a commute, are not allowed to take passengers on their wagons. All persons so offending will have their commutes taken from them.

Lumber, per thousand feet, fifty cents.

Coal, per ton, with two horse wagon, twenty-five cents.

WILLIAM S. GRANT,

Administrator and Attorney for the Heirs.

The bridge was owned by Samuel Grant's heirs at the time of St. John's passing. All totaled, the bridge remained with the heirs for 15 years after Grant's death. In 1877, Grant's heirs published a new toll schedule. There were reduced two-way rates for local merchants, manufacturers, and millers in New Hope or Lambertville. Pedestrians were charged 2 cents for a one-way crossing. And there were tolls for cattle, sheep, and swine – a reflection of the agricultural lands surrounding New Hope and Lambertville at that time.



The man you are looking at in this photograph was named Hiram Scarborough. He worked as the bridge's toll collector for 35 years or so. More than anyone, he probably accounts for the wooden bridge's steady success during the years of ownership by Grant and his heirs. The son of a blacksmith, Scarborough lost an arm in an 1851 shooting accident. The following year, the state-appointed receivers of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company's assets hired Scarborough as the bridge's toll collector. When Samuel Grant acquired the bridge in 1854, Scarborough continued in the job. The employment of a one-armed toll taker was genius. Who would give lip about a toll charge to an affable one-armed man?

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

NOTICE!

ALL persons having cows running at large are hereby notified that all such cows are forbidden to trespass on the Island above the Delaware Bridge, commonly known as Holcombe's Island.

I am determined hereafter to deal with such cases of trespass according to law.

HIRAM SCARBOROUGH.

New Hope, June 21st, 1876.-St.

Lambertville Record, June 6, 1876

Hiram was a bit of a river rat. During the 1841 Bridges Freshet, Scarborough – who still had both of his arms at that time – rowed a batteau out into the raging waters in an ultimately unsuccessful attempted rescue of Centre Bridge's George B. Fell. Scarborough also owned and operated the river fisheries in these parts for decades. His base of operations was behind his home, which is now known as The Landing restaurant in New Hope. Scarborough's fisheries apparently included Holcombe's Island, which we all refer to nowadays as Lewis Island. This is an 1876 newspaper advertisement he placed to warn people bringing cows onto that island.



Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Hiram was a popular gent. He and his family dog were regularly seen together at the bridge, part of the local color in New Hope and Lambertville. According to William W. H. Davis's History of Bucks County Pennsylvania, Scarborough had charge of bridge repairs and entire control of the bridge during the Grants' ownership years. Scarborough also was politically active, serving on a variety of local boards and even as a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives between 1876 and 1878. Scarborough further served as a rector's warden at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Lambertville and a director at the Amwell National Bank of Lambertville.

OLD DOG.—An old and trusty dog belonging to Hon. Hiram Scarborough, of New Hope, died on Monday morning. The dog was a favorite of the family, and seemed to be a kind of permanent fixture of the bridge toll house, during its life-time.

Lambertville Record, June 6, 1878

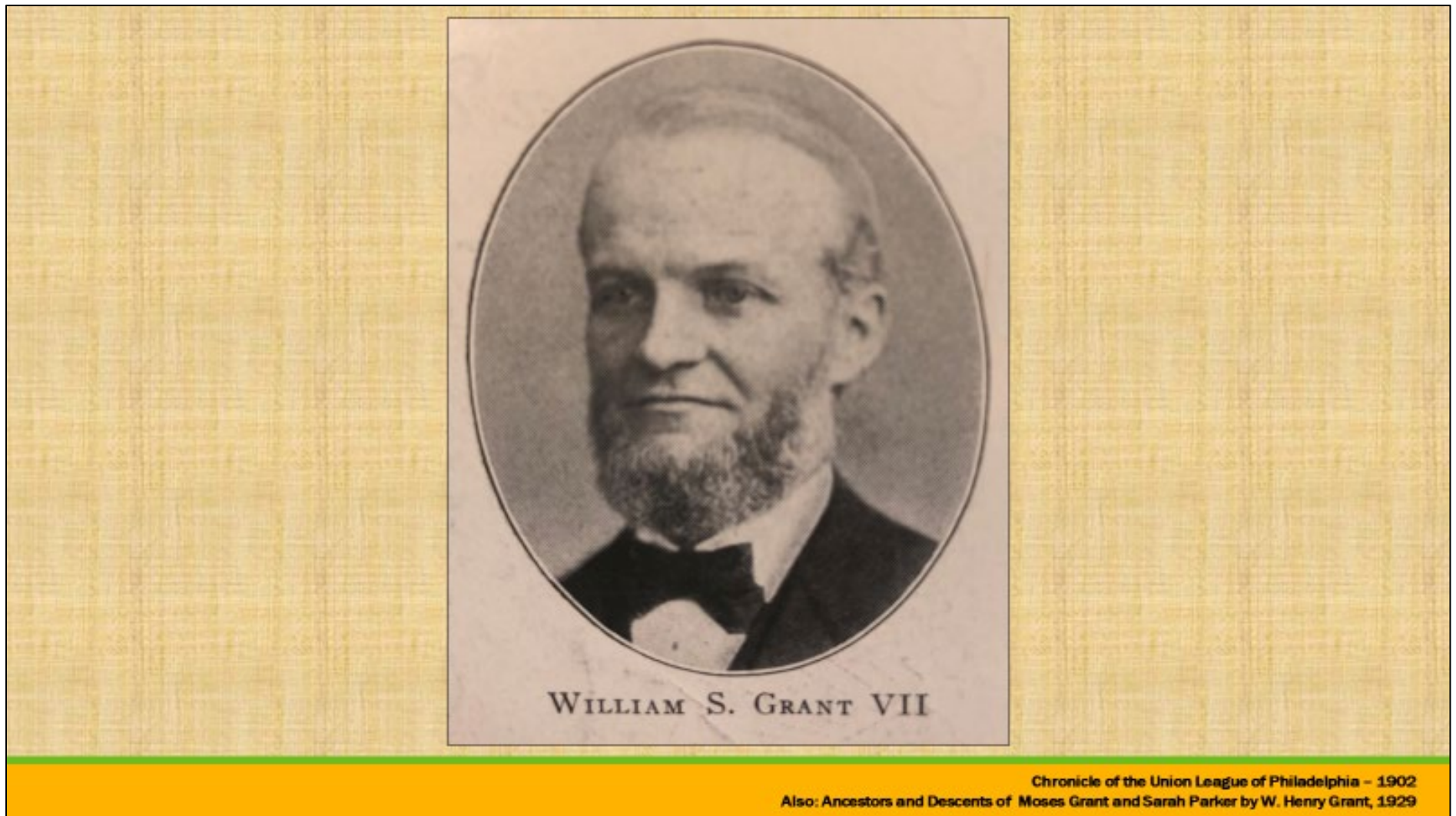
Mr. Scarborough and his canine companion were such fixtures at the bridge that it was news when “his old and trusty dog” died in 1878.

Death of Hiram Scarborough.

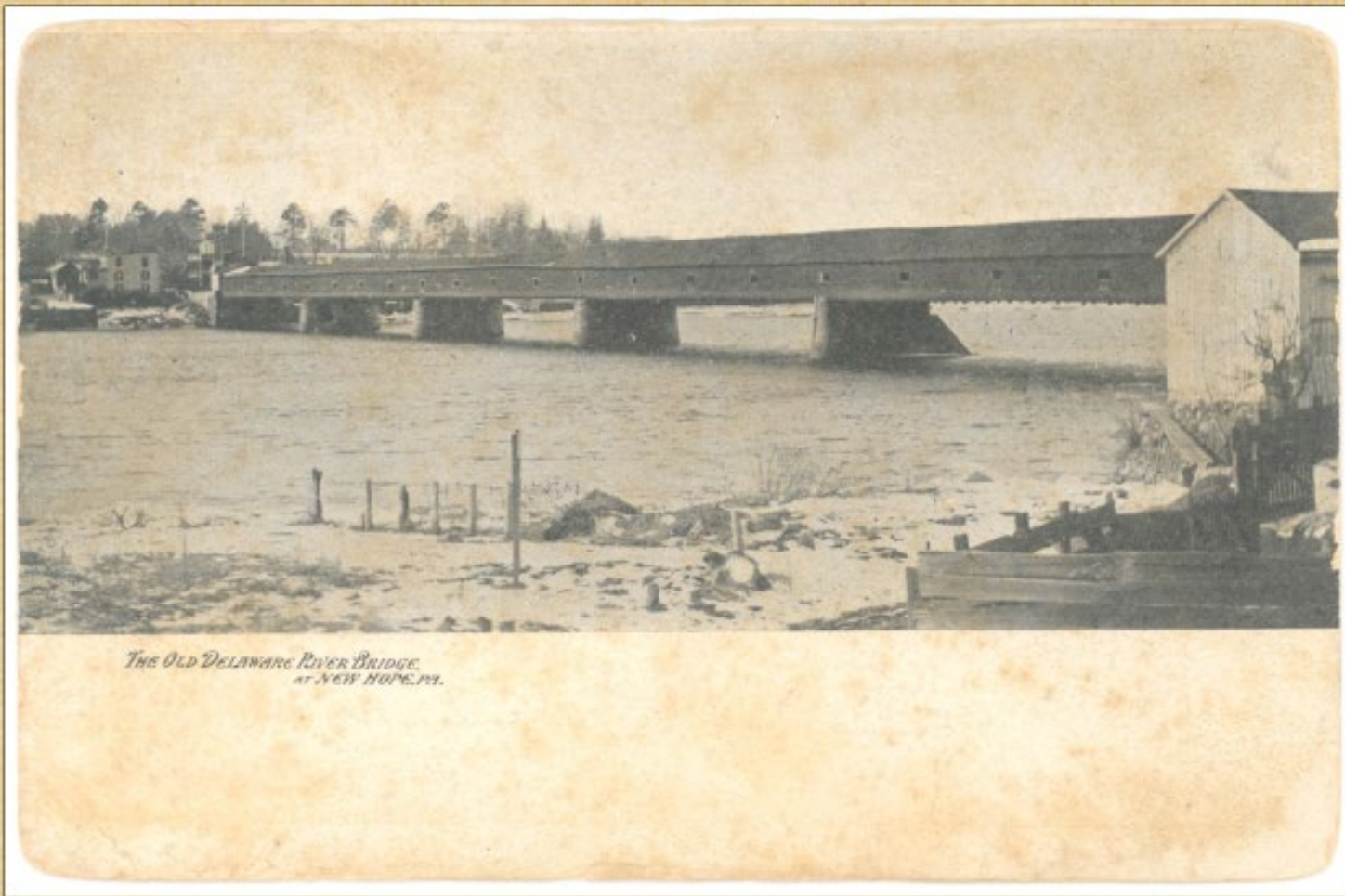
NEW HOPE, March 9.—Hiram Scarborough, one of the most widely known and highly respected citizens of Bucks county, died this morning. He was 82 years of age. He was a prominent member of the Masonic order and a director in the Amwell National Bank. In politics he was a Democrat, participating in all the State Conventions of his party and representing Bucks county in the State Legislature.

Philadelphia Times, March 10, 1888

Scarborough retired as the bridge's toll taker/caretaker in 1887. He passed away March 9, 1888; age 82.



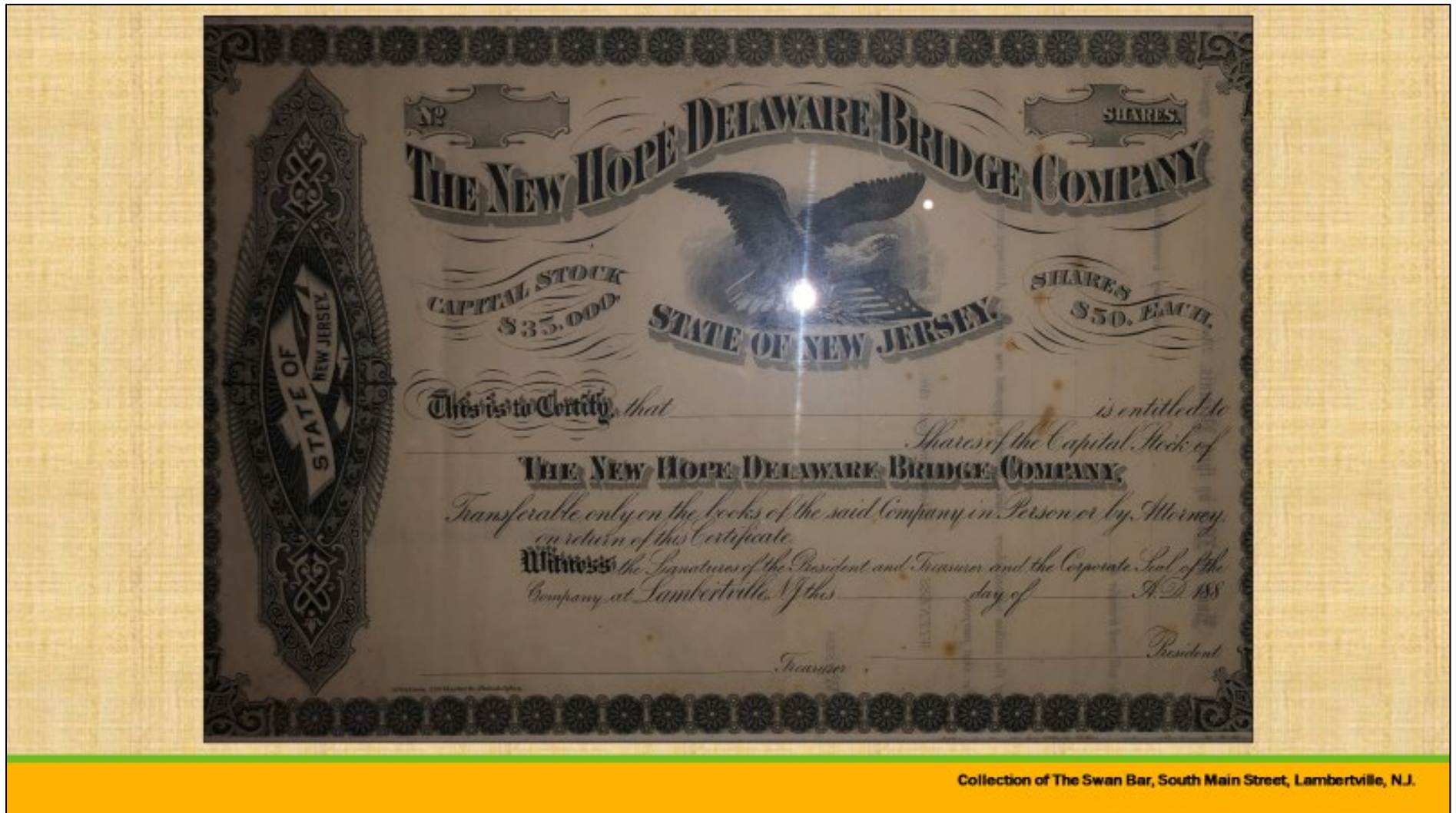
This is Samuel Grant's grandson, William Stephenson Grant. An attorney and protégé of his grandfather, he represented the Grant family in offering the bridge for sale to close out Samuel Grant's estate in 1874. But the bridge selling process took 13 years to complete.



*THE OLD DELAWARE RIVER BRIDGE.
AT NEW HOPE, PA.*

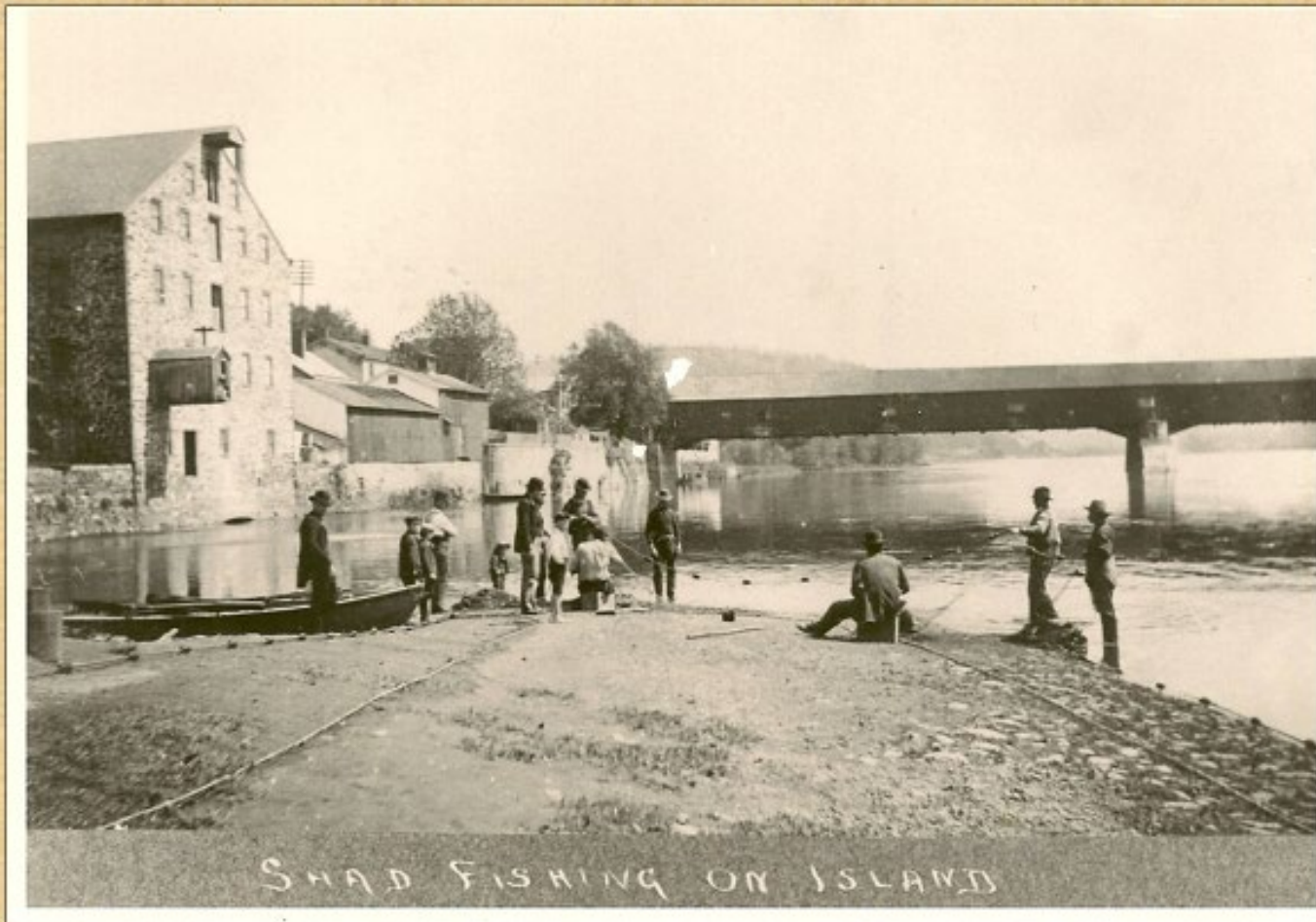
Collection of Robert Chase Palmer
Author of Postcards of Bucks County, PA - 2020

The bridge's availability for purchase eventually attracted the interest of New Hope/Lambertville area men during the later part of the 1880s. Many were from old-line families in these parts: Studdiford, Parry, Crook, Eastburn and Magill. They banded together, revived the old New Hope Delaware Bridge Company – minus the bank – with \$30,000 capital. The newly resuscitated company secured a mortgage and purchased the bridge. The closing took place in Camden on May 7, 1887. Charles S. Atkinson, a prominent Solebury farmer who purchased the New Hope Agricultural Works in 1879, was elected the company's president.



Collection of The Swan Bar, South Main Street, Lambertville, N.J.

This is a surviving stock certificate that the revitalized New Hope Delaware Bridge Company issued in the 1880s. Note that this certificate only mentions the State of New Jersey. The reason for this is unknown.



Courtesy of Jeff McVey

The second incarnation of the bridge company was a continuation of the Grants' ownership: boring and reliable, with steady growth.



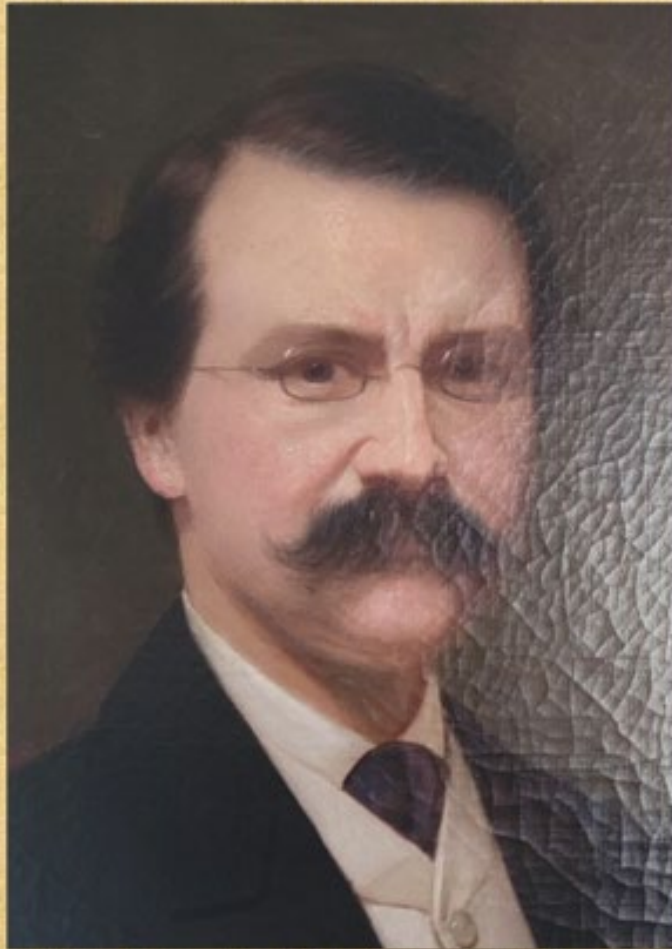
Collection of New Hope Historical Society.

One thing of strategic importance to a wooden bridge is the location of a nearby fire company. This photograph – date unknown – shows the first Eagle Fire Company on Bridge Street in New Hope. The building in the background was owned by the bridge company and gratuitously provided to the fire company, which would then have easy access to the bridge in the event of a fire. The building still stands and is now used for storage by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission.



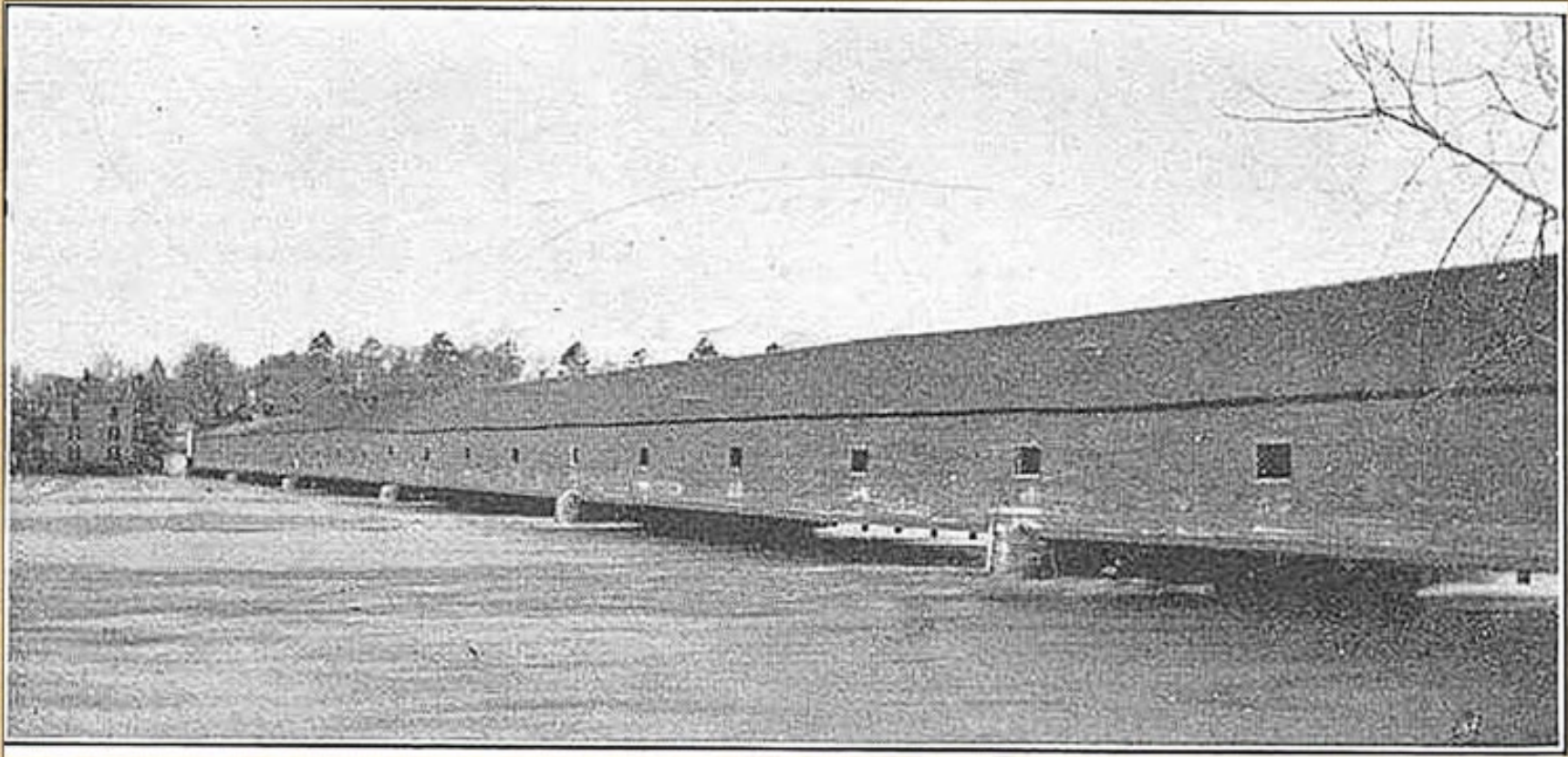
Spruance Library, Doylestown, PA.

This is an enlarged portion of a photograph that famed Lambertville photographer John Anderson took from the bluff overlooking Bridge Street in Lambertville. The photograph shows the importance of the bridge's location in connecting the commercial and social centers of the two communities near the turn of the 20th century. Look closely at this image and you'll see the different heights and shades of the three 1814 Wernwag bridge spans on the New Hope side and the three post-1841-flood replacement spans on the Lambertville side.



Courtesy of Roy Ziegler
Author of *The Parrys of Philadelphia and New Hope*

By 1892, this man – Richard Randolph Parry – had become the bridge company's president. Parry was the grandson of Benjamin Parry, one of the original incorporators of the first incarnation of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company. Richard Randolph Parry led the bridge company into a new era of motor-powered vehicles and, eventually, into public ownership.



The Delaware Valley and the Pocono Mountains
Ferris & Leach Publishers, Philadelphia, PA.

Parry's biggest challenge, though, was the Pumpkin Flood of 1903. The year 1903 had already been a wet one when showers began falling throughout the Delaware River Valley on October 7. The showers soon intensified into a driving rainstorm that lasted through the next day before moderating to a drizzle. By October 9, more than nine inches had fallen on an already soggy region, flooding farm fields, overwhelming streams, and soon swelling the Delaware River into an angry muddy torrent of debris that included barrels, timber, and produce of upstream farm fields – notably squash and gourds. This flood claimed the old covered bridge at New Hope and Lambertville as one of its victims. It's three original Lewis Wernwag spans on the Pennsylvania side were the oldest along the Delaware River at the time. The three Wernwag spans had been in service 90 years and 27 days until the fateful flood.

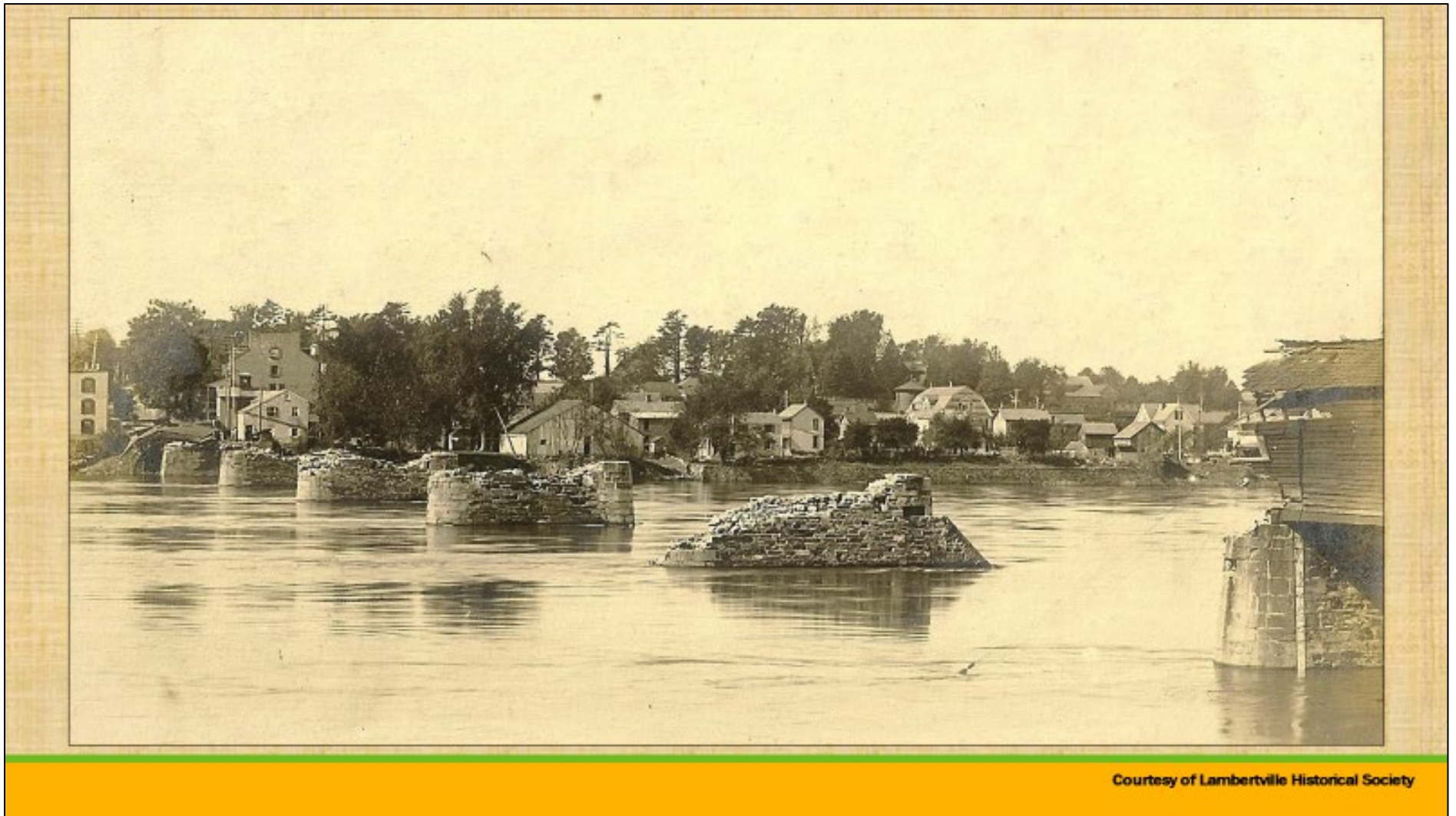


Spruance Library, Bucks County Historical Society
Doylestown, PA.

This is an interesting picture because it shows the height of flood waters completely overwhelming the piers. The bridge had been washed away, save for the remaining span that can be seen below the steeple at the center of the image. The 1903 Pumpkin Flood remains the second highest Delaware River flood on record to this day.

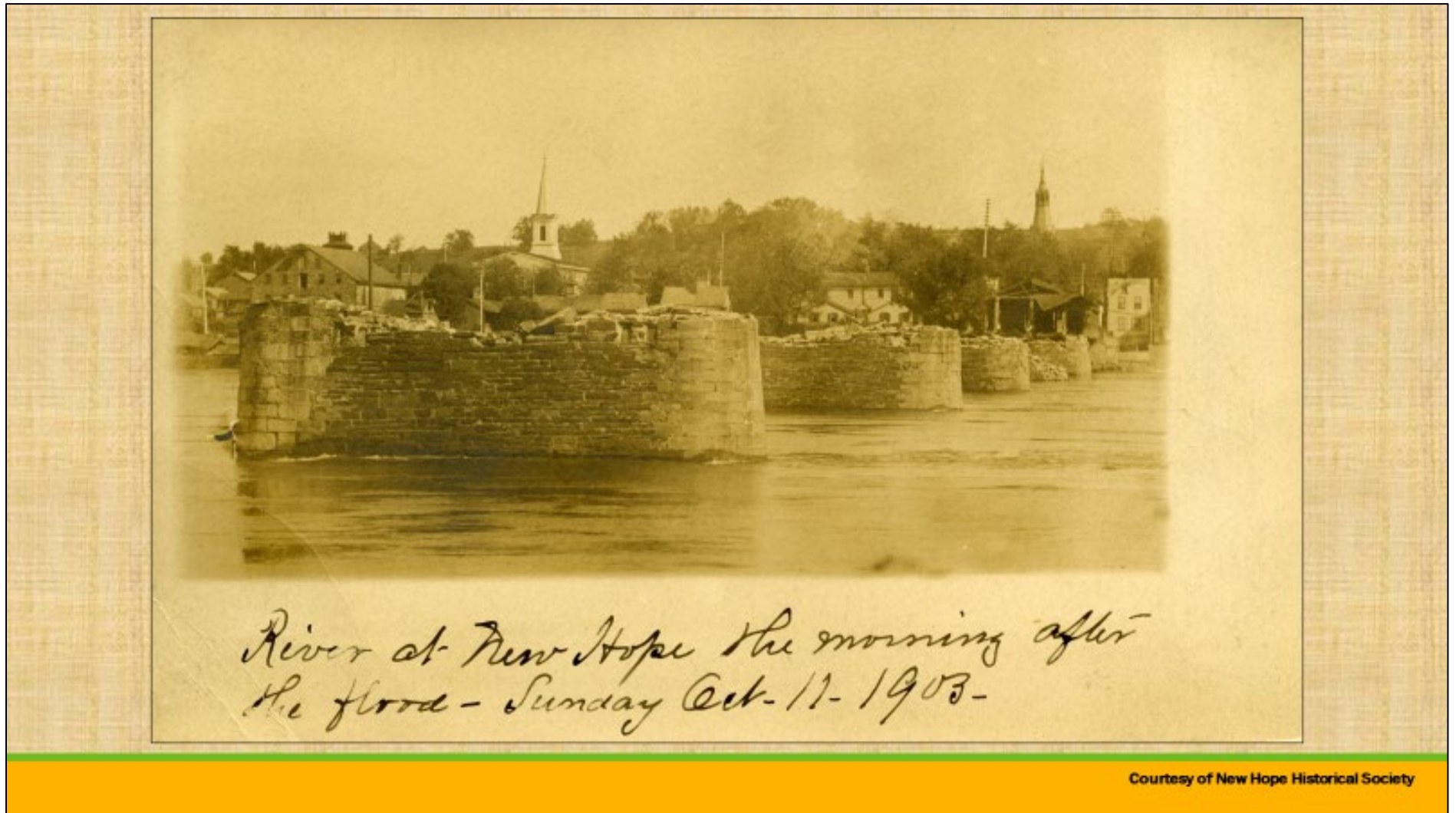


Here's a view of the surviving bridge remnant on the New Jersey side.



Courtesy of Lambertville Historical Society

Here's the post-flood view from the Lambertville side. You can see the end of the lone surviving span to the right.



Here's what it looked like from the New Hope side. There were scenes of devastation like this up and down the river.



Collection of Judith Noy
A tremendous lady

The New Hope covered bridge was one of seven bridges completely or partially destroyed between New Jersey and Pennsylvania during the 1903 Pumpkin Flood. This was the scene downstream at Washington Crossing. Look familiar? The view in this image is from New Jersey looking toward Pennsylvania.



Courtesy Lambertville Historical Society

This is what the aftermath of the flood looked like on the Lambertville side. Note the roofline of the bridge portal that fronted the three replacement spans constructed after the 1841 flood.



Here's the aftermath in New Hope, with borough residents assessing the situation amid a pile of flood debris. Note the stepped portal design of this Wernwag span from 1814.



Courtesy of Lambertville Historical Society

People went out to have pictures of themselves taken with the bridge remnants after the flood. This is a surviving Wernwag span from 1814. Note the iron rods used in that bridge's 1813-1814 construction.



Courtesy of Lambertville Historical Society

Here's one of the replacement spans constructed after the 1841 flood. Note the dual arches.



Here is the last horse-drawn cart to have crossed the bridge before its October 1903 demise. The man at the reins is believed to be A.C. Holcombe. This photo was taken in front of the bridge's destroyed New Hope portal.

NEW PLAN TO SPAN THE RIVER'S CREST

Special to the Times.

Lambertville, Nov. 3.—The New Hope Delaware Bridge Company held a meeting at their office in Lambertville Friday for the purpose of making arrangements for conveying passengers across the river between New Hope and Lambertville. As the plan of running a ferry back and forth has proved very unsatisfactory, it was decided to build a foot bridge across on the old piers, to be used until the new iron bridge can be erected. This foot bridge is to be four feet wide and will have a five-foot railing. It will be built at once, with cables running from pier to pier, and will be removed span at a time as the new bridge is put up.



Trenton Evening Times - November 3, 1903
Temporary ferry - courtesy of New Hope Historical Society

The officers of the second New Hope Delaware Bridge Company moved quickly to replace the bridge. According to bridge historian Frank Dale, the company purchased some type of steam powered craft to operate as a ferry. The Trenton Evening Times article on the left notes that the ferry proved "very unsatisfactory," but eventually ferry service got ironed out. Here's photo of the makeshift ferry with departing and awaiting passengers at the Lambertville side. It's unknown what the bridge company charged for this temporary low-tech ferry service.

The ferry, however, will be kept running until the foot bridge is completed. The fare on the ferry has been reduced to five cents each way. The piers, which are in very bad condition, will be examined and as soon as possible they will be put in order for the commencement of the new iron bridge.

The new bridge will have concrete drives and walks, the drives to be twelve feet wide, and a four-foot walk on one side, probably the south side.

The new bridge when completed will be twenty-eight feet wide. The building of the bridge will be under the supervision of Chief Engineer Devlin of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Mr. Devlin, who now has eleven bridges under construction, will draw the plans and commence the work at the earliest possible date.



Trenton Evening Times - November 3, 1903
Photo courtesy family of R.G. Develin

The Trenton Evening Times article also stated that a Pennsylvania Railroad civil engineer was placed in charge of the project to construct a steel replacement bridge between New Hope and Lambertville. It's altogether possible the railroad assigned a civil engineer to do the job because of Lambertville's importance to the railroad's business. The man on the right is the engineer who designed and oversaw construction of the bridge in 1904. His name, correctly spelled, was Reginald G. Develin.

LEWIS F. SHOEMAKER, Pres. THOMAS C. SATTERTHWAIT, Sec'y & Treas.

LEWIS F. SHOEMAKER & CO.

SCHUYLKILL BRIDGE WORKS STEEL BRIDGES and BUILDINGS

New York Office: 45 Broadway Works: Pottstown, Pa. General Offices: Harrison Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa.



COAL TRESTLE REPAIRS

A yearly examination of your coal trestle, and prompt repairs to weakened sections is a recognized necessity, neglect of which is apt to prove expensive.

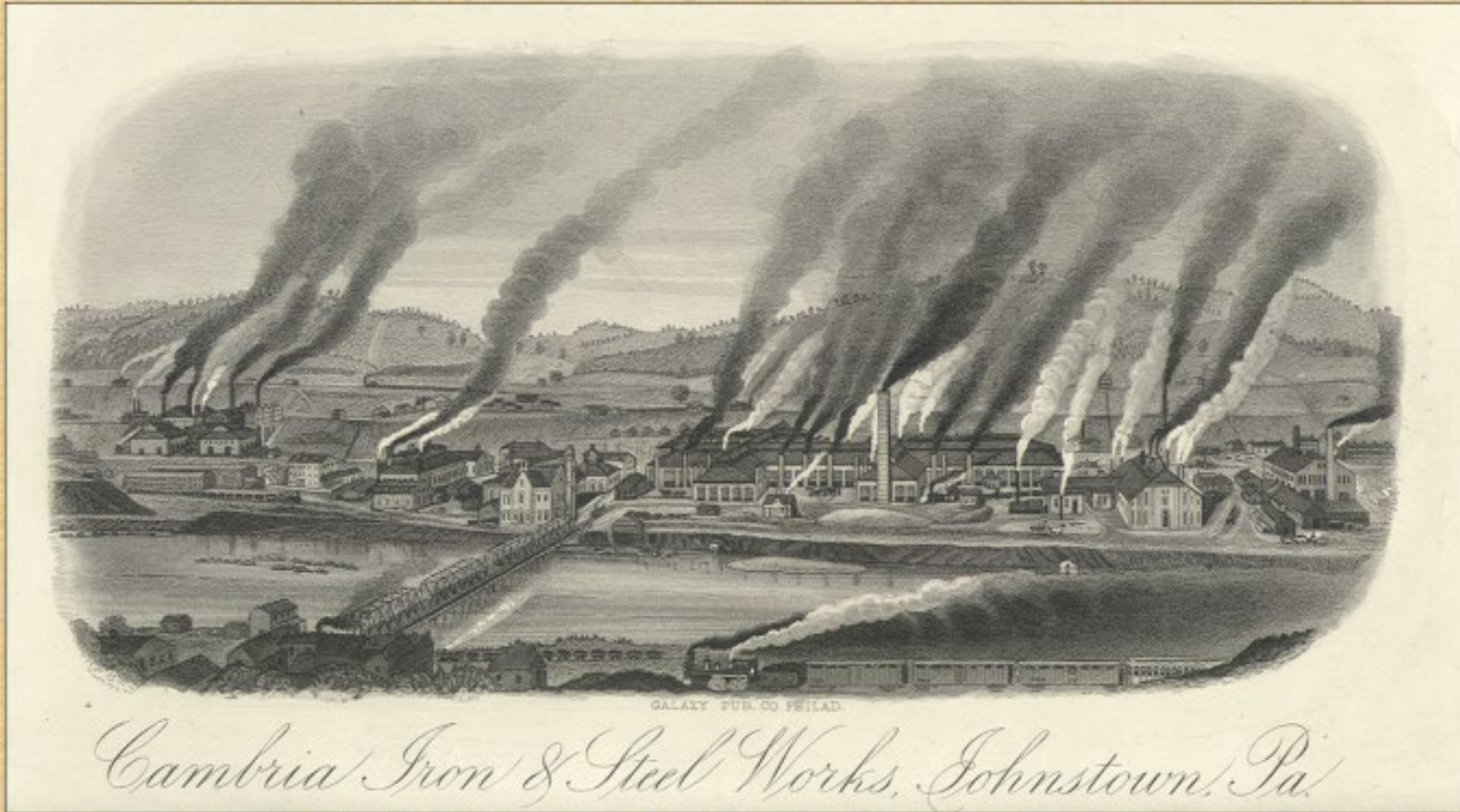
We handle both construction and repair work on coal trestles for the late R. Newlin Coal Company, E. J. Cummings, Heston & Jones and the London Coal Company, and many other well known manufacturers and coal companies. We have constructed many trestles and crossings.

Our engineers will gladly make an examination for you, and report the estimated cost of repairs.

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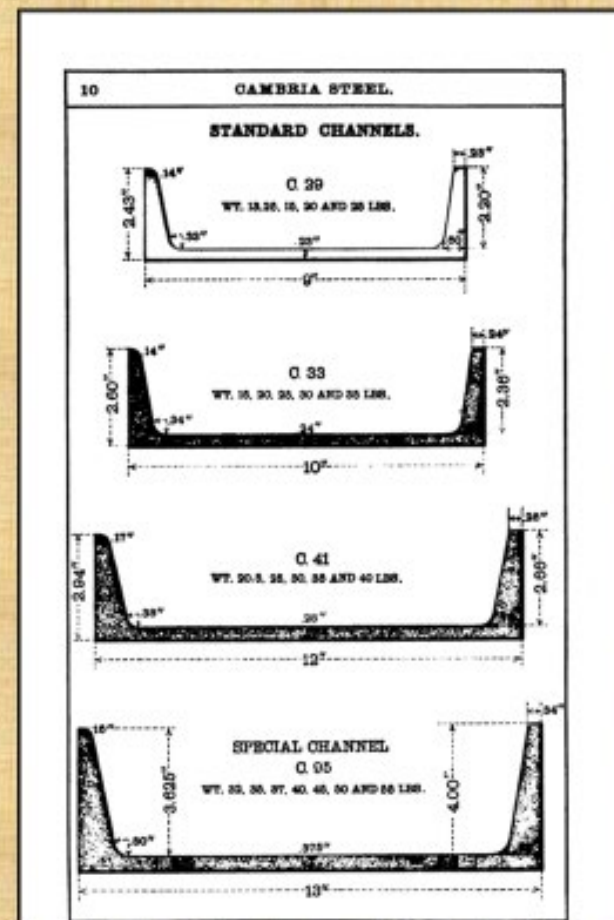
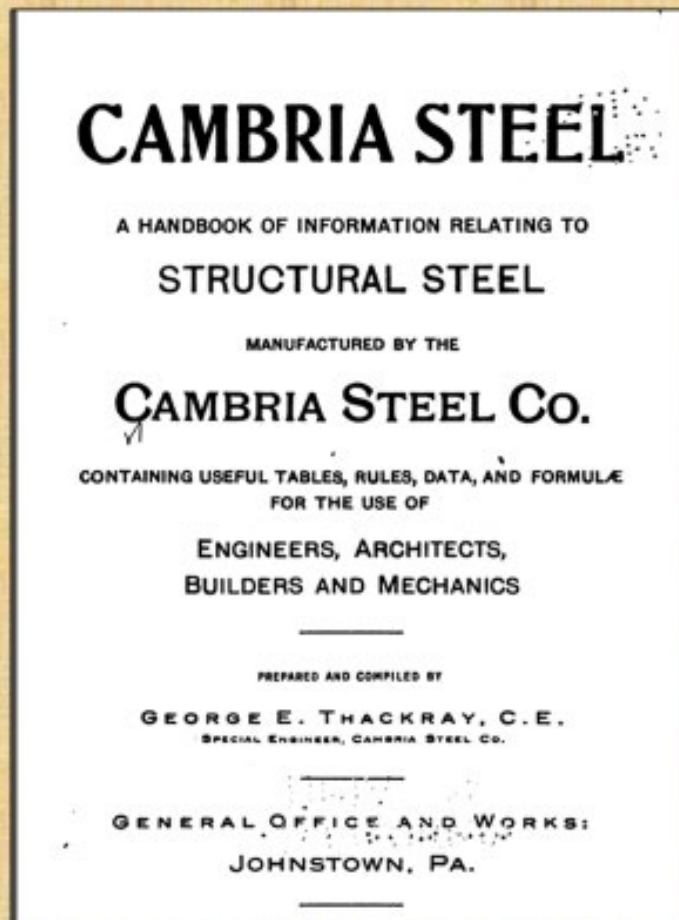
Engineers and Contractors
LAND TITLE BUILDING PHILADELPHIA
PLANS AND WORKS AT CAMDEN, N. J.

The general contractor was Lewis F. Shoemaker out of Pottstown, PA. The bridge's wooden floor – yes, they were made of wood back then – was Armstrong & Latta out of Philadelphia. Open steel grate decks were not invented until the 1930s.



Courtesy of Pennsylvania State Archives

The bridge's various structural steel members came here from western Pennsylvania. The Cambria Iron & Steel Works of Johnstown, Pa., probably ranked as that community's largest employer 15 years after the deadly and catastrophic Johnstown Flood of 1889.



The designer would have consulted a handbook like this one to order the various pieces of steel needed to construct the bridge's trusses.



If you walk on the bridge, you'll see CAMBRIA stamped on the main girders.

a few days ago.
William P. Colligan, clerk at the Union Touse, drove the first rivet on the new bridge between this city and New Hope.
Frank C. Johnson, bridge engineer.

Trenton Evening Times - May 23, 1904

Construction of the six-span steel superstructure began on April 25, 1904. Any element of progress, no matter how trivial, made news because towns folk and businesses were desperate to get their bridge back. This is a clip of a man driving the first rivet for the bridge's construction. But the real excitement was for people to use completed bridge sections in some capacity.

GADDIS JUMPS TO RIVER FROM BRIDGE

Lambertville Man Gains Novel Dis-
tinction in Connection With New
Structure Across Delaware.

Special to the Times.

Lambertville, July 18.—William Gaddis, who runs a ferry boat between this city and New Hope, determined he would not be outdone by the fellows who drove the first and last spikes in the new Delaware bridge, or the last person to cross the old bridge or the first over the new, walked out on the bridge Friday evening, climbed to the top of one of the iron posts and, holding an American flag in his hand, jumped into the water below, a distance of about forty-five feet.

Trenton Evening Times - July 18, 1904

William Gaddis, who ran the temporary ferry between the two communities, got his 15 minutes of fame by holding an American flag and jumping off the bridge. He lived.

Miss Nellie Trauger was the first person to cross the new Delaware bridge on a bicycle.

Trenton Evening Times - July 25, 1904

Nellie Trauger was chronicled as the first to ride a bicycle across the new bridge.

A. B. HOLCOMBE'S RIG FIRST ACROSS LAMBERTVILLE BRIDGE

Special to the Times.

Lambertville, July 21.—At an early hour yesterday morning Alfred B. Holcombe's horse and wagon, used for hauling coal, crossed the new Delaware bridge between this city and New Hope, the first vehicle to cross. James Naylor was the driver and Mr. Holcombe and two or three friends rode in the wagon. The bridge was open for traffic this morning.

Trenton Evening Times
July 22, 1904

The first vehicle – Alfred B. Holcombe's horse and wagon – crossed the new steel bridge on July 21, 1904. Holcombe's horse and wagon was the last rig to cross the old wooden bridge before its demise. The current steel bridge opened to traffic the next day - July 22.

THE NEW HOPE DELAWARE BRIDGE CO.	
SCHEDULE OF TOLLS IN EFFECT FROM OPENING OF BRIDGE, JULY 23, 1904.	
1-Horse and Wagon one way.	.12
2-Horse " " " "	.24
3- " " " " " "	.35
4- " " " " " "	.40
1-Seated Automobile (carrying capacity 2)	.18
2- " " " " " " (" " " 4)	.25
3- " " " " " " (" " " 6)	.40
Larger Automobiles.	.50
1-Horse and rider one way.	.08
Each extra horse (led).	.07
CATTLE each, on foot.	.05
SWINE each, " "	.02
SHEEP each, " "	.01
Foot toll one way.	.02
CHILDREN 5 years and over full toll.	
Each person and bicycle.	.02
Push cart and person.	.07
Wheelbarrow and person.	.04
Steam Road Roller.	.50
Steam Thresher.	.50
COMPUTERS: -50 trips one way good for one month from date of issue, not transferable.	.75
COMPUTATION for horses and wagons:-	
1-50 trip card to be used within 3 months, not transferable.	\$5.50
1-100 trip card to be used within 3 months, not transferable.	\$10.00
FUNERALS going and coming free when in the procession.	
SOCIETIES, ASSOCIATIONS and PARADES, while in a body 1-2 rate.	
Full schedule tolls to be collected every day in the year from all persons going on or over the bridge.	
July 23, 1904 NEW HOPE DELAWARE BRIDGE CO.	

Toll collections resumed July 23. This is the toll schedule at the time the new bridge opened. It included tolls for motorized vehicles, although the "newfangled contraptions" were owned almost exclusively by a wealthy few. Note the charge for large automobiles in this 1904 toll schedule – 50 cents. Each way! The bridge company increased tolls again in the nineteen teens. There was no pomp or ceremonies when the new bridge went into service. Lambertville and New Hope had been without a bridge for 285 days. The priority was to get the structure up and running. Speeches and partying would have to wait.

LAMBERTVILLE HAS PROUDEST DAY IN ITS WHOLE HISTORY.

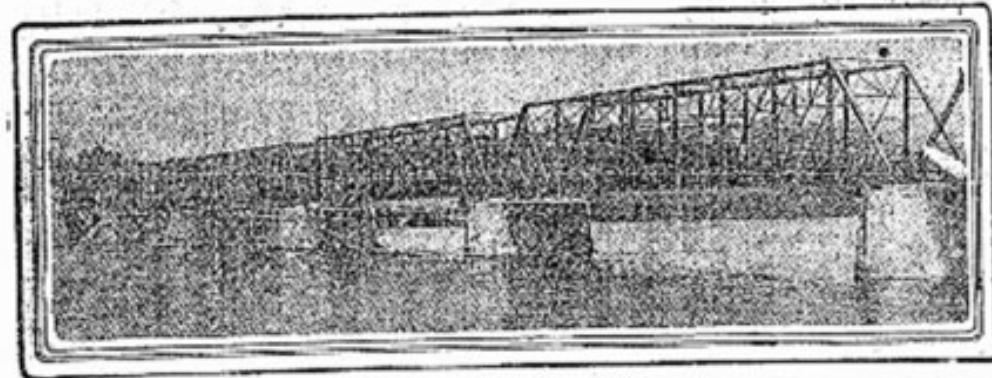
Business Carnival and Celebration of
New Bridge Opening Make
a Gale Occasion.

THOUSANDS OF VISITORS THERE

Immense Parade Was Feature of the
Day—Francis B. Lee and Colonel E.
C. Stahl of Trenton Among the
Speakers—Ball Games, Picnics and
Other Festivities.

Lambertville's great carnival, held
yesterday, was a huge success and
fully accomplished its two-fold ob-
ject—the presentation to the people of
the city's varied industries and com-
mercial activity as well as celebra-
tion of the recent opening of the new

LAMBERTVILLE'S BIG INDUSTRIAL CARNIVAL WAS SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT YESTERDAY



NEW BRIDGE AT LAMBERTVILLE

Trenton Evening Times, Sept. 6, 1904

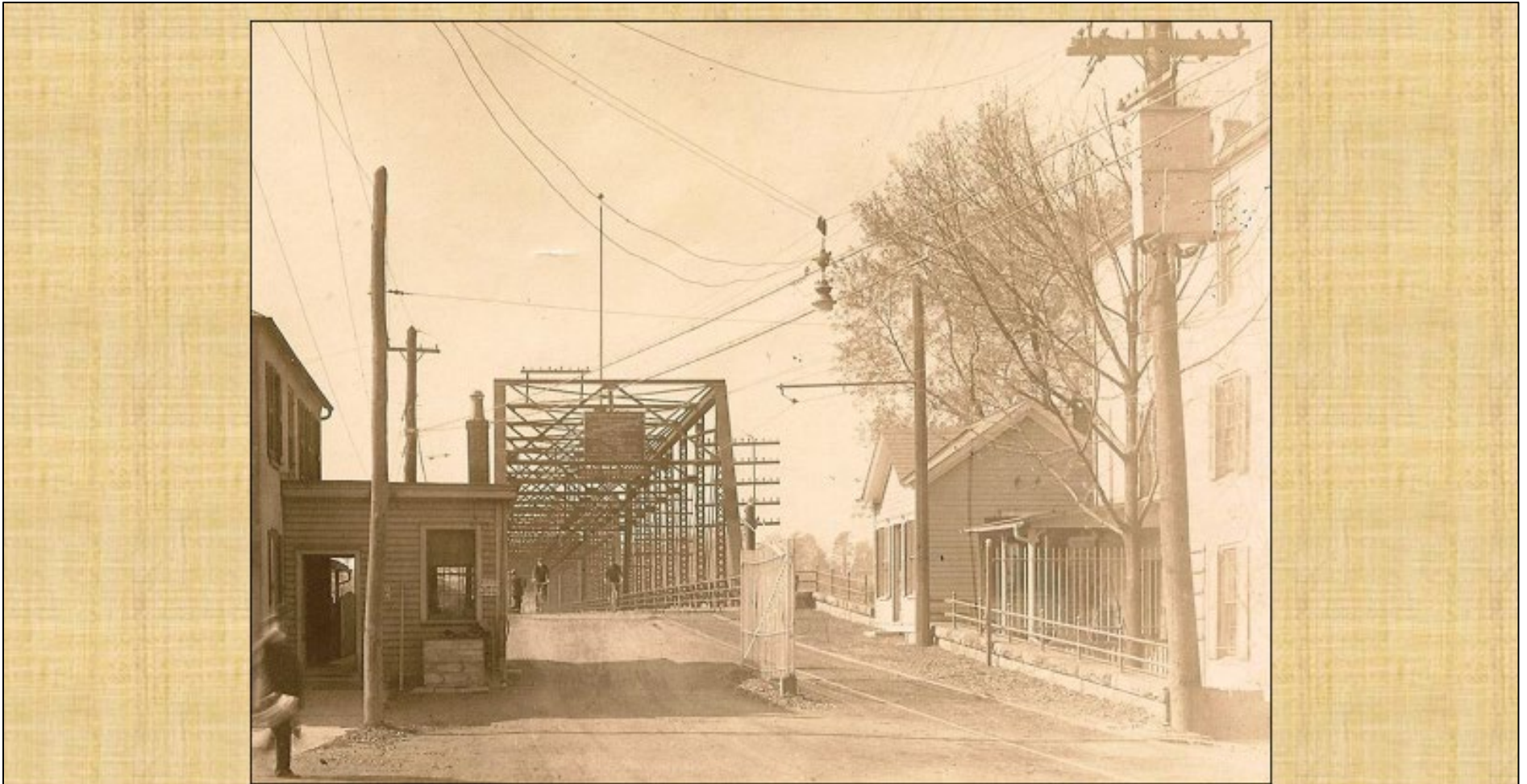
When the celebration occurred, it ended up being an all-day affair on Labor Day weekend. A big parade. A big picnic. Other communities up and down the river sent entire fire companies – one from as far away as Burlington County – to take part in the grand event.



Lambertville-New Hope Bridge.
General view from N.J. side.

DRJTBC archival photo

The steel New Hope-Lambertville Bridge consists of six steel Pratt-truss spans. Each span measures 171-feet, 1/8-of-an-inch long. It is the only vehicular bridge in the Commission system with identical span lengths. Measured from the center of its end bearings, the bridge's total length is 1,045 feet, 6-1/2 inches. The width – not including the 8-foot-wide sidewalk – is 23 feet. The roadway width between guiderails is 20 feet, 5 inches. The bridge has 962 tons of steel. The steel bridge turned 118 years old in 2022.



DRJTBC archival photo

When the new bridge opened, it was privately owned. Even bicyclists and pedestrians paid tolls. The old bridge gates can be seen in the foreground of this photograph. Also take note of the utility wires going across the bridge -- electricity, telephone and telegraph. The sign atop the portal is now used as a firestop behind the wood-burning stove inside the Swan Bar on Main Street, Lambertville. It's worth checking out.



Joe Donnelly photograph

To build the new bridge, the bridge company had to raise the approaches at New Hope and Lambertville. This is the New Jersey abutment today. The two lines of conduit here frame where larger 1904 stones were mortared into place above the original 1814 stones which were narrower and more numerous. This change at the abutments and the installation of bearings on the repaired river piers raised the bridge by about three feet, effectively allowing it to survive the higher river flood of 1955.



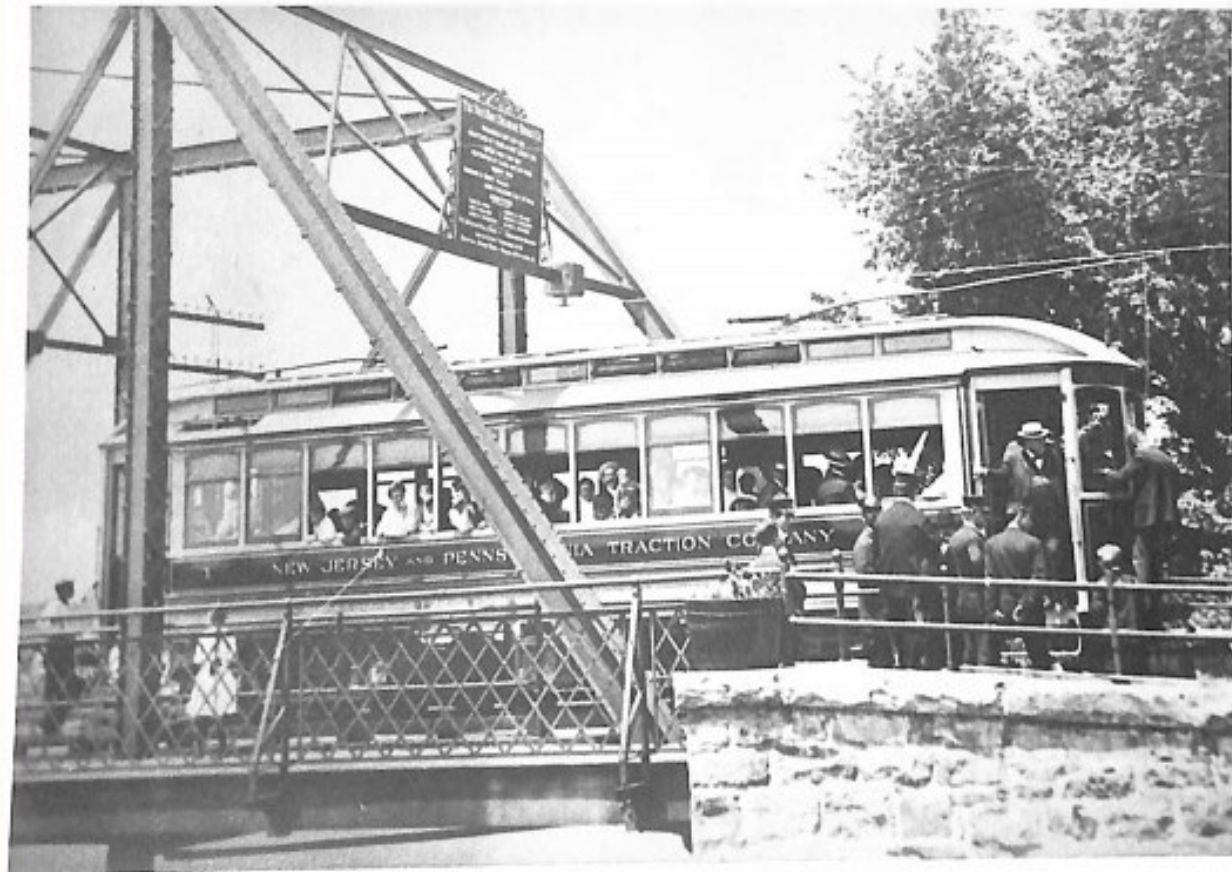
Collection of Jeff McVey
Thank you, Jeff.

A consideration in the bridge's design was the inclusion of heavier steel supports for a proposed trolley route. Here's the story on the short-lived trolley service:

T. Sidney Cadwallader, a Yardley attorney, led efforts to establish a trolley from Lambertville to Yardley. On December 7, 1903, the Trenton, New Hope, Lambertville Street Railway Co. was incorporated. Cadwallader was president. The trolley line was immediately leased to the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Traction Co. Construction north from that company's already-existing terminus in Yardley began in the summer of 1904. Construction was suspended during the winter and resumed in spring 1905.



Track eventually was installed across the bridge's upstream floor between New Hope and Lambertville.



This is a photo of a special June 14, 1905 church excursion from Trenton that was the first trolley trip across the bridge. The trolley's northern terminus initially was at the bridge's Lambertville portal, as seen in this photo. Daily scheduled service began the following day – June 15, 1905.



Collection of Jeff McVey
Thank you, Jeff.

In July 1905, the trolley track was extended on Bridge Street to a point across from the Pennsylvania Railroad station. The railroad prevented the trolley company from crossing the railroad tracks farther east into Lambertville. The trolley service lasted just shy of 20 years. Aside from the \$10,000 that was provided for reinforcing the bridge deck in 1904, the trolley owners were horrendous in making contractual payments for use of the bridge. After various ownership and name changes over the years, declining ridership caused the line to cease service on September 21, 1924.

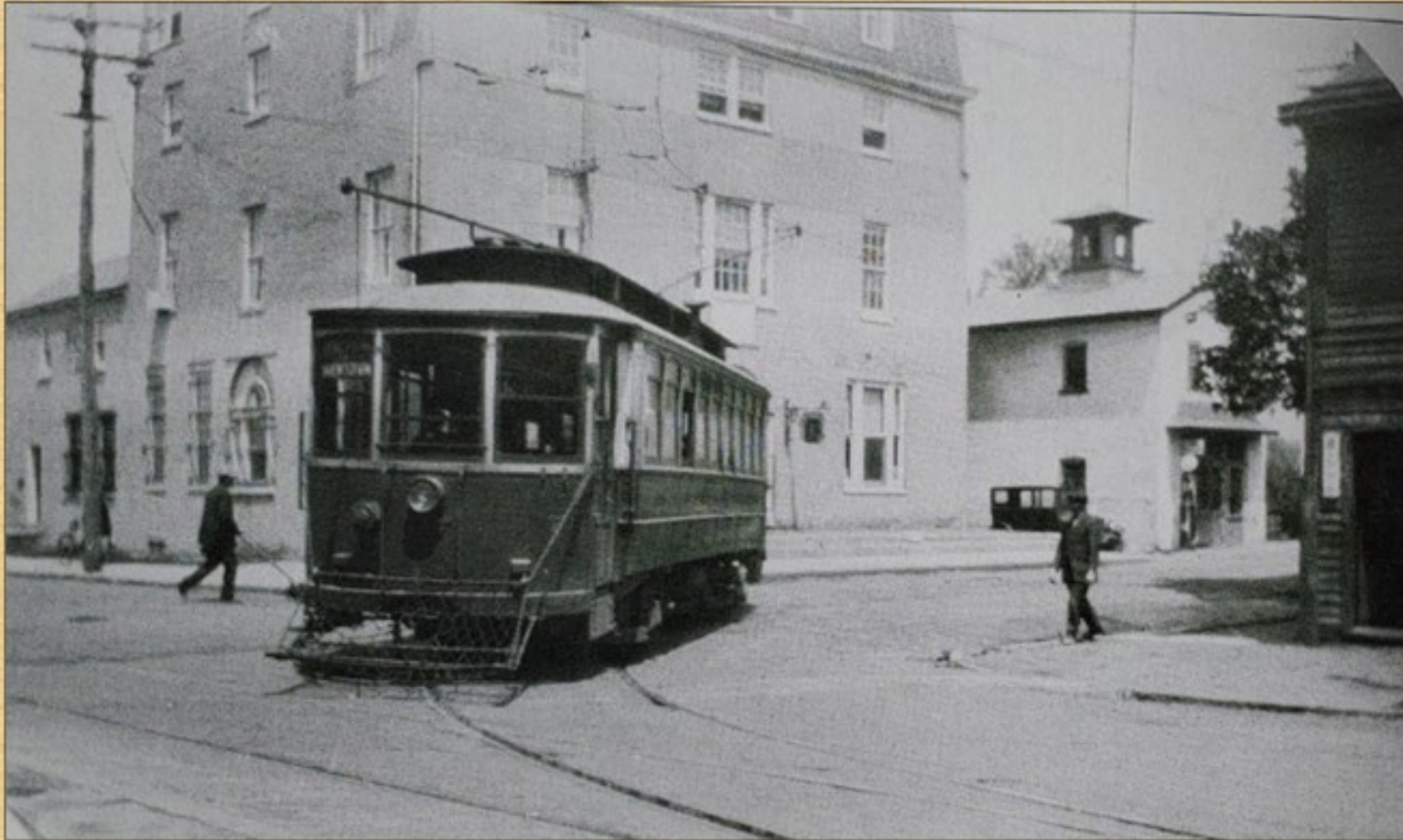


Photo courtesy of Mike Ciper

So, where exactly did the trolley go? Well, literally and figuratively, it went south. This is an image of the trolley turning in front of a porch-less Delaware House at the corner of West Bridge and South Main Streets in New Hope. If you look closely at the former firehouse to the right, you'll see a gasoline pump. After New Hope's Eagle Fire Company vacated the building for new quarters, the bridge company rented the building out for use as a service station.



Trolleys of Bucks County Pennsylvania
Harry Foesig, Barker Gummere & Harold E. Cox

The trolley route alternated between roadways and leased rights-of-way between New Hope and Yardley. It then continued south to Trenton via the Calhoun Street Bridge, which was owned by the trolley interests at that time. This is a picture of the trolley line running along River Road south of New Hope. The remnants of the trolley line's route can still be seen at various locations between Yardley and New Hope. If you look up to your right while driving south on River Road/Route 32, you can see the utility poles and flattened surface in this trolley line image. Farther south, there are old bridge abutments across Pidcock Creek behind the Thomson-Neely House and Farmstead. South of Bowman's Tavern, you'll see utility poles positioned 10 feet away from the road surface. That space between the poles and pavement is where the trolley ran.



Joe Donnelly photograph

Below Brownsburg there is this curious building along Route 32. It once was a power substation for the old trolley line. The structure has been repurposed as a residence. The structure and grounds usually look nicer than this. This picture was taken shortly after a weathered fence was struck by a vehicle or knocked over by wind.



Collection of Robert Chase Palmer
Author of Postcards of Bucks County, PA - 2020

Rising automobile ownership hastened the trolley line's demise. The increasing number of motor vehicles also posed new challenges for the private bridge company.



New Jersey State Archives

Does anyone know who this is? His name is often in the news in New Jersey. This is Governor Murphy – the first New Jersey governor named Murphy -- Franklin Murphy. After the 1903 flood, he embraced a lawmaker's suggestion to buy all the private toll bridges along the river. Only problem is Murphy didn't have a plan, any money to do it, or interest from the Pennsylvania side. Over time, though, a real grassroots free bridges movement gained momentum along the Delaware River.



Three factors helped to fuel the free bridges movement: the nation's Good Roads movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mass production of automobiles affordable to the middle class, and the reform-minded Progressive Era of American Politics.

ADVOCATES OF GOOD ROADS AND FREE BRIDGES TO MEET

NEW HOPE, Dec. 13.—A meeting of the Solebury Good Roads Association will be held in Kooker's Hall this evening. Delegates from the Buckingham Good Roads Association are expected, and plans for the 1916 campaign will probably be offered. Free roads, good roads and free bridges is the aim of the association now.

Trenton Evening Times – December 13, 1915

Grassroots meetings – such as the one mentioned in this 1915 news item – were a key aspect of the free bridge movement's eventual success. In 1916, legislation and funding were approved by the two states to create a panel charged with the mission of enabling the states to purchase the network of unaffiliated private toll bridges. The new agency was called the Joint Commission for Elimination of Toll Bridges – Pennsylvania-New Jersey. This bi-state body lasted less than 20 years, but it helped New Jersey and Pennsylvania purchase all but one of the private toll bridges that once crossed the river between the two states. The first bridge to be purchased was in 1918 at Trenton. The second was at Point Pleasant in 1919. The third was here at Lambertville and New Hope near the beginning of 1920.



Four Lambertville residents played roles in the free bridges movement and the drive to have the two states buy the bridge between New Hope and Lambertville. Top left is Assemblyman Oliver C. Holcombe, a local music instruments merchant who authored legislative measures aimed at freeing the bridges. Bottom center is Frank Barkley, who served as secretary to a temporary New Jersey commission that assessed the value of the private bridges and the costs to free them. Top center is Phineas K. Hazen, longtime editor/publisher of the Lambertville Beacon newspaper and a charter Joint Commission member. Bottom right is Walter Hayhurst, a prominent Lambertville attorney who took Hazen's Joint Commission seat after his death in 1917.



Joe Donnelly photograph

This was Mr. Hayhurst's address. I suspect he resided on the right and had his law office at the door on the left.

WATCHMAN DIES OF AUTO INJURIES

William Masten Succumbs After
Being Run Down at
New Hope Bridge

LAMBERTVILLE, Aug. 30.—William Masten, caretaker of the New Hope-Lambertville bridge across the Delaware River, died last night in St. Francis Hospital, Trenton, from effects of injuries received when struck by an automobile Saturday night. He suffered a broken hip and internal injuries.

Mr. Masten was on the bridge directing traffic at the close of the Chautauqua in New Hope, and had just warned an autoist that he was exceeding the speed limit, when he is said to have stepped directly into the path of a machine coming in the opposite direction. It is said Mr. Masten did not see the car because of the bright headlights of several cars on the roadway.

Trenton Evening Times - August 30, 1921

The dangers of rising automobile traffic became painfully apparent to the bridge's new operators the following year. On the night of August 28, 1921, a former toll collector turned bridge guard named William Masten was directing traffic at the bridge after the close of a Chautauqua assembly in New Hope when he was struck by a passing vehicle. Masten suffered a broken hip and internal injuries. He died at a Trenton Hospital two days later. He's the only person known to have died in the line of duty at the bridge. He is buried at Mt. Hope Cemetery in Lambertville.

**N O T I C E
NEW HOPE DELAWARE BRIDGE
COMPANY**

A special meeting of the stockholders of the above company will be held at the office of the company, 1 Bridge street, Lambertville, N. J., at 2 P. M. on the 6th day of February A. D. 1926, to take action upon the following resolution adopted by the directors:

"Resolved, That in the judgment of this board it is advisable and most for the benefit of the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company that the same should be forthwith dissolved."

**William J. Cooley,
Secretary.**

Dec.24,31-Jan.7,14,21,28-Feb.4)

Lambertville Record - February 2, 1926

As for the New Hope Delaware Bridge Company, it still maintained an office and phone for several years. On February 6, 1926, its remaining stockholders met and dissolved the company. This is one of the legal advertisements that company placed in local papers to inform its stockholders.



The bridge and its approaches have seen many changes over the years. Buildings have been modified, replaced, and removed.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

Utilities have come and gone. Pavements have been laid and marked many times. But of all the different changes that have occurred, the most significant one has been traffic. More cars. More trucks. Higher speeds.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

The bridge also has seen its share of modifications and improvements over the years. This a 1924 picture of steel plating that was installed to extend the life of the wooden deck. The bridge was outfitted with its first steel-grate floor in 1948.



DRJTBC

The two states annually provided joint subsidies to the former Joint Commission for Elimination of Toll Bridges so it could police and maintain the bridge between New Hope and Lambertville. This arrangement last almost 35 years. In late 1934, the arrangement was changed slightly. Faced with growing traffic concerns and a need for larger highway-speed bridges -- especially upriver between Easton, PA. and Phillipsburg, N.J. -- the two states disbanded the old Joint Commission in December 1934 and immediately replaced it with a newly constituted Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission. The states empowered the updated Bridge Commission to float bonds to build new and larger highway bridges that could then be tolled to pay back bond holders and to cover the construction and operating costs of the new spans. The new Bridge Commission also was assigned the former Joint Commission's duty of maintaining and operating the old former private bridges with the states providing annual equal annual tax subsidies to cover the costs. Congressional ratification of this new arrangement occurred in August 1935.

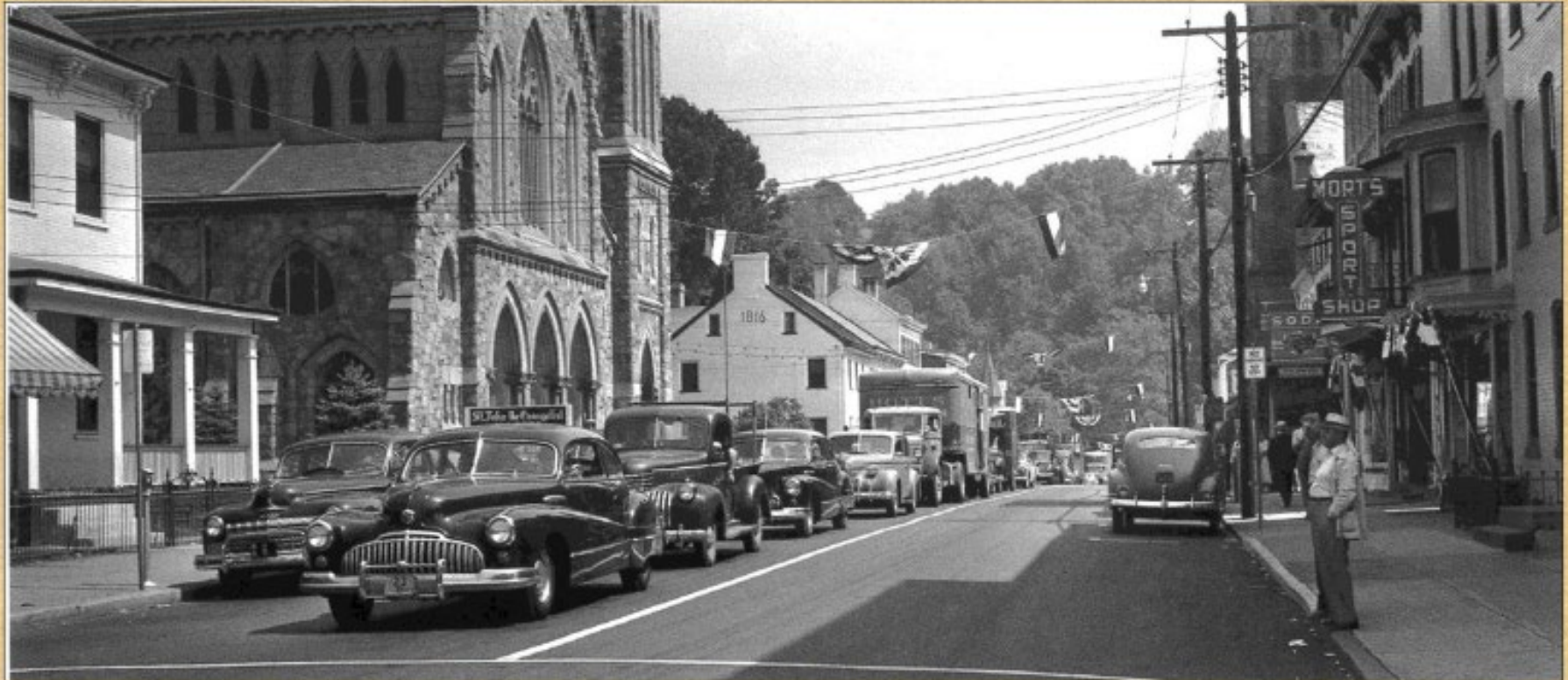


Photo by George Bailey

The new Bridge Commission's first toll bridges were at Easton in 1938 and Trenton in 1952. These were followed by new tolled crossings to provide easier access to the Pocono Mountain resorts region in late 1953. Rising traffic volumes at New Hope and Lambertville are evident in this photograph of Lambertville traffic heading toward the bridge in the early 1950s.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

Not many people know this, but the bridge here carried U.S. Route 202 traffic for decades. This photo shows the signage that was once posted here. Initial discussions in the 1950s about doing something about the situation had to be put on hold for a more pressing issue.

FINAL EDITION
PART ONE
GENERAL NEWS AND
EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

Trenton Sunday Times-Advertiser

WEATHER
A 24-HOUR FORECAST
Trenton: High 74, Low 54
Atlantic City: High 76, Low 56

1955 TREAS. No. 34 PUBLISHED WEEKLY TRENTON, N. J., SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 1955 10 CENTS

Receding River Bares Millions In Damage

All Free Bridges Closed—Yardley Span Cut In Two Worst Flood Of All Time Deals Delaware Valley Staggering Blow

Repair Work Will Take Months

The damage done by the flood in the Delaware Valley is being revealed as the water recedes. The Trenton bridge, which was closed for several days, is now open. The bridge was damaged by the flood, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first. The bridge is now open, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first. The bridge is now open, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first.

Angry Delaware Rips Yardley Bridge In Half



The flood in the Delaware Valley is being revealed as the water recedes. The Trenton bridge, which was closed for several days, is now open. The bridge was damaged by the flood, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first. The bridge is now open, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first. The bridge is now open, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first.

Plans Made For Return To Island

The flood in the Delaware Valley is being revealed as the water recedes. The Trenton bridge, which was closed for several days, is now open. The bridge was damaged by the flood, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first. The bridge is now open, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first. The bridge is now open, but the damage is not as serious as it was at first.

Staff photographer Vernon E. Koss got this striking photo of flood damage in the Yardley-Wilkes area from a Civil Defense photo picked by Joseph (Bud) Moran. The picture was taken only minutes after a house floating down the river crashed into the Yardley bridge and was only feet from the span. The building partially submerged in the treacherous rapids on the shore stood on the lower side.

On August 19 and 20, 1955, the highest and most devastating flood in recorded history hit the region. Back-to-back hurricanes deluged the Delaware River watershed. Older low-lying bridges along the river were inundated. Four bridges were destroyed and others like New Hope-Lambertville sustained damage knocking them out of service for weeks, even months.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

Here's an aerial of what it looked like here a day after the rains stopped. The rush of water and buildup of debris against the New Hope-Lambertville Bridge eventually distorted the alignment and positioning of the structure's trusses. Several panels in the bottom cord of the second span on the Pennsylvania side were so severely damaged that they required emergency replacement.



Photographs of George Bailey

The bridge was knocked out of service for over a month, the longest uninterrupted closure since its construction in 1904. This is a photograph of Dr. Flood of New Hope crossing the bridge shortly after the flood.



After the flood, there were discussions about replacing the bridge. In the minds of post-war decision makers, the dowdy truss bridge was a relic that struggled to handle rising peak traffic demands. Over time, tougher weight limits were implemented on the turn-of-the-century bridge. The gross vehicle weight restriction today is now down to 4 tons. This is a photo of weight restrictions before completion of a highway toll bridge a mile upstream in 1971.

Commission Has No Plan To Move New Hope Span

The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission has no plans to relocate its Lambertville-New Hope bridge, acting executive director William R. Johnson said today.

Johnson called complaints by the Delaware Valley Protective Association and the Bucks County Commissioners "much ado about nothing."

The county commissioners

urged that the present bridge, built in 1903 and damaged in the 1955 flood, be improved and kept in operation even though a new span is built at another location.

Johnson said there are no definite plans at present to replace the bridge.

"We may start field engineering surveys this summer on the possibility of replacing the bridge," Johnson said. "But no

January 21, 1962

New Bridge Discussion Tomorrow

NEW HOPE — Lambertville and New Hope mayors will discuss Delaware River Bridge plans tomorrow night at 8:30 at the Lambertville House. The announcement was made at the Lambertville City Commission Meeting last night.

Lambertville Mayor Harry Shepherd said, "our main concern is preservation of the present bridge crossing."

September 5, 1962

Engineers Survey Lambertville Span

NEW HOPE — Consulting engineers for the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission are beginning a complete study of the need, design and location of a new bridge near Lambertville and New Hope.

A commission resolution, sponsored by New Jersey Commissioner Chester L. Ertico of Lambertville, and seconded by Pennsylvania Commissioner Morris Gerhart of Norristown, directed Michael Baker Jr. Inc., engineering firm of Rochester, Pa., to make a thorough survey.

The route now crosses the old bridge and if a new one ever were built the present road would be considered an "alternate."

From Lambertville 302 runs to Flemington and Somerville where it turns north into Morris County. In Pennsylvania, it runs to Doylestown and Norristown.

Highway departments of both states have conferred with the bridge commission on the improvement, but how soon the new route and the bridge would be put under construction is still undecided.

December 12, 1962

New Hope Toll Bridge Supported

LAMBERTVILLE — Construction of a toll bridge, rather than a free span, over the Delaware River north of Lambertville and New Hope has substantial support among officials and planners in Bucks and Hunterdon Counties. The new bridge is estimated to cost \$74 million.

More than 100 members of the boards of freeholders, Lambertville and New Hope officials, those of Solebury and West Amwell Townships and planning

September 20, 1963

Trenton Evening Times

The Bridge Commission had begun weighing options to address traffic at the New Hope-Lambertville location in the 1950s. Among the considerations were replacing the 1904 steel truss bridge with a wider modern structure or building a new high-volume toll bridge upstream. The issue gained a renewed focus in the early 1960s with hearings, studies, and meetings. Early on, a decision was reached to keep the current bridge and add a four-line toll bridge upstream that would move Route 202 traffic out of the two riverfront communities' business districts.



PROPOSED NEW HOPE-LAMBERTVILLE BRIDGE

DELAWARE RIVER JOINT TOLL BRIDGE COMMISSION

MICHAEL BAKER, JR., INC.
CONSULTING ENGINEERS
ROCHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA

Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

This is a draft rendering of the envisioned toll bridge. This rendering is close to how the bridge ended up being designed and constructed. While the new structure was named the New Hope-Lambertville Toll Bridge, it is in neither New Hope nor Lambertville. It actually spans the river between Solebury Township, PA. and Delaware Township, N.J.



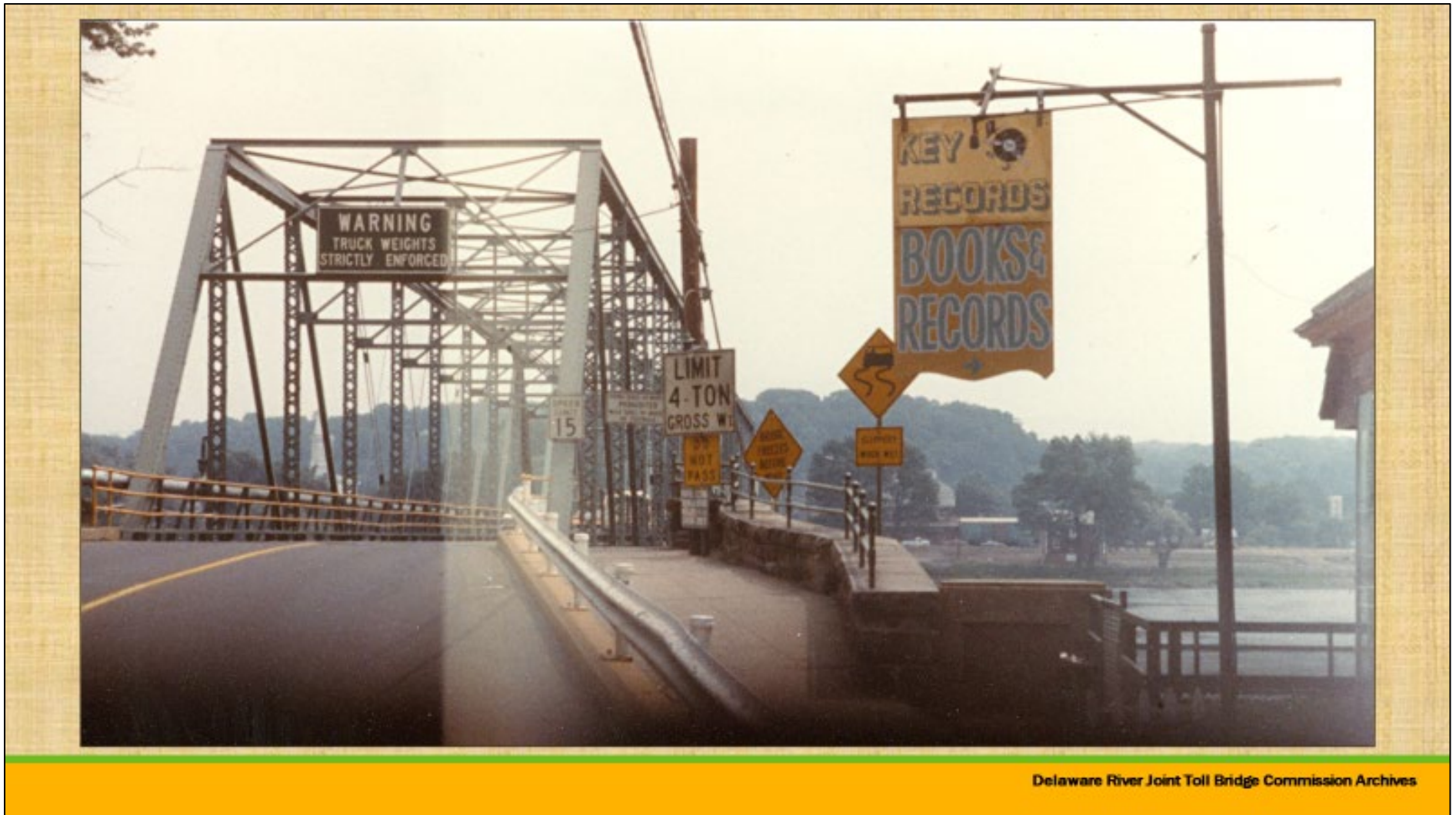
Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

Groundbreaking for the new bridge occurred October 7, 1968. The project culminated with the dedication of the Commission's sixth toll bridge on July 22, 1971. Note the woman near the bottom left corner of this photo. She's wearing hair curlers, not exactly a rare sight in the 60s and early 70s.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

Here's the new bridge and toll plaza four days after the dedication ceremony. There is no traffic. This often was the case at the bridge during its first couple of years. It only carried 568 vehicles a day – in both directions – during the remainder of 1971. Most of the traffic was heavy trucks, which did bring some relief to the main streets in New Hope and Lambertville. Toll bridge traffic rose significantly, though, after a new limited-access, four-lane Route 202 approach was completed from Ringoes to the bridge in October 1974. Pennsylvania improved its Route 202 access to the bridge in 1995. This finally moved Route 202 through traffic away from the two riverfront communities.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

The aging New Hope-Lambertville Bridge saw its first traffic decrease in decades during 1972. After completion of Route 202's relocation, the 1975 traffic volume at the old truss bridge was nearly four percent less than what it had been in 1966. The loss of Route 202 traffic – and heavy trucks – have clearly helped to extend the bridge's service life. Note the weight limit sign at the center of this photo – 4 tons.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives
Joe Donnelly photograph

That 4-ton limit is still in effect today. The bridge commission has battled overweight and oversized vehicles at the crossing ever since the advent of public ownership in 1920. Last year (2021), bridge monitors recorded 1,141 turnarounds of oversized/overweight vehicles. This protected the structure and further extended its service life.



While the Bridge Commission cared for the bridge with subsidies from New Jersey and Pennsylvania since 1934, ownership always rested with the two states. That ownership and funding arrangement changed in July 1987, when the states conveyed ownership of the aging formerly private bridges along the river outright to the Bridge Commission. The Commission was further directed to henceforth use a portion of its toll bridge proceeds to maintain and operate the aging system of low-lying non-highway bridges it was just assigned. The change was the result of changes the states and the U.S Congress made to the Commission's federal compact between 1984 and 1987. State tax subsidies for maintaining and operating the bridge ended and toll subsidization was initiated in its place. That's why the Commission's official name for the bridge is the New Hope-Lambertville Toll-Supported Bridge.



Joe Donnelly photograph

The bridge has some interesting features. One unique utility that separates this bridge from all the other ones along the river is a 10-inch-wide pipe that transfers effluent from New Hope and a portion of Solebury to the Lambertville Municipal Utility Authorities sewerage treatment plant. The pipe carries an average of 375,000 gallons of waste a day. That works out to 137 million gallons a year. This is the only bridge along the river with a sewage-utility connection.



Joe Donnelly photograph

Another interesting feature is a state line marking. This was the first Commission bridge walkway to be outfitted with a state line. The idea came from a Lambertville sixth grader, Ian Sanders, who sent a letter to the Commission in late 2013 requesting the state line be marked on the bridge. The Commission fulfilled the request as part of the bridge crossing's 200th anniversary in August 2014.



Photograph by the late, great Bill Brokaw

Here's Ian Sanders unveiling the state line on August 28, 2014.



Joe Donnelly photograph

A day seemingly doesn't pass when someone takes a selfie or group shot at the state line. Many of these photographs can be found on social media sites or Google.



Joe Donnelly photograph

As with the majority of Commission bridges, bicyclists are prohibited from riding across the bridge's traffic lanes or walkway. As the sign above explains, bicycles must be walked across the footwalk. Integration of bicycles with motor vehicles on the bridge's open-grate-steel roadway is inherently dangerous and potentially life-threatening. Meanwhile, the bridge walkway is only eight-feet wide with railings less than 4-1/2-feet high and exposed steel truss components. Federal regulations require such walkways to be no less than 10-feet wide with railings at least 4-1/2 feet high to handle crossings by both bicyclists and pedestrians. The walkway was widened to the eight-foot width in 2004, but the cantilevered pedestrian facility cannot be safely widened any further. This is considered the most heavily used bridge walkway in the Commission system, an estimated 15,000 individuals on a busy weekend day like Shad Fest.



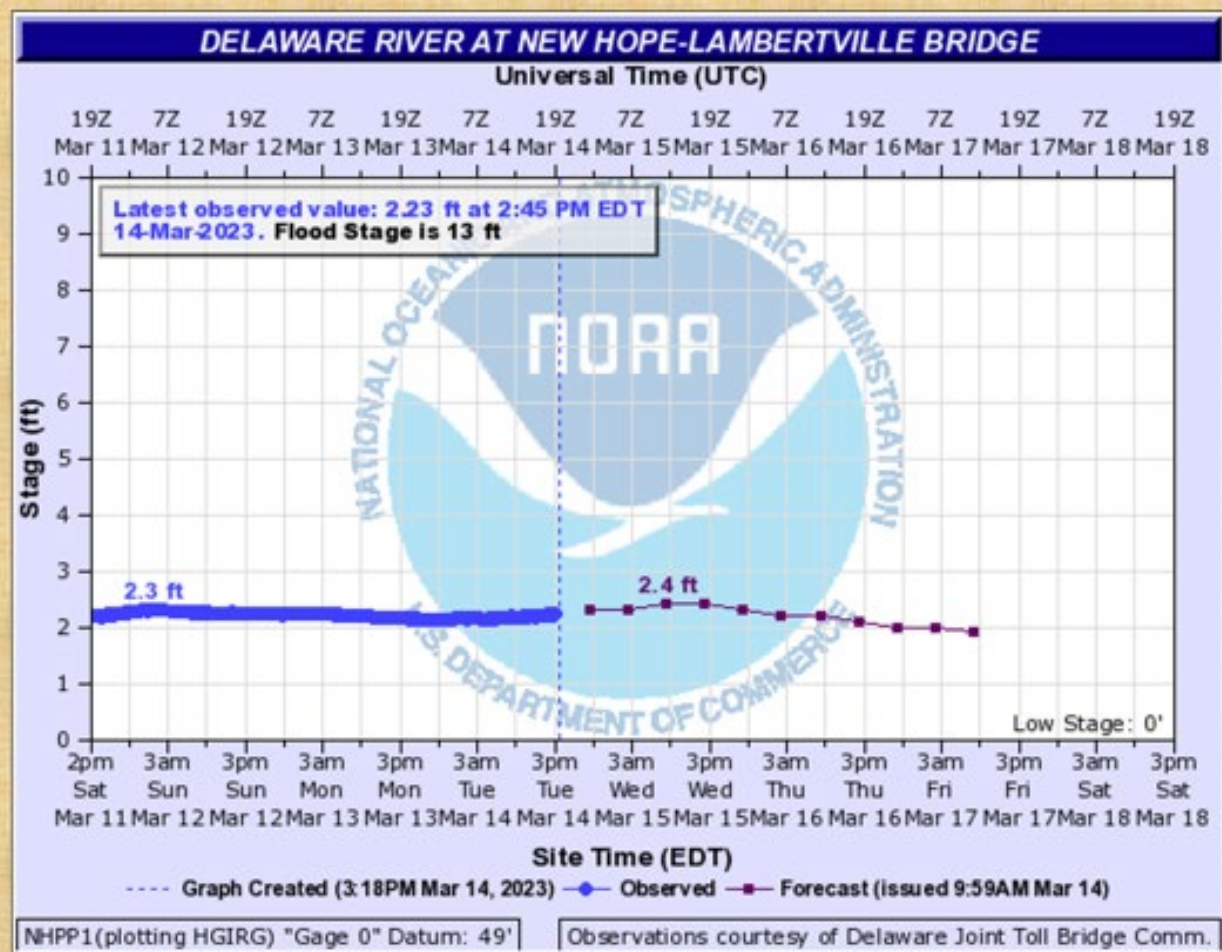
Joe Donnelly photograph

Despite the bridge's relatively low position above the river, its walkway was outfitted with crisis counseling hotline signs in 2013. When temperatures warm sufficiently in 2023, these signs will be replaced with new versions that have a three-digit phone number (9-8-8) that went into effect nationally in July 2022.



Joe Donnelly photograph

This is a picture of a water-level measuring device attached to the bridge's walkway railing. This equipment uses radar to measure the river's height every 15 minutes. The data is then transmitted via satellite to the U.S. Geological Survey which, in turn, sends it to the National Weather Service and other entities. Under a multi-year agreement between the Bridge Commission and the USGS, five Commission bridges are outfitted with these devices.



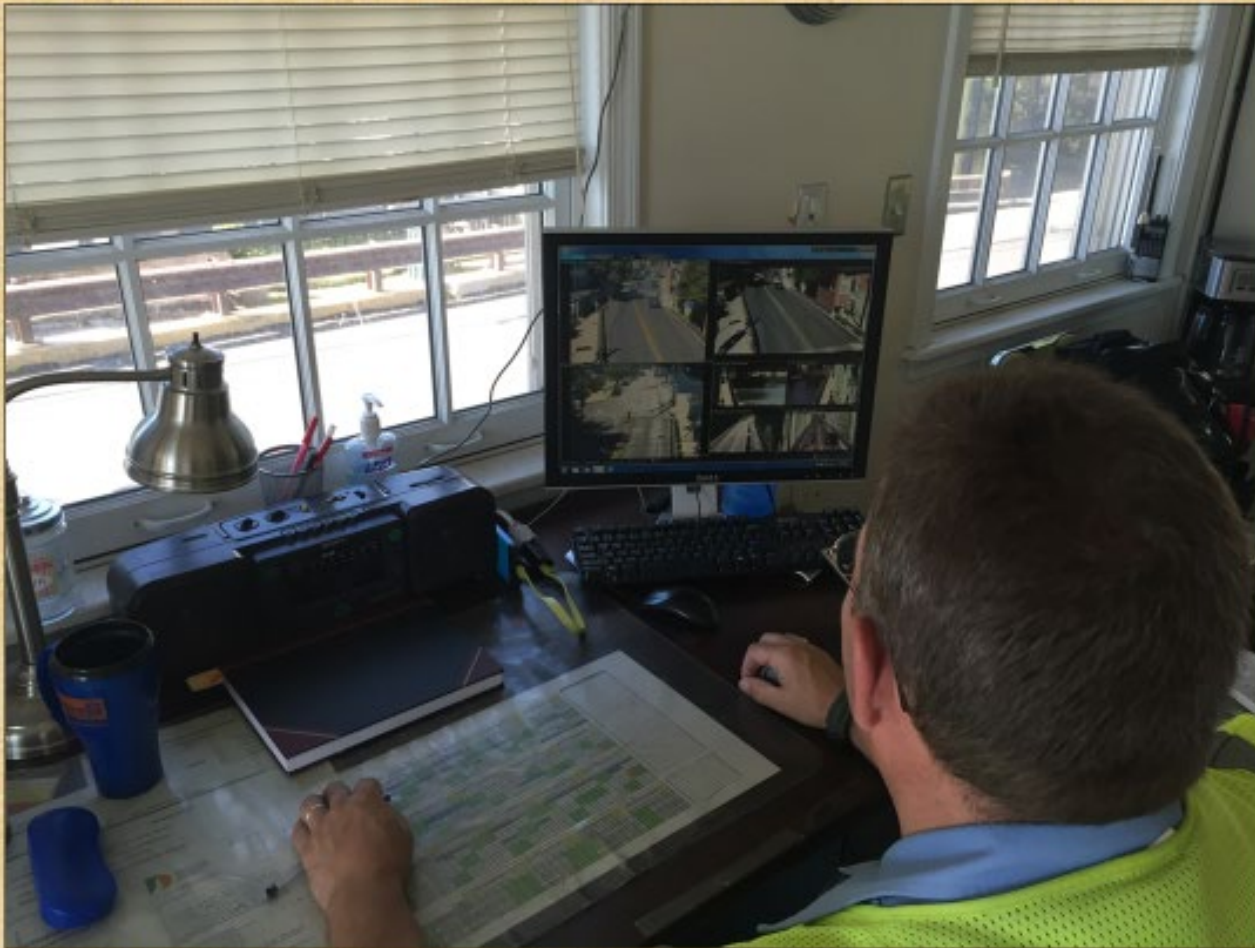
<https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?gage=nhpp1&wfo=phi>

The readings help hydrologists track river conditions and provide early warning of potential floods. The summation of readings may be viewed online any time of the day via the National Weather Service. Just go to Google or some other search engine and type in “New Hope hydrograph” to view current conditions, a projected three-day forecast, and other information. Free!



Joe Donnelly photograph

The bridge also is outfitted with a variety of security cameras. The installation of cameras began after the 9-11 terrorist attacks of 2001. The cameras give Commission security personnel the ability to monitor river conditions, traffic, and incidents that occur at the bridge.



Joe Donnelly photograph

Most importantly, the cameras help bridge monitors prevent oversized vehicles like box trucks and tractor trailers from getting onto the nearly 120-year-old weight-restricted steel superstructure.



Left: Art Gentile, Calkins Media
Right: Courtesy of Bucks County Herald

From time to time, the bridge gets used in some notable ways. There has been a wedding procession with white parasols. And a modified wedding procession due to a surprise fall snowstorm.



Joe Donnelly photograph

On July 20, 2013, 200-plus participants in the annual “Anchor House Ride for Runaways” crossed the bridge walkway to complete a grueling 500-mile bicycle ride from Burlington, Vt. to Trenton, N.J. The increasingly popular annual fundraising ride has raised millions for Anchor House, a halfway house for runaway and abused kids. The rides often – but not always – cross one of the Commission’s bridge walkways.



The late, great Bill Brokaw, photographer

And there have been parades. Many parades. This one was for Winterfest in 2012. Technically, the Commission does not close the bridge for parades. But when the Borough of New Hope and City of Lambertville agree to close the streets leading to the bridge, parade organizers have an opportunity to get Commission permission to march across the bridge.



Photo by the late, great Bill Brokaw

Even Mummers have strutted their stuff across the bridge...



The late, great Bill Brokaw, photographer

...And a very tall individual with a feather in his cap.



One of the biggest processions across the bridge is the Pride Parade from Lambertville to New Hope each May.



Visit Bucks County

Music and color are the hallmarks of this parade that attracts thousands of people.



Joe Donnelly photograph

There have been other unique crossings at the bridge. In recent years, members of the U.S. Military Academy running team have carried a game ball across the bridge as part of a ritual run from West Point, N.Y. to the annual Army-Navy football game in Philadelphia



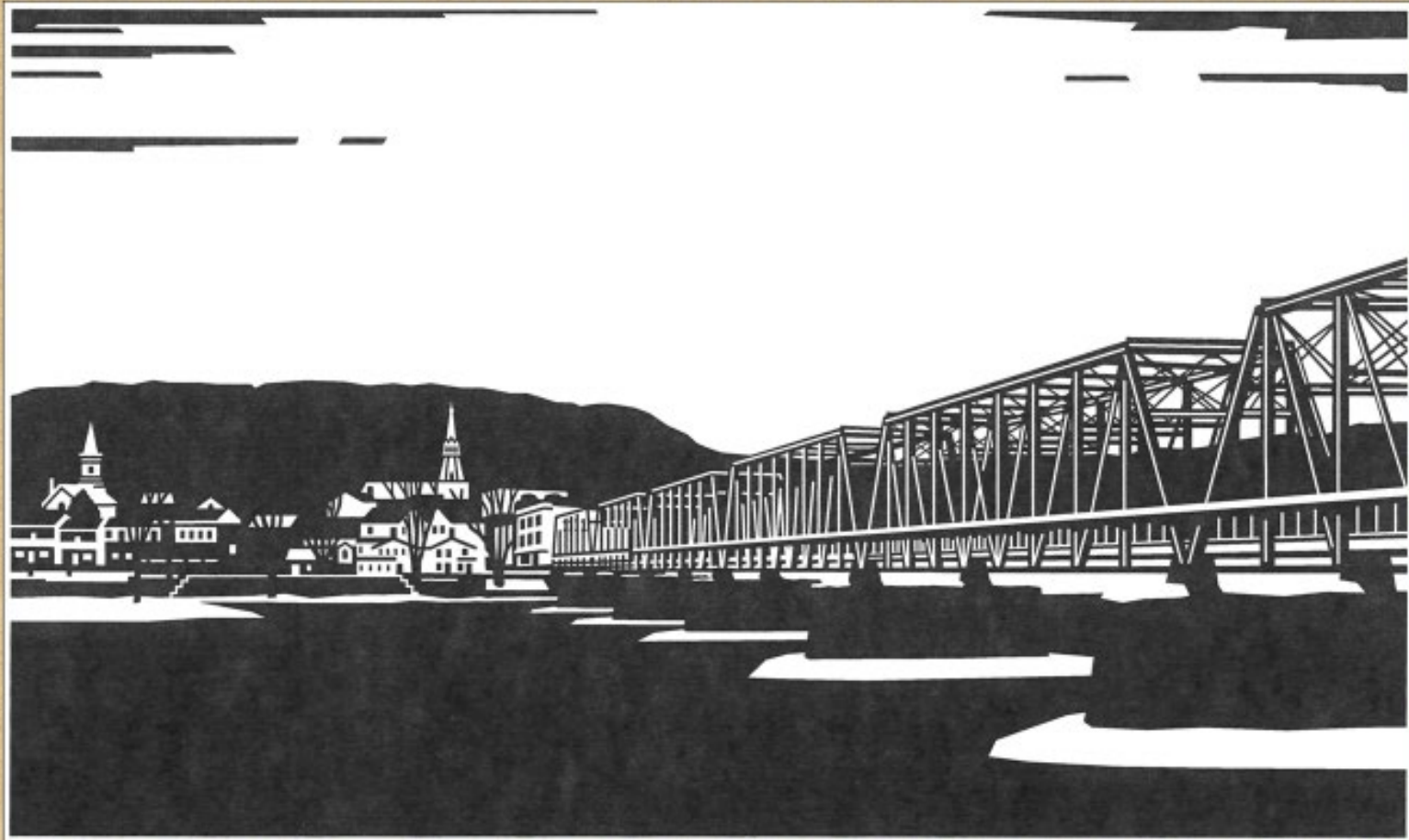
Joe Donnelly photograph

Many other crossings occur without fanfare or notoriety, such as these two gentlemen who walked their bicycles across the bridge as part of a roughly 2,000-mile ride from Bar Harbor, Maine to Key West, Florida in 2014.



Photo courtesy of Rinker Buck, author of *The Oregon Trail*

Perhaps the singularly most peculiar crossing might have been the gentleman in this photograph. He's Thomas Francis Buck, the onetime publisher of *Look* magazine and a New Jersey political activist. A dedicated father, he took four of his children on a horse-drawn wagon trip through western New Jersey and southeastern Pennsylvania in the summer of 1958. This human-drawn-wagon crossing is chronicled in the best-selling 2015 travel memoir, *The Oregon Trail*, written by Buck's son, Rinker Buck. As is the case with bridges that have open steel-grate roadways, the elder Buck's horses recoiled in fear when they came upon the New Hope-Lambertville Bridge in 1958. The father's solution was to dismount the horses and have his oldest sons lead them across the bridge's narrow wooden-plank walkway, which prevented the animals from seeing river waters below their feet. The father then pulled the wagon across the bridge. The kicker is that the elder Buck managed the feat with a wooden left leg. He was an amputee, having lost his leg in a 1946 aeronautical accident.



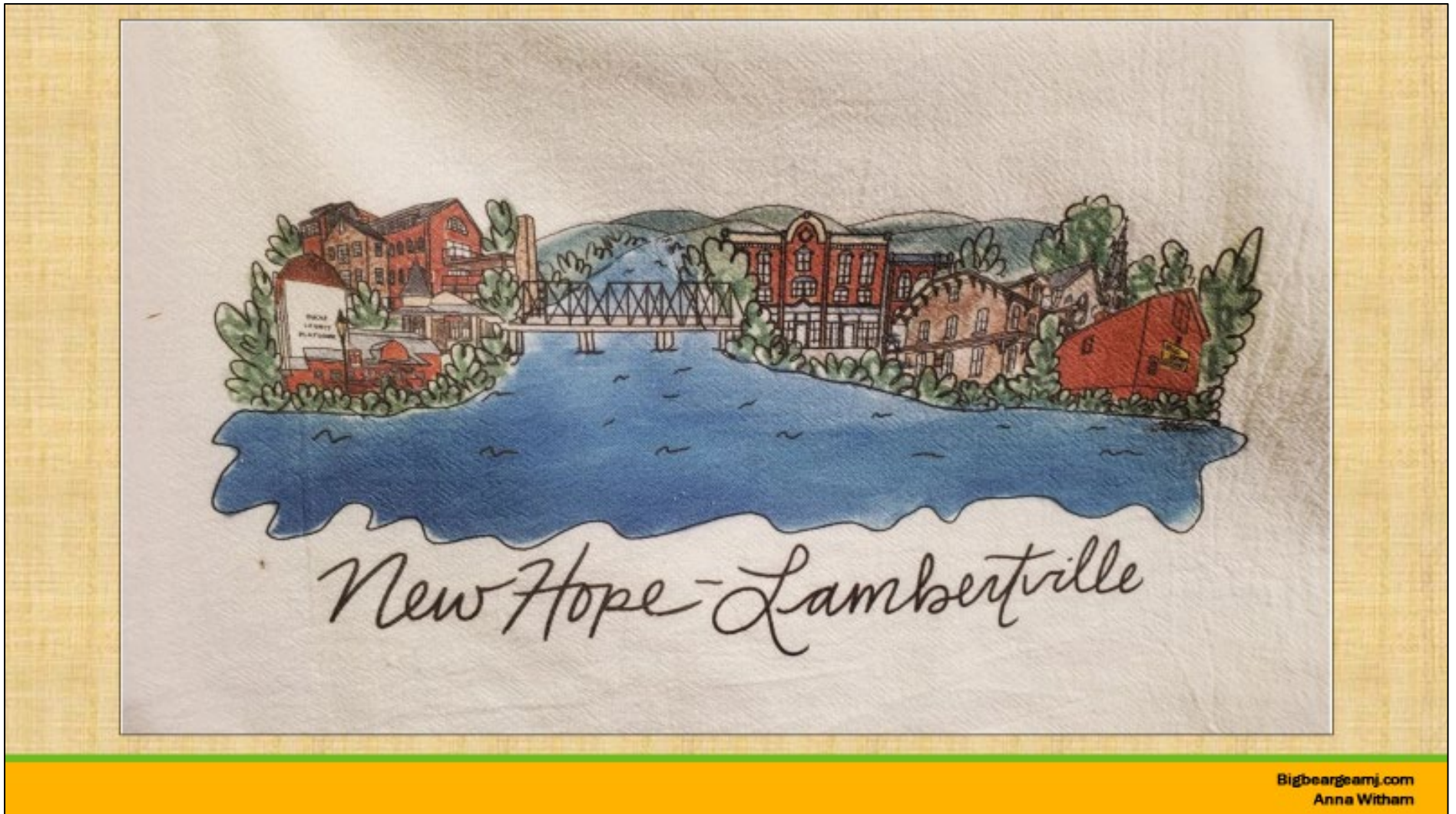
mrandmrsrose.com

If you're an aficionado of the New Hope-Lambertville Bridge, you are in luck because the bridge's profile and image is commercially available both locally and on the internet. Two Milford, N.J. artists who go by the name of Mr. and Mrs. Rose sell images of the bridge – and six other Bridge Commission river crossings – on t-shirts, note cards and framed prints. Their wares are available online and at Bowkers Pharmacy in Milford.



bigbeargearnj.com

Need a coffee cup with the bridge's profile on it? Maybe not, but they're out there. This mug can be had from Big Bear Gear online or via the store near the flea market on the outskirts of Lambertville.



How about a tea towel with the bridge's image? This image is from an Anna Witham tea towel. Note: The depiction of the bridge's trusses is inaccurate, but now we're getting picky.

NOTICE

526 Broad Street Bank Building
Trenton 3, New Jersey

Sealed proposals will be received by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, until Eleven O'Clock A.M. Eastern Daylight Saving Time, July 16, 1947, for all labor, materials, and other means of construction required to strengthen the trusses and to construct a new sidewalk and roadway floor on the bridge over the Delaware River between New Hope, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and Lambertville, Hunterdon County, New Jersey.

The general items included in the contract are:

- 1. Reinforce the top and bottom chords of the trusses.
- 2. Reinforce the floor beams.
- 3. Construct a new sidewalk and roadway floor.
- 4. Paint the bridge.

The price for each item shall be stated in the proposal. The total price shall not exceed \$100,000.00. The Commission reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to award the contract only to those experienced in this class of work, and to the bidder whose proposal is deemed by the Commission to be most advantageous to the public interest.

EDWARD J. PIERSON,
SUPERINTENDENT
DELAWARE RIVER JOINT
TOLL BRIDGE COMMISSION

Fee \$25.00
8:15-9:15 T3 Times

Bridge cleanup, painting to begin after Labor Day

By ANDREW WOLFF
Staff Writer

LAMBERTVILLE — A six-week clean and repaint the New Hope bridge will begin after the Labor Day holiday.

Deputy director of the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission said that Shipview Paint-Borne, Mass., contractor the commission to begin today, requested a delay until Sept. 8.

For Joseph F. Catania, it means the bridge will be closed to motor and pedestrian traffic throughout the holiday week.

The project has taken on significance since June, when the Bucks County, Pa., bridge painter the commission is neglecting the bridge that the span is badly deteriorated.

Deputy director, Hugo Budinich of Trenton, Pa., told the New Hope bridge committee that he was concerned about the bridge's condition.

HE SAID the bridge will have to be replaced unless action is taken soon.

But in June, bridge officials called Budinich's comments "totally wrong" and declared the bridge safe.

The steel structure, which is a six-span, pin-connected, truss bridge, was built in 1904.

It was the third such bridge to span the Delaware River between New Hope, Pa., and Lambertville, according to Deputy Executive Director Richard Van Noy.

The project will close the bridge

New Hope Bridge May Open Jan. 15

LAMBERTVILLE — The Lambertville-New Hope river bridge will be reopened to vehicular traffic about Thursday, January 16, a Delaware River Joint Toll

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the new roadway and overhead construction are being installed.

Local merchants, hard hit by the closing of the bridge, made every effort to have the shutdown period shortened as much as possible. They petitioned Governor Driscoll to use his influence in the situation but found there was little that could be done according to the bridge commission.

Trenton Times, Trenton Evening Times - 1947, 1988
DRJTBC archival photos - undated

There have been many projects and repairs over the years to keep this bridge in operation. After public acquisition of the bridge in the early 1920s, such projects were funded by tax revenues from the two states for a little more than 65 years. However, Bridge Commission toll revenues have funded all projects and everything else at the bridge since July 1, 1987.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

In 2004 – the bridge’s 100th anniversary year – the superstructure underwent the most comprehensive rehabilitation in its history. This was the first comprehensive project to be carried out at this bridge under the funding changes of the Commission’s 1987 federal compact changes. The work involved removal of lead paint, cleaning and repainting of the steel superstructure, installation of a new floor system, replacement of corroded steel components, lighting upgrades, walkway widening, walkway surface replacement, and new railings. The project cost \$6.3 million and involved weekday closures to vehicular traffic.



Here's a photo of a workman enshrouding the bridge for painting activities.



This photo gives an indication of how the new walkway would be two feet wider than the bridge's former six-foot-wide walkway.



This photo shows the new walkway surface and railing in place compared to the old wooden walkway and railing.



Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Archives

The steel open-grate sections are very heavy. A crane was used to help workers install the roadway sections into place. The prior steel grate surface lasted over 55 years. Given improvements in steel production and galvanization, these could last even longer.



Ed Savaria, photographer

The rehabilitation put the bridge in a state of condition to operate without closures for 15 years. The bridge is now approaching its 19th year since that rehabilitation. So far so good, but the paint is showing signs of rust. At some future date, the bridge will again need an intensified application of TLC.



Ed Savaria, photographer

There is a silver lining, though. Because of the scope of work performed in 2004, the next rehabilitation should be less involved. Some measure of travel disruptions is possible, if not likely.



Until then, the bridge marches on.



A venerable connection between two states...



Photo by Gordon Nieburg

... between two communities...



Joe Donnelly photograph

An enduring connection for the future...



Collection of Jeff McVey

... and to the past.





Ogden Photographics

THANK YOU!