

THISTLE



**Millburn-
Short Hills
Historical Society**

Vol XVIII

November 1993



The Brison Farm

(later the Millburn Inn; presently site of the junior high annex)

**"Delicious Home-Cooked Foods
plus
Excellent Service"**

Just over 30 years ago, demolition crews razed the Millburn Inn in Short Hills to make way for an addition to the junior high. While it was not "paradise" that was paved "to put in a parking lot" (although a parking lot stands there now), the picturesque homestead and its site had a long, colorful history.

Although it is not known precisely when the farmhouse was built, it had been dated to the early 1800's. Over a number of years in the early 1800's, pieces of land in the area of the present junior high were deeded to John Brison, who eventually built the house that became the Millburn Inn. At that time, Mr. Brison's 88-acre farm also comprised much of Millburn Township.

The home was willed to Mr. Brison's son David, who promptly sold it to a Mr. Benson. Benson became David's father-in-law, but David outlived his wife and re-inherited the homestead in 1899. According to an article in the Newark Sunday News, September 11, 1960, "(The) 80 acres of farm land were gradually sold, but the homestead remained in the family

until a Mrs. Wood began to operate it as a tea house 39 years ago. Later owners expanded the menu to include luncheons and dinners." The restaurant became the Millburn Inn and was popular with patrons of the Paper Mill Playhouse who often stopped there for a pre-theater dinner.

Literature from the Millburn Inn states that "The house has three levels. The present Pine Room, on the ground floor, was the original kitchen where the old swinging crane, cast iron pot, and Dutch oven do much to add to the quaintness of the room. Opposite the kitchen may be seen the original dining room with its fireplace, low ceilings and massive walls. Directly above and to the left of the reception hall, was John Brison's study over which was his... master-bedroom. The rear of the

house was an annex built by a grandson for his newly married daughter." They also note that "The Dutch architecture is perhaps the greatest charm of the house. It follows the lines of the old Dyckman House at 204th Street and Broadway, New York City."

In researching the history of the house, township historian Marian K. Meisner discovered that "Probably the finest hour in history for this ancient homesite was on June 23, 1780, when refugees from the Battle of Springfield poured upon its high ground above the center crossroads. The story is contained in a sermon delivered by the Rev. John C. Hart, Pastor of the Springfield Presbyterian Church, on July 4, 1840. Hart lived at a time when many survivors of the American Revolution were still alive, and from his interview with one of them his story... 'It must have been a fearful day' Pastor Hart said in his sermon. A woman, 14 years old at the time of action, who lived on the road to Cranford just off Morris avenue, Springfield, told Mr. Hart that when the alarm was sounded upon the mountain, her family began to put away their goods which they continued to do until the American troops were stationed. The enemy was so near, the woman continued, that they dared not cross the bridge (over the Rahway River, Morris avenue) with horse, so the mother gave the little girl an infant child and told her which way to go. Her father took the horses through the woods and across the river, and her mother remained at home a little longer to take care of some household matters.



The 14-year old, carrying the infant, crossed the river on foot between the two armies just before the firing began and made her way among the soldiers to the parsonage of the Springfield Church, where she rested. After a time her father and mother came with the horses and together they proceeded as far as M. Eaglesfield's (since razed to provide for the building of Spring street to Main street), where they met our troops retreating from the Vauxhall Road engagement. Then they were able to go on again and finally reached the property where Mr. Brison lives (speaking as of 1840). They stayed on that high spot and saw the enemy cross the bridge below them (at Millburn center). All around them, said Rev. Hart's informant, were 'men, women and children, horses, cattle and goods - a confused rout - fleeing from death, crying, hallowing, and the men fixing their guns or charging them' And so the acreage of the Millburn Junior High School held the terrified people until the enemy retired that night to Elizabeth and crossed to Staten Island, after burning the church and very house but four in Springfield center. But that was the last time the enemy set foot in New Jersey."

THE ARROW

SHOT FROM SHORT HILLS.

Vol. II.

SHORT HILLS, N. J., JUNE, 1881.

5 CENTS.

Last month a relative of a former township resident came upon several fragile issues of *The Arrow*, the Short Hills newspaper of the late 1800's. The historical society was able to preserve them and copy them to make them readable. (See *Arrow excerpts on next page*). We are very grateful for that gift.

In another instance, a township resident who was preparing to move found an original Hartshorn roller shade in the basement. Stewart Hartshorn (1840-1937), the founder of Short Hills, obtained the patent for his invention of the spring roller shade in 1864. With the proceeds of his roller shade business, he was able to purchase the land that was to become Short Hills. The Hartshorn roller shade is a valuable piece of history.

The historical society is always happy to obtain any material pertaining to the township. If you have any old photographs, postcards or artifacts, please let us know. Call Valerie Bleier at 376-7048. One objective of the society is to preserve these items for future generations.

HARTSHORN'S
 SELF-ACTING
SHADE ROLLERS
 EVERY ROLLER
 WARRANTED | NO CORDS OR BALANCES
SOLD EVERYWHERE.

FELIX CARDONI
 MAIN ST.
 Consorial Artist
 MILLBURN, N. J.

THE ARROW,

MARCH, - - - 1882.

ISSUED MONTHLY.

Advertisements inserted at the rate of One Dollar per inch.

Address: **THE ARROW,**
SHORT HILLS, N. J.

THE JUVENILE FANCY DRESS.

SOMETHING beyond the usual attractiveness of Short Hills society life claims a place in the columns of *The Arrow*.

The little ones who usually sleep away the hours of their elders' festivities in the Music Hall, on last Saturday afternoon flocked to the hospitable doors, opened for their especial benefit by a little hostess whose birthday was to be celebrated with generous consideration for others.



The fifty children or more were in all lovely appearances, from the fine court lady and gentleman, to the simple quakeress or humble sailor boy; the little hostess, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Pitcher, very modestly appearing as a quakeress, and her freedom from consciousness in the prominent position she held, added a charm to the perfect dress. Her sisters appeared as, "Nurse with her baby charge;" "Butter-

cup," and "Court-lady," complete even to the beauty patch of court-plaster on her cheek.

The music was furnished by Neithammer, and the dances of the children were the delight of all the elder beholders. Games followed the dancing; and then a grand march in which all the characters joined. This almost bewildered the eyes of the spectators with the pairing off of miniature representatives of various ages and countries. After the march all were seated, and a bountiful entertainment was offered them which was universally accepted with satisfaction. The five candles of an ornamented birthday cake were afterwards lighted, and while this was being admired, the pretty quakeress handed around a well filled basket of

bon-bons. After another dance—the Virginia reel—the young people reluctantly departed, leaving some of the old folks to an animated discussion of the pretty affair and of the good things which a thoughtful hostess had provided. The following costumes appeared in the bewitching display of the march:

Several Alsatian peasant girls; court ladies and gentlemen; a little girl covered with bells, probably to represent the old woman with bells on her fingers and bells on her toes so that she could have music "wherever she goes"; a perfect little British officer, about three years old with his sister, a brave little vivandière, canteen and all; Ralph Rackstraw of "Pinafore" memory; other sailor costumes; several lovely flower-girls, one or two very beautifully draped with smilax; Mother Hubbard; one quaint little face made attractive in a Kate Greenaway style of dress; a very good representation of Folly, with cap and bells after an illustration in Harper's; a drum major with square drum, grand in military bearing; Oscar Wilde, in proverbial sun flower; three or four charming Bo-peeps' with their flowery crooks; an apparent "Fool," whose face belied the accusation of his dress; and other costumes without particular design of representation, yet all very pretty, and adding variety to the scene.

Those who were fortunate enough to be present at the Hall that Saturday afternoon, will not soon forget the sight. And if at six years old the little quakeress should open the doors again to receive her friends, "may we be there to see."



SHORT HILLS AGAIN.

WHEN some few months ago we first drew the bow that sped our ARROW, we endeavored to avoid too long a bow, lest we should overshoot the mark.

And now as the bow is again bent, we have tried to select for one arrow, with its bright feathering, a solid head and a straight tail.

The few months that have passed have worked no wonderful transformation scenes among our hills, but many things that were then only proposed are now accomplished. Other things then under consideration are now rapidly approaching completion, and the summer now closed has been one of continued growth and marked progress. New streets have been opened, developing many new and attractive building sites. A number of houses have been completed and occupied, and several new dwellings are in process of construction. The general system of sewerage has been largely developed, and is now rapidly approaching completion. A fully appointed nursery, with forcing houses for rare plants, has been established at a convenient distance from the park, and has ample facilities for supplying our own homes and those of the region round about. Our water supply, which had already stood the test of the very dry season, has been largely increased by the discovery of abundant springs and the addition of new machinery and increased facilities for storage and distribution. The natural advantages of Short Hills have found a new expression in the more general use of stone, which is very abundant on our hills, for building purposes, and which, combined with brick and wood, has been found to produce very happy effects. With the continued establishment of new households among us has come the natural growth in social life, with its attendant privileges; and when we add to all of these things the constant improvement in train accommodations to and from our busy Babel, we feel that if Short Hills has not already passed entirely out of the region of experiment to the sure ground of a brilliant success, it is so passing with a rapidity that will put our ARROW to the test speed, lest it be left behind. So bend the bow, tighten the cord. Ready? Let fly.

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FEBRUARY, 1882.

PRICE, 5 CENTS.

Railroad Time-Table.

Trains from New York to Short Hills leave Christopher street and Barclay street ferries at 7.30, 10.10 and 11.10 A. M.; 2.30, 3.50, 4.30, 5.20 (Express), 5.50, 6.30, 7.45, 9.45 P. M.; and 12 P. M. on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Returning to New York at 7, 7.20, 8.06, 8.35, 9.55 A. M.; 12.05, 1.51, 5.13, 6.50, 8.46 P. M.

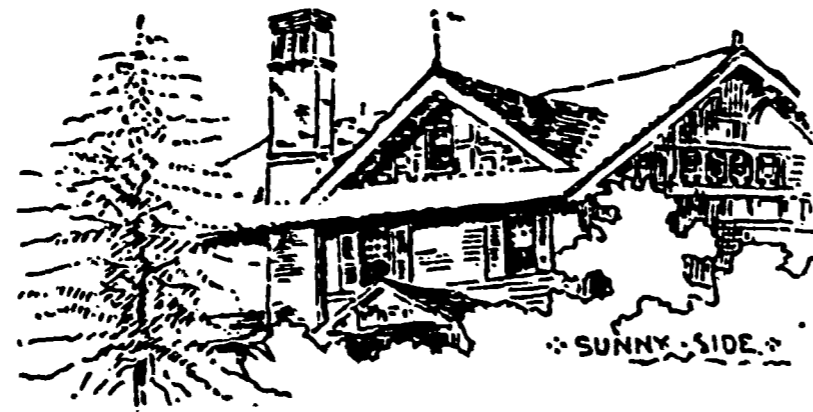
(Horse cars run between Union square, N. Y., and Christopher street Ferry.)

Distance, 18 miles. Excursion Tickets, 85 cents. Commutation Tickets, \$78 per year.

Short Hills Post Office, Western Union Telegraph Office and D. L. & W. Express Office at Depot.

THE SHORT HILLS COACH awaits the arrival of every train. On Sundays it carries passengers to the churches in Milburn and Springfield for 25 cents each.

JAMES MORRIS.



The Wyoming Meeting-House.

Our neighbors at Wyoming want to build a meeting-house, and have published an appeal for contributions of money to help them in building it. They have also published a picture of the meeting-house which they want to build. It is to cost about three thousand dollars. Somebody has "donated" the land for it; and the congregation has pledged about eight hundred dollars for the building. Since 1875, when the First Presbyterian church of Wyoming was organized, religious services have been held in the railroad station-house; but, as the appeal states, these services have been discontinued on account of "the condition and unfitness of the building, and they are now entirely without a place of worship."

THE TOWN OF SHORT HILLS.

OUR proposal that Short Hills be made a town, separate from Milburn, has attracted a good deal of attention. The opinion prevails that the eastern boundary of the new town should begin near the Rahway River, on the Valley road, the southern boundary be the railroad or just below it, the western boundary, Summit, which comes close to us; and that the northwestern, northern and northeastern boundary lines should include those estates whose occupants are in the habit of receiving their mails at the Short Hills post-office and who make their journeys from the Short Hills depot. This will give us a township in which the residents would have a common interest in all public matters. It would free us from the incumbrances which have been entailed upon us by the misrule of Milburn town committees, and permit us to manage our affairs according to our necessities.

A writer in the South Orange *Bulletin*, commenting on our last article, says that the whole amount of tax paid by the residents of Short Hills this year is \$2,750, instead of \$4,000. We have the authority of the tax collector for our statement that the amount is nearly \$4,000. The same writer also says that but \$72 of our money "goes into the town treasury for township and poor funds!" If this is true, it is the best of reasons for separating from Milburn and making Short Hills an independent town. We are aware that much of our tax money must be used to adjust accounts with the county and the State. But if, after this has been done, there remains for our use only the paltry sum of \$72, the sooner we dissolve partnership with Milburn and start business on our own account, the better for us. We have nothing to lose, but much to gain by the separation. Managing our own affairs, we shall not be compelled to support paupers at the

rate of nearly \$400 each annually. The Milburn poor farm, a speculation with which Short Hills had nothing to do (notwithstanding what the South Orange writer says) contains five paupers. The expenses of this farm, paid by taxpayers last year, were \$1,992, or just \$398.40 for each pauper—rather extravagant poverty!

I. SMITH, EMPIRE STORE, MILLBURN, N. J.,

Keeps constantly on hand a comprehensive Stock of

FANCY AND STAPLE
DRY GOODS,

Choice Groceries & Provisions,
CROCKERY,

Hardware, Wood and Willow Ware,

And in fact all the goods wanted for Family Supplies. My goods are all carefully selected, and a long experience in trade enables me to give my customers all the advantages of the New York market.

MY SPECIALTIES:
FINE TEAS AND COFFEES,

FANCY BUTTER,

Choice New Process Minnesota Flour.

Our Goods will always be found as represented, and a child can buy of us as well as the most expert purchaser.

I. SMITH, Empire Store.

Also for Sale, Orange Mountain
Top (St. Cloud).

For sale, sacrifice (5,500) handsomely located 3-story residence, stable, 1½ acres. 600 feet above tide water. Macadamized avenue; unquestionably healthy.

SPORTING NEWS.

An association has been formed to stock the woods and ponds of Short Hills with game. Katydid and Junebugs having been decimated by the raids of last summer's visitors, it is proposed to re-stock the woods with this delicious game for the practice of those who are handy with the mountain howitzer and light field piece. Elephant hunting was suggested as filling a long-felt want. A committee was appointed to treat with Barnum's menagerie for elephants.

It was determined to stock the ponds with lobsters, oysters, salt codfish, alligators, and the South African yak or sea-cow. A ship is to sail from the Music Hall wharf on the 32d inst. to bring home a cargo of yaks. The Florida alligator was preferred to the Greenland variety by all the members, because (1) he will make things lively on a fly-hook; (2) he will feed himself if he has a chance; (3) he will keep poachers out of the ponds. Price of a ticket to play with the alligators will be twenty-five cents.

Just see what sort of stuff has to be received and looked over in the immense mails of the editor of a great newspaper like THE ARROW:

The folks in the town they call Summit,
Thought no place o'er that one could come it;
Till they saw SHORT HILLS grow,
Which astonished them so,
They could only ejaculate "Dummit!"

We take this occasion to publicly rebuke the author of this ribald doggerel and to inform him, once for all, that our columns are hermetically sealed against everything of this low and invidious nature, which is at once consigned to the waste basket.

A Social Event.

On the evening of the 16th, Mr. and Mrs. William I. Russell gave a party at their residence, "Sunnyside," Short Hills, to which the well-worn society adjectives "brilliant and successful" may be truthfully applied. The interior of "Sunnyside" has been recently and richly decorated, and appeared to great advantage on this occasion with the concomitants of evening lights and a profusion of flowers, which were tropical in their luxuriance, and were artistically arranged in vases, festoons, hanging balls and mantel banks. Many of the costumes displayed were worthy the practised pen of a Jenkins—an appendage which THE ARROW unfortunately does not possess. Of the supper and the dancing we feel somewhat more competent to speak; and they were, both of them, simply delicious. The guests present were:

Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Hartshorn, Dr. and Mrs. Rose, Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Bliss, Mr. and Mrs. G. M. S. Horton, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Sloane, Dr. and Mrs. G. H. Benjamin, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Bradbury, Miss Bradbury, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Deen, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Humphrey, Mrs. Winant, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. C. Foye, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Pitcher, Mr. and Mrs. Valentine Marsh, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Vall, Miss Montgomery, Mr. G. K. Haswell, Miss Ball, Mr. and Mrs. C. T. Root, Mr. and Mrs. P. H. Copeland, Mr. G. W. Copeland, Miss Copeland, Mr. J. F. Chamberlin, Miss Graves, the Misses Traphagen, Dr. Wellington Campbell, Mr. Chas. Campbell, the Misses Campbell, Mr. A. H. De Rongé, Mr. Chas. De Rongé, the Misses De Rongé, Miss Russell, Mr. Clark, Cort, Mr. De Lancey Cleveland, Mr. J. H. C. Nevius, Dr. Burling, Mr. A. B. Jennings, Mr. J. E. Cox, Mr. W. C. Cox.

Publisher's Notice.

As THE ARROW has once formally declared itself dead, a few words of explanation may not be amiss in connection with its reappearance. The paper was originally a freak. It was printed a few times as a sort of burlesque on absurdity, and without any idea of permanency. It had no *raison d'être*, and was therefore dropped without ceremony when its parents tired of it. THE ARROW is now resurrected as an entirely different thing, or rather its name is taken for a different publication. The present idea is to see whether or no a small paper issued at stated intervals (monthly to begin with) and devoted to the interests of this neighborhood can be made self-sustaining. This journal is *not* started "to fill a long-felt want." The first thing is to try and create the want, and if successful in this to enlarge gradually and grow up with the country. The first number is offered without apology, although future issues will doubtless present a greater variety of matter.

TERMS:

Single copy five cents; discount on quantities.
Advertising space one dollar per inch each insertion.
Address, "THE ARROW,"
Short Hills, N. J.

SHOT FROM SHORT HILLS.

Mr. Stewart Hartshorn and family will sail for Europe on the 16th inst., to be absent during the summer. Mr. Hartshorn, besides carrying away with him the hearty good wishes of a multitude of friends, must also possess the liveliest satisfaction over the present and prospective progress of Short Hills—the limit of his success there being gauged only by the ability of workmen to meet the demands made upon them by the host of new comers to our neighborhood. Eight new houses have been erected during the past year, and others are under way to be ready for occupancy in the fall. On the principle that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, no better evidence of the prosperity of the place can be shown than to note the steady and ever increasing tide of immigration flowing hitherward.

A Great and Visible Decay of Godliness

by George Goffe

A meeting was held in Boston by a group of clergymen who were concerned that the country was falling into moral decay. They were very pessimistic, citing the following partial list of problems among the people:

1. A great and visible decay of godliness;
2. Manifestations of pride - contention in churches, insubordination of inferiors towards superiors, extravagance in attire especially those who persisted in dressing beyond their means;
3. A notable increase in swearing and a disposition to sleep at sermons;
4. Wanton violation of the Sabbath;
5. Family government had decayed and fathers no longer kept their sons and daughters from prowling at night;
6. People were not knit together as one man in mutual love, they were full of contention and lawsuits were on the increase, enabling lawyers to thrive;
7. Holidays had turned into orgies of sex and alcohol, taverns were crowded, women threw temptation in the way of befuddled men by wearing false locks and displaying naked arms and necks (and even naked breasts), mixed dancing, keeping company with vain persons, causing an increase in the rate of bastards;
8. Certain persons were betraying a marked disposition to tell lies, especially when selling anything;
9. The business morality of even the most righteous left everything to be desired, the wealthy speculated in land and raised prices excessively, laborers and mechanics were unreasonable in their demands;
10. People showed no disposition to reform, and seemed utterly destitute of civic spirit;

The assembled clergy felt that if people did not quickly reform, the last blow would fall and nothing but desolation would be left. Should we worry? The meeting took place and the complaint list was prepared in 1679.

Holiday House Tour

On Sunday, December 12th, the Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society will present a Holiday House Tour. Between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. three historic houses in Short Hills will be open to our members. The houses will be dressed for the holidays and we will provide light refreshments. All three homes are within walking distance of each other.

This tour is for historical society members only and there is no charge. Interested parties who are not members or who have not yet renewed their annual dues can contact Lynne Ranieri at 379-5032 to join and become eligible to attend the holiday event.

Society members who have questions or are willing to volunteer to serve as a host or hostess in any of the houses are asked to call Valerie Bleier at 376-7048 or Maureen Kundtz at 376-1218.



Sotheby's to Visit

The annual meeting of the historical society is scheduled for June 2, 1994. Guest speakers from Sotheby's will present a program on the auction process and, for a donation of \$5 per item, will appraise objects brought by members of the audience. It should be an interesting evening!

More information will follow, but mark your 1994 calendars for June 2nd at 8:00 p.m. at the Millburn Public Library.

Short Hills Antique Show

The Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society was again invited to participate in the Short Hills Antique Show at the Community Congregational Church on October 1st and 2nd. The society had a booth from which to display and sell their publications.

Thanks are extended to all board members who worked at the show. Special thanks to: Roldah Cameron, Josie Dellenbaugh, George Goffe, Joan Holmes, Maureen Kundtz, Lynne Ranieri, Madeline Ribaud, Mara Siebert, David Siegfried, and Ruth Ware. Thanks also to Joan Daeschler and Stephanie Siegfried of the antique show committee for making us so comfortable.



GREYSTONE - CONTACT

Historical Society 1993-4 Officers

President - Valerie Bleier

Vice President - Lynne Ranieri

Vice President - Madeline Ribaud

Treasurer - George Goffe

Recording Sec. - David Siegfried

Corres. Sec. - Joan Holmes

Members' Reception

This year our annual members' reception was held on Sunday, October 3rd. We would like to thank Joan and Jeffrey Barist for opening their beautiful home to our members. We would also like to thank our hospitality committee, headed by Madeline Ribaud, for the gracious job they did in hosting the event. A special "thank you" to all our board members for their contributions!

NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY - Just prior to Christmas you should have received our new membership directory dated December 1985. Although the Society Handbook is usually issued only every other year, there had been so many changes in our membership since the Handbook of January 1985 that a new issue was necessary. We now have the largest membership ever with 411 listings representing 141 single memberships, 270 family memberships and 12 business memberships for a total of 681.

We extend a warm welcome to the many new members. One hundred thirty-six of the listings are new, including five Life members - Mrs. William C. Ridgeway, Mrs. Thomas M. Welch, Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Homer, and Mrs. Robert F. Moore, Jr. A special thank you to Membership Chairman Carol Webster and to Treasurer Ginny Borzner for their efforts which resulted in this fine publication.

Since the Handbook went to press, Mrs. Genevieve Printon has become a Life member and the following have joined the Society:

- | | |
|--|----------|
| Dr. and Mrs. Robert E. Binder (Ruth)
235 White Oak Ridge Road, S.H. | 467-9438 |
| Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kane (Shirley)
65 Knollwood Road, S.H. | 376-8231 |
| Mr. and Mrs. Albert Livermore (Edel)
27 Taylor Road, S.H. | 467-9722 |
| Frances C. Mazurki
15 Duncan Street, Millburn | 376-1136 |
| Jack Moss
299 Millburn Avenue, Millburn | |
| Mrs. Genevieve Printon
27 Brooklawn Drive, S.H. | 379-1328 |
| Capt. and Mrs. William Wynne
32 Spencer Drive, S.H. | 379-6818 |

FLEMING'S HISTORY OF OUR STATE - Many members will remember our 1980 program at which author Thomas Fleming spoke about the battle of Springfield in 1780, the subject of his book "Forgotten Victory". In a new book entitled "New Jersey: A History" Mr. Fleming has written the story of our state from the time of Charles II's land grant to the recent past. The book is published as part of W.W. Norton & Company's States and the Nation Heirloom Library.

The Society is able to make the book available to members on a one-time special basis at a discount of 20%. Orders for the 214-page cloth bound volume will be accepted through March 19 at \$12.67 per copy which includes the 6% NJ sales tax. Checks should be made payable to the Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society and mailed to us at P.O.Box 243, Short Hills along with your name and address. Those who order will be advised when the books are received and where they can be picked up.

* * * * *

HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED DEPARTMENT - Hereafter some slices of Millburn's history during the Thrifty Thirties as uncovered by those who are indexing The Item:

- March 1931 - Local Ford dealer took saddle horse as deposit on a new car.
- October 1932 - First prize for community garden: 50 lbs. of flour, 25 lbs. of sugar, a quantity of canned fruits, vegetables and soups to a total value of \$5.00.
- October 1936 - Traffic was backed up from Chatham to the juncture of Morris and Millburn Avenues as drivers were out to see the foliage.
- March 1937 - Millburn Township was the second fastest growing community in the State.
- May 1937 - Residents of Farley Road presented a petition to the Township Committee asking that, if and when the county takes over the improvement of that thoroughfare, there be no widening, no curbing and no tree cutting in the program.