Old Frackville Tales

Lorraine Stanton

St. Joseph's Rectory at Nice and Frack streets, originally owned by the Haupt family. R. F. Fennessy occupied St. Joseph's Rectory at Nice and Frack streets, originally known as "The Grove." Westminster Hotel occupied in 1904 by John Stone. Previously it was the Cloud Castle operated by Charles Hillanbrand. Later it became Joe Rice's night club and today it is Paul's Inn.

Charles Hillanbrand built this hotel at 130 North Bellis in 1893. Previously he operated the American House for three years, and in 1893 ran the Cloud Castle.

Have you read the History of Frackville by Rev. Jonathan W. Miller published by the Miner's Journal in 1902? Many residents have copies of this book. The Preface reads:

The object of the author in the preparation of this work is simply to furnish the citizens of Frackville and surrounding community, with such facts as every one ought to know. Knowledge is essential to service. This is as true in the relation of the citizen to the community as it is to any other.

The more we know the objects we enter into the makeup of the community in which we live, the more interest we will have in that which tends towards its welfare. But besides the creating of a greater interest in the borough of Frackville by a better knowledge of its object, the author sends forth this work in the hope that it may accomplish the mission for which it is intended and asks the kind consideration of an ever indulgent public.

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Frackville, Pa., March, 1903, J.W.M.

How true this is! The same preface could be used in any book written today on the history of our town. No one has written anything in the past 72 years. No pictures were identified or kept in a public file for future generations. These were reasons that prompted me to write "Old Frackville Tales." Rev. Miller was Pastor of the Christ Episcopal Church in 1899.

Some of the utility companies located here were the Frackville and Gilberton Heat, Light and Power Company; The Frackville Water Company, J. W. Haupt and Clark Dixon Company; Mr. Wood A. Nice was the undertaker and also had a furniture store and F. A. Dietrich and Wagner and Son had butcher shops and did their own butchering. Both families had home- drawn butcher wagons for delivering.

The A. S. Seaman business place at Frackville was a very progressive town in 1904.

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Savern store in 1904 at 3 North Leigh. Today Herrick's Hardware. The family resided at right and the Bake Shoppe was a red brick building at left rear on Frack street, today a warehouse.

Recrecy at 14 South Nice street occupied in 1899 by Rev. Jonathan Miller, pastor of Christ Episcopal Church and author of the 1904 Frackville history. Today Mrs. Walter Lash operates it as an apartment house.