Baldwin is still comparatively young. But during the more than two hundred and fifty years since its first settlers arrived, much has transpired which deserves to be permanently recorded. Upon this, the twentieth anniversary of the founding of our bank, we are pleased to make possible the issuance of this story of Baldwin so that a record of the deeds and accomplishments of some of its inhabitants may be preserved.

The Baldwin National Bank and Trust Company

December 15, 1939
HICK'S NECK
The Story of Baldwin, Long Island

Compiled by workers of the Writers' Program of the Works Projects Administration in the State of New York.
Illustrations by the Art Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of New York

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A BANKING institution is built largely on the faith and confidence that prevail in its community; and faith and confidence are essentially a matter of tradition. It is therefore eminently fitting that, in celebration of its anniversary, a bank revive interest in community history by a publication of this kind. The New York State Writers' Project is happy to have been able to cooperate with The Baldwin National Bank & Trust Company in this undertaking.

Mr. Irving Davis and Mr. John Stoddard of the Writers' Project prepared the text; the illustrations are by Mr. Harry Tedlie of the New York State Art Project.

BERTRAND M. WAINGER,
State Supervisor
New York State Writers' Project
NOTE

Hick’s Neck (spelled Hicks His Neck in the old Town Records) was the original name of the strip of land between Parsonage and Milburn Creeks. It became known early in its history as South Hempstead. Later Bethel Chapel gave its name, Bethel, to the area just south of the plains. The neighborhood around Pine’s Mill at the Creek was called Milburn Corners, or Milburn, while the other trading center at the Grand Avenue junction was called Baldwin Corners. “Baldwinsville” and “Baldwins” grew naturally from this, but toward the turn of the twentieth century the Long Island Railroad changed the name from Baldwins to Milburn. After much protest from the local residents, who revered the memory of Francis Baldwin, Milburn once more became Baldwins, and then Baldwin.
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HICK'S NECK
The Story of Baldwin, Long Island

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The Old Bedell Homestead
The intersection of Grand Avenue, Foxhurst and Merrick Roads is where modern Baldwin began. Here are Baldwin's first bank, the Soldier's Monument, and the library. Within a stone's throw are the postoffice, the high school, the tower of St. Christopher's visible above the western trees, and, to the east, the spire of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Automobiles whirl about the police booth in the center. Offices and shops that serve most of the community's necessities and conveniences, line the sidewalks. Men and women pass and repass, intent upon the thousand and one affairs that make up a day.
North is the path to Hempstead (now Grand Avenue), first nucleus of white civilization in this area; south is the bay, larder of the pioneers, playground of their descendants. Milburn Avenue, which led to Pine’s Mill in the days when Hick’s Neck was the territory’s legal name, is four blocks east.

Since its unrecorded beginnings the heart of the community has been continuously shifting from south and east to north; even today, the movement has not ceased.

A view of the Grand Avenue junction two generations ago finds “Baldwin Corners” young, barely conscious of its future, but beginning to rival the old pre-eminence of the Milburn crossroads. Vacant lots appear where now are stores. The stones of St. Christopher’s are still in the quarry. On the northwest corner stands an inn—the Baldwin House: tall trees nod above the low roof; fly-pest- ered horses stamp and jingle their harness at the half-eaten hitching post before the veranda. Up Grand Avenue from the bay, a swaying load of salt hay creaks past; the village doctor in his high-wheeled gig pulls up at Thomas Baldwin & Son’s General Store diagonally across the street.

A top-buggy rattles eastward over the dusty planks of Merrick Road toward the gristmill at the foot of the pond now known as the reservoir. This is Smith’s Mill, whose wheel turns lazily in the froth of water tumbling over the dam: Smith’s Mill in these 1870’s. But two hundred years earlier, in the same mill, it was John Pine who ground the corn of the neighboring farmers. A few acres of cultivation were all that were about then. Beyond was the Great Wood—oak and maple, chestnut, beech and birch; dense verdure, dark shadows, stretching indefinitely east and west, north to the Hempstead prairie.

Three hundred years ago the stream that fed the pond, wider and deeper than it is today, rippled through timberland of Hick’s Neck down to a mud-walled channel among the cattails and reeds of the marshes. Ever widening as it progressed, it emptied into Baldwin Bay, a cove off Middle Bay. Thence by Garret Lead or East Channel the water sought East Rockaway Inlet, beyond which tossed the Atlantic. A few Indians roamed the Neck seeking deer, bear, partridges, or quail, fishing in the creeks, digging in the Bay for the clams that served a twofold purpose: the meat for food and the shells as a medium of exchange. By 1650 there were perhaps a dozen white families in this little wilderness.

Baldwin had its beginnings across the “North Sea,” as the
Sound was called, in Stamford, Connecticut. Disputes over religion and boundaries had caused an earlier migration from Weathersfield in Massachusetts to Stamford; similar differences moved John Carman and Reverend Robert Fordham to turn to Long Island in 1643, and, as agents for a restless group waiting in Stamford, to sign a treaty with the Island Indians for a strip of land between the Sound and the sea. The bounds were too indefinite, however, and a second treaty was concluded in 1657 confirming the first and agreeing to boundaries, to be indicated by blazed trees. Among the witnesses to these negotiations were two of the first settlers in what was to be known as Hick’s Neck - John Hicks and Edward Spragg (Sprague).

Six months later the Indians were still “holding us in suspense by thire delayes”. Finally, on May 11, 1658, the Indians were persuaded to join in an expedition to blaze the trees as had been agreed. It was a job of some duration and “from day to day potent inducements were offered the Indians to keep them at their task.” If we read between the lines we suspect this important transaction to have been conducted much as a metropolitan sales-manager of today entertains a visiting buyer—dinners on the house, tobacco and firewater, lacking only the clincher of a floor show at the Casino! “John Pine supplied the liquor for the party en route.”

Boundary questions were in a state of flux for some years, but colonization began with the signing of the first treaty. The first settlers arrived in 1644—the Carmans, Gildersleeves, Raynors, Bedells, Smiths, and Pettits, whose descendants are still prominent in Hempstead and Baldwin. The first Spragg (Sprague) came from England in 1656, but John Hicks, whose name appears frequently in the early town records, had been for a time in Flushing on the North Shore. Joseph Pettit, later town clerk, came to Hempstead in 1658, having arrived in America with the Winthrop fleet twenty-six years earlier.

In the ensuing years there were many disputes, sometimes even blows, with the Dutch, the English government, and the Indians, over jurisdiction, representation, land boundaries, and similar problems. At first the Dutch allowed the colonists freedom in handling their affairs, the Governors exercising their authority only formally; but under Stuyvesant—Peter the Headstrong, as Washington Irving named him—the English towns were goaded into what was practically rebellion. In 1662, two years before the English captured New Amsterdam, Hempstead, Jamaica, Flushing, Newtown, and Gravesend were annexed by the Connecticut Colony. In 1664 Hempstead declared its independence of Connecticut as well as of Holland.
Meanwhile there had been continuous agitation for representative government. In 1665 Governor Nicholl met leaders from Long Island and Westchester at Hempstead to consider changes in the existing laws. John Hicks and Robert Jackson represented Hempstead. The resulting code stood practically unchanged until after the Revolution, although the main grievances—the local right to appoint magistrates and have a voice in administration—still were unsatisfied. Finally, in 1683, Hempstead obtained from the Duke of York her Charter of Liberties and Privileges, which repealed some of the Duke’s Laws, guaranteed freedom of conscience, and provided for a representative assembly and locally chosen magistrates.

Indian relations were never of much concern in this part of Long Island. Occasionally an Indian disregarded property lines or ran amuck from too much rum; but generally the tribe was on good terms with the whites. Daniel Tredwell says that the Indians of the Neck were friendly and quotes one of his ancestors as saying that “The South Side Indians are too worthless to live but not bad enough to be hanged.”

Neither an occasional encounter with the redskins, however, nor the politics of empire greatly influenced life in the Neck. A plentiful food supply from the bay and creeks provided subsistence while the land was being cleared. The creeks supplied another necessity too—water power for the gristmills and sawmills beginning to appear.

One of the numerous mill grants of this period is the earliest indication that Hick’s Neck was to become a community. In the town meeting of January 25, 1686, “it was voted and agred by ye Majer vote that John Pine shall have Liberti to Sett up a Grist Mill upon any strem in the towne bounds wher he finds conveniant Where no mill is all Redy set or appointed to be Sett and to have five acirs of land by it upon the Conditions following the use of the Stream and the Land afors’d shall be and Remains to the afores’d John Pine or his order so Long as he or they shall ceep in Repaire a good Suffisient Grist Mill to grind ye towne corne for a twelth part of it. . . .” John Pine chose a site on Milburn Creek, a hundred feet north of where Merrick Road now runs, where the land conformation favored a dam. As more settlers came in, farms were staked out in the neighborhood of Pine’s mill; the Old Tredwell homestead was situated immediately north of the dam on the present site of Felix & Pierre’s.

The first roads led to the mill, and from it to the farms, to the bay, or north to Hempstead Village. These early highways were not
planned, but evolved from footpaths and forest trails. Hick's Neck Road, now Milburn Avenue, was one of the earliest; another was the highway now known as Grand Avenue, the route to Hempstead. As transportation improved, communication became more frequent between the "Town Spot" and outlying settlements, between Brooklyn and the eastern communities. Travel was slow, overnight stops a necessity on almost any journey, and inns inevitably appeared on the main routes to care for travelers. Of these, Milburn Inn near Pine's Mill, and Lott's Inn, farther down the creek near the present Church Street, were among the earliest in the Neck. Lott's Inn was famous for its hospitality among the seamen and merchants who had business at Lott's Landing.

The Landing, at Atlantic Avenue, was for more than a century a point of shipment for lumber, manure, tobacco, clams and fish, and a depot for incoming rum, tea, molasses, and a variety of manufactured articles. Here, as late as the middle of the nineteenth century, C. S. & I. Snedeker, general merchants of Hempstead, had a lumber shed. From Lott's wharves the local surplus of beef and mutton was shipped to the New York market in barges built by local shipwrights.

II

Life in Hick's Neck must have been much the same as in other American colonies. Economically, it was a farming-pastoral, home-industry community; politically a part of Hempstead, it was governed by the Town Meeting with the blessings of the Crown; socially, life centered in the church and the taverns.

Coarse clothing was made on the old spinning wheel and shoes were cut from the crudely tanned hides of the farm cattle. Food was grown in the garden patch, hooked from the waters of Parsonage or Milburn Creek, dug from the shallows of the Bay, hunted against the fall skies above the marshes or along the woodland trails. Wood was the tableware of the common folk, supplemented by copper or iron cooking pots and pans. Evenings were short. Eight o'clock found everyone in bed—in winter, in the company of the warming pan!

Most farmers raised stock, the cattle being herded together in a common pasturage. The keeper, appointed each year at Town Meeting, went from house to house in the morning to collect his charges, his horn sounding warning of his approach. Detailed ordinances were enacted for the care of cattle, construction of fences, earmarks, penalties for straying. It was the duty of the "hay-warden,"

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Merrick Road at Milburn, Showing Milburn Inn and Frelingdorf's
and later of the “fence-viewer,” to “keep y’e Jadhges or Cattle or other Cretors from Destroying any Corne. . . in the field.”

Most Long Island villages had some artisans: wheelwrights, butchers, tailors, weavers, blacksmiths, tanners, coopers; but the scant early records of Hick’s Neck do not refer to such craftsmen. Perhaps there was a blacksmith, but most of the tasks calling for special skill were probably handled by journeymen who stayed in the village as long as there was work, then traveled on.

Retail shops came after the labor of clearing the land had been accomplished and purchasing power had grown beyond the hand-to-mouth production of the pioneers. There is no record of any stores in the Neck until well along into the nineteenth century, but the name Snedeker is so closely associated with Baldwin that the Hempstead general store of that name must be mentioned. The local farmer drove over to Snedeker’s to choose from his varied assortment of “Bibles, oyl cloth, sperrits, scythes, umbrellers, musling, veal hind quarters, crooked combs, bandanna handkerchiefs, pine boards, clams, cups and Sarsers, rum . . . a load of hay,” and so forth.

Politically, the town meetings were the life of the community. Neither Dutch nor English rule interfered greatly with these local councils. They had power to grant and lease land, grant mill rights, provide for the poor, make changes in the common land. Serious crimes were uncommon. Wrangles were usually over land boundaries; in one of these, the Smiths brought charges against the Pine family for cutting up and crippling some of their hogs.

Politics, education, and religion were closely entwined in the colonial Long Island culture. Church attendance was compulsory; absence was punished by fine, or by banishment for the habitual offender. The earliest church in the Neck was the Bethel Chapel, which stood off what is now Grand Avenue near St. Luke’s Place and combined the functions of a house of worship, a school, and a meeting hall. It is said to have been built in 1810 by Christian Snedeker, the Hempstead merchant. Daniel Tredwell says, however, that in 1838, when a meeting was called in the building for the purpose of authorizing repairs, it was then seventy-five to one hundred years old. If the building was as old as Tredwell thinks, then Snedeker could not have built it, though he may have been responsible for major repairs. Undisputed evidence indicates that it housed the first Methodist congregation, which used the old structure until 1843 and then moved to a new building on Merrick Road on the site now occupied by Leon Joseph’s store. That Bethel Chapel was also the
first schoolhouse is doubted by one source, who contends that a private school conducted by William Fowler and located just above Parsonage Creek on what is now Stowe Avenue preceded it. Recollections of this Fowler school have been blurred by the passage of time, but our informant recalls that Mr. Fowler’s grandson later conducted the Hempstead Business College. The Fowler school building was later removed to DeMott Avenue and was demolished about thirty years ago.

Barn raisings, building the first hearth-fire in a new home, huckleberry frolics, the town meeting in Hempstead, were all occasions for visiting and fun-making. The entire family would drive to Hempstead on meeting days, perhaps passing the night at Sammis’ Tavern or at some friend’s home. The women shopped and gossiped; the men spent the time between deliberations on town affairs at the numerous taverns and taprooms.

III

For nearly a century after 1683 the Neck enjoyed rural peacefulness and prosperity; to our age of crowded living, the life seems to have been idyllic. But imperceptibly Hick’s Neck found itself involved in America’s first mass upheaval as rebellion became a reality. Men gathered together in homes, in taverns, and in meeting houses to discuss the news. Imports from England were tabooed by an extra-legal Continental Congress; persons of “no family” and no business or public experience were assuming unwonted power; news came of tar-and-featherings and riots and bloodshed. When the smouldering sparks burst into flame, the Neck population was hopelessly divided: even families split into opposing camps; “The Smith, Townsends . . . Kissams and Cornwells . . . were well represented on both sides. The Dodge, Onderdonck, Schenck and Sands families were overwhelmingly or entirely Whig, while the Hewletts, Motts, Pearsalls, Ludlows, Clowes and Dentons were largely Tory.” Records of immediate reference to Baldwin are scant, but the frequent mention of many South Side families in Hempstead annals compel us to include this trying period in Hempstead’s history as part of our own.

South Hempstead’s Tory sentiment was so much a thorn in the side of the Rebels that their fevered imaginations cooked up a conspiracy against Washington—a conspiracy for which no foundation has been found but which nevertheless kept the pot boiling in these parts and was the main topic of many a winter evening. It is likely that the majority of both Whigs and Tories chuckled over the
notion that Thomas Cornwell, Isaac Denton, or John Hewlett could be plotting the assassination of the Rebel general.

To the Hempstead Loyalists the Continental Congress was a bunch of "lawless upstarts," and they refused to participate in a Provincial Congress called by that body. For this, they paid dearly; they were in effect outlawed by the Congress and their trade was thereafter harassed by economic sanctions. Their boats were seized by committees of Minute Men, their arms were taken from them to prevent their assisting the British; shore and ship patrols were established along the coast; many Loyalists were arrested, and others sought the woods, the cornfields, and the South Side swamps to hide from the Patriots, who pursued them relentlessly.

Francis Pettit, son of the late John Pettit of Baldwin, tells of the role the marshes played in the Revolutionary history of his family. Francis's father's great-great-grandfather, Increase Pettit, while fishing with some friends down in Fundy, or Sea Dog Creek, saw a man running—running from "Redcoats".

"We ought to save him," exclaimed Increase. "Who'll join me?" Nobody volunteering, Increase said, "I'll do it."

Jumping into his skiff, he rowed hard toward Point o' Beach,* for which the fugitive seemed to be heading, got the man in his boat, and pulled away faster than he had come. When he got home he told that the "Redcoats" came down to the water's edge at the Inlet, halted, took aim, but did not fire. Increase breathed a sigh of relief, then wondered why they had lowered their muskets; either he had got too far away, or the leader had decided the game was not so important after all and he would save his powder and shot.

The fugitive was named Waite—later changed to Smith. When Francis Pettit was a boy in Baldwin there lived in the village a Richard Smith. Often on his way to school Francis would be called over by Richard or his wife, Jane, and be given an apple or pear. "Frankie" used to wonder what prompted this generosity—rare for them, who were known as never giving anything away. It was long after he had grown to manhood that he learned that Richard Smith was a descendant of the "Waite"** Smith whom Increase had saved that day long years ago at the New Inlet end of Long Beach.

But even patriotism, whether Whig or Tory, could not withstand

* Point O' Beach was at the tip of Long Beach just across the Inlet from Point Lookout.
**According to Peter Ross, History of Long Island, the Waite Smiths of Long Island possessed the only scales in their neighborhood; hence "Waite" Smith's.
the temptations of the lucrative smuggling trade between New England merchants and Long Island. Much of the smuggling was done in thirty-foot whalers, light, easily managed, oared craft, which supported the larger craft waiting farther out. A story lingers of a British packet, the *Cartaret*, pursued by an American privateer and driven ashore off Jones Beach. The crew made for shore and were aided to escape by a band of Tories, who later looted the vessel. Another incident is that of the Rebel privateer, *Revenue*, driven aground near Hick’s Neck by the British frigate, *Galatea*. The sailors swam ashore, only to be made captive by Loyalist militia among whom were John Mott, Joseph Mott, Ruben Pine, and Issac, Joseph, and William Smith.

After the defeat of the Americans in the Battle of Long Island, the tables were completely turned; the Rebel sympathizers were on the run. Among those who fled were John Smith Rock and William Tredwell.

The entrance of the British into Hempstead was greeted with huzzahs by the Tory population, but it was not long before resentment toward the King’s men was as strong as the hate of the Rebels. Tories and Whigs alike were subjected to compulsory billeting and levies of grain, cattle, and other farm products; their homes became the scenes of brawls; even their winter fuel was stolen from their sheds. They suffered in common the hardships of a military occupation.

Despite the fierce passions the times roused, romance still thrived in Hempstead. The uniform worked its accustomed way with the town’s maidens and several marriages of British or Hessian soldiers and officers with daughters of a Townsend, Cornwell, Bedell, Denton, Verity, Carman, Gildersleeve, and Jackson are recorded. Of the romances that failed to flower the account is lost, but it was wartime, and as ever, “There’s something about a soldier,” whether friend or enemy.

The peace that finally came revealed the havoc that war had caused. Much farm property was in ruin, fences down, buildings damaged, fields stripped of livestock. More irreparable were the damaged human relations. Families were permanently disrupted. Men who had espoused the losing side, whether from policy or conviction, suffered in the esteem of their neighbors, in confiscated estates, or in banishment. Homeless, a number made their way into Canada, joining a colony at the mouth of the St. John River, which later became the capital of the province of New Brunswick. But

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the routine of self-government by town meeting, which had continued through the occupation, now proved a steadying influence. The bulk of the South Siders rubbed their scars, resharpened their tools, and began again.

Perhaps the ravages of the Revolution were felt less on the scattered farms and among the baymen of Hick's Neck than in the streets of Hempstead Village. But certainly the South Side must have thrilled to the excitement of smuggling raids under cover of night; the house-tops provided ringside seats for many a skirmish off the beach; and more than once a fleeing Tory or Whig must have been found hidden in a farmer's haystack!

The war over, Hick's Neck began to grow into the village of Milburn. The roads improved, travel by stage increased; business, freed of the fear of raids and levies, prospered. Individual joys and cares rather than mass reactions became again the preoccupation of the community.
CHAPTER TWO

Of Ships and Inns and Millerites

ORIGINAL BALDWIN HOUSE ABOUT 1870

Throughout the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth centuries sheep-partings on the Plains made holiday for Hempstead farmers and their families. The flocks were long a profitable business for the Island. South from the rolling hills of the North Shore to the northern limits of present day Baldwin, was a grassy plain. In its sixty-four square miles Tredwell says not a stick or stone could be found. In the spring, at the beginning of the grazing season, the farmers turned out their flocks on this common pasturage. Ram or ewe, each bore its owner’s distinguishing earmark, registered in the town records. In late October or early November they were gathered up again. The owners met on the plains; the sheep tenders drove the animals in to the pounding pens where individual flocks were assembled. As this yearly gathering grew in size it assumed more and more the air of a festive occasion. From far and near people collected at the sheep runs. There came clowns and tumblers, wrestlers and magicians, horse traders and gamblers, peddlers with their packs, vendors of sweetmeats and foods. Extempore athletic contests were staged. The scene, in the clear fall weather, was one of liveliness and enjoyment.
Tredwell gives an amusing account of an incident at one of these affairs:

We espied a neighbor of ours, James Wood, a respectable boss fisherman of Hick’s Neck and a very entertaining man. He always commanded an audience, and he was always telling stories, and here he was perched upon the top rail of a panel of fence in his shirt sleeves (he weighed about 260 lbs.) and holding forth to an admiring audience of Goths and Vandals, to whom he was relating a story of a miraculous draught of moss-bunkers.

In the pen immediately behind Mr. Wood were four or five sheep, including an old patriarch ram. From the time we entered upon the scene our earliest glance at that old ram convinced us from his pose that he was meditating mischief... The violent gyrations of Mr. Wood’s arms were a challenge to this Sultan of Hempstead pampas. Mr. Wood’s audience saw this impending coup-de-grâce and they urged him on, anticipating fun. Finally, with that peculiar ferocity and dash of the ovine family when going into business, the old ram raised himself on his hind feet and made straight for Mr. Wood’s parts exposed over the fence, and with the momentum of a pile driver planted his two horns into Mr. Wood’s lumbrel regions about ten inches below his gallus buttons. The blow was terrific. Mr. Wood broke from his moorings and landed ignobly in the rear part of a booth occupied by a vendor of a newly invented device for peeling and slicing potatoes and coring apples. Wood’s friends crowded around him and with the strongest attestations of sympathy got him on his feet. Mr. Wood was no fool. He said nothing—he thought. As near as we could ascertain he had sustained no damage above the shock and the loss of his suspender buttons.

After the Revolution political candidates found the sheep partings an opportunity to market their wares. It is recorded that on October 23, 1840, two weeks before the election of William Henry Harrison to the Presidency, Democratic and Whig candidates for lesser offices performed with oratorical gusto on Hempstead Plains.

It was probably the abundance of wool in the region that brought industry to Hick’s Neck. Sometime in the first half of the nineteenth century, William Clowes set up a carding mill, with attendant looms, on the creek adjacent to the old grist mill. Daniel Terry, the miller, looked on benevolently, in the intervals when his thoughts were not occupied by his designs for ship propellers—ante-dating John Ericsson, who got the credit—or for perpetual motion machines, for
which no credit is due anyone. For some score of years the spindles whirred, looms clacked, and the Atlantic breezes mingled the odor of wet fleeces with the more agreeable aroma of the grist. The nemesis which so often overtakes small businesses that fail to grow large finally descended upon Mr. Clowe’s project. No trace remains today. The gristmill later passed to Captain Carman Smith, then to his son, Charles, and is remembered as Smith’s Mill by those who were children when the nineteenth century was on the wane.

Community life through the years was of the pattern familiar everywhere outside of cities on the North Atlantic Coast. Prayer meetings on Wednesday night were well attended. Lodge brothers in those years invented all the standard excuses for coming home late. Tavern barrooms had a steady trade. Streets were unpaved, hard-surfaced walks unknown. After the spring frosts, the softened surface became mucky under passing traffic: later it hardened and was ground to dust. Oyster shell as a surface dressing was an improvement, but the supply was limited. There was no street lighting. People out at night, whether walking or driving, carried lanterns. Quilting parties were well attended, and no wonder; who wouldn’t go for a dishpan of home-made crullers washed down with cider (not too hard)? And who would miss the valuable exchange of gossip on such an occasion?

Slavery was common before the emancipation act of 1827, and domestic servants were necessary in households where half a dozen hired men were fed at the family board. Class distinctions existed but they were loosely drawn and often forgotten; titles were reserved for the ministry.

Even much later—in the early days of the commuter—the old habits clung. An elderly lady, descending from a trolley at one of the Atlantic Avenue stops, asked a bystander to direct her to the residence of Mr. Charles Johnson.

“Never heard of him, ma’am,” said he. “I reckon he don’t live in Baldwin.”

“I am certain he does,” she persisted. “I believe he is sometimes called Buff Johnson.”

“O, Buff Johnson, to be sure ma’am, I know him. Everybody knows Buff.”

Transportation during the century reflected nearly all the modes in human history. At the beginning shanks mare was a main reliance: men walked the footpaths at a swinging three miles per hour and found it bearable; even in their envy of the horsemen trotting past. The gig, the chaise; and the Brooklyn stage rolled the connecting
highway, and as more money came into the section traffic increased. For many years a daily packet plied between Lott's Landing and New York. In the thirties came talk of the new-fangled railroad, and presently, traveled persons were describing to the stay-at-homes the thrills of the trip by rail from Brooklyn to Jamaica. But as the steam trains crept eastward, it was by a route that left Hick's Neck well to one side. Perhaps on a north wind a faint long note might be heard: the distant whistle that never fails to rouse the gypsy in a youngster's heart. By the late thirties a few Milburn business men drove more or less regularly to Hempstead where the Long Island Railroad maintained a connection with the main line at Mineola. Not until the late sixties did the locomotives begin their rumble through the South Side—some time after the feet of the young men had found some surcease, having tramped from Chattanooga to Savannah with musket and knapsack or slogged in Virginia clay about the Rappahannock. Operation from Long Island City east to Patchogue began in 1868, having passed Baldwin a year or two before. Trolleys were thirty years away; the auto was little more than a rumor, the airplane dismissed as an impossibility. At the close of the century Hick's Neck was still a rather isolated farming and fishing community partly lost in the bulrushes about the Bay.

Proprietary medicines were a first resort with a populace so hardy that they usually recovered anyway—the margin of safety on which such nostrums have always relied. On March 31, 1849, the Hempstead Inquirer was willing to advertise that Roger's Syrup of liverwort, tar, and canchalaqua cured consumption, influenza, and asthma. But there were skeptics; “truth in advertising” had some support: a Hempstead druggist offered “All the popular medicines of the day that are good for anything, beside some that may be good for nothing.”

Heating and cooking was by open fire, as had been the way for generations unnumbered. When the Franklin stove appeared it created a sensation. To “strike a light” meant to apply the spark from flint and steel to an oil-soaked rag, this combination being contained in the familiar tinder box, which might be made from ordinary ox-horn or from more expensive brass or tin. The preservation of fire was almost as important as in the dawn of civilization; each day’s fire was usually preserved for the next by burying the hot embers in ashes, or, if fortune had been kind, by burning a lamp or taper.

In his diary Daniel Tredwell relates on October 16, 1838, that at a meeting of the trustees of School District Number 10 in the Bethel Schoolhouse, Israel Frost of Milburn Corners was the only one
Original School No. 1

School No. 1, 1883
who had been farsighted enough to bring a means of lighting the candles—and to everyone’s surprise it was the newly invented friction match.

The trustees—Christian Snedeker, Elbert Tredwell, and Abraham Miller—assembled in the little 20-by-50 one-room building with seven square windows, oak beams, ceiling poorly plastered and painted, walls of pine planking around three sides, and desks of the same wood. The exterior was made of oak clapboards; the board shutters, swung on wrought iron hinges, were kept in place by logs propped against them. Primitive by modern standards, this hall was the center of Milburn’s educational, religious, and political activities for many years. The schoolmaster at that time was William Fowler. He was succeeded by Jessie Pettit, who joined the Mormons when they sought converts in these parts before their trek to the West began. After Pettit, John Magee took over the task of instruction.

About 1833 another school was erected on the site now occupied by the Baldwin Laboratories at Grand and Brooklyn Avenues. “Abe” Whealey remembers trudging from the Harbor when he was a boy to attend this two-story, two-room wooden affair whose long hard benches were tropic or arctic in temperature according to their nearness to the wood-burning stove. The principal was Thomas Smith and one of the teachers was Miss Louisa Baldwin. When this building burned down it was succeeded by a larger frame structure near the site of the present School No. 1.
The Robbins School in Hempstead advertised in several editions of the *Hempstead Inquirer*, 1849, courses of instruction for males, including algebra, geometry, surveying, navigation, logic, and mental and moral philosophy; for young ladies the course was much the same except that the more manly subjects of surveying and navigation were omitted and embroidery and French were substituted. But the outstanding attraction for “females” was “a spacious playground . . . and revolving swing . . . which will accommodate eight persons at once, . . . to afford Young Ladies suitable recreation.”

II

The *Hempstead Inquirer* was a four-page sheet, not given to extra editions or block letter headlines (the first page was usually devoted to a continued story); but the editor must have been a very restrained man indeed if he did not break out with a two-column head for two outstanding events of the 1830’s, two events which all the Atlantic states either saw or heard of; the meteor storm of 1833 and the wreck of the *Mexico* on January 2, 1837.

The 13th of November 1833, was a star-lit, wintry night, with snow on the ground. About eight o’clock the sky grew red; the heavens seemed to be pouring flames onto the earth; huge, glowing astral bodies fell in such showers as to turn the white snow crimson from the reflection. Hundreds and thousands of meteors flashed past during the night. They were seen over an area three thousand miles from Canada to the northern part of South America. It was a gorgeous show to the informed, but a night of horror to many who believed that the end of the world had come.

Nature, in a more familiar, though savage mood, was responsible for the wreck of the passenger packet *Mexico* four years later. More than one hundred souls were aboard, most of them immigrants from England and Ireland looking forward that January 2nd to a new and happier life on our shores. As the ship was about to enter New York Harbor it sprung a leak, became uncontrollable, and was swept onto a reef off Jones Beach. The sea was filled with floating ice, the temperature freezing; farmers and fishermen of Raynorstown and Milburn shivered on the beach, pondering ways to save the helpless folks aboard. Captain Raynor “Rock” Smith, wrecking master of the district, called for volunteers; five men of his clan stepped forward: Jophar Smith, two Oliver Smiths, Willard Curtis Smith, and James Smith. They got past the surf, took off one boatload, went back for another; but the sea was angrier now, and they could not again get near the vessel. All the next day frozen
corpses were ferried in by gray combers. The bodies were carried to the barn in the rear of John Lott's Inn, later called Craigie Manor. In haste they were stacked there like so much cordwood; there was no time for reverence. Daniel Tredwell tells of the funeral procession. Fifty-two farm wagons bore the dead to the Sandhole Cemetery at Rockville Centre, where a monument stands to their memory. Captain Raynor "Rock" Smith, the grandfather of Charles Smith of Central Avenue, Baldwin, was personally responsible for saving eight from the icy seas. On March 25, 1837, he was tendered a dinner at the Conklin Hotel, Hempstead, by a committee of prominent New York citizens and presented with an engraved cup in testimony to his heroism.

Lott's Inn was one of the earliest stopping places for merchants who had business in Lott's Landing. Six vessels could be moored at one time at the Landing's two wharves. Among the ships that frequently docked there were those captained by Henry Jackson, John Jackson, Daniel Bedell, Joseph Johnson, John Thomas, Thomas Raynor, and Benjamin Tredwell. New York, Brooklyn, Port Elizabeth, Perth Amboy, and Haverstraw were among their ports of call.

By 1850, however, shipping at the Landing was but a shadow of its former self. Local manufacturing plus cheaper, quicker transportation via the Long Island Railroad so affected water freighitage that Lott's Landing ceased to be commercially important.

Still the Inn prospered. Colonel Lott had built it and named it Milburn Hall in the opening years of the nineteenth century. It was the showplace of Baldwins, a mansion of twenty to twenty-five rooms with a mansard roof.

Milburn Inn, at the mill, was another popular place. An item in the Hempstead Inquirer, 1849, tells of a meeting of the Whigs "for the purpose of making their nominations . . . at the Hotel of Mr. Brewer at Milburne." Several Baldwin residents confirm the story that the Inn was once used as a courthouse and jail. In later days it was run by Ben Homan, then by Smith Pettit. The Inn still stands on the northeast corner of Merrick Road and Milburn Avenue, moved back about fifty feet from its original location to make way for a less decorative but now more necessary convenience—a filling station.

Thomas Baldwin built and conducted another nineteenth century hostelry, the Baldwin House, which occupied the northwest corner of Grand Avenue and Merrick Road. About 1825 Mr. Baldwin acquired three parcels of land at that junction and erected the hotel,
as well as the general store known as T. Baldwin & Sons on the present site of Bader's grocery store. His home, once on the site of Stop-N-Shop, at Park and Merrick, was later moved south to the head of Clinton Place.

Thomas Baldwin, who, like his father, was a native son of Milburn, gave his name to the modern village, for it comes from BALDWINS, which was antedated by BALDWINSVILLE, in honor of his son Francis, later Treasurer of Queens County and Assemblyman from that county. Milburn, as a name, persisted, however, for many years, so that old maps show MILBURN generally south of the tracks and BALDWINS as a stop on the railroad.

An editorial in the Literary Chat, a highly decorative periodical written in flourishing long-hand by members of the Milburn Literary Society about 1895, reflects the high regard in which Francis Baldwin was held:

Most of us remember Mr. Francis Baldwin, a kind genial man, with a pleasant word for everybody and a big generous heart. He never failed to respond to any call . . . for anything that was to be of benefit to the village and its people. The church, the school, and in fact the whole village and all its interests were benefited by him. To him we are indebted for the many pretty homes in the upper part of our village, with their pleasant grounds and beautiful trees and shrubbery.*

The Baldwin House was patronized by drummers and other travelers, as well as by the townsfolk. A motion by an early election inspector proposed that "Smith Abrams shall be made the custodian of the ballot boxes and their contents until the next meeting . . . at the inn of Thomas Baldwin at Hick's Neck." "Uncle Tom's" Inn was also host to Thomas Tredwell, of Milburn, when his constituents gave him a clambake at the end of his term in the State Legislature. This was a big affair. Three tents were erected outside the hotel to accommodate the overflow from Jamaica, Oyster Bay, and Hempstead. Thomas Tredwell, loved by thousands, was particularly noted for his efforts to conserve the game and other resources of South Bay.

During the nineteenth century the principal industry of the Neck was built about the shell-fish, which had been threatened by piratical outsiders for years. Daniel Tredwell tells of the appearance of a New Jersey schooner off Hick's Neck in 1842, its clambasket high in the shrouds to indicate readiness for business, its rakes ready to steal

* Mr. Baldwin built the present Loft home on Merrick Road and gave the site on which School No. 1 was built in 1888.
a cargo of clams. The law was that those who caught or offered clams for sale must be inhabitants of the town and the sloops must belong to ports of the South Side. The reason for such a rigid enactment was that outsiders had come to Long Island shores and had taken the fish only for the shells. The Jerseyman timed his visit badly. The marshing season was on. There were an intimidating number of local baymen on hand to challenge the sloop. They told the captain to clear out or they would set fire to his ship. That proved sufficient; the captain backed down, turned about, and slipped out of sight.

Marshing was an industry, a pleasure excursion, or a seasonal chore, as the mood of the participants varied. It was the yearly cutting over of the island meadows in the South Bay, the tedding of the salty hay, and its removal to the barnyard stack or its sale to out-of-town farmers. The price, at one time from $12 to $15 for a two-horse team load, made a welcome addition to the income of the baymen.

An individual staked off a particular tract for cutting by setting up a rake or a pole. Later a hut was erected in which the husbandman and his helpers lived during the time of cutting. Though the shelter was crude enough, the bill of fare would have satisfied an epicure: eels, lobsters, clams, oysters, duck and quail, freshly gathered potatoes and beans, and best of all, clam chowder Long Island style.

The work was hard and long; at the end of the day few would be ready for more than a hearty meal, a story or two, a pipeful of tobacco, then bed and a dreamless sleep under the stars and the moon. Nights like those were an adventure. Tredwell says, "A slight mist like a curtain hung motionless over the creeks . . . Now and then . . . the metallic cackle of a meadow hen or the muffled quack of a shell drake. Otherwise it was the silence of death save the ceaseless roll of the ocean."

More widely shared were huckleberry frolics, horse racing at Union Course and at Hempstead, fishing, and occasional celebrations such as St. Patrick’s Day, described as "characteristic," signifying "a parade, whiskey, speeches, fights and a jail full." The Hempstead Inquirer announced a circus under the direction of June, Titus & Co. in the summer of 1849.

Fishing parties were a common weekend pastime, and we are indebted to Tredwell again for a description of one on July 15, 1853: a supper at Bedell’s Landing of eels, bread and butter, and coffee; breakfast of clam fritters, and marvelous stories by Captain John John-
son of Hick’s Neck, pilot and guide, who believed that “leisure was more desirable than wealth.” One of his stories was about the French ship Nestor, which was wrecked off the South Shore. She was loaded with calico, which floated ashore and lay all over the beach. The natives did not resist the temptation to help themselves to the colorful cloth, but it later became a mark of reproach for a woman to be seen in public dressed in “beach calico.”

That the South Shore folk more than once found ill winds blowing them good is confirmed by the stories told by Thomas Carman of Baldwin: stories of backyards and barns stocked with bananas, coconuts, and sacks of flour—all from wreckage that floated in from ships whose captains had judged badly.

The old country store fostered another institution—the “gab-fest.” In the latter part of the century, Wortman’s (Wirtman’s) General Store at Baldwin Corners rivalled Thomas Baldwin’s. Even as Ad Carman, Dick Smith, John Bedell, and Dick Verity matched tales of prowess at fishing or gunning over a tankard at the Baldwin House or the cracker barrel at Tredwell & Frost’s, so others gathered at Wortman’s to smack connoisseur’s lips over oyster stew and milk punch, to talk and smoke and smoke and talk until the air was so thick “you could cut it with a knife.” And amid the smoke, they talked

... of many things,
Of ships and shoes and sealing wax,
Of cabbages and kings . . .
Of whales—and snow—and cold that bites,
Of carriages run by steam,
Of earthquake frights and Millerites
And funny old machines,
Of western gold in ’49,
And how railroads cut the time.

The earthquake date was January 25, 1841 at 3:30 a.m. The snowstorm was a month earlier. It lasted from the 4th to the 6th; Thomas Carman, Horton Homan, Richard Soper, Thomas Denton, Charles Johnson, and Jim Tom, Tredwell’s Indian handyman, had to go out and rescue a fishing smack lost in the blizzard off Long Beach.

The “steam carriage,” forerunner of the auto, was reported in the Hempstead Inquirer, May 5, 1849; and there was another new machine mentioned in the issue of April 21, 1849, “somewhat resembling a piano, by touching the springs of which, printed letters are produced upon paper placed there for the purpose.”

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More talk there was of the cholera wave spreading over the country in '49. It was serious enough for the President of the United States to proclaim a day of prayer; and it shared space with news of the California gold rush in the columns of the \textit{Inquirer}.

In August, 1842, Pettit’s Woods was the scene of a Millerite encampment of about 2,000 people. A huge tent was pitched inside a stockade; circulars were distributed all over the South Side. The founder of this sect was William Miller, who preached the second coming of Christ in the year 1843, when the world would come to an end and the faithful would enter the joys of heaven in the flesh. On the date set the expected event did not materialize. Several inhabitants of these parts had spent the night in a barn between Rockville Centre and Hempstead, waiting. They went home shame-facedly the next day, still wearing the white ascension robes donned for the expected meeting with the Eternal.

The Mormons, too, were subjects of the “gab-fest.” The Mormons first came to the South Side in the 1840’s. When they returned in 1880 they used the old Methodist Episcopal Church, then known as Baldwin Hall, for their meeting house. From there the converts were led down Parsonage Creek to near Atlantic Avenue where they were baptized in the “Mormon Hole.”

Debates in Baldwin Hall were many during the years from 1872 to 1882. Once Asa Pettit was in the audience while his nephew, Orson, was on the platform addressing the gathering. When Orson finished, Asa arose and announced: “All I have to say is that if my dog, Major, had made that speech, I would have told him to lie down.”

In April, 1861, the war clouds burst with the bombardment of Sumter. Events leading up to the crisis had been crowding each other; the nervous election campaign, threatening predictions, Buchanan pacing the corridors of the White House, South Carolina’s secession ordinance, Lincoln slipping into Washington in secrecy, Charleston farewell parties, Southern boys parading in gray.

When the call for volunteers came, Elija Sprague was on his farm in Baldwin two miles north of the Merrick Road. He had hired four neighbors’ boys on a yearly contract, as was the custom, to work the place. These young men asked Mr. Sprague to allow them to break their contracts in order to enlist. This he did. Among the four was the same Charles “Buff” Johnson mentioned earlier in our story. Johnson was later seriously wounded; he was taken to Wash-
ington hospital more dead than alive; when he regained consciousness he found a kindly old lady nursing him.

“If you would like I will write your folks and tell them you will get well,” the nurse suggested. “Where is your home?”

“In Hempstead, Long Island,” the boy replied.

“Hempstead! What part?”

“Oh, about two miles south.”

“Did you know Elija Sprague?”

“Sure, I was working for him when I enlisted. I live right across the way from him.”

“Is his wife, Aunt Jane, alive?”

“Why yes, sure, she is.”

“Then I will write her a letter,” said the nurse.

Mrs. Jane Snedeker Sprague was sister to Isaac Snedeker of Hempstead. Isaac as a boy of 19 had been in love with Liza Golder. His mother, however, opposed their marriage, and in 1823 young Isaac married Liza Simonson. The years passed; Isaac Snedeker became a leading citizen of Hempstead, president of the board of trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, colonel of a militia regiment, first chief of the Hempstead Fire Department, and a rich merchant, his store was on Front Street at the corner of Little Main Street and his old house still stands on the corner of Front and Washington Streets. About 1861 Mr. Snedeker sold his business and retired; his wife had died and he was living alone. Very often Jane Sprague would come to him and urge him to remarry, but he would always reply, “There is only one woman in the world I would marry, and that is Eliza Golder Bailey, and I haven’t seen or heard of her for thirty years.”

And then one day Jane Snedeker Sprague received a message from Washington: “I am taking care of Charles Johnson, son of one of your neighbors, who was wounded in action. I am a widow now and have enlisted as a nurse. Liza Golder Bailey.”

Mrs. Sprague put on her hat and coat and hastened to Hempstead to show the letter to her brother. Isaac said not a word, but reached for paper and pen and wrote Liza Bailey, asking her to be his wife. Liza Bailey had completely lost track of the people back home and she had naturally assumed that Isaac Snedeker was a man of very modest means; so she replied that she would be very happy to marry him, but she was afraid she would not be able to do the
family washing! Isaac wrote and told her this would hardly be neces-
sary, that he was a rich man now.

Liza came to Hempstead and she and Isaac Snedeker were
married. They lived together for ten happy years. Isaac Snedeker
is buried in the Methodist churchyard across from his home, between
the graves of his two Lizas.

Charles “Buff” Johnson dwelt for many years on Thomas Ave-
nue near Milburn Creek, known and loved by all his neighbors.
He is remembered as the owner of the Rattlesnake, a sloop with the
head of a rattler on the bowsprit and—rare thing then—an iron tiller.

The accelerated industrialization of the United States after the
Civil War was little noticed in Baldwin, whose inhabitants were still
busy with the primal tasks of farming and fishing. Richly arable,
the undulating farmland ran from north of the sandy shore
front to the fringes of the woods two miles above “The Corners.”
Stout cedar hedges, six to seven feet high, bounded the farms and
lined the dirt roads; an occasional windmill stood out on the skyline
beside neat white farm houses.

The population of the entire Town of Hempstead in 1865
(11,764) was slightly more than half of Baldwin’s population today.

Household conveniences were few and primitive. Hand pumps
were some improvement over the old well sweep and bucket; there
were a few houses with water tanks in the attic. The water was liable
to freeze on winter nights or overflow during a blow. A tale is told
of a farmer’s boy who had to jump on the long pump shaft of a
windmill and ride up and down with it until his own weight halted
the pump and checked the flood of water from an over-filled reservoir
that was washing the floors below.

There was no bank in all of Hempstead as late as the 1870’s;
checks were rarely seen and “shin-plasters,” bills of 5, 10, 25, and 50
cent denominations, were common here as they were throughout the
country. Until the 1880’s local people reckoned in shilling and pence,
though they actually used United States coins.

Charles Dykeman was the local milkman, still remembered with
his patient and intelligent horse, his tall milk cans, and the long
handled dipper with which he ladled creamy contents into pails and
pitchers held in small hands at the gates.

Another wagon trader was “Dutch Bill,” who drove from house
to house in a “top-wagon” loaded with coats and suits already cut out
and ready for stitching, pockets, buttons, and button-holes. This
half-processed clothing he farmed out to local needlewomen, return­
ing in a few days to pay for the work and collect the finished product.

Until about 1890, Carman Smith’s gristmill ground steadily the long days through. Walter Raynor of Baldwin recalls working for three years at the old mill; and Thomas Carman tells of its vibrating hum that lent languor to hot summer days. Other mills on Parson- age Creek slashed logs into sills and studding; one on Baldwin Pond near the present Foxhurst Road was run by Hollett Southard. “Tom” Baldwin owned this mill for some years; later, in the 1890’s, it was purchased by John Glover, who turned it into a gristmill and outfitted it with a turbine. As late as the 1920’s the mill pond, bordered by beautiful willows extended to the edge of Merrick Road, opposite the Baldwin House.

For many years Merrick Turnpike remained a plank road. At toll gates every few miles was gathered some share of the scanty small change of the communities served. One of these gates was near the present Elk’s Club building in Freeport; the location of another is preserved in Toll Gate Court on the east side of Rockville Centre.

Forty to sixty years ago Coles Pettit kept a general store on Milburn Avenue just south of Merrick Road. “Bob” Smith, the blacksmith, was around the corner east of Frelingdorf’s Hotel, now Milburn Hotel; he later moved across the street—now Ellison’s* shop, one of the few blacksmith’s shops left on Long Island. “Charlie” Smith ran another general store where Flaherty’s garage now stands.

* W. E. Ellison died August 14, 1939. At the time this book goes to press, the shop remains closed.
Another Charles Smith, of Baldwin, tells the story of a fire that broke out one early evening in the Baldwin Hotel. The proprietor was an enthusiastic collector of firearms. Some of his weapons hanging on the walls were loaded when the kerosene lamp exploded. As the fire gained headway the roarings and cracklings were punctuated by thuds which all hands about the place recognized and from which they retreated. The owner watched from a respectful distance while his business went up in smoke. And, worse luck, he shouted, he had not kept his insurance paid up.

"Don't worry, neighbor," said his agent, who was an eye witness, "I advanced your premium for you last month!"

For nearly forty years after 1843 the Methodist Episcopal Church stood on Merrick Road about where Leon Joseph's haberdashery is today. The present building, erected by Lorenzo Smith, was dedicated in 1872. Old residents remember how the steeple was built inside the church on the ground floor, then hoisted into place when finished, through a hole in the roof. The steeple of this church is still indicated on every marine map of this region, as one of the outstanding landmarks on the coast.

W. A. Miller had a paint and paper shop where Whitehead's now stands. The first paint job on the Jones Hotel, now doing duty as a private residence just north of the railroad station, was done by Mr. Miller when the hotel opened about fifty years ago. During the nineties and early 1900's Tredwell Jones's Hotel was the starting
point for the bicycle races every Saturday afternoon on Grand Avenue.

William “Bill” Bedell was postmaster and station agent combined at the old depot. “Abe” Whealey recalls children on the way home from school stopping at the station to ask for the mail; in the winter they’d straggle into the waiting room a few at a time, each group leaving the door wide open. This would irritate “Bill.” Every visit would send him from his office to hurl the door shut against the weather:

And as he went without the door  
And closed it with a slam  
He named a California town  
Methinks ’twas Yuba Dam.

Parts of Hempstead Plains were still free pasturage, where farmers drove their cattle in the morning. Parmeanus Bedell had a farm up north where Fasanella’s is now and “Meanus” Lane, now part of DeMott Avenue, extended west from Grand Avenue. All of northern Baldwin was cornfields and farms.

The Sprague property of about a hundred acres extended from Woodside Avenue to Grand Terrace, and the Jeremiah DeMott farm of about fifty acres was west of Grand Avenue. In the 1880’s Mr. DeMott had to drive through neighbors’ farmland, passing at least two private gates to reach a mill over on Parsonage Creek. There was no DeMott Avenue until the nineties.

The garage on Wallace Street was then a private home owned by Thompson Combs; his son, Thomas, occupied what is now Unter den Linden.

Back in Baldwin Corners, Wortman’s general store, occupying the frame building which now houses the Baldwin Public Library, was one of the landmarks of the eighties and nineties. In a way, Wortman’s symbolized the transition from the old to the new Baldwin, for here was installed the village’s first telephone. Wortman had to guarantee the telephone company $12.50 per month in calls, and that looked pretty steep at first, considering the temerity with which many approached the new-fangled instrument. A story is told about a farmer who came into the store one day during a thunderstorm to call his wife. As the connection was made, lightning struck the wire. There was a flash and a deafening report.

“That’s Sarah, alright!” the startled farmer exclaimed.

Across from Wortman’s was Aunt “Sukuy” Baldwin’s general store, once T. Baldwin & Son’s. Aunt Sukuy was the neighbors’
name for Mrs. Thomas Baldwin, mother of Sarah Ann Barnum, whose husband was the proprietor of the poorhouse at Island Park. Before the Civil War Aunt Sukuy had helped her husband by putting out half-finished clothes, called slop work, to be done in the neighborhood. Her general store was later run by Tredwell Smith, first postmaster of Baldwinsville, and later still by Charles Southard (not Charles H.), who sold it to the Wortmans before they moved to the larger place across the street.

Until well into the 1900's, James H. Storey had a butcher shop on Grand Avenue, a couple of hundred feet north of Hebenstreit's Baldwin House; and in the same block were the bicycle shop of Frank Cotte, Scott's drug store, and Schaeffer's dry goods shop. Before Cotte's time, George Ackley's candy store occupied the building. Directly north of the Baldwin House, adjoining these stores, "Tinker" Bill Powell had a tin shop about 1868. In the 1870's Ryerson's blacksmith shop was in the shed at the rear of the hotel. Mr. Ryerson had moved there from a shop on the side of Wortman's General Store; later he moved again, this time just opposite the present day South Side Laundry.

Grand Avenue ended at Church Street. From that corner the land was open prairie and farm acreage in all directions. An inlet
from Parsonage Creek ran up to the crossroads, which was called the Landing. Nearby was a watering trough of uncertain age, carved out of the trunk of a large tree.

The present site of the Church Street school was part of the old Whealey farm. Farther south, where Quigley Beach has been built, eight acres were owned by Thomas Carman’s great-grandfather. Indian shell mounds have been found on the Carman farm, and Thomas Carman has a collection of the arrow flints discovered on his property.

To the east, at the end of Cornwell Avenue, where a fish market now advertises cherry stone clams at ten cents a dozen, was the Bedell farm and homestead. The old house, torn down recently, dated back to the 1700’s.

Seventy or eighty years ago, Captain John Thomas sailed his sloop, Old Hickory, in and out of the South Side harbors and Jersey ports, transporting brick and coal for local builders. His old home still stands on Grand Avenue just north of Adele Place. A noted bayman, one of the largest oyster planters, and a farmer as well, was Wallace Cornwell, later associated with “Charlie” Southard and others in founding the Baldwin Water Company.

Pettit’s Woods, just west of the present junction of Milburn and Atlantic Avenues, noted as early as 1842 for the Millerite encampment, became known toward the end of the century as Schreiber’s Grove and was often used as a picnic ground. An old lane led through these woods to Coles Pettit’s General Store.

A story is told of one of the old baymen, Hewlett Johnson, and his wife Maria. Hewlett owned a large stack of salt-marsh hay, which he left with Maria to sell while he went clamming. His final instructions were, “If they won’t pay fifty dollars, why sooner than let them go away, take forty.” The hay-buyers came down from the North side to buy the hay and asked Maria how much she wanted; Maria answered, “Hewlett said fifty dollars and if they won’t pay that take forty.”

To old South Baldwinites, the waterfront—every channel, inlet, shallow, and bar—is home; the sea lives in their dialect; its distances have set their eyes; the sun and the wind have bronzed their skin. There are Homers among them, a little inarticulate, but willing. The yarns you can hear any afternoon along the creeks!

There was, for instance, that time about forty-odd years ago: “We were a-fishin’ off Jones Inlet; the weather was awful thick. We
saw a boat about five mile out; there was a heavy sea a-runnin’ and smoke and steam were comin’ out of her. Later that day, the crew rowed ashore and came to Phil Denton’s to see if someone would go aboard and help ‘em salvage the cargo. She was an English ship, the Acara, and carried a cargo of tea, matting, and block tin. She lay there all day, and the next day we went out to her and went aboard. There was a crack in her side the width of your hand. We salvaged a good part of the cargo, but the ship was a goner; the next summer she split in two and sunk.”

Then there was the Martha P. Tucker, bound for New York with phosphate from South America. She was wrecked in a heavy storm; her bowsprit was away in the air and her mast was down. Captain Andrew Rhodes was alone in the life-saving station with his two daughters. The three went for help, and Tredwell Bedell, Warren H. Bedell, and William Carman volunteered. They were able to shoot a line over the bowsprit and with the aid of a breeches-buoy save all the crew but one; he had fallen from the rigging and drowned.

An anecdote has been passed on of a Baldwin schooner captain, who, returning from the Chesapeake with a load of seed oysters, ran into a bad nor’easter. The schooner was taking them heavily over the bow; the captain grew nervous. “Boys,” he gasped to his crew after one particularly vicious comber had washed away, “if you fellers got any friends in Hell you better be remembering their names. You’re going to be seeing ’em soon.”

Not as salty, perhaps, are the stories of old Baldwin’s political celebrations. Yet there is a nostalgia in recalling the torchlight procession of the McKinley campaign of ’96: the smell of burning sulphur and magnesium, the dance of the lighted tapers along the marching ranks, the shouts and laughter, the raillery and red fire.

According to one old-timer, Baldwin was the political barometer of Republican Hempstead . . . and in two successive elections John Carl, the Democrat, running for Town Supervisor, was beaten by only seven and eleven votes.

Old Hines, the ship caulker, is remembered by many. A fine upstanding citizen, his eccentricities passed unnoticed or were received with indulgence. A wheel-barrow was his daily companion; he was seldom seen on the street without it. An ardent Bryanite, he was once drawn into a campaign debate in Thomas's store, during which he threw his hat high in the air. To the general amazement it did not come down. It had sailed through the scuttle hole into

[44]
the loft, and there was a tremendous hilarity while a ladder was brought in to retrieve the old man's headpiece.

Until commuters became predominant the town meeting was a familiar institution. The old Methodist Episcopal Church building was often the place of these gatherings, and the men of Freeport, Rockville Centre, and Oceanside came there to vote on questions of the day. Upon occasion, the building was used to hold court sessions, and crowds would gather in and around the church to discuss a trial or just to chat about local affairs and the weather.

*The Wreck of the "Acara"*
CHAPTER THREE

Water Tower, Jones' Beach

Evolution

I

"From the old corner fireplace to the modern steam heat; from the old tallow candle to electricity; from the wheat shock in the field to a bag of Hecker's prepared flour were long and tedious processes of evolution."

THROUGH much of the process of change between the eighteen-nineties and the nineteen-twenties, Baldwin lingered wistfully over shaded lanes, white birch and silver maple and forests of oak and sycamore, the scent of anemone and clover, pausing for a last glimpse of the sweeping roll of farmland, relinquishing the unhurried existence that had been Baldwin.
There were 1,200 to 1,500 people in the community in 1882 and only 5,000 in 1920. Farms made rectangular patterns on the landscape from bay to woods. Kerosene lamps on long arms were fastened nightly to posts along the main streets until gas lamps, lit at dusk by a long taper, superseded them just after the turn of the century, only to be displaced by electricity in a few years. Travel was by steam train or by horse and buggy until the trolley car came in during the early 1900's. The Long Island Traction Company's single track and turnouts ran along Atlantic Avenue, with station stops at Grand, Central, and Milburn Avenues. Freeport and Rockville Centre drew nearer, and small houses began to appear where there had been only fields.

Another new service, long needed in the village, was the volunteer fire department, organized in 1895. John Carl, the first chief, later active in founding the Baldwin Water Company, gave a lawn party and barbecue to raise funds for the fledgling organization. It is said that for a distance of more than 1,500 feet round the Carl estate, horses and gigs from miles around were tied up at the temporary fence, creating Baldwin's first parking problem.

In 1893 Lam's Business Directory listed an ice-cream store in Baldwin run by Thomas Bedell (another was "Uncle" Ben Homan's),
general stores owned by T. H. Wortman, Charles Smith, and Coles Pettit, a half dozen or more oyster dealers, the blacksmith shop of Cornwell Brothers, an insurance agent, a mason (J. H. Denton); Melvina Smith, dressmaker; R. H. Homan’s, grocer; two or three carpenters, among them Andrew Raynor and Leonard Verity; Tredwell D. Smith, real estate agent; H. Story, lawyer; a livery stable; coal, ice and fish dealers; a hairdresser, a drugstore, physicians, painters, shoemakers, two or three boarding houses, and the hotels.

It was still a long time before the modern Baldwin Theatre, but just above Merrick Road, back of Morgan’s Drugstore of today, there was a music hall where entertainment, church affairs, meetings, and minstrel shows were held for many years. During the 1920’s the wooden folding chairs along the sides of the hall were placed in rows three times a week so that some three hundred and fifty patrons might enjoy the “movies”. About 1925, the balcony collapsed and this old landmark was condemned. Another and older entertainment place was a rickety structure owned by Alex Birch, on the present site of the Knights of Pythias Hall, where the first moving pictures were shown.

To get the mail, South Baldwin people still had to walk or drive up to the post office. The railroad depot was subject to adverse criticism; a sign was nailed to it in 1900 reading, “Don’t Judge This Town By the Station.” The platform was pretty much of a mud hole in rainy weather; one old resident remembers that soap boxes were used for boarding the cars.

A nursing home run by Bertrema (Mrs. George) Roper, still living in Baldwin, occupied the large house later known as “Red John’s” now Douglas Inn.

A lane led through the woods that bordered Merrick Road, from the present Morgan Drugstore to Park Avenue; as late as about 1910 this grove was called The Locusts. Until about the end of the World War, the corner store belonged to Dr. William J. Steele, who had first occupied the “Ollie” Thomas Store on Grand Avenue, south of the present Baldwin National Bank. Oliver Thomas had been a clerk in William Golder’s drugstore, the first in Baldwin, and had bought the business himself. Since there was no other drugstore in the village at the time, Dr. Steele was the only one able to fill prescriptions. This same store housed the post office for some years, both Thomas and Dr. Steele having served as postmasters. Behind this place was Hewlett Storey’s coal yard, reached by a driveway at the at the side of the store.
View of Grand Avenue. First home of Baldwin National Bank & Trust Company, second from right, adjoining the old "Movie" House.

Five Corners, 1924
Next to Thomas's, and one door nearer the present bank, was Wesley Smith's grocery store—the original home of Thomas Baldwin & Son's, Aunt Sukuy's, Tredwell Smith's, and Southard's grocery stores, and the present site of Bader's. The Bader store was built about 1900 by Wesley Smith after fire had destroyed the original building.

In the early 1900's one of the first real estate subdivisions was begun by the Baldwin Harbor Realty Company. At about the same time Charles H. Southard began the first changes on the face of old Baldwin. By about 1910 he had built the series of stores on Church Street and bungalows on a large area along Milburn, Church, and Central Avenues, including the Richard Smith farm. Not long after, he put up the stores on Merrick Road in the Southard Block; Southard Hall, where Catholic services were held for a time before St. Christopher's was built, was on the second floor above the present Ford garage. Mr. Southard later founded the South Shore Yacht Club. In 1900 he was the prime mover in the organization of the Baldwin Water Company, which erected the two water towers still standing on East Seaman Avenue. The company sold out to the Long Island Water Company in 1910.

The World War years came to Baldwin much as they did to other towns, with the draft and departures for training camps. Presently the great city that was called Camp Mills was rising from the grasses behind Garden City, and the tramp of marching men was heard again. Major Johns of the home defense unit was given a dinner; Liberty loans began to coax dollars from the savings account or the kitchen clock. The Red Cross sign became familiar; there were headlines and parades and farewells. Later, there were six gold stars in Baldwin windows.

Life grew more crowded and cluttered the automobile and paved roads developed, and clusters of commuters' cottages were built up on hitherto open acres. By the time the twenties were middle-aged the auto had so closed up the distance to the city as to spell ruin for the old inns along the South Side. Prohibition brought speakeasies slyly sitting in homes once circumspect, blinking lights in the harbor, drawn shades in out-of-the-way cabins, and "rough hands come to port."

The Klu Klux Klan flourished for a while, a by-product of the passions roused by the war. The community divided on this issue and a minister found it diplomatic to resign because of his Klan sympathies.
Meanwhile, Baldwin was growing steadily. The Harbor School was opened in 1916; Collidge School started in 1923 on North Grand Avenue; and in the same year the old Cornwell property of ninety-two acres was being developed as the Plaza Section. The Star Shell Plant was opened in 1917.

In 1919 the Baldwin National Bank & Trust Company, first bank in "Hick's Neck," was founded; its first quarters were in the Sorrentino Building on Grand Avenue behind the Morgan Drugstore. In 1921 the bank built its present home on what was formerly the spacious lawn of Elisha Baldwin's estate. Dr. William J. Steele, already a prominent physician and surgeon, chairman of the school board since 1898, and former postmaster, became the new bank's first president, a position he held until his death in 1938. Dr. Steele built up some of the village's finest residential and business sections, and strengthened Baldwin's school system until it attained one of the highest ratings in New York State. As a family doctor he brought into the world more than 1,500 babies.

During the 1920's money was plentiful; more schools were needed, and forthwith they were built: a large new high school in '27, Schubert in '29, Plaza in '30. New homes were in demand, and 400 were erected in '27 alone. Old farms were divided, gas and water mains were put in, cedar hedges were cut down, corn and potato fields were sold as lots. The Thomas farm, the Carman Smith farm, the Fredericks and Cornwell and Sprague farms were swallowed up in subdivisions. Lanes became streets, footpaths were metamorphosed into sidewalks. Small homes rose on Thomas Avenue, on Harrison north, up to Seaman, still farther north on Stanton. Community problems pressed for solution—zoning, boulevard lighting, better government, incorporation, street paving, traffic control, new street signs, another fire truck.

In the decade 1920-30 Baldwin doubled its population. Trolley cars were discontinued and busses came in; community sanitation abolished the garbage pile; water mains displaced the old oaken bucket. The Long Island Railroad was electrified to Babylon; 82 per cent of the Baldwinites owned their homes.

During these years of growth the community erected a memorial to the war dead, a marble and granite shaft rising from a triangular patch of greensward in front of the library. Beyond the pond off
West Seaman Avenue a public park was created through the generosity of Edward Held and the help of Federal funds. In 1925 William Crocker began publishing the Baldwin Citizen, a weekly journal now under the editorship of Frank Gregory.

The Baldwin Library, begun in a modest way in 1919, was first housed in the building now occupied by the Chinese restaurant at the Station Plaza. From there it was moved into the present building, the former Wortman general store. It became a public institution in 1932 when the Women's Advance Club turned it over to the school district. The book and magazine collection covers a wide range of subject matter. The children's room is attractive and well-stocked. The library is an active member of the Nassau County Library Association, and can draw from libraries in other Nassau county communities.

Baldwin today (1939) has an estimated population of 18,000. It is a part of the area known to advertising executives and sales managers as the "50-mile radius" or the "Metropolitan Area." A sizable portion of its rentals, realty sales, food, clothing, and entertainment expenditures come from the purses of the 3,900 commuters. While the community is not an industrial center, it ships clams, truck-garden products, and industrial gas furnaces. Several small enterprises service trade the length and breadth of the Island. Retail shops line the sidewalks of Merrick Road, Grand Avenue, Sunrise Highway, and Church Street. Three bus lines have a central station at Grand Avenue and Merrick Road.
The old Bethel schoolhouse with its wooden plank seats long ago gave way to five modern primary grade buildings and a large new high school. Physical fitness as well as mental ability is stressed in all classes; and an effort is made to develop an appreciation of social values by giving pupils from kindergarten through high school more and more responsibility in school affairs. In 1939 there were ten classes without a failure in the Regents examinations, and the Baldwin average was 94.

In 1915 St. Christopher’s, the Roman Catholic Church, was named a shrine of the Patron Saint of travelers. For a number of years the rector has on July 25th—the Saint’s day—extended his blessing to motorists, aviators, and bicyclists and their vehicles. The ceremony is so well known and partakers are so numerous that Merrick Road, for several blocks, is closed to traffic on that morning each year.

Although municipal incorporation has been repeatedly voted down, Baldwin has its own fire, school, and sanitation districts, and civic associations see that the community’s interests are considered by the Town Board at Hempstead.

One of the oldest organizations of a social nature—of which there are many in Baldwin—is the Milburn Literary Society, founded in 1895. In addition to reading the works of great authors at their bimonthly meetings, the members contribute essays, travelogues, and poetry to *Literary Chat*, a series of volumes assembled from time to time.

Baldwin is the home of many who have known the smell of grease paint and the footlights of Broadway. The host and hostess of the Hi-de-Ho cabaret on Grand Avenue are J. Francis Dooley and his wife, Corrine Sales, once billed as America’s Comedy Team in Australia, London, and New York. Down by the Harbor, hoeing his garden, is William “Billy” Beyer, singer and impersonator of the old Orpheum Circuit, Keith’s, and RKO. Lillian Sidney, formerly Lillian Graves, vaudeville and musical comedy trouper busily cleans her house across the way. Walter Jones stops painting his house to show his picture as the “Old Man of the Mountain.” A printing press in a Milburn Avenue cellar is the hobby of Irving Walton, quick-change character, impersonator, actor in *Girl of the Golden West* and *M'Liss*; his wife was starred in *Fads and Follies* in England and was the first woman to impersonate Al Chevallier in America; she and Walton later teamed up as the *Actor and the Girl*. “Tim” Kirby, the dance artist who did a complete dressing act on the stage...
without stopping his tapping, owns a grocery store; his wife, Lina, was featured with him in *Courtin' Days*. Other theatrical folk are Neal Ryan, novelty dancer and pantomime artist in bygone days; and Frank Gregory, editor of the *Baldwin Citizen*, and his wife. Frank used to do a whistling specialty and Mrs. Gregory was *The Girl from Arkansas*, female counterpart of today's Bob Burns.

Still before the footlights are Victor Moore; Abe Reynolds, comedian; Walter Dare Wahl, burlesque comic; Rae Samuels, singer; the May brothers; Arthur Havel, who was a Broadway hit in *Oh Uncle* and *Just a Minute*, and his wife, Helen Lockhart, who played in *Forty-five Minutes from Broadway*; the Giersdorf Sisters; Florence Mills; and Len Manning. Jean Ballantynne owner of the puppet show is also a resident of the village.

Some old-timers regret that Baldwin has lost much of the rural charm that was once its pride. It is true that many of the shaded lanes and thickly wooded glens have disappeared before the onrush of metropolitanism. But a deeper charm perseveres under the new face of things: the tradition of tolerance, wit, humor, and a sincerely democratic way of life. May this link with the past be preserved through the changes that are to come, so that the Baldwinites of the future may say with pride, "I am a citizen of no mean city."
APPENDIX ONE

Miscellaneous Facts of Interest

Population of Baldwin, 1939 .................................................. Over 18,000
Commuters, 1938 ........................................................................ 3,972
Homes, 1939 ............................................................................. 4,225
Post Office Stops ...................................................................... 4,882
Stores ....................................................................................... 337
Apartments ................................................................................. 119, housing 275 families

(These statistics are from the Baldwin Citizen, March 30, 1939, except the number of commuters, which is the official figure of the Long Island Railroad.)

Miles from New York .............................................................. 23.4

APPENDIX TWO

Churches and Clubs in Baldwin

The following list was furnished by the Baldwin Citizen. It is not exhaustive; no effort was made to include local church societies and small neighborhood clubs.

**Churches**

Christian Scientist, 1928
Jewish Center, 1927
Lutheran Evangelical, 1918
Methodist Episcopal, 1810
Methodist Protestant, 1874
Presbyterian, 1926
Protestant Episcopal, 1921
Roman Catholic, parish 1915

**Fire Department**

Organized 1895, Chartered Feb. 20, 1896
Hose No. 1, 2, 3
Hook & Ladder No. 1

First Aid Company

**Organizations**

American Legion Post No. 246
American Legion Auxiliary
Baldwin Bird Club
Baldwin Business Men’s Association
Baldwin Democratic Club
Baldwin Harbor Civic Association
Baldwin Insurance Agents’ Association
Baldwin Lodge, F. & A. M. No. 1047
Baldwin Masonic Club
Baldwin Neighborhood Association
Baldwin Republican Club
Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Rangers, Brownies, Sea Scouts, Mariners
Central Council
Companions of the Forest of America
Eastern Star
Fralman
Garden Club of Baldwin
Home & School Associations
Knights of Pythias
League of Women Voters  
Mercy Hospital League  
Mid-Baldwin Civic Association  
Milburn Country Club  
Milburn Literary Society  
Needlework Guild  
North Baldwin Civic Association  
North Baldwin Democratic Club  
Parent Teachers Associations  
Pythian Sisters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Silver Lake Heights Civic Association</th>
<th>South Nassau Community Hospital Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veterans of Foreign Wars, Sgt. Miller Post No. 1514</td>
<td>Veterans of Foreign Wars, Women’s Auxiliary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Advance Club</td>
<td>Women’s Republican Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPENDIX THREE**

**Interesting and Important Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1609-1673</td>
<td>English and Dutch fight to control New York and Long Island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644 Nov. 14</td>
<td>First patent granted to Rev. Robert Fordham and John Carman and others from Stamford by Governor Kieft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644</td>
<td>First large body of settlers in Hempstead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1658 May 11</td>
<td>Second Treaty with the Indians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1657 July 4</td>
<td>Final agreement with Indians after tree-blazing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650-1670</td>
<td>Settlement in Hick’s Neck indicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1663</td>
<td>Hempstead repudiates Dutch rule; asks for protection from Connecticut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1665</td>
<td>Delegates from Westchester and Long Island meet with Governor Nicolls (Duke’s Laws).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1683 Oct. 17</td>
<td>Charter of Liberties and Privileges granted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700 (circa)</td>
<td>This area known as Hick’s Neck or Hempstead South.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776-1783</td>
<td>British occupy Hempstead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>Towns of Long Island recognized by New York State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>Bethel Chapel erected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>Methodist Episcopal Society formed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830's</td>
<td>Mormons in Hick’s Neck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>Bethel Chapel used as school house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>School No. 1 at Grand and Brooklyn Avenues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Meteor Storm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837 Jan. 2</td>
<td>Wreck of the <em>Mexico</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 25</td>
<td>Dinner at Oliver Conklin Hotel, Hempstead, in honor of Raynor Rock Smith.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1839 June 19 Incorporation of first Methodist Congregation.
1843 Methodist Episcopal Church moves to south side of Merrick Road.
1868 Long Island Railroad comes through Baldwins; first station, 1878.
1872 Dedication of present Methodist Episcopal Church.
1880's Wortman's Store opened.
1882 Population about 1,500.
1888 The Blizzard.
1895 Baldwin Fire Department organized. Milburn Literary Society founded.
1896 Feb. 20 Baldwin Fire Department chartered.
1899 Jan. 1 Nassau County formed.
1900's Long Island Traction Company trolley line.
1907 Woman's Advance Club organized.
1910 Charles Southard founds Baldwin Water Company.
1917 Jan. 7 Cornerstone of St. Christopher's Church laid.
1917 Baldwin Home Defense Unit formed. Star Shell plant opened.
1918 Apr. 28 St. Christopher's dedicated.
1919 Aug. 15 American Legion Post No. 246 founded.
Oct. 24 Library founded by Woman's Advance Club.
1921 May 20 First electric train runs through Baldwin.
Sept. 2 War Memorial dedicated.
1923 All Saints Church built. North Grand Avenue School opened.
1925-1931 Real estate boom.
1925 Baldwin Citizen started.
Dec. 1 School No. 1 burns.
1926 Trolley line replaced by busses.
July 14 Incorporation defeated.
Aug. 5 Baldwin Fire District created.
1927 Jewish Center founded. 400 new buildings erected.
1927 Apr. 16 Sunrise National Bank opens.
July 29 Peoples' State Bank organized.
Sept. 2 Boulevard lights on Grand Avenue.
1928 South Nassau Hospital opened.
New Koch building opened.
1929 Schubert School opened.
June 8  Sunrise Highway formally opened to traffic.
1930  Plaza School opened.
1932  Woman’s Advance Club gives library to school dis­
      trict.
1933  Baldwin Theatre opens.
1933 Mar. 17  Baldwin merchants join NRA campaign.

APPENDIX FOUR
Milburn Creek and the Dam

The dam and the pond at Merrick Road and Milburn Avenue
were artificially created early in the history of South Hempstead.
The top of the dam served as a popular promenade as late as the
early 1900’s.

In Indian and Colonial days, Milburn Creek meandered for
fifteen miles from its source to the ocean, traversing a forest of dog­
wood and cedar, chestnut, beech and birch, bramble and bush. In
places its banks were only five feet apart, at other points as much as
fifty feet. Just north of the Milburn Pond a swamp once divided
the stream, whose waters up to this point were often too shallow to
navigate a canoe; but as the creek left the pond, which was surrounded
by forest and swampland, and proceeded through the marshes and
meadows of the Bay area, it deepened and widened until at its mouth
it accommodated the small packets and barges that used to dock at
Lott’s and Bedell’s Landings.

Between 1800 and 1900 the creek lost half of its volume of water,
so that today it can accommodate only the smaller harbor craft.

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Henry Hebenstreit
Walter Jones
Tim Kirby
Louis Koch
Mr. and Mrs. Herman Koster
Don D. Lovelace
James McKeon

Charles Miller
W. A. Miller
Frank Myrick
Walter Raynor
Margaret Rope
Mrs. Bertram Roper
George Ross
Neal Ryan
Paul Schuman
Mrs. Lillian Sidney
Charles Smith
Forrest Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Smith
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Mrs. F. H. Storey
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Abraham C. Whealey

Jesse Wortman