



The New Town Crier

Official Newsletter of the Historical Society of Bloomfield



BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07003

NOVEMBER 2007

MEETING

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2007
8:00 PM
BLOOMFIELD CIVIC CENTER
84 Broad Street, Bloomfield

Bringing Back the Past Nostalgic Bloomfield

Come meet our engaging November guest speaker, Jerry Arduino. Jerry recently authored "Holiday Love and Madness," a nostalgic book that includes his most treasured memories of our town. Recalling places like the Charms Candy factory, Lipton's Department Store, Woolworth's 5 & 10, and the classrooms of Carteret School, he will share anecdotes of childhood made magical by strong family ties and traditions.

Copies of "Holiday Love and Madness" will be available for purchase and the author has kindly agreed to autograph his book.



New Street, Bloomfield 1921. Joseph Barry Sr., Marie Barry, James Barry (grandfather), Janet Barry, Annie Barry, James Barry.

THE BARRYS of Bloomfield

By Joseph Barry, Jr.

James Barry brought his family to 29 New Street from Cold Spring, New York, in 1921. He had gotten the job as Chief Engineer at Mountainside Hospital. He was born in Cold Spring across the Hudson River from West Point in 1880. He married Annie McNulty, 21, another Cold Spring native, on November 13, 1904. Their parents were born in Ireland. His father, Patrick, was from Limerick, and his mother Susan McCann was from County Monaghan. Her father, James McNulty, was from West Meath and her mother Mary Louise Barry was from Cork City.

James and Annie had four children, all born in Cold Spring. Marie born on December 7, 1905, Joseph born on December 28, 1906, James born on September 5, 1908, and Janet born on March 28, 1912. They went to a one-room schoolhouse, enjoyed the river in the summer, and skated on the Hudson in the cold New York winters. The boys delivered newspapers and the girls helped their mother in the house.

When they got to Bloomfield, Marie went to work for the telephone company. She met James Johnson, a telephone employee from the Brookdale section of Bloomfield and married him on October 8, 1930. They bought a Walter Johnson home at 20 Byrd Avenue and raised three boys there: James Barry Johnson, born on July 29, 1931, Raymond Douglas Johnson born on September 10, 1933, and Patrick Daniel Johnson, born on July 29, 1940. They sold 29 Byrd Avenue in 1949 and moved to Mendham for six months. They then moved back to Bloomfield to a new house that Bob Johnson had built at 618 East Passaic Avenue. James and Annie bought a house at 36 Hathaway Place in Glen Ridge in 1926. James was crippled in a fall down an elevator shaft in 1940. He would never work again. They sold the house and moved in with James and Marie at 20 Byrd Avenue and stayed with them until their deaths in 1964 (James) and 1965 (Annie). James and Marie lived at 618 East Passaic Avenue until he retired from the telephone company in 1965. They sold the house in 1966 and moved to a house in Spring Lake, New Jersey, where James died in 1968. Marie stayed there until she moved to a



Wedding photo: Sacred Heart Church, Bloomfield, June 14, 1930. (Left to right): James Barry (best man), Joseph Barry, Margaret Johnson Barry, Mary Johnson.



The Old Rectory

This so-called "Victorian" house on Liberty Street near Austin Place began as the Rectory of Christ Episcopal Church, located westward on the site of present-day Saint John's Lutheran Church, shown in the background. The exact date of construction was probably some time in the 1870's and it remained there after the Episcopal Church was razed by fire in January of 1893. The site of the church and the house were sold to the Lutheran. The frame structure which was vacated by Westminster Presbyterian in 1890 was moved down Austin Place to the old foundation of Christ Church where it remains today.

The Rectory remained here until about 1965 when it was replaced by a new and modern split level home for the Lutheran minister. It is now leased to Bloomfield College and is in use as a Student Affairs Center and Administration offices. *Photo by Frederick Branch, ca. 1948*

(Continued on page 3)

When The Railroad Married the Canal

“Excerpts from 19th Century Newspapers”

by Sallie Black (and Margaret Riggin)

Researchers using this very valuable book “Excerpts from 19th Century Newspapers” as a guide to the heavy and fragile original newspapers in the Historical Society’s archives should be advised that many if not all of these excerpts are considerably abridged. For only one example (reproduced below) the description of the Richards/Randolph wedding 1871 had been condensed from the 344 words of the original into 40. Also, some articles, considered by the editors as unimportant have been omitted entirely. The entire article as published in the newspaper is reproduced below.

Much more work should be done in reading through each bound volume to extract further historical data. Volunteers interested in perusing these 19th century newspapers should contact Dorothy Johnson at the museum.

A Brilliant Wedding.

At the Presbyterian Church last evening, a large and select audience, representing the beauty and fashion of Bloomfield, witnessed the uniting in marriage of Mr. Wilhard Richards, Superintendent of the Montclair and Greenwood Lake R. R., to Miss Annie, daughter of Jacob F. Randolph, President of the Morris Canal company, and also Manager of the Montclair Road. The event from being long talked of, and looked for, had become a matter of extreme local interest; and long before the hour set for the nuptials, the walks without the building were plentifully sprinkled with curious ones, bent on seeing the favored guests, who came

in hurrying carriages, were deposited at the vestibule door, and quickly disappeared inside. At the appointed hour the edifice was filled until ingress became almost a matter of impossibility. The audience comprised the many warm friends of the bride and groom, with a generous sprinkling of friends and acquaintances from Newark, New York, and Jersey City. There was considerable twisting and turning, among the most anxious ones, to get the first glimpse of the grand entre of the happy couple. And when at last the commotion outside told that they had arrived, they whispered “Here they come.” went from mouth to mouth. The bride was very lovely, in white satin, with full train and white hat, with flowing veil and flowers.

The bridesmaids were Miss Dodd, daughter of Vice Chancellor Dodd; Miss Davis and Miss Smith; all charming in white silk. The groomsmen were Messrs. Leonard, Richards, Edward Cleveland and Martin Dennis. We have not space to describe minutely the superb toilets displayed on the most brilliant wedding that has occurred here in years, and which will be long held in remembrance as one of the most enjoyable of its kind. After the ceremony, from six to eight, was the grand reception at the residence of Mr. Randolph, the bride’s father. The bride and groom, accompanied by Misses Dodd and Vantien, will say good-bye to their many friends to-morrow, and start for Europe on their wedding tour.



House at corner of Spruce and Liberty Street was dormitory of Bloomfield College in 1930's; demolished by Bloomfield College in the 1960's.

There is some confusion about the ownership of this building. It has been referred to for many years as the home of Charles Moreau Davis and the Classical School he conducted there for young men. However, the 1888 map #2 on the supplement sheet lists it as the property of Jacob F. (Fitz) Randolph, President of the Morris Canal, along with the property directly across the street. Early articles from Bloomfield newspapers state that Mr. Randolph lived on Liberty Street near the Morris Canal, which is an accurate description of the location of this house (refer to 1906 map #3 on the supplement sheet). Postcard given to the Bloomfield Historical Society by Ed Stecewicz.



The two massive, heavily-carved walnut doors of the Jacob F. Randolph house in the Historical Society Museum were removed from the house when it was torn down and given to the Historical Society by Bloomfield College.

My, How Bloomfield Has Changed

By Dolly O'Leary Wood

I was born and raised in New York City, met and married a Bloomfield gentleman in 1950 and have lived here ever since. In those days, living here was like living in the country. We first lived on Spring Street, later moving to Orchard. Our three children, all born here, and I, have walked all over town, enjoying visits to two nice parks here: Brookside and Watsessing. We could leave our doors open then, and toys and lawn furniture were left outside with no worries about theft.

We shopped at the supermarkets and purchased our produce from stands on farms in the Brookdale Section of town, which was our rural countryside before it was developed into a residential area.

For so many years we lived on Spring Street (where I understand a spring was once located, hence its name). It was a very Polish neighborhood with many nice people living there. Some of the families once operated private farms in their own backyards. We attended our local church, Saint Valentine's. The children who attended the school were taught to read, write and speak the Polish language.

The center of town was called "the shopping hub of Essex County." There were so many old-time stores, like three 5 & 10's (Grant's Kresge's and Woolworth's). Plambeck's Toy Store, Siem's Ice Cream Parlor, Fanny Farmer and Mary Dunham Candy, two ladies' hat shops (when ladies wore hats), Rose Macy's and The French Millinery, and a wonderful department store called Lipton's, where you could shop for things like clothing, household items, and gifts (wrapped free of charge). There was also Rosenfeld's wonderful button store on Washington Street featuring literally thousands of buttons of every kind.

There were two movie houses on Bloomfield Avenue: The Royal and The Center. There was the Westinghouse factory that was involved in the development of the atom bomb during World War II, Tung Sol, Associated Book Company, and The Annin Flag Company. At one time, there was a tennis court across the street from The Green behind the old Community House (replaced by the Civic Center in 1953). Almost all of the above have since disappeared and there seems to be no room for tennis courts anymore.

Then the Garden State Parkway was built through a large portion of Bloomfield around 1952, causing considerable disruption in the lives of the people who were unlucky enough to be in its way. I knew several families who had to give up their homes to find other places to live. My next-door neighbors moved to Orchard Street from Willow Street. Two of their sons were in the United States Marine Corps: 19-year-old Joseph was killed in Viet Nam and East Liberty Street has been renamed Joseph Burnham Plaza in his honor. The old Erie train to Jersey City used to cross our street and stop at the Orchard Street Station, later moved to Rowe Street. I miss the mournful wail of the whistle of that train, which carried me to lots of exotic places in my imagination.

The Barrys (continued from page 1)

nursing home in Montclair, New Jersey, where she passed away in 1996.

Joseph attended Bloomfield High School for two years and went into the steamfitters union as an apprentice. He completed that program and was a steamfitter. He worked on various jobs and the Empire State Building. He met Margaret Johnson, James' sister, at a party in 1929. They were married on June 14, 1930. They bought a Walter Johnson home at 642 East Passaic Avenue. After the Empire State Building job was completed in 1932, there was no work in the steamfitters union until 1940. Joseph worked for Walter Johnson Homes and in 1935 formed a partnership with Bob Johnson to install and service oil burners. In 1937 he went to work as a gas servicemen for PSE&G. They lost the house to foreclosure the same year and went to live with Margaret's father and mother at 71 West Passaic Avenue. Pop Johnson died in 1939. They moved to 20 Chestnut Terrace in 1942. Joseph returned to steamfitting in 1940 and worked at it until he retired in 1970. He died in 1972. Margaret remained at 30 Chestnut Terrace until she sold it in 1983. She moved to Felicity Towers where she passed away in 1996. Joseph and Margaret had five children; Joseph Jr. born on August 15, 1931, Doris born on July 1, 1933, Richard born on March 1, 1938, James born on August 20, 1942 and Margaret born on April 18, 1945.

James went to Sacred Heart grammar school and Bloomfield High School until they moved to Hathaway Place. He went into the plumbers union as an apprentice, finished that program, and became a plumber, working on new construction projects in New York City. He was employed for some time, and then went to work as a gas serviceman for PSE&G in East Orange. He met Leona Williamson of West Orange, who worked with his sister Janet, at a party at Hathaway Place around 1930. They were married at Sacred Heart Church on June 22, 1935. They lived at Hathaway Place until 1939 and then moved to an apartment on

Orange Road in Montclair. They had a son, Thomas, born on November 11, 1937. They bought a Walter Johnson home at 497 East Passaic Avenue in January 1943. Tom went to Saint Thomas School. They sold the house in September of 1945 and moved to a ten-acre farm on Ironia Road in Mendham. James passed away there in 1969. In 1970, Leona moved to a house in Spring Lake. She moved to an apartment in Morristown in 1971. In 1972 she moved back to her house in Mendham, which she sold in 1979. She moved to Leisure Village West where she lived for 23 years. In 1996 she moved to Leisure Village in Lakewood. In 2007 she moved to Juniper Village at Chatham where she now resides.

Janey went to Sacred Heart Grammar School and Sacred Heart Commercial. In 1928 she went to work at Standard Statistics in midtown New York as a stenographer. She married Francis Hummel, a former next-door neighbor on New Street on October 6, 1934. Hank was a butcher and had a store on Main Street in East Orange. They had an apartment in East Orange. They bought a Water Johnson home at 50 Clubb Street in Bloomfield September 1938. They sold it in March of 1945 and bought a 100-acre farm in Long Valley, New Jersey, where they carried on a large poultry operation. They had five children: Francis Kelly Hummel born March 27, 1936, Michael Dennis Hummel, born August 28, 1941, Peter Patrick Hummel born June 9, 1944, Terrence Paul Hummel born July 11, 1948, and Susan Hummel born September 10, 1950. Hank returned to work in his brother's butcher shop on East Orange in 1959. He sold the farm in 1960 and moved to a house in Long Valley. Hank continued to commute to the shop in East Orange until it was sold. Hank died in 1988. Janet moved to a nursing home in Morristown in 2000. She passed away there in December 2000.



50th Anniversary of James and Annie, 618 East Passaic Avenue. Foreground: James and Annie, Margaret and Joseph Barry, Sr., Lee and James Barry, Marie Barry Johnson, James Johnson, Janet Barry Hummel and Hank Hummel.



General Joseph Bloomfield
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 OF BLOOMFIELD
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THE WELCOME MAT

A cordial welcome is extended to the following new members of The Historical Society of Bloomfield. We hope you will take note of our many activities and participate in any that you may choose.

Claire Delaney, *Bloomfield*
 Suzann Branch Doyle, *Sarasota, FL*
 Frank Fleming, *Bloomfield*
 Frank Godlewski, *Essex Fells, NJ*
 Vincent Marrone, *Bloomfield*
 Al Moussab, *Bloomfield*
 Clair Ryan, *Bloomfield*
 Claire Cockefair Schopfer, *Bloomfield*
 Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Schopfer,
Kingwood, TX
 Ed Stecewicz, *Nutley, NJ*



The blacksmith shop from the 1906 atlas.

LETTERS TO THE HSOB



Dear Jean [Kuras],

When I see the name of a married woman in the NEW TOWN CRIER, I wonder if it might be someone I know. For this reason, it might be a good idea that [the name of] such a woman include her MAIDEN name. When I joined, I mentioned that I had grown up in Bloomfield and attended the public schools and was on the staff of the Public Library as Children's Librarian in charge of the Young Adult's Department and also the satellite libraries in Brookdale, Carteret, and Demarest elementary schools when Dorothy Johnson was our Reference Librarian and before she became the Director.

– Clare Dugan Rizzolo

The editor replies:

Mrs. Rizzolo is absolutely correct: her background and maiden name are important and I regret that our format of the "Welcome Mat" column doesn't have space for all of it. However, maiden names can certainly be included and will be in the future. Thank you, Claire, for calling this omission to our attention.

The editor had done much research in Bloomfield Cemetery and has been often frustrated because many of the monuments list married women as, for only one example, "Louisa D. Brower". Now, was Louisa a Dodd or a Davis; there are literally hundreds of both. It took some research to find out that she was a member of the Davis family and, yes, it did make a lot of difference.

– Frederick Branch

(To Dorothy Johnson, Curator of the Historical Society Museum)

September 26, 2007

Dear Dorothy,

...I do have a question concerning the photograph of the corner of Dodd and Orange Streets in Watsessing Center. During the time in which I lived in Watsessing (from 1938 through 1951 and again in the mid-1950's) the building referred to as the Tom Moore Hotel was always known as McCarthy's Tavern. It was owned by a Mrs. Julia McCarthy, and I was of the opinion that she owned the "hotel" as well. A copy of a portion of the Bloomfield Directory, published in 1935, confirms my belief. Perhaps the change in ownership took place after the late 1950's. Could you validate that for me?

Sincerely yours,
 Marian C. Marshall
 Willoughby, Ohio

1905 MEMORY

By Helen B. Andrews

*Mr. O'Neil owned the blacksmith shop,
 He was pleased when the kids would stop
 To see the sparks fly from the hot horse shoe,
 And watch and wonder as children do.
 When the bellows made the fire roar,
 We would shrink back towards the door.
 His hammer made a rhythmic tune
 Which pleased our ears that day in June.
 "How come the horse's feet don't burn?"
 "How can you make that iron turn?"
 He smiled and explained the effect of
 the heat:*

*Showed us the hoofs on the horse's feet,
 His shop was where "Bell Tell" now stands*
 I still remember his powerful hands,
 As they gently smoothed the horse's head
 While he listened to the things we said.*

This is surely a reference to the Bell Telephone Company building on Bloomfield Avenue near Orange Street (see map at left) standing on the west side of the avenue just south of the Metz Hotel.

The Garden State Parkway, our omnipresent landmark, now passes between the old telephone company building and the Second River.

**This poem was written by the late Helen Brady Andrews, surely about a childhood experience she had over a century ago. Helen, a Charter member of the Historical Society, was a life-long resident of Bloomfield and had taught in the Bloomfield Schools. She died in May of 1987.*



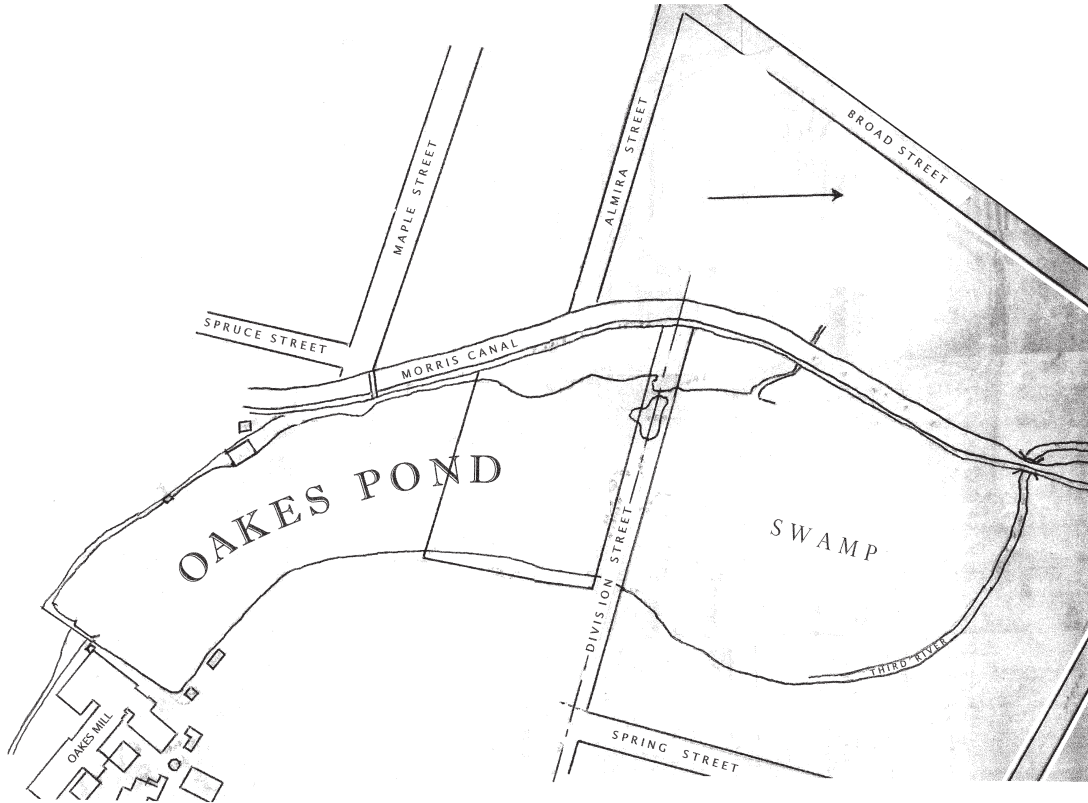
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SPECIAL MAP SUPPLEMENT

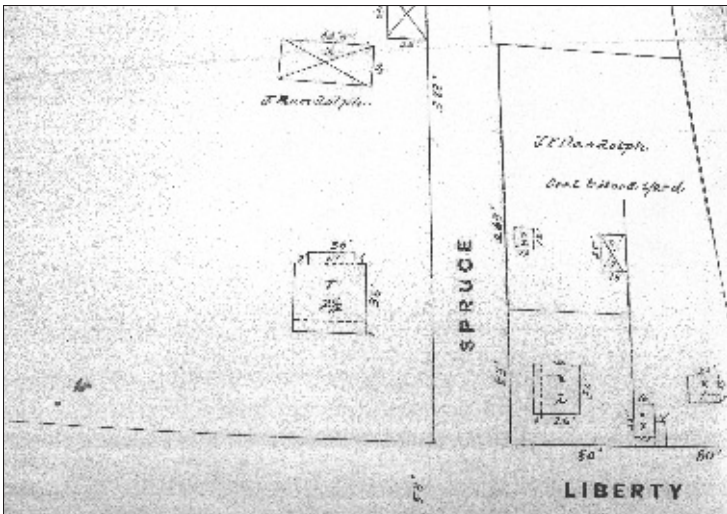
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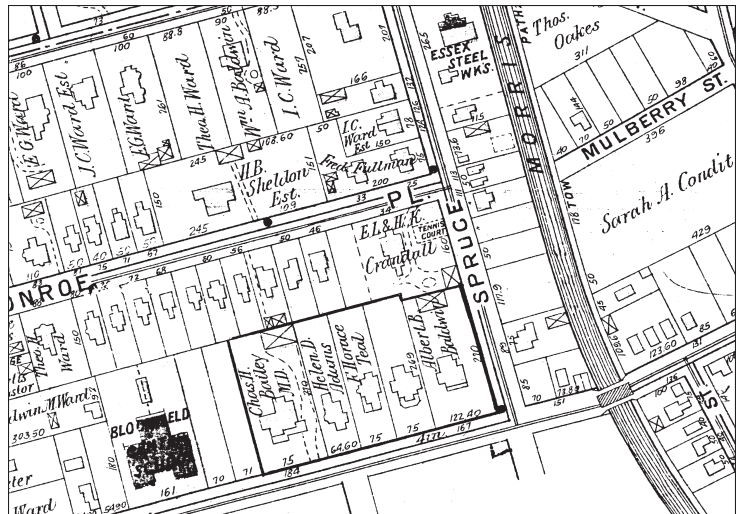
MAP #1: A hand-drawn map on tissue dated 1893 of lands belonging to Thomas Oakes II and the surrounding properties. Mr. Oakes' mother had been Abigail Baldwin and the lands at the top of this map were originally owned by her father and several other members of his family.

The purpose of the map seems to have been to show the proposed extension of Division Street from the corner of Spring Street (named for a nearby spring) from point "A", across the Oakes millpond to the towpath of the Morris Canal across other Baldwin lands to Broad Street, an improvement that is still needed today, but for some unknown reason was never carried out. The proposed use of the large underwater square plot to the left of the new Division Street extension is also not explained.

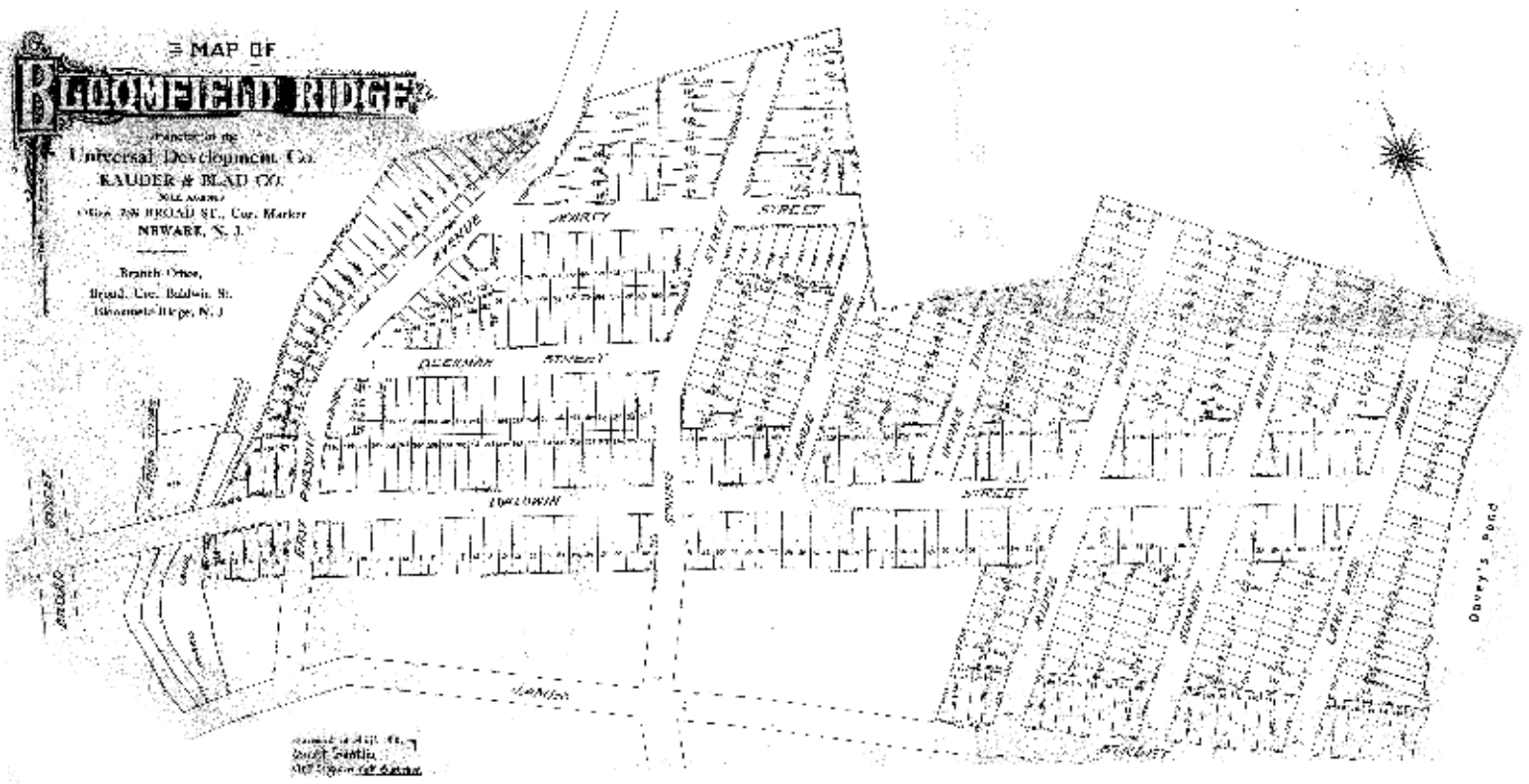
A possible explanation for the abandonment of this plan was the "Panic of 1893", which resulted in a short business depression. Whatever, the western end of Division Street still terminates, more than a century later, at a dangerously steep slope into the Third River.



MAP #2: The Jacob Randolph corner around 1890, mapped in 1888 before his death in 1897. All of the buildings shown are gone, as are the new houses to the left along Liberty, replaced in the 1920's by "modern" brick walk-up apartments.



MAP #3: A detail of the 1906 Mueller Atlas shows the Barth Florist complex at the corner of Spring and Division Streets. As their business improved, additional buildings were constructed and at least three greenhouses. It is possible that the Barths also used part of the Baldwin farm acreage for growing plants and flowers. Spring Street was later extended south to the boundary between the lands of Caleb D. Baldwin and Thomas Oakes, where it still dead-ends today.



BLOOMFIELD RIDGE

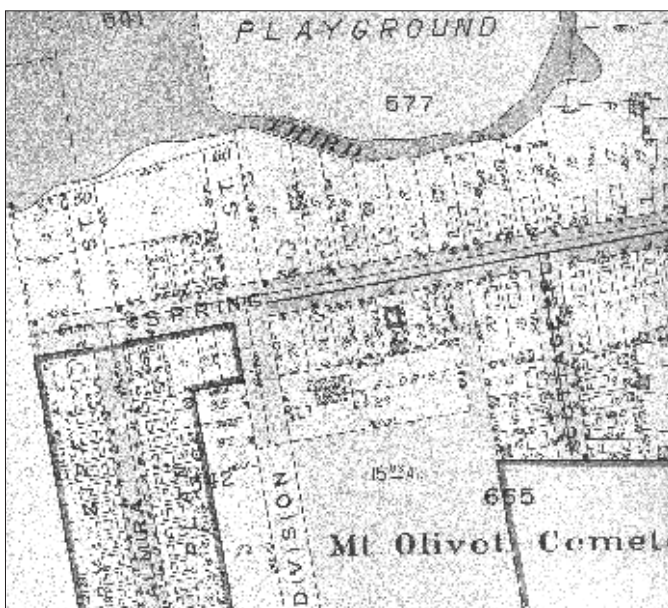
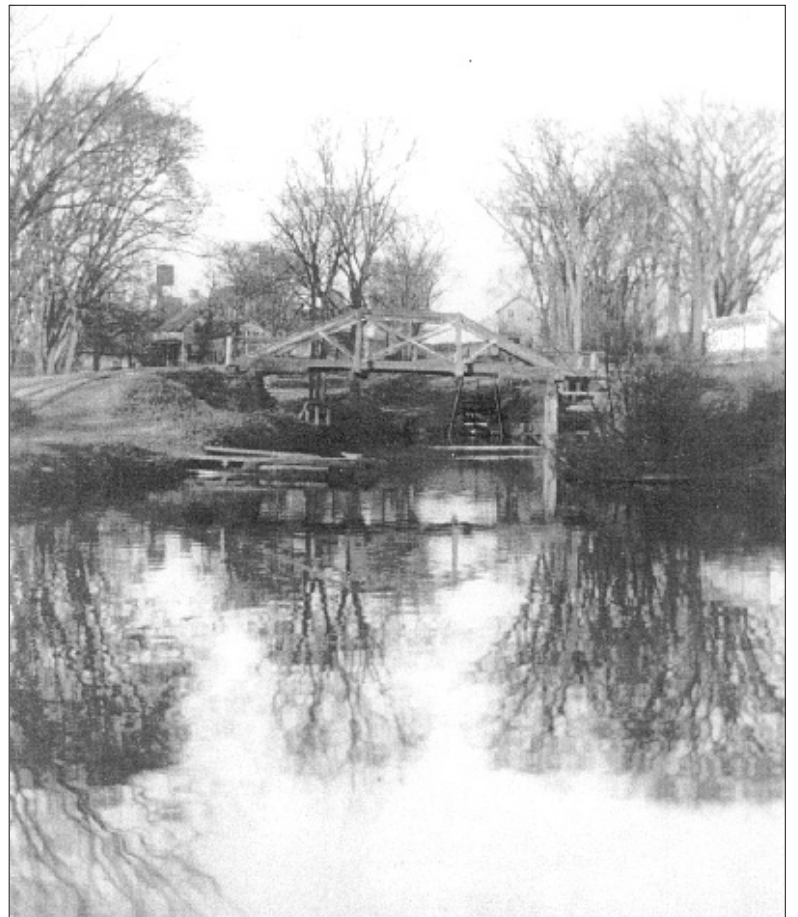
Ever hear of it? Try looking in the area cut off from Broad Street by Foley Field, the Third River, and, at one time, Oakes Pond. The map above was published in 1910 by Kander and Blau of the Universal Development Company. It was a map of their subdivision of the Baldwin Farms, east of what has long been known as “North Center”.

The entrance to the somewhat grandly titled “Bloomfield Ridge” was and still is via either the Baldwin or James Street bridges. Both end at the Garden State Parkway, which obliterated one side of Lakeview Avenue with the construction of the Parkway in 1952. As for the “lake”, it was otherwise known as Davey’s Pond, very little evidence of which remains.

A Bloomfield amateur photographer, Mrs. Emilie Westerdahl of 57 Woodland Road, caught this view of the abandoned Morris Canal and the Baldwin Street bridge at an historic moment. All other photos known to this writer show the old Baldwin homestead to the right of the bridge. Here the demolished house has been replaced with a sign that can be read as “Bloomfield Ridge”.

The tanks and smokestack of the Combination Roller and Rubber Company (now gone) are in the left background. The turbine house for the inoperable plane is just above the right end of the crumbling bridge, shored up by timbers that prevent any canal boat from passing under it again.

**An article about Mrs. Westerdahl and another of her photographs appeared in the September 2006 newsletter.*



MAP #5: The 1932 atlas shows the Barth property in the beginning of the Great Depression. New houses have covered some but not all of the Baldwin acres, and the Barth greenhouses (now demolished) are shown just below the center of the map. Spring and Division Streets both dead-ended at the Oakes Mill and the Third River as they do 75 years later.