THE HISTORICAL MURALS OF MAPLEWOOD

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by Joseph V. Noble

Maplewood, New Jersey

1961

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Introduction

A FEW HUNDRED years ago this pleasant residential valley was a primeval wilderness of forest and streams. No one knows, or probably ever will know, who was the first intrepid white settler. It is most probable that he was a Dutchman venturing forth from the comparative safety of the fortified town of New Amsterdam, later to be named New York by the English. The story of how this colonial rural community became Jefferson Village and later the Township of Maplewood is a fascinating one, high-lighted with names of famous citizens and written with the lives of everyone who has resided there. This book and the murals that illustrate it summarize the story of Maplewood.

When the Municipal Building was constructed, nine large arched niches for murals were built into the walls of the main meeting room. The graceful colonial style building was completed in 1931 and has served as a standard for the other township buildings. Unfortunately its completion coincided with the great economic depression. Consequently the mural niches were left empty for twenty-eight years.

Late in the year 1957, Thomas Sweeney, Chairman of the Township Committee, in effect the "Mayor" of Maplewood, addressed a meeting of the Civics and Legislation Department of the Woman's Club of Maplewood. During a general discussion of the past, present, and future of Maplewood, he was asked what new project the Woman's Club could undertake that would be of most constructive interest to the community. He promptly suggested that the nine niches in the Municipal Building should be filled with the long awaited murals. This was a large request as substantial funds would have to be raised by voluntary subscription. Preliminary meetings were held by the Woman's Club, the Civic Association, and the Township Committee, and the advisability of undertaking the project was thoroughly discussed. Ultimately Mr. Sweeney, acting for the Township Committee, appointed a Municipal Building Mural Committee and the Woman's Club accepted the role as the leading organization in the project. The membership of the various committees appears at the end of this introduction.

The theme of the murals was agreed upon in the initial discussion; it was to be The History of Maplewood. It was felt that the niches would permit a muralist ample space for his subject; eight niches are eight and a half feet high by five and a half feet wide and the ninth, at the front of the room, is nine feet high and seven and a half feet wide. A commission of ten thousand dollars was established to be awarded to the artist chosen to render the nine murals. Members of the Art Committee reviewed the work of various artists and visited buildings in which their murals were located. Eventually the committee narrowed its selection to four artists who were asked to submit sketches for the Maplewood project.

The artist chosen by unanimous vote was Stephen Juharos, at that time a resident of Newark and an artist of international reputation. He was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1918, and attended the National Academy of Art in Hungary where he received the Royal Academy Medal as the outstanding art student of the year of his graduation. He also won the prize of a year's study in Rome but unfortunately the year was 1939 and war was sweeping over Europe. Instead he served in the Hungarian Army until the Russians seized his country. He was able to escape with his wife, however, and was sustained by the prize money awarded him for the year in Rome. He finally reached the United States in 1945 and became a citizen in 1950.

Mr. Juharos has been a very successful portrait painter both abroad and in this country and has been in demand as an art teacher. Other works by him in this country are religious murals in New York City and the Eisenhower mural in the Hall of Presidents at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

The Art Committee, sifting through the several hundred years of Maplewood's history, finally chose the historical episodes for the nine murals. Every effort was made to select subjects that were representative of the growth and development of the community and to insure historical accuracy. Many friends in the township responded to the appeal for old photographs, maps, and other documentation about Maplewood. Meanwhile, the Finance Committee was busily soliciting contributions. Hundreds of individuals and many local organizations and businesses generously contributed a total of twelve thousand dollars to the fund. Gifts of a thousand dollars or more were designated as memorial gifts. Five of these

gifts were received and are indicated on the bronze plaques under the murals.

Work on the final sketches was started by Mr. Juharos in July, 1958, and in September of that year he began painting the murals in his studio. Composition board panels were bolted into the niches to receive the murals which were painted on Belgian linen canvas. This method of mounting permits the murals to be removed readily for cleaning or for the repair of the meeting room.

The murals were unveiled at a dedication ceremony on Flag Day, Sunday, June 14, 1959. In the intervening time between the inception of the project and its completion, Mr. Sweeney retired as Chairman of the Township Committee and was followed in office by Alan R. Kemp. George M. Wallhauser, General Chairman of the Executive Committee of the mural project, was elected a member of the United States Congress to represent the district which includes Maplewood. Fortunately, all of these men were able to be present and to participate in the dedication.

During the research work on the mural project it was discovered that the Township of Maplewood had never adopted a distinctive town seal. Accordingly, one was designed by the author and it was executed as a round plaque thirty-six inches in diameter by Anthony Micchelli. It was cast in bronze through a gift in memory of Ralph H. Jacobson and was installed at the front of the meeting room in the Municipal Building on Monday, January 2, 1961. By action of the Township Committee on the same day, it was adopted as the official corporate seal of the Township of Maplewood.

The murals and the seal augment the general meeting room in the Municipal Building and are tangible evidence of civic interest and pride. There have been many requests for a book illustrating and describing the murals, a book which would be used in the school system and by interested citizens. Therefore, an additional six thousand dollars was raised to finance this publication through a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Nestor J. MacDonald, and through the generosity of the three principal financial institutions of Maplewood: The Maplewood Bank and Trust Company, The Maplewood Savings and Loan Association, and Crestmont Savings and Loan Association.

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THE HISTORICAL MURALS OF MAPLEWOOD

1600

Chief Tuscan

THE FIRST inhabitants of the valley which is now Maplewood were a tribe of American Indians known as the Leni-Lenape. The translation of their name is most appropriate; it means "original men." They were a small peaceful group, sometimes known as the Delawares, who were part of the Indian culture of the Eastern Woodlands.

Primarily they were hunters; the forests abounded with deer, beaver, and smaller animals. Their dependence on wild game caused them to live in small groups rather than in large tribal villages. Nuts and wild fruit were also gathered, and they raised a few crops of corn and beans. Their houses were made of bent branches covered with strips of elm bark. This type of wigwam was quite serviceable but when a family moved on in search of better hunting, it was no great loss to abandon it. Baskets were made from strips of wood or cane, and boxes were formed from birch bark sewn together at the edges with grass. Wooden bowls were hollowed out of logs with fire, and sleeping and floor mats were woven from reeds or bark. They made a primitive type of pottery from the local clay which turned gray after being fired in their camp fires. Many tall jars have been found which seems to indicate that they preferred this style.

There is a local legend that two Indian chiefs had a contest for a girl whom each wished to marry. It was agreed that the winner would take the girl and, to insure peace, would move away. Chief Tuscan was successful, took his bride, and moved to the little ravine behind the present day site of Tuscan School parallel to Tuscan Road. He lived there happily for several years and after he died he was buried nearby. To this day the site of his grave has never been discovered.

The scene chosen for the mural illustrates the camp of Chief Tuscan as he and a friend return from a successful hunt proudly carrying a deer. It is afternoon in early fall, just at the beginning of Indian summer, and the smoke from the campfire merges with the blue haze in the woodland glade. The tumbling brook looks much as it does today. Beside it stand Chief Tuscan's wife and his family clad in deer skin. The young boy and the pet fox are equally interested in the results of the hunt. The wife has been grinding corn or maize for a simple meal but now with a freshly killed deer there will be a feast. What cannot be eaten immediately will be dried or smoked. The skin of another deer is being cured and stretched between two birch saplings.

Probably there were never more than ten or twelve Indians living in this valley at any one time. The early white settlers had little trouble with them as they moved westward following the wild game displaced by the farms. In 1678 Essex County, including Maplewood, was bought by the English from the Indians for 50 double hands of powder, 100 bars of lead, 20 axes, 20 coats, 10 guns, 20 pistols, 10 kettles, 10 swords, 4 blankets, 4 barrels of beer, 10 pairs of breeches, 50 knives, 20 horses, 1850 fathoms of wampum, 6 anklers of liquor, and 3 troopers' coats. The few remaining members of the Leni-Lenape tribe now live on reservations in Oklahoma.

1779

The Timothy Ball House

THE FIRST white explorer to see the area that is now New Jersey was the Italian, Giovanni da Verrazano, while he was in the service of France in 1524. Then, under the Dutch flag in 1609, Henry Hudson sailed his ship, the Half Moon, into New York harbor and sent exploring parties into Newark Bay. As a result of these explorations the Dutch laid claim to this entire region. In 1618 they established a trading post at Bergen, the first settlement in New Jersey, now known as Jersey City. England was not unmindful of Holland's territorial ambitions and engaged her in a series of conflicts resulting in all of the Dutch possessions in America being taken by England in 1664. At first New Jersey was administered as two separate areas, East Jersey and West Jersey, but in 1702 they were united as a crown colony.

In 1666 a group of Englishmen under the leadership of Robert Treat moved from Connecticut and established Newark. Among the group was Edward Ball whose son, Thomas, applied for a patent to a tract of land belonging to Newark along the Orange Mountain. He settled on a farm, part of which he ultimately gave to one of his sons, Timothy. For some years Timothy and his wife, Esther, lived in a small house where several of their children were born. Eventually he decided to build a larger one in keeping with his prosperity and the needs of his expanding family. It was built of local red sandstone and hewn timbers, and was under construction for nearly a year. The stones were hauled on sleds drawn by oxen from the quarry on the mountain. The laths were split from green oak saplings and were secured by hand wrought nails. Great oak beams for the house were fastened together by wooden pegs. It was not the custom to use a cornerstone but in the chimney a stone was laid, cut with their initials and date: T. & E. B. 1743.

Timothy Ball died of smallpox in the epidemic of 1758 and bequeathed to "my beloved wife Esther the use of all Lands Tenements and Hereditaments during the time she shall remain my widow and no longer." She did remain his widow for the rest of her long life and with her two older daughters she raised her three younger sons. At the time of the Revolutionary War three of her sons joined the New Jersey Militia.

In the winter of 1779 General George Washington and his troops were stationed near Morristown. At that time the British held New York City and both sides maneuvered their troops in New Jersey seeking possible advantages. The Ball family was strongly in support of the Revolutionary cause and offered their hospitality to Washington and his men when he was in the vicinity. It is said that on more than one occasion he spent the night at the Ball house.

The mural illustrates such an occasion in 1779, with the glow of a winter sunset filtering through the trees. Inside, the cheery candlelight offsets the chill of the evening and the discouragement of the protracted revolutionary conflict. It is reported that General Washington slept in the small room over the kitchen, the one with the tiny square window in the red sandstone wall at the left side of the house. The kitchen, on the ground floor, with its huge open hearth fireplace eleven feet wide, is said to have been used to stable the General's horse on his visits.

Washington's mother's name was Mary Ball and apparently there were some discussions as to a possible relationship between the families. In any event, Washington is said to have referred to the Balls as "cousins," perhaps as much from friendship as from kinship.

The Timothy Ball House still stands today on Ridgewood Road as the most important historical house in Maplewood. In 1919, having passed through various ownerships and fallen into disrepair, it was restored and a long porch with columns was added together with six dormer windows in the roof. But the kitchen still has the large fireplace fitted with cranes and kettles.

THIS MURAL is *the gift of Anthony J. Alves and his family in memory of Josephine C. Alves.*

1840

Asher B. Durand

AT THE START of the Revolution only about eight families lived in this valley, hardly enough to constitute a town. The patriotic fervor of the times apparently inspired the naming of the hamlet, Jefferson Village, after Thomas Jefferson, the architect of the Declaration of Independence. At the end of the century the town had grown slightly but it still could not boast of having a store, church, tavern, inn, blacksmith shop, or mill. Other than farms the only building was a tiny school which saw infrequent usage. In 1796 this rural village became the birthplace of Asher B. Durand who was destined to become the first famous citizen of the community. John Durand, his father, had moved from Newark in 1780 to a farm on Ridgewood Road adjoining a lane now called Durand Road, and it was here that Asher was born. His father, in addition to operating the farm for the family needs, made use of mechanical skills by repairing watches and clocks for not only his neighbors but for the surrounding communities as well. He was also a silversmith and, in his youth, a cooper, who seemed to have been able to manufacture any object needed by his family.

Asher reported in his fragmentary diary, "I am the sixth of seven brothers, and, if I may judge by earliest recollections, the feebleness of my constitution was in proportion to the order of succession." A delicate child, he started school at seven years of age where his instruction continued intermittently for five or six years. He had ample time to roam through the hills and forests and to form his lifelong love for all the aspects of nature.

He was a shy youth and preferred to putter about in his father's workshop rather than take part in the meager social life of Jefferson Village. He wrote of this as follows: "My father and two of my elder brothers were accustomed to engrave monograms and other devices on the various articles manufactured by them, and in this art I was early initiated." This did not satisfy him however, so he progressed to drawing animals and human figures. Neighbors and visitors encouraged him in these pursuits, and it was suggested that he be apprenticed to an engraver to learn the trade. After considerable negotiation, he was apprenticed at the age of seventeen to a well-known engraver in Newark, Peter Maverick, for a term of five years on the condition that he would receive no wage but would pay his employer one hundred dollars a year for his board.

"My career as an engraver thus commenced in October 1812. My first essay was a copy in lead pencil of an engraved head three or four inches long, the lines of which I carefully imitated. The effort was satisfactory to Mr. Maverick, and he immediately set me to work on a copper-plate."

Within the five years apprenticeship Asher Durand excelled his master after which he accepted a three year partnership with him. This terminated when the outstanding painter, John Trumbull, selected Durand to engrave his famous painting "The Signing of the Declaration of Independence." This major work took three years and when it was published Durand became known as the maker of one of the most popular American engravings. This single plate assured his success in the art field and other commissions rapidly followed.

During the years approaching his success he married and moved to New York where he met the famous art and literary figures of the day. He was one of the founders and later a president of the National Academy of Design and the Century Club. Increasingly he turned away from engraving to painting, specializing at first in portraits and then in landscapes. It was in the latter field that he achieved his greatest fame. His early love of nature lured him out into the mountains with his paintbox to paint his rustic landscapes rather than to make pencil sketches to be copied later in a studio as was the custom. He is credited with pioneering in direct painting from nature and with being the founder of the Hudson River school of painting.

The mural shows Asher B. Durand in the spring of 1840 at work on a characteristic painting. He continually chose the theme of unspoiled nature. His work is represented in all of the great collections in the United States including The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and The Newark Museum in New Jersey.

In 1869 he returned to Maplewood and built a house on the site of his birthplace. Here he painted and lived happily until his death at the age of ninety.

THIS MURAL *is the gift of Nestor and Helen MacDonald.*

1860

Seth Boyden

IN 1838 the Morris and Essex Rail Road, which ran from Newark to Orange, was extended to run through Jefferson Village and terminate at Morristown. This choice of railroad routing and the decision to have a station in the village, even if it was only a flag stop, insured the growth and prosperity of the community. The first trains were merely horse drawn carriages similar to stage coaches rolling on the iron rails. The horses were soon replaced by wood burning steam locomotives built by the inventor, Seth Boyden, who was then living in Newark. His two engines were called "The Orange" and "The Essex" and although they were the first he had ever built, he incorporated in them many unique inventions and improvements in locomotive design.

In 1788 Boyden was born in Foxboro, Massachusetts, and lived most of his life in Newark, but the last fifteen years, from 1855 to 1870, were spent in Jefferson Village. His life is a paradox of great inventive achievement and corresponding lack of financial reward for his efforts. Both his grandfather and father were mechanically inclined, the first having owned a small foundry which cast cannon for the Continental Army during the Revolution, and the latter having owned a forge and machine shop. He received little schooling and was entirely self-educated in physics, metallurgy, chemistry, electricity, and botany. At the age of twenty-one he made his first invention, a machine for making wrought iron nails. This was followed with other mechanical devices. At the age of twenty-five he moved to Newark taking with him a machine for leather-splitting which his father had invented and on which he had made substantial improvements. Newark in 1813 was a rapidly expanding industrial town needing the inventive talents of such a man. He easily found employment but it was not long before his peculiar lack of interest in profits from his inventions resulted in his being nicknamed "the uncommercial inventor."

Six years later, after significantly improving the method of making patent leather, he opened his own factory for its manufacture. In time, the making of patent leather became one of the major industries of Newark. Once an invention was made or a business started, Seth Boyden lost interest in it and moved on to new projects. The profits of his inventiveness were reaped by others who followed in his path.

After the leather industry his interests turned to metals. With outstanding success he invented the process for making cast iron malleable, allowing it to be worked readily. For inventing a whole new industry the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia awarded him its medal in 1828. Then, in characteristic manner, he sold his interests and plunged into the construction of locomotives, the first two of which were for the newly formed Morris and Essex Rail Road. Locomotives did not hold his interest for long; in rapid succession he prospected for gold in California, invented a process for producing sheet iron, invented a hatmaking machine, and built a fire engine for Newark.

His facile mind with its mercurial qualities made Seth Boyden great but kept him impoverished. When he was sixty-seven in 1855, a group of Newark businessmen bought a small house for him in Middleville, later known as the Hilton section of Maplewood, for what they thought was to be his retirement. However, he immediately plunged into a new field, botany, and started experiments in creating hybrid strawberries. Typically, he achieved brilliant results with his creation of the finest strawberries then known. "Boyden's No. 30," as they were called, were given freely to his friends and neighbors who in a short time set up a very profitable strawberry growing industry.

The scene of the mural shows Seth Boyden in late June, 1860, admiring a bowl of his strawberries picked by a neighbor's boy. In the background his locomotive, "The Orange," pulls into Maplewood station adjoining Baker Street. The name of the town was new in 1860, having originated from a large maple tree standing near the new station. Gradually the name Maplewood superceded Jefferson Village and included all the surrounding little settlements, united into one town.

Seth Boyden's house adjoined the land now occupied by Seth Boyden School. He died in 1870 at the age of eighty-two; in his eulogy it was said, "Nearly every family throughout the land has had their labors lightened by his inventions." Twenty years later his statue was erected in Washington Park in Newark.

1875

Pierson's Mill

MAPLEWOOD in the 18th and 19th centuries was an agricultural community, an area of farms and rural industries. The East Branch of the Rahway River flows through the valley parallel to the Orange Mountains affording an excellent source of water power. In 1831, Lewis Pierson built a dam and a gristmill on his 250 acre farm which had belonged since 1776 to his father, Samuel Pierson. Timbers were hand hewn from oak trees growing on the nearby heavily wooded hillside and the beams were held together with wooden pegs. The mill was a sturdy assemblage.

The millpond was quite large; it covered about fifteen acres of the floor of the valley. Water from it was led by a millrace to the mill where the water fell into the buckets of a huge breast wheel which slowly turned and rotated the granite millstones. Grain was fed through a center hole in the upper of a pair of millstones that were adjusted to rotate closely without touching. As it fell to the surface of the lower stone and was forced out between the two stones, the grain was ground to the degree of fineness for which the spacing between the stones had been set. The farmers brought their harvested crops of wheat, oats, barley, and corn to be ground and took home meal and feed for their animals and poultry, and wheat and corn flour for themselves. A farmer could either pay for the milling or, in lieu of money, a percentage of the grain would be kept by the miller to sell for himself. In this way the mill not only provided a manufacturing service but was also an outlet for crops and a source of supply for the community.

Other mills sprang up along the valley utilizing the water power. Among them were gristmills, cider mills, a woolen mill, and a paper mill. Along with the milling services, Pierson's Mill also provided a center for buying, selling, trading, and boarding horses.

In 1843 the prosperous miller, Lewis Pierson, erected a new house which he named Vaux Hall after a famous public garden in London. It was designed in the Greek revival style made popular in that day by the rediscovery of the classical period of ancient Greece. The façade of the house was based on a small Greek temple with four Doric columns. Water from a spring on the hill was piped into the house and was also used for a fountain, much to everyone's admiration.

The scene in the mural is in the fall of 1875. Pierson's Mill and the Greek revival house located on Valley Street look much as they do today. A horse barn can be seen behind the mill. To the right of the house is a part of the millpond.

Water power and the old slow machinery it drove in the mill were discarded in 1909 when electric power was installed. The new machinery could grind as much grain in an hour as the old mill could in a day. Eventually in 1916 the millpond was drained, to the disappointment of many residents who enjoyed winter ice skating on it. Farms finally disappeared from Maplewood and with their passing, the services of the mill changed. Grain was imported from the Midwest and ground for livestock and poultry feed serving a wider regional market. The advent of the suburban community required the stocking of grass seed, garden supplies, and tools instead of farm equipment.

This story of native enterprise is particularly interesting as it has been accomplished by five generations of the same family. The mill is still active and the house with its Greek columns is still occupied by the present Pierson generation.

THIS MURAL is *the gift of the Pierson family in memory of Hubert L. Pierson.*

1883

James Ricalton

THE FIRST schoolhouse in Jefferson Village stood at the corner of Ridgewood Road and Baker Street. It was a small wooden building which had been a tavern. The thirst of the farmers had given the name "Necessity Corner" to the site. Durand had attended this school in 1803 where he was "instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, a little geography and the whole of the Westminster Catechism." It remained in use until 1833 when a new building was built farther north on Ridgewood Road. The old schoolhouse later became a store and still later was incorporated into the house now standing on "Necessity Corner."

On the other side of the valley another wooden school was established in 1820. Then in 1831 a small brick schoolhouse was built on Tuscan Road adjoining the campsite of the legendary Chief Tuscan. In 1870 the three schools merged and the Central School, a two story frame construction, was built on Maplewood Avenue. The brick schoolhouse was sold and rebuilt as a private house which is still standing.

In 1871 a new teacher, James Ricalton, was hired for a term of twelve weeks at a salary of two hundred dollars for the term. He was to become the dominant force that shaped the educational system of Maplewood for twenty years. He was born in 1844 in a log cabin in Waddington, New York, a town on the St. Lawrence River. At the age of twenty-seven he became the first permanent schoolteacher in Maplewood's history. He had his difficulties with the school board; more than once they voted to dismiss him, and on several occasions they lowered his salary. However, he perservered; in 1878 an assistant teacher was hired and James Ricalton became the principal.

His capabilities as a teacher and a principal revealed only one side of Ricalton's character. He was an adventurer, world traveler, explorer, and photographer. Each summer at the conclusion of the school year he went off on one of his journeys. His first trip was to Iceland, at that time a relatively unknown country. In the following years he travelled up the Amazon River, took a walking tour of the British Isles, and another walking tour in Russia from the White Sea to St. Petersburg. He invented a "dormo-cart," a type of pushcart with a collapsible roof, into which he loaded his camera, chemicals, and luggage. At night he also was able to crawl into it to sleep. On good days he simply pushed his portable lodging by a handle. To protect him from bad weather, there was a hole cut through the center, with a trap door closure, which enabled him to stand in the middle of the cart and continue walking with the roof over his head.

From his trips he brought back thousands of photographs, specimens of minerals, articles made by natives, and curios. In the provincial town of Maplewood this unorthodox behavior was regarded by some as eccentric. However, these extensive travels gave him a breadth of vision which he imparted to his students, thus opening their eyes to the world beyond their little valley.

The scene in the mural is in the late spring of 1883. James Riealton is holding a class under the trees in the schoolyard. On the table stands his plate camera and several children are looking at photographs. One boy is examining a cluster of quartz crystals. Obviously Ricalton was an early exponent of visual education.

High on the hillside to the right of the school, the first church built in Maplewood can be seen through the trees. It was established in 1811 as a Baptist Church under the leadership of Elder Joseph Gildersleeve, and it was located at the corner of Ridgewood Road and Claremont Avenue. After the death of Elder Gildersleeve the building was leased to the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1854. In 1890 the building was moved on rollers down Ridgewood Road to Lenox Place and became the present Morrow Memorial Church.

Ricalton's travels brought him to the attention of Thomas A. Edison who, in 1888, asked him to go to the Orient in search of better bamboo filaments for Edison's new incandescent lamp. Accordingly, he requested a leave of absence from his school duties. A year's trip produced hundreds of specimens of which two were outstanding and one was used by Edison until he invented a new metal filament. Ricalton returned to the Maplewood school for a year and then resigned in 1891 to become an official photographer and war correspondent. For the next twenty years he covered events such as the Boxer Rebellion in China and the Russo-Japanese War. In 1909 at the age of sixty-five, he walked the length of Africa, from Capetown to Cairo. Eventually he retired in Maplewood to live with his family on Valley Street. He died in 1929 at the age of eighty-five after having moved back to his birthplace, Waddington, N.Y., in his final years.

THIS MURAL *is the gift of Marjorie K. Cooper, the Maplewood Civic Association, and many friends, in memory of Edward W. Cooper.*

1920

The Period of Expansion

THE GROWTH of Maplewood from a few scattered farms to a modern residential community is a story of slow but continuous change. At the time of the Revolutionary War only about eight families lived in the area, and thirty-nine years later this number had only increased to thirty. In 1810 there were 1129 slaves in the whole of Essex County. At least one of them was owned by a resident of Jefferson Village — Aaron A. Gardner advertised a five dollar reward in 1809 for the return of his nineteen year old runaway named Moses Hand. The youth had been apprenticed in a shoemaking business and apparently had not found it nor his master to his liking.

During the slack seasons on the farms the diligent and thrifty families supplemented their income with various home industries. One of the most popular was shoemaking. They made shoes for themselves and took the surplus to the local store to be sold or exchanged for credit. During the Civil War a great number of military shoes were made in private homes. Another industry that became profitable was the making of hats, some of the work being done at home and some in small factories.

In 1815, when the population reached thirty families, an application for a post office was made with the support of a map engraved by Cyrus Durand, an elder brother of Asher. The application was not successful. It was not until 1947 that Maplewood obtained an independent post office and 1958 before a post office building was erected in the town.

The advent of the railroad in Jefferson Village in 1838 insured its growth and prosperity. A route was chosen lying as close as possible to the South Mountain in order to make the shortest level track to Morristown. This choice bypassed Springfield, a far larger town, which consequently declined in importance. The Morris and Essex was leased to the Delaware and Lackawanna Railroad in 1868 when there were about one hundred and fifty people living in the newly named Maplewood.

By 1900 the population had increased to one thousand five hundred although there were still many farms and open spaces. About 1910 the improvements to the railroad reduced the commuting time to Newark and New York City, and many of the larger farms were sold for building lots. The real period of expansion came in the decade from 1920 to 1930 when the population increased from five thousand to twenty-one thousand. The mural scene of an afternoon in early summer of 1920 typifies this era of construction.

At the same time that the houses were being built, schools, churches, and municipal buildings were also being constructed. Wisely, the land on the floor of the valley, much of which had been covered by the millpond of Pierson's Mill, was not used for building. Instead, plans were laid out for the extensive Memorial Park and the Maplewood Country Club to share this property.

Today Maplewood occupies an area of 2,540 acres, almost four square miles, crisscrossed by 60 miles of roads. The population has grown to about twenty-four thousand inhabitants living in nearly 7,500 family units of which 5,650 are one family homes. 98% of these homes are occupied by their owners. The town has about 300 retail and business establishments in addition to financial institutions and professional offices. Township buildings include the Municipal Building, Police Headquarters, two Fire Houses, an Equipment Building, Main Library and Branch Library, Civic House, and smaller recreational buildings. The recreational facilities include five parks and playground areas comprising 50 acres as well as 480 acres of the Essex County Park Commission's South Mountain Reservation. There are eleven churches representing seven denominations, and there are three private clubs, one of which has a golf course. The school system is operated jointly with South Orange. Located in Maplewood alone are a senior high school, a junior high school, and five grade schools.

Maplewood has followed the axiom, "Let the light of the past illumine a pathway to the future."

1958

The Fourth of July Celebration

THE FOURTH OF JULY has always been America's favorite patriotic holiday. The day of Independence was in effect our nation's birthday, and birthdays call for a celebration. In 1817, when Jefferson Village could boast of only about thirty families, Asher B. Durand, then twenty years old, was asked to deliver the Fourth of July oration in the large nearby community of Springfield. There was a grand parade led by two of his brothers after which he overwhelmed the audience with flowery phrases and patriotic references to the Revolution still fresh in the minds of many of his listeners.

In 1904 an organized celebration of the Fourth was evolved in Maplewood which has continued to be an annual event ever since. It started with the suggestion that a collection be made to hire a band for the afternoon and evening and for the purchase of some fireworks. A small stand was set up for the band near the center of town on Lenox Place. Many families also brought their own fireworks to help make a bigger display. The street was decorated with flags and bunting and in the evening it was festooned with lighted Chinese lanterns. The celebration was a great success as most of the town turned out to listen to the music and watch the fireworks.

Each year the festivities increased and soon there was a parade with floats and costumes. Individual streets formed committees and presented elaborate floats, vying with one another for prizes. The small police force and the fire department, complete with their equipment and volunteers, were asked to take part in the parades. A baseball game and a patriotic address by a well-known speaker of the day were added. Eventually it was felt that more events should be held for the growing number of children, so the American Legion Post was asked to take charge of athletic contests. All of this resulted in the schedule of events that is still enjoyed today, financed by contributions from the citizens who attend.

Promptly at eight o'clock on the morning on the Fourth of July a barrage of aerial bombs echoes and re-echoes throughout the valley awakening the late sleepers. After hasty breakfasts the children rush to Memorial Park to take part in the athletic events. The various schools compete and all ages are represented from first grade through junior high school. Winners of the various events are awarded medals and the school with the most points receives a trophy. Good sportsmanship and keen rivalry exist side by side.

After lunch, at half past two, the circus starts and for several hours jugglers, acrobats, aerial acts, and performing animals entertain and fascinate their audience. Hurried dinners are consumed in order to get back to Memorial Park at seven-thirty for the band concert and community singing. As the sun sets and the sky becomes a deep blue indigo, the singing stops and the first skyrocket flashes up and bursts with trails of golden sparks pouring down through the sky. Ten thousand voices in unison cry "Ah-h-h," and the spectacular fireworks display commences.

There is something about fireworks that seems to appeal to everyone. The flashes of light and color, the magnitude of the moving forms, and the crack and physical shock of each explosion grips the viewer. The dramatic bursts of the aerial bombs with their cascading rainbows trickling down and becoming lost in blackness hold every eye. The grand finale is always a deafening cannonade. It is a mock war, apparent danger without really being dangerous, a thrill, a reminder of our patriotic history, a visualization of "bombs bursting in air." As it dies down a set piece in the form of an American flag is ignited and burns, vividly scattering red, white, and blue sparks. Slowly the adults gather their children together and wearily make their way home, content that another Fourth has been celebrated properly.

The scene of the mural is a montage, a blending together of the principal events of the day. The artist has condensed the fourth dimension, time, so that the entire day is visible on one plane. In the foreground in the morning sunlight are the athletic contests. To the right, the afternoon circus is under way and on the left is the evening concert. High above the Municipal Building explode several of the rockets of the night's spectacular display.

THIS MURAL is *the gift of William I. Orchard and his family in memory of Marie Frances Orchard.*

1959

Maplewood

THIS IS a portrait of Maplewood painted in the spring of 1959 as it appeared from the the Essex County Reservation on the crest of the first Orange Mountain. Maplewood encompasses several hundred acres of the reservation; a small part of it can be seen in the foreground descending toward Wyoming Avenue.

Near the center of the mural the buildings of the shopping district cluster around Maplewood Avenue. The long curving line crossing the picture is the Delaware and Lackawanna Railroad which faithfully serves the many commuters to New York. On the other side of the railroad line lies the green expanse of Memorial Park, and beyond it is Valley Street on which faces the Municipal Building with its colonial spire, seen in the middle of the mural. It is in this building that the murals are located. To the right of Memorial Park lies the Maplewood Country Club and to the left at the edge of the picture stands Columbia High School. Beyond the Municipal Building, Prospect Street crosses in a horizontal line. Springfield Avenue runs parallel along the next rise.

To the left beyond Maplewood is Newark, Jersey City, and the skyline of New York jutting out into New York Harbor. On the right, Union, Elizabeth, and Staten Island can be seen receding in the distance.

Maplewood is well named for it is a green oasis situated as a suburb of the largest populated area in the world. This mural is indeed a portrait of a community and a way of life.

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Township of Maplewood

PROCLAMATION – 3 June 2007

WHEREAS, the Maplewood Municipal Building, when completed in 1931, had nine bare niches in the Meeting Room, which remained empty until 1957, and

WHEREAS, then Mayor Thomas Sweeney enlisted the Woman's Club of Maplewood to undertake a project to fill these spaces with paintings, and

WHEREAS, Joseph Veach Noble led the raising of private donations and commissioned the artist, Stephen Juharos, to paint nine Historical Murals that were dedicated Flag Day, June 14, 1959, and

WHEREAS, after 45 years of exposure to dust, roof leaks, and airborne particulates it became obvious the paintings had lost their original luster and called for cleaning and restoration, and

WHEREAS, the Maplewood Historical Murals Committee was formed in 2004 with the endorsement of Mayor Fred R. Profeta, Jr., and under the auspices of the Durand-Hedden House and Garden Association of Maplewood, and first co-chaired by John Bausmith and Robin Hutchins, and

WHEREAS, as the paintings originally had been paid for with donated funds, the new committee, likewise, undertook to raise sufficient funds as a community project by donation, and

WHEREAS, the committee succeeded in keeping with the precedent from the nineteen-fifties and raised over $66,000 to fund the restoration and install museum-quality lighting,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Maplewood Township Committee, assembled this 3rd day of June 2007 that profound thanks and sincere commendation be conveyed to the Maplewood Historical Murals Committee for their success and dedication and to its several members, who are, in addition to the original chairpersons mentioned above, the current chairpersons Irene Kosinski and Barbara Rosengarten, and members Rowland Bennett, Hon. Robert H. Grasmere (deceased), Hon. David Huemer, Hon. Robert C. Klein, Mary Devon O'Brien, Hubert L. Pierson, Jr. and Hon. Noel S. Siegel, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that on behalf of the present and future citizens of Maplewood, this governing body does gratefully receive this gift of restoration and lighting of the Historical Murals.

Maplewood Historical Murals PROCLAMATION 6.3.07

Note: On 7/28/07, utilizing Apple PDFPen software, this presentation in PDF format was compiled by Apple Instructor Michael Kivetz for use by the Township of Maplewood

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