

The Founding of Oakland to The Surge to Independence 1695 - 1902

It May Not Be What You Thought

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April 2, 2014

Commonly Accepted Oakland History

- **Oakland Was Settled Following the 1694 Land Patent of Arent Schuyler**
- **10 Dutch Families Came Here in 1695 and Settled This Valley as Farmers**
- **The Dutch Generally and Our Settlers Specifically Had Warm, Peaceful Relationships With the Indians**
- **George Washington Slept at the Van Alen House on July 14, 1777**
- **The Bergen County Court House Was Here During the American Revolution**
- **Oakland Became a Borough in 1902**

A Few Questions About Accepted Oakland History

- **Oakland Was Settled Following the 1694 via the Land Patent of Arent Schuyler**
 - **Is It Documented? Why Did He Do It?**
- **10 Dutch Families Came Here in 1695 and Settled This Valley as Farmers**
 - **How Do We Know That? Who Were They?**
- **The Dutch Generally and Our Settlers Specifically Had Warm, Peaceful Relationships With the Indians**
 - **Is My Teepee Your Teepee?**

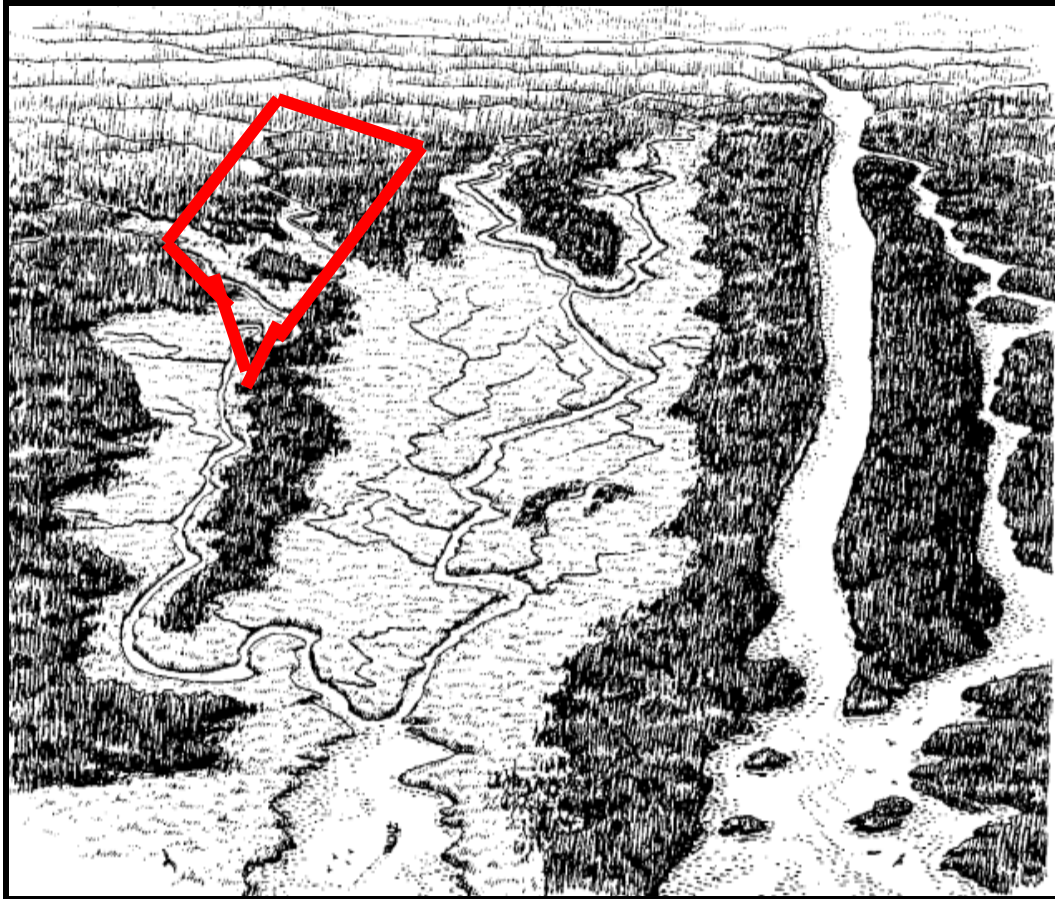
A Few Questions About Accepted Oakland History

- **George Washington Stayed at the Van Alen House on July 14, 1777**
 - **What Does His Dispatch Say?**
- **The Bergen County Court House Was Here During the American Revolution**
 - **How Did That Happen?**
- **Oakland Became a Borough in 1902**
 - **How and Why Did That Happen?**

Discussion

- **Consider the Role of Mother Nature in Oakland's Independence**
- **Explore the Anglo-Dutch Foundation of This Valley**
- **Attempt to ID the Names of the Original Settlers**
- **Chart the Dutch and British Views Toward the Indians**
- **Discuss Important Aspects of Oakland's Development during the 1700 - 1800 Period**
- **Present the Events and Environment Within and Beyond Oakland That Led to Our Independence: 1800 - 1901**
- **Examine Oakland's Independence Process Itself**

The Role of Nature to Create Oakland



Ramapo Mountains Created Millions of Years Ago.

Advancing and Receding Glaciers Carved the Ramapo Valley From Mountains.

The Last Ice Age, 10,000 Years Ago, Formed the Ramapo River and Left Mountains on Both Sides with a Great Plain Across Bergen County to the Palisades.

Mountains on Both Sides of the Valley Ultimately Created Oakland's Isolation and Small Farm Sizes.

New Netherlands - 1663



Pure Commercial Development

**Followed the Water Route between
Manhattan and Albany**

Dutch Introduce Slavery into America

British Establishment of East and West Jersey

After 1664 (Really After 1674!)



- **Continues Commercial Development**
- **1675 - Established Administrative Subdivisions**
 - **4 Counties: Bergen, Middlesex, Essex and Monmouth**
- **Established Colonial 'State' Boundaries**
 - **Colonies**
 - **In 1702 New Jersey Becomes a Royal Colony**
- **Granted Land Patents to Encourage Development**
- **Continued Slavery**

The Economic Development of New Jersey

Land Patents in the 17th and 18th Centuries

- **America was discovered by State Sponsored Exploration**
 - **Search for a Shorter Trade Route to India**
- **America was Declared as a Resource-Rich, Unclaimed Land**
 - **Furs, Minerals and Lumber There to be Had**
- **But America Needed Development aka Exploitation**
 - **People to Settle It to Make a Profit**
- **Royal Governments Developed the Land Patent System for Settlement**
 - **Entrepreneurial Companies to Exploit the Riches of America and Sell Goods Made in Europe**
- **Patents (aka Development Rights) Were Generally for 6 Years**
- **Revocable: Contingent Upon Settling the Area of the Patent - People**

The Arent Schuyler Land Patent of 1694



- Arent Schuyler born in Albany, NY in 1664
 - Surveyor, Indian Agent, Land Speculator, Miner
 - Hired by British to Investigate Rumors of French Incitement of Indians
 - Found Rumors to be False
 - But Liked the Land
 - ‘Bought’ 5,500 Acres on November 9, 1694
 - Included Oakland Area
 - Settled in Pompton Lakes – 1695
 - Interest in Mining, Not Settlers
 - 10 Land Deals between November, 1694 and November, 1695
- Many on the Same Day!

A Few More Interesting Questions

- **Who Gave The First Oakland Settlers Permission to Come Here?**
- **How Did They Get Here?**
- **When Did Oakland's First Settlers Really Arrive?**
- **What Did They Find When They Got Here?**
- **How Did They Divide Up The Land Among the 10 Settling Families?**
- **What Were Their Names?**

Settlers Come to the Valley

- **1699 Willocks and Johnston Patent**
 - **Several Thousand Acres**
 - **West of Saddle River at Preakness, The Ponds, Paramus, etc.**
 - **Land Subdivided and Sold**

- **First 19 Owners/Settlers of the 1699 Patent Were:**

John Laurence Ackerman

Jacobus Laurence Ackerman

John Le Toere

John Romaine

Ruloff Romaine

Edo Merseles

Jacobus Kipp

Jacob Kipp

Martin Ryerson

David Hennion

Tennis Hennion

Jacob Outwater

John Berdan

Samuel Van Saun

Nicholas Slingerland

George Vreeland

Stephen Camp

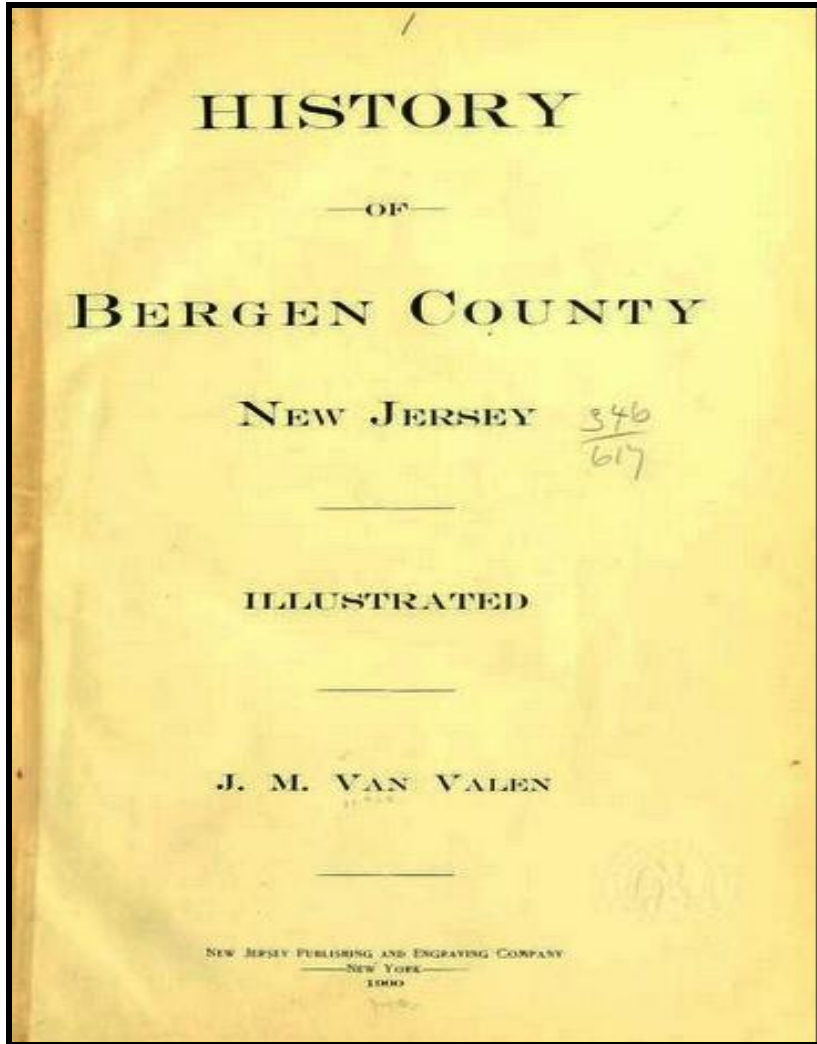
John Bogert

Zekiel Harris

- **Are These Families Our First Settlers?**

- 19 Families vs 10 / 1699 vs 1695?

Settlers Listed As of 1700



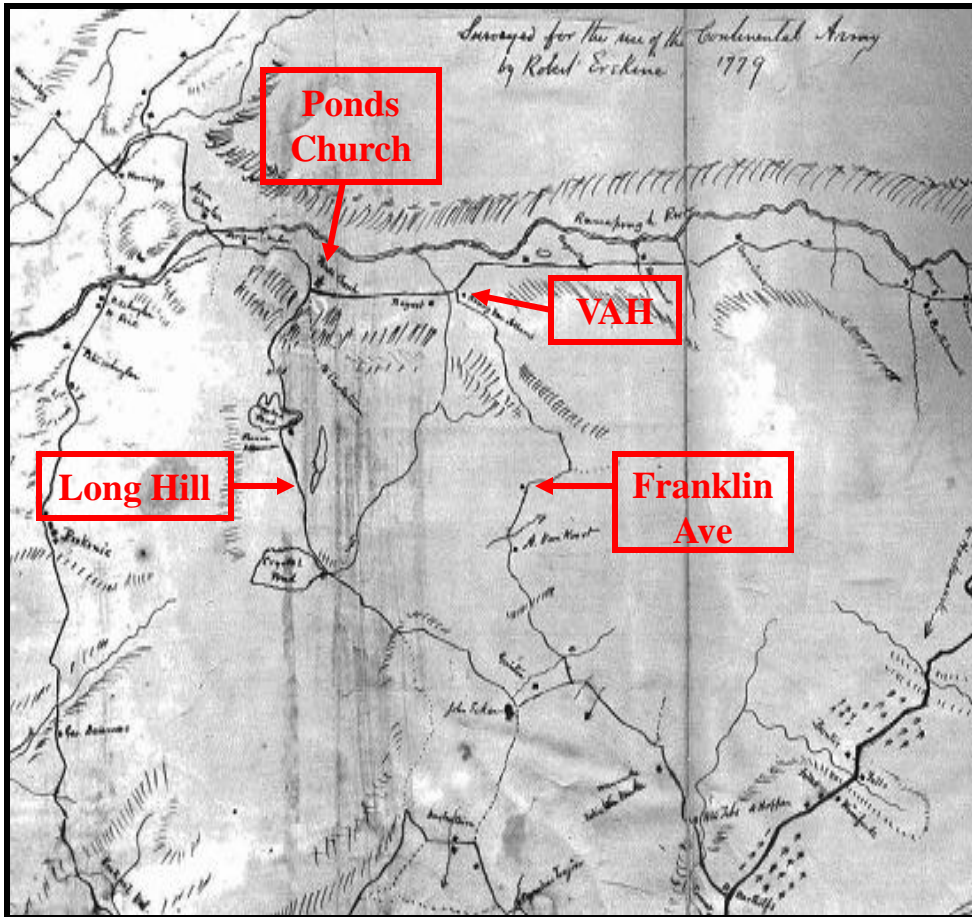
Written by James Van Valen in 1900

“In 1700 there were some 10 families living in the Northwestern part of Bergen County in the neighborhood of the Ponds Church....”

Arent Schuyler	Anthony Brockholst
Garretson	Van Alen
Berdan	John Stek (Stagg)
Van Romaine	Simon Van Winkle

The Robert Erskin Map of 1779

25 Settlers



Wormley (2)	Bogert	Schuyler (2)
Romaine	Garrison	Van Alen
Bartholmew	Rice	Ackerman
Van Koert	Gerritson	Ecker
Van Vanlte	Banter	Fells
Barthoff	Folks	Winford
Tebs	Hopper	Cairn
Doremus	Tangier	

Comparison of Settler Names

1695 - 1799

Schuyler Patent-1694	Wilcox Patent 1699	Van Valen Book-<1700	Erskin Map 1799
No Settlers Noted	Ackerman		Ackerman
	Ackerman		
	Bogert		Bogert
	Romaine	Romaine	Romaine
	Romaine		
	Berdan	Berdan	
		Van Alen	Van Alen
		Brockholst	Bartholf
	Camp	Garreston	Bartholomew
	Harris	Schuyler	Bonter
	Hennion	Stek	Caern
	Hennion	Van Winkle	Doremus
	Kipp		Ecker
	Kipp		Fells
	LeToere		Folks
	Merseles		Garrison
	Outwater		Hopper
	Reyerson		Rice
	Slingerland		Schuyler
Van Suan		Tagier	
Vreeland		Tebbs	
		Van Koert	
		Van Vanlte	
		Winford	
		Wormley	

Summary – First Settlers

- **That Settlers Came Here in 1695 Does Not Appear to be Documented**
- **That There were 10 Families Does Not Appear to be Documented**
- **The Names of the 10 Families That Came Here in 1695 Do Not Appear to be Documented**

An Interesting Confluence of Events

1694 - 1699

Brits Conquer New York

1664-1674

Johnston-Wilcox Patent

1699

Schuyler Land Patent

1694

**East and West Jersey
Established**

1665

Here They Come

**There Goes the
Neighborhood**

Slavery Continued

1665

**Schuyler Settles in
Pomton Lakes**

1695

1694-1699

When Our First Settlers Arrived, Here is What They Found

edelVIZ
landscape & business architectural visualization

They Got This

But Needed This



Their Mission: Clear the Land for Farming. But How?

Dutch and British Use Slavery to Encourage Settlement and Land Distribution

“THE CONCESSIONS and Agreement of the Lords Proprietors of the *Province of New Cesarea*, or *New Jersey* to and with all and every Adventurers and all such as shall Settle or Plant there”

(February 10, 1664)

“2. *Item* to every Master or Mistres that shall goe before the first day of January which shalbe in the yeare of our Lord 1665, **120 acres of land and for every able man Servant** that hee or she shall carry or send armed and provided as aforesaid and arriving within the time aforesaid the like quantity of 120 acres of land, and for every **weaker Servant or Slave** male or female exceeding the age of **14 yeares arriving there** 60 acres of land, and to every Christian Servant to their owne use and behoofe 60 acres of land. “

N.J. Archives (1st ser.) 1:28, 37-40

Free Land in the Wilderness for Every Slave Owned!

Slavery in New Jersey




- **Started by the Dutch in Mid-1600's**
- **Aggressively expanded by the British in New Jersey in 1664**
- **Wanted to Improve and Expand the Growth of the Providence (ROI)**
- **New Jersey Slave Population**

1726	-	2,600
1745	-	4,700
1790	-	11,432
1800	-	12,422
1860	-	236
- **Most in Northern NJ, Most in Bergen County**
- **Slavery is Documented in Oakland!**

Comparison of Settler Names

1695 - 1799

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No Settlers Noted	Ackerman		Ackerman
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		Brockholst	Bartholf
	Camp	Garreston	Bartholomew
	Harris	Schuyler	Bonter
	Hennion	Stek	Caern
	Hennion	Van Winkle	Doremus
	Kipp		Ecker
	Kipp		Fells
	LeToere		Folks
	Merseles		Garrison
	Outwater		Hopper
	Reyerson		Rice
	Slingerland		Schuyler
	Van Suan		Tagier
	Vreeland		Tebbs
			Van Koert
			Van Vanlte
			Winford
			Wormley

 = Documented as Slave Owners
+ Bush, Hopper & Van Blarcom

The Land of the Lenni-Lenape in 1695



A Few Facts

- Dutch and British Believed in Property Rights
- The Indians Did Not
- The Dutch Disliked the Indians
- Wanted to Enslave Them
- Wanted Them Off Their Land

Early Encounters with the Indians

Perception



VS

Reality



Dutch and British Relations with the Indians Weren't All That Good

A Late 17th Century Print



- Dutch Fought and Lost 2 Wars Against the Indians
- But Needed Peace to Settle the Land and Make a Profit
- Forced the Indians to America's First Reservation in the Pine Barrens on 8/1/1758 - Brotherton

A Few Soft Conclusions

The Initial Settlement of this Valley

- 1. If the 10 Founding Families Settled This Area (Oakland +) in 1694, They Were Likely Preceded by Several Years by Others to Clear the Land, Build Cabins and Plant Crops.**

Or

- 2. The Land Clearing and Planting Party Came Here in 1695 Followed by the First Permanent Settlers Several Years Later.**

But

- 3. There Were No Unassigned Land Patents Issued in This Area in 1694**
- 4. Arent Schuyler Appeared to Have No Interest In Promoting Settlements**

- Land Speculation → Flip Properties

A Few More Soft Conclusions

- 5. First Settlers Likely Arrived From the Perth Amboy Area (Slavery Center).**
- 6. Permission to Come Here Was Most Likely Granted Through Sub-Land Sales (1699).**
- 7. Our First Families Were Likely Slave Owners.**
- 8. Free Land via Slave Ownership Was the Motivation to Come Here.**
- 9. The Number of Slaves Owned Determined Who Got How Much Land.**
- 10. Your Property and Mine Was Cleared and Once Farmed by Slaves.**

And Now.....

Oakland Racing Into the

18th Century

And

The American Revolution!

Events That Influenced Oakland's Destiny

1700 to 1800

- **1709** **Uriah Reyerson & Urie Westervelt buy land on North Side of the Ramapo River between Pompton and The Ponds**
- **1710** **Designation of Townships by the British**
- **1710** **The Establishment of the Ponds Church**
- **1716** **Oakland Area Becomes Part of Saddle River Township**
- **1724** **Yan Romaine buys 600 Acres Near the Ponds Church**

Events That Influenced Oakland's Destiny

1700 to 1800

- **1758 The Removal of the Lenne-Lenapi to 'Brotherton' Reservation in South Jersey**
- **1775 – 1783 The American Revolution**
- **1769 Boundaries Set For Bergen County**
- **1780 Bergen County Courthouse Comes to Oakland**
- **1784 Bergen County Courthouse returns to Hackensack**
- **1784 Oakland Goes Back to Sleep for 85 Years**

Oakland in the American Revolution

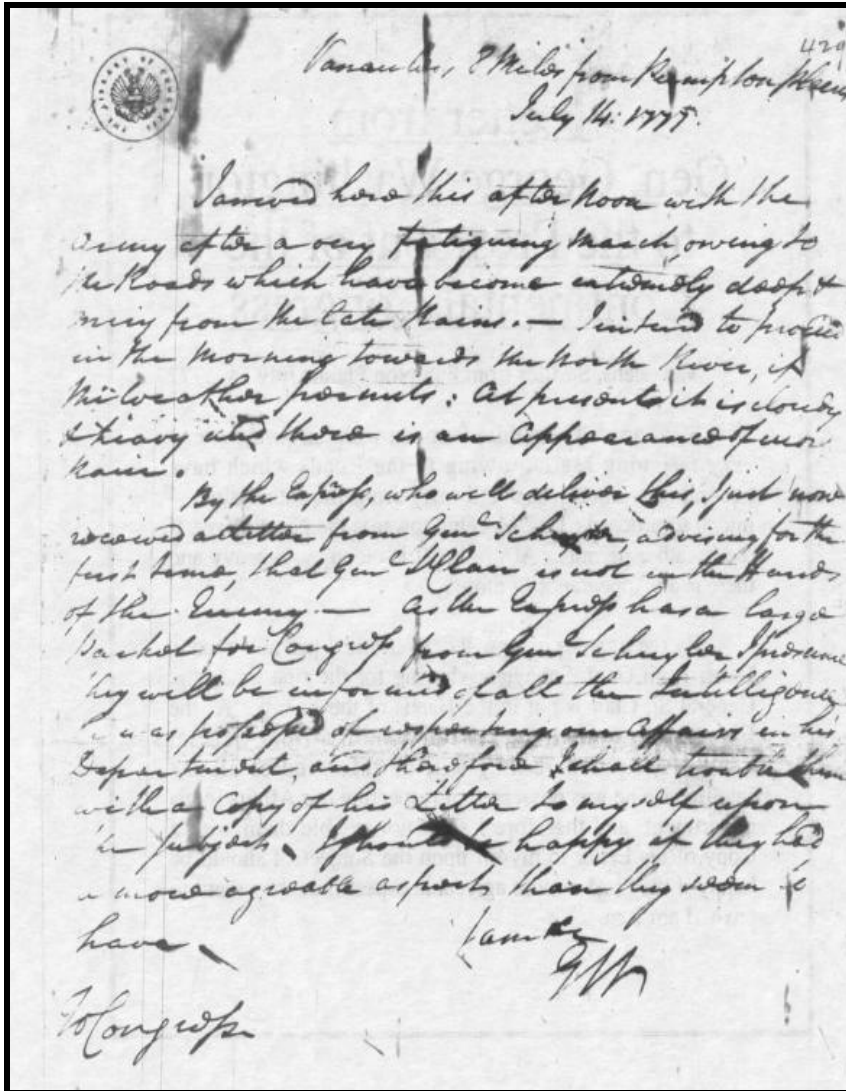
Two Events Define Oakland's Participation in the American Revolution:

- 1. That George Washington stayed at the Van Alen House on July 14, 1777**
- 2. That Oakland Was Proudly Selected to be the Seat of Bergen County After the British Burned the Courthouse in Hackensack**

Both Events Need a Bit of Discussion.....

George Washington HQ at the Van Alen House

July 14, 1777



Vanaulens, 8 Miles from Pompton Plains ⁴²⁰
July 14. 1777.

I arrived here this afternoon with the
Army after a very fatiguing march, owing to
the Roads which have become extremely deep &
muddy from the late rains. — I intended to proceed
in the morning towards the North River, if
the weather permitted: At present it is cloudy
& heavy with there is an appearance of more
rain.

By the Capt. who will deliver this, I just now
received a letter from Gen. Schuyler, advising for the
first time, that Gen. Mifflin is not in the hands
of the Enemy — As the Capt. has a large
Basket for Congress from Gen. Schuyler's
Army will be informed of all the Intelligence
as proposed at respecting our Affairs in his
Department, and therefore I shall transmit
with a copy of his Letter to myself upon
in Judgement. I should be happy if they had
a more agreeable aspect than they seem to
have.

I am
G. W.

To Congress

Facts to Be Considered

1. The Letter Simply Says, “Vanaulens 8 Miles From Pompton Plains”, Not at Vanaulens House.
2. There were 2 Van Alen Houses in Oakland at the Time Documented by the Robert Erskin map. If at the Van Alen House, Which One?

Implication

That George Washington Had His HQ at the Current Van Alen House on 7/14/1777 Does Not Appear to be Fully Supported But May Be True.

The Bergen County Courthouse Comes to Oakland 1780

Facts to Be Considered

**The British Burned the Courthouse in
Hackensack on March 22, 1780**

- Anticipated NJ Legislature in 1778
- Needed in Different Location

**New Site at Albert Hopper Farm in HoHoKus in
November, 1779**

- British Burned It April 16, 1780

**Another New Site at Martin Ryerson Farm in
Saddle River – May, 1780**

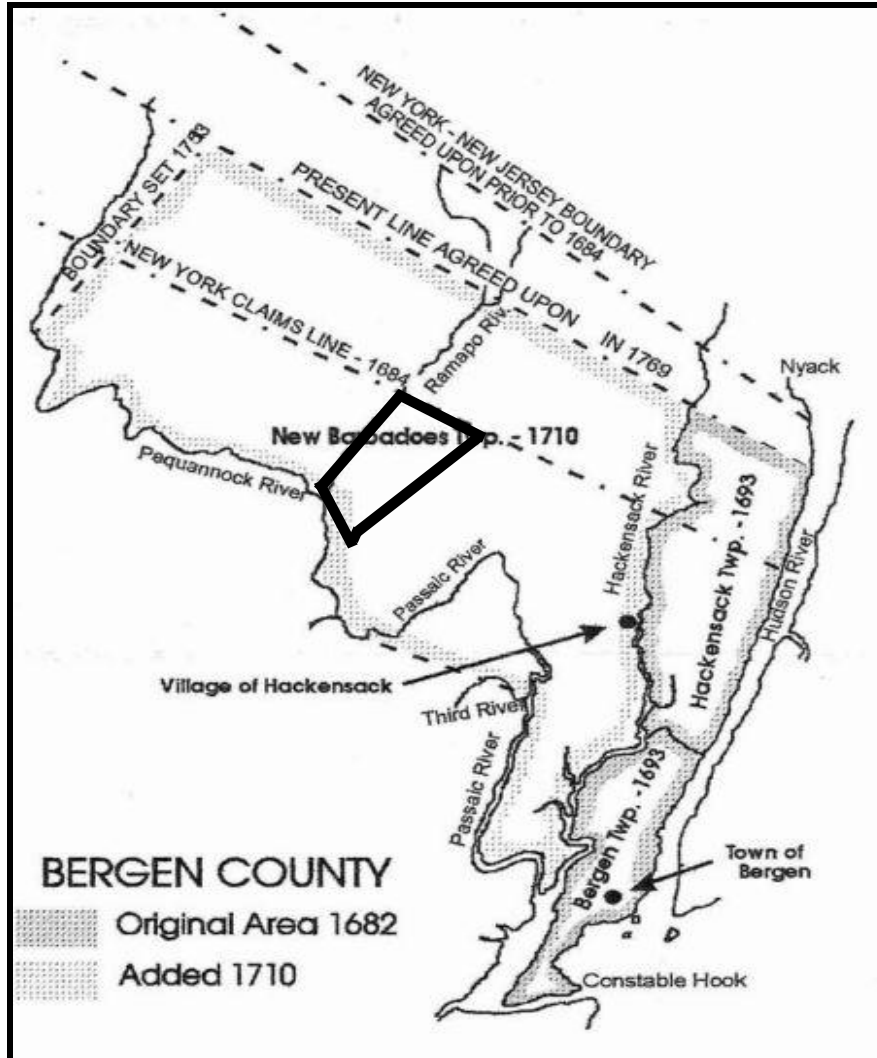
- British Burned It Down

Oakland Was the THIRD Choice

- 2 Rivers and 3 Days Away from Hackensack
- Temporary at Van Alen House Then to New
Courthouse/Goal (Log)



1710 Establishment of Townships in Bergen County

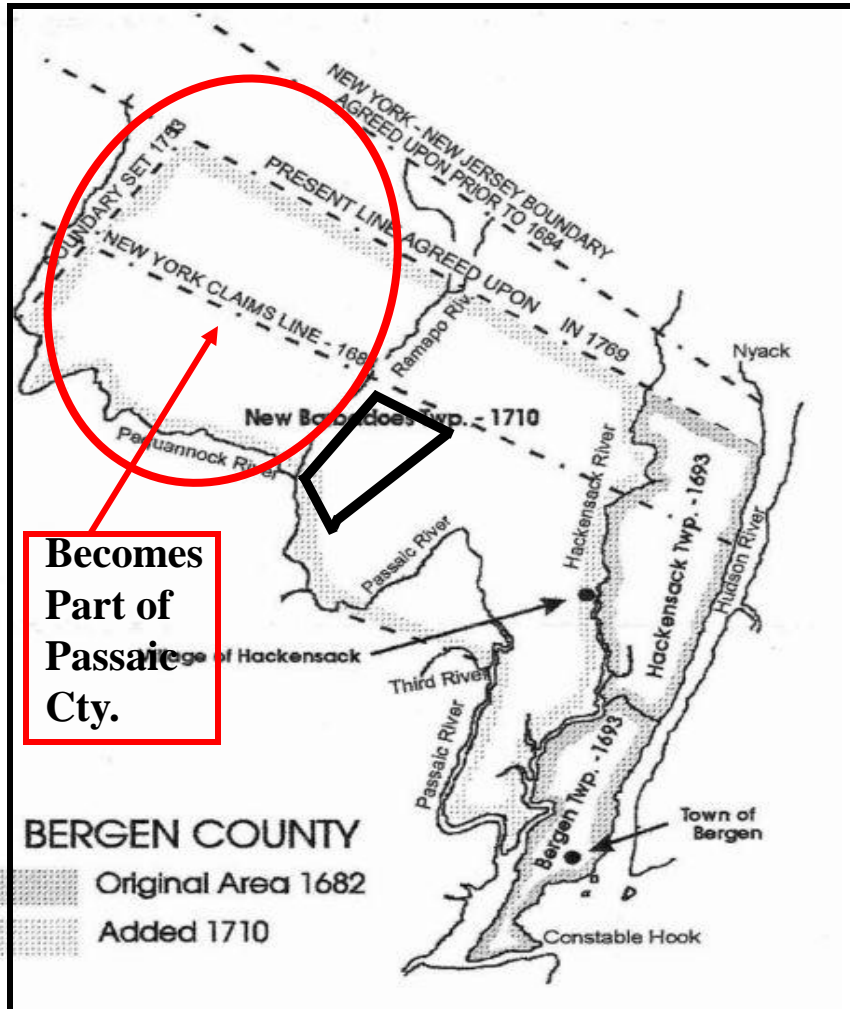


- **3 Administrative Districts**
 - **Bergen Township**
 - **Hackensack Township**
 - **New Barbadoes Twsp.**
- **Population Growth in East Part of County**
- **Governing Pressure Off of the East Jersey Proprietors**
- **New Barbadoes Township = 85% of Bergen County**

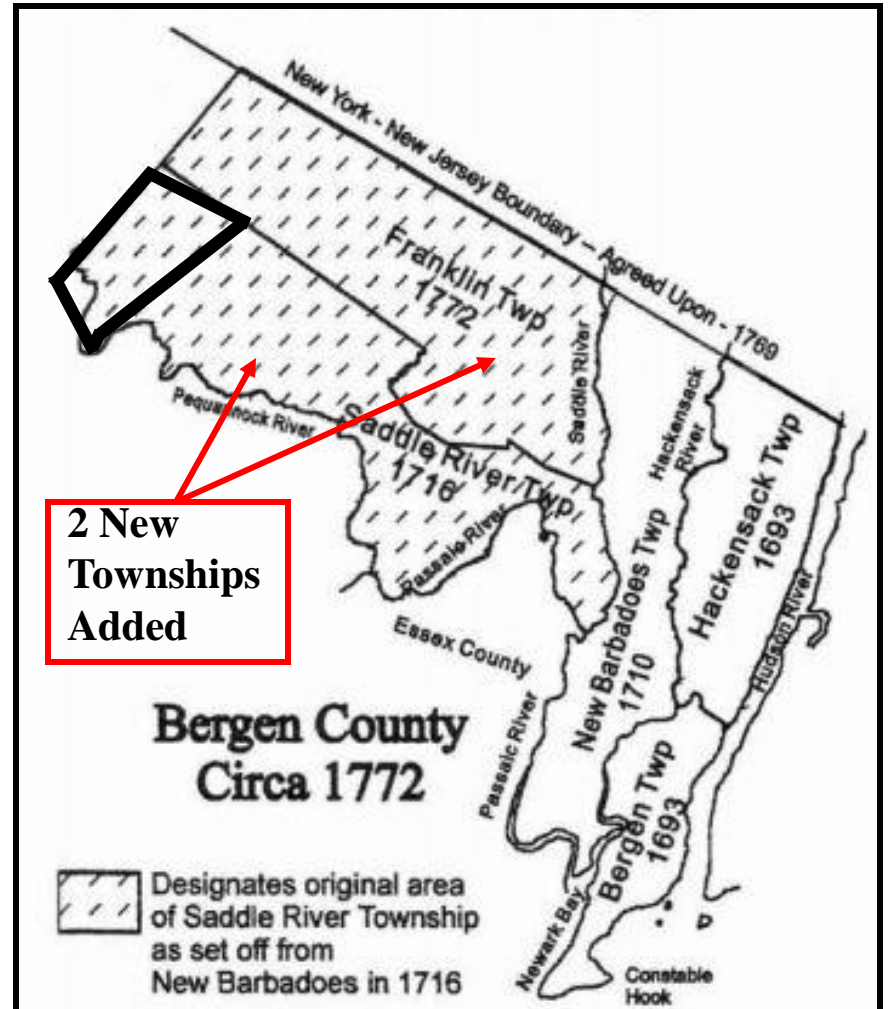
Bergen County Changes in Geo-Politics

1710 - 1772

1710

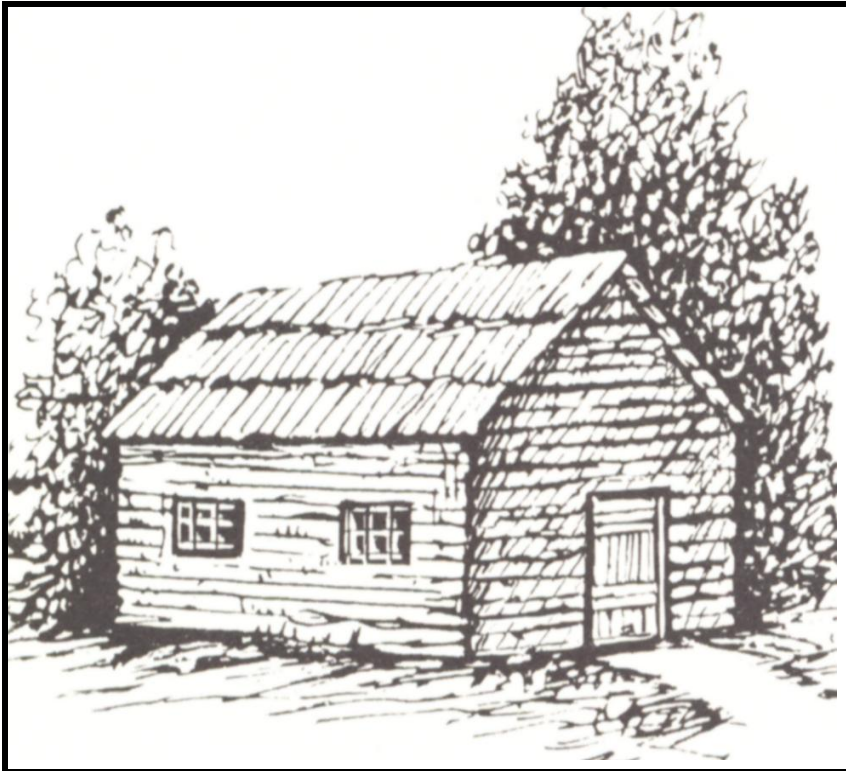


1772



1710 – The Establishment of the Ponds Church

Importance of the Ponds Church



- **Set the Ramapo Valley as an Important Place**
- **Was the Religious Nexus of the Area**
- **Center of the Community**
- **Established the 1st School in the Area – 1700s**
- **Cultural Center of the Area**
- **Spawned Several Other Churches**
- **Was an Informal Court**

Events That Influenced Oakland's Destiny

1800 to 1900

**1848 – David C. Bush Married Anna Van Blarcom and
Moves to Oakland (1852)**

1869 - The Railroad Comes to Oakland

1880s – Downtown Oakland Built

1890s – Oakland Enters the Industrial Revolution

1894 – Boroughitis

Townships Continue to Subdivide

- Township Debt, Control, Ratables and Access

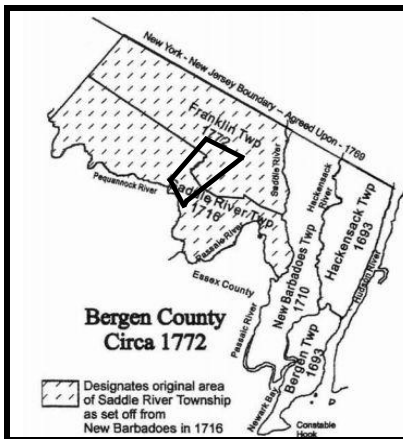
The Rise of Townships in Bergen County

- Each Township Responsible for Own Roads and Schools
- Contest for Ratables

The Effect

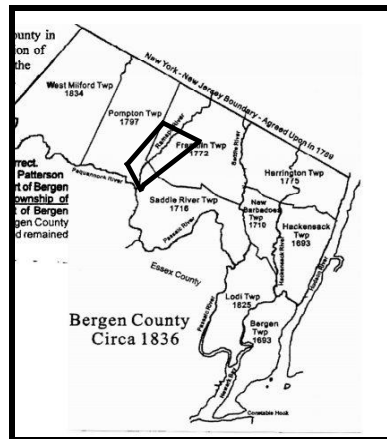
- Created an Atmosphere of Political Mobility Based Upon Local Selfish Best Interest – Lower Taxes & Control of Destiny

1772 - 5 Twsp



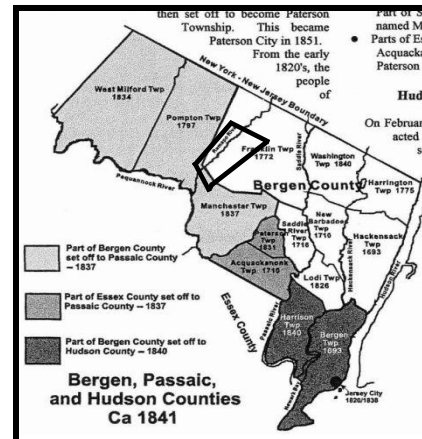
Oakland Part of Saddle River Township

1836 – 7 Twsp



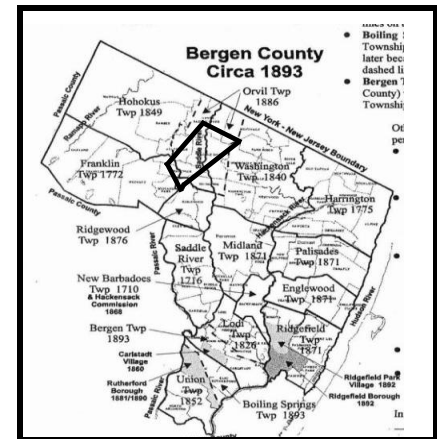
Oakland Now Part of Franklin Township

1841 – 7 Twsp



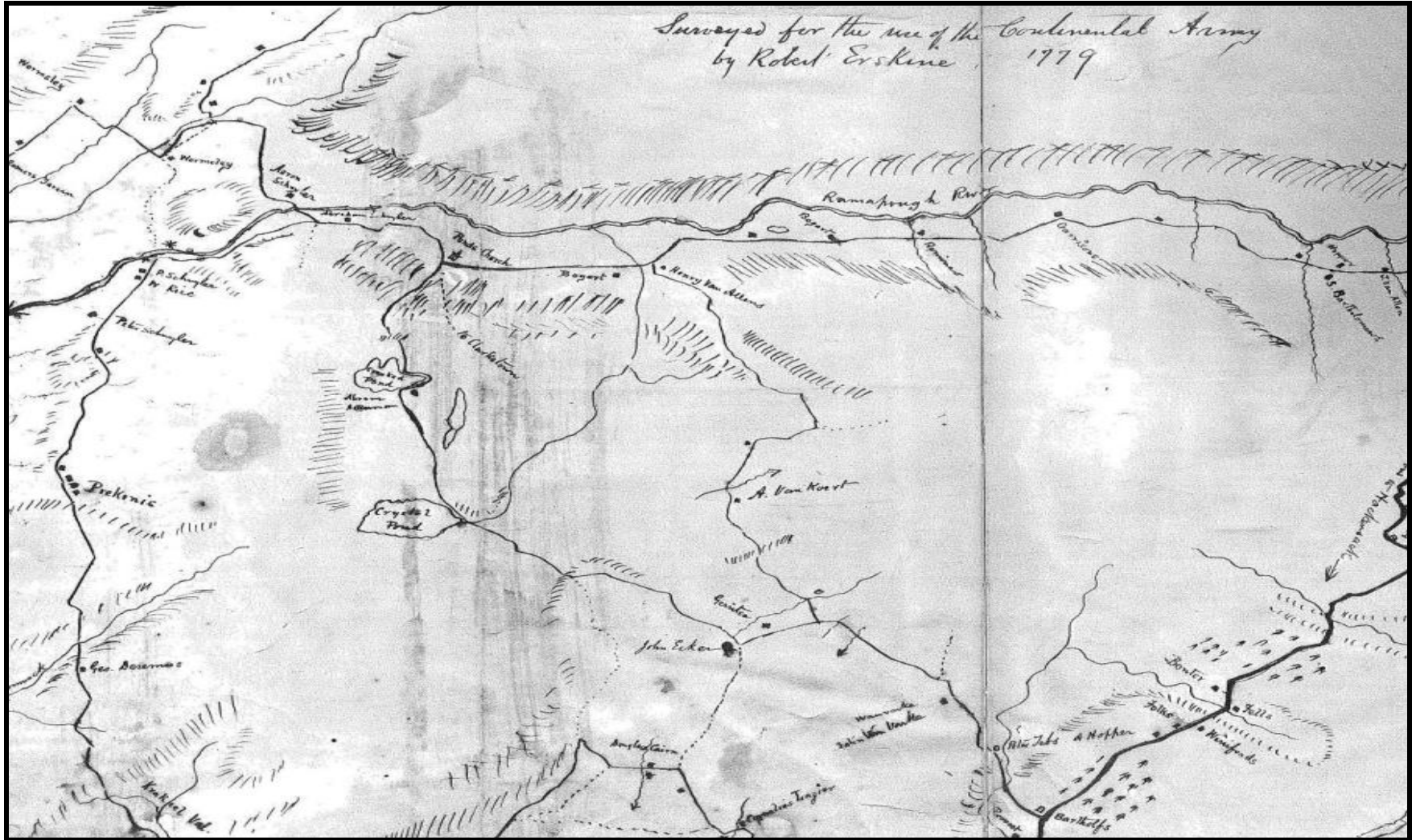
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1893 – 17 Twsp



- Boiling Springs Twp later became part of Bergen County
- Ridgely Twp later became part of Hudson County

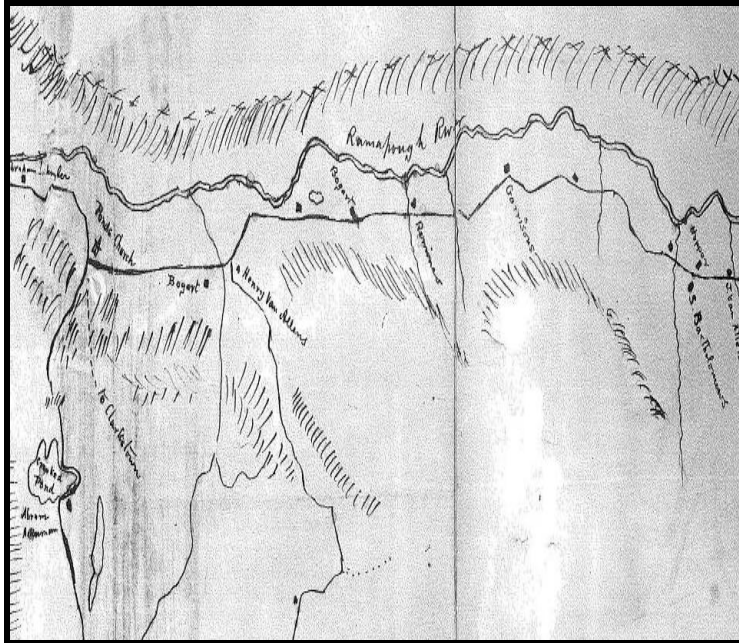
The Robert Erskine Map of 1779



- A Vast Plain From Oakland 's Ramapo Mountains to Ridgewood and Beyond
- Perfect for Large Farms, Perfect for Development

Oakland Population Development – 1779 to 1861

Oakland - 1695 to 1779



8 Families

Bogert (2)

H. Van Allen (VAH – 1740)

J. Van Allen

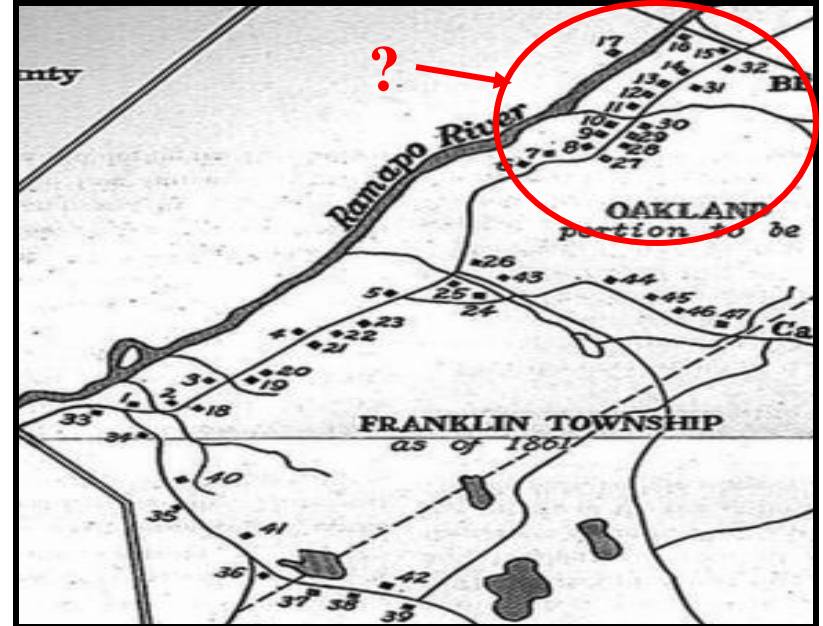
Romaine

Garrison

Batholamew

Hopper

Oakland – 1779 to 1861



41 Families

PROPERTIES OF RESIDENT-OWNERS OF THE OAKLAND PORTION,
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP, BERGEN COUNTY—SURVEY OF 1861.

From the foot of Oakland Avenue and continuing north, on the west side of the road:

1. Ponds Church
 2. Graveyard
 3. S. P. Demarest
 4. J. J. Winter
 5. Wm. Van Blarcom
- and thence up Valley Road*
6. J. P. Ramsey
 7. P. C. Bogart
 8. J. Fox
 9. A. G. Garrison
 10. C. Yeomans
 11. J. P. Smith
 12. Wm. Ackerman
 13. C. W. Steel
 14. Farmer's and Mechanics Hotel
 15. S. D. Bartholf
- To left on Midvale Rd.:*
(Glen Gray)
16. A. Hopper

and left, down west bank of river,
17. S. J. Fox

From foot of Oakland Ave. north, on east side of road:

18. H. L. Spear
 19. D. J. Demarest
 20. S. D. Demarest
 21. Smith shop, J. Mandigo
 22. M. Ryerson
 23. C. Van Houten
 24. Wm. Van Blarcom
 25. Saw Mill
- Valley Rd. just above Page's Corner:*
26. Mrs. H. Van Houten
 27. A. G. Garrison
 28. J. A. Zabriskie
 29. BSS & Wheelwright
 30. A. P. Ackerman
 31. Wm. P. Van Blarcom
 32. A. J. Hopper

From the foot of Long Hill Road, at Oakland Ave., south side of the road:

33. A. Doty
 34. Parsonage
 35. M. Sterr
 36. H. B. Demarest
 37. J. Ackerman
 38. B. Bartholf
 39. W. Ackerman
- North side of Long Hill Rd., from foot:*
40. J. H. Spear
 41. H. Cummings
 42. A. Boyd

Page's Hill—Camp Caw Road, north side:

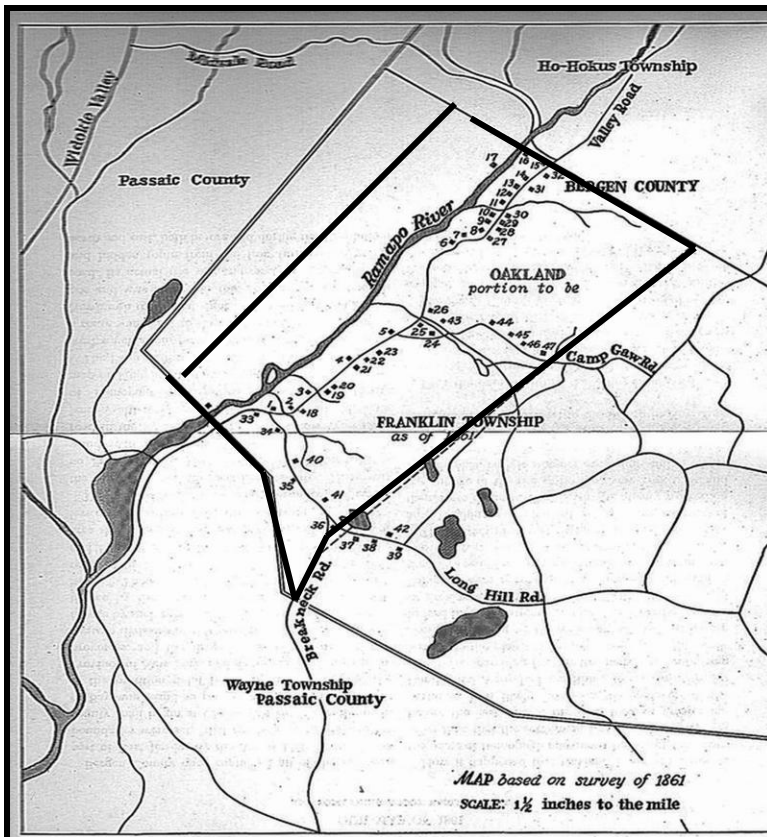
43. C. Bellmer
44. J. Wykoff
45. H. B. Winters
46. J. Post
47. T. C. Post

Oakland as Part of Franklin Township

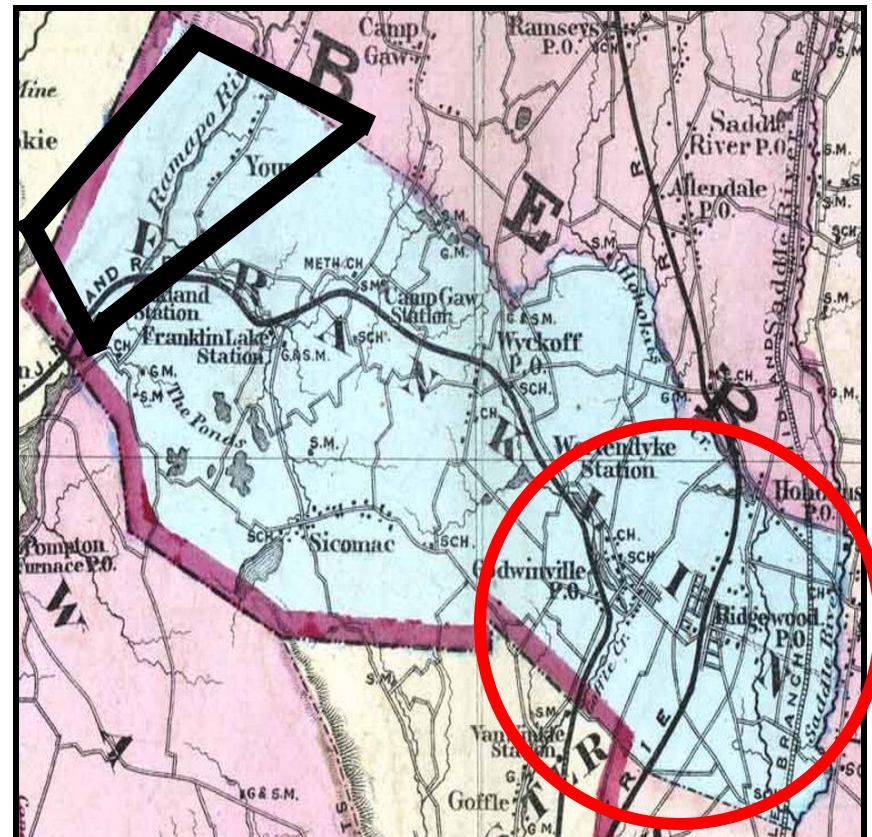
A Remote Village

A Small Fish in a Wealthy Pond

Oakland - 1861



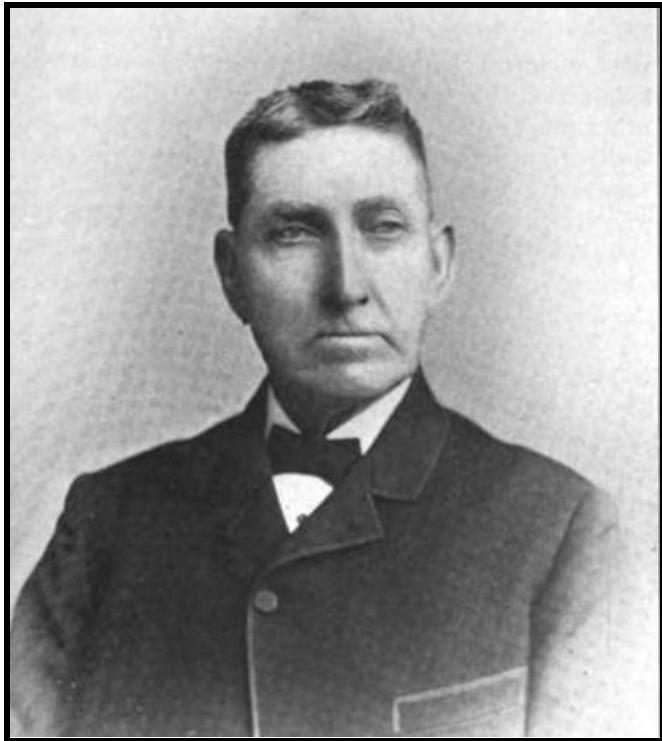
Franklin Township - 1872



The Father of Oakland

David C. Bush

David C. Bush



- **Came to Oakland in 1852 After Marrying Anna Van Blarcom in 1848 – Instant Wealth**
- **Sponsor and Investor in the Railroad**
- **Brought the Railroad to Oakland in 1869**
- **First Train to Oakland: May 1, 1870**
- **Built his Farmhouse in 1869**
- **Built the Railroad Station in 1872**
- **Built the Wigwam in 1887**
- **Was Both a Township Committeeman and Freeholder (1862-1864)**

The Railroad Comes to Oakland

1869

The Arrival of the Railroad was the Single Most Important Event in Oakland's History!



Oakland Celebrates the Arrival of the Railroad

‘ Upon the completion of the road, in March, 1869, five or six hundred people gathered, and under the inspiration of a couple of barrels of apple-jack and good cider, with the booming of cannon, the event was properly chronicled in the hearts and minds of the people. The opening exercises began at one o'clock. Beginning at two o'clock, speeches were made by ex-Gov-Price, Judge Garrison, Isaac Wortendyke, Dr. William Colfax, cousin of Vice President Colfax, and others, and at six o'clock refreshments were furnished, which terminated the gala exercises of the day. ‘

The Impact of the Railroad!



Oakland

Had

Arrived!

The "Ponds," however, assumed no importance until after the building of the railroad in 1870, when the depot was erected, a post office was established, and H. W. Bush started a store

The History of Bergen County, J. Van Valen, 1900, p.185

The Importance of the Railroad in Oakland

1. **Attracted Industry and a Way to Ship Product**

- **The Wilkins Brush Factory**
- **The Gunpowder Factory**
- **Kanouse Water Company**
- **Page Lumber Mill**

**All In the
1890s**

**Ratables and
Jobs**

2. **Attracted Wealthy New Yorkers and Mansions**

3. **New Markets for Oakland Farmers**

4. **Gave Impetus to Oakland's Resort Development**

5. **Put Oakland on the Map**

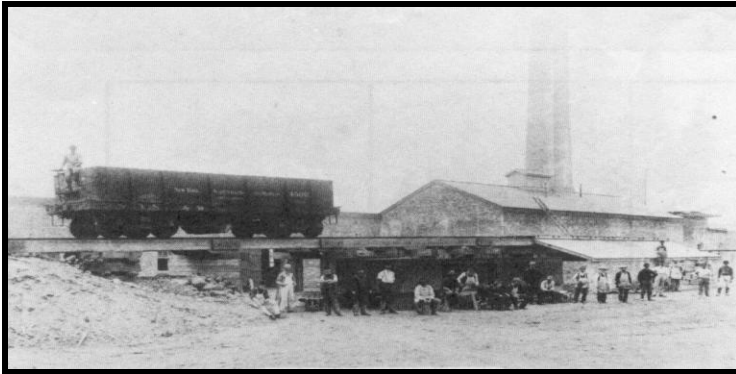
6. **Connected Oakland to the Rest of the World**

7. **Hastened the Arrival of Electricity on August 1, 1916**

Major Factories in Oakland

Oakland's Participation in the Industrial Revolution

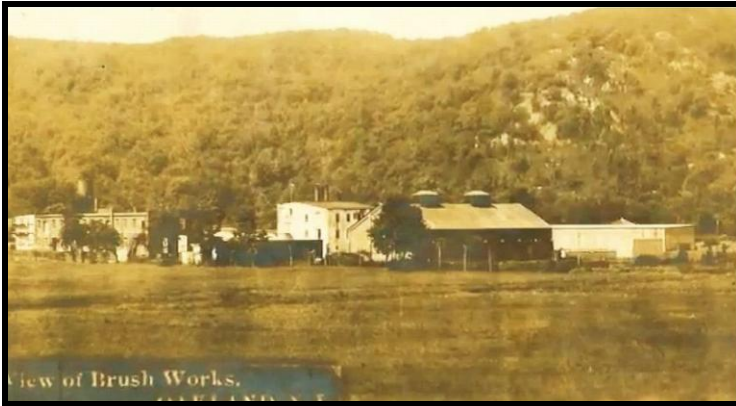
Anglo American Gunpowder - c1890



Page Lumber Mill - c1890



Wilkins Brush Factory - c1892

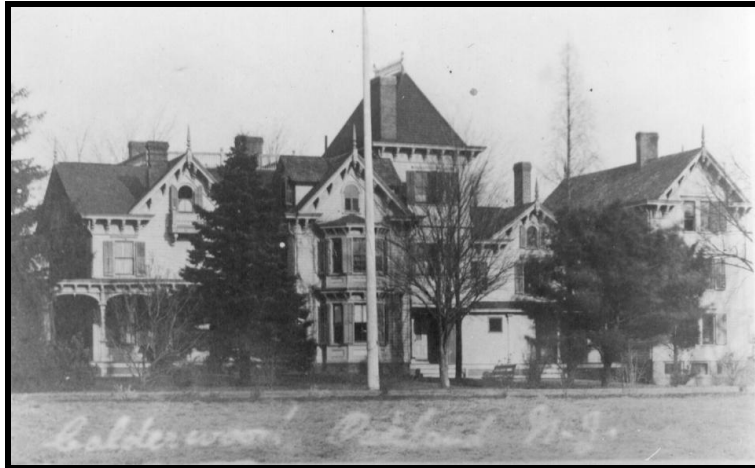


Kanouse Water Company - c1900



Majestic Homes in Oakland c1900

The Calderwood



Ludo Wilkins Home



The Page Mansion



Lilac Manor



1895 Railroad Map of Bergen County



The Rest of the World Was As Close As the Oakland RR Station!

Oakland's Surge to Independence

Oakland 1870 to 1901

Things Are Good!

Prosperous Farms

Several Major Factories

Mansions of Educated, Wealthy New Arrivals

New Money in Town

A Railroad to the Rest of the World

Aware of and Accustomed to Political Mobility

- New Townships and New Towns

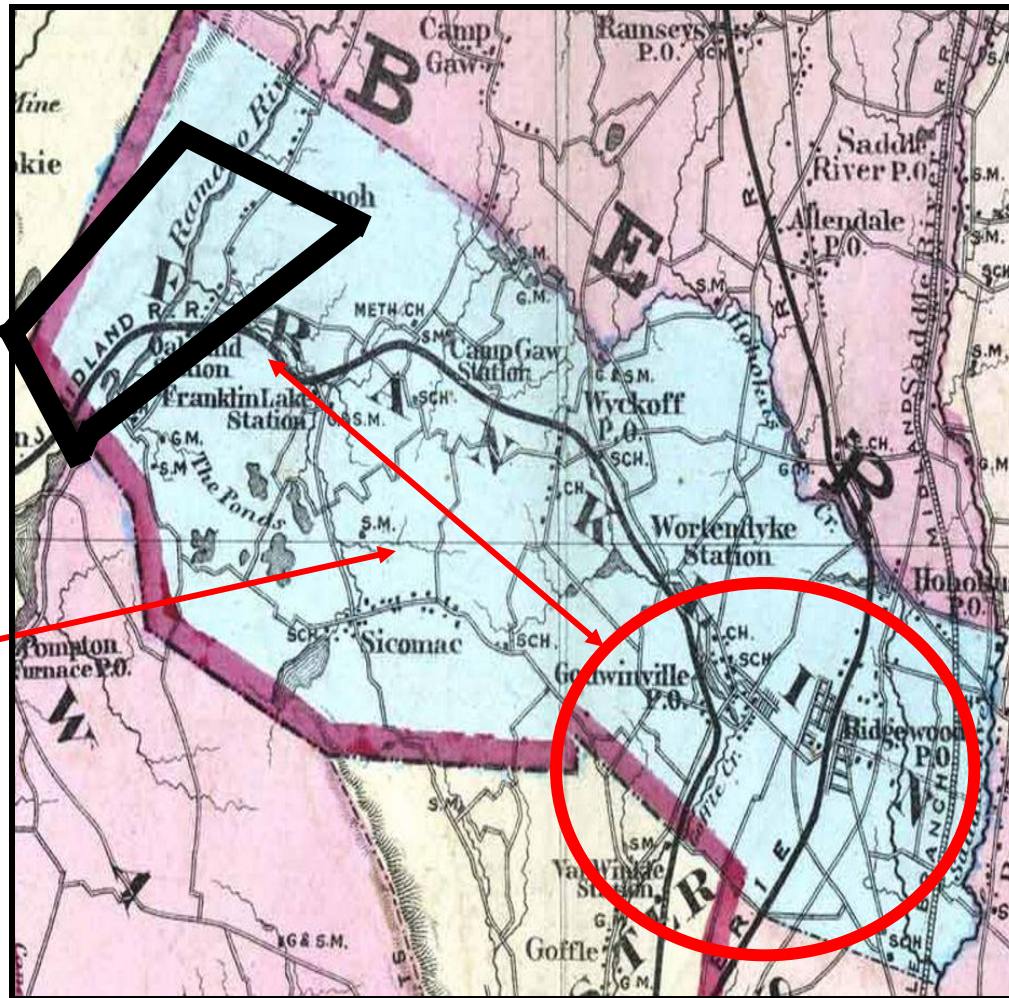
**But,
Are They
Really
That Good?**

Oakland vs Ridgewood - 1900

A Polar Imbalance in Franklin Township

Oakland →

Not Much
In Between →



← Ridgewood

Oakland's Surge to Independence

Oakland 1870 to 1901

Maybe Things Are Not So Good!

**Remote From the Township Power and Money
Center in Ridgewood**

Dirt Roads

Dilapidated One-Room Schoolhouse

Limited Voting Rights

Office Holding Based on Property Size

Travel Distance to Polling Places

Needs and Voice of Oakland Ignored

No Influence to Effect Change

Boroughitis - 1894

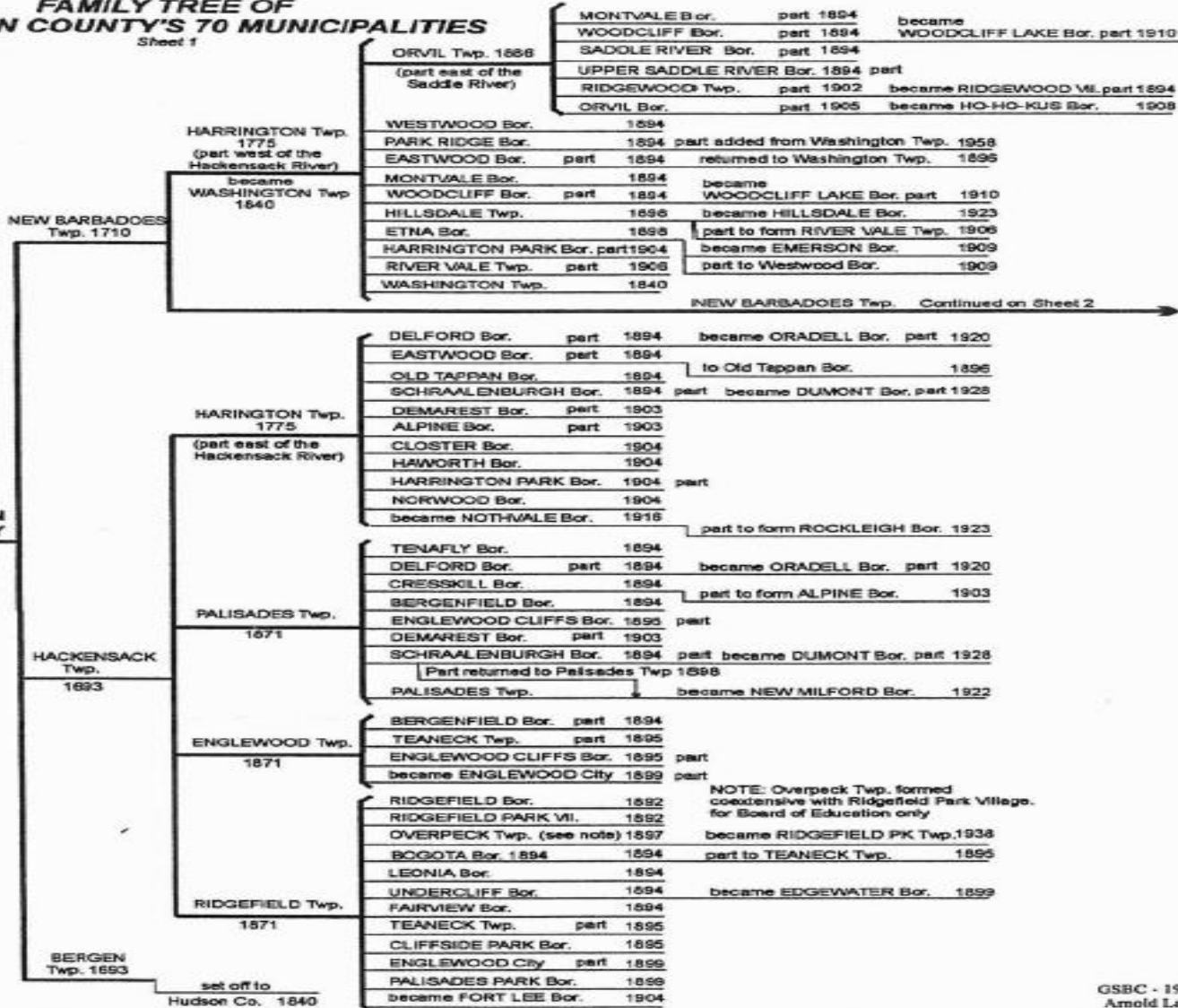
- **In 1894 New Jersey Enacted Legislation That:**
 1. **Affirmed a Township's Financial Responsibility for Schools and Roads**
 2. **Permitted Any Group of Contiguous Residents to Secede from a Township Without State Approval - Boroughs**
 3. **Permitted Cross-Township Formation of Boroughs**
 4. **Exempted Boroughs from From the Financial Responsibilities of Townships**
 5. **Senator Wilson States That the Law Is Insane!**
- **23 Boroughs Were Immediately Formed**
 - **Dissatisfaction and/or Opportunity**
- **Many Consolidated While Others Sprang Up.**
- **A 'Ratables' War!**

Bergen County Municipality Family Tree, p.1

FAMILY TREE OF BERGEN COUNTY'S 70 MUNICIPALITIES

Sheet 1

BERGEN COUNTY
1682



GSBC - 1999
Arnold Lang

26 Bergen County Boroughs That Were **But Are No More**

Delford	Eastwood	Schraalenburg	Palisades
Overpeck	Undercliff	Orville	Boiling Springs
Bendix Boro	Cherry Hill	Peetzburg	Etna
Campgaw	Mountain View	Athenia	Wortendyke
Crystal Lake	Granton	Norcliff	Taylorville
Linwood	Neuvy	Calton Hill	Highwood
Pompton Township	Godwinsville		

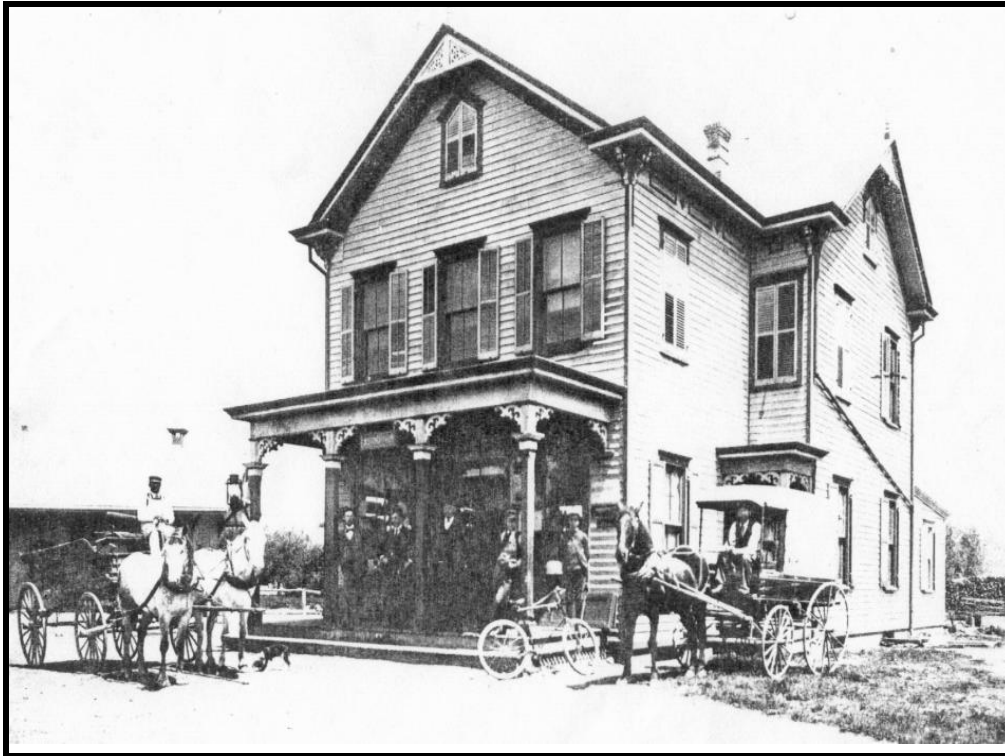
**These Consolidated, Broke Apart and Re-Consolidated to
Ultimately Form Some of the 70 Towns Currently in
Bergen County**

Sentiment in Oakland in 1900

- **Anger at Being Ignored by the Township Based in Ridgewood**
- **Anger at the Denial for a New Schoolhouse**
- **Anger at Paying Taxes Without Benefit**
- **Anger at Being Forced to Travel to Polling Places**
- **Anger at Little or No Representation in Township Affairs**
- **Anger at Being Taken for Granted**
- **Anger at Being Denied Macadam Roads While Ridgewood Greatly Expanded Theirs**
- **Aware of the 1894 State Statue for Seceding From a Township**
 - **A Potential Remedy**
 - **Now Requiring State Approval**
- **Aware of Oakland's Significant Ratables**
- **But Don't Know What to Do or How to Do It.**

'Tis Time to Part!

Bush Stuart Store - 1888



Oakland's Independence Hall

Oakland Takes Action!

A Meeting Held at the Bush Store

- Barrel of Apple Jack Available
- Grievances Defined
- Decision Made to Secede
- Deliver a Petition to Legislature
- Secession Committee Departs

NJ Legislature Not In Session!

- Committee Returns – Red Faced
- Need Help

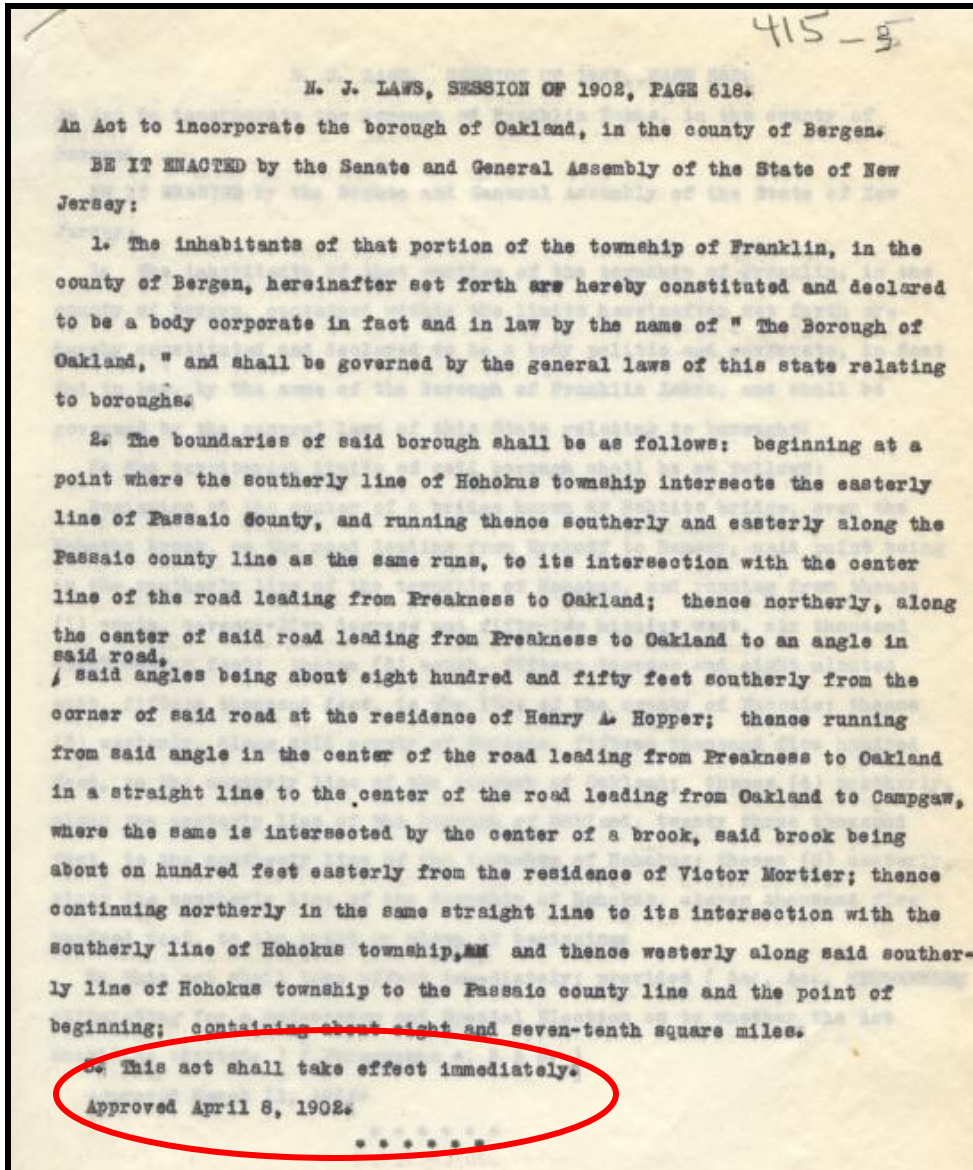
Hired Willard De Yoe, Esq.

- Petition, Survey and Draft of Law
- Sponsored by Sen. Edmond Wakelee (R- Bergen)

It's Official: Oakland Secedes From Franklin Township!

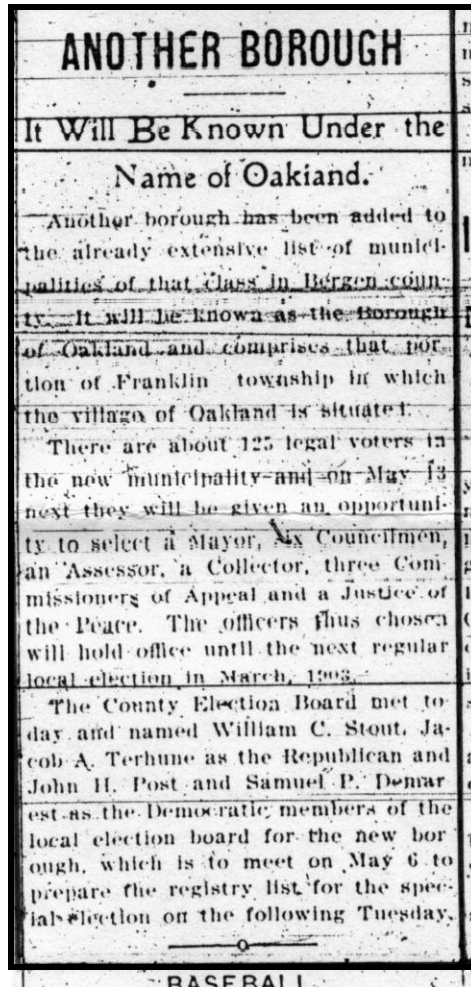
Free At Last!!!

- Laws of NJ, Session 1902, Page 602
- April 8, 1902
- “This Act Shall Take Effect Immediately”
- Signed by Governor Frank Murphy on April 19, 1902
- Franklin Township Officials Arrive Two Weeks Later to Protest
 - Too Late
 - A Dollar Short and a Day Late
 - We're Already Gone!



Public Reaction to Oakland's Secession

The Evening Record
April 9, 1902



- Ho Hum
- “Another Borough”....
- Boroughitis Fatigue

Oakland Is Free....Now What?

What Do We Call This Place?

Let's Have a Meeting at the Bush Store to Name It.

- **Suggested Names: Bushville, Brae Cliff, Scrub Oaks, Pleasant Valley, De Kalb***
- **Mr. Bush Declined the Use of His Name**
- **Mr. D.C. Bush Named This Area 'Oakland Station' in 1869 When the RR Arrived**
- **Mr. Bush Simply Wanted 'Oakland' And So It Is!**

Oakland Is Free....Now What?

Laws and a Mayor and a Council Needed

- Elections**
- Laws and Structure both Duplicated From Other Towns and Conformance to State Law Governing Municipalities**
- First Elections Held on May 17, 1902 - 125 Eligible Voters of 586 Population**
- The Results:**

Mayor: Amos W. Hopper

Council: David Christy Bush, Martin Reyerson, John Ramsey, Dr. Ezra Hamilton, Edward Dey Page

Borough Clerk: Thaddeus Garrison

Borough Attorney: J. Willard De Yoe

Oakland Is Free and Oakland Acts !

Pre-Independence

1901



Post Independence

1907



Summary

It Appears That:

- 1. This Valley Was Settled in 1699 – Wilcox Patent**
- 2. There May Have Been As Many as 19 Settler Families**
- 3. Free Land Via Slave Ownership May Have Been the Motivation of the Original Settlers to Come Here**
- 4. Oakland Farmland Was Cleared by Slaves**
- 5. The Settlers Had Poor Relationships with the Indians**
- 6. George Washington MAY Have Stayed at the Van Alen House**
- 7. The Courthouse Moved Here Out of a Sense of Determination and Semi-Desperation**

Summary

- **The Railroad IS the Single Most Important Event in the History of Oakland**
- **David C. Bush is the George Washington of Our Town**
- **The Wigwam Is Oakland's Independence Hall**
- **Our Independence Was a Result of Unfair and Uneven Treatment by Franklin Township (Ridgewood)**

On the Occasion of Oakland's 50th Anniversary

“...But has it occurred to us why we are celebrating? To know where we are going presupposes to know where we have been...One of the values of an anniversary is looking back. History gives a perspective....It imposes a sense of guardianship, of trust, a reason for the proper care of the resources which served our forefathers and must also serve our heirs....”

**Arthur Vervaeet
Mayor of Oakland
September 18, 1952**

**Thank You for
Your Time and
Your Interest**

