

The Deserted Village
Allaire, Monmouth County, New Jersey

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(PHOTOGRAPHS)
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

The Deserted Village
Allaire, Monmouth County, New Jersey

Owner: Arthur Brisbane, called Camp Burton and
occupied by Boy Scouts of America

Date of Erection: Established in 1813 as Monmouth
Furnace

Architect:

Builder:

Present Condition: The buildings have been restored
by local efforts

Number of Stories: Given with the description of
each building under materials
of construction

Materials of Construction:

Blast Furnace: Foundation - stone; super
structure brick

Church: Foundation - native fieldstone
One and one-half stories
Exterior walls - clapboards
Interior walls - plaster, wainscot
sill high; arched ceiling
Roof - shingles

Houses: Originally eleven, only two remain
Foundation - stone
One and one-half stories
Exterior walls - brick whitewashed;
inside chimneys; restored interior

Works Foreman's Cottage: Foundation - stone; no
cellar
One and one-half stories
Exterior walls - brick
painted white
Inside chimney
Cast iron lintels; restored
interior

Roof - wood shingles, new

Bakery: Foundation - stone
Two and one-half stories
Exterior walls - brick; inside chimney;
pine floor random width
Roof - shingles

Enameling House: Foundation - stone
Two stories
Exterior walls - brick; inside
chimneys; restored interior
Roof - new asphalt shingles;
brick tower on south elevation

Store: Foundation - brick
Three and one-half stories
Exterior walls - brick; sill and lintels
cast iron
Interior walls - brick whitewashed; floor
native yellow pine, random width
Roof - asphalt paper, new; the older roof
had lower pitch than present roof

Carpenter Shop: Foundation - stone
Two and one-half stories
Exterior walls - brick; one outside
chimney; two inside chimneys; brick
partitions first floor
Roof - asphalt paper

Blacksmith Shop: Foundation - stone
Two stories
Exterior walls - brick and siding,
siding new
Roof - asphalt paper

Historical Data:

One of the most widely known furnaces that dotted the Jersey pine barrens was Monmouth Furnace, first established in 1813. The country surrounding this furnace abounded in bog ore and iron was smelted from it by use of charcoal produced on the premises. Apparently the Manasquan River was utilized for transportation. The title to Monmouth Furnace was transferred several times between the date of establishment and 1821, when it became the property of William Newbold. At that time the property consisted of a dwelling house, fourteen or fifteen other houses, a furnace saw mill, outhouses, and other buildings and erections with ore beds, water privileges, and the like.

The property was rented to Benjamin B. Howell of Philadelphia. It was Howell who interested James P. Allaire in the property. Mr. Howell in writing to Allaire indicated that there were four kinds of ore to be found, namely; stone, seed or shot, shell, and loom ore.

After an inspection Newbold and Allaire entered into a contract for the purchase of the property which was consummated in 1822.

Mr. Allaire had cast with his own hands the brass air chamber for Robert Fulton's first steamer, the Clermont. He became a personal friend of Fulton and was one of the executors of his will. At the time of the purchase Allaire was proprietor of an establishment known as the James P. Allaire's Works.

This establishment was at 462 Cherry Street, New York City. At these works was built for Henry Eckford what was probably the predecessor of the compound marine engine. Allaire was also the inventor of an improvement on the steam boiler known as the steam chimney. Furthermore, he was closely connected with the development of steam-ships. He carried on the largest marine engine shops in the United States. At his works the cylinder of the Savannah, the first American steam-ship to cross the Atlantic, was cast. Mr. Allaire owned and operated among others a line to Shrewsbury, and upon this line he largely depended for transportations of castings and general products of the Howell Furnace to New York.

During the years 1827 and 1830, a village of sixty or seventy brick buildings sprang up including a furnace. The population was such that a post office was established in 1832. The buildings were all styled according to the period. Most of the buildings had iron sills and lintels which were made on the premises.

Water was the motive power for the air cylinders which furnished the blast of the furnace. The water was conducted from the old mill pond in a small raceway for part of the distance and then by wooden aqueduct underground to the edge of the bluff where the thirty-four foot drop of the bluff was utilized upon an undershot wheel of that diameter. The height of the bluff was used instead of a ramp to reach the top of the furnace where the ore was dumped.

A canal entered the village from the northeast; it is said to have been used in the transportation of ore in barges to the furnace from the fields about Farmingdale. It was about three miles in length and is still visible. Ore was transported also by carts.

The store was the pride of the county. It carried a complete line of stock and was equipped with an elevator which was operated by the use of rope, wheel, and gear.

The bakery was later used as a school.

Beside the blacksmith shop stood the screw factory where the first screws cut in a lathe were made. Charles Makepeace devised and built a heavy press for Mr. Allaire which cut and headed the wire at one operation. The screws were afterwards threaded by the employees on a series of small lathes.

The remaining part of the charcoal warehouse stands on the bluff to the north of the furnace.

To the north of the store along the brook stands a building in which tin, zinc, and brass lanterns were made; iron-ware was also polished or glazed there.

The first brick building was the Works Foreman's Cottage. The iron lintel over the door bears the inscription, "Howell Furnace 1827". This building was occupied by Joseph Johnson, the furnace boss. It was in this house that John Roach, who was one of America's great ship-builders, courted and won the sister of Joseph Johnson.

Among one of the first acts of Mr. Allaire was to build a church and school. Some of the timbers were taken from earlier Monmouth Furnace buildings. The original size of the church was about half of the present one, although the enlargement was made quite early. The bell, which formerly hung in the tower and is now in the possession of Christ Church, Bradley Beach, was cast at the works. In early days this church was under the parish of

Christ Church, Shrewsbury. The social life of the community was centered around the "Big House", which was part residence and part hotel, and where Mr. Allaire fostered entertainment and amateur theatricals.

The product of the mills was known as charcoal iron which was soft and malleable. Some of it was sent to the market in bars, but the greater part was moulded into pots, kettles, pipes, and miscellaneous products. Much of the Croton water mains came from Howell Furnace.

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Approved:


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