

December 18, 1919 reported that Y.M.C.A. boys from Ridgewood had recently “enjoyed a night’s primitive life in Marston Potter’s log cabin.”

Bub Buhlman remembered that when he was about nine or ten, Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show came to Paterson and they all went to see it. “I can still remember him coming out on a white horse with a buckskin suit and his goatee and a big Indian throwing up tar balls and he was popping them off with his Sharp’s rifle.”<sup>8</sup>

Basketball was played in Allendale on an organized basis as early as 1911, when two Allendale teams — the S.C.A. basketball team and the Bergen Guards basketball team — played in a series of games for the borough championship. Players on the two teams included Stephen Van Houten, Stanley Fisher, Theodore Blackmore, -?- Spratto, and Carlton Hutchinson for the S.C.A. team, and Charles Buhlman, George Buhlman, J. Hubbard, John W. Steele, Percy Fisher, and John R. McDermott for the Bergen Guards. The referee for games was C. Ackerman, and Samuel Pritchett served as umpire.<sup>50</sup>

In 1915 the Allendale Basketball Association elected its officers: Charles Buhlman, captain; Bernard deHossen, treasurer; and George Buhlman, manager. The team had won the Bergen County championship in 1914. In 1915 the team consisted of Whiting Anthony, Charles F. Buhlman, George Buhlman, Bernard DeHossen, H. Fleming, F. Milne, and Gordon Milne. The home games in 1915 were played at the Allendale Fire House and dancing followed each game.

Players on the junior basketball team in 1915 included William Buhlman, George Wilson, Ellsworth S. Thomas, Robert W. Fisher, and Frank H. Drummond.<sup>50, 51</sup>

A girls’ basketball team in 1918 included Betty Anthony, Nancy Barnes, Mabel Knack, Mary Hutches, Ethel Braun, Edna Grossman, Mary Robinson, Clara Nealis, Gertrude Robinson, and Rose Holman.<sup>52</sup>

In May 1914, the field on the southeast corner of West Allendale Avenue and West Crescent Avenue, which had informally been used previously as a ballfield, was made into a borough park, and called Recreation Park. Mayor Gustave Nadler and Charles L. Weyand had been instrumental in the establishment of a public recreational area. In February 1914, as a fund raiser for a public recreational park, William Ackerman took charge of a minstrel troupe which had given a performance at the Fire House. The park opened on May 30, 1914 with a new ball field and swimming pool. The following winter a skating pond was opened at the park, created by banking up earth around a low marshy section of the grounds. The ice on this skating rink was four inches thick by early December 1915.<sup>6, 53, 54</sup>



*An Allendale basketball team, 1916-1917. Standing, left to right: Richard Ackerman, Burtis Griffiths, Frank Drummond. Seated, front, George Wilson, William Buhlman, and Kenneth Fisher.*

The land for the park was initially leased by the borough, from John I. Yeomans and others. A new ball field and a concrete swimming pool were features of this new park.<sup>6</sup> In the spring of 1915 John D. Walsh donated lumber and others donated funds for the building of a grandstand for the ballfield at Recreation Park. John W. Rudolph built the grandstand. Donations toward its construction were made by Mr. Knack, Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Pittis, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Braun, Mr. Tomalin, Mr. Arlt, William Dewsnap, Mr. Sturchler, Guatelli Brothers, Mr. Strunk, William McGill, Mr. Lang, Mr. Hudson, P. W. Critchley, Joseph M. Steele, Cy Gousset, Mr. Rouse, Mr. Sullivan, Robert Shamback, and W. Merrill.<sup>47</sup>

In 1917 four parcels of land, comprising the acreage of today’s Recreation Park, were purchased by the borough. The four parcels of land, comprising over 10 acres, fronted on West Crescent Avenue and West Allendale Avenue, with a brook running through the property. They were purchased from the estate of Margaret Van Houten Yeomans (her husband, John L. Yeomans, had died in 1888; this parcel was 0.878 acres); John A. Mallinson and William H. Mallinson (6.132 acres), Laura J. Anthony and Sophia A. Letts (3.397 acres), and the Hamilton Trust Company (0.64 acres).

Holidays have a long tradition of being celebrated with great style and fervor in Allendale. On Labor Day in 1900, for instance, the 70-man Allendale Athletic Association sponsored and organized a program of races and games for the town’s young people. A baseball game between the boys of Allendale and

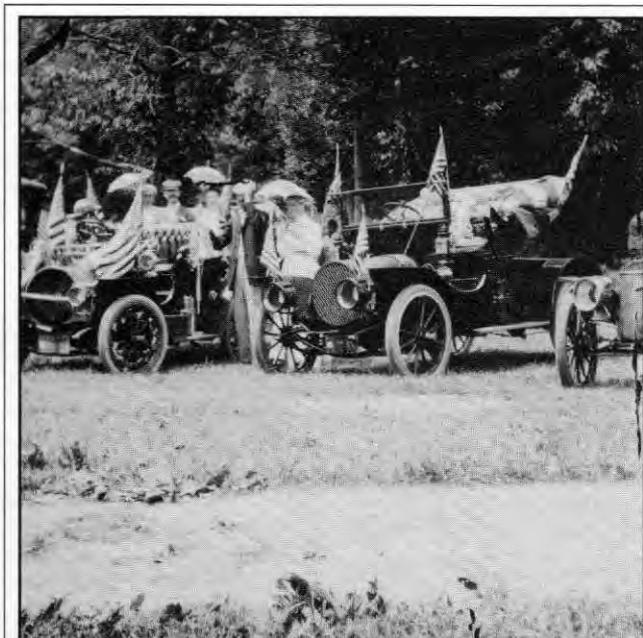
Waldwick was held, and games and races for young boys were held, including a 100-yard dash, broad jump, apple race, and 3-legged race. There was even a greased pig, which when released ran for the woods, but which was caught by George Nimmo (who would later become sheriff of Bergen County).<sup>55</sup>

In 1915, the Mayor and Council appointed a committee to work with representatives from other organizations in town to organize and plan a celebration to celebrate Allendale's "Coming of Age." Allendale would turn 21 years old in the fall, and a three-day festival and carnival was planned at Recreation Park for Labor Day weekend, September 4, 5, and 6. Serving on the Mayor's Committee were Mrs. J. J. Murphy, Mrs. V. J. Braun, Mrs. F. Hilbert, Dr. Godfrey Pittis, Benjamin F. Hutches Jr., and John Hamilton. Others working with the committee were, for the Village Improvement Association, Mrs. S. T. Van Houten, Mrs. W. M. Carver, and Mrs. R. W. Rodman; for the Allendale Baseball Association, Charles F. Smith, Whiting Anthony, and George Nimmo; for the Allendale Board of Trade, Arthur Tomalin, Arthur Bull Sullivan, and W. Critchley; for the Allendale Fire Department, Val J. Braun, W. W. Dewsnap, and Fred Koster; and for the Allendale Shade Tree Commission, J. W. Rudolph, Max P. Arlt, and Charles Weyand. Together, these volunteers formed an Allendale Carnival Association to plan the festival.

Mr. Edward G. Washburne, on behalf of a committee in charge of a fourth of July celebration a few years earlier, turned over to the coming of age festival a check for \$39 representing the committee's unexpended balance. Arthur Bull Sullivan donated a set of swings for Recreation Park, to remain as a permanent improvement. John Yeomans gave permission to use part of his land for the festival, and sixteen firemen volunteered to assist John Hamilton, head of police, in regulating traffic.

Various attractions and booths were planned to supplement the existing swimming pool and water sports, and the ball field, where two baseball games were planned. Spectacular lighting effects were devised for the events, which included dancing and music, a cut glass booth, an African Dip (in the charge of Whiting Anthony and the Allendale baseball team; the Mahwah Fire Department was to lend their "Dip" apparatus), a grill and cabaret, a toy booth (selling, among other things, sailboats, to be floated on the pool), and fishing ponds for both children and grown-ups.<sup>56</sup>

On July 4, 1916, Mr. and Mrs. George M. Potter gave one of their frequent holiday parties on the grounds of their home on West Crescent Avenue. The grounds were strung with electrically lighted Japanese lanterns, including lanterns around the



*Above, a holiday gathering at the George M. Potter home on West Crescent Avenue, July 4, 1910. Below, the Potter home decorated with flags and Japanese lanterns for a holiday celebration.*



pond, where canoe rides were a popular feature. Refreshments were set up on the large porch, and a platform had been set up for dancing. One of the main features of the evening was a display of fireworks.

### CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

In the summer of 1900, the Allendale Athletic Association was made up of about 70 men. They sponsored and organized, among other events, baseball games and a Labor Day program that year.

A Fish and Game Association was organized in 1902 and held its meetings at Linkroun's Hall. By 1917, a similar organization, the Allendale Rod and Gun Club, had been organized, and the officers chosen in December of that year were Alonzo Abbott,

Walter Steele, Louis Rossner, and William G. Ackerson.

In December 1903, a third Allendale Village Improvement Association was formed by a group of civic-minded women of the community. This group, often called the "Ladies' VIA" to differentiate it from the two earlier organizations of the same name, formed committees to look after the borough park (later Memorial Park), to plant and care for flowers in the plaza near the train station, to organize an annual clean-up garbage pickup, and to help with the Allendale Library.

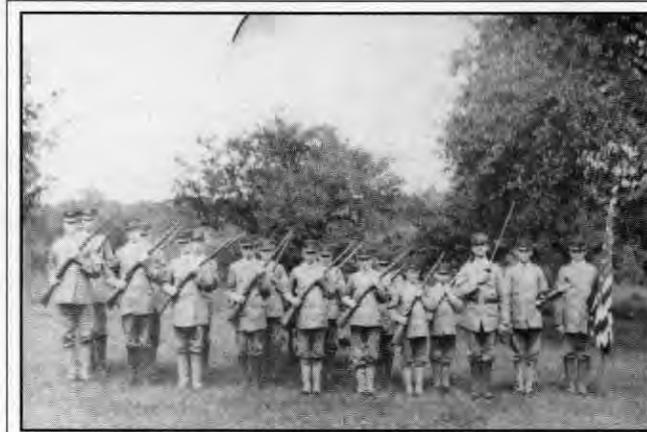
In order to implement its projects, the Ladies' VIA held various fundraisers including entertainments such as the 1904 production of "Tom Cobb," a three-act comedy by W. S. Gilbert. Appearing in the play were Mr. L. J. Griffen, Miss Edna Haring, Mr. William Dewsnap, Miss Sadie Ivers, Mr. H. O. Hashagen, Mrs. William Dewsnap, Mr. Theodore Smith, Mr. Alonzo C. Barrett, Mrs. William K. Walton, and Mr. Wallace E. Carver.

Officers of the Ladies' VIA in 1904 were Mrs. Alfred W. Harris, president; Mrs. Joseph Ware, first vice-president; Mrs. Stephen Van Houten, second vice-president; Mrs. Samuel M. Pritchett, treasurer; Mrs. William Dewsnap, recording secretary; and Mrs. Albert L. Zabriskie, corresponding secretary. Committee chairmen were: Mrs. Josephine Asten, street and sanitary; Mrs. Albert L. Zabriskie, railroad; Mrs. Walter Dewsnap, finance; Mrs. Wallace E. Carver, library; Mrs. Samuel M. Pritchett, parks and natural beauty; Mrs. Frank Drummond, children's auxiliary; Mrs. William C. Talman, prevention of cruelty to children and animals.

In October 1917, the VIA disbanded at their final meeting held at the Borough Hall (which was then at the Allendale Fire House). The president of the organization, Mrs. Stephen T. Van Houten, stated that since most of the work of the organization had been taken over by other organizations, the need for the VIA no longer existed. The one project which was still to receive support from a special committee formed before the group disbanded, was the library committee, composed of Mrs. Wallace Carver, Mrs. Samuel Pritchett, Miss Mary Parkhurst, and Mrs. Stephen T. Van Houten.<sup>57</sup>

About 1908 a boys' home guard organization, called the Bergen Guards, was formed in Allendale.

The organization's official name was Vigilantia B.G. Constanter. The group of about two dozen teenagers was formed by, and was under the supervision of, Captain Harry I. Hand. Hand worked for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and was a Captain in the Guard in Brooklyn. Outfitted in smart uniforms (khaki for drilling and blue for dress), the boys in this group were instructed in fancy drills, marching, handling arms, and fundamental army tactics. They demonstrated their precision at parades and in special monthly performances given at Archer Hall and later at the new Fire House. The drills at the Fire House, on the first Tuesday of the month, were open to the public, and dancing took place after each meeting.<sup>58, 59</sup>



*Harry I. Hand and the Bergen Guards.*

Two other "Bergen Guards" were active in Allendale at this time — the Bergen Guards basketball team, and the

Bergen Guards ice hockey team, which played at Smith's Pond on Brookside Avenue in 1911. Both teams were probably made up of boys in Harry I. Hand's Bergen Guard drill group. Ice hockey was played on B. F. Hutches' pond, Lake San Jacinto, when in January 1917 *The Ramsey Journal* reported on a practice hockey match played "by the light of the moon."

The Franklin Club, a social men's organization, affiliated with the Episcopal Mission of the Epiphany, flourished in Allendale in the early years of the 20th century. The club was organized about 1902 and was instrumental in raising funds and arranging for the building that year of the Mission's Parish House. The club sponsored bowling tournaments, bowling against other local teams (including one from Saddle River) on an alley in the basement of the Mission of the Epiphany's Parish House. They also sponsored occasional theater presentations, including one in 1903 called "The Timethementriedtobeatthem, or When Greek Meets Greek" The story behind that title is that ladies of the church had put on a show that had a long Greek title, and so the men decided to retaliate with another long-titled show. Members of the club included Alonzo Charles Barrett, George Washington Parigot, Harry Irving Hand, William Dewsnap, Henry Bergh Ivers, Edward Grant Washburne, Francis Ludlow Haveron, Lucien Blake Peyton, Percy Southwick Doty, Robert Law Nimmo, Jr., Edgar Deuell, Jr., and Gustave Nadler.<sup>60</sup>

A group of young women called "The Dorcas Girls" was associated with Archer Memorial Methodist Church in the early borough years. The Dorcas Girls presented a comedy play on June 15, 1909 at Archer Hall, which raised the sum of \$146.27. Some of those involved in the production, both the girls and their leaders, were Alma Seipel, Kitty Austin, Mary Hubbard, Sadie Mallinson, Gertrude Borger, Myrtle Quackenbush, Anna Van Dien, Ida McGuire, Josie Ackerson, Mr. John W. Steele, Lottie Scholz, and Mrs. McKeeby.

Another slightly later girls' group connected with Archer Church was the King's Daughters Society. On February 16, 1914, they presented at Archer Hall, a three-act comedy entitled, "Billy's Bungalow." Their elected officers for 1914 included Florence Darrow, Sadie Mallinson, Edna Ackerman, Ethel Quackenbush, and Gertrude Borger.

The Borough Dramatic Company (also called the Borough Dramatic Club) was organized in March 1915 at a meeting at the Fire House. The following officers were elected: Arthur Tomalin, president; Ambrose K. Merrill, treasurer; and Mrs. Ambrose K. Merrill, secretary. Appointed to the Dramatic Committee were Miss Mary S. Parkhurst, Joseph L. Stoothoff, Arthur Bull Sullivan, and A. K. Merrill. Members of the group included Mrs. Arthur B. Sullivan, Ruth Taylor, George W. Parigot, Mildred H. Hunt, Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Hutchinson, Marshall J. Couch, Edna Haring, Dorothy Carver, Percy Fisher, Matilda Van Houten, Anita Van Houten, Mr. and Mrs. William Dewsnap, Florence Darrow, Agnes McDermott, Mrs. R. D. Rodman, and Mrs. Charles F. Smith. Their first production was a vaudeville show in May at the Fire House. Over the years the group put on a number of plays, including "A Pair of Sixes" (1924) and "Officer 666" (1929). By 1917 the group had changed its name to The Allendale Players.

Other Allendale people involved in The Allendale



*Two slightly different views of the Allendale business section in 1905. Both views are looking west along West Allendale Avenue. In the top view, the Allendale Hotel is hidden behind trees at the left; the Allendale Meat Market and a house are shown at the center (the house was later moved to Myrtle Avenue); and the Winter building housing Mrs. Borger's dry goods store is on the right. The bottom view shows the Allendale Hotel and its barns and other outbuildings; the street to the left is Park Avenue and in the distance, beyond the railroad tracks, is Gasparini's shoe store.*



Players later included Whiting Anthony, Edward Megnin, Mrs. F. L. Potts, Genevieve Talman, Arthur Tomalin, Winifred Tomalin, Mrs. Herbert J. Winter, Elsie Mainey, Louis Jones, Mrs. H. E. Watson, Martha Parkhurst, Ross Peardon, Mrs. Peardon, George Comins, Edward N. Higgins, Mr. and Mrs. William Anderson, Mary Higgins, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Sweet, Edith Growsick, Helen Korndorfer, William Hanson, Mrs. Evelyn Simpson, Carroll Varey, James

The trolley at Allendale, probably about 1911-1915. The view is looking east from about the site of today's Flatiron Building (Braun Building). The building behind the trolley is Linkroum's store and hall, housing the confectionery business run in 1910 by George Mensching, Jr. and in 1914 by



Eugene Melchionna. The sign in front of the trolley says, "Look Out For the Locomotive." The "tent" sign on the sidewalk in front of the store advertises ice cream, and the horse-drawn delivery truck is an ice wagon.

Hutchinson, Mrs. Clinton Rossner, Mrs. William Abbott, William Lee, and Mr. H. E. Sylvester Beuchner. The group was active into at least the 1930s.<sup>61</sup>

The Christmas Tree Association was begun in 1916. This group obtained, erected, and decorated a Christmas tree and planned dedication ceremonies annually. The tree was installed in Station Square. In 1917, William C. Lee led the Allendale Community Chorus, comprised of all residents who wished to participate, in the singing of Christmas carols. The choirs of the Episcopal and Methodist churches supplemented the Community Chorus, members of which rehearsed for several weeks preceding the dedication ceremonies. The tree was topped with a large star, with hundreds of red, white, and blue electric lights beneath it.

Members of the Christmas Tree Association in 1917 included R. L. Oberholser, C. Johnson, Ambrose K. Merrill, Albert L. Zabriskie, J. H. Robertson, B. F. Hutches, Jr., Mayor Gustave Nadler, Fire Chief Val Braun, Stanley Fisher, Charles Hamilton, Wallace E. Carver, Mary S. Parkhurst, W. Critchley, George M. Potter, Arthur Bull Sullivan, and Louis Jones.<sup>62</sup>

Boy Scouting in Allendale began in 1917, when the Rev. Charles Woodruff of Archer Memorial Church, assisted by Willard Alling, Arthur Tomalin, Harry Hartt, Alfred E. Atkinson, and Robert A. Phair, formed Allendale's first Boy Scout troop, known as Troop One. Before this troop was formed, some of Allendale's boys, including William Hutches and Burtis Griffiths, belonged to Ramsey's Troop One.

Charter members of Allendale's Troop One, in 1917, were Leon Kornhoff, Ray Scholz, William

Buhlman, Floyd Vanderbeek, and Otto Vanderbeek. One of their first service projects, during World War I, was the collection of papers for the benefit of the North Jersey Ambulance Fund. During the war, the scouts also sold war bonds and collected old newspapers.

In February 1917, nineteen Allendale boy scouts went on an all-day hike to Torne Mountain near Suffern. Led by Scoutmaster Robert Phair aided by C. L. Weyand, the boys who participated, according to *The Ramsey Journal* of March 1, 1917, were Patrol Leader William Buhlman, Assistant Patrol Leader Otto Vanderbeek, George Rudolph, Howard Rudolph, Arthur Quackenbush, Walter Hillman, Norman Merrill, King Merrill, Edwin Merrill, Edward Austin, Leon Kornhoff, Floyd Vanderbeek, Wilbur Vanderbeek, Allen Smith, Preston Asten, Charles Webb, and Andrew Mowerson.<sup>63</sup>

The Allendale Board of Trade was formed in March 1914. Its members included Max P. Arlt, Alonzo C. Barrett, William G. Z. Critchley, William S. Cunningham, Stanley P. Fisher, William F. Kornhoff, George M. Potter, Mr. Robertson, Arthur Bull Sullivan, William C. Talman, Arthur Tomalin, and A. L. Zabriskie. The Board of Trade, among other early projects, arranged for "clean up weeks" in Allendale (with collection of rubbish, tin cans, and other garbage), erected street signs on Franklin Turnpike, and agitated for better roads and sidewalks. The group put on entertainments of various types, and proposed and promoted the Allendale Coming-of-Age celebration (Allendale's 21st birthday) in 1915.

The Girl's Friendly Society often met at the West Crescent Avenue home of their leader, Mrs. George

M. Potter. Grace Slingland Wahlers remembered that she learned to knit while in this group.<sup>64</sup>

### ENTERTAINMENT

Archer Hall was a favorite gathering spot for many special entertainments in the borough's early years. Among the variety of featured attractions during the first decade of the century was the show put on by the Crest Minstrel Company. In April 1908, the Crest Company gave their third annual minstrel performance at Archer Hall. Advertising of the time promised that the program would be "replete with new songs and sayings."

Nearly two years later, in April 1910, tickets that sold for 25¢ and 35¢ would get you through the doors of Archer Hall to marvel at "Mrs. Jarley's Wax Works," with Lillian G. Borger in the lead role.

Movies were shown by the Allendale Fire Department on the second floor in the Fire House. William Abbott remembered that Lottie Scholz used to play the piano there as the silent movies were shown.<sup>58</sup> The department formed the Allendale Firemen's Entertainment Association in 1914. This association sponsored movies and other entertainment at the Fire House until it disbanded in 1929. On April 9, 1915, *The Ramsey Journal* reported that "The Overland Entertainment Club, musicians, soloists,

elocutionists will give an evening entertainment, including 6 reels of moving pictures, featuring Chas. Chaplin and other stars. Fireman's Hall, April 15. Admission 25¢, children 15¢."

A group of movie actors actually passed through Allendale in September 1916, and *The Ramsey Journal* of September 14 reported on the event: "Fifty-two actors of the Vitagraph Motion Picture Company came to town on Saturday morning and caused much excitement in our usually quiet borough. The company went to Wyckoff by auto bus, where a five-reel picture was taken. The director who accompanied the actors said that they intended to return again during the middle of the fall."

### NORTH JERSEY RAPID TRANSIT — THE TROLLEY LINE

In September 1908, a certificate of incorporation was filed for the North Jersey Rapid Transit Company and the first surveys through the area for the trolley line that would run through Allendale were made that same year. In October 1910, the trolley company was running cars from the Waldwick station to Paterson on a thirty minute headway, with the running time to Broadway in Paterson being about twenty minutes and the fare 15¢.

The company reported that it expected cars to be



*The North Jersey Rapid Transit trolley, about 1911. This is probably a special two-car Sunday School excursion.*

running to Mahwah before the holidays.

By 1911, the trolley was running through Allendale north to Suffern and south to Paterson, connecting to New York. The switch for the interchange with the Erie Railroad was built at Allendale. The trolley station at Allendale was a three-sided wooden shed with a bench.

Originally an interchange with the Hudson River Line trolleys was planned, but the link between

## ROADS, BUGGIES & AUTOMOBILES

One of the new Allendale Borough Council's first major concerns in 1895 was the condition, improvement, and maintenance of the town roads, most of which were still dirt roads at the time of Allendale's incorporation. Local men, hired to work on the streets, were paid \$1.50 a day, and were expected to use their own horses and carts. Much of their work

was removing stones from the roads. Some of the local men whose bids to do road repair were accepted by the Mayor and Council before 1900 were Frank Beckley, Frank S. Merrill, and J. J. Vanderbeek.

From time to time in the early years of the borough, the council received bids for road repair work and they authorized payment for road repairs, sometimes done by the owners of the nearby property. On February 8, 1896, for instance, the Council voted to spend not more than \$25 to repair roads at the bridge near Mr.

Burtis's house. Later, in February, they authorized J. J. Vanderbeek to repair the road in front of his house and ordered the \$1.25 bill of F. S. Merrill for road work to be paid. The Committee of Public Works was authorized to repair a washout on School House Hill.

In the warmer months, Allendale's early dirt roads were sometimes treated to keep the dust down, sometimes by oiling the surface. Roads in the winter at this time were generally not plowed, but were rolled, or packed down when it snowed, and sleighs then became the vehicle that could negotiate winter thoroughfares with the least trouble.

In wintertime, as buggies and automobiles gave way to sleighs, they, too, suffered their share of mishaps. One double incident happened about 1902-03, when P. Belinsky hitched his flyer to Frank Storms' cutter and accompanied by their two wives, they set out on a sleigh ride. A snowbank and an unseen rock spilled the occupants and wrecked the cutter. They hitched up a new sleigh, and continued on. The horse began to speed, and while going over a bump in the



*A view looking west on Allendale Avenue. In the distance on the left, the Allendale Hotel (partially hidden by trees) and barns. On the north side of the avenue, the Winter building housing Mrs. Borger's store, the Stephen Van Blarcom house (moved later to Elm Street), the Borger home (now gone and replaced by an office building), and the Rapelje house (still standing). From a postcard mailed in 1905.*

Paterson and Hoboken was never built, so the trolley remained an interurban line. Maytie Sparling remembered the trolley connecting with a Hudson River trolley at Warren Point, Elmwood. She said cars ran every fifteen minutes, then later half hourly, and still later, once an hour. "In its later years," she recalled, "it ran right into Paterson. During World War I there were lady conductors. Often motormen would stop a car in the woods between Allendale and Ramsey to photograph deer and let the passengers view them."<sup>58</sup>

The trolley company suffered financial setbacks resulting from a few early accidents, and when bus routes began to be established through the areas served by the trolley, the competition proved too great.

The Public Service Company took over the trolley line in 1926 and service on the line was discontinued on January 1, 1929. The track was later taken up and was shipped to the U.S.S.R. to be used for the Trans-Siberian Railway.<sup>65</sup>

road, Mrs. Storms was thrown from the sleigh. Mrs. Belinsky tried to make the men understand that a passenger was overboard, but the men, with muffled ears and sleigh bells ringing, were only intent on making quick time. When, finally, Mrs. Belinsky impressed upon them that Mrs. Storms was lost, the team was turned and the abandoned passenger was rescued.<sup>66</sup>

Another incident happened in January 1904 when several women were walking along Franklin Turnpike. A horse and cutter approached and suddenly the horse started to run. The driver of the sleigh was thrown out, and one of the women, with her child, was knocked down. The cutter went over them, but fortunately neither was badly hurt, and the horse was caught a bit further down the road.<sup>67</sup>

In August 1908, a party of young people out for a moonlight ride was driven to Suffern in the "Zabriskie wagonette" by Charles Simon. The young folks included Grace Archer, Amy Zabriskie, Laura Dougherty, Emilie Burroughs, Mason Garber, Ward Townley, Bert Weaver, Arthur Braig, and Sam Pritchett. Near the Suffern station, the horses became frightened and dashed down the road. Several of the passengers jumped, but most stayed in the carriage, which was thrown against iron supports at the bridge in Mahwah, where the harness broke and the carriage stopped. The horses ran on and were finally caught below Ramsey. The passengers were badly frightened, but fortunately suffered only bruises and scratches. Another wagon was hired at Suffern and the young people arrived home in Allendale at nearly three in the morning.<sup>68</sup>

At the turn of the century, the trip from New York City to Allendale by horse and buggy took about four hours. Traffic on the roads through town was generally slight in the early years of the 20th century. Even so, every once and a while, an accident would occur or a runaway horse would create a scare or worse, and people would renew their demands for greater safety measures on the roads.

Automobiles were rare at the turn of the century. In January 1900, Dr. Vroom owned the only automobile in Ridgewood. A newspaper in 1901 warned that Allendale "authorities should pass at once an ordinance regulating the speed of horseless carriages passing through the borough. The school house hill and the stretch of road near the M.E. Church on the main road, seems to be the favorite speeding place.



*The Allendale Hotel, from a postcard mailed in 1907.*

Many of the vehicles rush along at a rate and with the noise that would put to shame an Erie express train. A lady and gentleman, whose name could not be ascertained at this writing, but who it is said came from Mahwah, were driving on Sunday near Dr. Badeau's when a locomobile came rushing along. The occupants must have noticed that the horse was frightened, but they never stopped or slackened up, but rushed on, causing the gentleman to lose control of his horse, which went into Dr. Badeau's gate, breaking down a part of the fence, damaging the carriage, and throwing the occupants out. That they were not seriously hurt was a matter of good fortune. The party in the locomobile never looked back but kept right on. Fortunately there are very few of this class on the roads, as usually when they see that a horse is frightened they slow down or stop."<sup>69</sup>

Laura Barrett Haviland wrote "In April 1902 my father, A. C. Barrett, was driving with his horse and sulky, on the Franklin Turnpike when a passing automobile frightened his horse. . . My father [wrote] a letter of protest to the owner of the automobile." H. O. Havermeier, Jr. denied responsibility in a letter dated May 2, 1902, which is interesting for its estimate of the automobile traffic at that time: "although I possibly passed on the Franklin Turnpike on my way to New York last Sunday, I did not encounter any carriage between Ramsey and Ridgewood, and at no time did I pass a carriage without stopping. Evidently you have been misinformed, and if you and your informer would stop and think that I am not the only automobilist who uses this road and that there are passing on the road weekly between Tuxedo and New York something like 50 automobiles, you would see the necessity of being absolutely positive before



*The Allendale Railroad Station, about 1898, when it still stood on the east side of the railroad tracks.*

making such an assertion.”<sup>70</sup>

Horse-drawn and automotive vehicles shared the scene for the first two decades of the new century. There were hitching posts and water troughs for horses at the edges of Allendale Avenue in the business section and in the vicinity of the train station well into the second decade of the 1900s.

There were few automobiles in the area in the very early 1900s and Allendale’s first encounters with horseless carriages were special events. In June 1902 Dr. and Mrs. Harry M. Archer provided quite an exciting spectacle when they drove their new automobile to Allendale, having made “the run up from the city in a very short time.” George Cook, Allendale’s second Mayor, had an automobile by 1904, perhaps the Stevens Duryea that he and his sons built themselves at his home on West Allendale Avenue.<sup>71</sup> Will Ackerman had a Ford by the summer of 1908, and in that same year Cy Gousset bought *two* new Franklins — a touring car and a runabout! Willard Alling had a new Franklin in 1910.

In June 1912 Dr. R. W. Rodman was teaching his wife to drive their new auto and she took the car out onto Franklin Turnpike. A newspaper of the time reported that “Mrs. Rodman started the machine all right, but could not keep it straight. The car zigzagged down the road until a telegraph pole got in its way and stopped it. The car was not damaged much.”

By the early teens, more and more people owned automobiles, and traffic began to be a problem. By 1916, automobile and motorcycle accidents were occurring frequently in Allendale, most on Franklin Turnpike, but some also on Crescent Avenue and Hillside Avenue.

By about 1901 or 1902, a 2,400 foot length of

Franklin Turnpike had been recently macadamized, and this stretch of roadway completed the paving of that road through Allendale.<sup>72</sup>

About July 1903 plans were being made by the Mayor and Council to macadamize parts of Park Avenue and Brookside Avenue. The roads to be paved were those from Gasparini’s store to Pullis’s corner, and then west along Brookside Avenue to Wyckoff. At the same time it was noted that work was expected to begin soon on a new steel beam arched bridge with concrete flooring to be built over the creek near the ballgrounds (probably on Brookside Avenue near Memorial Park).<sup>73</sup>

About 1910-1911 the borough issued bonds in the amount of \$25,000 to improve the streets. It was about this time or a few years later that Franklin Turnpike was graded near the Toll Gate House. The cobblestone bridge over the Allendale Brook near the Elm Street and Franklin Turnpike intersection was built in 1915.

Crescent Avenue in Allendale was graded in 1914 and 1915, as part of “the new road from the State line to the Paterson Market.”<sup>74</sup>

Macadamized roads were appreciated by motorists, but these same roads, according to *The Ramsey Journal* of December 16, 1915, “impress owners and drivers of horses in quite a different way, as in damp or icy weather it is well-nigh impossible for a horse to travel. A little roughened stretch at one side of the roadway, as in some stretches is noted, is of great aid to animals, and should left on all our surrounding thoroughfares.”<sup>75</sup>

In the summer of 1916, the Allendale Board of Trade put up new signs on Franklin Turnpike at its Waldwick and Ramsey borders. The signs read “Welcome to Allendale. A Good Place To Live” and “Goodbye to Allendale. A Good Place To Live.”<sup>76</sup>

Many of the names by which we know Allendale’s roads today came into use during this period. Hillside Avenue was still called “the back Ramsey Road” in 1903, but was known as Hillside Avenue by 1910. The name “Brookside Avenue” (the eastern part of which was formerly called Anthony Street, and the western part of which was known by locals as “the road to Wyckoff”) was not in general use until the early 1900s. New Street was known by that name by 1916. Myrtle Avenue was named for Myrtle Quackenbush Dator, whose family lived on that street.

## POSTAL SERVICE

Allendale had several postmasters in the borough’s beginning years, and the post office moved from place to place. It was usually kept in the business location of the postmaster. Stephen J. Van Blarcom was appointed postmaster in 1893 and

Albert F. Krause followed him in 1897. Michael M. McDermott was postmaster in 1902 (and the post office was in the railroad station), and John Winter took office in 1914 (and the post office was in his store).<sup>77</sup>

On September 30, 1913 the Post Office was moved from the Erie Station to a new addition in the Winter Store on West Allendale Avenue, where John Winter was Postmaster. Less than a year later, on April 20, 1914, the Winter Store and the Post Office were robbed and \$756 in money and stamps was taken.<sup>6</sup>

On July 1, 1903 Rural Free Delivery was started from the Allendale Post Office. William J. Wilson and James Morton Southwick were sworn in as U.S. Mail carriers, Wilson as the regular carrier, and Southwick as the substitute carrier. The route covered all of Allendale and the carrier's duties included delivering, collecting, and registering letters, as well as selling stamps.

On June 30, 1917, Herbert Winter noted in his diary that "Abe Ackerman gave up carting mail from Allendale to Saddle River after 31 years of service."<sup>6</sup>

### THE RAILROAD

The railroad station which today stands opposite the Fire Station in Allendale, was built in 1870 and originally stood on the east side of the railroad tracks. By 1902, the station building had fallen into some disrepair, and the residents of Allendale urged the railroad to tear it down and build a new one. The railroad company responded by moving the old station across the tracks to its current location and refurbishing it a bit. This resulted in a rash of sarcasm and indignation on the part of the Allendale commuters. *The Ramsey Journal* of October 31, 1902 reported, "If you want to make an Allendale man mad, ask him how he likes the new station. The moving of the old station across the tracks took place last Saturday, at noon, and so well was the thing planned that not a single train was delayed. Allendale people cannot understand why the company spent nearly \$1,100 to move an old building so far. The officials say the building will be thoroughly overhauled and repainted and will practically be a new building. The new site is considered by many superior to the old one. A citizen sat in the old station as it was being raised on jacks, when a friend came in and said, 'I see you are on the way to heaven' The citizen replied: 'Let me out; I don't want to go there in this dilapidated affair.'"

By July 1903 the railroad company had made good on its promise to overhaul the old building. *The Ramsey Journal* reported, "The station has undergone quite a change in the past few weeks. The office is now at one end and connects with a door leading



*The Allendale Railroad Station in 1905, after it had been moved to the west side of the railroad tracks. The view is looking north from about the site of Ackerman's store on Park Avenue.*

to the baggage room without having to go outside. Both waiting rooms have been thrown into one large room and extra seats put in. The station is to be lighted by electricity and a freight house is to be built on the old station site."<sup>78</sup>

During the early 1900s the railroad station at Allendale was frequently burglarized, usually to steal money from the machines that had been installed to dispense gum and candy.

Work on laying an additional two tracks had been in progress during 1902. By October 1902, laying of additional tracks between Waldwick and Allendale was nearly complete. In December 1903 the four tracks between Allendale and Ridgewood were put into operation (over what had previously been a two-track stretch), resulting in an unbroken four-track line between Suffern and Jersey City.<sup>78, 79</sup>

The roadbeds of Allendale Avenue and Park Avenue crossed the railroad tracks in Allendale at this time, and flagmen were employed to raise and lower gates, at first by using hand cranks, and later automatically. Maytie Sparling remembered Charlie Simon and Willis Christopher as two of the flagmen. Allendale Avenue, Park Avenue, Orchard Street, Crescent Avenue, and Chestnut Street all directly crossed the tracks at this time.

One of the Allendale Borough Council's earliest ordinances, passed in March 1895, was to ask the Erie Railroad to build gates at one of the most dangerous crossings — the Allendale Avenue crossing.

Even with gates, flagmen, bells, wig-wags, and alarms at crossings, train accidents still occurred. In January 1898 the driver for Richard Warren & Co.,



*The Allendale Railroad Station, about 1910 in a photograph taken by Sam Brower.*

Shearman, Charles F. Smith, Charles W. Stocker, Joseph B. Taylor, Arthur Tomalin, James E. Van Horn, William J. Wilson, and the Rev. C. S. Woodruff.

Nearly two years after Allendale's incorporation, ground was broken for a new school building to replace the old one. On April 24, 1896, *The Ramsey Journal* reported, "Plans for the new school building will be decided on this week. Size of the building will be about 50 by 60 feet, two stories high, two rooms on each floor, about 24 by 30 feet each. There are to be separate entrances and cloak rooms for the boys and girls."

The new school was built by Stephen Van Blarcom at a cost of \$5,500, and was built on the same lot on Franklin Turnpike that the 1862 school building occupied. The old building remained while the new one

Paterson dealers of soda water, was crossing the track at the Allendale depot when he was struck by the "Tuxedo flyer." His wagon was completely demolished and pieces of it and its contents were scattered along the tracks. The crash set the horses loose, and they plunged forward, pulling the driver out of the wagon. He landed on his face and a gash was opened over his eye, he was bruised internally, and he was unconscious when he was taken to the hospital.

In August 1915, A. L. LeBarron and his father were driving through the Chestnut Street crossing when their wagon was hit by an Erie express. The horse was killed and the wagon was demolished. Mr. LeBarron and his father both sustained broken legs and body wounds, and were taken to St. Joseph's Hospital in Paterson.<sup>80</sup>

By March 1917 improvements were being made in the Allendale train station building, including the installation of toilets.<sup>81</sup>

## ALLENDALE SCHOOLS

### *Allendale Public School*

Soon after the incorporation of the borough, a new Board of Education was elected, including as members William C. Talman, C. A. Quackenbush, John B. Willard, Stephen Van Blarcom, D. P. Davis, Robert L. Nimmo, Henry J. Appert, D. C. Cooper, and Stephen Van Houten. Later members of the Allendale Board of Education between 1895 and 1916 included Henry C. Anthony, J. P. Beaver, Joseph Waldo Griffiths, William F. Kornhoff, John Mowerson, Albert Pullis, James H. Robertson, Abram T. Ryerson, Harry

was built just northeast of it. After the new building was completed, the old building was removed by Henry J. Appert, who had purchased the building, to his farm further north on the Turnpike.

Work on the new building was begun in June 1896 and the school was formally opened at a dedication ceremony held on December 18, 1896. The building still stands on its original site today, where, with its second floor removed, and having been renovated several times, it serves as today's Allendale Police Headquarters. After 1929, when the new Brookside School opened, the old school building served various functions including years as a Borough Hall, as a Community Center, and as a War Memorial Building before being turned into a police headquarters.

Teachers at this 1896 school included Alfred Ackerman, Miss Ella Appert, Miss Backus, Miss Carey, Miss Freeland (who roomed with Mr. and Mrs. Wetmore on Allendale Avenue), Miss Johnson (who left to become Mrs. John Cook), Miss King, Miss Frances Kussine (Frances Cosine?), Marie C. Maloney, Miss Naomi Murdock, Miss Ruge, Sadie Salyer, Miss Sayer, Miss Travis, Anita Van Houten (later Mrs. Stanley P. Fisher), Mrs. Joseph Ware, and John B. Zabriskie. Principals of the school, who at this early date also taught, included John Jacob Ackerman, John B. Zabriskie, Adele Harris, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Brinkerhoff. In 1907, Willard Alling was appointed Principal of the Allendale School, a position he held until his death on November 16, 1940.<sup>42</sup>

Graduation exercises were held first at the school, later at Archer Hall, and still later at the Fire House. In June 1900, the largest number to that date



*Allendale's second and third schoolhouses on Franklin Turnpike in 1896. The view is looking north from East Orchard Street. The second schoolhouse is on the left in the photograph. The new third schoolhouse (center) is nearing completion. The steps on the right belong to the Episcopal Church of*

*the Epiphany, which had in 1895 been moved south from its former location on the corner of Franklin Turnpike and what is today Cottage Place. At this time, the entrance to the church building faced Franklin Turnpike, and the Epiphany Parish House had not yet been built.*

ever graduated at once from the Allendale School attended commencement exercises. The seven graduates that year were Bertha Mallinson, Edna Storms, Arthur Appert, Willie Yeomans, Archer Asten, Bertie Smith, and Fred Willard.

In 1904, three teachers were employed at the school. In March of that year, the proposal to add a fourth teacher was voted on and lost. In the early 1900s the schoolhouse was composed of four rooms. The two rooms downstairs accommodated two classes, one of grades K-2, and one of grades 3 and 4. Upstairs, beginning in 1907, the one large room could be divided by a sliding, accordion-type door to make two rooms, one for grades 5 and 6; the other for grades 7 and 8. Morning exercises for the whole school were held upstairs in the large room, which served as an auditorium. In the rear hall (on both floors) was a bell rope to ring the bell in the tower on the roof.

William Buhlman, who was born October 5, 1900 and came to Allendale about 1905 or 1906, remembered that there was an old-fashioned indoor "outhouse" downstairs inside the school. Later, he said, they closed that up and moved the out-houses out-

side, one for the boys and one for the girls. He graduated from the Allendale School in 1915 and remembered that he walked to school — "if you didn't walk you didn't get anyplace."

Buhlman remembered the school Principal, Willard Alling, who used to tell them stories of the coal mine country in Pennsylvania, where he came from. "His stock story was that he used to work as a boy as a breaker boy in a coal mine, which meant that as the coal came out after being crushed, they had to pick out the slate and throw it aside. That's when he was a boy, and years later he was still coughing up coal dust."<sup>8</sup> Margaret McNelley remembered that "in 8th grade, when our classmates read orally and came to a difficult word, Mr. Alling would say, 'Call it "steamboat" and go on.'"<sup>82</sup>

Willard Alling had been born on April 27, 1879 in Wyoming, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Harvard University and New York University Law School. He was admitted to the bar in New Jersey and New York but never practiced law because of illness. He received his training as a teacher at Pennsylvania State Normal School and was a teacher in the Allendale Schools for 33 years, serving in addition as



An Allendale School class photograph taken March 1900 in a downstairs classroom. Standing at rear is the teacher, Sadie Salyer, and standing beside her is Florence Mallinson. Students in the left row are, from front to back, Charlie Simon, William Johnson, Ella Simon, unknown, John Cook (and, right, an unknown boy), Charlie Johnson (and, right, Ed Hilbert), and an unknown boy. In the center row, front to back, are: Anita Van Houten (and to her right

Grace Van Houten and Ethel Borger), Sadie Mallinson (and, right, Marie Nadler), Anna Van Dien (and, right, an unknown girl), Gertrude Borger (and, right, Matilda Van Houten), Myra Zabriskie, an unknown boy (and, right, Morgan Stocker), Hazel Burtis (and, right, Mabel Quackenbush). In the right row, front to back, are: Elliot Spring, John Appert, Everett Burtis, an unknown boy, another unknown boy, Viola Rossner, and Mina Schneider.

School Principal for most of those years. He came to Allendale in 1907. He was also Justice of the Peace in 1920 and served as Tax Collector for Allendale for 8 years. He was active in many educational and civic organizations, including the Holiday Observers, of which he was president in 1932.<sup>14, 83</sup>

Children either went home from school for lunch or brought lunches in Scotch plaid folding lunchboxes which were kept in lockers at the school. There was a pump outdoors with a ladle for drinking water, but after parents complained about their children drinking from a "community" dipper, all students were required to bring their own collapsible drinking cups to school. On stormy days when pupils couldn't go home for lunch, some of them gathered in the belfry to tell ghost stories.

Laura Barrett Haviland remembered the excitement in the area when in 1912 the first airplane flew over Allendale. All the school pupils were permitted to go out in the schoolyard to watch it. "It was very exciting as it flew very low and we were greatly impressed," she recalled. She remembered the many chestnut trees in the woods behind the school, and her sister Alice Barrett, Ruth Hutchinson, and Beatrice Nidd playing piano for the march into

assembly each morning.<sup>11, 43</sup>

On the way home from school every fall, those students who walked north on Franklin Turnpike past Mallinson's Cider Mill would usually stop for a sample fresh from the press. The parents were not very happy about it because everyone, young or old, drank cider from the same tin cup which hung on a nail. William Abbott recalled that Joseph Henry Mallinson ("Joe Hen"), the operator of the cider mill, kept part of the cider as payment for the pressing of the apples.<sup>58</sup>

It was customary then for the graduating eighth-grade students to climb up into the school belfry and carve their initials there. In June 1912 while carving her initials, Alice Barrett's foot slipped between the beams. It accidentally broke through the ceiling of the room below, sending plaster onto the desks of her sister Mildred's classmates, who were taking their state exams under the direction of their teacher, Miss Carey. The two classes in the room were so disrupted that a new set of tests had to be sent for and taken later. The school Principal, Mr. Alling, was so angry that he expelled the entire graduating class of five students. Regardless of this, they all showed up every day and sat on the fence in front of the school, beg-

ging to come back. Finally Mr. Alling relented and permitted them to graduate, but refused to have his picture taken with them. Students at that time, after graduating from the Allendale elementary school, would take the trolley to the high school in Ridgewood.<sup>11</sup>

In 1911 a new storm door was built for the schoolhouse and extensive repairs and improvements were made to both the windows and the heating system. In 1914 an addition to the school was built at a cost of \$24,000. This addition was used as a kindergarten room. In 1915 indoor sanitary toilets were installed, school grounds were graded and a stereoscope and victrola were purchased for the school.

#### *Allendale Private Schools*

Miss Jennie Southwick, daughter of James Reynolds Southwick, ran a private "school" in Allendale in 1910. According to Maytie Rowland Southwick Sparling, this began as remedial tutoring classes, held in the house on New Street, where the Southwicks had moved, from East Allendale Avenue, in 1887.

By 1915 Carrie Switzer was running the "Allendale School of Music" in her home at 100 East Allendale Avenue. She taught day pupils and advertised "acco-

modations for a limited number of resident pupils."

#### **ALLENDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Allendale's public library, one of northern Bergen County's first, had its beginnings in December 1900 on the second floor of the school building on Franklin Turnpike. It was organized by the Village Improvement Association's library committee, comprised of Mrs. E. W. Spring, Mrs. Wallace E. Carver, Mrs. Steven Van Houten, Mrs. Frank Merrill, and Mrs. Frank Drummond. On its opening day the library was stocked with 600 volumes loaned by the State Library at Trenton on a rotating basis. The State also sent a trained librarian to Allendale to teach the volunteers in charge how to catalog, shelve, and supervise circulation of the books.

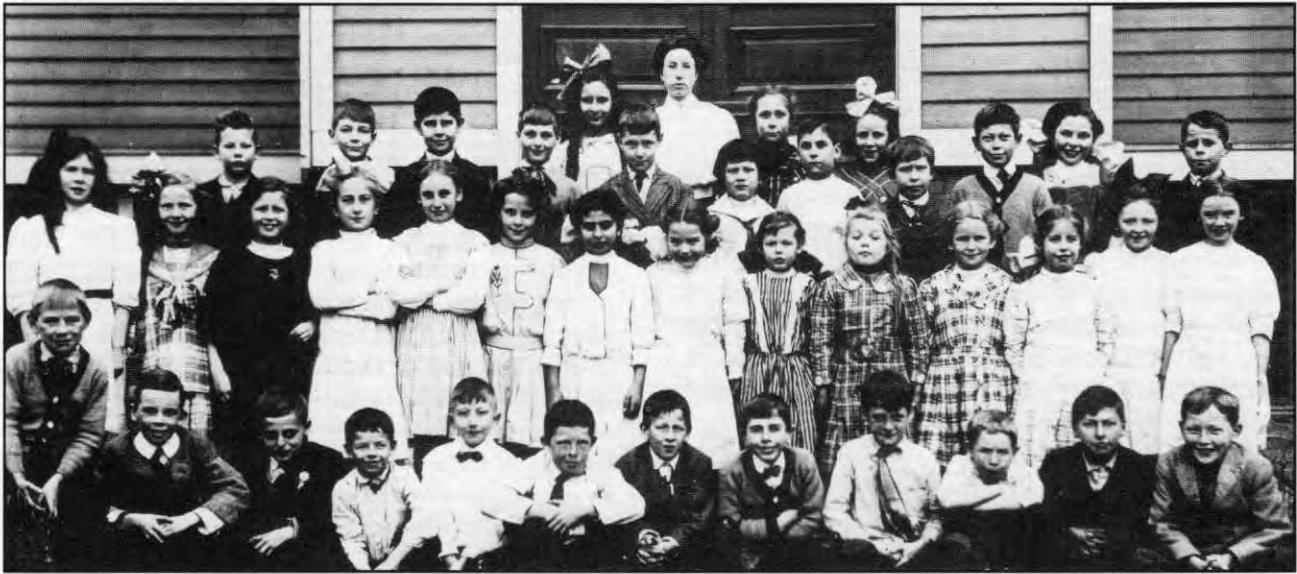
The library was supported by private funds, including membership dues and donations. Nonresidents could also borrow books.

In 1910, the school needed the library space for a cloak room, and so the library made its first of several moves, to a store owned by John Ackerman. In 1915 the library was moved to the second floor of the recently constructed Fire House, which at that time also doubled as the Borough Hall.<sup>84</sup>



*An Allendale School class photograph taken in a downstairs classroom, January 22, 1903. The teacher, standing at the rear of the room, is Sadie Salyer. Students in the left row, front to back, are: John Burgin, Ethel Borger, Duell Wall, Sadie Mallinson, Floyd Strawn, Louise MacNeil, and an unidentified boy. In the center row, front to back:*

*Harry Strawn, Edna Ackerman, Harry Yeomans, Lottie Scholz, Leo Van Dien, Anna Ackerson, Bill Mowerson, and Loretta McDermott. In the right row, front to back: Mary McDermott, Rose Gasparini, Josie Ackerson, Grace Abbott, an unidentified boy, Clinton Rossner, and another unidentified boy.*



Above, Allendale School class photograph taken about 1909 of probably the third and fourth grades. The teacher, standing at the rear center, is Ella Appert. The students are, front row, left to right: Edgar Austin, possibly -?- Griffin, John Knack, John Wilson, Clifford Fox, George Rudolph, John Winters?, Raymond Scholz, unknown boy, Jack Selfridge, Fred Conklin, and Kenneth V. Fisher. Second row: Mae Selfridge, Lois Merrill, Vivian Perry, Ina Van Horn, -?- Leach,

Mildred Barrett, unknown girl, Adelaide Couch, -?- Swan, Betty Anthony, Georgianna Van Houten, Grace Hubbard, Marjorie Hutchinson, and Edna Bloomer. Third row: Walter Swan, Leon Kornhoff, Arthur Quackenbush, Perry Sturges, William B. Buhlman ("Bub"), Kingsland Merrill, Olin Leach, John Winters?, Andrew Mowerson, Dorothy Hutchinson, and Otto Vanderbeek. Rear, top row: Gertrude Dexter, Miss Appert, -?- Swan, and Marjorie Dexter.



Above, Allendale School class photograph, 1914, 7th and 8th grades. The teacher (and school principal), Willard Alling, is standing to the left of the stairs. In the bottom row, left to right, are: Clifford Fox, Leon Kornhoff, Raymond Scholz, John Winters, Edgar Austin, and Kenneth V. Fisher. In the second row: Georgianna Van Houten, Edna Bloomer, Marjorie

Hutchinson, Viola Kinsky, Mae Selfridge, Ina Van Horn, Florence Dunkel, Grace Hubbard, and Sara Anderson. Third row: Marjorie Dexter, Dorothy Hutchinson, Marion Robertson, Ruth Taylor, Mildred Barrett. Rear (top) row: John Knack, Andrew Mowerson, Otto Vanderbeek, Arthur Quackenbush, William Buhlman, and George Rudolph.



Above, Allendale School class photograph taken March 1915 of the 2nd and 3rd grades. The teacher, standing at the the left of the stairs, is Miss Anita Van Houten. The students are, front row, left to right: an unidentified boy, James Travis, Harry Wiley, Edward Brown, William Barrett, and Erick Anderson. Second row: Jennie Winters, Hilda Vanderbeek, Gertrude Artl, Margaret M. McNelley, Jean Rouse, unidentified girl, Mary Monarch, Madeline Miller, Grace Shambach,

Virginia Russell, Pearl Rose, and Jennie Gasparini. Third row: unidentified girl, Edna May Murphy, Florence Hanson, unidentified girl, and another unidentified girl. Fourth row: Whyett Van Horn, George Gasparini, Paul Tomalin, Charles Bijou, Perry Dexter, and Lodowick Rossner. Top row: James Webb, John Taylor; Gerard Schilling, Kenneth Mowerson, Elwood Critchley, William Hanson, and Robert Rodman.



Left, Allendale School graduating class of 1910 standing outside the schoolhouse. Left to right, standing, are: Art Kaminski, Percy Fisher, Bert Sneden, Teacher and Principal Willard Alling, Rita Stocker, Lillian Bloomer, Russell Mallinson, J. Parnell Feeney, Jack McDermott, and Herbert Winter. Seated are James Hubbard, Oliver Asten, John Borger, and William Abbott.

## FIRES AND THE ALLENDALE FIRE ASSOCIATION

Over the years Allendale had suffered many disastrous fires. Some, occurring after the borough was organized, included the September 1896 blaze that burned a house on the Turnpike belonging to Benjamin Ackerman to the ground. The tenants, Mr. and Mrs. Parks, were away at the time, but neighbors managed to break down a front door and save some furniture, including a piano.

In December 1896 the home of Henry J. Appert was totally destroyed by fire, and the family escaped with only the clothing they were wearing.

In October 1898 a barn owned by Corines Quackenbush was completely destroyed by fire, including its contents — the complete summer crop of hay.

On August 2, 1903, a fire broke out in Ackerman's General Store and among the things damaged was the borough safe, which had been stored in the building. This fire had interesting consequences, according to *The Ramsey Journal*: the marriage of R. V. Ackerman's daughter, Myra, to Chartre Mallinson. "The young people had been engaged for some time," reported the newspaper, "No date had been set for the wedding, but the circumstances of the fire, and Miss Ackerman's peril brought the young people to realize they should be married at once."

Another fire occurred in Allendale in August 1903, when the W. Jaeger home on Hillside Avenue was totally destroyed. According to *The Hackensack Republican*, "Nearby a ball game was in progress when some of the small boys present noticed smoke

off to the west. Attention was called to it, but it was thought to be from a brush fire. Some of the boys who had gone to investigate raised the alarm, and immediately a large number of citizens were hurrying to the scene and assisted in saving some of the personal property, but by the time the first delegation arrived the fire had nearly full possession of the building. Those who did good work were George Parigot, "Fritz" O'Neill, Dr. Archer, who had his coat burned, and Mr. Dewsnap. John Mallinson and David Mowerson with pails of water wet down the roofs of surrounding property in the direction the sparks were flying."

Still another 1903 fire destroyed property at Henry J. Appert's farm on Cottage Place. One of the buildings destroyed was a storehouse full of onions, and neighbors said that for weeks afterwards the vicinity smelled of charred onions.

These fires and others had spurred talk of the need for a local fire-fighting organization, and that suggestion was renewed after the Jaeger fire. "The fire emphasizes again," wrote the *Hackensack Republican* reporter, "the suggestion of this column last week that a fire company should be organized. Property owners have to face higher insurance if this keeps up, and by a well organized fire company lower rates can be secured. Dr. Archer has been connected with the New York fire department for many years, and would make a capable instructor, and there is plenty of material here to make an excellent department."

Despite this suggestion, it would be another seven years before a fire company would be organized in Allendale. It happened when the usual Sunday morning

quiet was broken on the day after Christmas, December 26, 1909, by the sounds of many voices calling the alarm of "Fire!" The building formerly housing the Kornhoff Bakery, near the center of the Allendale business section, was aflame in a fire started by an upset Christmas tree. Despite the efforts of many volunteers, the tenant family occupying the house lost all of their belongings to the fire. The building housing the barber shop of Max Scholz, located about 25 feet away from the



In a photo from about 1910, Allendale Fire Association Assistant Foreman Valentine J. Braun with Allendale's first fire truck, outside Braun's barn, where the truck was housed until 1913.

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In a photo from about 1910, Allendale Fire Association Assistant Foreman Valentine J. Braun with Allendale's first fire truck, outside Braun's barn, where the truck was housed until 1913.

Kornhoff building, soon caught fire and was also destroyed. A strong wind was blowing that morning and there was a great deal of concern that the fire would spread to other nearby buildings, for sparks were being blown as far as the livery stable and the nearby Winter building. Seven or eight smaller fires, including one on the roof of Mr. Walton's building, were extinguished before they did substantial damage, but the fear remained that if the Winter store caught fire, almost every building on the Avenue would be endangered. Volunteers mounted ladders and poured snow and water on the roof of the Winter building to prevent the spread of the fire.

Ramsey firemen were summoned to the scene by telephone and Winter & Christopher sent a team of horses, driven by Richard Christopher and Arthur Appert, to help bring the apparatus. By the time the flames were completely out, all that remained of the two buildings was the tall chimney of the bakery.<sup>85</sup>

For Allendale, this disastrous fire was to have long-lasting consequences, for the tragedy of this conflagration and the fear of what might have been, inspired the quick formation of the Allendale Fire Company. On New Year's Eve, December 31, 1909, a general meeting was held in Archer Hall, and a committee of seven was appointed to investigate the organization of a permanent fire department. This first meeting was attended by 54 men (a number later estimated to be almost a third of Allendale's adult male population in 1909). Five meetings were held within the next 20 days, during which a constitution and by-laws were prepared and plans for a full working organization were established.

On January 24, 1910, a unanimous vote approved the constitution, it was adopted, and the volunteer

Allendale Fire Association was formally in existence. Charter membership totalled 57 men. The charter officers elected were: president, William Dewsnap; vice-president, William C. Talman; treasurer, J. M. Christopher; secretary, C. N. Elliott, Jr.; chief, Robert W. Steele; foreman, Valentine J. Braun; assistant foreman, Max Scholz; second assistant foreman, Arthur Dathe. Serving on the Board of Trustees were John W. Winter, Dr. Robert W. Rodman, R. Moelhausen, S. J. Van Blarcom, and William C. Lee.

In February iron tires, to be used as alarms, were purchased from the Erie Railroad and R. J. and J. M. Christopher donated lumber to be used to build frames from which to hang the iron tires. There were eleven of these iron tire alarms and they were located throughout Allendale at the following sites:

- (1) Park and Brookside Avenues (strike 1-5)
- (2) Franklin Turnpike near the Ilsley residence (strike 3-5)
- (3) at the railroad crossing near the hotel (strike 1-4)
- (4) at Allendale Avenue and Franklin Turnpike (strike 1-6)
- (5) at the intersection of Myrtle and West Crescent Avenues (strike 1-7)
- (6) at Hillside and West Crescent Avenues (strike 2-4)
- (7) on Hillside Avenue near the Gousset residence (strike 2-5)
- (8) on Brookside Avenue near the Smith residence (strike 2-6)
- (9) at Park and Crescent Avenues near the Lee residence (strike 2-7)
- (10) on Franklin Turnpike near the old Tollgate House (strike 3-4)
- (11) on East Allendale Avenue near the Zabriskie residence (strike 3-6).



*An Erie steam railroad train arriving at Allendale in 1910. To the left of the tracks hangs an early Allendale Fire Association fire gong: a railroad iron tire suspended from a wooden frame. This view is looking south along the railroad tracks; the grounds of the Allendale Hotel (and the bottom of its flag pole) are visible on the left of the photograph.*



*The Allendale Fire House under construction in 1913.*

In the event of a fire, these iron tires were struck with a hammer a varying number of times according to a number code that indicated the alarm location. In addition to the strike codes listed above, 2 strikes indicated Back Taps, Fire Out; 3 strikes indicated a Test Alarm; and 4 strikes indicated a Drill Call.<sup>86</sup> Later bells were used for alarms, and finally sirens were installed throughout the borough.

In March 1910 a new hook and ladder truck was ordered at a cost of \$995, from the Combination Ladder Co. On March 15, 1910 a terrible fire destroyed the home of Albert L. Zabriskie on East Allendale Avenue, where an estimated \$25,000 in

damage was done. This was the first fire to confront the newly formed association and it occurred before their new equipment was delivered. The truck arrived on August 18 and was stored in Valentine J. Braun's barn next to the Allendale Hotel. The truck, drawn by a team of horses loaned by H. J. Knack, appeared in Allendale's Labor Day parade on September 8, 1910.

Allendale firemen marched in the 4th of July and Labor Day parades in 1910, dressed in dapper uniforms of white duck trousers, white shirts, black belts, shoes and ties. They wore white cotton gloves and each man carried a cane with a flag attached. These striking uniforms earned Allendale firemen the nickname, "the silk-stocking boys."

In 1912 Valentine Braun became the Allendale fire chief, and that same year he sold the land on which the barn housing the fire truck was located. A building committee was formed and its members began to formulate plans for a permanent Fire House. In June of that year, Mrs. Margaret Yeomans donated a 25' x 50' plot of land on which to build a Fire House, and in October 1912 John Yeomans increased the size of the lot to 50' x 100'.

Allendale architect William Dewsnap drew up plans, which he donated without charge, for a combination Fire House/Borough Hall building, and work began on construction early in 1913. A contract was awarded to S. T. Van Houten, Jr. to erect the building for a sum of \$6,212. A well was dug by Mr. LeBarron and plumbing was installed by L. E. Rossner. On April 5, 1913 the cornerstone of the new Fire House was laid during ceremonies at which a brass band played. Mayor John Winter officiated, assisted by John Yeomans, Margaret Yeomans, and Dr. Harry Archer.

Over the next few years the building became more than just a Fire House — it was a community center where all sorts of civic and social community events were held. The building served as a polling place on election day, drill hall for the Bergen Guards, the office of the Building and Loan Association, and the meeting place for the Allendale Council.

In the early days of the volunteer association, the firemen pulled the first truck to fires, using ropes, but soon merchants in town volunteered to lend their teams of horses to haul the truck. Teams loaned included those of John W. Winter, Henry J. Knack, R. J. Christopher, John J. Brennan, John H. Ackerman, and Coates & Strunk. In 1912 the association



*The completed Allendale Fire House in 1913.*



Left, cornerstone ceremony for Allendale's first Fire House, April 5, 1913.

Below, the Allendale Firemen, in a photo taken April 5, 1913 at the cornerstone ceremony for the new Fire House. Some of the men in the photo are, from left to right, front row: Ernest Steele, William Dewsnap, Dr. Harry Archer, Valentine Braun, Sam Brower, and (to the side in the black suit) "Poppy" Mowerson. Second row: Fred Weinier, Mac McGill, Harry Yeomans, Milton Ackerson, Edward Thomas, Fred Koster, Charles Winters, Otto Sturchler, Max Scholz, Walter Steele, and the Rev. James Jackson. Third row: Ing Roswell, Bert Smith, Raymond Roswell, William Schilling, Jim Mowerson, William Mowerson, Ed Hilbert, William Ackerson, Charles Johnson, and John Bijou.



Allendale Historical Society



Above, 1915, parked outside the Allendale Fire House, the Seagrave ladder truck after being converted from horse drawn to Model T with chain drive, pneumatic front tires, hard rubber tires on tractor, and original hard rubber tires under rear trailer.

Below, Allendale Volunteer Fire Department's #2 equipment, about 1915. Standing, left to right are an unidentified man, Walter Steele, Vito Gasparini, William Dewsnap, Sam Brower, Charles Johnson, Ernest Steele, and Milton Ackerson. The driver is Dr. Harry Archer, and the passenger is Valentine J. Braun.



voted to pay \$5 to the owner of the first team to get to their headquarters and this is said to have produced a keen rivalry between a lumber company and two grocery stores. A special harness, donated by Dr. Harry M. Archer, hung from the ceiling in the Fire House and this could be lowered onto the horses as they backed into position, so that the truck could be rushed to a fire within minutes of a team's arrival.

Fire records show that a motorized vehicle was used for the first time on November 17, 1914 when Mr. Brennan's auto was used. A record made March 17, 1915 shows the first use of the fire association's own "auto truck."<sup>87</sup>

Dr. Harry M. Archer was instrumental in organizing the Allendale Fire Association. The son of Oliver Hazard Perry Archer and Mary Dean, he was born in 1868 and died May 17, 1954. He was by profession an insurance doctor, but was best known as the chief medical officer of the New York City Fire Department; he was later named "honorary medical officer" of that department. It was said that in his career he missed only one three-alarm blaze, and that was on his wedding day in February 1914. He spent his summers in Allendale during his childhood and visited here often later on in his life.<sup>88</sup>

On January 11, 1913, despite the combined efforts of the Allendale, Ridgewood, Waldwick and Ramsey Fire Departments, the house of Assemblyman George Cook (a former Allendale Mayor) burned to the ground. Cook's house stood on the north side of West Allendale Avenue between the train station and Franklin Turnpike, and the damage was estimated at \$8,000. The firemen from Allendale left the Fire House at 6:10 a.m. and returned at 10:15 a.m. The fire departments of the surrounding towns responded to telephoned calls for assistance. Sixty tons of coal had been stored in the basement of the house, and Mr. Cook announced that anyone who could salvage the coal could have it. A number of men tried, but

no one was successful. The coal was still smoldering a year later, in January 1914.<sup>6, 87, 89</sup>

The Allendale Fire Association was an autonomous group until September 23, 1914, when the volunteers voted to put the organization under the control of the Borough. A month later Mayor Gustave Nadler signed an ordinance creating the Allendale Fire Department.<sup>87</sup>



*The George Cook House on West Allendale Avenue, destroyed by fire January 11, 1913.*

### UTILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Maytie Sparling recalled that her uncle, James Morton Southwick, was employed in the late 1890s and early 1900s to care for Allendale's 13 kerosene street lamps. He carried a ladder on his rounds, when he would ignite the lamps at night, and again when he traveled the same route to put them out in the morning. Later, she remembered, a powerhouse was erected on the George Cook property, and from there, Southwick would turn the electric lights on and off.<sup>58</sup>

By 1895 Allendale had telephone connections via a trunk line in Paterson with Waldwick, Ramsey, and the Ridgewood Central District, which was comprised of Ridgewood, Midland Park, Glen Rock, and Ho-Ho-Kus. There were fifteen telephones on a 10-line switchboard installed in H. A. Tice's drug store in Ridgewood. By 1896 this switchboard was no longer adequate and was replaced by a 100-line switchboard.

The first Ridgewood Central Office telephone directory was issued in September 1897, and one Allendale telephone was listed: a pay station in the store of R. V. Ackerman. On August 13, 1903, *The Hackensack Republican* reported in its Allendale column that "there are two public telephones in town now," but neglected to mention where the second phone was.<sup>90</sup>

Having a telephone put in your home was quite an event, and Herbert Winter noted the remarkable occurrence in his diary. The Winter home phone was installed on May 14, 1914.

By February 17, 1916 transcontinental phone service was in operation in the area. Those attending a meeting at Fidelity Lodge of Ridgewood were to talk to San Francisco that night.<sup>6</sup>

Negotiations for electrical service began around

the turn of the century, and on June 7, 1900 Allendale enacted an ordinance authorizing the Rockland Electric Company to install and maintain a pole line in Allendale. At the September 14, 1900 Allendale Council meeting, it was agreed that seven electric lights were to be furnished to the borough by the electric company as provided by their franchise. The lights were to be installed at the following locations:

- (1) in the square opposite Yeoman's Butcher Shop
- (2) at the junction of the turnpike and the road leading to the railroad station
- (3) at the turn in the Saddle River Road by the residence of Albert A. L. Zabriskie
- (4) at the junction of the turnpike and Appert's Road in front of the residence of Mrs. Reading
- (5) on the main turnpike at the crossing by the old Gate House
- (6) on the road leading from the railroad station to the public park on the brow of the hill by the residence of Mr. Brown
- (7) on the road leading from Mr. Pullis's to the residence of Mr. Burtis about 150 ft. west of Mr. Pullis's house.<sup>17</sup>

In March 1915 Herbert Winter noted in his diary that his grandmother Winter was putting a new bathroom in her home on Elm Street, and by May Grandma Winter was having electric lights installed in her house.

Until 1914, Allendale's water had come largely from private springs and wells. Farms and houses in the town had windmills, bucket wells and artesian wells with pumps inside the house. Some families, William Abbott was to later remember, had water storage tanks that took up half of the attic. "Water was pumped there several times a week and boys were paid by the hour to pump — I was one of those boys."<sup>91</sup>

On July 23, 1914 water pipes were being laid in Allendale. The Mount Prospect Water Company of New York supplied the water, which was pumped from Ramsey. On March 12, 1915 when the Jessup barn on Brookside Avenue caught fire, "town water" was used for the first time to extinguish a fire.<sup>6, 87</sup>

Work began on the building of sidewalks along Franklin Turnpike in March 1916 and they were finished on September 6th.<sup>6</sup>

### OTHER EVENTS

A tornado, unusual for this part of the country, struck Bergen County on July 13, 1895. The location suffering the most damage was the Cherry Hill section near Hackensack, where people were killed and houses demolished. For years people remembered the storm as the "Cherry Hill Twister."

That storm in our area was described by *The*



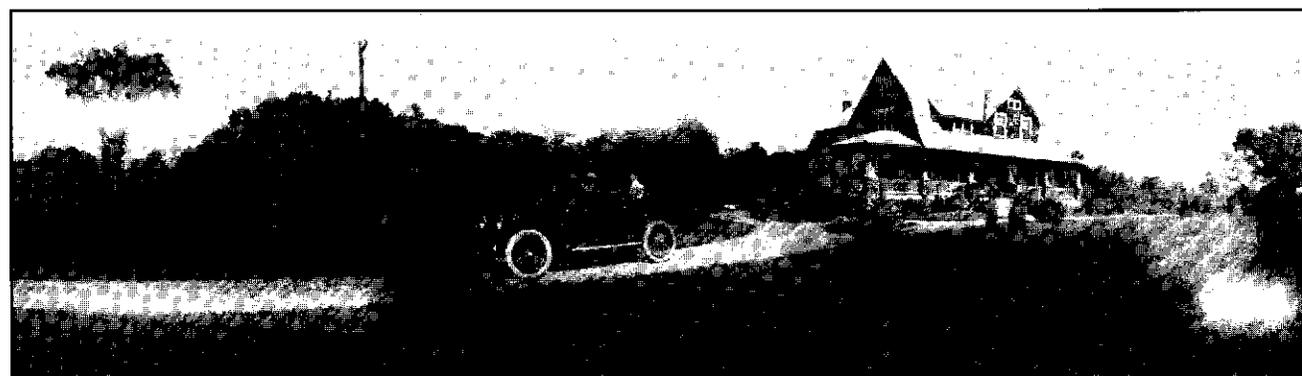
*A panoramic view of the Allendale business section, about 1903-1905. The view is looking east from Park Avenue, traffic on which at that time crossed the railroad tracks (so did traffic on West Allendale Avenue, just north in this photograph).*

*Ramsey Journal* in its July 19, 1895 issue: "The rolling black clouds on Saturday last were watched with much alarm by our people and it was evident that a storm of unusual fury was coming . . . The clouds . . . suddenly increased in momentum and the wind gained in velocity, when with a roar the storm broke in all its fury. The rain fell in torrents, accompanied by hail stones of great size, which soon leveled all before it. Crops and fruit were beaten to the ground and in some sections entirely destroyed."

Windows were broken, and people who happened to have been out with horses at the time the storm struck, had great difficulty controlling them. As near as Ridgewood huge trees were uprooted. In Ramsey a great deal of damage was done to greenhouses suffering broken glass, and several large lights in the

schoolhouse at Ramsey were broken. Hail stones were picked up that measured over 9 inches in circumference and weighed three quarters of a pound.<sup>62</sup>

On May 7, 1913, Mayor John Winter and William Mallinson, armed with shotguns, forestalled a potential disturbance in town. They halted the march of several hundred of the radical, socialistic Industrial Workers of the World who were advancing along the railroad tracks toward Allendale. Confronted by Winter and Mallinson and their guns, the marchers quickly dispersed and left the area. The I.W.W., whose members were called "Wobblies," was an international industrial labor union that had been formed in Chicago in 1905.<sup>6</sup>



*A panoramic view, about 1915 of the George M. Potter home at 775 West Crescent Avenue. Their pond can be glimpsed on the left. The Ramsey Journal of July 6, 1916 reported on a party at the Potter home: "On July 4, in the evening Mr. and Mrs. George M. Potter of Crescent Avenue gave one of the largest and most beautiful private parties ever seen, in Allendale. Mr Potter's beautiful grounds had been strung with electrically lighted Japanese lanterns. Around the pond, adjacent to the residence, there were also hung lanterns and in a canoe there were many delightful "spooney" rides, limited to ten minutes. On the magnificent porch the party was grouped and suitable refreshments and cigars and cigarettes were to be had in abundance. The large living-room and dining-room had been artistically decorated. In this and on a platform erected off the south side of the house there was dancing. One of the main features was a splendid exhibition of fireworks."*