

Clayton Historic Preservation, Inc.

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Transportation

Today, travel is much easier than it was over 250 years ago. One can travel by airplane, by boat, by automobile, by train, by bicycle or by foot to get from Point A to Point B with so much more ease and convenience than our forefathers. One can hire whatever transportation is needed; hire a limousine for a special occasion, rent a car when planning a trip, call a taxi cab for shorter journeys and, of course, today we have UBER.

People in the past used many of these methods and this newsletter will show how these modes of transportation had direct cause and effect on our borough, Clayton.

Toll roads and bridges were a starting point for the revolution in transportation, which accelerated in the late 1790s. Road construction was a small scale, localized enterprise. Clayton's main thoroughfare is Delsea Drive, Route 47, and was once a toll road, Malaga Turnpike, and ran through our small village of Fislerville. As our borough began to grow, Clayton was in need of paved roads and sidewalks showing the growth and prosperity of Clayton. With the borough's business direction adjusting to the times, name changes were necessary for some of our streets. In 1900, Factory Street was changed to High Street; later, Railroad Avenue was changed to Clayton Avenue; and a 1958 map refers to Fries Mill Road as Blackwood Road, and in 1972, a newspaper article referred to Clayton Avenue as Downer Road at Wilson Lake.

CHP has on file documents showing in our early years, Clayton raised money for the construction of New Street; and (see below and right) a 1908 document which shows the advertisement in the local newspaper of the Borough ordinance to provide for the laying of sidewalks on certain streets.

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AN ORDINANCE
 AN ORDINANCE to provide for the laying of sidewalks on certain streets in the BOROUGH OF CLAYTON.
 Be it ordained by the COUNCIL of the BOROUGH OF CLAYTON, as follows, to wit:
SECTION 1.—That sidewalks be constructed and laid on the following streets and avenues in the Borough of Clayton, to wit:
CENTRAL AVENUE, on the west side thereof, beginning at and including the residence property of J. F. Blakeborough, and extending in a northerly direction to Clinton street, and on the east side thereof, beginning at Clayton avenue and extending in a northerly direction to and including the property of Rachel Purnell;
HIGH STREET, on the south side

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orough, and extending in a northerly direction to Clinton street, and on the east side thereof, beginning at Clayton avenue and extending in a northerly direction to and including the property of Rachel Purnell;
HIGH STREET, on the south side thereof, beginning at Main street and extending in a westerly direction to and including the property of Albert Patterson, and on the north side thereof, beginning at Central avenue and extending in a westerly direction to the railroad station;
MAPLE STREET, on the south side thereof, beginning at Central avenue and extending in a westerly direction to the railroad station, and on the north side thereof, beginning at Central avenue and extending in a westerly direction to and including the property of John Lovejoy;
CENTRE STREET, on the south side thereof, beginning at Central avenue and extending in a westerly direction to Broad street;
BROAD STREET, on the west side thereof, beginning at High street and extending in a northerly direction to Centre street.
SECTION 2.—Said sidewalks shall be constructed and laid of concrete and cement, of good quality, and shall not be less than four feet and six inches in width, with a thickness of three inches of concrete and one inch of top surface, and shall be laid, on sidewalks of the width of eight feet in the centre of the space allotted for sidewalks, between the curb and the property or street line; and on streets having a greater width than eight feet for sidewalks the same shall be laid so that there shall be a space of one foot and nine inches between the property or street line and the edge of the pavement next to the same.
SECTION 3.—Said sidewalks shall be constructed and laid at the cost and expense of the owner or owners of the lands in front of which the same shall be so constructed and laid.
SECTION 4.—The owner or owners of lands in front of which said sidewalks shall be constructed and laid shall be allowed forty-five days' time in which to perform the work required hereby, and written notice of the required work shall be sent to such owner by mail, if their post office address be known; if not known, then by posting such notice on the premises affected hereby, or by leaving the same with any occupant thereof, or by personal service if said owner shall be resident within the borough.
 Introduced at a regular meeting of the Borough Council, held the fifth day of June, 1908, and passed at a regular meeting held the nineteenth day of June, 1908.
 Approved this nineteenth day of June, 1908.
 F. R. NICHOLS,
 Mayor.
 Attest:
 WALTER DU BOIS,
 Borough Clerk.

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As of May 2010, the Borough of Clayton had a total of 44.16 miles of roadways, of which 33.00 miles were maintained by the municipality, 8.36 miles by Gloucester County and 2.80 miles by the State of New Jersey.