

## 147 YEARS AGO      DECEMBER 1877

### **A HORSE GOES TO CHURCH.** *Somerset Unionist, December 13, 1877*

On Sunday morning last, the congregation of St. John's Episcopal Church, Somerville, were startled by the sudden appearance of a horse at the main entrance. It appears the animal had become frightened while coming from Raritan and ran away, throwing out the two male occupants of the carriage but not injuring them. Turning up Doughty Street, he took the sidewalk and dashed on straight across High Street and into the church door, where he was compelled to stop. Fortunately no person was injured.

## 100 YEARS AGO      DECEMBER 1924

### **SOMERVILLE CHURCH TO CELEBRATE 225<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY.** *Courier-News, December 27, 1924, p 9*

Sunday (Dec 28) the "Olde First" church of Somerville will observe the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its organization. To the casual observer the occasion might be taken as a "current event," notable in the passing but insignificant when over, but to those interested in the history of Somerset county, to the descendants of the early settlers of Somerset, and to members of the Dutch churches of the county, it means more. The settlement of Somerset county and the development of the territory within its confines would not be complete without the story of the First Reformed church of Somerville. The county and the Dutch church in the early days of the settlement of this section of New Jersey were one and for many years the county and the church cooperated in the upbuilding and the uplift of the community, as both have done in the passing years. The old Somerset County Court House at Millstone (the second in the history of the county) and the original building of the First Reformed church, now of Somerville, then of "Raritan," were destroyed by the British the same day. When the Court House was rebuilt near its present site in "Bridgewater" or "Raritan," it was rebuilt through the cooperation of members of "First Church of Raritan." Later, when the church edifice, which preceded the present [one] on East Main street, was erected, the church withdrew from its connection with the county but the friendly relations were always retained. When the present church building was erected, the congregation utilized the county buildings for worship; when the present county buildings were erected, the county used the chapel of the "Olde First" for courts of justice and law. The history of Somerset county has gone hand in hand with the history of the "Olde First" church. / The records of the early church are intact, largely because of the interest of two of its clergymen, both men who have contributed not only to the development of the church but to the development of the county as well, Rev. Abraham Messler, D.D., and Rev. William S. Cranmer, D. D. / The anniversary services at the church Sunday morning will be marked by a union of the Reformed churches branched from the "Olde First." ... Rev. William Stockton Cranmer, D. D., pastor emeritus of the church, will deliver the historical address. Senator Clarence E. Case is chairman of the committee of arrangements which also includes Judge Nelson Y. Dungan, former Judge Daniel H. Beekman, Charles W. Moore, and Dr. Cranmer. [Note: This church is located on the Somerset County Court House Green, Somerville and is used today by the county as the jurors' waiting room] [image- 1897 postcard of the rebuilt First Reformed Church, available on ebay.com. A similar image of the First Reformed Church can be seen on <https://visitsomersetnj.org>]



### **ORGANIZATIONS MARK YULETIDE SEASON.** *Courier-News, December 24, 1924, p 15*

The Christmas activities of the fraternal organizations and clubs of Bound Brook will consist of the distribution of numerous lots of groceries and toys to needy families. The Welfare Society erected a large Christmas tree in the station square and trimmed it with electric lights. Christmas Eve, a community sing will be held, if the weather is permissible, the music being furnished by Starch's Band. Following the sing groceries and toys will be distributed. / The Bound Brook lodge of the Elks will hold their Christmas day service for the children in the Palace Theatre Thursday (Christmas) morning. More than a thousand children are expected to assemble for the occasion and will receive small gifts donated from the lodge funds. / The Lafalot Club and the Rotarians of the borough have combined their efforts to furnish toys for the children at the State Sanatorium at Glen Gardner. The Bound Brook Elks also assisted the Welfare Society in the distribution of gifts and food for the dinners of the less fortunate.