

125 YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 1898

MISS STEELE'S SHINGLE OUT *Courier- News, Feb 4, 1898, P 5*

The First Woman Commissioner of Deeds in New Jersey. Miss Mary M. Steele, the second woman to be admitted to practice law in New Jersey, and the first woman commissioner of deeds, opened a law office in Somerville yesterday. ... Three years ago Miss Steele succeeded in having passed by the Legislature and signed by Gov. Werts the bill permitting woman to be appointed commissioner of deeds in New Jersey. Gov. Werts as a compliment gave Miss Steele the first appointment under the new law. *Image: Mary Steele in front of Somerset Court House, undated.*



100 YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 1923



MRS. HALL SAILS FOR ITALY FOR LONG STAY *Courier- News, Feb 5, 1923, p 2*

New Brunswick, February 5 – The Hall homestead on Nichol avenue was closed Saturday preparatory to the sailing of Mrs. Frances Noel Hall for Italy next Wednesday. The home will be placed in charge of caretakers during the absence of Mrs. Hall, who is expected to be gone for eighteen months. ... All arrangements have been made for the sailing of Mrs. Hall with Miss Sally Peters for Italy on Wednesday noon. Passports have been issued and everything is in readiness for the departure of the slain rector's wife and her friend. ... The investigation of the Hall-Mills tragedy has been at a standstill for several weeks and it is expected that the departure of Mrs. Hall will be the final chapter in the case. Rev. Edward Wheeler Hall, rector of the Church of Saint John the Evangelist, and Mrs. Eleanor Mills, choir leader at the church, met death under a crab apple tree on the old Phillips farm on September 14.

Image: <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2022/09/the-birth-of-americas-true-crime-obsession>

JAMES MILLS IN CONFERENCE WITH DETECTIVE TOTTEN *Courier- News, Feb 7, 1923, p 1*

Somerville – James Mills, husband of Mrs. Eleanor Mills, the choir singer who was shot to death with the Reverend Edward Wheeler Hall last summer in New Brunswick, was in conference with County Detective George Totten in the court house here today. It is presumed they were discussing some points in the investigation of the murders.

PAYMENT OF LAST BOND LIFTS 53-YEAR BURDEN *Bernardsville News, Feb 1, 1923, p 1*

Bernards Township emerges from debt of \$158,000 shouldered to secure railroad back in 1870. The railroad bonds of \$6,000 and six months' interest thereon, amounting to \$150, which the Township Committee pays off this year, will wipe out entirely the old New Jersey West Line Railroad bonds which the township issued in 1870 in order to get a railroad to Bernardsville. The bonds as originally issued by the Bernards Township Commission ... amounted to approximately \$160,000. These were issued for the sole purpose of building the old West Line Railroad through Bernardsville – or Vealtown as the place was then called, to Bethlehem, Pa., but which finally was built only as far as Bernardsville, because the railroad fell down on the job, went bankrupt and the property was taken over by another company...

COAL SHORTAGE NEWS NOTES *Courier- News, Feb 23, 1923, p 23*

- Somerville Public Library has closed its doors indefinitely because of the difficulty in securing sufficient coal to heat the building.
- A number of families in Raritan, because of the scarcity of coal, have been forced to heat their homes during the cold spell with wood gathered along the banks of the canal and river.

IDEA FOR FUEL CONSERVATION *Bernardsville News, Feb 22, 1923, p 2*

New Jersey man has evolved scheme. Apprehension of a coal shortage, together with the upward trend in fuel prices, has caused the wise suburbanite to consider ways and means of providing for his comfort and warmth during the winter. One enterprising Jerseyite has partially met the situation by capitalizing on his open fireplaces in his Hackensack home in a rather novel manner. ... Mr. Suburbanite purchased a small stove, which he set in the open fireplace, the pipe being extended up the chimney. The stove burns wood or pea coal, of which there is no shortage, and radiates considerable heat, not only within the room, but in the adjoining rooms. With the furnace operating on a curtailed supply of fuel, the fireplace stove permits the registers in that portion of the house to be turned off, shunting whatever heat might be produced to other sections of the house. The stove also serves a practical purpose, its flat top permitting the boiling of water, preparation of toast, or other light house-keeping practices. Other features in favor of the innovation are the fact that it is out of the way and takes up no additional space; and unlike a log fire in an open fireplace, gives off no sparks nor smoke ... – New York Sun