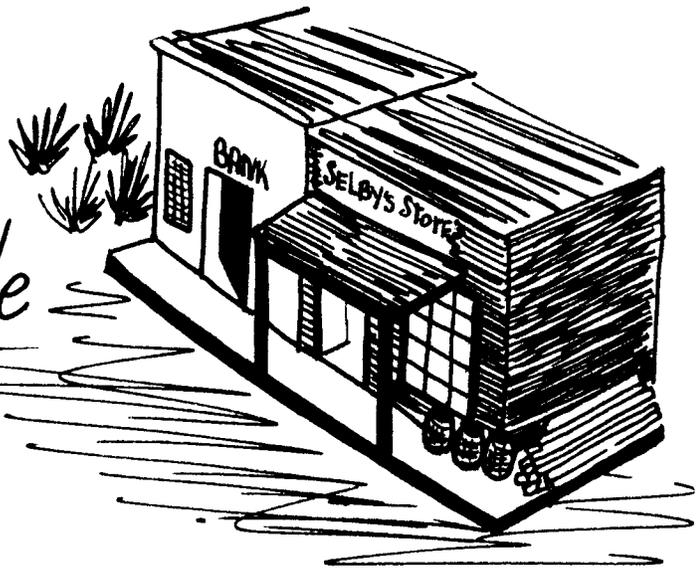




# Selbyville



"Like many other Delaware towns, Selbyville had its origin in a grist mill and blacksmith shop, at the time of the Revolution. Before the coming of the railroad no town could amount to much that was not on navigable water, and growth was slow. It was known as Sandy Branch until 1842, when Samson Selby opened a store here. He purchased his molasses, calico, muslin, whiskey, rum, tobacco, flour, and other goods in Philadelphia, and when he was asked where the winter's stock was to be sent, he is said to have replied: 'It will have to be shipped by Indian River vessel, and then hauled to where I'm opening a country store, so just mark it Selbyville.'

"The town stands on lands that belonged to the McCabe family. Matthew McCabe, the blacksmith, was a soldier in the Revolution. In 1817, or earlier, the Long family dammed Sandy Branch, a tributary of Sinepuxent Bay for a millpond to operate the gristmill and a sawmill. The forests were cut down and farmland spread, but the village's real development did not start until the Frankford and Breakwater Railroad reached here in 1873.

'Strawberries were first set out in 1871 by D. J. Long.' By 1918 Selbyville had become one of the largest strawberry shipping centers in the United States of America. Not only were the fresh berries shipped to the northern cities, but also hundreds of barrels of strawberries in sugar were put into cold storage for sale to ice-cream manufacturers throughout the year. Within a few years, the strawberry auction block had closed, and strawberries had ceased to be an important crop."

Broiler production became big business in Sussex County. In 1931, Pepper Poultry Company was established. Later the H&H Poultry Co., Inc. was formed. Here a billion pounds of chicken were processed in 1965.

Selbyville is the home of Bunting's Nurseries, two lumber companies and other substantial business interests. The town has installed a modern sewage disposal system.

There is an active volunteer fire company, and the American Legion owns and operates two ambulances.

The Baltimore Trust Company founded by the late John G. Townsend in 1903, has active branches in Bridgeville, Bethany Beach and Fenwick Island.

The Selbyville Public Library is housed in the home of the late John G. Townsend, Jr., Governor of Delaware 1917 - 1921, United States Senator 1928 - 1940. The building and the ground was the gift of the Townsend family.