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Alfred L. Shoemaker

Earl F. Robacker


Edna Eby Heller

Frances Lichten

Israel B. Earley

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Alfred L. Shoemaker, Earl F. Robacker, Edna Eby Heller, Frances Lichten, Israel B. Earley, Olive G. Zehner, Martha Ross Swope, Henry J. Kauffman, Elizabeth Clarke Kieffer, John Lowry Ruth, and Friedrich Krebs

the Dutchman



JUNE, 1954
75 Cents

Somerset County
Decorated Barn



The Dutchman

June, 1954

Vol. 6, No. 1

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Assistant Editor: Dr. J. Wm. Frey
Antiques Editor: Dr. Earl F. Robacker
Crafts & Folk Art Editor:
 Olive G. Zehner
Art Editor: Kiehl Newswanger
Food Editor: Edna Eby Heller
Design Editor: Roy Gensler
Photographer: Clifford Yeich

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*The Dutch Door Is Open
and the New*

DUTCHMAN

Bids You Enter and Be Welcome

*Macht eich
dahaim!*



—Florence Starr Taylor

The Immel Homestead along the Tulpehocken,
about two miles west of Myerstown

The Role of the Dutch Country

By ALFRED L. SHOEMAKER

Time was when the Pennsylvania Dutch Country was not even mentioned in textbooks on United States history. Since this is a fact, it will, I have no doubt, shock historical scholarship, as though it were being hit with a dozen H-bombs, to learn that our Nation—as we know it today—actually sprouted its first roots in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country.

The seed of the new Nation was not in New England, nor in the South, but in Pennsylvania, because Pennsylvania was the only area in Colonial America where two equal cultures met and clashed, one Continental, the other British Isles in origin.

Symbols of America's birth pangs are not words like Yankee, but a score of tragedy-laden terms: Dumb Dutch in the Eighteenth Century, and wop, hunk(y), kike and a dozen more in the Nineteenth and Twentieth.

The time has come to discard the entirely negative Nineteenth Century concept "melting pot" in favor of acculturation, a positive term which comes from cultural anthropology. The "melting pot" theory resulted, on the political scene, in One World-ism, and on the religious, in the ecumenical movement, both of which we reject absolutely and vehemently.

Instead, Pennsylvania must lead the way NOW, as it did once before—in the Eighteenth Century—to Decentralism, not only in government, but in every other human enterprise, education included.

Our age is witnessing the death of individualism, which is being replaced by group culture. And there is no greater group culture (or folk-culture, if you wish) in all of America than that found in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country.

Today we in Pennsylvania hold within ourselves the seed of the New America of two centuries hence—just as we did in 1776. It is up to us—through the Pennsylvania Dutch Village now in process of creation—to show the way.

An Invitation

DUTCHMAN SUBSCRIBERS—or as we at the Center put it more intimately: Our Dutchman Family—are hereby invited to the first public meeting on the Pennsylvania Dutch Village in the Green Room Theatre on the campus of Franklin and Marshall College on Saturday, June 12, 1954, at 10:00 in the morning. The meeting, which will consist of talks and reports, will continue into the afternoon.

Somerset County Decorated Barns

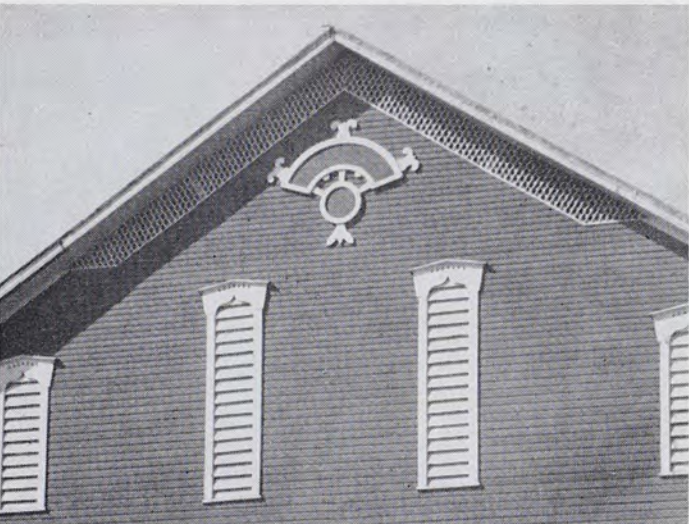
By ALFRED L. SHOEMAKER

There are three principal types of barn decorations in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country: the colorful, geometric hex signs within a radius of some thirty miles of Kutztown; the brick-end style, principally in Cumberland and York Counties; and the less well-known stars found in Somerset County in Western Pennsylvania.

The mode of decorating varies in each of these three areas. In the eastern section of the Dutch Country the barn signs, frequently gayly colored, are painted on the barns. The Cumberland-York designs are achieved by lacunae in the brick-ends of the barns. In Somerset County the stars are cut out of wood and then nailed to the eaves of the barns.

The five-pointed star, the most common design in the Somerset area, seems to stem from about 1890. Before then—from perhaps 1870 on—the designs, also cut-outs, were less ornate, primarily trefoil and heart-shaped.

A simple decoration antedating the five-pointed stars
—Photo courtesy of Somerset Library



The trefoil theme used
prior to five-pointed stars
—Photos by Bowen, Somerset



Daisy effect in deco-
ration; earlier than
five-pointed stars

—Photo courtesy of
Somerset Library

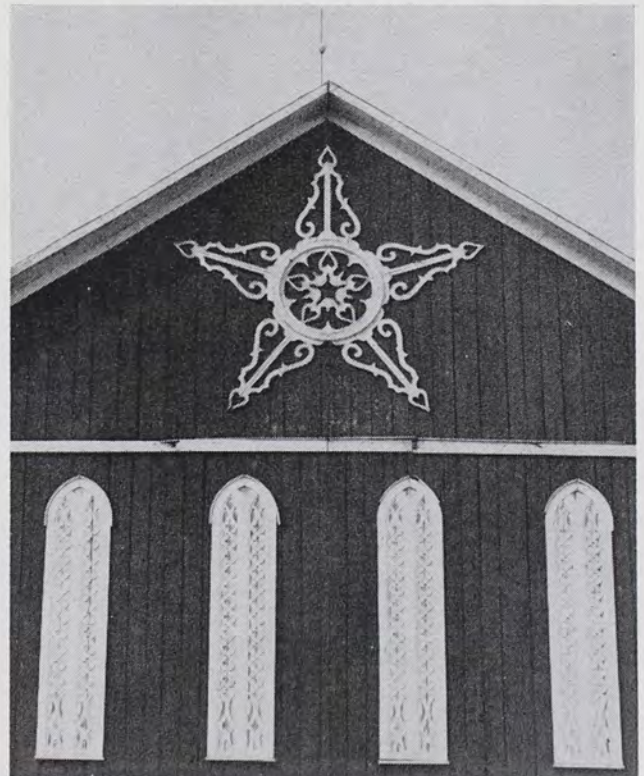


One of the most gayly decorated barns of Somerset County

The date 1893 on this barn indicates the time of origin of the decorations on this barn



A typical five-pointed star





Eagle motifs—the eagle appears quite frequently on butter molds, other birds rarely

Butter Molds

By EARL F. ROBACKER

—Photos by Alden Haswell

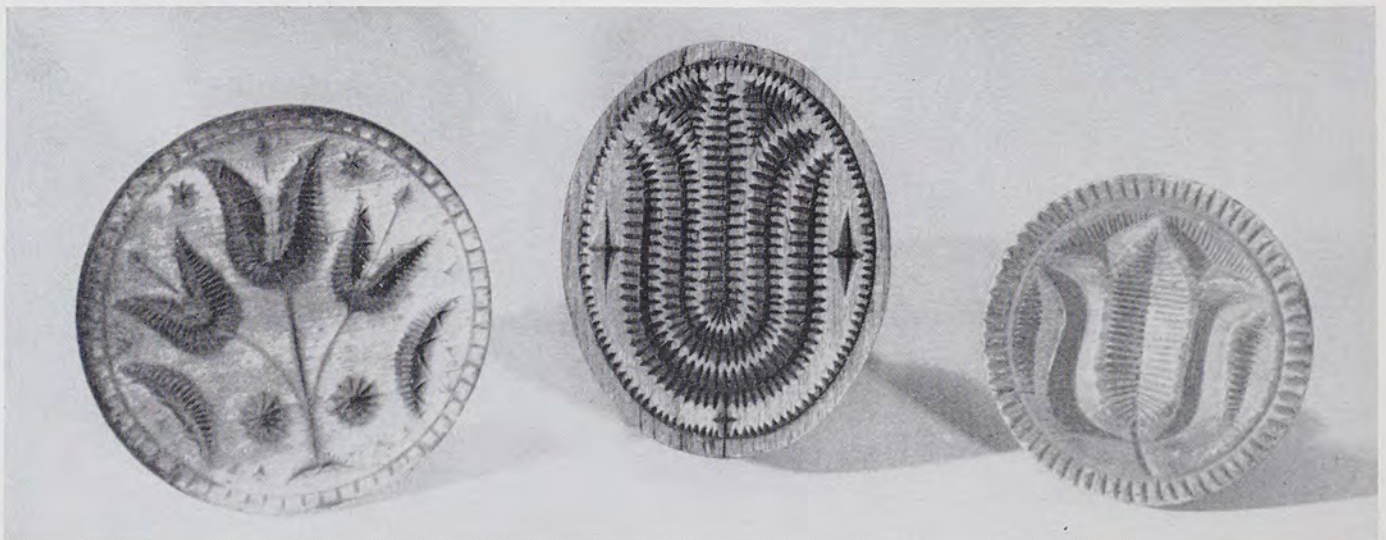
Only a few years ago, butter molds were referred to rather condescendingly, by such editors and columnists as were interested in antiques, as “simple collectibles”—interesting, perhaps, in a minor way, but of no special significance or import.

With interest in folk art, folk crafts, folklore, and folk ways at its present pitch in America, the picture has changed somewhat, and it would not be difficult to find collectors who are sorry they liquidated important collections in the thought that American “primitives” could at best be only a passing fancy.

The butter molds themselves remain as minor objects, by comparison with important pieces of furniture, but their place in collections of primitives has grown steadily in importance as our interest in and knowledge of the past has increased. The condition is especially true in Pennsylvania, where imaginative creation in this form of wood carving seems to have gone beyond what is found anywhere else.

What is a butter mold? It is a homemade device for imprinting on pats of butter a distinctive design, either “just for fancy,” or if the butter were sold in the market, to identify it as the work of the housewife who made it.

Tulip motifs are found in great variety of composition—some with stems and leaves, some without





Heart Motifs also show great variety of treatment—singly, doubly and in clusters

Butter and eggs were the usual media of exchange in rural areas for most housewives, and the bartering of these two for store-bought groceries, clothing, and the whole impedimenta of housekeeping persisted well into the Twentieth Century; indeed, in some areas it still goes on. Since butter-making called and still calls for a degree of skill not possessed equally by all farm women, those who turned out a superior product liked to mark it so distinctively that there could be no question as to its origin.

Variations in butter molds are enormous. Some are constructed as small wooden tubs, at the bottom of which a plunger—which bears the design—is secured. These usually exist in one- or two-pound sizes. Others are oblong boxes, into which the butter is packed, the design being impressed on the top. A very few, not improbably of European design rather than American, are composite affairs, with four swinging panels attached by wires to a fifth, which forms the bottom of the mold. A removable splint band holds the sections in place for the actual packing of the butter, and each panel is intricately carved in a different design.

Of greatest interest to collectors is a fourth type: a handled mold of circular, semi-circular, or oblong shape, intaglio-carved, used to imprint butter which had been paddled or tossed into shape in rolls or bowls or jars. These containers were not a part of the mold. The wood of such molds is usually soft pine or poplar; molds which are found in walnut, therefore, take on added desirability because of their rarity. In early molds the handles were often made separately and plugged tightly into the back; later the entire object, handle and mold, was machine-turned from a single block of wood. It goes without saying that completely handmade articles are the more desirable.

What, among the dozens and dozens of existing designs, are the "good" ones? Personal preference enters the picture, of course, but probably the ones most highly prized are those which bear the patterns we have come to identify with other folk art objects in the early Dutch Country: the heart, the tulip, the eagle, and the whirling swastika first of all. Workmanship varies from the obviously not highly skilled to the superbly executed; composition shows

similar variation, but as long as the work has been done by hand (many eagles of later date are machine-turned) these designs are snapped up as fast as they come to the market.

There is much variation within a single given motif. Taking the tulip as an example, we find, for instance, a single tulip; one tulip springing from another; a cluster of three tulips; a large tulip with a number of smaller ones rounding out the composition; a cross-hatched tulip; a tulip in combination with a heart or with small stars, foliage, or still other patterns; a tulip with or without a stem; a simply cut tulip, or one elaborately notch-carved.

Other popular patterns include the rose, the pomegranate, the fish, the six-pointed star, the acorn and the iris. Birds other than the eagle are rarely found, but do exist. Often mentioned as important and collectible patterns are the swan, the cow, and the sheaf of wheat, but, while the writer would certainly find no fault with these as interesting designs, it should be noted that they are generally machine-turned, and hence rather late. For some reason the cow has achieved a reputation for being extremely desirable; however, it is not particularly rare. The sheaf of wheat is not hard to find, either, but the swan admittedly falls into the category of rarities.

Some molds have long handles, and seem more like paddles than molds; many, perhaps most, of these are European. Initials are found on a few; whole names are all but unknown; dates are definite rarities. Unusual is a simple circular mold with the word "ANNA" on the face; the "N's" are correctly cut, so that the letters will not appear to be reversed on the butter print. The reverse has been so carved as to leave a shallow, raised plaque, on which appear the initials "AEH" and the date, 1866.

Who made butter molds? Some are obviously homemade, by artisans of more enthusiasm than skill. More are the work of men of considerable adeptness at wood carving, probably semi-professionals who could produce designs of their own or translate into satisfactory form the wishes of the housewife. A few are so expertly conceived as to design and so meticulously executed that only a highly skilled artisan, long familiar with his craft, could have



Six-cornered star and whirling swastika motifs —familiar patterns that appear on many other folk art objects of the Dutch country

produced them. In later years, molds could be bought at country stores, the designs still being offered in such variety that each housewife, if she wished, might have her own design.

In many of the categories of antiques there is something which, in someone's mind, stands as the "best": the Mahantango painted tall-case clock, the Philadelphia lowboy, the Bachmann desk, the William Will pewter, the Berks County dower chest, and so on—all of them subjective, personal preferences. In butter molds, so far as the writer is concerned, the "best" is an eagle on a semi-circular block. The bird stands with head turned to the left. Crest, neck feathers and wing tips are executed in graceful, nearly parallel lines; the rest of the wings and the feathers of the body are chip carved. Beak, eyes, legs, and feet are deeply and cleanly cut. Two deeply carved stars, four shallow ones, and the letters "M" and "S" round out the design. It is, of course,

entirely hand carved; it merits the accolade on the scores of design, composition, execution, originality, folk feeling, and rarity.

How old are butter molds? All of them are old enough to be collectible, in the sense that they are survivals of a completely vanished past. It is all but impossible to date undated examples, wear or use being no indication, since the action of salt and water rendered them short-lived at best. Perhaps the best we can do is guess that those in the heart-tulip-eagle-swastika category are roughly contemporary with fractur and dower chests, on the evidence of the similarity in design. That would place them in the late 1700's and early 1800's. Others, in which the folk feeling is lacking, may have been made at almost any time in the Nineteenth Century, with probable emphasis on the later years. In any case, it is the folk feeling, the story, the design and the rarity which make them important, rather than the date.

A medley of motifs and types of butter molds



Restaurants, too, Go Dutch

By EDNA EBY HELLER

WITHIN the past generation popular opinion among the natives of the Pennsylvania Dutch country has swerved from one extreme to the other. Time was when school teachers told their students that if they were to be "accepted" by the rest of the world they would have to lose their dialect, disregard their customs, and lock up the family tree. In other words, it was a disgrace to be born a Dutchman. With such influence, it is easy to understand why the bride earnestly tried to adopt a new way of cooking. No one was going to call her a Dutch cook! Even the restaurant owners succumbed and served everything else but Dutch food. Luckily, we awakened before Dutch cookery became a lost art.

It was the outsiders who shook us up. At first, in our drowsiness, we wondered what they were looking for. Then suddenly, when wide awake, we realized the value of what we were holding. We began to appreciate Grandma's doughtray and then her cookbook. Once again we began proudly to serve shoo-fly pies to the strangers from distant localities. These same friends sang the praises of the Dutch so loudly that soon our travel agencies and Chambers of Commerce began to receive letters asking where a tourist could enjoy Pennsylvania Dutch meals.

Restauranteers, at long last, have caught the idea and are rising to meet the demand, though ever so slowly. (Some are still glued to their seats.) Several years ago the first ones stirred and began to question whether Pennsylvania Dutch foods were even worth the cost of advertising. A few took

the risk and began serving specialties. Slowly others caught on, and with boldness announced on their signposts: Pennsylvania Dutch Cooking.

In all parts of the Dutch territory there are eating places which specialize in our regional cookery. In the northern section, on Route 22, lies the little town of Shartlesville where Haag's Hotel serves its famous Pennsylvania Dutch dinners family style. Quantity is the characteristic word often used to describe the dinners at Haag's. Typical of family dinners among the Pennsylvania Dutch, there is an abundance of food and you can eat all that you want. If you stop there for a Sunday dinner, this is what you may expect: Roasted chicken with gravy, potato filling, sweet potatoes, lima beans, chick peas, green peas, dried corn, pickled beets, pepper cabbage, chow-chow, mustard beans, piccalilli, chicken salad, celery, olives, pickles, dried apricots, applesauce, tapioca pudding, sugar cookies, pies (raisin, schnitz, lemon sponge or shoo-fly), ice cream and coffee. Help yourself. You can have all that you want. You may well expect to be stuffed!

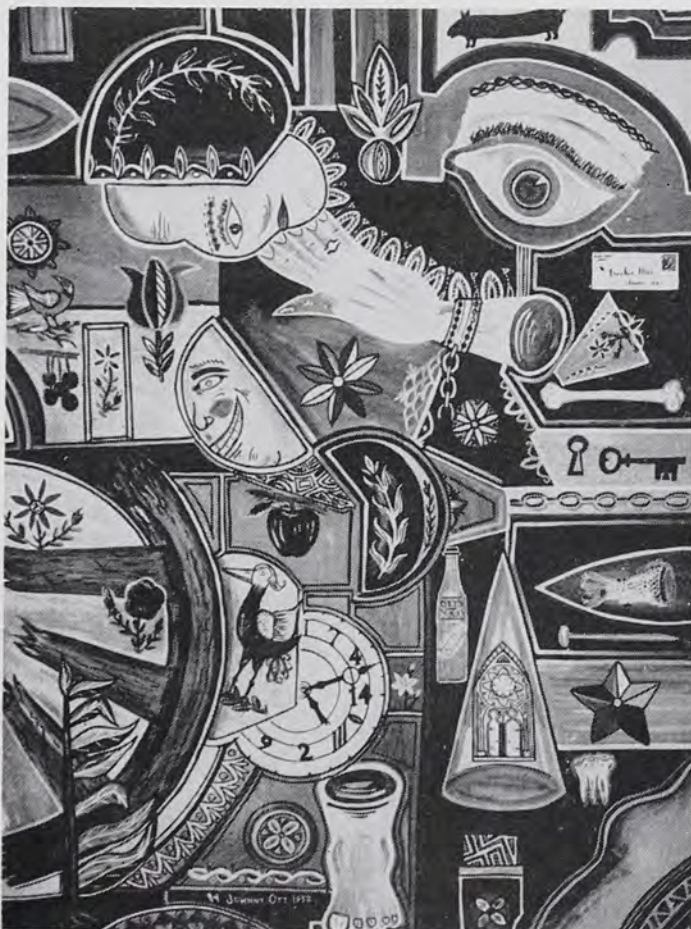
If you like diner type service, go to The Hub, a restaurant and gift shop just recently opened. Situated near New Tripoli, along Route 309, about 18 miles northwest of Allentown, The Hub stands as a welcome spot to tourists. One of their specialties is old fashioned bean soup with big chunks of ham in it. Pies are baked by the dozens and the variety is great, including lemon custards with sweet dough strips and the unusual cocoonut custard made with bread crumbs. You will enjoy their old fashioned home cooking whether you stop there for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

In the northwestern section of the Dutch country there is a chain of three restaurants, bearing the name of Dutch Pantry. Actually, these grew out of a market business in the Sunbury Farmer's Market, where Lottie Kemberling sold her homemade egg noodles, cabbage salad, cookies, and pies. Nine years ago, Lottie and her son, Jess, opened the Selinsgrove restaurant where business mushroomed because of their market reputation. So, in no time at all, one grew to three: Selinsgrove, Lemoyne, and State College. A fourth is to be opened soon. What do they serve at the Dutch Pantry? A long, long, list of homemade items, from bread to pies. Even the sausage that is smoked with apple wood is smoked in their own smokehouse. On the menu you will sometimes find Bean Soup with rivvels.

As in the market days, a large part of the Dutch Pantry food is sold for home use. Countless shoo-flies have been sold to take home. The Lemoyne restaurant alone bakes about 85 of these each day, many of which are sold to carry out. Many items such as potato salad and pickled cabbage are sold by the quart. The Dutch Pantry isn't the only Dutch restaurant that supplies retail trade in this manner. Walp's in Allentown-Bethlehem finds the bakery business very profitable. This grew from the demand of customers to take home pies and rolls like those they had just eaten. As a result, there are now shelves and shelves of raised buns, doughnuts, and shoo-flies, all baked right there in the restaurant kitchen.

This same restaurant, Walp's, on Route 22, serves a most interesting platter of Dutch foods. On it they serve smoked sausage, their own scrapple, fried mush, browned potatoes,

(Continued on Page 23)



Wild Lettuce Feeding Its Young in Early June

Painting by Johnny Ott



This fraktur, a Vorschrift, reads: This copybook belongs to Peter Huh, industrious scholar in penmanship in the Earl school in Lancaster County, Oct. 30, 1792

—Photos by Clifford Yeich

Unusually good fraktur piece for so recent a date. Note the eagles with E PLURIBUS UNUM streamers in their beak →

Fraktur from the Hostetter Collection

By FRANCES LICHTEN

The *fraktur* drawing and/or illuminated manuscript record is the outstanding contribution of the Pennsylvania Dutch to the folk art of this country. The ancient art of manuscript illumination—for that is what *fraktur* is—was practised on this side of the Atlantic long after the printing press in the homeland had supplanted the work of the scribes. A peasant art, *fraktur* was much admired by the folk, who, following their custom, kept their own records in this fashion until officialdom and the state took over this task. And as long as they followed this custom, how striking their records were!

While the "Taufschein" or birth-and-baptismal certificate contains all the necessary information, every inch of the paper not occupied with the records is covered with colorful decoration, drawn with quill pen and painted with watercolor. As these birth records were prepared for members of Protestant sects, they carry no specific religious symbols such as crosses, but with this exception, the range of decorative motifs is fairly wide, with the tulip and heart dominating, as they do in other fields of Pennsylvania Dutch decoration.

These papers were made for their communities by the schoolmaster or the clergyman, but as time passed, itinerant scribes entered the field. In schools, writing was taught by copying handwritten examples, called *Vorschriften*, prepared by the schoolmaster for this purpose. If the pupil liked to draw, he learned that, too, in addition to writing, by copying the decorations on the *fraktur* drawings and *Vorschriften*.

The *fraktur* writer, after establishing the style of certificate, generally adhered to the motifs of his choice. That is the reason many *fraktur* pieces bear a close resemblance to each other, plus the fact that the scribe, in preparing subsequent copies, traced the main features of the design. Even so, there are no exact duplicates and one can see that the scribe added variations to the basic design from sheer pleasure in his craft.

As birth certificates were valued records, they were usually preserved between the pages of the Bible, or framed as wall decorations, or even occasionally pasted inside the lids of dower chests. Some disappeared entirely from view, because certain folk followed an odd custom of interring them with the dead.





This fractur, a birth record, reads: Anna Gerw[bl]er is my name and Heaven is my Fatherland. I was born in Leacock Township, Lancaster County, Oct. 2, 1788

The examples shown here from the Hostetter Collection in the North Museum at Franklin and Marshall College are particularly fine and fully display the elaborate surface patterning characteristic of early illuminated manuscripts. When human figures were introduced, they always bore the earmark of the primitive artist. Nevertheless, these quaintly drawn figures help us to visualize the time when these handsome documents were produced.

—Photos by Clifford Yeich



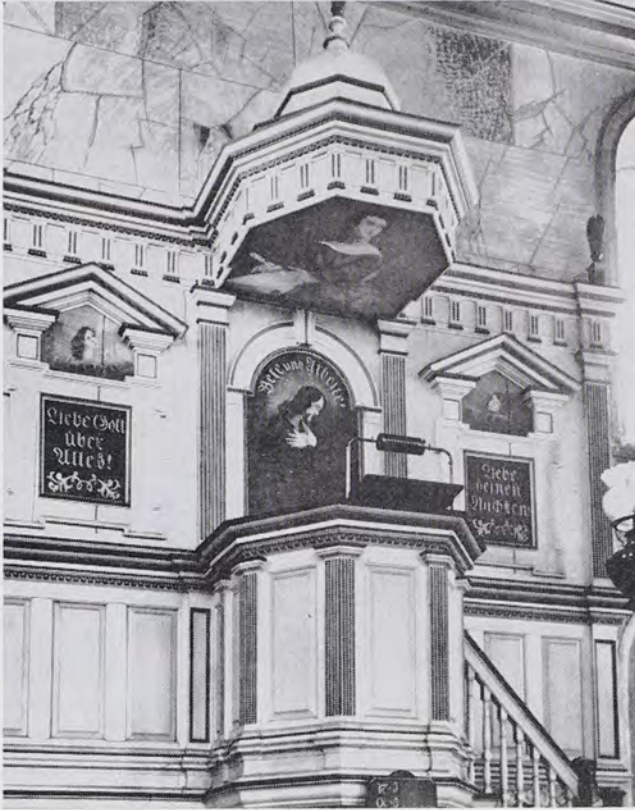
Vorschrift of John Zimmerman (Carpenter), industriöser Scholarch, in Earl Township, Lancaster County, March 12, 1823



This fractur, a birth record, reads: Jacob Waidman is my name and Heaven is my Fatherland. I was born in Leacock Township, Lancaster County, Nov. 21, 1789



John Gahman's religious guide in German and English. Note the sampler influence in the letters at the bottom of the fractur



Study of decoration motifs in one corner of Bindnagle's

Wine-glass pulpit surrounded by German inscriptions and paintings

Bindnagle's Church

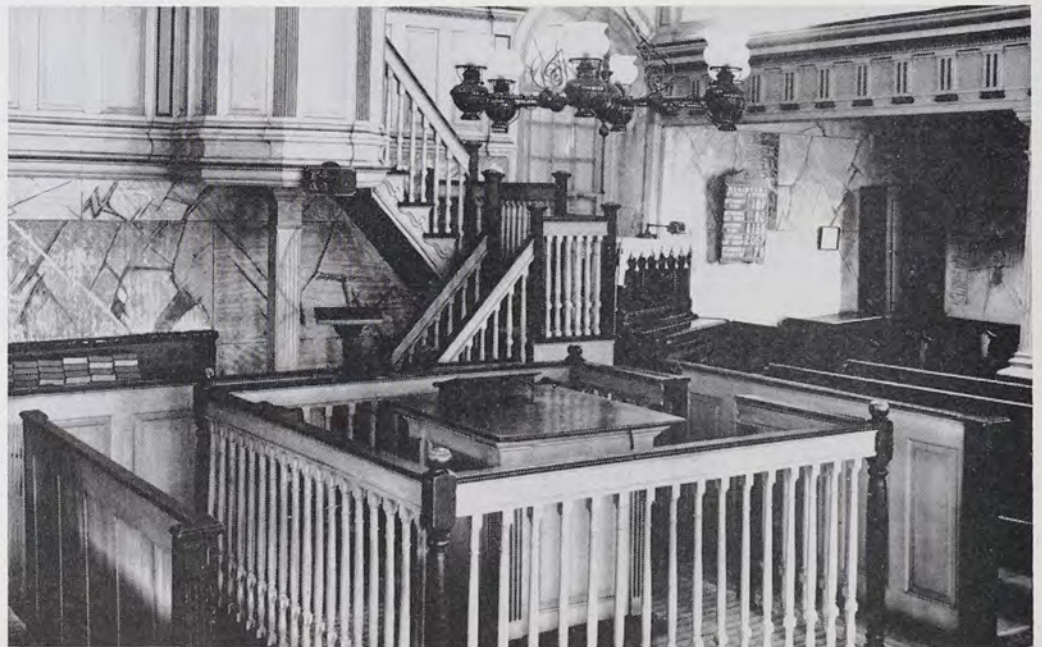
By ISRAEL B. EARLEY

WITH its clean lines of red brick and white trim, Bindnagle's—erected in 1803—is an excellent example of Colonial architecture, modeled after classic Greek design. The walls are thickest at the base to provide necessary strength in the absence of steel, and the decrease in thickness is accomplished by use of a moulded brick course about four feet from the base.

However pleasing the outside lines may be to the stranger, it is on entering the church that the striking beauty of the interior charms the visitor. The interior is designed in the form of the Greek cross with a wine-glass pulpit at the apex. A sounding board of "crown" design is above the pulpit, with a painting of John the Baptist on its base. The altar, enclosed by a railing, is in the center of the cross design. High-backed pews with narrow seats are set on a double floor to protect the worshipers' feet from the cold in the basementless building. These pews form the sides and base of the cross design, all facing the center. The balconies are placed on three sides of the building at such a level that the speaker in the wine-glass pulpit can see, and be seen, by every occupant of the church, wherever seated.

In 1850, seeing that the daughter churches at Palmyra and Campbelltown had bells to call the worshipers together, Bindnagle's added a cupola and bell, placed at the south end of the building.

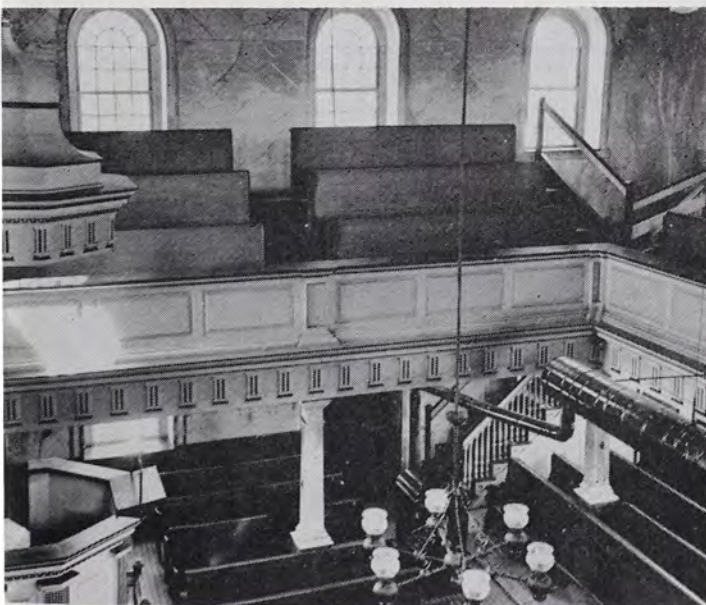
The altar, enclosed by a railing, in the center of the church



—Photos by Clifford Yeich



**View of Bindnagle's
Church and Cemetery**



The gallery or "bawrd-karrich" with the high-backed pews

In 1885, necessary improvements and some changes were made. The cupola was removed and a steeple was erected on the north end of the building, and roof and steeple covered with slate. The entire outside of the church was painted and the bricks lined, and decayed parts of the wood-work replaced. The interior, which had never seen paint before, was most skillfully painted in imitation of marble by a Swedish immigrant, named John Cardell. Daniel Kline, father and grandfather of present members, brought this man to his farm from Lebanon. While working there, Cardell revealed to the Klines and other farmers of the neighborhood his talent as a painter, and so the churchwork was placed in his hands. The beauty of his work is still evident, for nothing has been changed or added since that day. The portraits and lettering behind the pulpit attract, and are appreciated by every visitor who tries to read the German mottoes: "Bete und Arbeite," (Pray and Work), "Liebe Gott Ueber Alles," (Love God above All), and "Liebe deinen Naechsten," (Love Thy Neighbor).

Bindnagle's is located four miles north of Palmyra, near Hershey.



Miniature animals made of red clay and glazed with a heavy coat of transparent glaze which gives them a shiny "take-me-in hand" look.



Harry S. High Folk Art Collection

By OLIVE G. ZEHNER

The late Harry S. High, whose family roots reached as far back as 1717 in Berks County, always took great pride in his heritage. When he died last October in Reading, he left, as witness of his interest, one of the foremost collections of Pennsylvania Dutch folk art. He assembled it quite late in life; about 1930 he bought his first piece.

The Harry S. High Collection of Spatterware, an extensive one, was recently on display at the Berks County Historical Society, which he served as a board director and treasurer. Almost equally extensive is the Gaudy Dutch, among which is included a very rare "Butterfly" cup-plate.

The Spatterware and Gaudy Dutch, as is well known, of course, are English in origin. But Mr. High took just as keen an interest in his many unusual pieces of early American folk art. Especially noteworthy are about a dozen pieces of *Vorschriften* which he had framed in identical old frames. These must have been done by the same person and one of them bears a date 1287—a slip of a teacher's pen.

There are several pieces of slip-ware and sgraffito, some of the rarest pottery in the world. Among these is one done by Johannes Neesz, 1775-1867, Montgomery County potter, whose work is recognizable by the graceful fuchsia motifs he

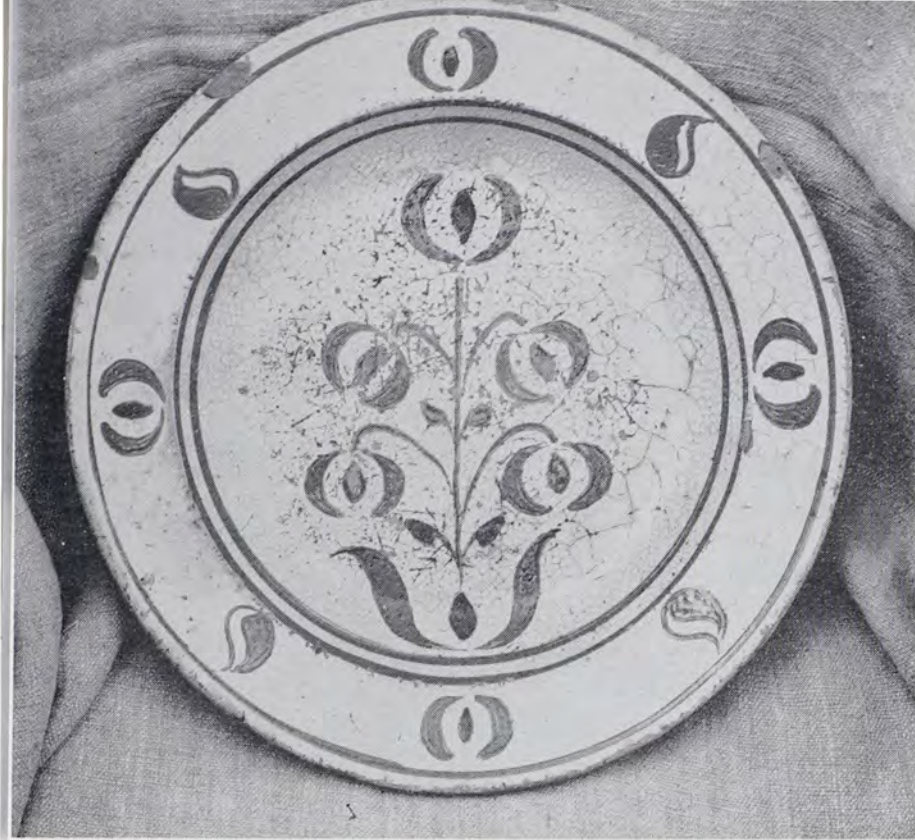


Beautifully illuminated title page of an early hand-written song book which declares Johannes Hoch (High) to be its owner in 1287

—Photos by Clifford Yeich

Fractur title page of a manuscript song book





Miniature red clay duck and rooster—whether they were toys or adult nicknacks, one knows they were made to be cherished

Simple tulip or tree-of-life motif done in sgraffito technique on a quite large plate. Unique in that it has no coloring save that of red clay body and white (turned cream-colored with age) of the slip

used. Another sgraffito dish is an oblong platter with a simple and quaint fish scratched on it. There is quite a heavy coating of glaze over the body of the fish and it has carried the thick copper oxide green color along with it. To round out the pottery collection, there are several red clay miniature figures and dishes.

Sgraffito platter showing simply outlined fish gliding among a few stray strands of sea-weed. This piece was one of Harry S. High's favorites for with the possession of it he was able to dispute another collector's claim to have the only sgraffito fish platter known.





Unusual cut-out fractur picture lined with a heavy black fabric. Design is skillfully cut in single areas, which, viewed as a whole, presents a pleasing composition.



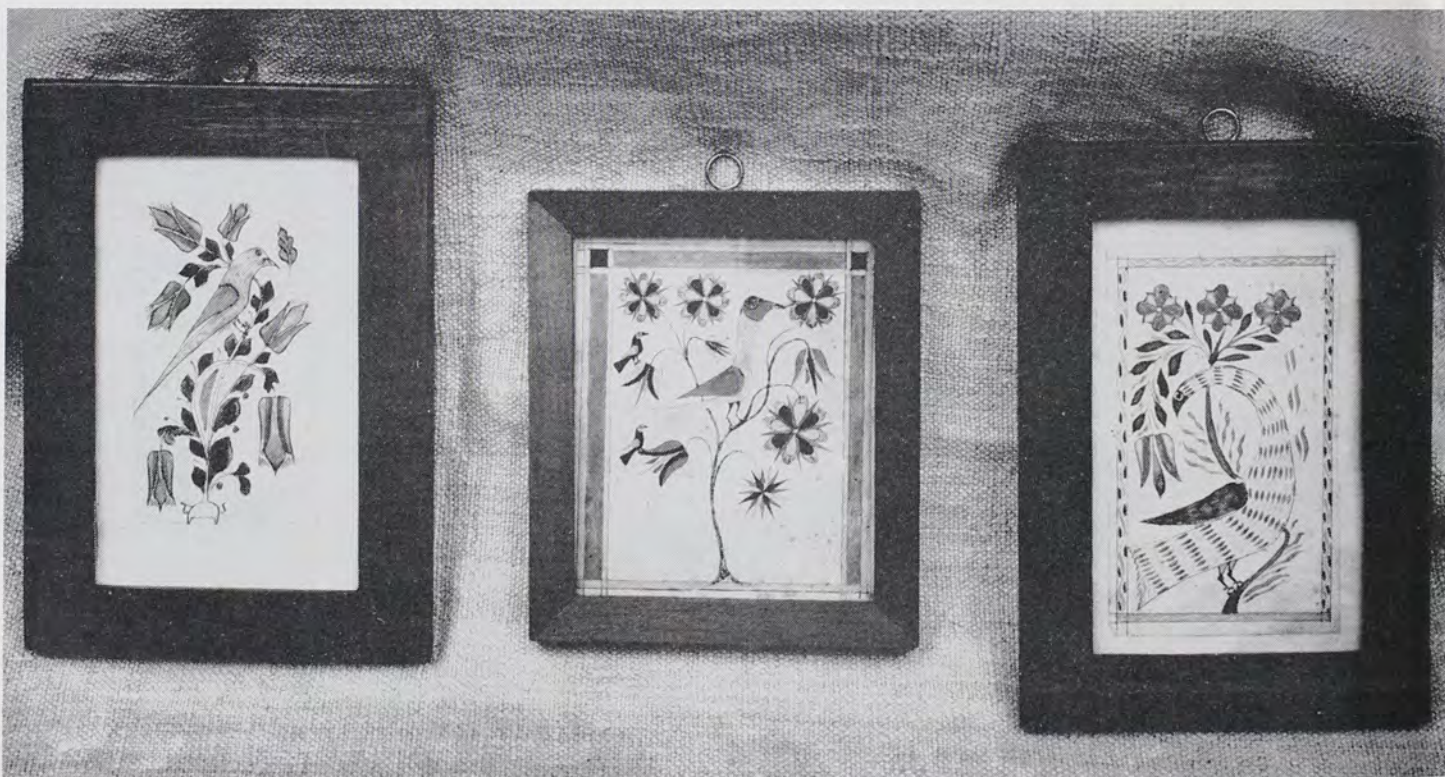
Poly-chromed wooden figures carved by Whistling Tom, itinerant tramp artist who roamed Berks, Lehigh, and Chester Counties—date unknown.

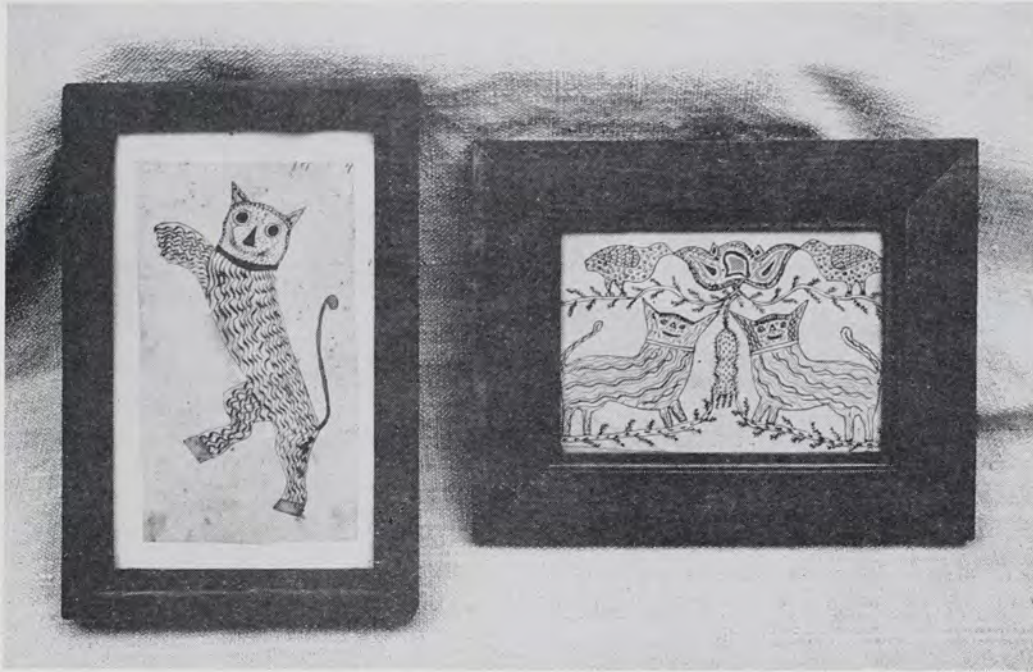
Getting back to the fractur, perhaps the most notable pieces are the title pages to two early manuscript songsters. These are beautifully illuminated and dated 1821 and 1827. Also very good are the childish drawings of tigers done in pen and ink—true expression in folk art. One would hardly call them pretty, but they are utterly charming and invite speculation as to the life and times of the primitive artist who created them.

In the Collection are two small carvings of a man and a woman—they look like the Amish of today. They are said to have been done by Whistling Tom, an itinerant artist who tramped through Berks, Lehigh, and Chester Counties.

The *Dutchman*, through the graciousness and kindness of Mrs. High, is happy to share with its readers, a small—but significant—part of the Harry S. High Collection of Pennsylvania Dutch Folk Art.

Three of more than a dozen small *Vorschriften* or more accurately fractur samples which Mr. High bought in a copybook and which he later had framed in identical frames





Free-hand pen and ink drawings of lions or tigers. This folk artist probably had never seen animals such as these but has nevertheless expressed his accumulated lore about them with great earnestness and charm

Octagonal red-ware platter with incised decoration and inscription that says "If you come to borrow—come to-morrow—today I will not lend."





Old American House, South Ninth Street, between Cumberland and Chestnut, in Lebanon. The stone mason entered his name on this date stone in his own honor



Drawings by Florence Starr Taylor



Interesting head on Myer house (Wenger farm) on road leading from Schaefferstown to Millbach



Zeller's Fort, near Newmanstown, located by historical markers in the vicinity

Lebanon Valley Date Stones

By MARTHA ROSS SWOPE

EARLY in life it became a game with me to look for the brown date stones on the gracious limestone farmhouses of my native Lebanon County. I sought them out as eagerly as a child that watches for the "red box" on the end of a train. Later on, at College, it was, therefore, but a short step for me to select date stones as a subject for special study in a research course in local history.

The word date stone is used advisedly, in lieu of a better word. A date stone is a stone bearing the date of erection of a building. Many are placed at a corner of two walls, a few feet above the ground; within a hollow place in the stone are generally deposited the names of interested or responsible parties and some objects characteristic of the time or occasion. This is the "corner stone" type of a date stone. Another type, sometimes designated as "head stone," is placed well up in the front of a building or over an arched door and has the name of the building, the date and sometimes other information. But the date stones that particularly interest me—and the type that will be given consideration in this article—are the ones I have designated as "prayer stones" or "house blessings."

The buildings on which these "prayer stones" are found are, for the greater part, large commodious limestone farmhouses, barns and even mills, almost invariably located along a stream. I studied between thirty and forty of these buildings in the Lebanon Valley and my findings are restricted to this area.

The earliest date stones appear to be almost all of brown sandstone, bravely standing out against the gray of the limestone. The stones vary in shape, regularity, size and quality of workmanship. Some are hand carved and beautifully ornate. They generally appear in the second story of the front of the house, between the windows; sometimes they are found in the gable end, near the roof. There may be one rectangular one or two upright ones as a pair, or even three. The inscriptions are predominantly German.

Some of the stones bear only the name of the owner and the date, others bear the name of both the owner "und seine Frau" with the feminine suffix "in" on the wife's name. Some of the stones are well shaped and beautifully inscribed, while others are very crude, with peculiar misspellings and odd spacing. If the date stone cutter had not spaced carefully and ran short, he simply crowded or abbreviated or used single letters for whole words with periods in between. In addition to the names and dates there was frequently a border: a six pointed star, a heart, a wheel or even a sculptured head.



Heilman mansion, south of 422, at Sunnyside; now owned by Roy Killinger

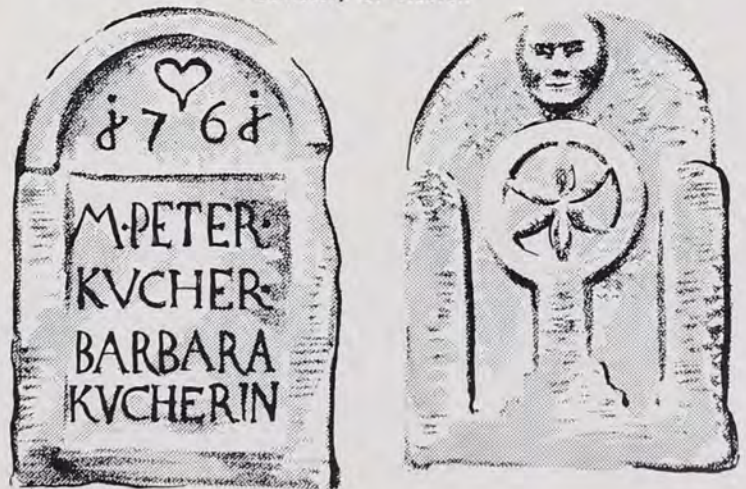
The earliest date found is on a large anvil shaped stone, carved with the letters M. T. and dated 1744. It is on a well-preserved story and a half limestone half house half fort, built by Michael Tice. A later building on this same property is also of limestone and has three date stones across the front of the house, with the names of Phillip and Eve Tice, descendants of the original owner.

The most interesting date stones are the ones carrying inscriptions in addition to the name of the owner and the date of erection. Many of these inscriptions have a blessing for the members of the household and for all who pass in and out; some carry a prayer, still others, a warning; others run to the ridiculous.

Perhaps the best known Lebanon Valley date stones are the ones found on the front of a large stone mansion at Sunnyside, known as the Heilman mansion and now in the possession of Roy Killinger. These are a very handsome pair of stones, in beautifully executed German lettering. The translation on the one date stone is: "God bless this house and him who goes in and out—John Stover—Angenes Stover 1795." The second stone reads: "Peace be to this house and with those who go out; this house was built in the year 1795."

Near Hebron there formerly stood one of the largest and finest of all these stone mansions. Built in 1761, it was known as the Kucher homestead. Among other famous guests, General Peter Muhlenberg was entertained here on occasions. By a sheer stroke of good luck, this pair of very unusual date stones was preserved when this landmark was razed in the path of industry; the stones were imbedded in the wall surrounding the old Moravian cemetery at Hebron.

Kucher date stones now imbedded in the wall of the Moravian Cemetery at Hebron





Three date stones are unusual on front of one house

The Kuchers very evidently wanted a pair of dates stones; however, instead of his own name on the first stone and Barbara's on the second, he placed both names on one stone and had the second stone inscribed with very unusual designs.

Another interesting one is to be found on the Adam and Cathrina Orts (Orth) homestead; it carries the usual blessing but adds "to God alone the glory and to no one else." The added bit of piety may explain the character of the man, for Adam Orth, born in the Palatinate, is said to have been a man of unusual energy and contributed much to the early progress of Lebanon County.

In contrast to the piety of the last mentioned stone, I discovered several with a morbid cast—a warning. "Whether I go in or out, death stands and waits for me." Another one: "As often as the door turns on its hinges, O Man think of your end; built 1751."

The date stone on the famous Millbach home was removed and taken to the Philadelphia Museum, where two rooms have been set aside for the purpose of exhibiting Pennsylvania Dutch furnishings. A mill attached to this home has a date stone and by climbing on the roof and by the aid of the setting sun on a bright winter day I was able to decipher the time-worn "Gott alein deen [serve God alone] Michael Miller—Melisabeth Mielern 1784." A fitting inscription for a mill.

The Hannes Immel house is an excellent example of early local architecture, with its huge central chimney. This house has Dutch doors and exposed beams in part of the house, fifteen-inch wide oak flooring and very small deep windows. Aside from its age, style and condition, this house is of great historical interest for the granddaughter of Hannes Immel was married from this house to Governor Schultze of Pennsylvania.

Not only did houses, barns, mills and forts have these brown date stones, but they were also proudly displayed on the old churches. An outstanding example of church stones are the three imbedded in the rear wall of the present Tulpehocken Reformed church built in 1772, placed there when the church was remodeled.

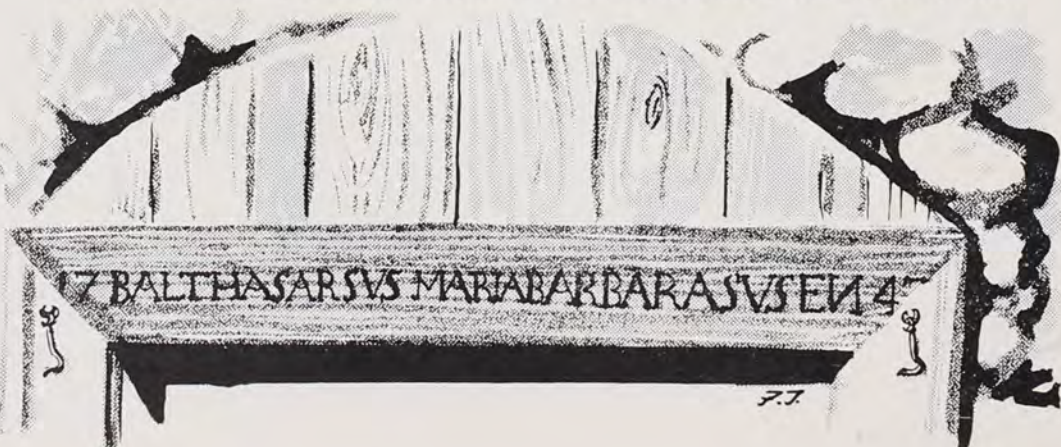
Not all the date markers were of sandstone, however; many of the quaintest forms were date boards placed in niches made for the purpose when the houses were constructed; unfortunately, as they weathered and shrank, many fell out and were thus lost. An excellent marker of this type is the date board above a doorway which originally had a board archway above it. The writing on these boards usually carries only the name and date as this one: "17 Balthasar Sus—Maria Barbara Susen 47." Some of the markers, especially the later ones, were of Marble.

This partial record of a few of these mementoes of the past should include the unusual date stone on Fort Zeller near Newmanstown. This building, with the springs beneath it, is outstanding in every respect, from the sandstone framed Dutch door to the great yawning central chimney which I learned to look for as I drove through the countryside in search of date stones.

People were generally interested and helpful to me. Some showed me their deeds for these old houses, deeds from Thomas and Richard Penn or Caspar Wistar to the first owners, witnessed by Conrad Weiser. They were written on parchment and included the annual red rose rental. The interest in some cases extended to curiosity and I frequently found myself surrounded by gaping groups of people staring wonderingly upward while I was trying to decipher a stone through field glasses. Their expressions as they walked away were not always flattering. As a result of my study, some interest has been aroused in the subject of date stones, for of necessity I contacted a great many people. I also encountered the unpleasant in my field work—unfriendly dogs and some suspicion. And not infrequently, the sun was uncooperative in that it was on the wrong side of a building to decipher the time-worn stones.

These date stones which have so stirred our interest represented a realization of hopes and dreams fulfilled; they were literally a petition for God's blessing. We, too, are blessed by them, for ours is the heritage of these people and these markers serve as a symbol of our goodly heritage.

Date-board on house on road from Brickerville to Cornwall, near the Lebanon Water Works



ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

ISRAEL B. EARLEY, Palmyra—postmaster of Palmyra and author of the history of Bindnagle's Church.

EDNA EBY HELLER, Hershey—authority and lecturer on Dutch cooking; author of *A Pinch of This and a Handful of That* and *Shoo-fly Cookery*.

HENRY J. KAUFFMAN, Millersville—professor at Millersville State Teachers College; author of *Pennsylvania Dutch American Folk Art, Coppersmithing in Pennsylvania, Early American Copper, Tin, and Brass, and Early American Gunsmiths*.

ELIZABETH CLARKE KIEFFER, Lancaster—librarian of Franklin and Marshall College; author of *Henry Harbaugh Pennsylvania Dutchman*.

FRANCES LICHTEN, Philadelphia—artist; author of

Folk Art of Rural Pennsylvania and The Decorative Art of Victoria's Era.

EARL F. ROBACKER, White Plains, New York—professor; author of *Pennsylvania German Literature and Pennsylvania Dutch Stuff*.

JOHN LOWRY RUTH, York—director of the York County Historical Society.

MARTHA ROSS SWOPE, Myerstown—teacher; graduate of Lebanon Valley College where she did research on Lebanon Valley date stones.

OLIVE G. ZEHNER, Reading—president of the Reading-Berks chapter of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen, lecturer; co-author of *Coloring and Design Book for Children of all Ages*.

Restaurants, too, Go Dutch

(Continued from page 9)

apple butter and smearcase. Included also is the popular Pennsylvania Dutch salad: lettuce with hot bacon dressing. Isn't that a fair sample of this regional cookery? Walp's offer a good choice of Dutch foods every day. In addition to the country platter they offer Schnitz un Knepp, Smoked Sausage, or Sauerbraten. The latter is more German than Dutch but many restaurants do suggest it on their Dutch menus.

One of the latest restaurants to include Pennsylvania Dutch foods is The Willows, five miles east of Lancaster on U. S. 30. Each day they feature three Dutch dinners with the traditional apple butter and cottage cheese, homemade chow chow and corn relish. The management of The Willows is so pleased with the popular appeal of these Dutch dinners that they are planning to add many new items to their Dutch menus.

None of the above eating places presents as distinctive a Dutch atmosphere as the Hotel Brunswick in the heart of Lancaster. Here, there are two Pennsylvania Dutch Dining Rooms. Rural scenes are painted on the walls with all sorts of sayings "so that you will know what to say when you are down Pennsylvania Dutch way." Tablecloths and menu folders also display the folk art. As in the decorations, the Brunswick has gone into the Dutch foods service in a big way. Six platters are offered each day plus a specialty such as Ham Schnitzel with String Beans, Boova Shenkel, or Pig's Knuckles with Sauerkraut.

Another place that presents Dutch atmosphere is Trainer's on Route 309 at Quakertown. Here, in the Don Dor Mar Lounge, amidst soft lights and organ melodies, you can enjoy Pennsylvania Dutch art and food. This is the most luxurious among the Dutch eating places. Tulips and love birds adorn window frames and fireplace. Most unusual are the glass panels into which original pie plate designs have been cut. Even though Trainer's do not advertise their food as Pennsylvania Dutch, they often serve Boiled Pot Pie, Boiled Pork and Turnips, and Pig's Knuckles with Sauerkraut, all of which are the "dutchest of the dutch."

There is another kind of atmosphere to be found in Lenhartsville, along Route 22, just five miles east of Hamburg. The sign outside calls this place Lenhartsville Hotel but it is much better known as Johnny Ott's. It reminds one of a curiosity shop. The proprietor, a chef himself, opened this hotel 19 years ago. Since then he has turned painter and has decorated the interior from top to bottom with hex signs and other numerous Dutch patterns, painted in his own individual folk style. Johnny enjoys serving his own homemade

cheeses as well as his snapper turtle soup. There is more variety in the decorations than on the menu.

Eight miles north of Lancaster, in the Moravian town of Lititz, Dutch dinners are served to crowds but only by reservation. Beside the private parties they serve, the General Sutter Hotel will serve a family style Pennsylvania Dutch dinner to approximately 2500 who will tour the Dutch country with Brunswick guides this summer. The meal begins with Chicken Corn Soup and ends with Apple Dumplings; in between are the seven sweets and sours plus the potpie, ham and vegetables. Sometimes the chef includes a few of these dishes on the coffee shop menu, but generally one does not find Dutch food at the General Sutter unless ordered for group dinners.

Shoo-fly pies seem to be the most common among the Dutch foods found in restaurants. Next in prominence ranks scrapple. It is surprising to note how often schnitz un knepp is served. Boiled potpie is also very common. Perhaps you would be interested to know that in each place, but one, it was made with baking powder; that is, the light kind. Potato filling is served in Berks County but none of the places visited serves raw potato cakes. Among the soups, bean and chicken noodle are common but only the Dutch Pantry includes noodles. Would you believe that even the lowly Millich Schlopp Pie is listed on the Monday menu at Haag's? By the way, here they serve zitterle, too. In several places, corn pies and oyster pies are served in season.

At some of these restaurants, one has to ask the waitress to point out the Dutch foods. Special Dutch menus are an asset to any dining room. However, these menus should be complete in themselves without referring one to another menu for the vegetables and desserts, as though the Dutch have none to offer. Seeing apple dumplings served with lemon sauce was a disappointment, but I was floored when I saw cheeses offered as desserts. Perhaps a Dutchman does sometimes take a piece of cheese to "top off on" but he certainly doesn't think of it as a dessert.

There has been an unexpected revival of our folk culture, but we haven't yet achieved the end. Next in the line of progress must come a restaurant that is exclusively Pennsylvania Dutch in the food it serves and in atmosphere, too. Then somewhere, somehow, the public should be informed that smearcase and apple butter belong on bread, and that sugar cakes were made to be dunked. If we show the tourist what we eat, we had better show him how we eat it, too.

Of Bells and Bell Towers

By HENRY J. KAUFFMAN

While traveling through the Dutch Country one frequently notices small bell towers on the roofs of farm and school houses. Although they are now outmoded by the pocket watch and the clanking electric bell, their charm creates a nostalgia that is known to all who lived in these parts a generation or so ago.

The little red schoolhouse has been condemned in favor of the giant octopi of the mid-twentieth century, but it may be interesting to return to it momentarily. The bell in the tower doubtless sounded the most beautiful to a group of youngsters who were returning to school early in September. Most of the summer chores were finished and all were eager to rejoin their schoolmates and their teacher for another season of study and fun. All would gather in the school yard the first day and at approximately eight-thirty in the morning the bell in the tower summoned them to the inside. There was a quick rush to the door so that all could greet their former teacher or quickly evaluate their new one. The bell also announced the end of the noon period (dinner time in the Dutch

Country) as well as the recess periods which were fifteen minutes of relaxation in the middle of the morning and afternoon sessions. Sometimes the bell would disappear at Hallowe'en time but the farmer who found it on his back porch or in the cow stable always was cooperative and returned it to its original location. On April 1 the clapper was often inclosed with cloth or paper so that it would not sound, but that condition was also quickly remedied. School sessions continue but the romance of the iron bell in the tower has been replaced by the buttons in the main office.

No less charming or interesting are the bells and bell towers on the farm houses of the region. The hands in the fields relied on the bell to inform them of the approaching mid-day or evening meal and its ringing provided them with adequate time to get the team to the barn. The bells were also used in times of emergency and the constant ringing of a neighbor's bell indicated that help was needed. The Amish continue to use their bells to this day and if a bell is found today on a non-Amish farm it likely is just "for show."



The bell tower on the Bell House in Bethlehem is doubtless one of the most famous and magnificent settings for a bell to be found in America. The six sided bell tower was completed in June, 1746, and three bells were placed in it, one large and two small. These were cast by Samuel Powell who also made the weather vane on the tower. The town clock, made by Augustine Neissen of Germantown, was installed in the cupola in 1747, but both of these original installations are gone and a less spectacular single bell now rests in this Moravian monument

—Photos by Henry J. Kauffman

The eight-sided tower with the lightning rod appendage seems to be the product of an amateur carpenter. The railing at the bottom is a country style, the posts terminate in a Gothic Arch arrangement, and the roof and finial seem to have some oriental influence. It is wholly incompatible with the house which is located on the Long Lane near Millersville, Pennsylvania





The bell on the pole with its handsome architectural canopy is located in Little Pittsburgh, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. It was obviously made by an ingenious craftsman for it is both attractive and functional. Very few bell poles have survived for the poles would rot in the ground and due to the scarcity of fine long trees the bell was placed on the house or discarded

This interesting tower was formerly located on the roof of the Sisters' House at the Ephrata Cloister. The conical roof of sheetmetal and the crude framework of wood indicates that it was not a part of the original structure. The round shape of the roof is extremely rare for bell towers in the Dutch country

The square tower on the little red school house does not seem to belong to the rest of the structure but is the style frequently found on school and farmhouses



JOHN DURANG

The First Native American Dancer

By ELIZABETH CLARKE KIEFFER

“THERE, through the Divine favour of God I was born in Lancaster, State of Pennsylvania, January 6th, 1768.” Thus wrote John Durang, actor, ballet-dancer, pantomimist, slack-wire artist, pyrotechnician, “equestrian hero,” clown, and impresario. His statement is near the beginning of a charming volume of Memoirs, illustrated with naïve water-color sketches of himself in costume, which is in the collection of the Historical Society of York County. This little book formed the basis of much of the *History of the Philadelphia Stage* by his son Charles Durang, published serially in the *Philadelphia Sunday Despatch*, 1854-5. Yet the elegant dancing master of the mid-century was distinctly ashamed of his father’s lively manuscript. When Thompson Westcott was preparing his extra-illustrated copy of the articles (now in the collection of the University of Pennsylvania) Charles Durang wrote to him, apologetically, that it was written in “Half-French, German, and English.” He seems to have thought his father’s misspellings and grammatical errors a sign of illiteracy, and not the natural mistakes of a trilingual writer. Certainly John Durang wrote an unusually clear and beautiful English script. His spelling is no worse than that of many of his English contemporaries, and his punctuation far better. If he now and then writes “wery” or “the chaset Diana,” does not Charles make similar errors in the French of his dancing-school manuals?

My guess is that what really shocked the early Victorian son, was a certain healthy realism, and verbal frankness more pleasing to the taste of the mid-twentieth than of the mid-nineteenth century. He probably found it very poor taste in his father to explain that his birth in Lancaster was due to the fact that the Jacob Durangs, on their way to settle in York, were forced by the young wife’s “delicate condition” to stop with her sister in Lancaster until their first son was born. That the young Alsatian doctor, newly released from the French army, did not settle in Lancaster was probably due to the fact that there were several doctors already practicing here, who could speak English as well as French and German. York had far more need of surgical skill, and when the baby was several months old, his parents settled there, in a house on High (now Market) Street. Here, in addition to his medical practice, Jacob Durang kept a store, and, according to his son, “gained the inheritance of Respect and Wealth.”

The children (there were seven of them, we are told) were sent to “the German school.” This was probably the school of Trinity Reformed Church, although the Durangs were Catholics. Little is known of this school as the records of the church were destroyed by fire in 1797, but these early church schools are known to have given a good basic foundation in the elements. French, the Durangs could learn at home. One of the delights of John’s childhood was the annual Fair or “Harvest Frolic.” There he first heard barrel organs, and trumpets, and saw puppet shows, wire-dancing, and

sleight of hand. Years after, he was to make use of these remembered joys in one of his most popular spectacles, the *Harvest Frolic*, a pantomime which he staged effectively over a period of more than ten years.

In the War of the Revolution, Jacob Durang volunteered as a private in Captain George Eichelberger’s company of the York County Associators.* His regiment was stationed in Lancaster, while a Virginia regiment was in York. John, aged seven, but already exhibiting his lifelong passion for fancy dress, teased his mother into making him a hunting shirt and trousers, green with yellow fringe like those of the Virginians. Thus equipped he marched along with the troops when they marched to Lancaster. Here, to his chagrin, he was turned over to his father who returned him to his bereft mother.

While the British prisoners were held in York, some of the officers boarded with the Durangs. The military band re-

*Pennsylvania Archives, 6, 2, 420.



Water-color sketch of Durang
—Courtesy of the York County Historical Society



John Durang in the role of the Dutch Fisherman
—Courtesy of the York County Historical Society

heard there, to John's enthrallment. It was probably through one of the Philadelphia evacuees that Jacob Durang acquired a property in Philadelphia, for immediately after the British evacuation, the Durangs moved to the capital, and settled in a house on Second Street. There they entertained the Colonel of Jacob's former French regiment, on his way to join Washington. To a little boy, there was a wealth of excitement in the big city. He enjoyed the freedom of the French embassy, and the French colony between Pine and Powell Streets. He skated on the river, and ran after the soldiers, and learned every dance step that anyone could teach him. Although theatrical history pictures revolutionary Philadelphia as a desert for actors, the country boy with a dawning passion for the stage seems to have found much to feed his flame. True, the Congressional resolution of 1774, closing all theatres for the duration, had banished from the city the only professional actors, Hallam and Douglass' American Company, which had toured the seaboard from 1752-74. Their theatre in Southwark stood

empty, but was available for amateur shows, and for such fly-by-night performers who dared to brave Congressional disapproval for a few nights. In this theatre, young Durang saw his first pantomime, performed by the servants of the French ambassador. He attended the performances of Mr. Templeton, the wire dancer, early in 1780, and reports that he was "most compleat in the art."

In the victory parade which celebrated Cornwallis' surrender, Durang had his first taste of public display. He took the part of "Mercury on the printing press," dressed in flesh-colored tights, blue cap and sash, and feathered wings. One supposes that this was some kind of a float advertising Franklin and Hall's printing establishment, for "Mrs. Beach, Dr. Franklin's daughter made the dress, cap and wings for me. Dr. Franklin was in the room at the time she fit the cap on my head."

The event, however, which had the most influence on his future career was the Philadelphia season of Wall, Ryan and Company, in 1783. Denis Ryan had kept the theatre alive in Baltimore during the Philadelphia prohibition, and was now appealing, in vain, for a repeal of the anti-theatre resolutions. Durang's testimony settles the question of whether he actually played in Philadelphia without sanction. Although Durang's memory is often at fault as to dates and places, he can scarcely be wrong about this. He appears to have attended every performance, getting a seat "in the front of the house," to watch every step of Mr. Russell (or Roussel) the dancer, whose chief attraction was a hornpipe. "I thought I could dance as well as anybody, but his stile set it off with his dress." With an ingenuity always typical of him, he made a deal by which Mr. Russell was to board at his father's home for the rest of his engagement, and give him dancing lessons. Thus he learned not only the hornpipe, but an Alamande, and a Country Dance which were later to be permanent parts of his repertoire. The only thing which the French dancer either could not or would not show him was how to do a pigeon wing. In spite of careful observation and constant trying, the boy could not master the step. He had begun to despair, when a perfectly plausible psychological experience settled his difficulty. He dreamt that he was dancing before a large audience and cut a pigeon wing perfectly. When he woke he knew exactly how to do the step and never had trouble with it again.



Fiddle tune which became popular in the Dutch country
—Courtesy of the York County Historical Society

After Ryan left Philadelphia, a man whose name Durang claims to have forgotten came to town with a show made up of transparencies, magic lantern slides, mechanical sea-fights, "all bad enough, but anything was thought great in those days." He showed in "a house the corner of the Little St. between front and Second St. this house is part of the oldest theatre that was build in Philad^a by old Hallam and Douglass, it is a large red frame Building at the corner of South and the little street, and stands there yet to this day [1820?] occupied in tenements." (We include this information for the sake of the historians.) The nameless gentleman (and in view of Durang's excellent memory for names we suspect he forgot this one by request), found John hanging around the theatre as usual. His mechanical aptitude made the showman covet him as a cheap assistant. The not unexpected result was that the boy ran away from home, and went with the show to Boston. Fifteen years old, "full of health and cheerfulness," and armed with "my aversion to vice, couplet with prudence." Unlike the story books, his adventure was a very happy one. He remarks, in several places, that his love of travel was one of the ties that held him to the theatre. He enjoyed the trip, learned a lot in Boston, and was well-treated by his master who, at the end of the season, gave him his fare home and the proceeds of one night's performance. He returned to Philadelphia by stage-coach, with money in his pocket, and was received by his family in the best "Prodigal Son" tradition.

During his absence, things had happened in Southwark. Lewis Hallam the younger, eager to use his theatres, had ventured back in spite of Quaker frowns, keeping his theatre open from April to June of 1784 with a series of performances which he thinly disguised as "Lectures." As he suppressed the names of his company for their own sakes, we only know positively of a Mr. and Mrs. Allen, English actors who had come to America just in time to be caught by the prohibition, and had somehow weathered the revolution in Philadelphia. In the fall of 1784, he opened again with the same type of program, having added to the group a young Frenchman Charles Busselot, who in addition to dancing and pantomime, kept a fencing school in the city. There was also a Mr. Moore, a former member of the company.

John Durang must have been spending some of his Boston earnings for finery. About Christmas time he appeared at a private ball attired in a blue coat, white vestcoat and small clothes, white silk stockings, a powdered toupee with curls tied with a black rose, cocked hat, gloves, cane, gold watch, and chain. (This is a mere skeleton of his loving description of the costume.) Thus attired, he danced a hornpipe for the guests. It must have been sensational, for the news of his performance reached the ears of Lewis Hallam himself. The impresario was desperate for talent. His elderly and meagre company needed new and youthful blood, and he was not insensible to the advantages of having at least a few "native born" performers, to combat the anti-British prejudice. "He waited upon my father to negotiate on liberal terms for me to dance on the stage." Jacob Durang, who, by this time, must have realized his son's vocation, consented.

At his first rehearsal, the boy broke down, completely over-awed by finding himself behind instead of before the footlights, with an audience composed of the very actors he so admired. Mr. Hallam, however, was consoling, and kind Mrs. Allen gave him advice on costumes, stage deportment, and even dance-steps. He accepted and profited

by every bit of advice that was given him throughout his career, and always ascribed it to the giver, with a becoming gratitude. His debut could not be more vividly described than in his own words, "the theatre on this occasion was crowded to see a fellow-townsmen make his first appearance on any stage. I had contrived a Trample behind the wing to enable me to gain the centre of the stage in one spring, when the curtains rose, the cry was sit down, hats off, with the swiftness of Mercury I stood before them, with a general huzza and dancet in busts of applause. when I went off the stage, I was encored they made such a noise throwing a bottle in orchestra, apples, etc. on the stage, at last the curtain was raised again and I dancet a second time."

From that time until the end of his life, John Durang was continually in the public eye. Chiefly he was a dancer and pantomimist, but he was cheerfully ready to turn his hand to any task in the entertainment field that he was able to do. His Pennsylvania Dutch accent always stood in his way as a serious actor. Indeed, it shows the desperation of Hallam and Allen, in those early days, that they allowed him even the smallest of speaking roles. In the pantomime, he was very quickly playing Scaramouche, and even, now and then, Harlequin. The programs now achieved more variety. Although still advertised as "lectures" and "concerts" they gradually took on an aspect closely like vaudeville. Durang and Busselot contrived between them what Durang calls "a fantasy of small shades" billed as *Les Grandes Ombres Chinoises* and *Les Petites Ombres Italiennes*. These shadow plays were very popular at the time, and have been described as *The Forerunner of the Movies*.^{*} During the winter, John's sister, Catharine (sometimes called Caroline), joined the company. He says generously, "she sang with as much applause as I dancet." There was also a local blacksmith with good lungs, who was allowed to sing "Bright Phoebus" for three nights. Mr. Hallam was really desperate.

During this first Philadelphia season, Durang fell in love, and pursued his wooing with public serenades, assisted by the theatre orchestra. The young lady's mother disapproved, and so guarded her daughter that the lover was forced to disguise himself as a beggar at the back door, in order to slip a note of farewell into his sweetheart's hand when the company left for New York, in August 1785.

At the old John St. Theatre in New York, there was less anti-theatrical feeling to combat, and the company was not afraid to give their own names, but they still clung to the "Lectures": *A Monody on the Chiefs, Poetical Introduction to a Display of Characters*, etc. and leaned very heavily on the pantomimes of Busselot and Durang: *The Genii of the Rock*, *The Cave of Enchantment*, *The Famous Skeleton Scene*, and others. To prove their Americanism, they frequently included a *Roundelay Celebrating American Independence* and closed their bills with "Vivat Republica."

Meanwhile, Durang was improving his time. He had met with an odd genius, a German dwarf named Hoffmaster, just three feet tall with a wife the same size. He gave the boy lessons on the violin, flute, octave, flageolet, and French horn. Under his tutelage, Durang constructed a Pan's pipe, on which he learned to play while he danced before the ear of the Comic Muse in the "Shakespeare Jubilee" which often ended their programs. It was Hoffmaster who composed the lively tune of "Durang's Hornpipe" which became so widely popular that in later years Durang was charmed to find it had become a fiddler's tune "on the other side of the blue mountains."

^{*} Brander Matthews, *Century Magazine*, v. 87, p. 916, 1914.

This association, too, was probably the origin of the "Dwarf Dance." He gives Mr. Hallam full credit for inventing the *modus operandi* of this popular number. A large false face was strapped to his belt, and dummy arms worked by strings below it. The dancer's whole upper body was covered by an enormous turban, giving the effect of a three foot dwarf in oriental costume. This illusion was enormously successful in New York, but the following year, when he first tried it in Philadelphia, he became confused, blinded as he was by the turban, and mistaking the footlights for the wing lights, danced off the stage, into the orchestra, impaling himself on a spike, which caused him to be invalided for three months. Unwilling to abandon the clever dance, however, he altered the costume so that by releasing a drawstring at the end of the dance, the turban fell down as a skirt, metamorphising the dwarf into a six foot woman, a trick which made the dance even more of a hit. One of his sketches illustrates this illusion.

We have, however, gotten ahead of our story. Hallam and Allen played in New York from August to November 1785, adding to their lectures and pantomimes more and more real plays, badly cut to fit the size of the company. Even so, most of the actors had to take two and sometimes three parts. Obviously this could not go on after the novelty wore off. Pantomime and spectacle were still the main reliance. Durang and Busselot were kept busy preparing new ones. *The Witches, or Harlequin in the Moon* was one of Durang's standard attractions for years to come.

Anti-theatrical letters were beginning to appear in the newspapers. A temperate reply from an "Old Citizen"

quoted by Odell from *Louden's Packet* says that if the theatre is to be open, "let it not be with Harlequin farces by a set who, one or two excepted, are British strangers, but let us have an old company of players who, I learn to the southward, lately arrived from the West Indies." Odell suggests that this may have been advance publicity for John Henry who, with the "Old American Company," was working his way north. The actors and actresses he brought were, some of them, like himself, members of the pre-Revolutionary company, while others like Maria Storer (later Mrs. Henry), were new importations. (Durang vividly describes Mrs. Henry's notorious tantrums.) Miss Tuke, now first appearing on the bills, was an American girl, and may actually have preceded Durang on the stage. She later became Mrs. Hallam.

Hallam disbanded his own company, and joined Henry. The Allens, unwilling perhaps to accept Henry's small salaries (Durang wrote and then scratched out "he was very close") left the company and established a small theatre of their own at Albany. (Their son later joined the "Old American.") After some heart-searchings, Durang accepted the lower rate and minor position, and joined the new group. His comments on its personnel are most entertaining. Catharine Durang was dropped. Mrs. Henry could both act and sing (when she felt like it).

As usual, Durang made the most of his new opportunities. He roomed with the scene-painter, a Mr. Snyder, and took painting lessons from him. He continued his violin studies, under the orchestra-leader, Mr. Phile. For recreation he hunted and fished on Long Island, and went skating on the fresh-water pond near the Bowery. By these inexpensive pursuits, he economized sufficiently to send 80 French pounds home to his father, and have enough left in his trunk to supply his needs.

When the company closed for the summer of 1786, Durang was constitutionally unable to remain idle. He first announced his return to Philadelphia, to the lady of his heart, by another serenade; then arranged his room in the Second Street house with all his treasures: paintings, musical instruments, firearms, and fencing foils, a bed with curtains that rose and fell like those of the theatre, birds and squirrels in cages, and a camera obscura in the window. Here he set about constructing a set of puppets, some in wood, some in papier-mâché. He called upon his father's surgical knowledge to get the anatomy straight. His sister helped dress them, and Charles Busselot helped with the stage carpentry and machinery. Busselot had left the stage, and returned to his fencing school. He and Catharine Durang were now married. He had retained his full interest in mechanical marvels, however, and displayed his *Ombres Chinoises* at the Peale museum. Jacob Durang, an always pliant father, yielded to his son's desire to tear out all the partitions on the third floor of the house, and build a puppet theatre. He even allowed a hole to be cut in the ceiling for a "Thunder loft." Here was given the first performance in Philadelphia of the comic opera, *The Poor Soldier* (George Washington's favorite). Durang and Busselot handled the puppets and spoke the male parts. Catherine sang. "Mr. Hallam attended the first performance and gave me flattering creadid." Profits rolled up; the third floor theatre was soon too small to hold the crowds. A house was hired at South and Front Streets "opposite Mease's vendue store."* Here a much more elaborate program was put on. Eight small children were trained to act in pantomimes. The

* Charles Durang.

John Durang and Scottish Influence



—Courtesy of the York County Historical Society

Ombres were shown, and Durang danced. This venture was kept up all winter, but did not interfere with Durang's rejoining the "Old American" when it opened the Southwark Theatre in January 1787. Instead of repealing the anti-theatre law, the Assembly had enlarged it to cover pantomimes, so Hallam now called his performances "operas" and rebaptised the old theatre as an "opera house." Under any name the amusement-starved audiences thronged to it. Durang gives a glimpse of their trials on rainy days when the unpaved streets around were churned to mud, and men and women were obliged to wade up to their calves. "Yet they flocked to it."

He tells us, "I had the pleasure to dance twice before General Washington in this theatre" and goes on with the inimitable description of Washington's reception, which has been quoted so often that it would be superfluous to quote it here. On February 7, 1787, the "Dwarf Dance" was advertised, so this was probably the night of his painful accident. He seems, however, to have used the leisure of his illness to complete his courtship, for on February 27, he was married to Miss Mary McEwen, by the Rev. Father Beeson, in the "little Chapple of the Catholic Congregation of Philadelphia." On the second day afterward, he gave a supper to sixty of his friends, followed by a ball with music furnished by the theatre orchestra. Even the mother-in-law seems to have resigned herself to the match, for in later years she lived with the family in the fine house which John built for himself, close to the Southwark Theatre, and kept such of the children as were too young to go barn-storming with their father and mother.

The puppet theatre kept on successfully until May, when John, now healed and fit to dance again, returned to the company for a summer season in Baltimore, with a side excursion to Annapolis during the races. In July they returned to Southwark, where they presented such "Moral and Instructive Tales" as: "Filial Piety, exemplified in the history of the Prince of Denmark," "The Disadvantages of an Improper Education, exemplified in the History of Tony Lumpkin." These subtleties drove the Quakers to present a petition to the Assembly against these "schools of seduction and resorts of licentiousness . . . under whatsoever evasive name disguised."*

Durang says that it was in this season that he first presented his own pantomime, *The Birth of Harlequin*. If this is so, then the mysterious "Master Durang" billed in the part of "Harlequin Pigmy" in this farce in 1791, may not have been, as supposed, an otherwise unknown son of the dancer, but a younger brother, possibly one of the small children trained to act pantomimes in the puppet theatre. At all events, the performance cleared \$100—Durang never forgets his profits, if he does confuse his dates.

For the next few years, however, his memory is understandably hazy, and it is necessary to check every date he mentions, with known advertisements and playbills. The present author, having neither the facilities nor the specialized knowledge, has attempted only to correlate the statements of the memoirs, with published theatrical histories, leaving to the experts the pleasant task of a careful and scholarly chronology.

In the fall of 1787, the company moved to New York, and young Mrs. Durang, for the first time, went along. A dangerous storm at sea caused her husband an agony of self-reproach for, "altho she Betrayd no fear, yet the situation

was alarming, being her first journey to leave a comfortable home for this where hope was despaired of." The winter season was less successful than usual, and a rather discouraged company returned to Philadelphia for a short summer season, closed because of the Quaker sentiment, and re-opened defiantly in October with a bill of plays presented under their undisguised titles.

On March 2, 1789, the anti-theatre law was at last repealed.† On March 9, the Old American Company, using for the first time its corporate name, and for the first time listing its cast, advertised:

BY AUTHORITY

The Roman Father ("In the fifth act an Ovation for Publius' Victory over the Curatii, with a Hornpipe by Mr. Durang.")

It was a little like dancing over the grave of the Quaker conception of decency.

In April, the company hastened to New York to take part in the celebration of the inaugural ceremonies. Durang didn't miss a thing. He saw the miles of illuminated transparencies decorating the line of march. He saw Washington step ashore from "an Elegant barge rowed by thirteen men dressed neatly." He heard him speak "from the balcony of the fetheral Hall." The following week he had the pleasure of seeing the President in a box at the theatre, with the Vice-President, the Governor of New York, and the French Ambassador, all watching him, who, so short a time ago had been a small-town Pennsylvania Dutch boy.

At the end of this season, if I do not misinterpret the evidence, Durang returned to Philadelphia with his season's earnings, and "deposited \$300 in the North American Bank, my first capital and the cornerstone of my fortune, faithfully earned." With a Mr. Easterly who owned "Harrowgate Gardens" "four miles from Philadelphia, near Frankfort," he then united to create a "Vauxhall Garden" after the pattern of the famous London amusement park, with refreshments, pleasure alleys, boat lake, concert hall, displays of fireworks. (It was probably at this time that Durang became an expert pyrotechnician.) "Mr. Kenney and his lady, and son and his lady" sang, an item of news for the historians who are seeking more information about the career of the "K. Company."

To the same historians, I leave the placing of Durang's next piece of information. He says that with the profits of the Vauxhall adventure, which ran for two summers, he and his brother-in-law, Charles Busselot, converted a large boat-builder's shop in the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia into a theatre. To add to the mystery, I give Durang's list of his company: "Messrs Durang and Busselotte managers. Mrs. Busselotte, Doctor Vaughan, Mr. Tobine, Mr. Kinney, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Steward, Mr. Guaran, Mr. Pursel, Mrs. Steward (afterward Mrs. McDonald), Miss Wells." This surely must have been the "Northern Liberties Company" of the season of 1789, yet in spite of similarities how unlike the cast found by Pollock.

In early October, Durang was billed in New York in *Barataria*. By early November he was back at the Northern Liberties, where in *The Devil upon two Sticks* he "danced a hornpipe on thirteen eggs, Blindfolded without breaking one," while "a gentleman from London" ate "real red-hot fire, and blue flaming brimstone matches." On November 11, by Pollock's calendar, Mr. Partridge (whom Durang nowhere mentions), and Durang introduced in Philadelphia

* Penna. Archives, 11, 343-3.

† Pennsylvania Statutes at Large. Ch. 1391, v. 13.



Durang in early Negro impersonation
—Courtesy of the York County Historical Society

the famous pantomimic dance of *The Wapping Landlady*. Yet on November 16, Odell finds him in New York, doing the same dance, and taking a benefit as though he had been there all the season. The whole thing is very confusing. One did not commute between Philadelphia and New York in those days.

In January 1790, the Old American Company followed the capital of the United States to Philadelphia, and, from January to July, kept the Southwark Theatre open. Although Pollock does not have casts for this season, it is evident that Durang was with them. There is, however, some reason to suppose that he kept the Northern Liberties Company going, as well, perhaps on alternate nights. On February 10, the bill was: *Robinson Crusoe* "with entire new scenery, machinery, music, etc. etc. The former (save for a view of the Falls of Passaick taken from Capt. Cooke's Voyage to Otaheite, New Zealand, etc." This must have meant hard work for that scene-painting trio, Snyder, Durang, and Busselot. It is not known at what date Durang was first cast as "Harlequin Friday," in this pantomime, but it was soon to become one of his standard numbers. Lincoln Kirsten points out that it was probably the original of the "black-face clown in coffee colored fleshings."

Durang says that it was during the period of the Northern Liberties Company, that he was first approached by Mr. John Ricketts, the circus manager, with a proposal that they join forces. Durang refused on the ground that he was not an expert horseman, "for which I was sorry later." From December 1790 to July 1791, the Southwark Theatre was open for three nights a week, and Durang abandoned his other ventures. It was probably during this season that he met the "Chipeway and Nadowessie Chiefs of the West," from whom he claims to have learned his "eagletail, war, scalp and pipe dances." Many Indians were in Philadelphia that year to sign treaties with the United States. It became standard practice to entertain them at the theatre. (The

Senecas were regaled by *Richard III* of all things!) Durang not only learned his steps from them, but bought, for rum, a full Indian costume complete with knee-bracelets of "Chichicoes (a kind of large dried bean hollowed and strung, make a music to keep time like the castinates)."

The season of 1791-2 was spent in New York. In January, they were joined by the ballet group of M. Placide. Durang says of them: "About this time a Monsieur Placide a Celebrated Tight-Rope Dancer, and his wife, and a frenchman called the Little Devil famous on the Slack Rope and Tumbling all arrived. Mr. Hallam made an arrangement with them which turned out to the advantage of the whole company. M. Placide was the best rope dancer that ever was in America. I did the clown to the rope which got me a good benefit . . . at least I cleared \$300 which was a great sum at that time." One of the nicest things about Durang is that he never once exhibits a spark of professional jealousy. It is probably because of this that better performers always treated him graciously. On April 27, 1792, at the "good benefit" of which he speaks, Mme. Placide herself played Columbine to his Harlequin in *The Birth of Harlequin*.

The Old American Company had passed its best years. Mr. Henry left for England to recruit new actors. Mr. Wignall, the best comedian of the cast, who had been held back for some time by the jealousy of the aging Hallam, had withdrawn, and gone into partnership with the distinguished musician Alexander Reinagle, to build the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, for which he was recruiting his own company.

Hallam, Durang, and the Placides went to Southwark for the summer where they kept things going with pantomime, ballet, and rope-dancing. In September, Mr. Henry brought back his recruits, headed by John Hodgkinson, of whom Durang says, "He was the best general actor that Ever was, or, in my opinion, Ever will be in America." They opened in New York at the end of January 1793. Here, suffering perhaps by contrast with the more sophisticated newcomers, Durang got his first bad notice, in a letter to the *New York Journal** ". . . expressing our doubts whether the managers suppose we can be amused by the agility of Mr. Durang or whether we should be diverted by him in the character of a clumsy stage dancer." Yet Odell points out that his dancing continued to be featured throughout the season.

At his benefit in June, *The Grateful Lion or the Liliputien's Power*, he evidently took enough money to justify a down payment on a lot of ground at 216 South Street, Philadelphia, on which he eventually built a double house, at a total cost of \$1400. This was his proudest possession. He tells us that, for three summers, he stayed at home and worked his garden. Since research and his own account place him elsewhere in almost every summer of his life, it is hard to tell which were the three summers. Perhaps to a man of his restless spirit, a few weeks now and then seemed like a whole season.

The summer of 1793 was not a propitious one to set up as a householder in Philadelphia. The first and most terrible of the Yellow Fever epidemics struck the horrified city. Mr. Wignall's Chestnut Street Company which had intended to open were kept riding at anchor in the bay. Hallam's Company, perhaps trying to capitalize on the delay of their rivals, kept going through July and August. Durang danced in July, and as he says nothing of the plague perhaps escaped it. Southwark was still semi-suburban in those days. Durang's house was the first in his square. The

* Quoted by Odell: v. 1: p. 319.

A picture of Durang doing
the dwarf act
—Courtesy of the York County
Historical Society



rest of the company were not so lucky. On August 28, they were forced to announce that, "the indisposition of part of the company still continuing," performances would be postponed until further notice.

By November 11, they were well enough to open in New York. Odell, it seems to me, is unjustifiably surprised to find some names missing from their casts. Durang now danced with a partner, Mr. Miller. On March 3, the company produced *Tammany*, now accounted the first American opera, one of the features being an Indian dance by these two. On May 28, they did a "Liliputian Dance" and at their joint benefit on June 11, Durang danced for the first time on the slack wire.

The summer of 1794 is rather perplexing. Durang definitely states that it was this year that the company tried a "summer scheme" of dividing into two groups, the serious actors going to Providence and the dancers to Newport where, according to Durang, they played for three months with considerable success. Now Sonneck places this event in the summer of 1796, with a total failure, and while there would be no reason to doubt that they might have tried it twice, he places Durang with the Newport group that summer, when his time, as we shall see, was almost certainly occupied elsewhere.

Somewhere that summer, it is certain, Hallam's company united with a genuine ballet company which had played in the Chestnut Street Theatre during the preceding winter. The premiere ballerina was the beautiful and tragic Mme. Gardie whose romantic and terrible story is detailed by Dunlap and by Charles Durang. When the reorganized company opened in Southwark, in September 1794, the ballet dancers were part of it. The Henrys were not. Durang tactfully reports that they had left, "through Indisposition or some other Cause." The ambitious Hodgkinson now held the supreme power. Durang seems to suggest that William Dunlap, playwright and author of the first history of the American stage, was already a silent partner, although he did not officially join the management until the spring of 1795.

It was, however, Mr. Hodgkinson who "raised my Salary without my applying for it. it was an act of consideration and generosity and Secured my Esteem."

On December 4, 1794, the company closed in Philadelphia. They could not have known it, but it was their final appearance on the Philadelphia stage forever. It was, for the last time, announced that "the President of the United States means to honor the Old American Company with his presence." It is to be doubted, however, if Mr. Washington was again entertained by Durang's agility. His name is not on the bill, and that night was born the most famous of his sons, Charles Durang.

The company's New York season ran from Dec. 15, 1794, to June 27, 1795. Durang danced frequently with Mme. Gardie, notably in a "witches dance" in *Macbeth*. It does not seem to have been too successful a season. In the summer the whole company went to Hartford for a short season ("while there I taught a dancing school") then on to Boston, where they also intended to make a short visit; but, word reaching them that the yellow fever had broken out in New York, they joined forces with a company already playing there, and stayed until February 1796. Here Durang not only saw all the sights of Boston (with some comments on Boston lodging houses) but made the acquaintance of young Joseph Jefferson (grandfather of "Rip") who later became one of his best friends. "I viewed with pleasure the reception of this stranger to our land—the feast was made more cheerfull by his presence."

When, in February of a particularly bad New England winter, the Old Americans decided that it was safe (and politic) to return to New York, Durang hired a closed coach on sleigh runners and brought his family home at their ease, "and every night in comfortable lodgings," reaching New York long before the other actors who made the cheaper but cruelly dangerous trip by sea. He uses this for a text for a slightly smug but entirely sensible dissertation on the difference between spending lavishly on comforts for oneself and family, and flinging it away in convivial pleasures.

"Many have been pleased to say that I am close . . . if there is any pleasure over a bottle Let it be with a Valueable friend at home, where the poor will always find me and not afraid to meet my creditors at the door."

It was a full and busy season. Durang was on the bill at almost every performance. In March the company absorbed another ballet group, whose principals were M. and Mme. Val, and M. Francisquy. Mme. Gardie was still the great attraction. It was her last season. Charles Durang, in detailing her horrible death, mentions that he saw the murder chamber, most probably with his father. The great new dancing features were *The Bird Catcher* and *Pygmalion*. In Arnold's *Mountaineers*, Durang and Francisquy danced a Spanish Fandango with Mmes. Val and Gardie. In *Rural Waggish Tricks* he danced with all the principals in "A New Country Dance called Yankee Doodle." In *The American Heroine* on May 3, his Indian dances were again featured.

Yet things were not going too well in the company. Although Dunlap was doing his best to put it on a paying basis, Durang, with twelve years of theatrical experience, could sense danger. He and Lewis Hallam were the sole survivors of that little company which had started out so bravely in 1784. He did not wish to be the next one pushed to the wall. He may have gone to Newport with the dancers, again, but he does not say so. He says "when the theatre closed I opened a summer theatre in Broadway opposite to the park. A Mr. Patterson, once celebrated for his dancing in Ryan and Walls company, was with me but I could not persuade him to dance before me. Mr. Miller and Mr. Rankin I had too." It was not a good company, and it had good competition. Just down the way, at the New Circus on Greenwich Street, the Ricketts circus, best of its day, was drawing the crowds. "Mr. Ricketts sent me an offer of an Engagement inclosed in a note, the terms were liberal [\$25 a week and a benefit in every town] . . . I took the affair into serious Consideration Reflecting on the poor Situation I held in the Theatre living on a low salary with a family, no prospect of a Benefit [the company had grown so large that all but the principals had to share benefit nights with three or four others] and on the other hand fortune seemed to invite me. I waited on Mr. Ricketts and excepted his offer. Gave my managers notice of my withdrawing from the Theatre. Mr. Dunlap offered to raise my Salary if I would Remain, but I told him my mind is made up to try my fortune Elsewhere. I thanked him for his kind offer and the humain politeness he had always showd me. I took my leave Respectfully wishing him health and prosperity and proud to say that it is in my power to proclaim him a Compleat Gentleman."

Thus in the fall of 1796, Durang began five of the most peaceful and prosperous years of his life. Much has been written about Ricketts' circus, and I need not repeat it here, but to understand Durang's position in it, it is necessary for the reader who thinks in terms of Ringling Brothers, to have some re-orientation. The big top had not yet been invented. Circuses were held in specially designed buildings. In the big cities, these were permanant structures, like theatres. On tour, a barnlike edifice was erected with the cheapest of lumber, sometimes without a roof, but even this was so expensive that the company stayed much longer in one place than any modern circus. The circus building, it is true, contained a ring. Boxes surrounded it, and a ringside pit for the poorer classes who risked having their brains kicked out. At one end of the ring, however, there

was a stage, reached by ramps from the ring, and on this were performed pantomimes and ballets. It was for this branch of the work that Durang was engaged. It would not indeed have been necessary for him to learn horsemanship at all; but he was never the man to enter anything half-way. His first summer with Ricketts in New York was devoted almost entirely to riding lessons and to study under Matt Sully, the famous clown, so that he could early be billed as "clown to the horsemanship" and later even as one of the "equestrian heroes."

As soon as the horrors of the second great yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia were over, the circus moved into its fine new building, The Pantheon, directly opposite the Chestnut Street Theatre (an offense which Mr. Wignall never quite forgave). Here, with the assistance of Mr. Spinacuta, a man of talents as varied as his own, Durang staged, directed, and performed in many of his old favorites: *The Two Philosophers*, *Vulcan's Gift*, *The Wapping Landlady*, *The Dwarf Dance*, etc. and introduced new spectacles such as *The Country Frolic or the Merry Haymakers*, which was perhaps a development of *Rural Waggish Tricks*, and later became the *Harvest Frolic*, which was an almost standardized part of his "Bill Affair" as he persistently calls it.

During a temporary engagement of James Byrne, "former ballet master of Sadler's Wells and Covent Garden" they put on a magnificent spectacle of the *Death of Captain Cook*, which Durang later adopted for his own. After Byrne's departure, Durang staged a new pantomime, *The Magic Feast*; and for his own benefit on February 7, 1797, he used his perennial *Independence of America*. "I took a benefit" he writes "and had \$800, 600 of which I deposited in the bank, for the first time, I performed on horseback, . . . for the first time I sung the Dutch Fisherman."

In the spring of 1797, the company, reduced in number, were for a short season in New York. Here, among other things, was produced a new pantomime, *The Western Exhibition or the Whiskey Boys Liberty Pole*. The Whiskey Insurrection had only just been quelled. Durang had a flair for putting on such topical spectacles, and was to capitalize upon this ability more and more frequently. He makes, however, a very shrewd observation, well justified by future events. "Mr. Ricketts was convincet by experience that a Equestrian performance blended with Dramatic performance would never agree or turn out to advantage . . . a circus within its own sphere must succeed and please."

After the New York season, the company split into two groups. One, under the management of Francis Ricketts, the younger brother, toured Philadelphia, Lancaster, York, Baltimore, and Annapolis, where they failed, and had to send an express to John Ricketts for money to save their expensive trained horses from being sold at auction. Why Durang, with his Dutch accent, and his knowledge of his native territory was not sent with this group is a mystery. He might have saved them from disaster. On the other hand, since John Ricketts' half of the company was bound for Canada, and Durang spoke French, he could be just as useful there. No doubt his own craving for travel was the final decisive factor. With his usual sense of responsibility, he returned to Philadelphia, arranged for his family to stay in the country, safe from any recurrence of the plague, and left a bank account for his wife to draw upon in his absence. Then he set out on the gayest adventure of his life.

His account of the Canadian tour, the fullest of detail in his book, is obviously based on a journal. It is so good, that one is tempted to quote far more than proportion allows.

Let us attempt self-restraint. The skeleton company and their horses went up the Hudson by sloop, stopping at Stony Point long enough for Durang to "ascend a rocket," to the astonishment of other ships on the river. They opened in Albany at the end of July, and had been playing less than a week, when a disastrous fire almost destroyed them. They saved their horses and properties, however, and even gave a performance for the benefit of the fire sufferers. Then they struck into the wilderness of upper New York, where they were forced to mend bridges before they could cross them, shoe their own horses, sleep in the most primitive taverns, catch their own turkeys and cook their own meals. They were "benighted in the mountainous desert of Vermont," almost lost their horses in a swamp near Crown Point, back-tracked on General Burgoyne's road where they were attacked by monster horse-flies, of which he drew a life size portrait. In Canada they were entertained by Indians, and less civilized whites, finally reaching St. Johns on August 24, and proceeding by flat boat to Montreal.

Here they built a fairly permanent circus, and settled down for the winter. Durang gives an account of his duties with this establishment. "My business was the Clown on foot and on horseback and obliged to furnish all the jokes for the ring and ride the Tailor to Brentford [this was a kind of dramatization of John Gilpin's Ride] with the Dialogue which I was obliged to speak in french, German and English . . . I rode the fox hunter [a horse] Leaping over the bar with the mounting and Dismounting at full speed—taking a flying leap on horseback through a paper Sun—in character of a drunken man on horseback. Tied in a sack, standing on two horses—while I changed to women's clothes—rode in full speed standing on two horses. Mr. Ricketts at the same time standing on my shoulders with Master Hutchins at the same time standing in the attitude of Mercury on Mr. Ricketts shoulders forming a pyramid. I performed the drunken Soldier on horseback—Still vaulted—I dancet on the stage—I was the harlequin in the pantomimes. Occasionally I sung a comic song I tumbled on the Slack wire. I introduced Mechanical Exhibitions in Machinery and Transparencies. I produced Exhibitions of fireworks in short I was performer, machinist- painter-Designer- music compiler- the Bill maker and Treasurer." (It sounds like new words to the *Largo al Factotum*.)

Meanwhile he was visiting Indian villages and convents, dining with Royal Canadian officers and French habitants. He observed the extraction of maple syrup, went canoeing, skating, and hunting, yet "never neglected going to Chapple on a Sunday." When business grew slack, they gave a free ox-roast on the frozen St. Lawrence, which drew great crowds to the town, and hence to the circus. The roof of their hastily built circus leaked (alas for the Cupids and rose-garlands which Durang had painted on the ceiling). Riding his horse Silver Heels in a wet ring, Durang was thrown, and although, in truest trouper tradition, he jumped up and danced a hornpipe to reassure the audience, his knee was badly wrenched. He was cured by "an old French Doctor Lady" whose skill is attested by the fact that she had cured a woman of cancer of the breast by the application of a live toad.

To add to their income, Durang and Ricketts gave riding and dancing lessons, and broke horses for the Royal Canadians. In the spring of 1798, they left Montreal for Quebec where they performed successfully for two months, and came home in more luxury than they had enjoyed on their trip

north. After a few weeks in New York, they went to Philadelphia for the winter, where, with his Canadian earnings, Durang finally completed the house on South Street and settled his family there.

The reunited circus went in for big things this year. After the close comradeship of the Canadian tour, Mr. Ricketts entrusted Durang with large responsibilities. He and Mr. Spinacuta painted scenery for the *Battle of Trenton* into which they introduced a realistic mechanical snowstorm. The *Harvest Home, or the Reaper's Frolic* was several times produced, so were *Don Juan*, and *The Shepherd of the Alps*; with John B. Rowson, a new member of the company, he wrote a sketch *The Death of Miss McCrea*, which was well received. His triumph was *The Battle of the Kegs*, probably based on Francis Hopkinson's poem. His setting included "All the scenery of the Delaware, Front St. wharves, flat-men, corders, carters, citizens, etc." He himself took the part of Sir Wm. Erskine. From contemporary Philadelphia he turned his talents to ancient Babylon, and produced "a magnificent spectacle of the Siege of Gaza, Battle of Arbela and triumphal Entry of Alexander the Great into Babylon." The circus was closed for ten days to prepare this intimation of Hollywood.

The summer, we judge, was spent in the enjoyment of his new house and garden, but in the autumn of 1799, the Pantheon reopened with much its usual repertoire. It looked like just another season. On the night of December 17, 1799, just after Durang had finished his John Gilpin routine, and was dressing for the part of Don Juan (traditionally a theatrical hoodoo) Ricketts' circus burned to the ground. Horses, wardrobe, and props were saved, but the handsome building was a total loss.

It was Durang who, in this crisis of their fortunes, thought of his birthplace as a possible refuge. Lancaster was at this time the capital of Pennsylvania. Assembly was in session, and the leaders of the State were there, but no theatrical company had sought to reap the possible harvest. While Mr. Ricketts sought desperately to do what he could to meet his responsibilities, Durang gathered the most faithful members of the corps, arranged an entertainment suited to the possibilities of the situation, hurried to Lancaster to engage the ball-room of the White Horse tavern on East King Street, which he set up as a make-shift theatre, and got out handbills for the opening on January 2, 1800. Such enterprise, in so brief a time after the disaster, deserved a better success.

The Lancaster County Historical Society has a copy of the handbill. It is headed "BY DESIRE OF GOVERNOR McKEAN who means to honor the Theatre with his presence this evening" and goes on to say that Mr. Rowson and Company will present "the greatest variety of amusements that have ever been presented in this town . . . pantomime, singing, hornpipe dancing, tumbling, speaking, etc. etc. And in particular an Indian war and scalp dance by Mr. F. Ricketts and Mr. J. Durang."

The reason the company was billed under Mr. Rowson's name was that Durang did not intend to stay with them. He performed only two nights and returned to Philadelphia. "I saw them on a fair way to go on, and told them it rested on their own conduct to succeed." Perhaps he forgot that there were still Quakers in the Assembly. The venture was a failure, and Ricketts had to send money which he could ill spare, to bring his costumes and scenery back to the city.

The rest of the year 1800 was a sort of hand-to-mouth

affair. In the summer, Durang and Rowson pooled their capital and rented the old Southwark Theatre, where they kept what was left of Ricketts' company from starvation for two more months. Durang himself, as usual, came out fairly well. "On the night of my benefit I flew from the gallery to the back part of the stage through a bust of fireworks, bringing in \$300." (How we all wish he had explained this Daedalean episode!)

He needed the money. His son Augustus was born that year. The South Street house, although finished, demanded all the little unexpected extras that new houses always need. While he was out of town, someone stole his wood, apparently with the connivance of his watch-dog. He gave riding and dancing lessons, and struggled along as he could, but that reserve in the bank was dwindling.

For the season of 1800-1801, Ricketts, having got what he could from the wreck, took command of his company again, and played in an old circus building in Baltimore. In the summer he took them on a "circumference tour" of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and back by Alexandria, and Georgetown. It was not much of a success. Disheartened and impoverished, Ricketts, returning to Philadelphia, "had no choice but to hire the ruins of that once elegant circus build by Mr. Lelson at Prune and Fifth Sts." This building had stood unused since the night, some years before, when its roof had collapsed under a heavy snow, ruining the French showman, as the fire had ruined Ricketts. The boxes and stage were still covered, and Ricketts thought perhaps he could get along in the roofless ring. Durang's diagnosis of their failure is not the discomfort of an open-air theatre in winter, but the lack of a ceiling to reflect the lamplight, the ring being thus dim and gloomy and visibility poor.

"We worried along for a few weeks" and then Ricketts gave up. Durang refused to join him in a tour of the West Indies, which was just as well, for after capture by French privateers on the high seas, a forced sale at Guadeloupe, a brief success, and final failure, Ricketts started for England and was lost at sea—a sad fate for an "equestrian hero."

"Meanwhile," says Durang, "I was bequeathed to Ruminant for myself Some new Employment." He bought an elegant bay horse, named him "Cornplanter" in memory of the most famous of Mr. Ricketts' trick horses—he probably felt the public would remember the name—and taught him the original Cornplanter's tricks. Undeterred by the preceding autumn's experience, he rented the roofless circus, himself, and in the spring of 1802, opened with a small company. One of the spectacles he had planned was a ride on the new Cornplanter, dressed in a full suit of armor, with a fountain of fireworks going off from the top of his helmet. On the first night, the half-trained horse took fright, jumped over three benches in the pit, and threw Durang over the orchestra on to the stage. No one was hurt, but Durang remarks wearily, "I found I did not get paid for my trouble in this scheme."

In July, he and his company joined the ventriloquist and magician, Mr. Rannie, for an upstate tour. They were in Lancaster early in the month, where it was announced that they would perform *The Valiant Soldier* and the *Ancient Maid* and that "Mr. Durang invites particularly all those young ladies and gentlemen who are lovers of the fashionable modes of dancing, as he means to give a general display of the steps and movements used at the assemblies both in Europe and America."

In the fall his ruminations led him to a settled conclusion.

There were too many uncertainties in his present career. What he needed was steady employment, with a settled and successful company. He went to call on Mr. Wignall at the Chestnut Street Theatre. The two men had worked together harmoniously in the Old American Company, and although Durang had remained loyal to Mr. Hallam, when the other seceded, there seemed no reason now why he should not be well received. It was with hurt astonishment, then, that he found himself turned away with a brusque refusal. Another man would have accepted it bitterly and gone to his ruin. Durang, after a sleepless night, went back, with quiet common sense to ask why. This time the reason came out. It was quite simple. Wignall supposed that, after the large salaries of the circus, Durang would not be willing to accept the minor roles and small salaries that he could offer him. Durang replied that "as that was done away with, I should agree to conform to the limits and Rules of his arrangement, be what it would." On these terms they quickly agreed. "I Relyd on my own conduct to make it a permanency." It was permanent for almost twenty years.

Here most of the histories take leave of him as if he had entered a home for decrepit actors, and abandoned his career forever. To Durang, as to me, it seemed that his most important work was done in the years ahead. True, of course, that in Chestnut Street his place was much the same as it had been with the Old American Company and even less important as he was older, and less of a novelty. For the first few years, he confined himself to building up his private fortune. On free days (the company performed only three times a week) he helped the dancing master, Mr. Francis, a fellow member of the company, with his academy at Harmony Hall. "He told me he would give me a suit of clothes for my labour . . . at the end of the year he gave me a check on the bank for one hundred Dollars." The following winter he was taken into an equal partnership which lasted for twelve years. His basic living needs were now provided, although at least three daughters were born to him in the next few years. Stage and dancing school provided an education for the whole family, while Mr. Reinagle kept a friendly eye on their musical instruction.

A new source of income became available as soon as the young Durangs were ready for the stage. In 1803, his two sons, Charles and Ferdinand, aged 9 and 7, appeared on the Chestnut Street stage in "a pigmy pantomime," *Harlequin prisoner, or the Genii of the Rocks*, Ferdinand as Pantaloon, and Charles as Harlequin, "with original attitudes and a leap."

From the beginning of his association with the Chestnut Street Company, Durang seems to have reserved his summers for his own ventures. He seldom went on tour with his fellow actors, although he now and then spent a few weeks with them in Baltimore, where he had good friends. He liked staying with his former landlady, and visiting with her neighbors, the Coles. In the summer of 1803, he was again in Lancaster for a short time, with a Mr. Bromley, and a "great wire dancer." Mr. Bromley paid him thirty dollars for the trip, and left him to do all the work, while the wire dancer lay in bed, and the manager gambled away free tickets, playing cards in the room below. He went back to Philadelphia in disgust, but he was beginning more and more to understand the possibilities of the unreachd territory of his native country.

The career of the Durang children continued to expand. Charles Durang was regularly on the bills, Ferdinand less

requently. In January 1804, John and Charles were both in the ballet of the "first American melodrama," *Tale of Mystery* by Holcroft. In the pantomime of *Cinderella*, January 1806, Charles, Ferdinand, and Augustus (aged 6) figured as Cupids. At the end of the same year, the Park Theatre in New York announced, "From the Philadelphia Company, for two nights only, Master Durang as Tom Thumb." The idea of a family company was beginning to shape itself in Durang's mind. He bought a frame house on a lot adjoining his own, where he spent his free hours in painting scenery designed for use on a small stage, and began rehearsing his family, including his wife and his younger brother, in a repertoire selected from old, and well proven successes. He knew, of course, that for leading roles, he would have to hire professionals (a fact that caused his chief difficulties in the years to come) but he drilled the others so that they were able to step into any minor roles at a moment's notice.

For his first venture, in the summer of 1807, he chose to stay very close to home. The old Southwark Theatre had stood empty now for years. Lewis Hallam had never obtained a clear title to it, and now, in his old age could not sell it to relieve his needs. Charles Durang reports, "it leaked a good deal and was hardly ever dry," but such as it was, Mr. Hallam allowed his old friend to use it rent free. Thus with no expense for rent, housing, and little for personnel, the profits of the summer were almost clear. His programs must have required very little rehearsal. *The Independence of America; Auld Robin Grey; Two Philosophers; The Caledonian Frolic; Death of Captain Cook.* He allowed himself one luxury, that of acting his favorite part, Petruchio—not of course, in the full length play, put in Garrick's shortened *Katharine and Petruchio*. The children appeared in a pantomime all their own: *The Lilliputian Frolic*; they also did a "Garland Dance"; and Augustus, the family clown, gave a humorous recitation, "Giles Scroggins' Ghost." At the end of the season, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Hallam appeared several times as guest stars. It was their farewell to the theatre. Mr. Hallam died the following year.

Having proved the abilities of his little company by this

trial summer, Durang was ready for the really important work of his career. With the usual provincialism of the city-dweller, most of the historians dismiss his next eight summers, with a remark about "an occasional summer tour," as if any theatre away from the seaboard were unworthy of mention. Not so Durang. The patient precision with which he details these tours, proves how important he thought them. Not only was he for the first time completely on his own, and making a success of it, but he was very conscious that he was doing a specific service to his own profession and his own people. He was conscious that for the first time the Dutch country was enjoying the theatre. He was equally conscious that he was removing a deep prejudice against acting and actors, by presenting an example of well-regulated family life, meticulous honesty, and personal integrity. In spite of his troubles with insolent inn-keepers, drunken musicians, and temperamental leading ladies, it is evident in every line that he was utterly happy in those summers.

In the cities his ineradicable accent had been a life-long handicap. In Lancaster, York, and Frederick, it was an asset. His native origin was good advertising material. His knowledge of the locale enabled him to throw in those local allusions and jests so delightful to the small town audience. He made more and more use of German on the stage. Frequently he acted his own part entirely in German, giving the cues in English. He wrote, "This part of the Country or neighbourhood, is generally inhabited by a Sect of people called Manistes [Mennonites] or Dunkerds they are Germans, the aged men wear their beards very long and clothes very plain and generally homespun of their own manufacturing. I am the only person that ever succeeded in performing among them which was in consequence of my speaking the German language . . . I pleased them very much, and paid me well for my trouble."

One gains an excellent picture of his methods. After several years of trusting to local haulers, he had his own van built in Hanover, canvas-covered, and drawn by two horses. A comfortable two horse coach carried his family, and he himself rode the horse "Cornplanter." Baggage

people and Lawyers of Harrisburg - I set off from this place. Leaving the town, people well gratified with the invitation to visit them again - This part of the Country or neighbourhood - is generally inhabited by a Sect of people called Manistes, or Dunkerds. They are German, the aged men, wear their beard, very long and clothes very plain and generally home spun of their own manufacturing - I am the only person that ever succeeded in performing among them, which was in consequence of my speaking the German Language - I spoke the words of the Character, I performed in German, and sometimes I would introduce a German song together with Dancing Ballets, pantomimes - feats on the Rope - and Wire - Transparencies, ship fights &c. - I pleased them very much, and paid me well for my trouble =

Page from the Durang manuscript

—Courtesy of the York County Historical Society

was sent on a day ahead, then with the coach he overtook it, passed it on the road, and went on to the next town to make his arrangements. At the end of each tour, he left the van and contents in storage, and the next season played his circuit in reverse, thus saving transportation.

He rented whatever large room was available, preferring the ball room of an inn, but accepting a storeroom, brew house or anything adaptable. With the help of local carpenters, he turned this into a theatre, and set up his scenery—a few flats, a thing he called a “frontispiece,” and a green baise curtain. He carried along the machinery for the old “Ombres Chinoises,” and for some of his favorite pantomimes. Knowing his actors, he arranged that the whole repertoire should be well-rehearsed at the beginning of the season while the whole company was fresh and enthusiastic. Then there was no danger of the weariness and lethargy of late summer causing slipshod performances.

In each town that had a newspaper, he advertised. In towns like Lancaster and Reading, which had several papers in both languages, he was careful to choose an English Federalist and a German Republican paper, or vice versa, thus pleasing all parties and all races. He himself attributes the greatest share of his success as follows: “The whole fabric of my scheme was Build on the foundation of my own Private conduct, to make myself to be Respected by the rich and poor—I observed a Reserve of Industry and Sobriety—a compliant address conformed with the manners and rules of the family I lived with and inhabitants—found no fault tho it was sometimes not so good as I had been accustomed to. I paid my way. I secured the love and commerce of the people who wer allways glad to see me again with a cheering welcome—no man need to risk on a country Scheme unless he will keep within the Strict bounds of my plan.”

The Lancaster *Journal* of July 22, 1808, carries the first advertisement of his eight summers of touring: “THEATRE at Mr. Rohrer’s spacious ball room, sign of the King of Prussia. On Friday Evening 22d July, will be presented a grand entertainment by Mr. Durang and Co. (the particulars explained in the handbill) also on Saturday Evening 23d July an entertainment got up for the occassion entitled Harvest Frolic, a Burletta, Dialog, Pantomime and German Story on the poetical epistle called Stoffle Rilps and Annalis or the Seu Shwamm Wedding. Mr. Durang of the New Theatre, Philadelphia, and a native of Lancaster, most respectfully returns his thanks to the Ladies and Gentlemen of Lancaster and vicinity who have honored him on other occasions and entertains a high sense of gratitude for the distinguished patronage his endeavors to please have received. He will make it his study for the short time he will be in Lancaster to bring forward on each evening a various and approved selection of comedys in singing, speaking, and a variety of admirable and fashionable dances, ballads, pantomimes, machinery and transparencies.”

To the localist, the most interesting item on this program, is the “German Story.” No expert on Pennsylvania Dutch literature has been able to identify it, and it may have been original.* The names Stoffle (Christophel) Rilps and Annalis (Anna Liese), are common locally. *Seu Schwamm* (Pigs’ Wallow) was the local name for the neighboring town of New Holland, for many generations.

From Lancaster, on that first tour, he went to Harrisburg, where in addition to theatrical performances, he gave a display of fireworks from a boat on the Susquehanna. He

* See Dr. Shoemaker’s article on Stoffle Rilps and Anna Lis in another section of this issue of the Dutchman.

then visited Lebanon, Reading, Norristown, and returned to Philadelphia. The last two towns cannot have been profitable, for he never revisited them. In 1809, he began his summer with a brief engagement at the Columbia Garden in Baltimore, but his heart was in the provinces, for on his ride from Philadelphia to Baltimore he occupied his trip by memorizing the whole of *Richard III* in German, and later in the season performed it in Hanover. On June 20, the *Maryland Gazette* announced his opening of a “new theatre” in Frederick, Md., at Mr. Stalling’s “Sign of the Spread Eagle” and from there he worked north to Hanover, York, Harrisburg, and Lancaster. His 1810 itinerary is a little vague, but seems to have been Lancaster—Harrisburg—Carlisle—Hanover, by way of York Springs—Frederick and Hagerstown—his first crossing of the mountains.

The Summer of 1811 was perhaps his most successful. After two weeks at the Pantheon in Baltimore, where he added to his company “by her own will and her mother’s wish and entreaties” a Miss Mullins, for whose theatrical training he took great credit to himself, he went to Lancaster where he opened the “Lancaster Theatre” at the Fountain Inn in South Queen Street. Here he played for more than a month, with a large cast, and a varied repertoire. In *Modern Antiques*, on July 15, the cast included Mr. C. Durang, and Mr. P. Durang (obviously the brother whom Durang never names). On July 19, *She Stoops to Conquer* (“the first time this comedy has been given to a Lancaster audience”) had: Mr. C. Durang, Mr. F. Durang, Mr. Durang, Master A. Durang, and Miss Durang. As his oldest daughter was seven we deduce that a sister was along this year, unless, indeed, “Miss” should be read “Mrs.” After Lancaster came a week in York, two weeks in Hanover, then, after an upset in a brook which nearly ruined his scenery and costumes, he finished the season in Frederick.

The season of 1812 was a bad one. Mr. Blisset (an old member of the Chestnut Street Company) and his wife were with him. Mrs. Blisset has the distinction of being the only woman of whom Durang ever spoke ill, “the most vain mischievous and artful woman who assumed the name of actress . . . very disagreeable to the whole company, and never certain of one night’s performance till the night was accomplished.” Another new member was Ferdinand’s young wife. Charles, not yet married, was a valued mainstay, as he was of the Philadelphia Theatre. He had, this year, made his New York debut.

Picking up their baggage in Frederick, they went to Hagerstown, then up the Cumberland Valley to Chambersburg, Shippensburg, Carlisle, and Harrisburg. They had sent advance publicity to Lancaster, an unusual expense, which was not justified. The engagement was never filled. On September 12, 1812, Mrs. Durang died in Harrisburg.† “I must speak in the highest terms of the Ladies and Gentlemen and Citizens in general of Harrisburg. They have my heart’s thanks for the politeness they have done me on this occasion.” Leaving his baggage in Harrisburg he closed the season, and went home to Philadelphia.

The tour of 1813 was uneventful: Harrisburg—Lancaster—York—Hanover—Gettysburg (for the first time) and Petersburg (now Littlestown), back to Hanover, to store the baggage, and home by way of Baltimore. In 1814, he opened with a season of six weeks (20 performances) in Lancaster. Besides his sons, daughters, and daughters-in-law, he had with him Mr. and Mrs. Blisset (in spite of his

† Her burial is recorded in Salem Reformed Church, although the pastor mistook the initial and made it Mrs. C. Durang.

former experience), Mr. Caulfield, Miss White, Mr. Heneman, and Mr. George and Edward Cole. These were apparently the Coles he had mentioned earlier as good neighbors in Baltimore. On July 2, 1814, there is recorded in the marriage records of First Reformed Church, Lancaster, "John Durang, witwer von Philadelphia und Elisabeth Kohl, witwin von Baltimore." This autumnal romance seems to have made so little impression on the family, that neither he nor his son ever mentions it. The very elaborate celebration of the Fourth of July at the "Lancaster Theater" may have been, in part, a wedding celebration. The thirteen windows of the theatre were illuminated with transparencies after the manner of Washington's inaugural, so long ago. "I got up for the first time, *Perry's Victory* performed here during the Harvest frolic." This was really timely. The War of 1812 had only just begun to seem real to the Americans. With the British fleet in the Chesapeake, it must have been comforting to be reminded, dramatically, of the preceding year's greatest victory.

The war became personal to Durang, next month, when, shortly after his opening in Harrisburg, Charles and Ferdinand Durang and George Cole, his new stepson, all enlisted in Captain Thomas Walker's Company, 1st Regiment, 1st Brigade, Pennsylvania Militia.* This effectively ended the summer tour. Who could wish to be amused, anyhow? Washington was burned, Bladensburg had been fought. Nobody dreamed that Baltimore could hold out. What was to keep the enemy from marching right out the York road, or from landing on the left bank, and coming straight on to Lancaster?

Durang went along with the Blues to York, where he joined the civilians in making cartridges at the courthouse, while his boys drilled briefly at the edge of town. As he worked, however, he surveyed the crowds with a showman's eye, and could not allow so large a potential audience to go to waste. When the boys marched off (too late to defend Baltimore which had quite adequately defended itself) Durang mounted the steps of Mr. Witts' Hotel, where he usually played, and set off an exhibition of fireworks. When the astonished yokels gathered to gape, they were invited in to an impromptu performance which paid off quite well. It is not unlikely that Durang's rockets were bursting over York, at about the time that the British rockets were shedding their red glare over Fort McHenry.

It is not the duty of this chronicler to enter the vexed question of the singing of the Star Spangled Banner. It is one of those questions that will cause historians to squabble for many years. No one seems to deny, however, that Ferdinand Durang was the first person to sing it in public, with Charles leading the chorus. Only the details are in question, and they largely because of late misquotations of Charles Durang's first description of the event. We may be sure that John Durang who followed his sons to Baltimore as soon as it was safe to do so was instrumental in arranging for Ferdinand's later and more profitable performances of the new anthem. For some odd reason, he does not mention it, although on the Fourth of July 1815, when his company was in Harrisburg, he mentions that "The Star Spangled Banner was sung in many companies."

His tour of 1815 confined itself to the Cumberland Valley, opening in Harrisburg, and closing in Chambersburg. In 1816, he opened in Chambersburg and played there for a full month. One gathers from all his accounts of this place that he had some thought of settling there permanently.

*Penna. Archives, 2: 12: 494.

An old schoolmate from York was an important business man of the place and had provided him with theatrical quarters on each of his visits. He now offered to give him a lot on which to build a permanent theatre. He was tired of traveling. Little annoyances of the road seemed much larger to him than they used to. One guesses that his new wife may have been the reason for his leaving an inn where his family were required to sit at table with some professional gamblers. It might not have been a bad idea to try a permanent thing, with dancing school and riding school on the side.

He did not attempt it, however. He went on to Hagerstown, and then home by Baltimore, and "This was my Last Season of my Entering in any more Country Schemes, by this time I was well weary of the Business." I have a notion that one or both of his sons may have taken a company on tour in later years. Several reputable historians report a Durang company on the road in 1821, and Scharf's *History of Western Maryland* has them in Hagerstown as late as 1825. Without John Durang and his hornpipes, however, it would not have been the same.

At home in Philadelphia, Durang lived an uneventful life. He still had his dancing school. He still appeared in the Chestnut Street Theatre. The last role in which he is reported is that of Don Guzman in *Love among the Roses*, in 1819. He knew and loved all the personnel of the company: actors, managers, musicians, stage-carpenters, wardrobe women, and janitors. He names and characterizes them all. He was only fifty, but he was a worn old man. Cardiac asthma was bothering him. He probably saw from his window the burning of the old Southwark Theatre, in 1821. His children were well established. Charles, a successful actor and fashionable dancing master, had married Mary White, companion of the 1814 tour. Augustus had been lost at sea, but he was saved the sorrow of Ferdinand's death of tuberculosis in New York in 1832. In January 1822, his daughters Charlotte and Juliet made their debut at the Park Theatre in New York, where they had a successful season, playing Red Riding Hood and Lubin in the pantomime of *Red Riding Hood*. He may have sighed with satisfaction, and settled to a last long rest.

In the back of the little book of memoirs, Charles Durang copied an item from the diary of William Warren, manager of the Chestnut Street Theatre: "Sunday (Palm Sunday) March 31st, 1822 attended the funeral of John Durang who died 3 days since. He was in our theatre 20 years. Buried in the Catholic Ground between 4th and 5th, Spruce and Pine Sts."

Was John Durang a significant figure in the history of the American theatre? Certainly not. He was not even, strictly speaking, the first native born actor. That title belongs to Samuel Greville, who acted for a season, with the American Company a year before Durang was born. Even the title "actor" could be debated. He was really, as Miss Moore's article correctly describes him, "The First American Dancer." To me it seems he made his greatest contribution in those eight happy summers, when he took the theatre to his own people. It cannot be too often emphasized that the majority of Americans do not live on the eastern seaboard. Durang prepared a road which was followed by the Jeffersons, by Charlotte Cushman, Fanny Kemble, Adelina Patti, the elder Booth, and so on down to the Barrymores. He contributed to the enrichment of life in that interior America which is perhaps the truest America of all.

STOFFLE RILBPS' EPISTLE

By ALFRED L. SHOEMAKER

Literary historians of German-American literature have steered clear of the ever-popular Kurt M. Stein "Gemixte Pickles" type of poetry, commonly called macaronic verse.

To Lancaster-born John Durang belongs the credit for introducing theatre audiences in America to this kind of entertainment. It was through *Stoffle Rilbps' Epistle to Anna Lis*, an anonymous Pennsylvania Dutch-English poem, which was written at *Seu Schwam* (the early dialect name of New Holland) on May 30, 1801, and printed in the June 6, 1801, issue of the *Lancaster Journal*.

The Rilbps "Epistle" hit the press just a couple of days before the annual two-day Spring Fair in Lancaster. It must have met with immediate popularity, for in the *York Recorder* of June 24, 1801, appeared a Dutch-English poem, Anna Lis' rejoinder to Stoffle Rilbps. This was promptly reprinted in the *Journal* of July 4.

How Durang got hold of the *Stoffle Rilbps Seu Schwam* "Epistle" and when and where he first added it to his program, we shall, no doubt, never know. From Miss Elizabeth Kieffer's article in this issue of the *Dutchman*, we learn that Durang used *Stoffle Rilbps' Epistle* as early as 1808 in his theatrical productions in the Dutch country. The only hope of establishing when, between 1801 and 1808, Durang first used macaronic poetry is through uncovering possible playbills or newspaper advertisements of this period.

STOFFLE RILBPS' EPISTLE TO ANNA LIS

(From the *Lancaster Journal* of June 6, 1801)

*Do mine schweetheart Anna Lis,
Dose lofeing lines I here haf pend;
Mit all mine heart I hand you dis—
'Bout fashions, dings unt all I send.*

*Wen lasht upon de down I be,
I sees de womens small unt big,
Mit gurtain's dat de cannot see;
Und Schneider's Katy wears a wig.*

*Like on one site fon Yawkups schale,
Mit straw upon dere heds de looks,
Mit silk und rippons green und gale,
De dofs apout like fader's fux.*

*Deres plack und vite, unt prown you know,
De dies dere heds apout you see;
Wat makes de hare so shord pelow?
Did louses pite dem, or de flea?*

*Up high pefore some look so fool,
All shiny over, round mit silk,
Gan it pe doe, gan it pe wool?
Or gan de pe so schwelt mit milk?*

*Wen you dinks pehint you go,
De bulls dere flounces dight aroud,
Do show how burdy dings will grow,
Und keep dere dales from off de ground.*

*O Anna Lis I lofes you well,
You wears no shawl to hite you so,
You daubs no baints, I will you dell,
You rubs no bowders I'll lad you no.*

*Und Anna Lis you shtink so sweet,
You is all over vite und ret:
You wears no glances on your feet,
Nor huddlewish upon your het.*

*Hensy marries Eafa grate,
Und Lisbet has got too a man;
Now mine lofe gum unt pe not blate,
Und make mine vife so soon you gan.*

*Den Schpringers, hoopsesaws und sich,
At Stoffelies we'll gick und shump,
You shall look gunning like a witch,
Unt I'll look wisdom like a bump.*

Seu Schwam, May 30, 1801

Anna Lis to Stoffle Rilbps; In answer to his Epistle, which appeared in the *Lancaster Journal*, of the 6th instant.

(From the *York Recorder* of June 24, 1801)

*I say von ding now Stoffle Rilb[ps],
For wen you go upon de down,
For vat you dinks on ladies' silks,
Und shneaks a look pelow her gown.*

*Mit schtraw unt rippons on dere het,
For vat you poaks your nose pefore;
Oh! Anna Lis is not so blate,
De vite unt ret schpots come no more.*

*For vat you dinks 'dis vool or dow,
Who schwells deir breaschts so high abofe;
Oh! Stoffle Rilbps, why talks you so,
To make dem grow is vat de lofe.*

*But dink not from dem dings so rount,
But shtay by me in Fader's wiss,
Unt wen I shleeps upon de ground,
Den you may dink on Anna Lis.*

*I bowders not, why dont you zee,
I baints me not behint or fore,
Und wen a wig you fints on me,
Den dink of Anna Lis no more.*

*You say, wat makes so short der hare,
Wile oder dings so soon can grow,
Why ax de men who made dem bare,
May be de vant it for a queue.*

*I wears no shade upon my face,
My breascht unt feet see too are bare;
Dem leave to gentlemans to place,
De ladies schwelling breaschts unt hare.*

*But Gutlip says you wish to zee
Dere flouncing rippons tuck'd pefore;
Oh! Stoffle wish such dings for me,
Unt Lis shall ax for noding more.*

*Unt van upon de down you rite,
Unt in de shtreet such ladies fint,
Den van de pull dere flounce so dight,
Oh! look not, Stoffle, so pehint.*

The First Singing of Our National Anthem

By JOHN LOWRY RUTH

LATE in 1766, there came to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, as emigrants from Alsace, Jacob Durang and his wife, Joann Catherine Arter. On January 6, 1768, a son, John Durang, was born to this couple in Lancaster. Several months after the birth of this son the family moved to York, Pennsylvania, where the elder Durang purchased a house and lot of ground on High Street (Market Street), near the court house. In later years this was the site of the "Sign of the White Horse," a tavern. Now it is the site of the York County National Bank.

John Durang is the first native American to win widespread recognition as a professional dancer. He married Mary McEwen in 1787. The Durangs had seven children of whom there is definite record.

Ferdinand Durang and Charles Durang were two of these children. In the War of 1812, they enlisted in the Company of Captain Thomas Walker, attached to the First Regiment of Pennsylvania Militia (Pennsylvania Blues) and were encamped at Fell's Point during the bombardment of Fort McHenry.

On September 14, 1814, Francis Scott Key, upon his return to Baltimore after having been detained aboard a British

vessel during the bombardment, gave the manuscript of "Star Spangled Banner" to Benjamin Edes, printer, for publication. The same evening it appeared on the streets of Baltimore.

Ferdinand and Charles Durang acquired copies of this printing. They were actors and musicians. Their trunk of belongings was stored at Tom Bennett's Tavern, near the Holliday Street Theatre.

Together, they fitted the words of Francis Scott Key to an old English musical composition, "To Anacreon in Heaven." Ferdinand Durang played the air on his flute and Charles Durang sang the words. This was heard in the downstairs of the Tavern and the spirit of the words was soon caught by those inside the small frame building.

Three nights later, in Holliday Street Theatre, the audience clamored that the "Star Spangled Banner" should be sung from the stage. The management and the Durangs accommodated the public; and thus was our National Anthem born and produced to be many years later (1931) woven into our national fabric by the Congress of the United States of America.

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH PIONEERS

By DR. FRIEDRICH KREBS

Palatine State Archives, Speyer, Germany

THE names of the following emigrants were culled from the collections of the State Archives of Coblenz. The names have been checked against Hinke's *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*.

From Niederbrombach (Kreis Birkenfeld)

1. PONTIUS, JOHANN DAVID, born March 3, 1738, and JOHANN PHILIPP, sons of Andreas Pontius of Niederbrombach and his wife Anna Marie. Both brothers "emigrated to America around 1767-68." [David Pontzius, Pennsylvania Packet, Oct. 3, 1768.]

2. APEL, JONAS of Niederbrombach went to America in 1768 after he had purchased freedom from serfdom. His wife and three children at first remained in Germany but followed in 1771. [Jonas Apel, Pennsylvania Packet, Oct. 3, 1768.]

From Birkenfeld

3. WART, BERNHARD, born Feb. 21, 1718 in Birkenfeld, tailor. "Is said to have gone to America in or about 1738." [Bern Warth, Loyal Judith, Sept. 3, 1739.]

From Ellenberg (Kreis Birkenfeld)

4. BRENER, PETER from Ellenberg emigrated in the year 1768 as a widower with his children to America and nothing was ever heard from him. [Frantz Peter Brenner, Pennsylvania Packet, Oct. 3, 1768.]

5. MAUS, GEORG JACOB and FRANZ CARL from Ellenberg set out for America around 1767. [Jacob Maus, Pennsylvania Packet, Oct. 10, 1768.]

From Sohren (Landkreis Zell, Mosel)

6. ALBERTHAL, FRANZ NICLAUS and JOHANN NICLAUS, sons of Balthasar Alberthal and his wife Elisabeth Catharina, emigrated to New England, the former around 1765 and the

latter around 1768. Since they left without manumission their property was seized and later also their inheritance, which after taxes was used for the Catholic church, for the poor, and the rest divided among relatives. [Nickellas Alberthal, Tryal, Dec. 12, 1764 and Johann Nickel Alberthal, Sally, Oct. 5, 1767. Franz Nikolaus Alberthal, farmer, and Johann Nicklaus Alberthal, tailor, according to documentation, lived in Hanover Township, Lancaster County.]

From Bockenau (Kreis Kreuznach)

7. GEIB, CONRAD from Bockenau left with his wife and three children for the new land. [Johann Conrad Geib, Two Brothers, Oct. 13, 1747.]

Kreuznach Official Records 1751.

From Weinsheim (Kreis Kreuznach)

8. RUPPERTER, JOHANN LEONHARD from Weinsheim in 1752 applied for manumission from Pennsylvania where he married; granted after payment of fees in 1754. [Leonhard Ruppert, Sandwich, Nov. 30, 1750.]

From Ruedesheim (Kreis Kreuznach)

9. SUESS, CYRIACUS from Ruedesheim, according to Kreuznach official records of 1751, left for the New World.

From Buechenbeuren (Landkreis Zell, Mosel)

10. MAEURER, PHILIPP (JACOB) from Buechenbeuren around 1750 left as a "Schuhknecht" for the New World. [Phielib Jacob Maurer, Patience, Aug. 11, 1750.]

From Engelstadt (Kreis Bingen)

11. GRAFFERT, CHRISTOPH, PHILIPP PETER and JOHANN GERHARD, sons of Philipp Peter Graffert and his wife Anna Eva Finkenauer from Engelstadt left for the New World around 1749. [Christoffel Graffert, Loyal Judith, Sept. 2, 1743, and Philipp Peter Graffert, Phoenix, Oct. 20, 1744.]

