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Authors

Don Yoder, Yvonne J. Milspaw, Sara L. Matthews, Mark Workman, George A. Boeck, and Jo Ann Early

Pennsylvania FOLKLIFE



SUMMER 1978



Die Ocht Yearlich
Pennsylvanisch Deitsch
Sunntag Schule
on da Huffa Karrich
18 Moi - 1975
on holuer-drei Nommidaags.

The Dialect Church Service

Contributors to this Issue

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Pennsylvania **FOLKLIFE**



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(Inside front cover)

COVER:

Title page of program of a Pennsylvania German dialect Sunday School held at Huff's Church in Berks County, May 18, 1975. The artwork is by Clarence G. Reitnauer of Huff's Church.

The Dialect Church Service in the Pennsylvania German Culture

By Don Yoder

1.

The linguistic history of the Pennsylvania Germans is complex. The student dealing with the culture has to be competent in three languages — High German, which was the cultural language in the earlier stages of the culture's development; English — the cultural language today; and Pennsylvania German or "Pennsylvania Dutch" dialect — the language of everyday communication in family and neighborhood¹. If we add to this High German as influenced by dialect, and English as influenced by dialect, we get a total of five rather than three "languages" which have been in use in varying combinations with each other since the culture first began to shape up in the colonial period².

The stages of linguistic development parallel the acculturation of the German and Swiss settlers of the 17th and 18th Century and the continuing acculturation, Americanization, or secularization of their descendants to the present. As is the case with all ethnic groups with a non-English language, linguistic acculturation is forwarded or slowed by the group's sense of ethnic identity in relation to the dominant culture. In other studies I have traced the development of the ethnic self-consciousness of the Pennsylvania German community³. In this paper I wish to concentrate on the linguistic developments, in particular the very recent development of dialect services in the Pennsylvania German churches.

In my earlier studies I have analyzed three trends in Pennsylvania German linguistic history: Germanizing, Americanizing (radical anglicizing), and dialectizing. The Germanizing and Americanizing trends developed in the 18th Century and continued into the 19th Century, when in the public aspects of the culture English

¹For the linguistic history of the Pennsylvania Germans, see Don Yoder, "The Pennsylvania Germans: A Preliminary Reading List," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, XXI:2 (Winter 1971-1972), 5-7. For trilingualism, see J. William Frey, "Amish Triple-Talk," *American Speech*, XX:2 (1945), 85-98.

²Ralph C. Wood, "Pennsylvania High German," *Germanic Review*, XX (1945), 299-314.

³Don Yoder, "Akkulturationsprobleme deutscher Auswanderer in Nordamerika," in Günter Wiegmann, ed., *Kultureller Wandel im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1973): pp. 184-203; and Don Yoder, "Pennsylvania German Folklore Research: A Historical Analysis," in Glenn G. Gilbert, ed., *The German Language in America* (Austin, Texas, 1971), pp. 70-105, 148-163.



Dialect Sunday School Program, Huff's Church, 1974.

won out over German. The institutions involved in the struggle were church, school, and family. One by one these institutions gave up High German, leaving English and dialect surviving together in the 20th Century. The school dropped German first, in the mid-19th Century when the free public or state schools replaced the German-language parochial schools of the churches and sects⁴. The churches continued German services at a dwindling schedule (3 services German, 1 English per month in the earlier period to 3 services English and one German service per month

⁴Clyde S. Stine, "The Pennsylvania Germans and the School," in Ralph Wood, ed., *The Pennsylvania Germans* (Princeton, N.J., 1942), pp. 103-127.

in the later era)⁵. The year 1935 is the approximate cutoff date for the dropping of all German services in the Pennsylvania German rural churches, with the exception of the sects — Old Order Amish and Old Order Mennonites — which still continue to use a High German which has been described as “Pennsylvania High German” — somewhere midway between standard German and the dialect, although nearer to standard German⁶. In some cases after 1935 funerals and private communion were conducted in German at the request of individuals, but the public services of the Lutheran and Reformed (United) Churches, the largest church groups in the culture, were now English rather than German.

The language transition was a bitter and difficult one, with strong opinion ranged on either side. From 1806, when the first all-English Lutheran church was set up in Pennsylvania (St. John’s in Philadelphia), after a lengthy court case⁷, until the 1930’s, when the last German services were dropped in the rural congregations, countless discussions and arguments were held, and pamphleteering and journalizing carried on, over the “language question”. The arguments ran from the old folk cliché that “after all, God spoke German” (citing Genesis I in Luther’s version) to the pragmatic Americanizing stance that English was after all the national language and to continue German was a handicap to local progress.

2.

Pastor Helmuth of Philadelphia was the great “Germanizer” in the culture in the period from the Revolution of the War of 1812⁸. In his lengthy “Appeal

⁵See in particular, Heinz Kloss, “German-American Language Maintenance Efforts,” in Joshua A. Fishman, ed., *Language Loyalty in the United States: The Maintenance and Perpetuation of Non-English Mother Tongues by American Ethnic and Religious Groups* (The Hague, 1966), pp. 206-252. For a regional example, see Ira D. Landis, “The German-English Transition in Lancaster County,” *The American-German Review*, June 1945, 8-9, 27.

⁶As late as forty years ago the *1935 Schedule for Longswamp, Ziegel’s & Hill Church*, three rural Reformed churches in Lehigh and Berks Counties, Pennsylvania, listed German services for the Hill Church on January 6, February 3, March 3, March 31, German Communion on April 28, May 26, June 23, July 21, German Harvest Home Service on August 13, September 15, German Communion on October 13, November 10, and December 8. There was one English service a month at the Hill Church at this time. The Pastor was Donald M. C. Englert, now professor of Old Testament at the Lancaster Theological Seminary.

⁷See C. F. Huch, “Die deutsche Sprache in den deutschen Kirchen,” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Pionier-Vereins von Philadelphia*, Heft 20 (1911), 23-26; for the language quarrels in Philadelphia Lutheranism, see James Carson, *Trial of Frederick Eberle and Others* (Philadelphia, 1817). Eberle and associates were accused of “illegally conspiring together. . . to prevent the introduction of the English language into the service of St. Michael’s and Zion’s Churches”.

⁸Justus Heinrich Christian Helmuth (1745-1825) was a distinguished scholar, founder of the German department of the University of Pennsylvania, and front-ranking leader of American Lutheranism in the second, post-Muhlenberg generation. See the *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, 515-516.

to the Germans in America,” published in 1813, he predicts the cultural loss that would come when the culture shifts from German to English:

Your English-raised children now lose all the edification which they could have in the German worship service — the beautiful German prayers — the fine catechising — the many spiritual songs and hymns, with which our forefathers comforted themselves in necessity and at death, and where the English language is much too poor that one could ever translate them correctly; all the fundamental devotional books, which they can no longer read in their mother tongue; German seriousness in worship, which — say what one will — is encountered in no English church in such biblical purity, and so equally removed from all sensual fanaticism on the one hand and on the other from the ice-cold manner of a pure rationalist, as in a well-ordered German church.

Neither the Presbyterians with their sense of order, nor the Methodists with their “fire,” nor the Episcopalians are proper church homes for the Germans. His plea is to remain German, found German schools to perpetuate German culture here. Like other onesided Germanizers he indulged in romantic prophecy:

What would Philadelphia become in 40 years, if the Germans there remain German, if they keep their language and customs? It would not even take 40 years for Philadelphia to become a German city, as much as York and Lancaster are German counties. . . . And what would in this case become of all Pennsylvania and the upper part of Maryland in 40 or 50 years! An entirely German state, where the beautiful German language would commonly be spoken, as years ago in Germantown, even in the high state councils and in the courts⁹.

Ernst Ludwig Brauns, who had served Lutheran churches in Pennsylvania before 1820, returned to Germany and kept up a barrage of highly critical treatments of American-German culture from the Germanizing standpoint. The “anglicized Germans” or “Irish-Germans,” as he calls them, form a large and vocal party in the German churches, particularly in the cities. Their purpose is to “remove German from the churches and substitute English in them, since their ‘ladies’ and their children, who speak only English, don’t understand German anymore.” For this the parents were to blame, and he laments that American-Germans could not keep up German services as do those much older German congregations in Russia, Denmark, England, Turkey and elsewhere that Germans have settled. He is against the introduction of English

⁹“Zuruf an die Deutschen in Amerika,” *Evangelisches Magazin*, II (1813), 43-47, 65-71, 174-177, 193-197. For an analysis of Helmuth as Germanizer, see Heinz Kloss, *Um die Einigung des Deutschamerikanertums: Die Geschichte einer unvollendeten Volksgruppe* (Berlin, 1937), Ch. 5: “Die Helmuth-Bewegung”.

1935 Schedule

FOR

Longswamp, Ziegel's & Hill Church

All times are Standard Time, unless otherwise marked. (D. S. T.) Daylight Saving Time.

All services are in English, unless otherwise marked. (G) services in German.

- Jan. 6—Hill (G) 9.30 A. M.
- Jan. 13—Ziegel's, 10 A. M. Longswamp 2 P. M.
- Jan. 20—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Jan. 27—Longswamp, 10 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.
- Feb. 3—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- Feb. 10—Ziegel's, 10 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M.
- Feb. 17—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Feb. 24—Longswamp, 10 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.
- Mar. 3—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- Mar. 10—Ziegel's, 10 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M.
- Mar. 17—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Mar. 24—Longswamp, 10 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.
- Mar. 31—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- Apr. 7—Ziegel's, 10 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M.
- Apr. 14—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Apr. 21—(Easter) Longswamp, Communion, 9.30 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.
- Apr. 28—Hill, German Communion, 9.30 A. M.
- May 5—Ziegel's, Communion, 9.30 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M. (D. S. T.)
- May 12—Hill, English Communion, 9.30 A. M.
- May 19—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- May 26—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- June 2—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M., (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- June 9—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- June 16—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.), Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- June 23—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- June 30—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- July 7—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- July 14—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- July 21—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- July 28—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- Aug. 4—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Aug. 11—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- Aug. 13—Hill, Harvest Home, German, at 9.30 A. M. English at 7.30 P. M.
- Aug. 25—Longswamp, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, Harvest Home, 10 A. M.
- Sept. 1—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Sept. 8—Longswamp, Harvest Home, 9.30 A. M. (D. S. T.) Ziegel's, 10 A. M.
- Sept. 15—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- Sept. 22—Ziegel's, Communion, 9.30 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M. (D. S. T.)
- Sept. 29—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Oct. 6—Longswamp, Communion, 9.30 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.
- Oct. 13—Hill, German, Communion, 9.30 A. M.
- Oct. 20—Ziegel's, 10 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M.
- Oct. 27—Hill, English Communion, 9.30 A. M.
- Nov. 3—Longswamp, 10 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.
- Nov. 10—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- Nov. 17—Ziegel's, 10 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M.
- Nov. 24—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Dec. 1—Longswamp, 10 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.
- Dec. 8—Hill, (G), 9.30 A. M.
- Dec. 15—Ziegel's, 10 A. M. Longswamp, 2 P. M.
- Dec. 22—Hill, 9.30 A. M.
- Dec. 29—Longswamp, 10 A. M. Ziegel's, 2 P. M.

At Longswamp Church, Preparatory Services will be held Friday evening, 7.30, before Communion.

At Ziegel's Church, Preparatory Services will be held Saturday evening, 7.30, before Communion.

At Hill Church, Preparatory Service will be announced in due time.

All members and friends are cordially invited to these services.

DONALD M. C. ENGLERT,
Meristown, R. 1.

Telephone, Meristown 5-2

Preaching schedule for Longswamp Reformed Parish, Donald M. C. Englert, pastor, 1935.

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Church Notices

Rev. R. B. Lynch, Luth. Pastor.
English services at Kutztown at 10 a. m.
English services at Kutztown at 7.30 p. m.
Sunday school at Kutztown at 8.30 a. m.

Rev. Geo. B. Smith, Ref. Pastor.
German services at Maxatawny at 10 a. m.
English services at Bowers at 2 p. m.
English services at Kutztown at 10 a. m.
English services at Kutztown at 7.30 p. m.
Sunday school at Kutztown at 8.45 a. m.
The services at Maxatawny will be conducted by Rev. Harvey Miller, of Topton, and those at Kutztown by Rev. James Dengler, of Philadelphia.

Rev. E. H. Leinbach, Ref. Pastor.
German services at St. Peter's Church at 10 a. m.
English services at Fleetwood at 7.30 p. m.

Rev. J. W. Bittner, Luth. Pastor.
Sunday school at Kutztown at 8.45 a. m.
German services at Kutztown at 10 a. m.
No services in the evening.

Rev. S. N. Dissinger, Evan. Pastor
Sunday school at Kutztown at 9 a. m.
German preaching at 10 a. m.
V. P. S. of C. E. at 6.30 p. m.
Preaching at 7.30 p. m.
German preaching at Virginsville at 2 p. m.
Prayer meeting Wednesday 7.30 p. m.

Rev. J. O. Schlenker, Luth. Pastor.
German services in the New Jerusalem (Dunkel's) Church at 10 a. m.
English services in Bethel Zion's Church at Grimsville at 2 p. m.
Sunday school at both places one hour before the services.

Rev. Wm. F. Bond, Luth. Pastor.
Class lectures at Huff's Church to-day (Saturday) at 9.30 a. m.
Class lectures at Longswamp to-day (Saturday) at 2.15 p. m.
Sunday school at Bowers at 8.30 a. m.
German services at Bowers at 9.30 a. m.
Sunday school at New Jerusalem at 1 p. m.
English services at New Jerusalem at 2 p. m.

Rev. Wm. H. Kline, Lutheran Pastor.
Catechetical lectures at Fleetwood to-day (Saturday) at 2 p. m.
Sunday school at Topton at 2.15 p. m.
German services at Fleetwood at 10 a. m.
Sunday school at Fleetwood at 9.30 a. m.
English services at Topton at 7.30 p. m.

Rev. A. L. Brumbach, Ref. Pastor.
German services in the New Jerusalem (Red) Church at 10 a. m.
German services at Wessnersville at 2 p. m.

Rev. R. S. Appel, Ref. Pastor.
German services at Shartlesville at 10 a. m.

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Newspaper notice of German services in Kutztown area, 1915.

services into German churches, since English alternating with German eventually drives the German out¹⁰.

These are typical samples of the Germanizing stance which continued in Pennsylvania throughout the 19th Century. The Americanizing movement is in a sense more complex, for it attacked both the High German language and the Pennsylvania German dialect. I have recently republished what was perhaps the most violent antidialect blast that ever appeared in print in Pennsylvania, an anonymous newspaper editorial in the *Lebanon Courier* in 1858:

As the inevitable product of this continued backward motion, we now have the degenerated, mutilated, confounded, hybrid creation which is made to answer the linguistic wants of the German districts of Pennsylvania . . . Indeed, we boldly assert that the Pennsylvania Dutch is an anachronism, a rotten relic of national ties, severed many years ago and consequently superseded by those of the adopted country; a decrepit reminiscence of a semi-civilized epoch, unworthy of our age, which ought to be wiped off from existence¹¹.

¹⁰See in particular, "Die Englisirung der Deutschen in Amerika," Ch. XXVI in [Ernst Ludwig]. Brauns, *Practische Belehrungen und Rathschläge für Reisende und Auswanderer nach Amerika* (Braunschweig, 1829), pp. 351-369. He calls the Anglified Germans "Eirischdeutsche".

¹¹This anonymous article appeared in the *Lebanon Courier*, January 29, 1858, and February 26, 1858. It was republished, with an introduction by Alfred L. Shoemaker, in *The Pennsylvania Dutchman*, III:15 (January 1, 1952), 2-3. For a lengthy excerpt see Don Yoder, "Pennsylvania German Folklore Research," pp. 155-156.

Pennsylvanisch
Deitsch
Karrische
Dienst
Die Gricht Karrick
Leck Kill, Pa.
Sundag Orts Am Halver Ocht
September 26, 1971

Program, Leck Kill U. C. Church, 1971.

In an address at one of Pennsylvania's colleges in 1875, George F. Baer went on record as opposing the use of the dialect for church services:

As far as Pennsylvania German is concerned, it is simply a dialect, the patois of the Pfalz, with the addition of English words. It is a mistake to imagine that it can be brought to the level of a language which one can teach and use in literature for the exchange of thought. It can never become a literary language and it has always been used only in spoken form. Not for a moment would the Pennsylvania Germans permit its use in the pulpit. Just think what would happen if Luther's Bible translation or the majestic old chorales and hymns were transformed into Pennsylvania German! And that in this day and age! It is impossible to create a literature in the Pennsylvania German language¹².

3.

The 20th Century began with predictions of the rapid disappearance of the dialect, now that High German was obviously being displaced by English. The public schools stepped up their campaign to displace the dialect with English. Older teachers who grew up "Dutch" and had become school adminis-

¹²George F. Baer, *The Pennsylvania Germans. An Address Delivered at the Dedication of Palatine College, Myerstown, Pa., December 23, 1875* (n.p., n.d.); the address also appeared in the *Mercersburg Review*, XXIII (1876), 248-267. For Baer's career, see *Dictionary of American Biography*, I, 489-490.



**Pennsylvania Dutch
Worship Service**

Main Stage 2:00 p.m.

July 4, 1976

Bicentennial Service, Kutztown Folk Festival, 1976.

trators did their bit to aid the decline of the dialect. Dialect was forbidden in school and even on the school grounds — which has happened in other contexts with Spanish and Navaho and other American languages. (I have begun to record these attitudes from retired teachers who lived through this anti-dialect period¹³.)

In the 1930's what has been called a "dialect renaissance" began in Pennsylvania, with the foundation of the Pennsylvania German Folklore Society (1935) and the development of a whole series of dialect institutions involving "dialect events" sponsored by local groups¹⁴. Chief among these new "events" was the so-called *Versammlung*, an all-dialect evening gathering held once a year in a dialect-speaking community¹⁵. A variant was the *Grundsau Lodch* or "Groundhog Lodge" founded at the same time to provide a dialect evening with a hearty meal and plenty of Dutch humor in the late winter, around "Groundhog Day" or Candlemas (February 2). At the same time other dialect "events" arose — dialect spelling bees and liars' contests. There was at this time also a growth of dialect theater and dialect radio programs¹⁶.

None of this, of course, was organically connected with religion, except that the *Versammlinge* were sometimes held in churches and ministers sometimes delivered the main address or *Versammlung Raed*¹⁷. The latest development in this chain of dialect organizations has been the development within Pennsylvania German religion of dialect church and Sunday School services. The development of all-dialect services appears to have come in the 1940's. (I am not prepared at this time to review the entire history and spread of the movement. I am, however, researching its history, gathering recordings made at past services, collecting the dialect programs, and by letter and interview attempting to reconstruct the motivation of the movement from the ministers and laymen who appear to be responsible for the phenomenon.)

There appear to be three types of dialect service in connection with the Pennsylvania German churches:

1. The first is the full liturgical service held in the Lutheran or Reformed (United) Church, often in the "union churches" over the countryside where both denominations have shared a church building from the

¹³See my Folk-cultural Questionnaires No. 19: "Pennsylvania German and High German," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, XX:3 (Spring 1971), and No. 20: "The Country School," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, XX:4 (Summer 1971).

¹⁴For the Pennsylvania German awakening of the 1930's, see Homer T. Rosenberger, *The Pennsylvania Germans, 1891-1965* (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 1966), Ch. VII, pp. 194-229; and Don Yoder, "Pennsylvania German Folklore Research," pp. 81-83.

¹⁵A. F. Kemp, "The Pennsylvania German *Versammlinge*," *Pennsylvania German Folklore Society*, IX (1944), 187-218.

¹⁶Albert F. Buffington, ed., *The Reichard Collection of Early Pennsylvania German Dialogues and Plays* (Lancaster, 1962).

¹⁷Russell W. Gilbert, "The Oratory of the Pennsylvania Germans at the *Versammlinge*," *Susquehanna University Studies*, IV (1951), 187-213; and "Pennsylvania German *Versammlung* Speeches," *Pennsylvania Speech Annual*, XIII (1956), 3-20.



**PENNSYLAWNICH DEITSCH
GOTTES DIENST**

**ST. PAULUS EFANGALISCHE
LUDRISCH KEIRICH**

Telford, Pa.

der 30 September, 1973, 2:30 p.m.



Dialect Service at Telford Lutheran Church, 1973.

pioneer period. These "union churches" are in a very real sense folk institutions expressing the Pennsylvania German ethos.¹⁸

If one maps the area where dialect services have been and are being held in Lutheran and Reformed (United) churches, one finds that the dialect service territory extends from Northampton County on the Northeast to York County on the Southwest, including Lehigh, Montgomery, Berks, Lancaster, Lebanon, Schuylkill, Dauphin, and Northumberland Counties. Among the individual churches involved (this is only a selective list) are Emmanuel (Stone) Church at Petersville / Northampton County, Forks Union Church of Stockertown / Northampton County, St. John's U.C.C. Howertown / Northampton County, St. Paul's Union Church, Trexlertown / Lehigh County, New Bethel (Rosenthal) Church, Kempton / Berks County,

¹⁸The "union churches" (*gemeinschaftliche Kirchen*) of Eastern Pennsylvania and other areas settled by Pennsylvania Germans, were usually joint arrangements by the Lutherans and Reformed, who owned the building in common, and alternated services. They were analogous to the *Simultankirchen* of the Palatinate. For bibliography on the Union Church, see Don Yoder, "Lutheran-Reformed Union Proposals, 1800-1850: An American Experiment in Ecumenics," *Bulletin Theological Seminary of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in the United States*, XVII:1 (January 1946), 39-77.



**Pennsylvanisch Deutsch
Gottes Dienscht**

BINDNAGEL LUTTRISCH KARRICH
PALMYRA, R. D. 1, PA.
DER SECHS UN ZWANSCHTIGT JUNI, 1977.
AN UHRE DREI NUMEDAG

Der Breddicher Rev. Warren C. Heinly
Der Hëlfer Pastor Guy R. Grube
Der Gemez Vorsinger Israel B. Earley
Die Gemez Piano Spielern Martha Clouser
Die Chor Piano Spielern Naomi Hand
Die Aerigel Spielern Myra Earley
Der Chor Tri-Valley Senior Citizens Choir

DIE ORDNUNG

AERIGEL VORSPIEL — Am I a soldier of the Cross
Isaac Watts
*AAFANGS LIED — (Page 10 - No. 8)
O Hett ich yuscht en Dausend Zung
*AAFANGS WADDE (Opening Verses - Page 1)
BEKANNT MACHE Introduction
CHOR SINGES Gottes Liewe — Dot is wo die Engeline
DER PSALME (23rd Palm - Page 3)
SCHRIFT GELES Matthias 7:21-29
ZWETT LIED — (Page 6 - No. 2)
Gott hot die welt recht gut gemacht
DIF BREDDICH "Schwitze net Schwetze"
ES FREIGEWWICH OPFERGELD Offering
Aerigel Spiel — But the Lord's Mindful of His Own
Mendelsohn
CHOR SINGES Vest niver ins Galoabta Lond
Ich vair so garrn — Wilkum Heim
*ES GEBET Mrs. Jennie Carl, age 87, oldest member of
Tri-Valley Senior Citizens Singers
*EM HERR SEI GEBET (Lord's Prayer - Page 1)
*DER SEGEN Benediction
*CHOR SINGES SCHLUSS LIED Gott sei bei Eich
AERIGEL NOCHSPIEL Postlude - H. P. Hopkins
*Die Leit Selle Schtee

REV. DR. WARREN C. HEINLY

Born Dec., 1901 in Berks County, Albany Township. Graduated — Muhlenberg College in 1928 and Mt. Airy Seminary in 1931. His first parish was Howertown, Stone Parish, Northampton, Pa. from 1931 to 1936. Rev. Heinly served the following Parishes — St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Allentown, Pa.; Grace Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pa. Presently he is the 36th Pastor to Minister to the needs of the Bindnagle Congregation. He came to Bindnagle's in Oct. 1969 and has been the guiding spiritual light from that date to the present.

CHURCH HISTORIAN ISRAEL B. EARLEY

Born July, 1904, Palmyra, Pa. Was educated in Palmyra. He was Sunday School Superintendent from 1930 to 1956, Treasurer from 1946 to the present time. Directed the Bindnagle Church Choir for 20 years.

PASTOR GUY R. GRUBE

Born May, 1939, New Ringgold, Schuylkill County. He was called to Trinity Lutheran Church, Valley View, Pa., July, 1975. He has studied at Bangor Theological Seminary, Maine and at the Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. While studying at Bangor Seminary he served the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Milford, Maine, for 3 years.

TRI-VALLEY SENIOR CITIZENS PENNA. DUTCH CHORUS

Originates from the extreme western end of Schuylkill County, Valley View, Pa., Route 13, midway between Pottsville and Millersburg. This group was organized in the autumn of 1974. It runs the gamut from spirituals and hymns to folk songs and skits. With these tools they try to fan the tiny spark of Pennsylvania German dialect that is still smoldering in our midst. This is the only known singing group in the area dedicated to "Halte in grosse ehr hock, die liebe, die uesti mutterschproch". Robert Schroppe, Public Relations, was instrumental in helping to organize the group and keep this dying heritage alive in the area. Naomi Hand was asked to serve as arranger and pianist because of the wealth of knowledge of the spirituals acquired from her grandmother, Valeria Gable, Hegons, Pa.

Service at Bindnagle's Lutheran Church, 1977.

Christ Lutheran Church, Dryville / Berks County, St. Paul's Church, Fleetwood / Berks County, Reed's Church, Tulpehocken / Berks County, U.C.C. Church, Lenhartsville / Berks County, Friedens Lutheran Church Hegins / Schuylkill County, Christ Church, Leck Kill / Northumberland County, St. Paul's (Artz's) Church, Sacramento / Dauphin County, Swamp Church, Reinholds / Lancaster County, St. Jacob's U.C.C. Church, Brodbeck's / York County; and Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church, York County.

In most cases these services are sponsored by the churches themselves, or by lay groups within them. In other cases they are sponsored by organizations such as the dialect group which calls itself the "Fereinicht Pennsylvanisch Deutsch Fulk, Inc." which sponsors dialect services at various churches in Eastern Pennsylvania every Spring and Fall¹⁹. There are now so large a number of churches holding dialect services, if only once a year per church, that one can, by traveling about, attend a dozen or more dialect services from Spring to Fall.

Among the Lutheran and Reformed (United Church) ministers and lay speakers who star (or starred) at the dialect services are Clarence Rahn of Berks County, who was also a star performer at the *Versamlinge* and *Grundsov Lodches*; Ralph E. Starr of Berks County; Paul D. Yoder of York County; Franklin F. Glassmoyer; Richard Druckenbrod; Donald Geschwindt;

¹⁹The "Fereinicht Pennsylvanisch Deutsch Fulk Inc." is made up principally of dialect-speaking residents of Lehigh, Northampton, and Berks Counties, Pennsylvania. They also sponsor a country school museum and publish a journal called *Da Ausauga*, now in its fifteenth volume.

Sterling Schnell; J. William Wartluft; Merrill Q. Ressler; Harlan Breininger; Sherwood Haas; Frank W. Ruth; Clarence G. Reitnauer; Roy W. Meck; and Larry Neff. In addition some German-speaking ministers from the "sects" have been pressed into preaching duty in the "churches" — a favorite among these was Peter Gress, Bishop of the United Zion's Children in Lancaster County.

2. The second type of dialect service is the evangelistic type service, held by the evangelistic sects — the United Brethren and Evangelicals, now United Methodist, and others — church organizations which were the product of acculturation between German pietism in Pennsylvania and Anglo-American Methodism, with the preponderant formative influence from the latter²⁰. Since these denominations were anti-liturgical, the German which they used in preaching in the 19th Century was said to be closer to dialect than the German used by the college and seminary-educated Lutheran and Reformed clergy. Some of them, "Mose" Dissinger for one example, developed into genuine *Volksprediger*²¹.

Besides, the evangelistic churches developed a strong native hymnodic tradition which was partially in the

²⁰For the influence of Anglo-American revivalism on the Pennsylvania German churches and sects, see Paul H. Eller, "Revivalism and the German Churches of Pennsylvania, 1783-1816," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1933; also Don Yoder, *Pennsylvania Spirituals* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1961).

²¹See Thomas R. Brendle, "Moses Dissinger," in Milton Rubincam and Thomas R. Brendle, *William Rittenhouse and Moses Dissinger, Two Eminent Pennsylvania Germans* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, 1959).

dialect. This involved the so-called "Dutch Choruses" which I have analyzed in my book *Pennsylvania Spirituals* (1961)²². These were an American hybrid product of German language and the Anglo-American camp-meeting songs which fused when the camp-meeting or "bush-meeting," as Pennsylvanians called it, reached Pennsylvania soon after 1800. A body of several hundred "choruses" (white spirituals) were developed, many of which are still known and loved especially by older singers who grew up before 1900 when the camp-meeting and revival song tradition was still German (or bilingual) in language.

In my recording of this living folksong tradition — actually it is the only still functional folk-song tradition among the Pennsylvania Germans apart from the "slow tunes" (*langsame Weisen*) of the Old Order Amish and the Old Order Mennonites²³ — in a dozen counties of Eastern and Central Pennsylvania in 1946—1952 and 1959—1961 I found that my best informants were those born in the 1870's and 1880's. They knew the fuller versions of the chorus-verse patterns, they knew the older modal tunes associated with the earliest stratum of the camp-meeting music²⁴, they knew the long chains of verses which are associated with each chorus. My younger informants often were strong on the choruses and weak on the verses, producing a truncated version of the songs. Because of the love of the people of these evangelistic denominations for their own "choruses," they are strongly featured in the dialect services of these churches. Sometimes they are advertised as "English and German Hymn Sings" or "Song Services".

One of my dear friends and informants from the E.U.B. church, the Reverend Harry M. Tobias, is one of the leaders in this movement in his own group of churches²⁵. In a letter to me dated April 27, 1967, he listed "a few" of the coming dialect events of that year in which he was to participate:

- a) April 16th Pennsylvania German service in Fontana EUB at 7:30, sing and preach.

²²See also Albert F. Buffington, "Dutchified German" *Spirituals*, Lancaster, 1965.

²³For transcriptions of the Amish "slow tunes," see Joseph W. Yoder, *Amische Lieder* (Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, 1942). For the most recent list of works on Amish hymnody, see Don Yoder, "What to Read on the Amish," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, XVIII:4 (Summer 1969), 14-19.

²⁴George Pullen Jackson, the leading researcher in the "white spiritual" field, traced many camp-meeting tunes to what he called the "Celtic strain" of American folk music, the dances and folksong tunes from the British Isles, many of them in the more unusual modes, which were part of the American folk repertoire in the 18th Century. See his *White Spirituals of the Southern Uplands* (Hatboro, Pennsylvania, 1964), second edition.

²⁵For Harry M. Tobias, his career as minister and songleader, and some songs as sung by him, see *Pennsylvania Spirituals*, pp. 169-172, 224, 293; songs nos. 20, 28, 33, 81.

- b) May 14th EUB Bicentennial at Long's Barn near Neffsville. This will be a large service, possibly 10,000 people. I have 10 min. for Pennsylvania German singing.
- c) May 21st a Pennsylvania German program in Ruhls EUB as part of our centennial. Sunday School at 2 P.M. (Pennsylvania German), Rev. John Burkholder, teacher. German service at 3 P.M., Rev. Monroe Dourts the German preacher. Rev. Miller will be the song leader and I'll be the Liturgist.
- d) July 10th at 7:30 P.M. Pennsylvania German service at Bowman's Park [Camp Meeting] near Lehighton.
- e) July 30th at 10:30 A.M. preach for the Schaefferstown 2-day celebration. The 3 churches of Schaefferstown will combine for this event and will be held on the Schaeffer farm, and in the barn in the event of rain.
- f) August 27th Cocalico Church of the Brethren, English and German Hymn Sing.

The events listed by my informant appear to be very close to the grass-roots level of Pennsylvania German culture and reveal a growing interrelationship on this level between the evangelistic churches and the "plain sects" (Mennonite, Brethren). In a sense this rings true to the "folk" character of the evangelistic movement which has been commented on in detail both by Heinz Kloss (1937)²⁶ and myself (1961)²⁷.

3. The third type of dialect service is the all-dialect Sunday School. The Sunday School is a lay-controlled institution wherever it is encountered in American Protestantism, and it is natural that it should come to express the linguistic preferences of the parishioners in the Pennsylvania German churches. One of the pioneer spots to begin this movement was the Huff's Church (*Die Huffa Kaerrich*) at Hereford in Berks County, Pennsylvania, a Union Lutheran and Reformed (United) Church. Here the Sunday School superintendent, Clarence G. Reitnauer, is responsible for its development. The Huff's Church "Pennsylvawish Deitch Sunedag Shul," as it is called in the bulletin, is held in May each year. The services are held in the afternoon — *am halwer drei* — in the large second-story sanctuary of the country church which seats at least 900 people. I attended the first of these in 1969 and the church was full.

4.

How can one analyze this development, so recent, so tentative, and yet so important to the people within whose culture the phenomenon has developed?

²⁶Kloss, *Um die Einigung des Deutschamerikanertums*.

²⁷*Pennsylvania Spirituals*, Ch. III, "Bush-Meeting Religion: A Sociological Analysis," particularly pp. 114-116.

Trinity (Great Swamp)
United Church Of Christ

Spinnerstown and County Line Roads
SPINNERSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

REV. WILLIS K. HECKLER, B.D., Pastor



Founded 1734

To all who are visiting with us today, we extend, in the name of Christ, a hearty welcome. May you find here an experience of true Christian worship and fellowship. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to unite with us.

Cover of dialect program, Great Swamp United Church, 1975.

It appears at this stage of my research that there are three principal approaches one might take, the liturgical-church historical, the linguistic, and the sociological approach involving acculturation and ethnic identity theory.

1. From the liturgical standpoint the dialect services represent in the case of the Lutheran-Reformed groups a reversal of opinion on dialect use in church services from the widespread attitude in the 19th Century that the dialect was too "common" for liturgical use. (Statements by George F. Baer²⁸ and S. K. Brobst²⁹ can be recalled here.) The dialect was all

²⁸Baer, *The Pennsylvania Germans*, p. 24, cited supra.

²⁹In 1850 Samuel Kistler Brobst made the statement, "Zu unserm Leidwesen haben wir schon zu verschiedenen Malen vernommen, dass Lehrer, die doch gut deutsch reden können, pennsylvanisch-baurisch-deutsch reden, wenn sie Kinder unterrichten. Ja, wir hörten schon von Predigern, die z.B. bei Sonntagsschul-Festen sich einer ganz gemeinen Bauern-Sprache auf der Kanzel bedienen" ("Schlechtes Deutsch beim Unterricht," from the *Jugendfreund*, quoted in the United Brethren church paper, *Geschäftige Martha*, November 26, 1850. Sunday Schools were institutions which were usually low-church and controlled by the laity. They entered the Lutheran and Reformed churches through the influence of Anglo-American revivalism.

right for the "sects" who didn't know any better, who boasted of their lack of academic training for the ministry, but not for the "churchly" groups. For the latter it was a case of either standard German or English. Today, when the High German has disappeared from the scene, and English liturgy has conquered, the Lutheran-Reformed group can press for recognition of dialect liturgy and hymnody at least for an annual commemorative service. While the services can now profit by using a full and good dialect translation of the four gospels done by a local German professor named Ralph C. Wood (he began with the gospel of Matthew which he published in Germany in 1955 and in 1968 published the four gospels)³⁰, the hymns sung at many of these dialect services represent a lower level of literary achievement. In fact one might say that they represent a popular-culture influence on the liturgical churches, since the majority of them are simply translations into dialect of common Anglo-American "gospel songs"³¹. In a sense, then, we can interpret the dialect services, judging them liturgically and church-historically as a partial reshaping of the "churchly" tradition by the popular-culture approach of the evangelistic groups.

A more formal collection of worship materials for dialect services was prepared in 1974 by Pastor Frederick S. Weiser and published in *Der Reggeboge: Quarterly of the Pennsylvania German Society*, VIII:2 (June 1974). It includes the Lord's Prayer translated by Russell W. Gilbert, Opening Versicles translated by Pastor Larry M. Neff and Russell W. Gilbert; the 23rd, 27th, 84th, 90th, and 121st Psalms (Gilbert); and these original hymns: "Gott, nimm mich an der Hand," "Gott hot die Welt recht gut gemacht," and "Gott iss mei Freund im ganse Yaahr," by Gilbert. Translations of hymnic materials include several by Pastor Neff: "Holy, Holy, Holy," "O for a thousand tongues to sing," "O God our help in ages past," and "O worship the King"; two by the late Arthur D. Graeff: "How great thou art" and "Jesus, I live to thee"; and the rest by Gilbert: "Rise up, O men of

³⁰Ralph C. Wood, *Es Evangelium vum Mattheus: Aus der griechische Schprooch ins Pennsilvenideitsch iwwersetzt* (Stuttgart, 1955); "The Four Gospels Translated into the Pennsylvania German dialect," *Publications of the Pennsylvania German Society*, I (1968), 7-184.

³¹"Gospel songs" or "gospel hymns" were popular-culture religious songs based on Bible themes. They were created for urban revival meetings of the post-Civil War era, as for example the Moody and Sankey revivals of the 1870's. They were poems, with chorus, set to popular music which one commentator referred to as "music hall tunes". They are very different in spirit from the *Kernlieder* of the Lutheran and Reformed traditions. For the gospel song in Pennsylvania, see *Pennsylvania Spirituals*, pp. 5, 423-429. Among the most active translators of English gospel songs into Pennsylvania German versions are Ralph Starr, William LaRose, Larry Neff, Florence Bayer, and Hattie Brunner.

<p>DIE GROUNG FA ES KARRICHE TINSHT AN DYS ALT SCHNUMMER KARRICH</p> <p>DA PARRA FON DIE G'MAY PARRA DONALD GESCHWINDT DA BREDDICHER DA DSHOP PETER GRESS DIE ORIGEL SCHPIELER DIE MISSUS BETTY GESCHWINDT DA INSCHLICHT AM-SCHTECKER DA KARL GESCHWINDT</p> <p>DES ORDNING *MRS. BETTY GESCHWINDT *ES AIRSICHT LIED - "Kum Du Almechtler Gott" *DIE ANRUFUNG *ES AIRSICHT CHOIR LIED - "Selicha Ruhheit" - Brunner DIE HEILICHA SCHRIFT - Johannes 14:1-6 ES GEBAYDT ES TSWEIT CHOIR LIED - "Gott, Nimm Mich An Der Hand" Gilbert ES TSWEIT LIED - "Treek Mich Nacher" SAACHE BEKANT NACHE DIE FREIGEBICH UFFER ORIGEL MUSIK *GEBAYDT *ES BREDDICH LIED - "Yasus, Ich Leb Zu Dir" DIE BREDDICH - "Sea Des Gottes Lamm" Beim Bishop Peter Gress EN GEBAYDT UND AM YASUS SEI GEBAYDT *ES LETSICHT LIED - "Wohn In Me're" *DER SEGEN UND DREIFACH AMEN *DER NACHSCHPIELE *Mir Bitten, Luss Uns Aufstehen</p>	<p>AM YASUS SEI GEBAYDT UNSER FATER, UER DU BISCHT IM HIMMEL, GEHEILIGT WERDE DEINA NAMA, DEIN REICH KOM'E, DEI WILLIE GE- SICHEHE AUF ERDEN, WIE IM HIMMEL. UNSER TÄGLICH BROT GIEB UNS HEUTE, UND VERGIEB UNS UNSRE SCHULDEN, WIE AUCH MIR FERGEREN UNSERN SCHULDIGEN. UND FUHRE UNS NICHT IN FETSUCHUNG, SONDERN ERLOSE UNS FOM BASOM. DENN DEIN IST DAS REICH, UND DIE KRAFT, UND HERRLICH- KEIT IN EWIGKEIT. AMEN. *****</p> <p>MIR WELLA FELLA DUNK SANGA ZU DIE HATTIE BRUNNE: FA DES AIRSICHT CHOIR LIED, DIE SCHRIFT UND ES LETSICHT LIED IYV'WSETZA.</p> <p>DA BISHOP PETER GRESS IS KENN FREHNE: ZU UNS LIET. AM WAR GEBORRA UND UFFGABRUCHT IN UNSER NOCHBARSHAFT. MIR SIN ALL FROH OS IER KOMMA HUT KEN'WA.</p> <p>MIR SIN OR'IG FROH EICH ALL WIDDER BU SEHNA, KUMM NOCH EFTER AN DIE ALT SCHNUMMER KARRICH. IHR SEID GEWISS OLFARDT WILKOM. ALSO, IHR SEID ALL EIGALANDA FA IN UNSER SOCIAL HALL ZU GAE NOCH DIE BREDDICH FA KOFFEE UN KOOCHA UND MIT NUNNER ZU SCHWEITZA.</p> <p>EIN GROSSER DANK ZU ALL DIE OSS O'HOLFA HEN DES FIERT DEUTSCHE REICH BEI NUNNER ZU HOLTA. LUSS UNS NET UNSER NUDDER SPROOCH FERGESSA.</p> <p>DIE OLLDORR BLU'KE SIN GEVA BEI DA JIM UN LILLIE EMES IN DAS GEDANKNIS IHRA GELIERTA.</p>	<p>"KUM DU ALMECHTIER GOTT"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kum Du Almechtler Gott, Helf uns Dei Nma singa; Helf in der Lober Fater mit Herrlichkeit, Ivver allus g'wünscht, Kum un rulle Ivver uns, En longie treit. 2. Yasus, O Gott, kum how, Ol unser Flend shick fardt, Luss uns net falla, Luss Dei Almechtlichkeit, Unser Forsicherung sei; Mei Seele tsu dere winsh ich, Gott, hair uns ol. 3. Kum, geb uns Hellicher Droscht, Dei hellich tzeigness schlog fore, In darra schtunn. Du wu Almechtich bischt, Rulle in yadern hartz, Gae net funn uns weit fardt, Greiflicher Geischt. 4. Du bischt yo drel in aim, Aavicher lobe fer Dich, Aavich so fardt. Dei grosser Kaynlich Reick Gae'n mir in Lushda nei, Laava so fardt, Liebe und ehre. Amen.
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The Swamp Church (United Church of Christ) features dialect services. This one was in 1967.

Die Aiirscht
Pennsylvawnish Deitsch Kaerrich
Der Acht Un Zwanzisht June 1959

bei da
St. John's UCC Kaerrich
Kutztown, Pa.
Am Faddel ivver Tseya

Die Bredicher

Der Paare Richard Druckenbrod
Funn Die Plainfield Kaerricher, Pa.
Der Paare Aaron Brumbach
Funn Kutztown, Pa.
On Die Ariegel Jean Bortz



St. John's United Church, Kutztown, Program, 1959. Held in connection with the Folk Festival.

Huff's Church Program, 1973. Cover design by Clarence G. Reitnauer.

God," "Now thank we all our God," "My God! How wonderful thou art," "I need thee, precious Jesus," "Abide with us, our Savior," and "What a Friend we have in Jesus". Finally there are two camp-meeting spirituals: "Ich will schaffen," and "O, wie lieblich iss Yesus".

The booklet has already been widely used at dialect services in various parts of the Pennsylvania German area. While it is premature to plot its long-range effects, its range of song and the high quality of its translations will undoubtedly aid in restoring a churchly tone to the dialect services in the churches. As good money drives out bad, so good translations may replace the insufficient variety.

2. Linguistically the services can be analyzed from their relationships with literary German, spoken dialect of everyday communication, and liturgical English. (Fortunately I have available over a dozen recordings of separate services which will be useful for linguistic as well as for event-analysis.) The "translations" of liturgical elements used in the services are closer to standard German or liturgical English versions depending on whether the translator was a German professor within the culture, a minister with some knowledge of the older German liturgy, or a layman who knows only English and the everyday dialect. While some elements, like hymn translations, are now diffusing widely, there is enough local inspiration in the composition of the dialect liturgies to point to the value of comparative study. One sample of this approach is to compare the different expressions used, for only one example, for the term "church service". They range from "Gottesdienst" (pure German) to the coined translation "Kaerriche Diensch" (literally "church service") which has no analogue in German, with the midpoint reached in the expressions "Deutsche Kaerrich" (German Church) and "Deutsche

Breddich" (German Sermon, i.e., Service). Both of the latter are justifiable in the dialect on the analogy of the two dialect expressions for "Harvest Home" — "Aernkaerrich" (literally, Harvest Church) and "Aernbreddich" (literally, Harvest Sermon)¹².

3. Sociologically we can look at the phenomenon in the framework of acculturation theory and more recently, ethnic identity theory¹³. Acculturation theory explains the earlier stages of the linguistic development of the culture, with the shift from German to English in the official levels of the culture. Ethnic identity theory may provide a sharper focus for the analysis of the recent development of dialect institutions ranging from the "secular" *Versammlung* to the "sacred" dialect liturgy. The dichotomy "sacred-secular" is not absolute here, because at the *Versammlung*, as Russell W. Gilbert points out (1956), the *Versammlung Raed* or "fersammlung address" contains both humor and a moralizing thrust¹⁴. It is frequently given by ministers and is in fact a kind of secular sermon or what the Pennsylvania Germans used to call a "Waerdagsbreddich" (weekday sermon). And the dialect services are not without their humor, particularly in the sermon illustrations (*exempla* have a way always of reaching popular and even folk

¹²Don Yoder, "Harvest Home," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, IX:4 (Fall 1958), 2-11.

¹³Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins* (New York, 1964); Erik H. Erikson, "Psychosocial Identity," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, VII, 61-65, with basic bibliography; see also Erikson's *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York, 1968).

¹⁴Russell W. Gilbert, "Religious Services in Pennsylvania German," *Susquehanna University Studies*, V:4 (May 1956), 277-289.

 <p>Pennsflawisch Deitsch Sunndaw Shule on da Huffa Kaerrich Der 17^{ten} Moi, 1970 om holvet drei.</p>	<p>DIE HEILICH SHRIET John 11: 11-14</p> <p>11-Ich bin der Gute Shoaf-Heeder. Der Gute Shoaf-Heeder gebt sei Laeva fer die Shoaf. 12-Oewer aenen os yusht ge-ding' is, un seggent die Shoaf mat, shpringt fert won der Wulf kummt, un lusst die Shoaf a-lea. Der Wulf fongt dani, un die ommer shpringt alla-wang fert. 13-Der Ge-ding' Moog gebt fert, da-weil os er yusht ge-ding' is, un er gebt nix um die Shoaf. 14-Ich bin der Gute Shoaf-Heeder un Ich kenn mei Shoaf, un die Shoaf keema Mich.</p> <p>Psalm 23 1-Der Herr is mei Shoaf-Heeder, ich hob ken Mongel. 2-Er mach mich ommer-leia in der greens Wayt. Er herd mich om'a shull Vosser. 3-Er datt mei Saal uff-bowa. Er nemmt mich darrich der Ge-recht Waeg, weil sei Sei Willa is. 4-Won ich aw darrich's Dawl last, wuh der Shodda fonn Dawl is, farrich Ich mich nat, weil Dab het mer nicht. Dei Shick-a un Dei Shuck die drashta mich. 5-Dab setst en Dack, fell Kiss, fer mich, grawt bei meina Feind. Dab dacht Ael uff mei Kupp. Mei Keilich is ful, un laeff lueer. 6-Ich bin shure os Gutes an Barren-hartzich-kaet tru mier kummt, alla sawg fun mein Laeva; un ich will aewich in Gottes' Hous wuhra.</p>	<p>DIE LESSENT FER HEIT Sott m'r im Shiff blewa? Matthew 14: 22-33</p> <p>22-Groot noach-der-hond hat Yaesus g'saot sei Yinger mat'a os Shiff nemma un noch der ommer side geh, weil Er die fiela Leit fert shicka datt. 23-Wie Er die gross drupp-Leit fert g'abickt khot hut, is Er goss-a-leh, uff der Barrick gonga fer baya. 24-Bel aellera tzeit wor's Shiff mitta im Saer, un die Wella hen's rum g'abmiasa. Der Wind is der letza waeg kumma. 25-Darrich die Nocht is Yaesus-tu ehos ge-luffa kumma, uff en Wasser. 26-Wie die Yinger Eho g'esaha hen, uff'm Vosser laefa, is'ma der Fer-shond all serra; sie hen ge-main es wear en Gotsh. Sie hen sich arrick g'farrich. 27-Oewer grawt noh hot Yaesus tru etas g'saetst, in hat g'saot, "Seit in guter mood, es is Mich, seit nat bong." 28-Noh hat der Peter g'saot, "Herr, wome' Fich is, waag ich sut tru Dier kumma off's Wasser." 29-Noh hat Yaesus g'saot, "Kumm. - - - - - un der Peter sou'm Shiff wor, is er uff'm Wasser ge-luffa, seich Yaesus. 30-Wie er oewer der arrick Shlarrem g'abohul is, er bong serra, un is a-longe unse-gelb. Noh hat er g'rubla, "Herr safe nich." 31-Noh hat Yaesus Sei Hond nous g'abreckt, un hat zho g'fonga, un hat g'saot, "Dah haud os wunnt' Glaava' Fer-woss haubt duh ge-tzetelwilt." 32-Wie Yaesus un der Peter in's Shiff kumma in, hat der Shlarrem grawt noach ge-just. 33-Du was im Shiff wora, sin kumma un hen Yaesus aw-ge-bayt, un hen g'saot, "Wortlich, Dab bist Gottes' Sohn."</p>
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Dialect Sunday School, Huff's Church, 1970. Scripture readings, center and right.

levels) and Sunday School exhortations³⁵. And, as is proper for Pennsylvania German culture, both institutions often include socializing and eating together. It is significant that the central institution of the culture, the Church, at last has felt the pull of the linguistic preferences of its people. While the dialect service movement has little relation to the earlier Germanizing tendency in the culture (unless it could be explained as a mild and gentle form of Anthony Wallace's nativist or revitalization movement?)³⁶, it does make clear the fact that the dialect is now thought important enough to be used in the "sacred" atmosphere of the Church.

Dialect services have faced the same range of attitudes in other German cultures as in the Pennsylvania German culture. An important example is the movement to introduce Low German (*Plattdeutsch*) services in North German areas where High German never established itself completely. Albrecht Jobst in his volume *Evangelische Kirche und Volkstum* (1929)³⁷ cites an anonymous article, published by a clergyman in the *Evangelische Zeitung* in 1829, which "points up the difficulties which lie in the way of a Low German peasant's understanding of the High German language." He called for the "elevation" of regional dialect to liturgical language and with it the creation of a dialect devotional literature. *Plattdeutsch* sermons and Bible instruction were begun but they nowhere displaced High German. In most cases the kernel of the service remained High German — prayers, hymns, and liturgy — while the sermon and Bible instruction were given in the local dialect. In the 20th Century the demand shifted to a full *Plattdeutsch* liturgy and *Plattdeutsch* hymnody to match. Some sporadic progress was made in this area, although as Jobst points out, "the translation of high German hymns into *Plattdeutsch* turns out, from experience, very seldom favorably, and for the composition of (new) *Plattdeutsch* hymns as well as a *Plattdeutsch*

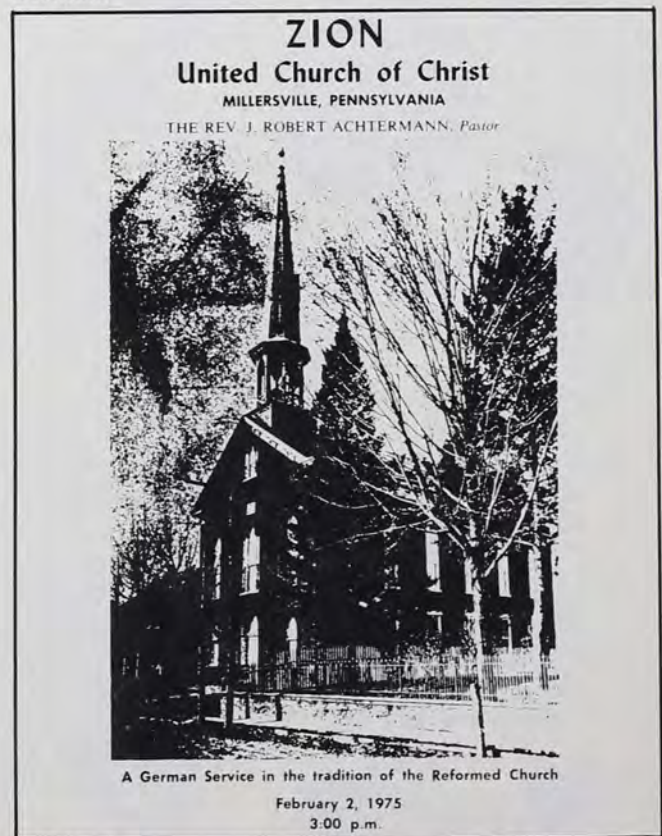
³⁵Preaching in the European vernaculars had of course a long history in Europe. One of the most famous of vernacular preachers was Bernardino of Siena, whose *Prediche Volgari* are in Siennese dialect. "When I go about preaching from place to place," he wrote, "I no sooner arrive at a particular spot, than I diligently strive to acquire the popular dialect. Thus I have laboured, and ended by speaking to people on a variety of topics in their own tongue". According to his biographer, he also "adopted a style accessible and appropriate to the multitude, interlarded with popular dicta, bywords and proverbs" (Paul Thureau-Dangin, *Saint Bernadine of Siena*, translated by Baroness G. von Hügel (London, 1906), p. 174. For his *exempla*, including fables, see pp. 176-179. For the *exempla* in general, see Frederick C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum* (Helsinki, 1969).

³⁶Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist*, 58 (1956), 264-281; see also his *Religion: An Anthropological View* (New York, 1966).

³⁷Albrecht, Jobst, *Evangelische Kirche und Volkstum: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Volkskunde* (Stuttgart, 1938), pp. 224-228.

translation of the Bible the talents of a genius are required if the work is to succeed." In my researches in the German colonies in Rio Grande do Sul in 1969 I found that of the several varieties of ethnic German settlement in that Brazilian province only the Pomeranians had succeeded in using a dialect (*Pommerplatt*) liturgy. Copies of the liturgy were preserved in manuscript by the clergy so that the dialect movement there (and the wave had already passed its crest in 1969) had not reached the level of general acceptance.

Surely in an age when the "folk mass" and the "jazz mass" can enter the sacred atmosphere of the Catholic and Episcopal services, when liturgical dance has been rediscovered by the Christian Church, and when liturgies have been vernacularized in Catholicism and the liturgical Protestant churches, the movement for dialect services in the Pennsylvania German speaking parishes of Eastern and Central Pennsylvania can be seen for what it is — a significant effort from the grass roots to preserve and maintain the Pennsylvania German mother tongue. It is significant that the Church, which was the last traditional institution in the Pennsylvania German community to preserve High German, should be the last of the older institutions in the culture to attempt to preserve Pennsylvania German.



A few Eastern Pennsylvanian churches have held commemorative services in High German. This one was at Millersville in Lancaster County.

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Witchcraft Belief in a Pennsylvania German Family

By Yvonne J. Millspaw

Folklorists are not often given the opportunity to examine the changes in a belief system as it works in succeeding generations of the same family. And when that belief system involves *Braucherei*, a quietly guarded secret among most Pennsylvania Germans, it is even more astonishing to find informants who will openly discuss the matter.

Braucherei is a form of healing based on ancient continental European magical and religious beliefs which employs prayers, blessings and conjurations in its ritual.¹ It is literally translated from the Pennsylvania Dutch as "trying," but is often referred to by its English designation, "powwowing." *Braucherei* is the antidote to the misfortunes brought on by *Hexerei*, evil witchcraft, although it may be employed merely for the assurance of good luck, rather than against a specific disease or misfortune.

Braucherei is practiced by a person who simply has power. Age, sex or religion has little bearing on this matter. Power may be obtained in a number of ways: one may be given power by being taught specific charms, most often learned from a member of the opposite sex. One may obtain power by accident of birth: children born with caul or "veils," or those born on certain auspicious days, such as Christmas, are so blessed. One may simply get power from the ownership of certain books of charms such as Hohman's *Lang Verborgener Freund*, or Albertus Magnus, *Egyptische Geheimnisse*. Or one may simply have power. Those who have power and actively practice "trying," often acknowledge the ultimate source of their power as God. The *Hex*, the sorcerer, presumably obtains power elsewhere, although this is never specifically stated in the tradition.

Even in the 18th Century there was much concern in Pennsylvania with the widespread German belief in magic and ritual. In 1789 Benjamin Rush wrote, "It has been said that the Germans are deficient in learning; and that in consequence of their want of more general

and extensive education, they are much addicted to superstition."² He hoped that "proper" education would eradicate these unfortunate flaws of character.

One hundred and forty years later, in 1928, three troubled young men in York County, Pennsylvania, murdered an old recluse named Nelson D. Rehmeyer who they suspected had hexed them. The spectacular witchcraft-murder trial which followed was given national news coverage, and brought this still vigorous belief to the rapt attention of America.³ Pennsylvania Germans were embarrassed and humiliated. State politicians rushed to their defense, and a few years later triumphantly announced:

State educators declared today that hexerei, terror of numerous rural farm communities for many years, is being banished from Pennsylvania by the public schools.

School authorities explained that instruction in the sciences, even in the lower grades, has proved the most effective weapon against the superstition.

They said that "hex" symbols calculated to cause illness in a farm-house or disease of cattle may still be seen on farms and houses, but that the younger rural folk spurn beliefs that frightened their kin only a few years back. Court records show the "hex" responsible for many crimes including murder and arson, during the last 50 years.⁴

By the mid-1930's public opinion and education had officially banished witchcraft from Pennsylvania. *Braucherei* and its practitioners, however, continued to flourish. The emphasis of the practice, however, shifted away from *Hexerei*, and instead encompassed healing through faith in God. Marcia Westkott has noted this phenomenon in Berks County, Pennsylvania, as a response to contemporary needs,⁵ and Susan Stewart,

¹Thomas R. Brendle and William S. Troxell, *Pennsylvania German Folktales, Legends, and Once-Upon-a-Time Stories, Maxims and Sayings* (Norristown, Pa., 1944), p. 136.

²Benjamin Rush, "An Account of the Manners of the German Inhabitants of Pennsylvania," *Columbia Magazine or Monthly Miscellany*, 3 (August, 1789). Reprinted Institute of Pennsylvania Dutch Studies #1 (Collegeville, Pa., 1974), p. 4.

³Arthur H. Lewis, *Hex* (New York, 1970).

⁴A. Monroe Aurand, Jr., *The Realness of Witchcraft in America* (Lancaster, Pa., n.d.), p. 24. Characteristically Aurand gives no reference or date for his quotation, other than to state it appeared during the administration of George H. Earle, Governor of Pennsylvania 1935-1939.

⁵Marcia Westkott, "Powwowing in Berks County," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 19:2 (1969-70), 2-9.

working in York County, considered powwowing as one of several available forms of medicine.⁶ These findings are in keeping with Don Yoder's suggestion that "powwowing is still as important a feature of Pennsylvania folk culture as it was in the 19th Century."⁷ Thus, belief tales about successful cures by *Braucherei* are frequently and easily collected in German Pennsylvania.

Over the past five years I have been able to interview and in some cases collect narratives from seven members of a Pennsylvania family, all residents of a small Dauphin County community. Most of my informants were women, and all were members of three generations of the same family.⁸ They are descended from or otherwise related to four, possibly five, active *brauchers*. One of the women interviewed also "tries" occasionally. The narratives provided by the members of this family span the years from the late 19th Century to the 1970's, with the events clustering in the 1920's and in the present. Taken together with a small group of other narratives from distant cousins and neighbors, they provide not only a series of tales reflecting attitude changes in one family over nearly a century, but they also provide some data on the transmission of powwowing belief and practice. By examining the relationships of these people, it will be possible to obtain some evidence on the manner in which the transmission of traditions may be affected. The four active powwowers to whom the informants are related represent four fairly distinct forms of the belief system. The ways in which each informant has understood and accepted these beliefs, and the kind of relationship each family has had with them significantly determines what aspect of which tradition each will acknowledge and confess.

Additionally, there is the factor of time. It is expected that a massive change of attitude will be apparent following the 1929 Rehmeyer murder trial. This will be examined by documenting three distinct aspects of the belief system: the attribution of cause in the events recounted (*Hexerei*, or bad luck, or germs); the kinds of action associated with the event (ritual, sympathetic magic, the use of charms, amulets or other devices); and the attitude toward the results of the event (truth or coincidence).

⁶Susan Stewart, "Rational Powwowing: An Explanation of Choice Among Medical Alternatives in Rural York County, Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 26:1 (1976), 12-17.

⁷Don Yoder, "Twenty Questions on Powwowing," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 15:4 (1966), 38. Quoted in Robert L. Dlupe, Jr., "My Interview with a Powwower," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 21:4 (1972), 39.

⁸Yoder has remarked on the occasional tendency for powwowing to run in families. See note to Victor C. Dieffenbach, "Powwowing Among the Pennsylvania Germans," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 25:2 (1975-76), 31.

Wild fire! Rest you
 Any kind of wild fire or
 Arisopalis. use fire or any
 red fleannul. or red string
 rub or pass over nine times
 "Any and all kinds of wild
 fire flee fire wild fire I
 spread the parway a way thin
 blow nine times repeat three
 or nine times
 Bluster in the eye say
 blust bluster I blow
 die nose pass over three
 times with the hand and
 blow three times repeat
 three times.
 "Any kind of sores say
 I dussie I russia" Three times
 pass over three times with hand
 repeat same times.
 M. O. C. H.

Manuscript powwow formulae from the family under study.

If this assumption is correct, then narratives concerning events which occurred prior to 1930 ought to contain the presence of *Hexerei* as a cause, descriptions of rituals and other actions, and indications of faith in the truth of the report. On the other hand, narratives concerning events between 1930 and 1970 will substitute "bad luck" for a cause, or suggest no cause, suppressing the idea of witchcraft. The use of sympathetic magic in ritual may continue, but the emphasis will be on curing, on faith in the healing power of God, rather than on *Braucherei*. The manifest attitude toward the truthfulness of the event will range from skepticism to surprise. The contemporary shift of interest to the occult may be reflected in a tendency to emphasize *Hexerei* once again.

While informants may be expected to incorporate a later, more skeptical attitude into their accounts, it is believed that this will take the form of denying belief in the truth of the event rather than in changing the essential structure of the narrative.

The Family

The X family traces its arrival in America to ancestors who debarked in the port of Philadelphia in August of 1750.⁹ Most of those on board the ship were Men-

⁹Ralph B. Strassburger and William J. Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers* (Baltimore, 1975).

nonites or Anabaptists from the Rhine Valley of Germany. The first United States Census of 1790 indicates nine families of the same name living in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.¹⁰ Most of the family still reside there. All are still active members of fundamentalist or otherwise conservative protestant churches.

The major informants, Anna and Betty, are sisters-in-law, Cal was Anna's brother and Betty's husband. All were born in the 1890's in the town where they still reside. Both Anna and Betty are now widows; both are the children of active powwowers. Anna's father, grandfather and husband "tried" for people; Betty's mother "tried," and this power has been passed on to Betty's granddaughter, Gail, who also "tries". Anna's daughter, Dorothy, and two granddaughters, Ellen and Fran, are well versed in the belief, though none has practiced "trying," and only Dorothy has sought the aid of a powwower. Dorothy's mother-in-law also was a powwower.

Anna, Betty, and Gail allowed me to record some of their narratives. The others would not. When discussing the subject the informants were extremely guarded: I was not permitted to mention aloud, much less write down, the names of persons who had been hexed or those who had "tried" for them, even though their identity was quite apparent to all. People involved in the narratives were often referred to obliquely—"a neighbor," "a man who tried for things," "a child"—when actually referring to a friend, a relative or even a son or daughter.

The informants suggested that the same source of power gave one the ability to either hex or "try," the distinction merely being in the way this power was utilized, whether for good or evil. None of the informants mentioned the Devil in connection with hexing, but both Anna and Betty were in awe of people who tried, and became extremely upset when I accidentally mentioned one's name while recording an interview. Anna believed that anyone could "try" as long as they "done good."

If they knew the words they could try. I have an old book somewhere, with all kinds of things out of . . . how to stop blood and different, I just don't remember exactly what all's in there, but I'll get it for you. Well somebody had loaned [my husband] a witchcraft book,¹¹ and he started to write this stuff down, and I thought he was getting like a fanatic about it and he give this book back and I had the other one. And I still have it. And he never did get it. I don't remember anything he has written down there, but it's some. And one in particular I remember about how to stop blood. I don't know whether it works or not.*

*Indicates recorded narrative.

¹⁰Bureau of Census, *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States taken in the year 1790* (Washington, D.C., 1908).

¹¹Motif G224.3: "Witch gets power from books."

Anna's book was a manuscript of handwritten charms from the most famous of the powwow books, Hohman's *The Long Lost Friend (Lang Verborgener Freund)*.

Betty, on the other hand, knew of two sources for the power to "try": "They say when a child is born with a veil over its face, a sort of skin or whatever, anyhow that they can foresee and tell things."¹² Both her mother and the powwower she later used were born with veils (cauls). Anna and Cal's mother, too, had been born with a caul, and although they believed she could "see" things others could not—particularly ghosts—there was no connection in this branch of the family between a caul and the ability to powwow. An interesting sidelight is that Betty's mother was also a child who had never seen her father—he had died several months prior to her birth—a fact which some traditions require as a source of power.¹³ Betty, however, did not indicate any awareness of this latter tradition.

But Betty, too, had a manuscript containing charms which along with the power to try had been given to her by her mother. The charms themselves appear casually written in a recipe book between the entries for strawberry marmalade and sand tarts. I have been unable to locate any of the charms in the commonly employed charm books of the era, although they do have parallels in oral tradition.

The charms appear in the manuscript twice: once in what Betty identified as her mother's handwriting, and again, with an additional charm in Betty's own handwriting. Gail, who now owns both the book and the power has generously, albeit reluctantly, given permission to reproduce them here. In the handwriting of Betty's mother:

*Wild fire Rect for*¹⁴

Any kind of wild fire or Ariscipiles. Use fire or any red flannel or red string. Rub or pass over nine times.

"Any and all kinds of wild fire flee flee wild fire I chase the away away,

Then blow nine times repeat three or nine times.

*Blister in the Eye*¹⁵

Say Shust bluster Ic blow dic nose

Pass over three times with the hand and blow three times repeat three times.

¹²The tradition of the caul as a source of power is widespread. See, for example, Richard M. Dorson, *Bloodstoppers and Bearwalkers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952, 1972), 154.

¹³Elmer L. Smith, John G. Stewart and M. Ellsworth Kyger, *The Pennsylvania Germans of the Shenandoah Valley* (Allentown, Pa., 1964), 157-158.

¹⁴A similar charm is recorded by Thomas R. Brendle and Claude W. Unger, *Folk Medicine of the Pennsylvania Germans* (New York, 1970), p. 81. Also Emma G. White, "Folk Medicine Among the Pennsylvania Germans," *Journal of American Folklore*, 10 (1897), 78-80, reports the use of red thread in powwowing.

¹⁵A similar *Brauch* formula for a sty is recorded by Brendle and Unger, pp. 124-125.

*Any kind of Sores say*¹⁶

"I dusic I rusic" three times
Pass over three times with hand
Repeat three times

Mother O.K.¹⁷
*for Itch*¹⁸

Venus turpentine or Duck
Venatus turpentine was[h] 9 times by a running
stream
Mix with lard as salve

In handwriting Betty identified as her own:

*Try for
Wild Fire*

Enny and all kinds of wilfire flee flee flee
Wildfire I chase the away away away
Repeat nine times with fire, or red string, then
blow nine times, repeat three times

Blister in the Eye

"Shoose bluster ic blow dic nouse"
Pass over with the hand three times then blow
three times

Any kind of sore

Say "I dussic I rusic" three times then blow
three times

*Penna. Dutch Remedy for Hernia*¹⁹

Cut lock of hair off back of head, cut nick in
Thorn bush tree, put hair in, when tree knits to-
gether, Hernia will disappear.

She notes the name and occupation of the person from whom she learned the last charm, remarking, "home in coal region upper part of state, this is an old custom for natives of that part of state."

Betty did not repeat her mother's salve recipe, and she shortened the actual powwowing directions on her mother's charms.

It is quite unusual for the power to try to be passed along the female line—in most reported cases the power is passed across sex lines, from woman to man to woman.²⁰ Betty, however, insisted that this power

¹⁶This charm is apparently unique. No parallels could be located.

¹⁷The informant suggested that "Mother O.K." meant that the power must pass through the female line. Don Yoder has suggested that it "might mean that 'Mother' has tried it and it worked - the same as 'P.E.' in some charm books - 'Probatum est' " (private communication).

¹⁸According to Don Yoder (private communication) Venice Turpentine was commonly used in home remedies. This is an odd combination of both charm and salve.

¹⁹This remedy is fairly common, although it is often specified for disorders other than hernia. See White, p. 70; Brendle and Unger, p. 187; W.J. Hoffman, "Folk-Medicine of the Pennsylvania Germans," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 26 (1889), 334, 348.

²⁰Dluge, p. 40; Stewart, p. 15; Dieffenbach, p. 31. Also Motif G224.9: "Witch power is inherited."

passed along the female line in her family: "My mother, her mother could pass it on to her, and she could pass it on to me. She gave it to me, but I never used it." She has since given both the book and the power to her granddaughter.

Informant 1: Anna

Anna is in her 80's, lively and outspoken. She permitted me to record a few narratives from her, but surrounded each tale with vehement denials of her belief in witchcraft—"That witchcraft was the silliest stuff you ever heard of." Even though she had consulted powwowers throughout her young life, she appeared to separate the idea of witchcraft, which she would not accept, from the concept of healing, which she found acceptable.

Anna's grandfather, born about 1830, was a practicing powwower. She remembers him as an old man with a long beard, and a big black hat (he was a member of the Dunkard Brethren, a plain sect), who lived with them through most of her childhood. She described him as extremely religious and extremely strict. She told several narratives about his powwowing, but tended to append a rational explanation to tales which involved the concept of witchcraft as a cause.

Grandpap always spoke in Dutch. He tried for a lady in [— — —]. She was a poor thin soul. Her family quit bringing her over. She died not long after that. Pap said he could have cured her if they had kept bringing her over. But she had TB.

Then about half a block from our house a young girl got sick. Grandpap tried for her. He said there was such a spell on that girl that they [the witches] were comin' in the keyholes. I didn't believe in it²¹

Then I had the mumps one time, and they were on both sides of my jaws, and they were swollen up terrible. So, Grandpap said he'd try for them and they'd go down. And he took a brick and made it hot, and sit in front of me, and he'd rub this brick and talk in Dutch, I didn't know what he was saying, and he'd talk in Dutch. And he done that for quite awhile and that was supposed to cure my mumps. They went down then, they were supposed to anyway. They did.*

Grandpap, he come out one morning and he was real pale, and he had been sick during the night. And Mother said to him, "What's wrong, Pap, you look so bad?" He said, "Well, they almost got me last night," he said, "I had a broken windowpane, he said, and I forgot to fix that windowpane, and they come in the windowpane. In there where the windowpane was broken," and he said, "They almost got me last night."*

Anna's brother, Cal (Betty's husband), confirmed his grandfather's activities as a powwower, but, like his sister, reflected disbelief in the practice.

²¹Motif G263.4: "Witch causes sickness"; G242: "Witch flies through air."

Grandpap would try for people. He claimed he did good. He put stuff around the doors to keep away evil.²² People brought their kids to be tried for. But we didn't believe in it. When I was a kid they'd try for the decay—they'd do maneuvers and say words over the head of the child, and that would drive it away.

They both did, however, accept the "trying" their father practiced; it did not involve the concept of witchcraft, but rather was a combination of home remedies (which Anna still practices) and faith healing. Anna reported:

They'd try for Livergrow. It's a cold, mostly across your back. You had a pain there, you know. They'd grease it and then they'd take their hand and they'd press. That's supposed to be trying for it. Maybe they said things, I don't know, but they'd press [thumbs in rubbing downward] on there real hard. And it seemed as if it would help. But that was just a normal thing, you know. It wasn't anything. Pop used to do that, but he didn't used to, he said he didn't want anybody to say he was trying for anything, cause he didn't believe in that, especially in this witchcraft, he didn't believe in that . . . Erysipelas, yes, yes you could try for that, and there was something else you tried for and I can't think what it is. But the only thing I know that Pop done was the Livergrow . . . They used hog fat for all

²²Edwin Miller Fogel, *Beliefs and Superstitions of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Philadelphia, 1915), #628: "To keep away witches, draw toad's feet with chalk on the bedstead or in the room above the windows or door."

those things. But this stuff [witchcraft] I didn't believe in.²³

Anna's husband, however, was also a powwower who believed in witchcraft. Hence their children were constantly "tried" for, in spite of her wishes to the contrary. That his practice was a constant source of friction in their long marriage is apparent in her narratives about him.

A woman on [—] Street had neighbors who were really poor. She'd give them food and work for them to help them out. One of the poor neighbor's children got sick and they had him tried for. And he said that the first person to come to borrow something was the one who had hexed the child. That year the good neighbor's onions didn't turn out, and she came to borrow an onion and was blamed for being a witch. They put a broom over the doorway to keep the witch out. I saw that and just walked over it.²⁴

Once someone came to try for the girls. This witchdoctor [Anna's husband's teacher] came and he said they should draw a picture on the outer building, a shed or somewhere, just draw a face on there. And drive I don't know if it was more than one nail in there or something, and then that would affect the person that had put a spell on their child, you know.²⁵ I don't know if that was

²³Brendle and Unger, p. 195, reported that for Livergrow one "anointed the sufferer's chest with melted lard in a peculiar manner, making special pressure along the lower ribs with the thumbs."

²⁴A very common method of identifying a witch. See Fogel, #630, 634; A Monroe Aurand, *Popular Home Remedies and Superstitions of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Lancaster, Pa., n.d.), p. 26; Motif G272.7.2: "Broom across door protects from witch."

²⁵Motif G272.1: "Steel powerful against witches"; G271.4.2: "Exorcism by injuring image of witch."

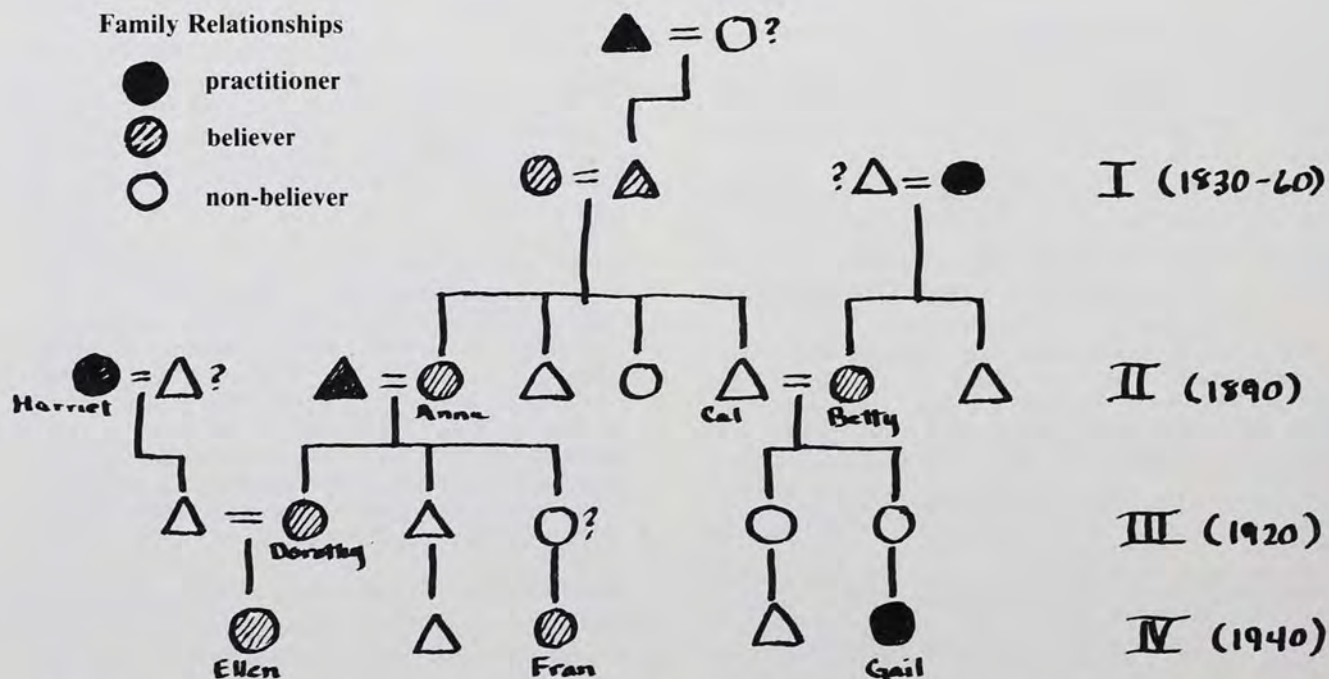


Chart showing family relationships, practitioners of powwowing, believers and non-believers of the tradition.

the time he didn't want me downstairs or not, I believe that was another time, later. Well, this, I didn't believe in that anyhow, and another time when he came and was trying for one of them I went upstairs. I wouldn't stay down and listen cause I never believed in it anyway, and he said he was glad I was upstairs cause the witches were there, they knew he was there to try, and they were there to stop him, you know. And he was glad I wasn't down because they were there. Wasn't that ridiculous?*

Another thing, my son used to be, when he was a baby, he was so cross at night, and I, I'd have to walk with him and everything else. Somebody told my husband that when the baby wet a diaper he was to put it in the bureau drawer tight and that would pinch whoever had a spell on him. Did you ever hear anything so stupid?*

The latter practice was apparently a favorite cure of the local powwowers. Other reports from the same area and time show this to be a common practice. A neighbor of Betty's reported:

When Alice [her child] was born we moved to an apartment on [—] Street. An old lady lived below us and people said she was a witch. Alice was always crying, and her grandmother said the old witch had put a spell on her. Grannie told me to take Alice's shirt and turn it inside out and put it in boiling water and jab it with a fork. Then put a broom across the door because a witch wouldn't cross over the broom and the spell would be broken. The old lady downstairs came up and tried to come in, but when she saw the broom she left. That's true! And we moved out of the house and Alice was all right. That's the God's truth.²⁷

Another neighbor reported the same cure, although curiously it lacks the identification of the child's disorder with witchcraft.

You probably don't remember, Rick was just a little fellow, but when things were going bad, or someone got sick I would take an old T-shirt, tie two knots in the end and stick the other end in the top dresser drawer. This was to bring good luck. I remember one time when Rick was sick for a week and I did that, and Rick was better in the morning. Oh, I forgot, you must turn it inside out.²⁸

Anna's disbelief of witchcraft, however, was selective. It did not deter her from belief in other occult phenomena. Like her mother, she accepted the possibility of ghosts, of seeing them, and of communicating

with them, presumably through the medium of a powwower. (This latter point was confirmed by Betty who recalled the incident; Anna did not mention it.)

When we lived on [—] Street in the green house, I would sleep in the corner bedroom. I would wake up at night—my husband was working nights—and see a little short fat man who smiled and nodded. I thought I was dreaming, but he seemed like a real flesh and blood person. Then one of the children said, "Who is the little man we see around here?" Before I could answer, another child said, "Oh, I see him lots. He won't hurt you." Later someone said he was drowned. He had a mean wife and they said he had money hidden somewhere [and was coming back to tell about it]. I asked Mother to describe the man who used to live in the house, and she said he was a short fat man who was very pleasant.²⁹

Informant 2: Betty

Betty is also in her 80's and is the widow of Anna's brother Cal. She is rather quiet, but did permit me to record several lengthy narratives from her. She is deeply religious, and believes implicitly in miracles, prophetic dreams, and faith healing. Her mother tried for people, but she, too, denied any belief in the existence of witchcraft, suggesting it was believed only by the uneducated "Dutch."

My mother had, now the wildfire, they'd always say wildfire, but they could try for wildfire and try for various things. Pennsylvania Dutch people did it. We didn't believe in it, you know, but something happened of some kind. And anyway she left the book . . . She just did it, tried for friends, maybe, children were sick or one thing or another she'd go to see. But she just, she didn't make a practice of it or anything. But I really couldn't tell you any more about it, that's as far as I can go, but there's lots of people around the vicinity, especially in the Dutch area, and they'll believe in that right and left. You know, hexing and so forth and so on. But we never did. But I know that my grandmother's generation, they tried for various things. People was very ill—erisiphilis—that's a very bad thing, you know. And they'd try, even out of burns, they'd take the fire out of burns by trying. So I don't know.*

But she too made use of the service of a powwower when one of her children was quite ill.

Some of the relatives on my husband's side [referring obliquely to Anna's husband] said they thought that a neighbor, thought it was a neighbor lady that, you know, that had the power to do something like that. We didn't believe it, but the child got worse and the doctor's medicine didn't seem to do any good, so there was a man

²⁷Betty Snellenburg, "Four Interviews with Powwowers," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 28:4 (1969), 44, reports a similar cure.

²⁸Collected by S. Bitner, October, 1975.

²⁹Collected by R. Baumbach, April, 1976.

²⁹E338.1: "Non-malevolent ghost haunts house or castle"; E371: "Return from dead to reveal hidden treasure."

living in the town that had the power, and he tried for those things. So he came up and he tried for the child and he used a big piece of red yarn and tried . . . He went over the body I don't know how many times, then he hung it up and it happened to be on a hall rack you know, and he put a coat, he hung one of our coats over it, [and said] She'll be back. So anyway, we noticed that when she came into the house, a neighbor, our dog just go into like a spasm or a convulsion,³⁰ so he said, "Lay a broom over the porch, at the door and [see] if she steps over it," he said that she won't wanna, but he said she will, and he said she'll be hunting all around in the house, she'll know that there was something, that the child was treated for something. And in the meantime, in the next few days, the child did start to recover.

But she came in, she came in, she looked all around, and she looked every place, all around for something, but she didn't find it, cause it was over with a coat on the coatrack, and when the man came back to see how the child was, he said that he was visited three nights by a big husky woman coming in, and his son said, "Dad, I got awake and I thought I saw a woman in my room." And he said, "She wasn't after you, she was after me." So anyway he said, "But I broke her spell." And the child got better

He went around to all our keyholes and marked X's [on them] all around.

Collector: What about the lady who was supposed to have caused all the trouble, did she ever come back and visit?

"No she kept away, she wouldn't speak to us, somebody said she was sick, and that she was sorta weak or whatever, but I think she lost her power for that, whatever it was".

Collector: Had she been angry with you or something before?

"No, but we bought the house, the half a house that they wanted and we didn't know it, and they had gone down in the basement and started to clean up the basement and this and that and everything else, and we come along and bought it . . . and paid for it, see, and the deed went through and everything, and they were very put out about it. She was very put out about it. She wanted that side of the house, too. So, but outside of that they were always good friends, we never had a word, no arguments, no nothing."

"He [the man who was trying] gave us a string with a little pouch to wear around the child's neck. And he told us not to open it, but when it was folded up, it was folded so many times, but I watched him, and it was the form of a cross. . . . He folded the paper up and he put it in a little bag, and tied it up, and she wore it around her neck, he said, they can't touch her. This man even put one of those [pouches] on the dog's collar."

Collector: "Did he give you and your husband each one of them too?"

"No, didn't need them. Only the weaker people, see, you don't believe in her, she can't touch you."

Collector: "What about your other children, did you ever have anybody try any other time for anything?"

"Didn't need to. That stopped it."*

Her husband, Cal, corroborated the story, adding a few more details:

When Jane was little she was hexed. We brought in someone to try. He said that our dog would carry on when the person who hexed her came up the back steps. X came, and the dog carried on, we had to throw him out. X came in, stayed a few minutes and left and never came back. Jane kept crying and saying she saw X, coming through the wall. [The powwower] laid a string across the door to Jane's bedroom so "they" wouldn't come in. That was the time some of our chickens were found dead every morning—we finally had to sell them. But we never believed in witchcraft.

Betty repeated this story at a later date in an interview at which her outspoken sister-in-law, Anna, several children and some grandchildren were present. She altered one aspect of her story drastically—that was her admitted belief in the efficacy of "trying".

Jane was real sick that time, you know. But your husband [referring to Anna] sent the witchdoctor up there, you know. Well, anyway he put a string around the child's neck and he put one under the dog's collar, and it was a little like a bag, remember asafetida bags? Well, it was a little like that on a string around her neck. And when we opened the bag it was a prayer and it was folded, the paper was folded like a cross. But anyhow we called the doctor in. I said, "Do you believe in anything due to supernatural activity through my house?" He said, "Oh my goodness, no."*

Like Anna and Cal, Betty was unwilling to admit to the possibility of witchcraft as a cause. But in spite of her vehement denials, she, too, accepted the possibility of supernatural healing, as in her child's dramatic recovery, and in her own more recent recovery from major surgery which she describes as a miracle of faith. She also accepts the possibility of supernatural contact: she repeated privately the tale of Anna's family's-famous encounter with the short fat ghost:

There used to be somebody come into her house, a man especially. Understand everything was locked, but he, you know, but this man would appear, you know, he'd appear at the foot of their bed. She said he'd stand and grin and grin. Well, anyway, she said that years ago there was some old man [who] lived alone for many years, and he liked company, you know, but people just seemed to shy away from him because he had such queer ways. And it was the same house they had bought, down on [————] Street.

And Anna said that for the longest time he would come back like that. And she said somebody told her, she went to the Mr. — I won't

³⁰Motif G265.6.4: "Witch causes dog to behave unnaturally."

mention his name on the tape — to try, and he said, "You ask him what he wants." He said, "That old man had money, and may be he has it buried someplace, and he would like to tell you, so ask."

And she said that, well, he came back once again and she talked to him and asked what he wanted or something similar, I just don't recall. But anyhow, he disappeared, and that was the end of it. Never nothing about the money, I don't know if he had any money, but this old man said that he did, he was noted for that. He was an old recluse. He lived alone, and Anna had all these children there and (her husband). But he never appeared when [her husband] was there, it was just Anna.*

Once again, her rejection of powwowing appears to be limited to a denial of evil cause; she has no doubt in either the possibility of contact with the supernatural or in the power of healing through faith. And this modification may be a recent phenomenon.

Witchcraft in the United States commonly manifests itself as illness in animals, a decidedly rural form; in the early part of this century, however, the area where the family lives was rapidly becoming urbanized. Significantly there are few narratives in the family's repertoire about the bewitching of animals (the pet dog and chickens being exceptions), but there are few residents of this area who cannot recount a tale of a bewitched child. A casual remark to one of Betty's long-time neighbors produced an excellent typical tale of child hexing.

It was the year 1908—that's the year I was born. But before that, this old man lived aside of my grandmother on [_____] Street, and he was a real grouchy old man. And he used to yell at the kids and make motions against them. My sister said he had real bulgy eyes, said he was real ugly. And then, Aunt Kay, before I was born, when Aunt Kay was home yet when she was growing up, maybe 8 or 10, she used to sleep on the third floor, and she'd hear things at night, things scratching. She'd look out the window and see black cats and she'd scream and carry on and cry.

And then Grandma took her to someone and he tried for her, and then after that it seemed to settle her down. It wasn't long after that I was born. I just kept crying day—all day and all the time. Mother took me to the doctor, and he couldn't find anything the matter with me. But he gave Mother something to give me, ruedicine or something, but it didn't help. So then Grandma, or my mother went to Grandma, and Grandma told her to take me to the man who tried for Aunt Kay.

And that man said, "I'm tired of this. I'm going to get that son of a bitch this time."

And a week later he [the old, ugly man] died a very violent death, he suffered. He must have died an awful death, he suffered. When he put this spell on him, this man I guess got pain, violent pain and died a violent death. My husband thinks it's stupid, but I don't.

He was terrorizing all the kids, peoples' children in the neighborhood. My sister said I just cried all day and night. When Mother brought me home that's the first I slept. Mother never had any trouble with me after that. I didn't cry and cry.

Informant 3: Dorothy

Dorothy is Anna's daughter, and the only one of Anna's, Betty's and Cal's combined seven children who admits to either any interest or belief in powwowing. The other children, when questioned, found Anna's and Betty's beliefs rather quaint, funny and of limited interest. This suggests one possible reason for Anna's and Betty's vehement denial of any belief. All of their children, with the exception of Dorothy, are materially well-off and comfortable. Dorothy, however, has suffered a series of emotional traumas following the loss of her husband, her home, her sister and a brief estrangement with one of her children. She found some limited reference to the powwowing techniques of her father and grandfather helpful in tiding her over these crises. For example, she carries with her a charm against danger which she obtained from her father's witchcraft book.

Her mother-in-law, Harriet, was also an active powwower. Dorothy wanted to learn from her, but Harriet believed that the power could only pass from female to male. Hence, Dorothy never learned the actual charms, but clearly recalls events:

I saw warts removed. Harriet and I were visiting some friends, and one had a wart coming on his lip. Harriet said do you want rid of it. He said yes. So she said some words real soft — I couldn't hear what she said — and blew three times on the wart. And in two weeks it was gone. But she wouldn't tell me the words.

Harriet knew how to stop blood, too. She couldn't tell me, she had to tell a man. She went to her grave without telling anyone. It was a Bible verse.³¹ X had a dairy down on [_____] Street, one Sunday he was cleaning bottles and he cut himself badly. He couldn't stop it and he couldn't get a doctor. They called Harriet — I was there. She got X to the phone and talked to him, then said the words real low, I couldn't hear them even though I tried to. She said for him to call her back in fifteen minutes. He did and the bleeding had stopped.

Her belief does not exclude the possibility of evil as Anna's, Betty's and Cal's purportedly do. Rather she accepts the possibility of witchcraft fully. A neighbor of hers was reputed to be a witch.:

When Z lived next door to Mother her things started to break — her refrigerator, her washer. Z came over here about this cat, and I told her not to trust him. You know grandpop was a witchdoctor, and he said to put red x's on things

³¹Dorson, p. 150 ff.

to protect them from witchcraft, so she put x's on the things and that stopped it. Her washer sounded horrible, but after she put the mark on it, it's run good ever since. And my house, I came in one day and all the things on my dresser were changed, and in my cupboards. I put marks on them and that stopped it.³²

Informants 4 and 5: Ellen and Fran

Ellen is Dorothy's daughter and Fran is her cousin. Both are in their late twenties, have college degrees, and openly admit the possibility of witchcraft and the power of faith healing. They accept the exploits of their grandparental generation not with the disbelief and amusement of their parents, but rather with awe and belief. Curiously, neither knew much about the achievement of Anna's husband and grandfather, even though they are close to this grandmother. Both, however, knew tales about Harriet. Ellen reported:

My grandmother used to try for people. Once she said a prayer for someone who was cut and she stopped bleeding.

Fran continued with a typical belief tale about Harriet's power:

Aunt Lena's baby couldn't sleep. She said he would scream that the kitty cat was trying to get him. So Aunt Lena called Harriet. She said someone was after the baby. She said to put a frog's leg at a certain verse in the Bible and put a broom across the door. She did it, and that was the first the baby slept. And he slept after that. The broom disappeared, but the frog leg is still in the Bible.

Informant 6: Gail

Gail is the granddaughter of Betty and Cal. She is in her late twenties, also has a college degree, and occasionally "tries" for people. While she is aware of the stories told by other members of her family, she traces her own ability and interest in powwowing to the manuscript given to her by her grandmother, Betty. She was reluctant and embarrassed to admit anything about her knowledge; she appears to have adopted the moderate attitude toward powwowing apparent in her grandparents, generally downplaying aspects of witchcraft, emphasizing the power of faith healing.

My grandmother gave me this book that had everything written down in it, and she told me about it, and I guess she said I could do it. I didn't really believe it, but well, it was kind of fun, I thought. One time I told some friends about it, and one time I was visiting them, and they said that their baby had been sick. They'd taken him to the doctor and everything, but, he had a rash. And we started kidding around, and

she said why didn't I try for the baby. They knew I had, I told them my grandmother had given me that stuff. And so I was joking, I said okay.

And I remembered the one thing that grandmother had given me for treating rashes [wildfire], and we went up, and the baby was only about a year old. I didn't know the baby very well. And we went upstairs, and the baby woke up, and he wanted to come to me, and that was kind of strange, because I just didn't know him. So anyway, I said those words that my grandmother had said, and did it just the way they said in her book. And just like said a prayer. And then the baby went back to sleep, and I went on home, and didn't really think too much about it.

The next day she called me and said that the rash was gone, so I began to wonder if it really did work. So anyway I tried it again, a couple of times, when people, well, when that baby was sick and then somebody else. But it works.*

Conclusions

Generation I, the cohort actually covering two generations from 1830 to 1860, shows all of the characteristics usually associated with Pennsylvania German traditional powwowing. The cause is almost uniformly attributed to witchcraft. The use of charms in German, amulets, and the employment of chalk, strings or other objects in ritual is regularly accepted. And the truth of the events, at least as far as the practitioners seem to have seen it, is unquestionable.

Generation II, the cohort born in the 1890's and reaching maturity about the time of World War I (including Anna, Anna's husband, Betty, Cal and Harriet), shows a curious mixture of belief and disbelief. There is a growing unwillingness to allow witchcraft as a cause (only Anna's husband would accept it); instead, natural causes — illness, bad luck or other rational explanations are encountered. The ritual, the charms (now often in English since this was the generation that finally discarded the dialect), and some use of amulets still appear, although there is an emphatic shift to acceptance of the power of faith in healing. And most importantly, while the tales are related as true events, there is a large scale denial of the mystical aspects of it — "we never believed in it" is a common phrase. This, too, is the era of the Rehmeier murder trial.

Generation III was born in the 1920's and matured at the time of World War II. With the sole exception of Dorothy, whose attitudes are far more in keeping with those of Generation IV, members of the cohort do not accept powwowing. It is regarded as quaint superstition, causes of bad luck are attributed to anything but witchcraft; there is no use of incantations, charms, amulets, or ritual, and any cure touted as "true" is ascribed to coincidence. The power of prayer and the success of faith healing have only limited acceptance.

³²Motif G265.8.1: "Witch bewitches household articles"; G271.2.1: "Sign of cross marked on bewitched object breaks witch's spell."

Generation IV was born in the late 1940's and reached maturity in the early 1970's during a massive occult revival. They exhibit a particularly dramatic shift of opinion. Where their parents have entirely rejected the powwowing complex, they have embraced it to the point where they not only openly accept trying, but at least one actively practices it. Only Dorothy cites witchcraft as a sure cause; the others tend to equivocate. They all accept the use of ritual, amulets, incantations (Gail still uses two in the German dialect even though she doesn't understand them), and especially prayer. And all report their narratives as true events, as cures wrought through power and faith.

The family lines of belief transmission are of a particular interest. Anna and Cal worked very hard to erase this "silly stuff" from the lives of their families. Anna especially fought hard to keep her husband's "fanatic" interest in witchcraft from being transmitted to her children, and she apparently has won this battle. Of all her children, only Dorothy believes, and she apparently has accepted the belief only recently. Of her numerous grandchildren, only Ellen and Fran show evidence of belief. All three are extremely close to Anna, but none know much about the activities of their own powwowing grandparents; most of their material has come to them through Harriet. Likewise Gail, who also is quite close to Anna, learned through her grandmother's (Betty's) family, and while she is aware of the activities of Anna and Cal's side of the family, she considers them interesting family history, but history with little bearing on her own knowledge or ability as a powwower.

Dorothy and Gail both possess handwritten copies of Anna's "witchcraft" book, but Gail denies ever having used it. Dorothy, on the other hand, has used at least two charms from it, one the charm (prayer) against danger she carried with her. Dorothy has adopted Harriet's belief that power can only cross sex lines, for when I asked her what the charm was, she replied that she could not tell me but she could show me. She also carries the charm for "healing a sore mouth" taken from her father's manuscript. Additionally, she has adopted a technique from her great-grandfather (shared, surprisingly by Anna) for protection against witchcraft by placing red x's on objects.

Anna's grandfather was the only one who established a regular powwowing practice; Anna's husband would like to have been an active practitioner, but was apparently discouraged by his wife's vehement dislike of the practice. The other active powwowers — Anna and Cal's father, Betty's mother, Harriet and Gail — are family practitioners. They tried for their family and friends, but rarely established any prac-

tice beyond that. Each of them, too, had (or has) a significant knowledge of other forms of folk medicine. Anna and Betty remembered (and still use) numerous herbal remedies for minor ailments. Anna swears by an onion or spice poultice which she learned from her parents and with which she nursed her children through pneumonia. Dorothy reported the occasional use of the same poultices with her children. Anna also reported the use of catnip, boneset, slippery elm, pennyroyal, dandelion and elderberry as teas variously prescribed for colds or "for the blood," but which she rarely used. Betty knew fewer home remedies, but did extoll the virtues of a homemade salve made of beeswax and soap, and recalled several cold remedies and poultices, whose basic ingredient was whiskey.

Gail, too, is a family practitioner. She has actively learned as many of the "old" remedies as possible, but uses few of them. She admitted that she, like Betty, kept whiskey for a cold, and occasionally used pennyroyal tea for menstrual cramps, a cure she learned from Anna's sister.

Several conclusions are possible from this examination of a family's healing traditions. First, the people of this family who were concerned with healing, whether from native interest or necessity, adopted the use of as many cures as possible. Anna is conversant with both the occult and non-occult cures of her tradition, even though she has rejected selected aspects of the former. Betty knew of both traditions, but came from a wealthier family and could afford to forget many of them. Dorothy and Gail are aware of the twin traditions, and on occasion apply either or both. Other family members, however, recall a few non-occult herbal cures and no occult cures.

Second, the acceptance of this tradition — particularly of the powwowing tradition — seems to depend heavily on the closeness of ties between various members of the family, especially between active powwowers and their descendents. Anna and Cal disliked their *Braucher* grandfather, but adored their father. And the attitude they reported represents a rejection of the grandfather's beliefs (they discarded witchcraft as a cause), but a retention of their parents' beliefs in healing through faith. Betty was close to her *Braucher* mother, but accepted her husband's partial rejection of the tradition. Additionally neither Betty nor Cal particularly liked Anna's *Braucher* husband. Again, there is a precise rejection of witchcraft as a cause, but a defense of Betty's mother's practice of healing.

Anna and Dorothy share a close but occasionally tempestuous relationship. Anna's family has largely accepted her rejection of witchcraft, but Dorothy sometimes rebels. If Anna has soundly rejected her husband's belief system, Dorothy, their daughter,

has just as soundly accepted it. The relationship between Betty and Gail is more subtle. They are not close, but Gail has adopted many of her grandmother's attitudes and beliefs. While this accurate reflection of the tradition in Gail may have been emphasized for the benefit of the collector, Gail's articulated belief and healing style relied far more heavily on Betty than on any member of the family.

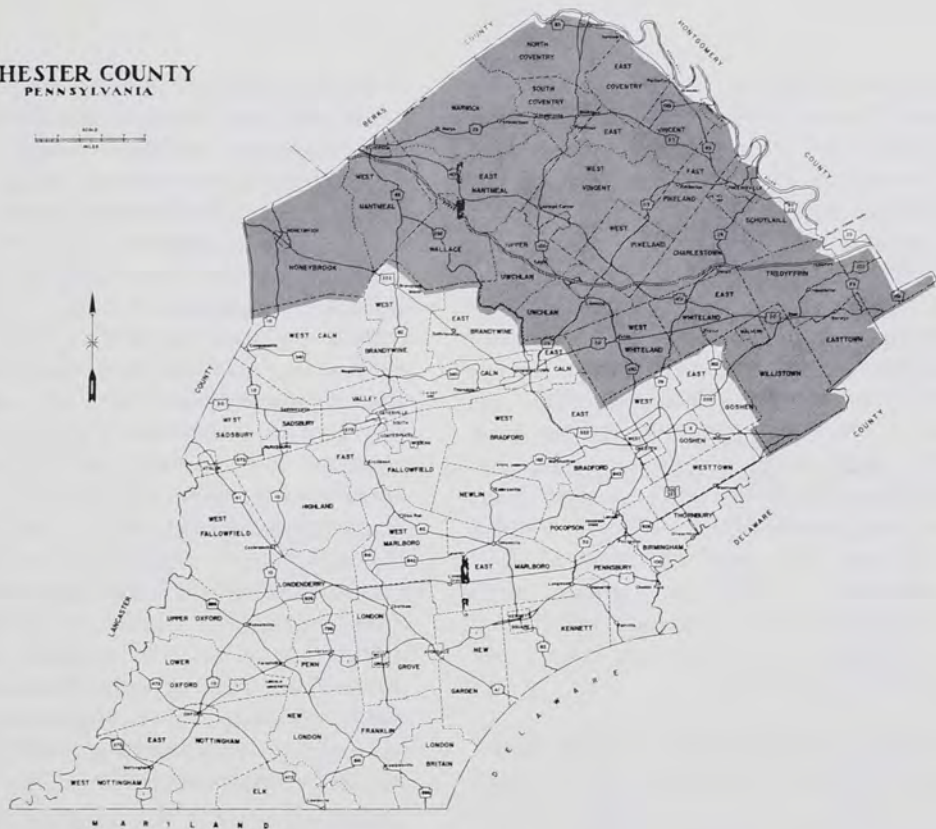
Attitudes toward powwowing seem to be part of one's cultural baggage, inculcated at a young age and not affected by close relationships as much as by

disjunctive ones. Furthermore, public opinion greatly affects the willingness of people to express belief in powwowing practices. Before 1930 (the era of the Rehmeyer trial), beliefs in powwowing were openly expressed; thereafter it became an underground practice (or belief) which has reemerged following the occult revival of the 1970's. And now, in the minds of most of the informants, powwowing has become indistinguishable from faith healing, a phenomenon they are all ready and willing to accept.



Title-page of last Harrisburg German edition of Hohmann's "Long Lost Friend," Pennsylvania's most used powwow manual.

CHESTER COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA



Chester County. The shaded portion shows the area of German settlement.

German Settlement of Northern Chester County in the 18th Century

By Sara Matthews

INTRODUCTION

The mass emigration from the Lower Rhine regions to Pennsylvania was in full tide during the first half of the 18th Century. Economic distress, religious persecution and the ravages of war prompted over one hundred thousand German-speaking emigrants to seek a refuge in Penn's new colony. Eventually this ethnic group constituted one-third of the population of colonial Pennsylvania and occupied a larger area than did any other national group.

Although branches of the great stream of German immigration flowed into New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, the main current was directed toward Pennsylvania. The first settlers planted themselves in the immediate vicinity of Philadelphia. Later the settlement pattern became a northerly migration up the Schuylkill River, with eventual occupation of much of Southeastern Pennsylvania, especially those counties of Northamp-

ton, Lehigh, Berks, Bucks, Montgomery, Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, and York.

Traditionally, the neighboring county of Chester has usually been accepted as an English and Welsh ethnic stronghold. Evidence exists, however, of German immigration into the northernmost townships. In the present study, I have attempted to exploit the data to ascertain which of these townships were, in fact, subject to significant German settlement and so determine what further lands of Southeastern Pennsylvania may rightfully be considered the home of the "Pennsylvania Dutch".

METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this paper, northern Chester County was defined as these ten townships: Charlestown, Coventry, Easttown, Nantmeal, Pikeland, Tredyffrin, Uwchland, Vincent, Willistown, and Whitelands. Those northern townships of 18th Century Chester County which in 1789 broke off to form

Delaware County are not included in the present study. In 1740 Nantmeal Township was subdivided into East Nantmeal Township and West Nantmeal Township. Those sources examined after this date include the records of both townships.

There exist several sets of surviving documents available for historical studies of Chester County. Primary use in this paper was made of the *township tax lists*. These lists provide basic data on the number of taxables, by category for each year (except for the years 1741-1747) from 1715 on into the 19th Century. Records for Pikeland Township do not exist until 1748. The early settlers of this township encountered difficulty in obtaining titles to their lands and as unrecognized landholders were not subject to taxation. The tax lists were examined at five-year intervals beginning in 1720. As German immigration was virtually over by 1765, it was judged that further examination after this date would not significantly contribute to this study.

Abstracts of Wills. These volumes, arranged chronologically, contain the names, residences, and a brief summary of the content of the will for those people who have wills on file in Chester County Court House. Volume II, 1758-1777, and Volume III, 1777-1800, were examined to further substantiate those conclusions drawn from the township tax lists. Through surname analysis, both the tax lists and the will abstracts were used to ascertain those townships which were subject to significant German immigration in the course of the 18th Century. The author claims both reading knowledge of German and Pennsylvania German. This knowledge, plus an extensive study of Pennsylvania German wills of the 18th Century,¹ gave capability to determine those surnames of German origin. Obviously, those surnames exist of undeterminable origin and immigrants may anglicize their names. There existed, however, sufficient numbers of indisputably German names in both tax lists and wills to render valid conclusions.

Finally, *local histories* of any type available were used to further corroborate the basic data. Many of these histories did discuss the various ethnic settlements and their approximate locations in Chester County. Rarely, however, was settlement analyzed on the township level. Local histories further provided data in that locations of churches and their chronological origins of the predominantly German religions, i.e., Lutheran, Reformed (presently United Church of Christ), Amish and Mennonite served to substantiate the existence of German settlements.

¹Sara L. Matthews, "Pennsylvania German Wills: A Content Analysis" (Unpublished article, Department of Folklore and Folk-life, University of Pennsylvania, 1976).

BACKGROUND OF GERMAN IMMIGRATION

On the sixth of October, 1683, the first German colonists landed in Pennsylvania. On the seventeenth of October a warrant was issued for six thousand acres of land and on the twenty-fourth it was surveyed and divided into lots. This settlement was Germantown and constituted the first German settlement in Pennsylvania.

This German immigration beginning in 1683 was to continue until the latter part of the 18th Century. Although it remained light throughout the 17th Century and the early 18th Century, by 1717 such vast numbers were arriving as to cause uneasiness to some of the early English settlers in the Province. The Governor's Council in that year made note of the fact that it might be a very dangerous consequence having so many foreigners from Germany daily disposing of themselves, without producing certificates from where they came or what they were, and without making application to any of the magistrates. This led to measures being taken, whereby all arriving emigrants were obliged to be registered by the Secretary of the Province.² In 1719 Jonathan Dickinson wrote, "We are daily expecting ships from London which bring over Palatines, in number about six or seven thousand. We had a parcel who came out about five years ago, who purchased land about sixty miles west of Philadelphia, and proved quiet and industrious."³ And on September 14, 1727, a resolution was adopted by the Provincial Council holding shipmasters to a strict accountability and ordering an examination into the matter of bringing aliens into the Province.

That the masters of vessels importing Germans and others from the continent of Europe, shall be examined whether they have leave granted to them by the Court of Great Britain for the importation of these foreigners, and that a list be taken of all these people. . . and that a writing be drawn up for them to sign, declaring their allegiance and subjection to the King of Great Britain, and fidelity to the Proprietary of this Province.⁴

Estimates vary as the actual number of arriving German immigrants. In 1766 Benjamin Franklin testified before a committee of the House of Commons that he supposed that there were in Pennsylvania about one hundred and sixty thousand white inhabitants, of whom one-third were Quakers and one-third Germans.⁵ This is in close agreement with

²Andrew D. Mellick, Jr., "German Emigration to the American Colonies, its Cause, and the Distribution of the Emigrants," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, X (1886), 389.

³F. R. Diffenderfer, "The German Immigration into Pennsylvania Through the Port of Philadelphia and The Redemptioners," *The Pennsylvania German Society*, I (1900), 33.

⁴*Ibid.*, 37

⁵Mellick, 391.

most contemporary authorities although one states that "this *Völkerwanderung* brought to our shores one hundred and fifty thousand people, one-half of the population of the province of Pennsylvania.⁶ Contemporary studies based on extant ship lists estimate between 65,000 and 75,000 persons arriving between 1727 and 1765.⁷

German emigration had a two-fold cause: first in point of time as of importance, a religious motive; and secondly, a social or material one. The Rhine country, from which such an overwhelming proportion of the colonial German emigrants came that it may almost exclusively be considered, was the home of Mysticism and Pietism. The Reformation did not go far enough to satisfy those who looked further than the new teachings of Luther or Zwingli. Among scattered circles existed certain beliefs which crystallized into "the Sects." These flourished mainly among the lower classes, those who had wished during the Reformation to abolish the existing nobility along with the priesthood. These socialistic views naturally made them obnoxious to the existing authorities who through death and imprisonment attempted to eradicate the followers of Pietism. The severe harassment earned them the designation of "the persecuted sects."

The second cause of the colonial German emigration was the social and political condition of that political entity we now designate as Germany. In the midst of the religious intolerance and persecutions of the century after the Reformation began the Thirty Years War causing total upheaval of existing social and economic structure. Successive wars coupled with severe misgovernment of the separate principalities created a thoroughly desolate situation.

William Penn made four visits to Germany, the last in 1677, noting the existing religious intolerance and destitution of the lower classes. Four years later obtaining the grant of his province and seeking settlers, he ordered pamphlets prepared setting forth the advantages of Pennsylvania. Offered an asylum, the inhabitants of this desolated land began their oceanic journeys, seeking in Pennsylvania relief from economic depression and religious persecution.

German immigration was largely confined between 1683 and 1776. The Revolutionary War proved an effective deterrent to immigration; at its conclusion, however, German immigration did not resume in significant numbers. Prior to 1702 only 200 families

had sought refuge in Pennsylvania.⁸ By 1727 it is estimated that 20,000 had reached the Pennsylvania shores.⁹ It was in this year that German immigration assumed large proportions and official statistics began to be published. The following table chronologically numbers those ships entering the port of Philadelphia carrying German immigrants.

Table I
Peak Years of German Immigration
(F.R. Diffenderfer, 43)

Years	Number of Ships	Years	Number of Ships
1729	2	1748	8
1730	3	1749	21
1731	4	1750	14
1732	11	1751	15
1733	7	1752	19
1734	2	1753	19
1735	3	1754	17
1736	3	1755	2
1737	7	1756	1
1738	16	1757	none
1739	8	1758	none
1740	6	1759	none
1741	9	1760	none
1742	5	1761	1
1743	9	1762	none
1744	5	1763	4
1745	none	1764	11
1746	2	1765	5
1747	5		

Consequently the peak years of German immigration can be determined to be 1732-33, 1737-44, 1748-55, and 1764, of which 1749 and 1750 were the highest individual years.

BACKGROUND OF CHESTER COUNTY SETTLEMENT

In 1682 William Penn established Chester as one of the three original counties of his province. It was located on the west bank of the Delaware and extended indefinitely westward. The western boundary was definitely established by the erection of Lancaster County in 1729 and the northern boundary was fixed by the erection of Berks County in 1752. The structure of the county was again altered in 1789 when a large group of eastern townships split off to form the new county of Delaware.

⁶Lucy Forney Bittinger, *The Germans in Colonial Times* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1901), 5.

⁷James Thomas Lemon, "A Rural Geography of Southeastern Pennsylvania in the Eighteenth Century" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin), 78.

⁸John Palmer Garber, *The Valley of the Delaware and Its Place in American History* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1934), p. 107.

⁹Levi O. Kuhns, *German and Swiss Settlements of Pennsylvania* (New York: Holt Publishing Company, 1901), p. 57.

Settlement of the county was not a constant, progressive, evenly distributed phenomenon. In some cases it was inhibited by, or for a time remained static because of man-made controls, such as land systems, belligerent Indians, and decrees of the Proprietor limiting the land to be occupied.

William Penn, imbued with an idea of a religiously oriented society as well as the hope of gaining revenue, had an orderly plan of settlement. He thought people should seat themselves contiguous to one another in tier after tier of township, regularly laid out and surveyed prior to settlement. To implement his plans, he sold large acreage to "First Purchasers" in England, most of them Quakers whom he thought would carry out his ideas. These were requested to settle people within three years on pain of loss of their rights. In 1699, Penn abandoned this policy and the London Company was granted 60,000 acres without this stipulation.

Proprietary practices and policies, however, had only a minimal influence on the location of settlers. Only before 1700 was progressive contiguous settlement maintained. After 1700 the practice of indiscriminate location was widespread due to the lack of control and direction.¹⁰

Sources indicate that by 1730 the "frontier" had extended beyond Chester County.¹¹ This does not, however, indicate the availability of land behind the moving frontier line. By 1700 William Penn set aside some of the land in Chester County for his wife and heirs as various "Manors". This land was only gradually sold off, as Penn's original hope had been to rent it. That land initially sold by Penn as investments to groups or individuals in England developed slowly. The authorities of the London Company were still trying to lure settlers to their land in 1731 when they made the following offer: "That they will give to Every such Person or Persons Fifty Acres of land to them and their Heirs for ever, Free and Clear of all manner of Quitrents."¹² Lastly, in 1760 the following figures were reported in the Assembly which record a large amount of unassessed land.

Table 2
(*Pennsylvania Archives*, Series 8, Volume VI, 5134)

	Acres		%	
County	Reported	Area	Reported	
Chester	399,674	604,800	66	

It appears obvious, therefore, that incoming settlers were able to take up lands previously unsettled.

¹⁰Lemon, p. 118.

¹¹John Florin, "The Advance of Frontier Settlement in Pennsylvania 1638-1850" (Unpublished M.S. Thesis, Department of Geography, Pennsylvania State University), pp. 50, 51.

¹²Duane Eugene Ball, "The Process of Settlement in 18th Century Chester County, Pennsylvania" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1973), p. 25.

Further, one reference suggests the additional possibility that incoming settlers might purchase previously developed farm land. The Reverend William Currie, then missionary at Old St. David's Church (Radnor Township, Chester County), by letter dated "Radnor, September 29, 1763," writes to the Secretary of the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts:

I have the pleasure to acquaint you that my congregations of Radnor and Ye Valley [Chester Valley] daily increase but that at Perquihama [Montgomery County] rather declines, as the Dutch [Germans] buy out the English and settle in their room.¹³

GERMAN SETTLEMENT OF NORTHERN CHESTER COUNTY

Charlestown Township. Part of this township was a grant of 5,000 acres to Charles Pickering who traveled to Pennsylvania with Penn. The subsequent township also included one of the Penn "Manors" and eventually took the first name of Pickering as its designation.

Table 3
Analysis of Charlestown Township Tax Lists
(Chester County Tax Lists, Assessments and Returns, Chester County Historical Society)

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1720	records do not exist		
1725	no German surnames		
1730	no German surnames		
1735	no German surnames		
1740	records do not exist		
1748	63	5	8%
1750	76	8	10%
1755	102	11	10%
1760	131	15	11%
1765	182	22	12%

Table 4
Analysis of Will Abstracts
(Abstract of Wills, Volume II and III, Chester County Historical Society)

Year	German Wills Recorded
1788	1
1791	1
1795	1

For those years not listed, no German wills were recorded.

Coventry Township. All that part of Chester County north of French Creek or Vincent River was first called "Skoolkill." In 1724, the name Coventry appears, receiving its name from one Samuel Nutt, who emigrated from Coventry, England, and began the manufacture of iron in the area in 1717.

¹³Henry Pleasants, *The Old Eagle School* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1909), p. 24.

Table 5
Analysis of Coventry Township Tax Lists

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1720	records do not exist		
1725	no German surnames		
1730	32	18	56%
1735	56	30	54%
1740	61	29	48%
1748	records missing		
1750	81	34	42%
1755	100	52	52%
1760	109	54	50%
1765	136	66	49%

Table 6
Analysis of Will Abstracts

German Wills		German Wills	
Year	Recorded	Year	Recorded
1775	1	1792	3
1780	1	1793	5
1782	2	1794	3
1785	2	1795	2
1786	1	1797	2
1787	1	1798	2
1788	1	1799	7
1789	1	1800	4
1790	2	1801	1
1791	1		

Beyond the above data, there is substantial evidence of heavy German settlement. In 1724, taking its name from the township, the Coventry Brethren Church was formally organized, a group of Dunkers or German Baptists. In 1725, a Mennonite church organized, erecting their first structure in 1728. Further, the Brownback Reformed congregation existed for some years before extending its first call to a pastor in 1743.

Easttown Township. This township, organized about 1704, was originally part of the "Welsh Tract," those 40,000 acres west of the Schuylkill purchased by Welsh settlers from the Penns in 1684. These settlers originally hoped to maintain themselves as a separate municipality and did appear to have felt a separateness of national identity. Although Welsh immigration ceased by 1700,¹⁴ this cultural allegiance appears to have continued on into the 18th Century. In 1725, an Anglican minister said there were Welsh in Radnor who still could not understand English.¹⁵

Table 7*

Analysis of Easttown Township Tax Lists

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1765	58	1	2%

*For the years 1720 - 1760 there were no Germans taxed in Easttown Township. There were also no German wills recorded for this township.

¹⁴ Wayland Fuller Dunaway, "The English Settlers in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LII (1928), 432.

¹⁵ Lemon, p. 127.

Nantmeal Township. Formerly written "Nant Mel," meaning honey brook, this township was first settled by Welsh who named it for their birthplace in Radnorshire, Wales. It extended from the 'Skook kill' to the Lancaster and Berks County lines. In 1739 the original township was divided into East Nantmeal Township and West Nantmeal Township.

Table 8

Analysis of Nantmeal Township Tax Lists

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1720	records do not exist		
1725	no German surnames		
1730	no German surnames		
1735	no German surnames		
1740	18	5	28%

Table 9

Analysis of East Nantmeal Township Tax Lists

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1748	70	1	1%
1750	101	1	1%
1755	107	11	10%
1760	133	22	17%
1765	157	28	18%

Table 10

Analysis of West Nantmeal Township Tax Lists

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1748	76	3	5%
1750	128	4	3%
1755	137	7	5%
1760	139	6	4%
1765	216	6	3%

Table 11

Analysis of East Nantmeal Will Abstracts

German Wills		German Wills	
Year	Recorded	Year	Recorded
1769	1	1791	1
1777	2	1796	1
1782	1	1798	1
1790	1	1799	1

Table 12

Analysis of West Nantmeal Will Abstracts

German Wills		German Wills	
Year	Recorded	Year	Recorded
1768	2	1790	1
1770	1	1792	1
1782	2	1793	2
1789	1	1797	1

Pikeland Township. Presented by the Proprietor to Joseph Pike, these 10,000 acres were unseated many years but at length was leased in small tracts. The first settlers had difficulty in obtaining titles to their lands. Eventually all of Pikeland was sold by the sheriff for debt and the settlers thereby secured titles to their lands. Two churches of German origin were founded in this township, St. Peter's Reformed in 1772 and St. Peter's Lutheran in 1771.

Table 13**Analysis of Pikeland Township Tax Lists*

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1748	53	3	6%
1750	64	9	14%
1755	126	32	25%
1760	123	47	38%
1765	176	54	31%

*As before mentioned, due to the difficulty settlers had in obtaining title to their lands, assessment records for Pikeland township do not exist prior to 1748.

Table 14*Analysis of Will Abstracts*

Year	German Wills Recorded	Year	German Wills Recorded
1768	2	1788	2
1770	1	1790	1
1777	1	1792	1
1778	1	1795	1
1783	2	1797	1
1787	2	1798	1

Tredyffrin Township. Originally a part of the "Welsh Tract," the first authentic evidence of a German settlement in Tredyffrin Township is found in the deed books of Chester County which indicate the purchase by Jacob Sharradin on 16 March, 1765 of 150 acres of land.¹⁶ Although no German names are recorded prior to 1755, assessment records do indicate German settlement prior to 1765.

Table 15*Analysis of Tredyffrin Township Tax Lists*

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1755	100	9	9%
1760	118	12	10%
1765	133	13	10%

Table 16*Analysis of Will Abstracts*

Year	German Wills Recorded	Year	German Wills Recorded
1780	1	1796	1
1788	1	1798	1
1789	1	1799	1
1790	1	1800	2

Uwchland Township. Lying directly northwest of the "Welsh Tract," this township was settled by Welsh Quakers who gave it its name meaning "the land above the valley." Formally organized in 1712, the assessment records of this township reveal only one German settler in 1765, one Johannes Hains. The will abstracts again give evidence of one German, the same Johannes Hains, dying in 1784.

Vincent Township. This township, originally consisting of 20,000 acres, was purchased in England by Sir Mathias Vincent, Benjamin Furley, and Dr. Daniel Coxe. Furley, a traveling companion of Penn and a Quaker, returned to Germany and induced

many emigrants to eventually settle there. The owners preferred to make this land available for lease only with the reserved right of purchase. Consequently, land development here, as in Pikeland township, was slow.

Table 17*Analysis of Vincent Township Tax Lists*

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1720	records do not exist		
1725	14	4	29%
1730	39	4	10%
1735	59	6	10%
1740	68	21	31%
1748	109	24	22%
1750	113	27	24%
1755	157	50	32%
1760	161	57	35%
1765	164	63	38%

Table 18*Analysis of Will Abstracts*

Year	German Wills Recorded	Year	German Wills Recorded
1771	1	1787	1
1774	1	1788	2
1776	1	1791	4
1778	1	1792	1
1779	1	1795	1
1780	1	1797	1
1782	1	1798	2
1786	1	1799	1

There exist also in Vincent Township two churches of 18th Century origin, Vincent Mennonite and St. Vincent's Reformed.

Whiteland Township. About 1704 this township was named for the ancestral home of Richard A. Thomas who had purchased 2,000 of its acres from Penn. In 1711 he came over from Wales to settle his land. Originally it was the northwestern part of the "Welsh Tract".

Table 19**Analysis of Whiteland Township Tax Lists*

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1740	53	2	4%
1748	67	4	6%
1750	76	6	8%
1755	88	2	2%
1760	120	7	6%
1765	125	10	8%

*Prior to 1740 no German names are recorded in Whiteland Township.

¹⁶Pleasants, p. 15.

Table 20
Analysis of Will Abstracts
German Wills Recorded

Year	Number of Wills
1780	1
1786	1
1792	1

Willistown Township. Settled first by English and Welsh Quakers and located in the heart of the "Welsh Tract," this township remained virtually immune to German penetration. Assessment records evidence no German settlement until 1755.

Table 21
Analysis of Willistown Township Tax Lists

Year	Number of Taxables	Germans	Percentage
1755	97	2	2%
1760	100	2	2%
1765	120	1	1%

Further, no German wills were recorded in the 18th Century in this township.

Table 22

Township	Earliest Record of German Settlement	Highest % Recorded
Vincent	1725	38%
Coventry	1730	56%
Pikeland	1748*	38%
Nantmeal	1740	28%
East Nantmeal	1748	18%
West Nantmeal	1748	5%
Whiteland	1740	8%
Charlestown	1748**	12%
Tredyffrin	1755	10%
Willistown	1755	2%
Easttown	1765	2%

*No records exist for Pikeland prior to 1748.
**1740 records for Charlestown do not exist.

CONCLUSION

In the historiography of Pennsylvania, the characteristics of national groups have been called upon extensively to explain the locational characteristics of various social and economic phenomena. It has long been thought that the Germans were more rational in the selection of sites on the land for farming.

At the very start they chose good land whenever possible. It has often been said that they hunted out the land where the trees grew tallest, for there they knew the soil would be most fertile; that they looked for the black walnut, which grew best in limestone soil; or that they sought out blue stones streaked with white — in other words, limestone.¹⁷

¹⁷Fredric Klees, *The Pennsylvania Dutch* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1950), p. 192.

In physiographic terms Southeastern Pennsylvania is relatively uniform although there exist some distinct features. One, in particular, is the limestone plain long noted for its supposedly high agricultural potential. It has long been a legend that the Pennsylvania Germans sought these limestone regions and that the 18th Century settlement patterns of this people followed the gently curves of the limestone belt in Pennsylvania.

Analysis of the research on Chester County leads to several conclusions. Other than Uwchland Township which remained impervious to German penetration, German settlement in varying degrees is evidenced in all the northern townships of Chester County.

There appears a heavy and relatively early concentration of German settlement in those three townships located on the northeastern border: Vincent, Coventry and Pikeland. It is also these townships in which are located colonial churches of German origin. To a lesser extent and some years later, evidence of settlement is found in Nantmeal (with a higher concentration in East Nantmeal which lies to the northeast), Whiteland, Charlestown, and Tredyffrin. Willistown and Easttown to the south were subject only to slight and late German settlement.

Initial penetration of the county appears to have been made in Vincent Township. As German immigration gained momentum, there began a gradual diaspora into the closest townships of Coventry, Nantmeal and Pikeland. This movement continued, eventually penetrating the townships of Whiteland, Tredyffrin, Willistown, and Easttown—all part of the "Welsh Tract".

Although it remains impossible to discuss accurately the movement of a people without comparable analysis of the surrounding counties, one conclusion of validity can be rendered. Although the limestone belt does indeed cross Chester County from west to east, it does not in any significant way correspond to the existence of German settlement. Those three townships of heaviest German settlement: Coventry, Vincent, and Pikeland are located to the north of the region.

National character to any degree would appear to have little explanatory utility. The practical factor of availability of land would initially seem a more rational answer.

Further, the evidence suggests that cultural factors could have been of some importance in the establishment of the distribution of this people. Each new wave of immigrants sought land as close as possible to their countrymen, for the Germans were foreigners, as the Scotch-Irish and Welsh were not, in an Anglo land. The bonds of kinship, custom, language and religious belief could well give security to this people in a new world.

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Medical Practice in Philadelphia at the Time of the Yellow Fever Epidemic, 1793

By Mark Workman

For the purposes of this course we have agreed to focus our attention on any non-Western, non-academic areas of medical practice. This paper, which revolves (albeit loosely) around the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia, would appear to fall outside the domain in which we are interested. There are a number of important reasons, however, why it is beneficial for us to examine 18th Century academic medicine. One obvious reason is suggested by the concept of "Gesunkenes Kulturgut". That is, before one can meaningfully discuss the acquisition and function of borrowed ideas, one must first know where they were derived from and how they functioned in their original context.

There is a more immediate reason, however, why this topic is of concern to us. The outstanding characteristic of scholarly medicine in late 18th Century Philadelphia, a characteristic made painfully obvious by the epidemic, was that it didn't have very far to "sink" before it reached the level of folk medicine. In spite of their more sophisticated vocabulary and complex theoretical justification, and in spite of the fact that they were taught in universities rather than in more traditional ways, the members of the College of Physicians resorted to the same pharmacopoeia and the same formulas and remedies as their less learned neighbors. At this point and place in time, when it came to actually dealing with urgent medical problems rather than just theorizing about them, there was tragically little difference between the two groups. Therefore, before going on to examine specific responses to the epidemic itself, we must first describe the surprisingly retarded state of contemporary medical knowledge.

Prior to the transition to modern medical and physical science in the 17th and 18th Centuries, the intellectual paradigm which dominated medical thinking was still the one proposed by the Greek philosophers and systematized in the Middle Ages, specifically, the theory of humoral physiology. This so-called "rational" theory ascribed all body functions to the four fluids or humors — blood, phlegm, black bile, and yellow bile — each humor being associated with two of the four fundamental qualities, heat, cold, moisture, and dryness. Bodily health was thought to

result from "the proper balance and counteraction of the four humors, and diseases were associated with excess or deficiency of one or another of them" (Corner, 1948, p. 361). Excess could be directly treated by bleeding, purging, or sweating; and deficiencies by the ingestion of the appropriate foods and pharmaceuticals, which were believed to be composed of the same qualities as the various body tissues.

Newton's discoveries, while revolutionizing the study of physical science, served only to disrupt the medical world from its state of complacency and throw it into a state of argumentative confusion. Numerous "systems" were proposed to replace the ancient, if not disproven, humoral theory. Most of these systems were entirely speculative, divorced from actual clinical experience (a situation not wholly unreasonable given the sorely limited investigative equipment available to the physicians). The break with the past was not complete, however. Hermann Boerhaave, a professor at Leyden, adhered to a modified version of the humoral theory, in which chemical and physical qualities were substituted for the humoral ones. Boerhaave, in fact, was still the accepted authority of Philadelphia physicians in 1769 when Benjamin Rush returned from abroad. According to Boerhaave, the "morbid cause of fevers" was to be found

chiefly in the urine, and glasses to retain it were a necessary part of the furniture of every sick room. To ensure the discharge of the supposed morbid matter of fever through the pores, patients were confined in their beds in sick-rooms from which all fresh air was excluded. Spirit of sweet nitre was a specific in general use and, in dangerous cases, Virginia snakeroot was added (Goodman, 1934, p. 34).

His theory, however, was no more based on experimental fact than was that from which it was derived, and it was eventually eclipsed as the center of medical thinking shifted to Edinburgh.

The medical systems proposed in Edinburgh were based on new discoveries about the physiology of nerves and muscular tissue ("solidism"). William Cullen, Rush's teacher, believed that the nervous system was the source of all life, and that "disease was due to failure of its regulatory powers, leading either to exaggeration of nervous functions (spasm), or to weakness (atony)" (Corner, 1948, p. 365).

Correspondingly, therapy was aimed at either reducing the tension in the nervous and vascular systems, or at stimulating them when they exhibited a lack of tone. The former was achieved by bleeding, purging and reduced diet, and the latter by intake of restorative drugs, stimulating drink, and food. Herein perhaps lies the basis of the adage "feed a cold and starve a fever." John Brown, another Scottish physician, elaborated upon Cullen's ideas, and also had an influence on Rush.

Another recent development inspired by the work of Linnaeus in botanic taxonomy was the establishment of "nosologies." An effort was made to classify all diseases according to superficial symptoms into classes, genera and species. Cullen discovered 1,387 specific diseases, and he devised an equally elaborate hierarchy of drugs suitable to each. Thus, all one had to do was to correctly diagnose the symptoms of a disease, find its place in the scheme, and administer the appropriate remedy (Flexner, 1937, p. 65). In a happy state of self-illusionment, those who subscribed to these systems ironically believed that

It was nosology that made the difference between empirics and true physicians. Empirics, ignorant of the class and order and species of a disease, of its remote and proximate causes, ignorant of all nosology, treated only the grossest symptoms, not the real root of illness. Their practice was habit, founded in caprice and contrived in ignorance, however they might dignify it with the name of experience. But the true physician reflected on the nature and causes of disease. He exercised his understanding (Powell, 1949, p. 37).

Benjamin Rush, the most outspoken if not the most effective doctor in Philadelphia at the time of the plague, went several steps further than any of his teachers. Specifically, Rush combined the two causes of disease proposed by Brown and Cullen, of excess or lack of nervous stimulation, into one. Thus, according to Rush, all fevers were due to an excess of stimulation in blood vessels caused by infection which had only been able to effect the body because of a previous lack of stimulation. Treatment of excess stimulation was accomplished through blood-letting; and lack of stimulation was controlled and adjusted by the administration of cordials and other stimulating remedies. It is not surprising that Rush reacted strongly and negatively to the prevailing nosologies since, as far as he was concerned, all fevers (and hence all serious diseases) were ultimately the same. On this subject Rush said:

the multiplication of diseases. . . is as repugnant to truth in medicine, as polytheism is to truth in religion. The physician who considers every different affection of the different systems of the body. . . as distinct diseases when they arise from one cause, resembles the Indian or African savage, who considers water, dew, ice, frost and

snow as distinct essences; while the physician who considers the morbid affections of every part of the body. . . as derived from one cause resembles the philosopher who considers dew, ice, frost and snow as different modifications of water (quoted in King, 1958, p. 224).

Furthermore, moreso than any of his contemporaries, Rush believed that the role of the physician was to control Nature and not to aid her. According to him, Hippocrates had done incalculable harm "by first marking Nature with his name and afterwards letting her loose on sick people." His system, instead, "rejected undue reliance upon the powers of Nature, and teaches instantly to wrest the cure of all violent and febrile diseases out of her hands" (Flexner, 1937, p. 102). This defiant attitude was characteristic of Rush's revolutionary spirit.

The medical systems I have surveyed so far are representative of the state of medical knowledge in the late 18th Century. All the systems are "monistic"; that is, each seeks to explain the phenomenon of feeling "sick all over" by one kind or another of equilibrium model (Shryock, 1966, p. 239). Another common feature of these systems is that they were developed with very little reliance on actual clinical data. Also, in spite of their differences (which ultimately were not very great), each theory tended to resort to similar remedies which were the common possession of academician and lay person alike. These facts point to the marginal significance of medical theory to successful healing during this period, and they support my original contention that, in spite of their substantial education, 18th Century physicians actually knew little more about most diseases than did the patients they treated.

Consistent with current theories of disease, medical therapeutics was based on the principle — mentioned above in regard to nosology — that illness could be diagnosed on the basis of superficial symptoms alone. Correspondingly, treatment was dictated by the notion that any remedy which substantially affected the overall symptomatic state of the patient necessarily affected the underlying cause of the symptoms as well and was therefore a valuable cure. Most physicians, therefore, usually chose their medicines according to which would provide the greatest and most immediate changes in the overall condition of the patient, whether or not those changes had any positive connection with the actual illness.

In a paper about the effects on children of blisters induced by plasters, a common treatment for many diseases, a physician observed that blisters affected children far more severely than adults, sometimes producing convulsions, gangrene, and even death in children. He concluded from this that blisters 'ought to hold a high rank' as remedial agents in the diseases of children, although he also criticized their 'indiscriminate

application' by many physicians (Rothstein, 1972, p. 43).

Another reason for the drastic nature of many cures was related to the fact that the patients themselves expected some kind of visible and immediate proof that the doctor was earning his fee, not by gentle persuasion, but by active attack of the disease. Often however, the effect of these drastic measures was so violent that, according to Jefferson, "the inexperienced and presumptuous band of medical tyros let loose upon the world, destroys more of human life in one year than all the Robinhoods, Cartouches, and Macheaths do in a century" (Rothstein, 1972, p. 45).

Primary among these very widespread treatments was blood-letting, which was prescribed for almost every disease imaginable. It was particularly effective in reducing fevers and symptoms related to them, although again this did not necessarily make it an effective cure. Almost every physician practiced blood-letting, and debate often focused not on whether or not to employ it, but how often and how much. Here is a representative case from 1837:

. . . before he arrived Dr. Colby had made preparations for bleeding her, thinking prompt blood-letting necessary, and that a high peritoneal inflammation existed. Dr. Drake concurred, and they proceeded to bleed. When six or eight ounces were abstracted, Dr. Colby, thinking she had been bled as much as her constitution would bear, and becoming satisfied from the effect of the bleeding that the high state of inflammation supposed did not really exist, arrested the flow of blood. Dr. Drake was much dissatisfied, and insisted on a more copious bleeding. The bandage was accordingly removed, and more blood was taken. It was then replaced. Dr. Drake still remained unsatisfied, urging that it was necessary to bleed to fainting. (The difference of opinion was presented to the family, and Dr. Richards was brought in.) Drs. Richards and Drake both soon agreed as to the necessity of bleeding, and she was again bled. . . Forty grains of calomel were then administered. Thirty ounces of blood had been taken. Still Drs. Drake and Richards were not satisfied — they thought further bleeding was necessary, yet postponed it till morning. . . (Rothstein, 1972, pp. 47-48).

The other treatments which were thought to be particularly effective were the cleansing of the bowels and stomach. This was achieved by administration of emetics, which produced vomiting, and cathartics or purgatives, which acted as laxatives. Unlike contemporary medicines employed to the same end, however, the emetics and purgatives administered by 18th Century physicians were chosen, typically, according to their ability to produce sudden and pronounced results. Calomel was a particularly common cathartic. It is a chloride of mercury which, for the situations in which it was used, was therapeutically useless, but in the intestine it breaks down into highly

poisonous components which irritate and purge and was therefore considered to be quite useful. Rush combined it with jalap, another potent cathartic, and used it extensively during the epidemic.

These purgatives were administered by both physicians and patients alike, for a wide variety of diseases. Not surprisingly, extended use of calomel produced some rather drastic side-effects. According to one physician writing in 1870, extreme doses resulted in the following condition:

The teeth, those valuable instruments of our most substantial enjoyments, become loose and rot, perhaps fall out; or worse still, the upper and lower jawbones exfoliate and rot out sometimes, as I have witnessed in the form of horse shoes; parts of the tongue and palate are frequently lost, and the poor object lingers out a doleful existence during life. . . This happens when mercury performs a *cure!* (quoted in Rothstein, 1973, p. 51).

Some other emetics and purgatives in common use were tartar emetic, and nitre, which was a mineral and a lethal poison. That these were accepted and used by laymen as well as by doctors is indicated by the following remedy found in Margaret Morris' recipe book:

For a Cough

*1 ounce gum Arobick, 2 drams Antimonial Wine
2 drams Spirit Nitre in a pint of water. Dose, one
Tablespoonful every 2 hours.*

And in the following letter (no date), although none of the specific remedies which I have discussed are employed, the same basic principle is certainly adhered to:

Poor, unlucky Dick had like to have committed a fatal mistake last night; he had eaten too many currants, and was very sick afterwards, and thirsty, and he thought a draught of the currant juice, with water, would settle his stomach, and went in the parlour to get it; there happened to be a bottle of antimonial wine on the sideboard, which he took up, and poured about a spoonful in, and then the currant juice; the vomiting increasing I gave him chamomile tea; this settled his stomach, and I was going to bed, when he told me he believed the stuff he took with the currant juice had made him sick; this alarmed me, and I began to make strict inquiry, and found he had taken what might possibly finish him; so to work I went with milk and oil, and made him drink till, I dare say, there was not a particle left. Happily, these carried the dregs downwards. He was vomiting from eight o'clock till nearly eleven, before I knew the occasion, and was in great pain till two. This morning, he looks weak and poorly, but, I dare say, will never take anything from a bottle that he don't know (J. Smith, 1892, p. 899).

We can now turn our attention to the epidemic which struck Philadelphia in the late summer of 1793. First, in order to make clear what people were up

against, it is important to note that, according to a recent *Merck Manual* (a guide for physicians), there is still "no specific treatment for yellow fever," and the recommended treatment is just "complete bed rest and excellent nursing care" (1961, p. 894). Medication includes fluids containing sugar and salt to *counteract* the effects of vomiting, vitamin K to *counteract* hemorrhaging, and codeine to counteract pain. The resemblance between this course of action and the one followed by most (not all) 18th Century physicians is minimal.

Philadelphia had been infected with yellow fever prior to 1793, but not to the same degree. Due to a large unchecked immigration of refugees from Santo Domingo, where the fever was particularly prevalent, and due to the hot, muggy weather, the disease was able to reach an intensity far greater than it had ever achieved in the past. The situation was compounded by the extremely crude state of sanitation and the ignorance of the people (including many doctors) in taking preventive measures. The disease first struck in a sailors' boarding house near the waterfront, where its presence was not taken as unusual, and it caused no great alarm. But in August, it spread, infecting more prominent parts of town (and their more prominent inhabitants), thus instigating a general state of panic. (*Bring Out Your Dead* by J. Powell describes every phase of the epidemic in great detail; my description of the situation is based mainly on this source.)

While no one knew exactly what to do, everyone did what he could, although many of the steps taken were clearly motivated more by desperation than by good sense. It is true that Mayor Clarkson did order all streets to be cleaned as early as August 22, but this was one of the few positive steps initially taken to check the disease. Naturally, of course, everyone avoided as well as they could any unnecessary intercourse with other residents of the city; and to reduce the chances of dealing with fever victims, houses which had been struck by the disease were so marked. Beyond this, the preventive measures became less rational.

The lighting of bonfires was very popular, as it was believed that the heat and smoke cleared the air. This created a fire hazard, however, so it was prohibited by the mayor. The residents, those who weren't able to flee, thereupon turned to the firing of guns to purify the air, until this too created such a disturbance that it was also prohibited by the mayor. Actually, this was a measure which had been recommended by the College of Physicians:

The college conceive fires to be [a] very ineffectual, if not dangerous means of checking the progress of this fever. They have reason to place more dependence upon the burning of gun-powder. The benefits of vinegar and camphor, are confined

chiefly to infected rooms, and they cannot be used too frequently upon handkerchiefs, or in smelling-bottles by persons whose duty calls them to visit or attend the sick. (quoted in Geddes-Smith, 1941, p. 12).

Although the College limited their endorsement of vinegar and camphor, it did not prevent those who ventured outside from keeping handkerchiefs or sponges soaked with these materials against their noses at all times. Others resorted to tying bags of camphor around their necks and carried pieces of tarred rope in their hands or in their pockets, trying desperately to attain protection against what they believed to be a highly contagious, or at least a highly virulent disease. Many people chewed garlic or kept it in their clothes or shoes, and many others, when not chewing garlic—including children and women—walked around continually with cigars in their mouths (after Oberholtzer, 1911, pp. 355-60). In almost every house one could smell gun powder, tobacco, nitre, vinegar and other simple disinfectants which were known to the people. Thus, on August 27, 1793 (still early in the epidemic), Margaret Morris wrote to one of her children:

I would not have thee be alarmed at the reports of a very infectious fever prevailing in town. Dr. Kuhn said this morning that only 9 have died from it, all the rest were common disorder. A plentiful use of Vinegar, Onions, and a little wine between whites are great preservatives against the fever. We burn tar in our lodging rooms and put camphor in the bosom, and strew wormwood, tansy-rue, and other strong herbs, on the beds, tables and floor of our houses. The Drs. say the disorder does not spread. Great fatigue of body is to be avoided—Camomile tea drunk cool is very proper . . .

Four days later she writes again that:

Let me entreat thee my beloved children—to be careful of thyself—to take the bark bitten with gentian and snake root, made with gord wine. . . Observe the directions I gave in my late letter about herbs. I think I never made such free use of wine. I give it to all my family 2 or 3 times a day. I wash myself all over with vinegar and sprinkle every room with it, and burn Tobaccoe and Tar and rosin in all the rooms from the garret to the kitchen. . . (letters contained in Haverford College Quaker Collection).

Eventually, a hospital was established at Bush Hill in the mansion of a vacationing aristocrat. At first the place was, typically, in a state of horrible confusion, with a lack of supplies, little sanitation, a minimal and transient staff, etc. But under the direction of Stephen Girard and Peter Helm, order was restored and the place was actually transformed into a reputable and efficient hospital. The doctor who was to have

the most success in treating the plague at the hospital was from France; not surprisingly, he rejected the violent cures prescribed by Rush.

Philadelphia was the capital of the country at the time of the plague, but for the several months during which the city was afflicted with the disease, one would never have recognized it as such. Congress had adjourned early, and, although Washington remained in the city during August, he left for Mount Vernon on September 10 and didn't return for almost two months, and even then it was to Germantown. Although there was nothing unusual in his departure, it did further dishearten the city (Powell, 1949, p. 107). The Pennsylvania Assembly similarly adjourned for the length of the epidemic, and Governor Mifflin, unlike the more courageous mayor, retreated to his country home. He was, however, by no means alone. Only about 3500 of Philadelphia's 6300 homes remained occupied, and then sometimes only by servants. Less than 25,000 of the city's approximately 45,000 inhabitants remained during the epidemic, and of these some 4,500 died (figures based on Oberholtzer, 1911, p. 358). It was not always a simple matter, however, to find refuge outside the city. The price of homes and rent in boarding houses both sky-rocketed. Even more serious was the fact that neighboring cities refused entrance to any refugee from Philadelphia.

In New York bands of vigilantes were organized lest fugitives from Philadelphia slip into the town by night . . . A party of militia was stationed 'at a pass on the Philadelphia road, about two miles from Baltimore,' to stop travelers who lacked certificates of health. At Boston, ships from Philadelphia were held in the harbor for cleansing with vinegar and exploding gunpowder (G. Smith, 1941, p. 13).

The dead were buried in Potter's Field, sometimes being dumped into their graves in a manner only remotely resembling a burial. At the height of the epidemic a tent was set up for gravediggers so that they could get a few hours of rest as they worked around the clock (Powell, 1949, p. 254). All the economic and social functions of the city naturally fell into a state of total disruption. What order there was resulted from the efforts of a committee of volunteer citizens under the direction of the mayor. These dedicated individuals oversaw such things as the maintenance of the hospital at Bush Hill, the rounding up and caring for orphans, the locating, carting and burial of corpses, the procurement and distribution of food, etc.

Physicians were at a premium during the epidemic. Of those who remained in the city, many died. But amongst those who remained and lived, there was no common agreement as to the cause or cure of the disease. Rush and his followers believed the disease to be of local origin, a miasma of noxious effluvium

thought at first to be emanating from some rotten coffee left sitting on a wharf near where the disease first broke out, and then from the swamps and sewers in the city. This served to explain why the disease occurred on foul ships and in crowded cities, but not in the countryside. Currie, Kuhn, and others, on the other hand, believed the disease to be imported and spread by contagion. By October 3, 1793 this debate still raged, as is revealed in a letter written by Rush to a friend:

I shall begin by observing that I have satisfactory documents to prove that the disease was generated in our city. To suppose, because the yellow fever is an epidemic of the West-Indies and because it seldom occurs in North America, that it can exist among us only by importation, is as absurd as to suppose that the hurricanes which are so common in the West-Indies, and which occur here only one in twenty or thirty years, are all imported from that country. (Butterfield, 1951, p. 694).

Another issue the doctors disagreed on was whether more than one disease was present in the city. Rush contended that there was but one, while many other physicians were characteristically more open-minded. Rush had only bitter words for his opponents:

They first called the prevailing epidemic the jail fever. They might as well have called it the small-pox. They have declared that we have two distinct fevers in town—the one a putrid yellow fever and the other a common remittent. It would not have been more absurd to have asserted that we have two suns and two moons shining upon our globe . . . But the mistakes of my brethren have not ended here. Where the disease has made its chief impression on the head, it has been called an angina maligna. Where it has attacked the sides, it has been called a pleurisy, and in one person in whom it first affected the bowels, it was treated as a bilious colic. The disorder in this case terminated in a black vomiting and death on the third day (Butterfield, 1951, p. 697).

Of course, regardless of how many diseases were present in the city, Rush would have treated them all alike, by bleeding and purging, the efficacy of which I have discussed above. Rush only arrived at this regimen after finding more mild remedies ineffective. In late August, Rush reveals in a letter to his wife (who spent the duration of the plague in New Jersey) that he is still uncertain as to how to combat the as yet unidentified illness: "The common remedies for malignant fevers have all failed. Bark, wine and blisters make no impression upon it. Baths of hot vinegar applied by means of blankets, and the cold bath have relieved and saved some". (Butterfield, 1951, p. 644). By early September however, Rush had clearly vehemently endorsed the combination of mercury and jalap, and entered into one of his characteristically passionate

battles with his colleagues, some of whom thought Rush to be more a murderer than a doctor. As Rush's wrath increased, so too did his confidence:

Dr. Kuhn continues by his advice to oppose mercury and jalap, but he stands now nearly alone, for its most bitter enemy and calumniator has this day adopted it. 99 out of an 100 who take it on the *first* day recover, and all would probably recover, had I time to attend closely to them after the expulsion or extinction of the poison by mercury . . . My old patients are constantly preferred by me. Kuhn's publication has done immense mischief. Many doctors will follow him, and scores are daily sacrificed to bark and wine. My method is too simple for them. They forget that a stone from the sling of David effected what the whole armory of Saul could not do. Many hundreds of my patients now walk the streets and follow their ordinary business. Could our physicians be persuaded to adopt the new mode of treating the disorder, the contagion might be eradicated from our city in a few weeks. But they not only refuse to adopt it, but they persecute and slander the author of it (Butterfield, 1951, pp. 655, 664).

Finally, shortly after he had decided on the unquestionable merit of calomel and jalap, he discovered the benefits of combining the purging with bleeding. It was this supposed "cure" which Rush employed to such great excess and with such great confidence that made him the doctor most sought after by some and most despised by others during the epidemic of 1793. His opinion about bleeding is expressed in the following letter (September 12, 1793) to the College of Physicians:

I have bled twice in many, and in one acute case four times, with the happiest effects. I consider intrepidity in the use of the lancet at present to be as necessary as it is in the use of mercury and jalap in this insidious and ferocious disease (Butterfield, 1951, p. 661).

Rush was no doubt driven to his extreme position by the frustration he experienced in dealing with what was then still a mysterious disease. In spite of the totally negative effects of his two major cures, his patients revered and respected him, and he in turn was devoted to them. His position in society allowed him to act as intermediary between different social classes, and an indication of his pervasive influence, however deleterious, can be detected in the letters of Margaret Morris. Also, it should not be forgotten that bleeding and purging were cures by no means restricted to Rush. On different occasions he prescribed all the remedies and concoctions employed by even his most bitter rivals, and they in turn employed his methods, even if not to the same extreme. It just so happens that in the case of yellow fever, the best medicine was the

most mild medicine. Who prescribed what in which circumstances was still more a question of chance and tradition rather than a scientifically predictable thing. Again, given the crude state of diagnosis and the concentration on external symptoms, this "hit or miss" nature of 18th Century medicine (academic, popular or folk) is not surprising. Finally, it must be remembered that it was still ultimately the weather which brought an end to the epidemic rather than any act of man.

At this point we can profitably turn our attention to Margaret Morris in order to illustrate some of the common experiences encountered during the epidemic. She is particularly interesting to us because, as John Jay Smith relates in his recollections, Margaret Morris was well known and respected as a healer:

Thomas Gilpin told me that my Grandmother Morris was, long before her second removal to Burlington, recognized as a skilful doctress. On one occasion his mother was attacked in the Friends' Meeting with faintness. "Mrs. Morris" was at hand, but, no lancet being found, she bled the patient with a common razor, and thus relieved her . . . The daughter of a physician, Dr. Richard Hill, she had observed his practice, and was considered as possession a natural family gift for healing. This is perhaps the first recorded instance of a female physician in practice (J. Smith, 1892, p. 242).

The circumstances of Margaret Morris' involvement with the epidemic were, like everyone else's, quite unfortunate. Among those who elected to remain behind in Philadelphia to help for the duration of the sickness was her son, Dr. John Morris, one of the founders of the College of Physicians in 1787. When he contracted the disease himself, his mother came to the city (from Burlington) in order to care for him. He died, however, on September 8, 1793, and eight days later his wife died as well. This left Grandmother Morris with four young children under her care. Because this was so much a burden for her, she sent one of the children, five years of age and healthy, to her other set of grandparents; the child was returned however, because her grandfather refused to give refuge to anyone—including his granddaughter—who had come from a contaminated house (see Bronner, 1962, p. 204, 207). The following excerpts from a letter written by Margaret Morris to a younger sister, describe some of the common daily horrors brought on by the plague; it is of further interest for documenting the contemporary medical practices and beliefs and the social networks through which they were transmitted:

I've forgot when I last wrote thee, but think it was a little after my maid S. was taken sick—we did not think her bad, as she had a fever only one night however she was treated as Dr. Rush directs

and all went on well till the next 7th day when she began to vomit blackish stuff—& the discharge downwards was the same, & about noon that day, a vomiting of blood succeeded. Sent for Dr. Park who had attended her at the first, he said it was a hopeless case—& came no more, however while there was life, there might be hope, & I began to make experiments—I made her lick fine salt & a little allum—this made her thirsty, & I gave her Elixir Vitriol, Vinegar & Water—and it stopt for 24 hours—and then the bleeding returned, it came out like a tea pot, & we had 2 large tubs full of sheets, etc. that were quite stiff—Dr. Rush was sick & Dr. Gutts the same, however I went myself to Rush, told him all about it. He gave me a Mede for her—and sent one of his pupils to see her. To make short of my story the bleeding continued several days & nights her mouth tongue and lips as black as ink—than I gave her the bark—when Dr. Rush saw her, he said the bleeding had saved her life—and thro mercy she is now quite well—tho very weak (Haverford College Quaker Collection).

One final letter written by Margaret Morris (my personal favorite), written on January 7, 1794, to her sister reveals her inclination for doctoring. In a more general sense, however, the letter indicates the necessity which prevailed for laymen to assume medical responsibilities in the absence of more qualified individuals, the kind of cures employed in these situations, and something of the similarity between these and other more “scientific” remedies:

our dear sister Wells has been confined to her bed since last seventh day, with what I take to be a general rheumatism, flying pains all over, from her head to her shoulder, and yesterday very bad on her left side. At first, I thought she should be bled, but on feeling her pulse, found it so low that I begged them not to venture on it without better judgement than mine; but they were not willing to consult any *other doctor!* I, therefore, boldly prescribed a blister to the affected side, with volatile tincture of guaiacum and laudanum, and plentiful cups of flaxseed tea. I had a painful anxious night, and went there early this morning to dress the blister, and had the satisfaction of finding my dear patient much relieved; the blister was a very fine one, and the medicines had produced a plentiful perspiration, which has greatly relieved her, and this evening they sent me word she was vastly better . . . possibly I may do harm with my quackings, but the intention must screen me from censure (J. Smith, 1892, pp. 424-425).

It would be naive of me to claim that Margaret Morris represents a purely folk level of culture; but neither was she a member of the elite level of medical practice. As folklorists we must be concerned with the interfaces between levels of society (see Redfield, 1960) in order to determine the mechanisms of such processes as culture change, transmission of specialized information, etc. Related to these cultural processes of course is

the concept of *Gesunkenes Kulturgut*. In this paper I have tended to emphasize the transmission of information from the “higher” to the “lower” levels of society, but we must always remember that the flow is not unidirectional but at least two-way. Margaret Morris occupied a strategic position in this transmission process, having equal access to both more and less educated and more and less urban individuals, and is therefore a productive point of focus for further study in this area. Furthermore, 1793 is a particularly interesting time for the study of medicine, because the different traditions—folk, popular and purely academic—had not yet widely diverged from one another. Often, sophisticated medical cures were derived from, if not exactly the same as folk remedies, and laymen were always quick to add new medical ideas to their own repertoire. I have tried to indicate something of the fluidity of this situation above. One final important point is that, due to this close relationship between the different traditions, one is required to make use of such things as private correspondence, remedy books, journals, newspapers, etc., in order to discover the social networks which prevailed at that time.

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Folkloric Aspects of the Common Law in Western Pennsylvania

By George A. Boeck

Abstract

Using records of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and Common Pleas during Judge Addison's tenure, 1791-1799, aspects of the law relating to folk beliefs are discussed. In particular it is shown that responsibility in the community rested directly upon the individual, although there was an inclination toward shared familial responsibility. Communication is shown to be the basis for agreement. If an agreement was based upon a complete understanding by both parties, it was binding despite subsequent occurrences. Profit, unlike our contemporary notions, was allowed only in situations necessitating the recovery of possibly lost principal. Finally, the jury system is shown to have been no longer capable of determining the law, implying then, the disenfranchisement of the folk community. The latter concerns, profit and jury concepts, are discussed with regard to legal theory as well as for their indication of processes involving the folk.

This paper is toward a presentation of the concepts of common law in 18th Century Pennsylvania. In particular, folk concepts of responsibility, communication, profit, and the jury are presented. Karl-Sigismund Kramer emphasizes that the folklorist's categories for examination cross-cut those of the legal historian. While the "*rechtsgeschichtlichen Kategorien. . . nach Strafrecht, öffentlichem Recht, Zivilrecht, usw.*" are of interest to the historian, the folklorist's interests will follow "*dem 'Kanon'. . . Sachgut, Sprachgut, Brauchgut und Glaubensgut im Recht.*"¹ Due to the nature of the records available, little information regarding speaking or needs of the folk community is presented. The emphasis of this paper will, then, be dealing primarily with the beliefs and, to an extent, possessions.

Communities have expectations for member behavior which range from laudable through sanctioned behavior and disapproved through proscribed behavior. The examination of instances of proscribed behavior yields an enumeration of these behaviors, a code of action which is considered by the members of the community to be disruptive to the extent that self-correcting institutions must be engaged. Paul J.

¹Kramer, Karl-S., *Grundriss einer Rechtlichen Volkskunde* (Göttingen: Otto Schwartz, 1974), p. 1



Alexander Addison

Born in Morayshire, Scotland, 1758. Died 1807.

Bohannon defines these activities designed to correct breaches in the range of acceptable deviations as counteractions.² In colonial Pennsylvania these counteractions evolved from town meetings presided over by a judge to formal adversary proceedings³ as the code of proscribed behavior became increasingly elaborate.⁴ Similar elaboration occurred within the common law as well. This was, further, an outcome of the process whereby the in-dwelling law of the Quaker settlers was increasingly codified, a process the formal beginnings of which may be set shortly before 1756, when the Quaker majority in the Pennsylvania Assembly was overturned.⁵ While it is not

²Bohannon, Paul J., "Anthropology and the Law," in Sol Tax, ed., *Horizons in Anthropology* (Chicago: Aldine, 1964), p. 193. While Bohannon's concept is applicable to our analysis, one should keep in mind that his work was primarily based upon violations of what Western Pennsylvanians would have considered criminal cases of a fairly serious nature, rather than the civil cases which were much more frequently before the court.

³Lewis, Lawrence, Jr., "The Courts of Pennsylvania in the Seventeenth Century," in *Report of the First Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Bar Association* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Bar Association, 1895), pp. 354-355.

⁴Philadelphia City Archives, "The Tangible Manifestation of the Law," in *News Letter*, Nos. 31 and 32 (June and October, 1977).

⁵Boorstin, Daniel J., "The Perils of Indwelling Law," in Robert Paul Wolff, ed., *The Rule of Law* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), pp. 80-82.

within the scope of this paper to examine the changes in the common law during and after formal Quaker control of the commonwealth, certain philosophical shifts evidenced throughout the colonies during the late 1700's and early 1800's may be addressed. A convenient end to this process of codification could be set at the 1807 report by the State Supreme Court to the Legislature of those aspects of the common law which they felt ought to be included in statutory law.⁶ Needless to say, the social processes upon which this codification bore continued throughout the century.

The implications of the codification of the law are far-reaching for both the folklorist and the legal historian in that once the law had become codified it became malleable toward social ends by both the legislature and the courts.⁷ While the legal historian, at this juncture in the history of law, would begin to examine the formation and effects of various pressure groups upon the law, the folklorist looks to the disenfranchisement of the folk from the law as locally determined. Once the responsibility for this determination of both the facts before the jury and the law applying to these facts leaves the local forums, the court system must be seen as predominantly elite rather than folk, in foundation. Efforts toward safeguarding against this process were initiated as early as 1686 when a bill meant to disallow the charging of lawyer's fees, and thereby to hinder the rise of professionalism in the law, was defeated in the Assembly.⁸

In the most recent direct involvement of the folk in their legal affairs was relinquished to the Supreme Court and the Legislature by the early 1800's, then the earliest folk involvement in their law would necessarily rest with the colonial immigrant. While the English common law and the Christian religion were established as the bases of colonial common law⁹ and indicate the folk origin of our law, application of the law in Britain at the time was likely to have been thoroughly beyond the capacity of the common man. In Pennsylvania, however, the earliest courts necessarily operated on a vernacular level. For instance, the selection of the jury was by the drawing of lots made up of all of the freemen in the county; the judges were men drawn from the community; either the principals or their friends pled

the cases.¹⁰ In each instance the realities of the environment in which the folk community was situated and the philosophical orientation of the founders of the colony may be seen to organize the law as a folk-determined institution. A particular aspect of the legal system dating to this same 1683 session of the Assembly warranting study in depth are the Peacemakers. Three common Peacemakers were chosen for each county. Their duties were to intercede in disputes prior to their coming to trial. Their decisions were binding upon the participants and were, apparently, based in common sense and fairness. While no official records of their tenure exist, and the office was disbanded after a mere ten years when the legislature determined that the law was not in practice,¹¹ journals by these men ought to yield some solid information on the functioning of this noteworthy institution.

The folk origins of some of the concepts of common law in Pennsylvania are discoverable by the examination of contemporary court records. Expectably, the availability of comprehensive courtroom texts determines, to a large extent, the period and area which is to be discussed. Of somewhat greater interest, necessarily, is the consideration of the processes in which the law is engaged. The period of the late 1700's places the court within the movement toward formal court room proceedings but still allows the jury and judge some latitude in dividing the available roles. For the greatest folk emphasis to be maintained, a court well beyond the sphere of immediate Philadelphia influence would be preferred. Fortunately, then, one of the few easily accessible, fairly comprehensive reports of court cases at the county level comes from the Fifth Circuit — well into Northwestern Pennsylvania. Alexander Addison was the President of the Courts of Common Pleas. His reports cover the period from 1791 to 1799 and include appeals as well as county courts. As mentioned above this places us in a very fortunate time period and location. As to the thoroughness of his reporting, he states that his cases "are taken from hasty notes made by me at the time"; he considers it "incumbent on me to mention. . .the imperfection, and, in some cases, the omission of the statements of the arguments of council."¹² This, fortunately, does not deter us from discovering some-

⁶Binney, Horace, *Reports of Cases Adjudged in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: Kay and Brother, 1891), pp. 599-626.

⁷Horwitz, Morton J., *The Transformation of American Law, 1780-1860* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), p.1.

⁸Lloyd, William H., *The Early Courts of Pennsylvania* (Boston: Boston Book Co., 1910), p. 112.

⁹Dallas, Alexander J., *Reports of Cases Ruled and Adjudged in the Several Courts of the United States and of Pennsylvania Held at the Seat of the Federal Government*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: Ormrod, 1799), p. 67, *Morris v. Vanderen*.

¹⁰Pennsylvania. Colonial Laws. *Charter of William Penn and Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania Passed Between the Years of 1682 and 1700 Preceded by the Duke of York's Laws* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1879), pp. 128, 129. Henceforth: D. of Y.

¹¹D. of Y., p. 129

¹²Addison, Alexander. *Reports of Cases in the County Courts of the Fifth Circuit and the High Court of Errors and Appeals of the State of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: George T. Bisel, 1883), p. vii. Pagination follows first edition.

thing of the common law upon which the decisions in these cases were based. Further, in Lloyd's words, some of the "true value [placed] upon the flights of forensic oratory" among people who have "expressed such profound admiration for the common law while deviating so widely from it in practice"¹³ may be examined in those cases where particularly complete notes have been kept.

Entering directly into the cases, it is established that a forthright understanding on the parts of the principals took precedence over subsequent discoveries. In *Merchant v. Milliron*, Mr. Milliron had bought that piece of land which the two of them agreed upon rather than that which the surveyor eventually laid out.¹⁴ Again in *Baird v. McInnes*, the boundary agreed upon was that which took precedence over eventual court decisions.¹⁵ For an application of this principle when applied to situations involving risks, if both parties were aware of some risk involved, their agreement was sound even if the outcome realized the risk. Thus, in *Dixon v. McClutchey*, since Mr. Dixon was told that the horse he was buying may have been unsound, the deal was binding when the horse thereafter proved to be, in fact, unsound.¹⁶ Again, in *Cavode v. McKelvey*, since the purchase of a house with an unclear title proceeded with that in both men's minds, the deal was final regardless of the eventual subsequent claim on the house.^{16a}

These cases imply that a profit may not be made based upon the ignorance of one of the parties. In another horse-trading the concealment of the illness of the horse was judged sufficient cause to void the purchase.¹⁷ Further, circumstances unknown to both parties cannot subsequently be used to the benefit of one over the other. Although this is somewhat more difficult to illustrate than the preceding cases, *St. Clair v. Galbraith* may apply in that a loan partially repaid by Galbraith during a period of depreciated money was not considered fairly repaid.¹⁸

The entire concept of the proper manner for businessmen to make money was not fully changed until well into the 19th Century. Both Nelson and Horwitz consider this one of the seminal changes to be effected on the common law in the mid-1800's by the application of legislation upon law.¹⁹ In essence the proper manner of handling wealth required that a fair price be paid. At auction a buyer was required to

¹³Lloyd, p. v.

¹⁴Addison, p. 352.

¹⁵Addison, p. 292.

¹⁶Addison, p. 322.

^{16a}Addison, p. 56.

¹⁷Addison, p. 146, *Irwin v. Rankin*.

¹⁸Addison, p. 50.

¹⁹Nelson, William E., *The Americanization of the Common Law: The Impact of Legal Change on Massachusetts Society, 1760-1830* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 7 *passim*.

REPORTS OF CASES
IN THE
County Courts of the Fifth Circuit,
AND IN THE
HIGH COURT OF ERRORS & APPEALS,
OF THE
STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA.
AND
Charges to Grand Juries
OF THOSE
COUNTY COURTS.

By ALEXANDER ADDISON,
CLERK OF THE COURTS OF COMMON PLEAS OF
THE FIFTH CIRCUIT OF THE STATE
OF PENNSYLVANIA.

WASHINGTON:
PRINTED BY JOHN COLERICK, AND MAY
BE HAD OF THE BOOKSELLERS
IN PHILADELPHIA.
1800.

Titlepage of Judge Addison's book, 1800.

pay the seller the full worth of the items bought²⁰; proceeds from the sale of goods to cover bills in excess of that actually owed were returned to the original owner.²¹ In short, the only legal method of making money was in situations in which it was doubtful whether there may not be a loss.²² These concepts of fair exchange, in Nelson's thinking, were instrumental in the "preservation of the community's economic and social stability" by encouraging people "not to increase their wealth through either speculation or competition but to accept the niche corresponding markedly to Redfield's description of the peasant community."²⁴ One is led, then, to a con-

²⁰Addison, p. 19, *Fulton v. Irwin*.

²¹Addison, p. 46, *Franks v. Stivers*.

²²Addison, p. 124, *Philip v. Stivers*.

²³Nelson, pp. 5, 6.

²⁴Redfield, Robert, *Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 123.

sideration that the decline of this folk ethic may apply toward an explanation of how capital was made available for the increase in the rate of net investment posited by M. M. Flinn as a requirement for the onset of the Industrial Revolution.²⁵

If we might return to our discussion of the folk ethic as discoverable in the common law, a note on the concept of responsibility may be of interest. Only one instance of jointly held responsibility was found, this being in a murder trial in which all of the individuals present and either acting or aiding and abetting the action were considered guilty as principals of the crime.²⁶ There was, however, some inclination toward considering family members as responsible for one another. The court took particular care to point out that while a wife may in certain circumstances act as her husband's agent and that her husband was expected to act as her agent, each was ultimately responsible for their own actions²⁷ and the acquittal of one would not be considered the acquittal of both.²⁸ Further, a son acting as his father's executor was responsible for his father's debts in his role as executor rather than that as his son, just as someone acting as another's agent was responsible for the other's debts as an agent rather than personally.²⁹ If one, however, voluntarily accepted the responsibility for another, as in the case of vouching for someone's ability to repay a loan,³⁰ or buying a house with an acknowledged lien,³¹ then the responsibility was fully transferred. In the former instance, by the way, this acceptance of the responsibility for someone's capacity to repay a loan did not allow the borrower to freely default. Since the cosigner could buy the loan from the original lender, in fact was occasionally forced to buy the loan, he could, then, collect from the person for whom he vouched.³²

While nearly all of the folk concepts examined thus far had counterparts in English common law, Pennsylvania common law being based upon the British system,³³ there were discoverable variations. As is the case with all immigrant groups modifications, new forms and innovations established that the new environment and social needs would take precedent. In some cases the law was accepted but the punishment changed. A pleasant example of this was the disuse on humanitarian grounds of the ducking stool

for conviction of being a common scold.³⁴ In other instances the specifics of the laws themselves were modified. One such modification involves the concept that concealing a death was tantamount to confession of homicide. The particular tragedy referred to is that of Pennsylvania vs. Susanna McKee whose bastard infant was found dead. She maintained that it had been born dead. English law would have convicted her on the negative evidence of concealment. Pennsylvania law, however, required positive evidence that the child had been born living and that the child had subsequently received injuries. As an aside, although Miss McKee was fairly obviously guilty and the jury was instructed by the judge that this guilt was proven, the verdict was not guilty.³⁵

An example of common law notions being applied to a totally new environment and resulting in unprecedented forms may be seen in Pennsylvania vs. Robison. In Western Pennsylvania the amount of available land was significant while the procedures for registering title were conflicting; quite the opposite was the case in Europe.³⁶ In the absence of registered title, settlement established claim; settlement, in fact, took precedence over registry.³⁷ To settle on property one must peaceably live there for three years. In the event that one's claim to the land was by force, the peaceable occupancy requirement was increased to twenty years. Such an arrangement seems very peculiar in that the use of such force is plainly actionable, leaving the modern reader to assume that moving was easier than initiating action to eject the interloper.

The scope of this paper cannot pretend toward a comprehensive discussion of the relationship between folk belief and the common law. At best a brief mention of some of the more prevalent concerns

²⁵Sharswood, George, "The Common Law of Pennsylvania," in *Report of the First Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Bar Association* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Bar Assoc., 1895), p. 349.

²⁶Addison, p. 1, *Pennsylvania v. McKee*. The subtle distinction between positive and negative evidence raises a note of caution for the student in folklore. An ethnocentric attitude that the folk are simple, backward fellows somehow less adept at complex logic may be quickly dispelled by consideration of the complexity of the arguments followed in many of these court cases. In *Philip v. Kirkpatrick* (Addison, p. 124) the delineation between profit made on an investment and interest made on a loan rested upon the concept of chance. Thus, while the possibility that a ship may not come into port makes it ethical for the investor to make a profit on those that do, to cover possible future losses, the likelihood that an individual may become insolvent is not considered grounds for the charging of interest above the statutory limit unless the principle of the loan is endangered. In this case, the father of an indentured son was forced to pay high interest on a bond of indenture because both the principle of the bond and the welfare of the indentured son upon which the bond rested were the responsibility of the lender.

²⁷Addison, p. 12, *Pennsylvania v. Robison*.

²⁸Addison, p. 52, *Merchant v. Milliron*; Addison, p. 252, *Gilliland v. Hanna*.

²⁵Flinn, M. W., *Origins of the Industrial Revolution* (London: Longman's, 1966), p. 40.

²⁶Addison, p. 279, *Pennsylvania v. Lewis et al.*

²⁷Addison, p. 316, *Spencer v. Tisue*.

²⁸Addison, p. 18, *Pennsylvania v. Lovel*.

²⁹Addison, p. 138, *Parr v. Jones*.

³⁰Addison, p. 123, *Barker v. Sutherland*.

³¹Addison, p. 37, *Porter v. Brown*.

³²Addison, p. 44, *Pennsylvania v. Misner*.

³³Dallas, p. 67, *Morris v. Vanderen*.

REPORTS OF CASES, &c.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY,

September Term, 1791.

PENNSYLVANIA v. SUSANNA M'KEE.

SUSANNA M'KEE, a widow, was tried for the murder of her bastard child. The infant was found dead in the *Monongahela* river, on the 15th August last, with a stone to it, its head bruised, and marks of violence. This woman was suspected and examined: at first she denied, but afterwards confessed, having had a child.— She said she had buried her child, it having been dead born. Afterwards owned she had taken it up, and thrown it in the river. One witness for the prisoner (a man suspected as the father of her child) proved, that, three months before its birth, she applied to him, when he was going out of the neighbourhood, to enquire for a nurse, and send to her, as she did not want the child to be in the neighbourhood; and that she afterwards sent to know, whether he had found one. He never enquired.

Brackenridge and Young for the prisoner, read act of September, 1786. 2 *Hutch.* 438. 2 *Hale*, 289.

PRESIDENT. The 8th section of "the act for the advancement of justice, and more certain administration thereof," passed in 1718, declares, that if any woman delivered of a bastard child "conceal privately, by drowning or secret burying thereof, or any other way, so to conceal the death thereof, as that it may not come to light, whether it were born alive or not; except such

1791.

Evidence	24 crt
Contract	11 bus
Survey	8 bus
Indictment	6 crt
Assignments	6 bus
Homicide	5 cri
Trespass	5 cri
Settlement	5 bus
Baron and Feme	4 crt
Ejectment	4 bus
Execution	4 bus
Forceable Entry	4 cri
Forgery	4 cri
Justice of Peace	4 crt
Malice	4 crt
Warrant for Land	4 bus
Bond	3 bus
Indebtitatus	
Assumpsit	3 bus
Jury	3 crt
Land	3 bus
Larceny	3 cri
Riot	3 cri
# of 2's	13
# of 1's	33

crt = court, bus = business, cri = criminal

The predominant topics for discussion in rulings on evidence, by far the largest category listed, are matters concerning spoken versus written aspects of contracts. Specifically, the court was asked when it would accept spoken agreements over written ones. Many of the other topics upon which the court commented have already been dealt with to some extent. That the concepts of contractual obligation and fairness of exchange were in some flux is borne out by the frequency of the cases surrounding these concepts.

It is worth noting that in some of these cases, the court provides a forum for the formulation of the coming code of behavior in the sense that the expression of this code will necessarily predate its enactment. For instance, in a rental agreement to be paid in grain, the landlord argued that the amount of grain was fixed while the tenant argued that the amount of money that the grain represented was fixed.³⁹ Needless to say, the worth of a bushel of wheat had increased during the interim.

That the jury : judge : legislature relationship was changing, which Nelson conceives of as the second major difference between 18th and 19th Century law,⁴⁰ is somewhat more difficult to sustain. The instructions and clarifications for the jury by the president of the court indicate that the process whereby the jury and, thereby, the folk community lost its power to make the law was nearly completed. Instead, legislative stature or precedent were presented to

Page from Addison volume of cases tried in Western Pennsylvania.

facing the community may be offered. Of the 178 matters considered by Judge Addison's court, a mere twenty-five were generated by criminal charges. Homicide (five cases), forcible entry (four), forgery (four), larceny (three), and riot (three) comprise the bulk of these cases. The overwhelming majority of issues handled revolve around property and business (ninety-four) and courtroom concepts (fifty-nine). Since it is in these areas that the greatest changes were taking place, the work in acculturation would lead us to expect such an expression of the tension caused by as well as causing these changes.³⁸ A tallying of the matters before the court is provided:

³⁸Wallace, Anthony F. C., "Revitalization Movements," in *American Anthropologist*, vol. 58, no. 2 (April, 1956), pp. 269-270.

³⁹Addison, p. 346, *Meason v. Philips*.

⁴⁰Nelson, p. 13.

the jury for consideration. In *Pennsylvania v. McKee*,⁴¹ a forgery case interesting in its own right, the presiding judge instructed the jury (1) as to the state law: if the acts "amount to counterfeiting the hand and seal of another, why should it not be a good indictment on the Act of Assembly?"; (2) on the precedent in common law: "the forgery of any writing which may be prejudicial to another is forgery at common law"; and (3) of the facts of evidence themselves: "we think the proof strong against the defendant, and sufficient, if you believe it, to justify you in convicting him of forging the receipt, and uttering it, knowing it to be forged."⁴¹ The parenthetical question in the instructions on statute is noteworthy in light of a verdict of not guilty on that offense, there being no positive proof just as in the concealment case earlier, but guilty on the common law offenses of prejudicing another with forged writing and giving utterance to that which was written and known to be forged. As it was mentioned, however, this was a somewhat peculiar case. As a general rule, where the offense was fairly straightforward, Judge Addison summarized the arguments, precedents, and statutes under consideration. In both this forgery case and in the concealment of death trial, the jury declined to use statute to find the individual guilty. Further instances of a disinclination by the local community to accept legislative over folk notions of the law indicates the relatively recent introduction of statutory law.

Very infrequently some response on the part of the jury would give indication of their deliberations. In the murder case *Pennsylvania v. Lewis* the jury responded "if there was no degree lower than the second, they found them guilty of murder in the second degree."⁴² In that the jury accepted the delineations of homicide presented them by the court, this indicates that the jury no longer made the law but operated solely on the grounds of determining what happened.

The question arises, again, as to whether we are dealing with a folk, popular, or elite event. In the sense that the elite provide the structure within which community members interact, we have a popular culture event. If one's point of departure follows Hermann Baltl's influence, however, studying the participants and what may be determined about them within whatever structure they happen to be found, we have a folk process.⁴³ Were one able to establish

the extent of folk beliefs in the actual statute, a significantly larger corpus of material would be available. This could be accomplished by examining records more directly controlled by the local community. The newspapers, Justice of the Peace records, and personal journals available in the area would certainly provide information in this regard.

The further into the past one endeavors to research, the greater the difficulties of recovery of information relating to such ephemeral materials as folk belief which are largely carried in conversation. Even with this as our premise, a great deal may be read through what is essentially an elite record.⁴⁴ This is likely to be due to the inclination to choose locally prominent people to preside over the court.⁴⁵ We have found, then, that the counteractions in Western Pennsylvania in the 1790's were concerned primarily with business, contractual, and court matters. The common law code was in a period of change which was part of continuing adaptations made by the immigrants in regard to their new situations. While the role of the jury seems to have been reduced earlier here than in Massachusetts, the concepts of property, profit, responsibility, and communication were being heavily discussed while remaining, as yet, substantially unchanged.

⁴¹Addison, p. 33.

⁴²Addison, p. 283.

⁴³Baltl, Hermann, "Folklore Research and Legal History in the German Language Area," *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, V: 2-3 (August-December 1968), 146.

⁴⁴Dorson, Richard, "The Use of Printed Sources," in *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1972). Unfortunately, Dorson does not deal specifically with this problem facing the researcher in folklife studies. Instead, his emphasis is on printed sources augmenting field research in oral behavior.

⁴⁵Lewis, p. 354.

Runaway Advertisements:

A Source for the Study of Working - Class Costume

By Joanne Early

On the night of February 28, 1721, Patrick Boyd, a young Irish servant, stole away from James Logan's Germantown estate and fled into the Pennsylvania woods. Boyd had hatched his plans and eloped in cahoots with his fellow countryman, Miles MacWard, the servant of a local butcher. Armed with a light hunting gun, the two Irishmen took flight to escape their indentures, legal contracts which bound them to labor for a specified term in exchange for transportation to America.

Boyd's master, James Logan, was a prominent Pennsylvanian, a confidant of William Penn and, later, the acting-governor of the province. Despite his influence in the community, Logan's only resort to secure Boyd's return was to offer a reward to anyone who could recover the fugitive. Logan placed the following advertisement in the Philadelphia newspaper, *The American Weekly Mercury*:

Runaway from James Logan's Plantation near GermanTown the 28th Instant, an Irish Servant Lad, named Patrick Boyd, aged about 17 or 18 Years, with streight dark Hair, a freckled Face and a smooth Tongue, cloathed with a double-Breasted Pee-Jacket, a brownish Kersey Coat, a Pair of Leather Briches, and a good Felt Hat; but he had other Cloaths with him. Also a fine short fowling Piece of Carbine Length or less. He went in Company with one Miles Mac-Ward. Whoever takes and secures him shall be well rewarded for their Trouble.¹

Since Boyd's retrieval depended upon his identification, Logan took pains to describe the runaway as fully as possible. In addition to publicizing Boyd's age, nationality, physical appearance, and personality traits, Logan also included a description of the clothes the servant was wearing.

Logan's advertisement was only one of the many runaway notices in the pages of colonial Philadelphia's newspaper. Among the advertisements for Jamaican rum, whalebone, molasses, stray horses, and Spanish snuff, new announcements of rewards for runaways appeared each week. From Ranier Vanhill's description of his servant, Francis Lemmons, one wonders why

Vanhill would even spend forty shillings to recover such an unsavory character:

Runaway from Ranier Vanhill of Salem, a Servant Man, named Francis Lemmons, the 3d of this Instant May. He is a Scotchman born, and I believe a transported Rebel. He has a full red Face, full of Words and little Performance. He wears a Home-spun ragged Coat, and an Ozenbrig Shirt; no Hair but what is very short, he loves Drink very much and Smoaking of Tobacco. He has got a Scar on his Lip, a great Scar on his Left Shoulder, and one Scar on his Right Side. Whoever shall take up the said Servant, secure him and give Notice, shall have Fourty Shillings Reward New Currency, with all Expences and Charges whatsoever.²

Another master, Philip Taylor, expressed equal concern for return of a horse which his servant, William Varnill, stole to make his escape as he did for Varnill:

Runaway from Philip Tayler of Chester County, a Servant Man, named William Varnill, aged about 22 Years, fresh coloured, pretty tall, black Hat, brown Hair, brownish Sagathy Coat and Vest, New Leather Breeches, old Shoos and Stockings. He took with him a young Grey Horse, branded with I.Y. on the near Side. Any person that can take the said Man and Horse, or secure them so that his Master may have them again, shall have Five Pounds as a Reward and reasonable Charges, paid by me Philip Taylor.³

Many indentured servants escaped as soon as their ships reached the dock in Philadelphia:

Runaway last Night, from on board the Dianna, of Dublin, Richard M'Carty, Master, a Servant Man, named Valentine Handlin, aged about 30 Years, a lusty rawbon'd Fellow small round Visaged, is of a dark Complexion with short Black Hair, Had on when he went away, a brown bob Wig, Old Felt Hat, an old lightish colour'd cloth great Coat, a blue grey Waistcoat, old leather Breeches, yarn Stockings, broad square toe'd Shoes; and perhaps may have taken some other clothes with him. He is remarkable Hollow Footed and seems crup footed when his

¹*The American Weekly Mercury*, March 30, 1721.

²*The American Weekly Mercury*, May 18, 1721.

³*The American Weekly Mercury*, April 27, 1721.

Shoes are off. Whoever secures the said Servant so he may be had again, shall have Twenty Shillings Reward, paid by William Blair.⁴

Runaway on the 18th inst. at night from on board the ship Friendship, Hugh Wright, commander, now lying at William Allen Esquire's wharff, James Dowdall, a servant man, a laborer, lately come in, but he has been in many parts of this Continent before; he is about 5 ft. 4 inches high, has short hair, but neither cap nor hat; Has on a blue frize Coat and Jacket, a Check shirt, leather breeches, and blue yarn hose; speaks as a native of this Province; he is at present greatly infected with the itch and not able to travel far. Whoever secures the said James Dowdall so that he be brought to the said Commander, or to Wallace and Bryan on Market street wharf, shall have 40s. reward and reasonable charges paid by Wallace and Bryan.⁵

Most of these fugitives managed to elude their pursuers and were never captured.⁶ In all probability, James Logan's reward for Patrick Boyd was never collected. Although the advertisements place by Logan and other disgruntled masters recovered few runaways, today these advertisements provide the scholar with a wealth of information about colonial costume.

Historians of costume tend to focus their study on the apparel of the wealthy, particularly that worn by women.⁷ Their bias is only partially explained by the attraction of elegant finery. Pragmatic rather than esthetic reasons account for this prejudice. Researchers have chosen to study the attire of the elite because more articles of their clothing have survived and are preserved in museums. In addition, the fashions worn by members of the upper classes were often depicted in contemporary novels, paintings and prints, which supply the historian with ample documentary evidence. In contrast, examples of the clothing worn by working-class people have seldom survived. Farmers and laborers probably donned their garments until threadbare and then discarded them. Few garments would have been preserved for posterity. Moreover, as members of the lower classes were less frequently portrayed in the visual arts, fewer iconographic sources are available today to document lower-class garb.

The history of costume should not be restricted to an account of the fluctuations of high fashion. Scholars must turn their attention to the apparel worn by members of the working class. The runaway advertisements appearing in colonial newspapers represent

one of the few rich sources of evidence about the clothing worn by working people in the eighteenth century. This article makes no effort to provide a comprehensive account of working-class apparel in colonial America; it is merely an attempt to initiate further study by exploring the runaway advertisement as a fertile source for costume research.

From runaway notices the historian can infer much about typical working-class attire. Indenture contracts usually stipulated that masters were to provide clothing, in addition to food and shelter, during the term of servitude. As the master provided clothing appropriate to the servant's occupation and social status, the runaway's costume differed little from that commonly worn by his independent counterpart. Thrift was undoubtedly paramount to a master when outfitting a member of his staff. In 1759, George Washington ordered bolts of durable cloth, shoes, buttons, and caps to outfit his retinue at Mt. Vernon.⁸

The servants of more frugal masters were probably the beneficiaries of their employers' cast-offs. One servant made the error of running away in a shirt which bore the easily identifiable monogram of his master. Although the indentured servants described in the runaway notices may have had little choice in selecting their own apparel, they were probably more adequately clad than members of many independent working-class families, who could not afford to replace a shoddy pair of boots or a ragged coat.

Runaway notices contain a wealth of information about the types of clothing worn and the fabrics from which they were constructed. These ads have only one limitation — they are usually silent on the topic of style. As a master described the runaway's appearance solely to secure his capture, he printed only salient information which would identify the renegade. He neglected to specify the cuts of common fashions because these would have been taken for granted by contemporary newspaper readers. Only when a servant wore an unusual outfit, which would identify him to a stranger, might the master mention style. To discover the styles of garments worn, one must rely on secondary references.⁹

The workingman described in the runaway notices cut a rather shabby figure in ill-fitting, unmatched garments. His motley appearance was exaggerated because many fugitives grabbed all the clothing they could get their hands on before taking flight, especially if they escaped during the cold winter months. One farsighted servant, nicknamed Plumly, absconded with several changes of clothes. According to his master, he took:

⁴Elizabeth McClellan and Sophie B. Steel, *Historic Dress in America* (Philadelphia, 1904) p. 244.

⁵An extremely useful reference on 18th Century costume is C. Willett and Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1957).

⁶*The Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 11, 1740.

⁷*The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 28, 1752.

⁸For background information on indentured servitude refer to Karl Frederick Geiser, *Redemptioners and Indentured Servants in the Colony and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (New Haven, 1901); and Abbot Emerson Smith, *Colonists in Bondage: White Servitude and Convict Labor in America, 1607-1776* (New York, 1971).

⁹Notable exceptions of this trend are two recent exhibition catalogues: Claudia Kidwell and Margaret Christman, *Suiting Everyone: The Democratization of Clothing in America* (Washington, D.C., 1974); and Brooklyn Museum of Art, *Of Men Only: A Review of Men's and Boy's Fashions, 1700-1975* (Brooklyn, 1975).

a homespun Coat of a Cinnamon Colour, lined with light-coloured Stuff, a Wastecoat almost the same Colour; a blew and white striped Linsey-woolsey Jacket; another light-coloured Coat; also a very good Leather Jacket, with cross Pockets, lined with white Flannel of Half-thick, and Pewter Buttons, a Pair of very good Leather Britches with Brass Buttons. He has 3 Shirts, one Cotton and Linnen, the other two homespun cloth; a pretty good Hat, a Scotch Cloth Neckcloth fringed at both ends, and one plain one; also a Pair of grey worsted stockings, and 2 Pair of black and white Yarn Stockings, and a Pair of Shoos almost new.¹⁰

Selected advertisements from the early 1720's indicate that the typical runaway's outfit included a coat or jacket, often a waistcoat or vest, knee breeches, a shirt, shoes, stockings, and a hat or cap. These articles, with the exception of the jacket which was worn only by workingmen, differed from those worn by members of the upper classes in quality and styling.

Workingmen wore loose-fitting coats, unlike the wealthy who wore coats which were close-fitting and waisted with a full-flared skirt reaching below the knee. Masters referred to the coats worn by runaways as loose coats, frocks, great coats, or surtouts. The great coat, also called a surtout, was an overcoat with a back vent essential for horseback riding. The frock was a loose coat with a flat turned-down collar which was worn over other garments as a smock. These loosely-fitted garments afforded greater mobility than the tight-fitting garments worn by the well-to-do, who performed little physical labor. Double-breasted coats were worn by the wealthy only for riding; however, many servants described in runaway ads wore this style.

Coats were cut from a variety of fabrics: broadcloth, kersey, drugget, frieze, sagathy, fear-nothing, serge, camblet, duffle, homespun, thicket and duroy. All of these materials were durable fabrics. Coat colors were usually drab shades of brown, cinnamon, gray, or blue. These coats had little or no ornamentation. Workingmen wore coats with pockets before pockets had become standard elements on coats. No doubt, pockets first appeared on workers' garments because they were handy for carrying tools.

Workingmen often wore jackets, which were rarely, if ever, worn by the wealthy. The jacket, like the loose coat, provided the worker with freedom of movement necessary for labor. Jackets were hip-length and sleeved, but were cuffless. The terms "sailor's jacket" and "pea jacket" appear frequently in runaway notices. Although this style of double-breasted woolen jacket was originally worn by seamen, runaway advertisements indicate that this type of jacket was also worn by laborers of many different occupations. As the jacket was often described in greater detail than other garments, there may have been a

¹⁰*The American Weekly Mercury*, November 16, 1721.

great diversity among them. One runaway boasted a brown jacket embroidered with hearts. Another, named Giff, traveled with three jackets: a dark drugget with red lining, a flashy striped Holland jacket with a checkered lining, and a third made of Ozenbrig.

Knee breeches were worn by almost every workingman. These pants were constructed out of a number of different materials, but leather, especially buckskin, was most frequently employed.¹¹ Ozenbrig, a coarse linen, was a popular fabric for cloth summer breeches; however breeches were made from every material ranging from "Beggar's Velvet" to canvas and striped ticking, a fabric comparable to that used today for mattress coverings. Occasionally, servants were described as wearing trousers, which were probably similar to overalls.¹² Buttons of brass and pewter or buttons covered with cloth or leather closed the front flap of these pants.

Shirts were usually made of Ozenbrig or homespun. The shirt was worn alone or underneath a waistcoat, which was also referred to as a vest. The waistcoat was made of many fabrics, such as drugget, ticking, fustian, broadcloth, flannel, sagathy, or kersey. One authority suggests that servants' waistcoats were often sleeved and worn as jackets.¹³

Although wigs were not commonly worn by those on the lower rungs of the social ladder, some servants did wear them. Valentine Handlin, an Irish servant, took flight from a ship docked in the Philadelphia harbor wearing a brown bob wig, which was parted down the center and curled at the nape of his neck.¹⁴ Runaway ads suggest that members of the working class wore caps or hats in lieu of wigs. Caps, usually woolen, were often striped and colorful. Hats were either made of beaver or felt.

Servants wore worsted stockings in a multitude of colors. Most hosiery was grey, white, blue, or cinnamon, but occasionally a servant sported "Scots plaiden hose". These stockings were high and gartered below the knee. Shoes were either round or square-toed. The majority of shoes worn by runaways were described by masters as "new" or "good". Perhaps the clever fugitive recognized that he could travel faster and farther in sturdy shoes and made certain that he had a pair of good shoes before planning his escape.

A handkerchief or scarf was the only ornamental accessory commonly worn by servants. These were frequently worn about the neck. The scarf, often silk, was usually quite colorful. Plumly, the servant of Joseph Jones, escaped in a plaid "Scotch Cloth Neckcloth fringed at both ends". Another form of personal adornment, although not a type of apparel,

¹¹Cunnington and Cunnington, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹²Alice Morse Earle, *Costume of Colonial Times* (New York, 1924) p. 248.

¹³Cunnington and Cunnington, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 91.

was the tattoo. One sailor was decorated with his initials and a crucifix on one arm and a picture of Adam and Eve on the other.

A plethora of information can be gleaned from runaway advertisements about the attire of workingmen. These notices are a much less fertile source for the study of women's costume because the overwhelming majority of ads are for male servants. The following notice for Eleanor Trainer and her cohort is one of the few to be found in *The American Weekly Mercury*:

Runaway from the Subscriber, in St. Mary's County in Maryland, the 15th Day of March last, two servants. A young man named James Hand . . . The other a Woman named Eleanor Trayner, black Hair, fresh coloured, a very lusty Woman, and has on a stuff Gown mixed with Red and white, but appears to be mostly Red, and a Petticoat of stamped Calico with a dark Stamp; one other Gown of striped Stuff, lined with striped Stuff of a contrary Stripe, a petticoat of second Mourning Crape, a Pair of blue Worsted Stockings and wooden heel'd Shoes . . .¹⁶

Eleanor Trayner's dress, like the typical outfit of the early 18th Century, consisted of both a gown and petticoat. The gown, a combined bodice and skirt, was opened in the front to display the petticoat beneath. Women's costumes are also briefly described in the following ads:

Runaway the 17th of this Instant October, from William Chancellor of the City of Philadelphia, a Negro Woman named Nan, aged about 32 Years, having on a Stuff Gown and a new Bonnett Lined with Red Silk; She is supposed to be about the said City. Whoever takes up the Negro and brings her to her said Master, shall be well Rewarded.¹⁷

This Day Runaway from John M'Comb, Junier, an Indian Woman, about 17 Years of Age, Pitted in the Face, of a middle Stature and Indifferent fatt, having on her a Drugat, Wastecoat and Kersey Petticoat of a bright Colour. If any Person or Persons shall bring the said Girle to her said Master, they shall be Rewarded for their Trouble to their Content.¹⁸

An adequate portrait of the working-class woman's attire cannot be drawn until a larger quantity of advertisements is compiled.

This article presents only a small sample of runaway ads published in Philadelphia newspapers over a very narrow time period. Systematic analysis of a larger number of ads would yield much more information about the neglected subject of 18th Century working-class attire. To determine if there are any discernable changes in working-class apparel during the 18th Century, runaway advertisements could be collected from newspapers ranging over an extended period of time.

A comparison of runaway notices from newspapers published in different cities might reveal regional patterns in working-class dress. Most important, further study of these notices could supply information about the social function of dress in colonial America.

Forty years ago, ethnographer Petr Bogatyrev published a pioneer study, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*. In this provocative essay, Bagatyrev urged scholars "to learn to read costumes as signs in the same way we learn to read and understand different languages".¹⁹ In addition to serving the practical function of protecting the wearer from the physical environment, costume also expresses the individual's relationship to the social environment. Costume is a symbol of identity and differentiates the individual by sex, age, social status, and occupation, in addition to expressing his personality.²⁰

Admittedly, runaway notices are a poor source for studying costume as an emblem of age or sex because most runaways were males in their late teens and early twenties. Runaway notices are a particularly fertile source, however, for examination of costume as an emblem of social status. Runaway notices often include the occupation of the servant. Closer scrutiny of these ads may reveal distinctions in occupation costume. As these advertisements invariably mention the nationality of the servant, one might also discover the survival of nationalistic difference in dress. These are just a few of the possible avenues of research to which the runaway advertisements in colonial newspapers may lead.

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¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 104.

¹⁶*The American Weekly Mercury*, May 18, 1721.

¹⁷*The American Weekly Mercury*, October 31, 1723.

¹⁸*The American Weekly Mercury*, March 24, 1720.

¹⁹Petr Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia* (Paris, 1971) p. 83.

²⁰Don Yoder, "Folk Costume," in *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, edited by Richard M. Dorson (Chicago, 1972) p. 304.



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