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PENNSYLVANIA Folklife

SPRING • 1960



THE GERMAN GRANDMA SING TO ME

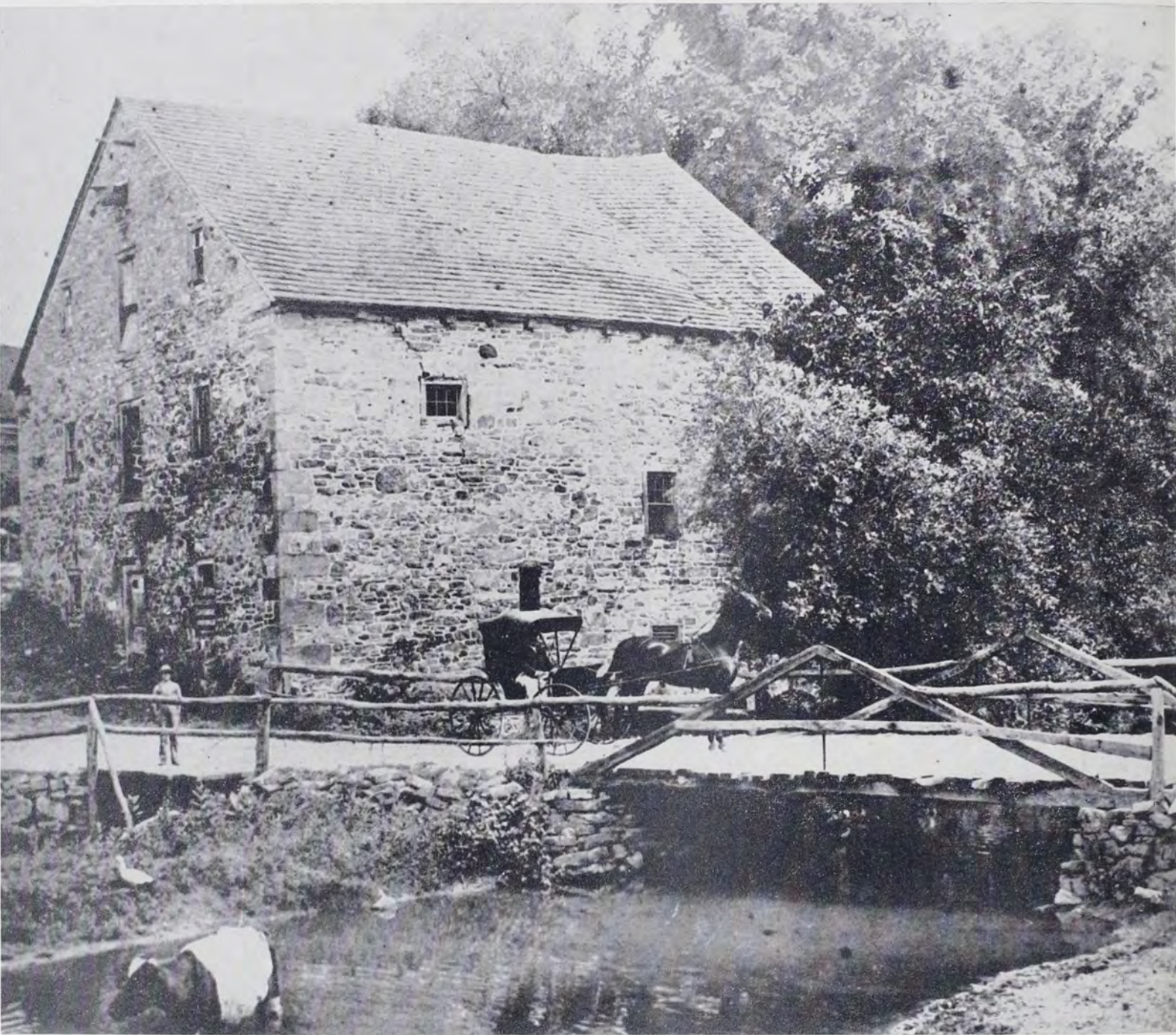
WE SHALL LET THIS LETTUCE SHOOT TO SEED

SO DISTELFINKES MAY EAT THE FUFFUL

FOOD OF FRAPPING ROOT

S E B OYER

Courtesy: Berks County Historical Society



Ruth's mill beside the Wyomissing creek—two miles west of Reading — in the horse-and-buggy era.

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Contents

- 2 A Dunker Weekend Love Feast
of 100 Years Ago**
By CLARENCE KULP, JR.
- 10 The Peacock in Pennsylvania**
By EARL F. ROBACKER
- 17 The Get-Togethers of the Young Amish Folk**
By VINCENT R. TORTORA
- 22 Church and Meetinghouse Stables and Sheds**
By ALFRED L. SHOEMAKER
- 34 Abraham Harley Cassel—
Dunkard Bibliophile**
By ROY C. KULP
- 38 Mennonite Folklore**
By JOHN R. MUMAW
- 40 Springs and Springhouses**
By AMOS LONG, JR.
- 44 Finishing Wooden Surfaces**
By JOHN C. CUMMINGS
- 47 Early Funeral Notices**
By JANE KEPLINGER BURRIS
- 50 Collecting Dialect Folk Songs**
By THOMAS R. BRENDLE

A Dunker Weekend **LOVE FEAST** *of 100 Years Ago*

By CLARENCE KULP, Jr.

The Brethren—called colloquially “Dunkers” or “Dunkards”—are one of the three major sects of the so-called “Plain People” of Pennsylvania. In theology they are very much akin to the Mennonite groups, coming from the same Anabaptist-Pietist tradition. The chief differences which distinguish the Brethren from their fellow “Plain People” are their observances of baptism by trine immersion and the keeping of the “*liebesmahl*” or “love feast.”

Love feasts are among the most ancient of Christian ceremonies, being patterned after the *agape* or feasts of love held in the apostolic church. When the Brethren were first organized in Germany in the year 1708, one of their main objectives was the re-establishing of the primitive church with all of its rites and ordinances.

As their basis for doctrine and ceremony, they took, first of all, the Holy Scriptures, and, secondly, the works of the accredited church historians among the German Pietists. In one of these works they read that all Christians of the early church observed a common meal, called the *agape* or love feast, in celebration of the Lord’s Supper and as a token of brotherly love and fellowship. In accordance with their desire to re-establish the apostolic church they began observing this ancient rite in connection with the communion service, and they continue its observance to this day.

Although the love feast has always been the most important date on the Dunker calendar, it seems to have reached the pinnacle of its popularity in the years 1840 to 1880. During this period it was not only the most important religious event of the year, but an occasion of great sociological significance as well. It had become *the* social event of the year for the Brethren. Members, primarily farm folk, throughout Eastern Pennsylvania took off a week from their rural chores and traveled, many of them, as far as fifty or sixty miles to attend a neighboring love feast.

We are fortunate in the Indian Creek Valley of Montgomery County to have had among us—up to January 17th of this year, when she died—Mrs. William F. Bechtel who still remembered very vividly the week-end love feasts as they were held during the 1870’s and 1880’s. Since her father, Moses K. Gottshall, had been a deacon in the congregation responsible for the preparations of the love feast, she was also able to relate to us some of his experiences, going back another half-century.

The following description of a typical week-end love feast in the Indian Creek meetinghouse is taken largely from her

oral description of it, as given to me within the past two years, with added facts received from other elderly members of the congregation.

Liebesmahl at Indian Creek circa 1860–80

The love feast of the Dunkers during the nineteenth century was usually held once a year. There was no specific date set for its observance, although the old custom was to observe it during the week preceding Pentecost or *Pingshta*. This was usually followed, on Whit-Monday, by the great yearly council or “*die gross rath fersammlung*,” where the business of the entire Dunker Brotherhood throughout the country was transacted. The days on which the love feast was held were usually Saturday and Sunday. So great a church function necessarily required a great deal of preparation, both spiritual and physical.

Spiritual Preparations

The spiritual preparations for the love feast were three-fold, as follows: (1) the annual deacon’s visit; (2) the special council meeting; and (3) the preparatory service.

The first of these, the annual deacon’s visit, began about six weeks prior to the love feast itself. It was known in the dialect as the *yairlich bsuch* or *for-shtaiers bsuch*. At this time the deacons of the congregation, usually numbering a half dozen or more, were divided into groups of two, and sent out into the congregation to conduct personal visits with each member family. The purpose of the visit was to ascertain whether the members were all dwelling in peace and unity and living within the “*ordnung*” or “order” of the congregation. Three questions were always asked: (1) Are you still in the faith as you were when you were received into the church by baptism? (2) Are you living in peace with your brethren and neighbors as far as you know? and (3) Are you willing to work on with the church (*gmay*) at Indian Creek? It is said that some years ago a certain brother, when asked the third of these questions, replied: “Ya, won’s net tsu shtarriek gait.” (Yes, if it doesn’t go too fast, meaning if the old-time customs and traditions were not too abruptly changed.)

After the above interrogation was completed, the brethren would ask if there were any complaints or suggestions which the family might have for presentation before the special pre-love feast council meeting. After one of the brothers had completed the questioning, the other deacon would lead



*Indian Creek Brethren Meetinghouse as it looked at the time described in this article.
The door in the gable end is the entrance to the cellar kitchen.*

in audible prayer, the family kneeling the while. This concluded the visit and after exchanging the salutation of the right hand of fellowship and the holy kiss, the visiting brethren departed.

The Special Council Meeting

The next step in the spiritual preparation for the love feast was the special council meeting. There are four regular council meetings a year in Brethren congregations, at which time the members of the congregation discuss congregational business under the direction of the bishop or presiding elder.

This special council meeting is an additional conference, largely disciplinary in nature. It was known in the dialect as *die rote fersammlung* or the *counsel* meeting. After the opening scripture and prayer, the reports of the visiting brethren were given. These were largely matters of discipline, such as difficulties in family or church relationship, as well as cases of members who had transgressed the order of the *gmay* in becoming too worldly in one way or another. The cases were settled in the order in which they had originally been presented. Members who had transgressed were advised to make open confession (*bekentniss*) of their sins. If transgressing members were not present, the bishop would appoint a committee of deacons to visit them and advise them as to the congregational ruling. If members made an open confession and restitution for their sins, they were forgiven and reinstated into full fellowship. If, on the other hand, they refused to confess their sins, there remained

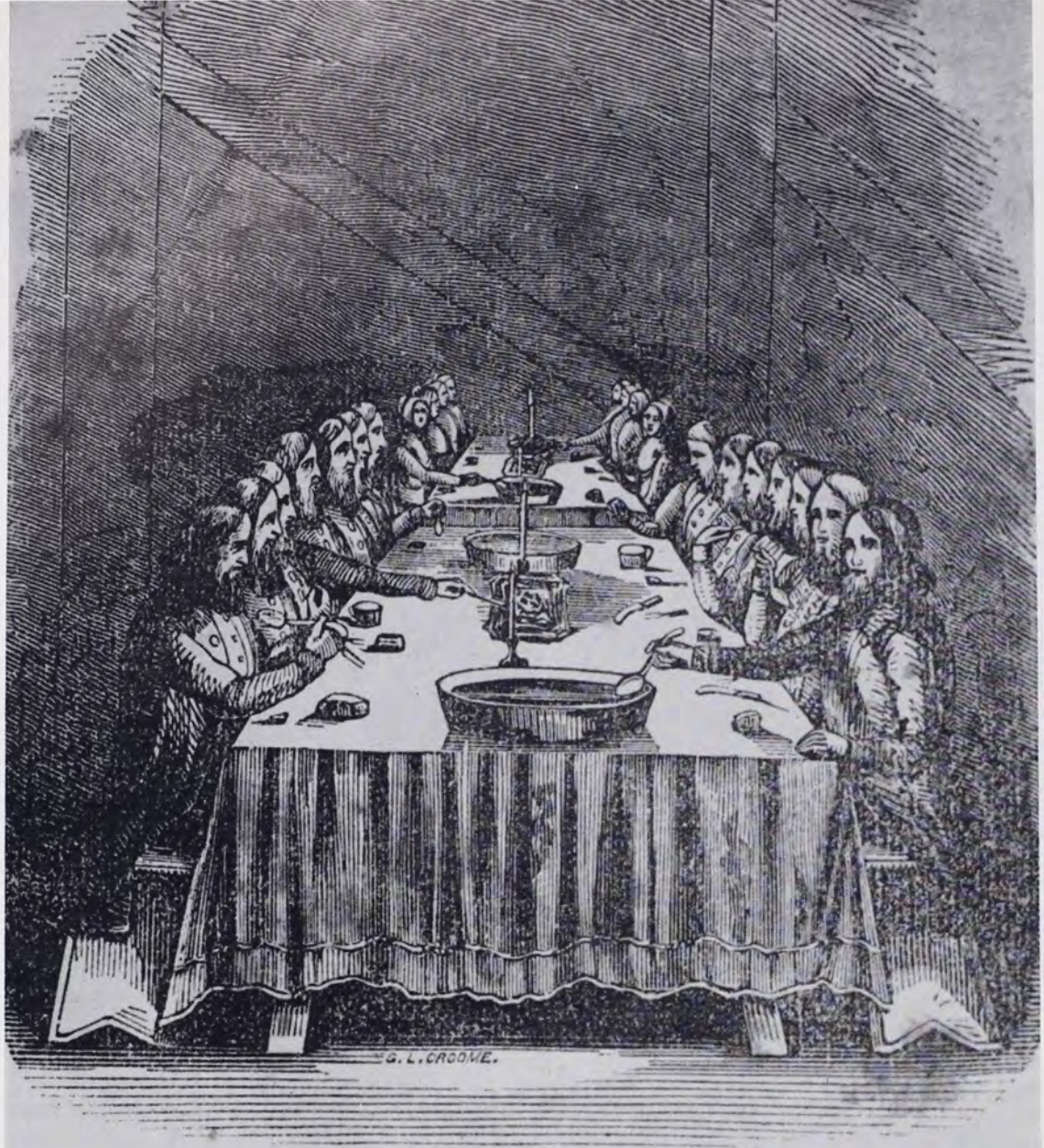
two courses¹ of action for the church: (1) If the sin was considered a gross one, the member was excommunicated and placed under the ban; or (2) If it was considered a minor transgression, the member was merely excluded from the communion table, church council meetings, and the salutation of the holy kiss. This action was known in the dialect as being *tserick-gsetzt* or *tserick-gsteltt*.

After the disciplinary cases had been settled and the yearly admonitions given, the meeting turned to the material preparations for the love feast. At this time the bishop appointed a committee to take charge of accommodations for the visitors from other congregations, as well as one to purchase the provisions—meat,² bread and butter—for the love feast service.

Some members would volunteer their houses or their barns as dormitories for sleeping accommodations. Others would give foodstuffs to help feed the great crowds. One or two farms, located near the meetinghouse, would be designated as feeding, watering, and bedding places for the horses. These were usually the farms of Matthias Price, Abraham Price, or Abraham H. Cassel. Also several brethren were appointed as hostlers.

1. Brethren Annual Conference Minutes, 1825: "For gross or vicious sins, members should be put entirely in avoidance, while for minor transgressions, they should be precluded only from the salutation of the kiss, church council, and communion."

2. Indian Creek Congregational Minute Book. Special Council Meeting, April 30, 1910: "It was decided to obtain the meat for our coming Love Feast from butcher J. B. Kratz."



The Lord's Supper.

Engraving of Brethren celebrating the Lord's Supper in Nead's Theology, c. 1850.

Material Preparations

Before we consider the final step in the spiritual preparation for the love feast, we must now consider some of the material or physical preparations, which were made during the week prior to the affair.

On an appointed day during this week the *dieners weiver* (deacons' wives) assembled at one of their homes to prepare and bake the traditional *liebeshmahl brote* or love feast bread, which was used in the communion ceremony. This was a special bread, of unleavened variety, baked in a flat loaf, round or oblong in shape. The loaf was ruled off into long strips, with the aid of a special marker, and a two-pronged fork was used to prick holes into the strips, five in a row, symbolizing the five wounds of Christ on the cross.³

3. For the picture story of the preparation of Dunker love feast bread see article "Love Feasts" by Don Yoder in *The Dutchman*, vol. VII, no. 4, pp. 34-37.

On the Friday preceding the first day of the week-end love feast, these same deacons' wives, assisted by the *breddichers weiver* (preachers' wives), assembled at the meetinghouse for the purpose of cooking the meat for the love feast.

A fire would be built in the large cellar fireplace. A fireplace such as this was a necessity in all of the old Dunker meetinghouses for the preparation of the love feast meal. After the meat was cooked, it was laid out on large tin servers and placed upon the tables in the cellar kitchen.

The meat which was used in the early days was always mutton, symbolizing the Passover Lamb, but, as time went on, other types of meat were allowed.⁴ Since the Civil War period, beef has become almost universally used.

4. Brethren Annual Conference Minutes, 1827: "Mutton is recommended as the most agreeable meat for the Lord's Supper, but forbearance is to be exercised if some congregations use other meat."

During this period of great activity among the officials of the congregation, the other members did not remain idle. The women were busy baking the pies and preparing the other traditional dishes which would be served to the many visitors at the other mealtime occasions during the weekend, apart from the love feast ceremony itself.

The men were likewise occupied, preparing the feeding, watering, and stabling accommodations for the horses, as well as the sleeping accommodations for the visitors. Some were at home, putting straw down upon the threshing floors of their barns and covering it with long strips of cloth or carpeting material, which served as bedding for the large numbers of people who would be sleeping there. Others, under the direction of the deacons, were placing straw and bedding materials in the attic of the meetinghouse. Upon entering the garret or attic of a Brethren meetinghouse at that time, the first thing that caught one's eye was the provision for *ivvernacht bleiva* or staying overnight.

The garret was divided into two parts, with a partition running through the center. On the women's side, a small section was divided from the rest, containing several beds, as well as a cradle. This was provided for the younger women with small children.

When, at last, everything seemed to be in readiness, the men and women retired to their homes in order to gain a much needed night's rest so as to be ready for the many duties of the morrow.

The Day of the Love Feast

Early on Saturday morning, as the first rays of the sun began to shine over the hills surrounding the Indian Creek Valley, final preparations for the great feast had already begun.

The women, early in the morning, began to bring the provisions for the various meals which were to be served during the course of the two-day period. Large loaves of home-baked bread and pies and other foodstuffs were placed on the shelves and tables in the cellar kitchen.

As the women were readying the food and drink, the men were busy preparing for the various religious activities of the day. One could see the deacons, buckets in hands, filing out of the meetinghouse through the cellar doorway, moving across the road, through the meadow, to the edge of the creek from which they drew the water for use in the foot washing ceremony.

As the morning progressed, long lines of horses and wagons could be seen, arriving from the neighboring congregations in Montgomery County, as well as from Berks, Bucks, and Lancaster.

Mrs. Bechtel told me that in her early youth—during the early Eighties—she remembered seeing these lines of vehicles stretched out on the Indian Creek road, sometimes to a distance of a half-mile or more.

As the visitors arrived, their horses were taken to the



Brethren women cooking love feast meat at Indian Creek Meetinghouse in recent years.

farm of Matthias Price or to one of the other neighboring farms to be fed and watered. The visitors themselves were shown to their accommodations, either in the attic of the meetinghouse or at one of the neighboring farms.

The visitors having arrived, the great yearly "reunion" of the Brethren was ready to begin. Old acquaintances were again renewed and new ones were formed. Some had perhaps not seen each other since the last love feast season. The din of their lively conversation blended with the delicious aromas emanating from the kitchen of the meetinghouse to form the delightful, never to be forgotten combination of sight, smell, and sound which permeated these occasions.

As noontime drew near, the sisters began to set the tables for the midday meal. Here one could see all the traditional dishes of the fellowship meals of the Dunkers. The tables were laden with large loaves of bread, butter, apple butter, pickles, and many varieties of pies. The men seated themselves on one side and the women on the other side of the long table in the cellar kitchen. Attending brethren poured hot coffee, containing milk but no sugar, into bowls on the table. This was the traditional menu for the fellowship meals of the Brethren at their week-end love feasts, as well as at their great council or great meetings, with one exception. At the great meetings some form of meat and broth were added to the menu, while at the meals prior to the love feast ceremony the custom was to abstain or fast from flesh.

Since the announcements of Brethren love feasts in the earlier days were rather widely publicized, these occasions never failed to attract large groups of sightseers or observers from other denominations in the community. These on-lookers were invited to partake in the meals served during the day prior to the evening love feast. Because of the promise of free food the occasions were never free of a certain number of local rowdies who lulled around the outside of the meetinghouse while the services were in progress within. In some areas, this problem must have become rather serious, as evidenced by an act of the Brethren great meeting or annual conference of 1879, granting each congregation the right to employ "police officers" or local constables to keep order among the "observers" of the love feasts.⁵ This same condition prompted a movement among some of the Brethren at that time to petition annual conference for the right to hold "private" love feasts, which would not be announced in the community. This right was granted only in extreme cases.⁶

Final Spiritual Preparation

After all had partaken of the noon meal, the preparation for the afternoon services began. These services were two in number. The first was an ordinary Brethren *fersammling* or church service, composed of singing, prayer, a *for-raid* or first sermon, the main sermon or sermons, and the customary opportunity for extemporaneous exhortation granted to any visiting ministers or deacons present.

Later in the afternoon, following an intermission, the second service was begun. This was the last or final step in the spiritual preparation, as well as the first official service of the love feast itself. It was known as the preparatory or examination service, or in the dialect, *die for-bereiting*. The service was opened with singing and prayer. Then, a visiting minister or deacon was called upon to read

the traditional examination chapter (1st Corinthians, chapter 11). Following this reading, the visiting bishop, who had been called in to officiate at the affair, preached a sermon of self-examination, in which he exhorted the brethren and sisters to examine themselves to see whether or not they were in proper condition and frame of mind to observe the love feast in a worthy manner. Several other ministers also exhorted on this same chapter. Following the exhortations, the service was closed with prayer, in which "general liberty" was given. Private members, even sisters, one by one, joined in audible prayer for themselves, the congregation, and for all mankind, after which the entire assembly repeated the Lord's Prayer in unison.⁷

Because of their length, these two afternoon services were later merged into one service, known as the preparatory service.⁸

7. *Brethrens Encyclopedia* (Columbiana, Ohio, 1867), p. 164.

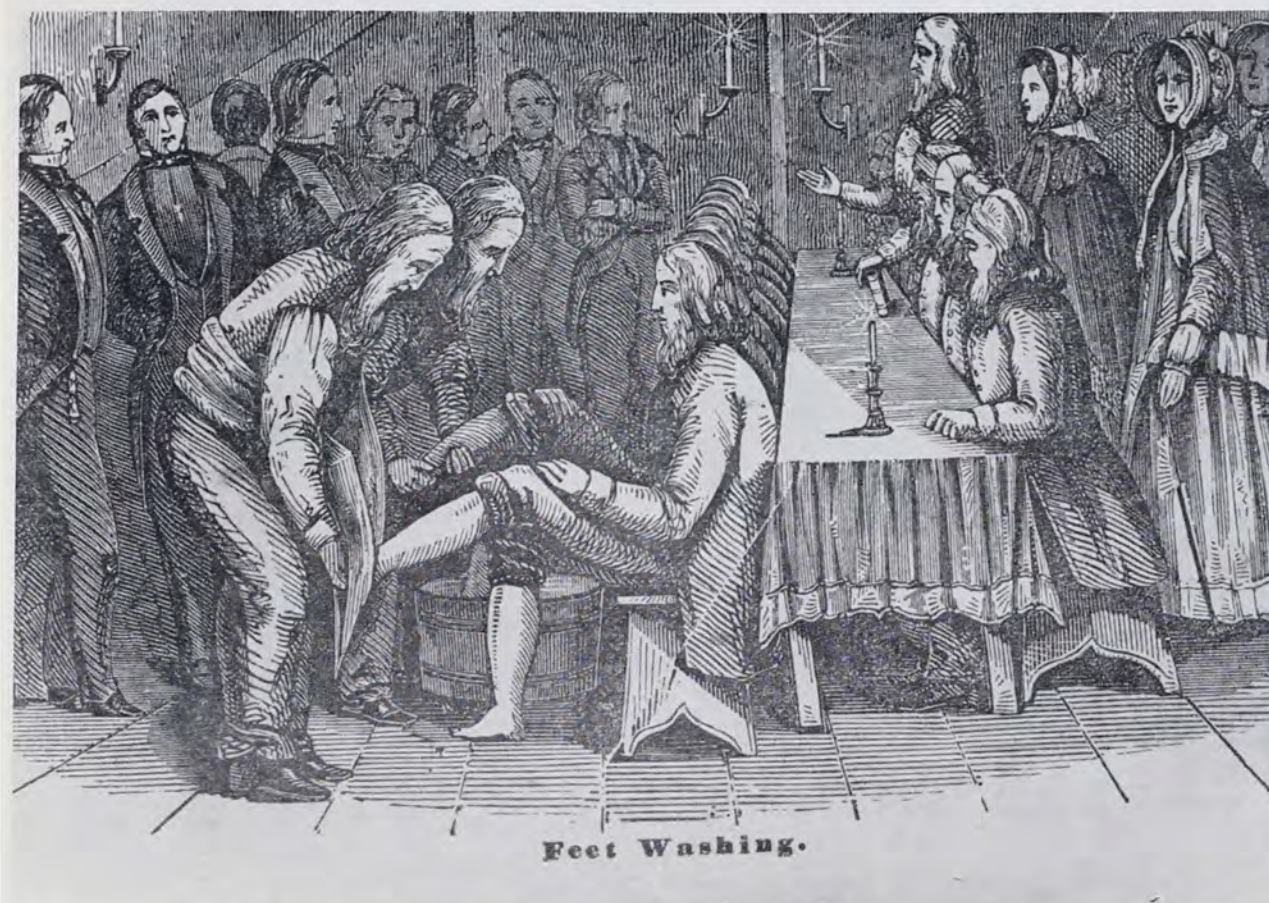
8. Indian Creek Congregational Minute Book, April 19, 1913: "It was decided that the two services in the afternoon on the occasion of a Love Feast be merged into one."



A Dunkard woman, from Lebanon County, marking love feast bread. Note the five indentations used to symbolize the wounds of Christ on the Cross.

5. Brethren Annual Conference Minutes, 1879. Article 12.

6. Brethren Annual Conference Minutes, 1854. Article 11.



Engraving of a Brethren feet washing from Nead's Theology, c. 1850.

As soon as the afternoon services were adjourned, the meetinghouse again became a beehive of activity. First of all the traditional supper meal was served in like manner as at noon. Then the brethren under the supervision of the senior deacon Moses K. Gottshall (my great-grandfather), began carrying the long table tops down from the garret and out of the *kammer* or ante-room, adjoining the meeting room. These table tops were pegged to the top of every third bench, forming long love feast tables, surrounded by benches on either side.⁹

The sisters spread the long linen or muslin cloths on the tables, while the deacons began to fill the foot washing tubs with water from long-spouted cans.

Soon the deacons came up out of the cellar, bearing large trays, containing the plates of beef and the large round loaves of bread. This they placed on the tables.¹⁰

The Love Feast Ceremony

As soon as everything was in readiness, the bishop, William Price Nyce, went to the front of the meetinghouse and announced the beginning of the service. As the bishop, together with the ministers, ascended to the long, old-fashioned, table-like Brethren pulpit, the rest of the congrega-

tion quietly and reverently took their places at the tables. The men and women sat on their respective sides of the meetinghouse. (In all Dunker meetings the sexes were required to sit in their separate places.)

Following the singing of several German hymns, the love feast itself finally got under way. The entire service was conducted in the German language. The service proper was opened by prayer led by Bishop Nyce. Then one of the ministers, behind the pulpit (which was also set for the love feast), read from the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John. This was the chapter containing the command of Christ to his disciples, enjoining them to wash one another's feet, as he had washed theirs. Following this reading, the ceremony of foot washing, the first ritual of this three-fold service, was begun. The brethren and sisters filed from their seats, several benches at a time, to the special benches provided for this rite.¹¹ On the men's side, these benches were placed end to end through the middle of the aisle and on the women's side in one aisle, as well as in the *kammer* or ante-room. As soon as the brethren were seated on these special benches the rite was begun. The brother at the end would arise, gird himself with a long apron, made of toweling material. He would then kneel before the next brother and begin to wash his feet, in the foot washing tub, provided at each bench. After completing this washing, he would dry his brother's feet with the "towel, wherewith he was girded." This ceremony completed, he would rise and greet his brothers with the right

9. Some years later the Dunker love feast bench table came into use. This was a bench which had the back hinged to the sides so that with a flick of the wrist it could be converted from a bench into a table. See Don Yoder's article "Love Feasts."

10. In earlier years the food was not placed on the tables until after the foot washing service. This practice was largely discarded in the post Civil War period and finally laid aside by a church council.

11. In most Dunker love feasts today, among the conservative Brethren, the foot washing ceremony takes place at the table.



Interior view of Kline's Meetinghouse, Indian Creek congregation, built in 1843. Approximately the same interior as meetinghouse where love feast was held annually, with the exception of preacher's table rather than pulpit.

hand of fellowship and the holy kiss of charity. Now this same brother would continue in like manner to wash the feet of the other brethren at the bench until he had washed the feet of several of them. When he retired, another brother took up the task until the entire row was completed. After the first group had filed back to their seats, another group would begin the ceremony until the entire congregation of brethren had participated in the rite.

At the same time the sisters on their side observed the ordinance in the same manner.

Following this rite the love feast would continue in exact imitation of the events at the Last Supper as portrayed in the Gospels.

The next rite or ordinance was that of the love feast itself. This rite had a double significance for the Dunkers. It was known by two names, the Lord's Supper and the love feast. As the Lord's Supper it was a re-creation of the events that occurred during the Last Supper of Christ and his apostles, at which time the communion service was established. To Dunkers the Lord's Supper or *nachtmahl* is not the communion service, but the meal which Christ and his disciples ate prior to the communion. The love feast or *liebesmahl* is the re-establishment of the ancient *agape* held in the apostolic church to symbolize the brotherly love and affection of the church. At these feasts all members, regardless of station in life, ate together, on one level. In the early Christian church these love feasts were also held on other occasions. The Brethren, however, celebrate this feast only in connection with the communion service.

Following the prayer of thanks for the meal, the congregation begins to partake of the feast. Quietly and prayerfully they eat of the simple repast composed of sliced beef, bread, butter, and water. Some years later broth was

introduced and was served in bowls into which the brethren and sisters dipped pieces of bread. This was called "dipping the sop," following the biblical terminology.¹² All participants were provided with knives and forks, three to four people eating from one plate or bowl. Following the meal, another prayer of thanks was offered for the food. This was called "returning thanks." This followed an old custom of two prayers at one meal, one prior to eating and one at the conclusion of the meal. Immediately following the final prayer of thanks for the meal, the second part of the love feast itself is celebrated. This is the ordinance of the holy kiss or kiss of charity. The officiating bishop rises and greets the minister next to him with the right hand of fellowship and the kiss of charity, placed upon the lip. This brother in turn greets the next one, and so on to the last brother on the rear bench. Then this brother comes to the pulpit and greets the bishop, thus closing the chain of fellowship. While this rite is in progress, the bishop comes down from the pulpit and greets the sister at the end of the front bench on the sister's side of the meetinghouse with the right hand only. This sister then greets her adjoining sister with hand and kiss and in like manner the rite is observed by the sisters. The brethren in greeting one another rise from their seats, while the sisters in observing the same remain seated, symbolizing the subjection of the sisters to the brethren. This ceremony symbolizes the bond of love between the members of the congregation and is observed in accordance with the command of the Apostle Paul, "Greet ye one another with an Holy Kiss."

Now we come to the third part of the love feast ceremony,

12. This practice was probably borrowed from the Lancaster County Brethren who used the broth quite early, but made a soup of it by placing the meat into the broth along with bread and rice.

the rite of holy communion. The officiating bishop uncovers the sacred elements of the communion, which had been covered with a white linen cloth and placed upon the pulpit. As the bishop takes a long strip of the *liebesmahl brote* (communion bread) from the tray, the entire congregation rises. Now the bishop lifts the bread in his hand and asks God's blessing upon it. Following the blessing, the entire congregation repeats with the minister the following words: "Das Brot dass wir brechen ist die Gemeinschaft des Leibes Christi." (This bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.)

Now the bishop, assisted by the ministers and deacons, distributes the bread to the congregation as they sit about the tables. The flat loaves of love feast bread have been broken into the long marked off strips containing the symbolic five perforations. These long strips are handed to each table. As the strips are passed around the table, each brother breaks off a portion and hands it to his neighbors. His neighbor then lays his portion upon the table and takes the strip and breaks to the next brother, and so on till all have been served. (The end pieces of each strip which can no longer be broken are returned to the serving brethren who give them to the small children to eat.)

On the sister's side, the bishop himself, along with his assistant, serves the bread. Unlike the brethren, the sisters do not have the privilege of breaking the bread among themselves but receive portions broken to them by the bishop. This again serves to symbolize the headship of the brethren. In the Brethren Church today, however, the sisters are granted the privilege of breaking the bread themselves.

After the bread has been distributed, all communicants partake of it together in a quiet, prayerful attitude. According to custom, it is broken into five pieces as it is eaten as a further reminder of the five wounds of Christ upon the cross.

Next, the cup of wine is elevated and blessed as the congregation again rises. The communion of the wine was always served in a common communion chalice. Thus it is observed in the Indian Creek congregation to this day. There are some congregations, however, in the denomination who have accepted the use of individual cups. As the cup was being passed, the congregation engaged in the singing of some of the old German love feast and communion hymns. A favorite selection was, "Ich komm jetzt als ein armer Gast, O Herr, zu deinem Tische." (I come now as a humble guest, O Lord, unto Thy Table.)

The communion wine was a fermented wine made by the senior deacon of the congregation; it was never bought. Today most Brethren congregations have substituted unfermented grape juice in this service.

At the close of this rite the love feast ceremony was now near to its completion, following ever so closely the biblical account they read in the New Testament saying that the disciples "sang a hymn and went out, and it was night." Following the singing of a familiar German hymn, the service was adjourned with the words of the bishop, "*Hiermit sind ihr entlassen; gehet heim mit Friede.*" (Herewith you are dismissed; go home in Peace.)¹³

After the service, great fellowship was again engaged in as the brethren and sisters cleared the meetinghouse of the plates, tables, and remaining food. After all was cleared

away, the members of the congregation repaired to their homes, while the many visitors from neighboring congregations retired to their accommodations. Some climbed up into the attic of the meetinghouse, receiving their blankets and bedding from the deacons' wives. Others retired to their accommodations in the barn which had been designated as men's and women's dormitories. Many stories stem from these experiences of long ago. Mrs. Bechtel, my informant, recalled very vividly sleeping in barns during such occasions. She related the following: At a neighboring love feast which she attended, she was assigned to sleep in one of the barns. It seems that an outsider, a man dressed like a woman, slipped into the barn where the sisters slept and, during the small hours of the morning, stole all the valuables and money belonging to the women. One can only imagine the consternation which occurred in the camp the next morning.

The Closing Day of the Love Feast

Early the next morning the host women wended their way back to the meetinghouse to prepare the traditional breakfast for the visitors who were already coming back to the premises. Following a hearty morning meal of bread, butter, apple butter, pickles, pies, and strong, hot coffee, they were prepared for another day. Between breakfast and the service of the morning an informal song fest was often held, accompanied by much talking and visiting. At 9 a.m. the morning church service began.

This service consisted of the usual components of a typical Sunday morning worship service, comparable to the first service on Saturday afternoon, with the exception that this service consisted of perhaps as many as three to four sermons, what with the assemblage of so many visiting ministers and bishops. Following this worship service, the preparations were begun for the final fellowship meal of this great two-day event. Great amounts of the traditional foods, earlier described, were again put on the tables, in addition to the meat and broth left over from the love feast.

After the meal, a final session of fellowship, singing, and prayer closed the Brethren week-end love feast of a century ago.

As the horses and buggies of the visiting brethren and sisters were about to start back towards Berks, Lancaster, and other parts of Pennsylvania, one repeatedly heard the same last farewell, "*Won mer eich net saina am liebesmahl s naigst yaur, dann saina mer eich am grossa liebesmahl im himmel.*" (If we don't see one another at next year's love feast, we will meet at the great love feast in Heaven.)

Conclusion

As one pictures in his mind's eye the Brethren love feast of a century ago and sees the plainly clad brethren and sisters gathered around the "Table of the Lord" one cannot help but be impressed with calmness, serenity, and a sense of abiding brotherly love that permeated this week-end of fellowshiping. The men with their long beards and plain coats with standing collar and long tails and the sisters in their plain "caped" dresses, all wearing the white prayer covering, supping together in peace and unity of heart—all this presents a picture that is almost beyond the imagination of today's busy world.

The advent of the automobile and other means of rapid transportation in recent decades have brought about the abbreviating of the two or three-day Brethren love feast to an observance of a half day. With it all, something of the family spirit of the past has been irrevocably lost.

13. In jest the children parodied the closing of the services in these words: "Hiermit simmer im melassich." (Hereby we are in the molasses.)

What has the peacock, *pavo cristatus*, to do with the old-time art of Dutch Pennsylvania?

The question as to the legitimacy of the motif has not infrequently been raised, perhaps with good reason and certainly in a proper spirit of inquiry. The lordly peacock, vain, flamboyant, and raucous, seems ill-suited as a companion to the heart, the tulip, and other simple decorative motifs of Eighteenth Century rural Pennsylvania. In fact, to the beginning student it has sometimes appeared that the peacock bears about the same relation to the heart and the tulip that the cowbird's egg bears to other eggs in the same nest: It is there, but it is not there legitimately.

Actually, the peacock *does* belong. Perhaps the best single treatment of the subject ever to appear in print was Cornelius Weygandt's chapter, "The Peacock in His Pride," in *The Red Hills*, 1929. It should be pointed out that Dr. Weygandt was very largely concerned with the peacock decorations found on Staffordshire spatterware, but his observations are so sound and reasonable that one wonders why the question of legitimacy could come up at any later time. Certainly, the peacock belongs.

Convincing as the evidence is, however, the writer or lecturer almost inevitably has to face the questions of the doubting Thomases: Wasn't it the peacock which admitted the serpent into the Garden of Eden? Wasn't the peacock Juno's bird, and therefore purely pagan in its symbolism? Wasn't the peacock symbolic of the Resurrection, and hence a Christian symbol? Wasn't it the phoenix instead of the peacock which symbolized resurrection? Wasn't it the pelican instead of either? And, almost inevitably, What did the lowly Pennsylvania Dutch, so largely of peasant origin, know of peacocks—those magnificent birds which, roasted and then re-encased in their feathers, once graced the tables of the English nobility . . . and which only yesterday were tourist attractions on such great estates as that of the Earl of Warwick? Finally, Does it not appear, therefore, that the peacock is a ringer in America and that the folklorist is rendering unto one master what properly belongs to another?

For the first question: There is a tradition, steeped in antiquity, that it was, indeed, the peacock which allowed the snake to enter Eden; according to that school of thought, the peacock should bear the burden of responsibility for the expulsion of man from Paradise. Perhaps it is for this reason that a single peacock feather is sometimes believed to bring bad luck. (But what of the peacock-feather dusters which were once *de rigueur* in any well-kept English home? Did a bunch of feathers ward off the evil a single one might invite?)

The peacock *was* Juno's bird, and it was, therefore, according to Christian thinking, a pagan symbol. But it is also credited with being a symbol of the Resurrection, in the early Christian church. The two are far from irreconcilable, as any student of the religious beliefs of mankind knows. As a matter of fact, it would be a brave man who would assert that more than a very few religious symbols have not at some time been used as symbols in other and contrary religions.

As for the phoenix, there should be little confusion, since the phoenix was purely mythical. Rendered in artistic form, it might take any shape the artist wished, theoretically, at least. Representations in existing art are usually those of fantastical creatures, little if at all like peacocks. As for esoteric significance the phoenix was its own agent

The PEACOCK

By EARL F. ROBACKER

of perpetual re-incarnation, springing reborn from its ashes in periodic cycles. It is therefore a pagan symbol of resurrection, and appears later to have been borrowed, in the sense of a symbol, by the early Christians, to illustrate the concept of the risen Christ.

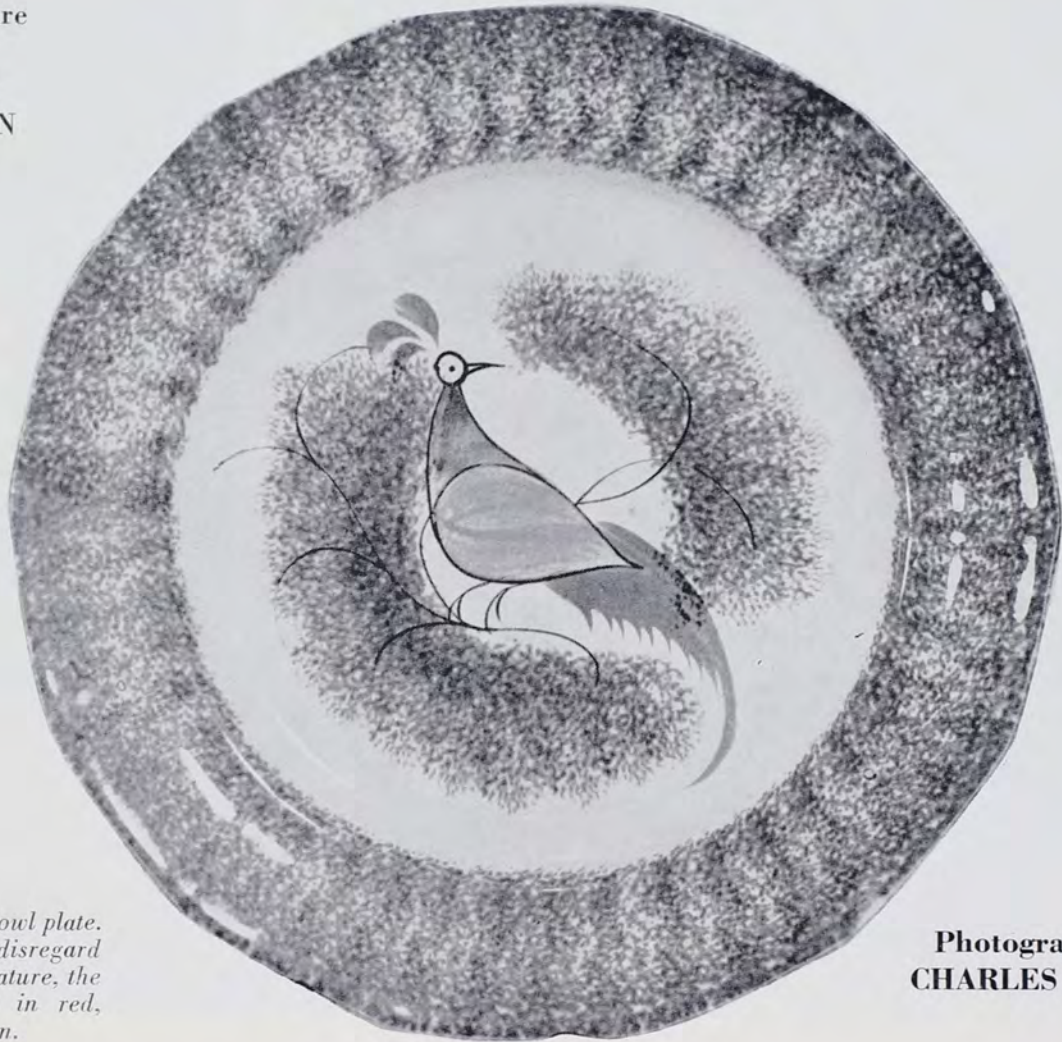
The pelican, which in nothing but size even remotely resembles a peacock—to say nothing of the phoenix—has traditionally been regarded as symbolic of piety or self-sacrifice. Representation of a mother pelican, plucking at her breast so that her young might feed on the drops of blood, are not uncommon in folk art, but the bird of art hardly resembles the bird of nature. There appears to be a correlation between the idea of the shedding of the mother's blood for her young, and the sacrificial blood of Christ.

The supposition that the "humble" Pennsylvania Dutch could not have known about peacocks and therefore would not have represented them in decoration rests on a number of fallacies. In the first place, far from *all* Pennsylvania Dutchmen were of humble birth, though certainly many were. From the days of Pastorius on, there were men of position, men of means, scholars, and well-traveled persons among the German immigrants. According to the records, it seems likely that a great many of the emigrating European groups had rubbed shoulders with the great—often to their regret, it is true. The assumption that they could not have known about the nature or way of life of the rich and powerful, or about their possessions, will not stand. Even were the assumption correct, one must not overlook the fact that in America many of the Pennsylvania Dutch were neighbors of the English Quakers. The Quakers were not at all backward in acquiring material possessions—which, according to the literature of the time—included peacocks. (Severe in their own dress, the Quakers could condone the brilliance of peacocks, for had not God created them brilliant?) That the Pennsylvania Dutch knew considerable about Quakers is evidenced by the fact that the Plain sects imitated Quaker clothing . . . and an eye that could spot a Quaker bonnet could hardly miss a peacock!

In answer to the final question posed by the doubting Thomases mentioned earlier, one may observe that peacocks were so far from being uncommon in Pennsylvania that their presence gave rise to a well-known weather adage. When the peafowl cries, there will be rain. Dr. Weygandt notes that peafowl were prevalent on the great farmsteads of Lancaster County, in particular. As a matter of fact, Pennsylvania Dutchmen who remained farmers were always partial to farm fowl which might be considered exotic, and perhaps unwanted, by their neighbors of non-Germanic extraction. Even today, if a farm boasts of guinea fowl, bantams, and Silver-spangled Hamburgs, the chances are pretty strong that a Pennsylvania Dutch wife is indulging her taste "for fancy."

in *Pennsylvania*

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*Blue spatter peafowl plate.
With complete disregard
for the laws of nature, the
bird is dressed in red,
yellow, and green.*

Photography by
CHARLES BAHR

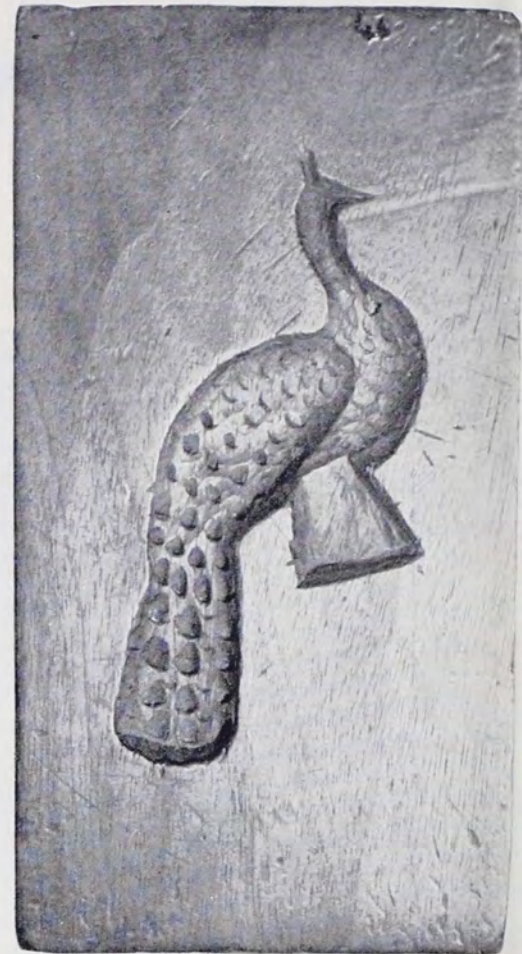
THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK

Of greater significance to the collector, however, than whether or not the peacock actually *belongs* among Pennsylvania Dutch motifs is the problem of recognizing it. It would seem that so striking a bird, with its characteristic crest, gold-blue-green color, and unforgettable tail spread, would be impossible to confuse with any other creature—and yet it is not impossible. In fact, it is only too easy, for the simple truth of the matter is apparently that no one but a competent artist can make a peacock look like a peacock in certain media—and not all early artists were competent. There may be a rich segment of folklore lying buried among the myriads of representations of birds in our native folk art—but no one will ever be the wiser because it is impossible to identify them. In specimens of cookie cutters alone, for instance, while it is possible to identify some birds with positiveness and others more or

less tentatively, there are still others which are just birds and will always be just birds—because the artisan lacked the skill to make them emerge as paroquets, not parrots; chimney swifts, not wild geese; distlefinks, not carrier pigeons. Thus, any one among peacocks, turkeys, pelicans, robins, and roosters may purport at some time to be any one of the others, and the novice none the wiser. From a researcher's point of view, it seems important to call a thing by its right name, in the interests of science, so to speak, but there is another and equally cogent, three-pronged reason for the collector: Peacocks are rare; rarities cost money; and if one pays the price for a peacock he should *get* a peacock, not a wren or a turkey.

Illustrations on these pages have been chosen with an eye toward showing how the peacock looks in a variety of objects and in different media. Let's start with spatterware—

Papier mâché squeak toy with polychrome decoration, probably made in Germany.



Intaglio-carved cake mould of black walnut.

THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK

Pennsylvania Dutch by adoption, English in provenance. It may have been Dr. Weygandt or it may have been Hattie Brunner of Reinholds who first used the term *peafowl* instead of *peacock* in naming the bird on this tableware. Whoever it was, the cautious nomenclature makes good sense for, since the representation is a sidewise one, the creature does not at first glance strongly suggest a peacock. The characteristic crest is there—but the ocellations of the tail plumage do not show; instead, simple downward strokes of the brush are used to indicate the edge of the feathers and the sweep of the tail. It might almost be a *peahen* instead of a *peacock*; hence the term *peafowl*.

While spatterware is by no means common, and while the inflationary spiral of the past few years has priced it almost

out of circulation, the peafowl is far from being the rarest spatterware pattern. In fact, one may discover a dozen peafowl pieces before he finds a dove or a rooster, and a hundred before he comes upon a windmill or a sailboat or a cannon. The colors of spatterware peafowl vary; the colorists who filled in the black outline of the bird did not feel obligated to adhere to the gold-blue-green of nature. Similarly, there is great variation in the actual shape of the body. Some birds are compact, like the one shown here; others are slender, even attenuated. In some, the central portion of the body (the "wing") is almost round, and the crest is erect. In others, the crest is replaced with a drooping tuft of feathers. One suspects that the workmen were sometimes even more careless of detail than workmen are said to be today.

Show towel with peacocks rendered in colored wool.



Peacock cookie cutter. Even with the sharpness of detail modified to meet a practical culinary situation, *pavo cristatus* is unmistakable.

PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA

Another genre of peacocks Pennsylvania Dutch by adoption rather than birth is found in the squeak toy, usually made in Germany and exported during the Nineteenth Century. The specimen shown here is noteworthy on several counts—the careful ocellations of the tail, the fact that the wings flap when the base on which the bird rests is depressed, and its large size—6½ by 6½ inches. The coloring is faithful, even to an attempt to indicate the iridescent quality of the plumage. It has been said that toys of this kind were made at Lehighton, Pennsylvania, but there seems to be no evidence that this is not a German bird.

A popular misconception is the notion that “If it looks back, it’s a peacock; if it doesn’t, it isn’t.” The intaglio cake board illustrated should be evidence that some peacocks look straight ahead, for there is no mistaking that this bird

is *pavo cristatus*. The carving is competently done in what appears to be native black walnut. Probably intended as a mould for springerle cookies, the piece is somewhat unusual in size—3 by 6 inches.

In homespun, peacocks take on a completely different personality. The pair shown in colored yarns at the top of the folded show towel are obviously *pavo cristatus*, in spite of the fact that they look like nothing in nature. There could be reasonable doubt about the pair in the drawnwork at the bottom of the same towel; yet, because of some odd trick in perspective, these same birds done in samplers, with a crest added, look remarkably like the birds they may not have been intended to be.

Peacocks in cookie cutter form are usually recognizable because of the tail spread. Alone in the writer’s collection,



What more appropriate as the "scenery" of a mirror than the preening peacock?

Red and black cloth peacock toy with all-over bead decoration. (The inverted ironstone egg cup is extraneous.)



THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK

the illustrated specimen shows a bird with proper crest and tail. Were this not satisfactory evidence in itself, documentation could be added: This particular bird was copied by the whitesmith from the peacock on the signboard of a flour mill in the Dutch Country, many years ago.

Reverse painting on glass called for considerable skill; thus, the "sceneries," so called, above the mirrors popular during the Federal and Empire periods were often more highly prized than the mirrors themselves. Birds were favorite subjects for mirrors—but peacock mirrors are extremely rare. The one shown here and the nearly identical one pictured by Weygandt in *The Red Hills* are the only two the writer has seen. It may be that the suggestion of vanity inherent in the peacock acted as a deterrent to the use of the bird on mirrors!

Completely engaging—and all but non-existent today because of their fragility—are the paper-tailed toys which were the products, not of a professional, but of some busy housewife. These birds, mounted on polychromed spools, were as colorful and elaborate as anything she could have produced. That they were actually used as playthings is to be doubted; it is far more likely that they belonged to that broad Dutchland category of things "just for fancy." Fancy they were—with their stuffed bodies (too thin to make satisfactory pin cushions) of gay scrapbag pieces, their bead eyes, and their folded and fanned tails.

Peacocks were occasionally used as motifs in the borders of the woven coverlets of the Dutch Country. Master designers, in setting up patterns for the loom, were always faced with the problem of creating a degree of verisimilitude,

in tiny squares, for objects which did not naturally lend themselves to treatment in squares or right angles. Thus it sometimes happens that there can be a difference of opinion as to whether a completed motif constitutes a leaf or a tulip, a rose or a flower not a rose—or, more pertinently here, a peacock or a turkey or just a bird. When an experimentally inclined weaver undertook to edit the original design, as now and then happened, the resultant creations, always interesting, were also sometimes puzzling. It may be for this reason that the peacock design in coverlets is subject to considerable variation, with occasional misnaming.

The same condition is true of slip-decorated redware pieces and of sgraffito. The dealer with a piece of pottery decorated with a bird has something important to sell; he may be forgiven on Judgment Day for calling the bird by a name he assumes will be sweet to the customer, or he may not. The pie plate shown here will serve as an example. A few years back, when distle-finks were being eagerly sought out, the then owner unhesitatingly dubbed the bird a distle-fink, in spite of the spotted breast and the un-canary-like tail feathers. Others, remembering the spotted birds which must be called pelicans because of the drops of blood dripping from the breast into the open beaks of young birds in other pottery decoration, maintain that this creature, too, is a pelican. Occasionally it is called a peacock, but the chances are that it is just a bird. It may be pointed out that it was extraordinarily difficult to use the primitive slip cup at all, for more than the creation of lines and "squiggles"; the wonder is that representations are as accurate as they are. Sgraffito was a bit easier, since the

*A pillow-sham peacock in red—
a late manifestation.*



*Brilliantly colored stuffed
toys with cut-paper
crests and tails,
mounted on spool
bases.*



*Slipware bird variously
designated as
distlefink, pelican,
and peacock!*



A "peacock" which is almost certainly a turkey.

Perhaps only a peacock could achieve the unconventional stance of the bird on this tray.



Tôleware tray with typical Victorian decoration.



PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA THE PEACOCK IN PENNSYLVANIA

artist could take his time in cutting through the glaze and into the red clay beneath. Some sgraffito peacocks, therefore, are indubitably peacocks.

Peacocks on fraktur are subject to comparable variation, and for the same reason: The scrivener was not always in complete control of his medium. Some peacocks (the motif is not common) are adeptly rendered; others can be called peacocks only by courtesy. The fraktur artist was less hampered by lack of space than was the potter or even the weaver, but the fact remains that the trick of rendering a recognizable peacock was rarely mastered.

Most satisfactory of all and least subject to doubt are the peacocks of tôleware, trays in particular. These birds

made their appearance during the Victorian era, and are as realistic and as gaudy as the heart could desire—from the crest above the appropriately swiveled head to the magnificent tail plumage. Only the Victorian passion for lushness in decoration could have produced, as the central decoration of a tray, a balustraded terrace banked with flowers and fruit, flanked with a weeping willow and a fountain, and crowned with a gorgeous peacock delicately balanced on a marble urn! What matter that the separate objects were out of scale or gorgeous beyond belief? The result was pleasing then, and if the speed with which a peacock tray is now snapped up by collectors is any criterion, the day of *pavo cristatus* is far from being over.



Amish youth and his pride: a horse and open buggy.

The GET-TOGETHERS *of the Young Amish Folk*

By VINCENT R. TORTORA

There is nothing closer to the young Amish heart than the prospect of a rousing get-together with companions of his own group. This affords an anxiously anticipated opportunity to break away for a brief time from humdrum farm life and to devote a day to light-hearted camaraderie.

Amish youth call their get-togethers "singings," and they are held on Sunday evenings. Sunday afternoons are given over, largely, to visiting and frolicking. Since the Amish, as a group, do their utmost to shun the world and its blandishments, the singing serves the two-fold function of affording entertainment for the young people from sixteen up and providing opportunities for meetings that blossom into marriages.

At least one singing is scheduled in the Amish area of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, every Sunday; usually at the house or barn of the family whose turn it was, earlier in the day, to hold "Gmay," the Amish word for a church-meeting. Since there are about thirty Amish church districts, and "Gmay" is held in each one fortnightly, about fifteen meetings are in session on any given Sunday morning. But, by prearranged plan, the singing is held only at one farm, or, at most, two.

Scarcely is the three to four-hour church-meeting finished early Sunday afternoon and the Amish young people take to clopping merrily over the back roads in their buggies.

Boys and girls, alike, drive shiny open black buggies. As many as five persons may jam into a rig built to accommodate two. Youths of the same sex tend to cluster together, but a boy may take his girl friend and, occasionally, his sister for a ride. Amish young people lavish on their high-stepping horses the same pride in transport that teen-age "worldlings" do on their hot rods. Chromium and mother-of-pearl rings and colorful rosettes glisten smartly in a setting of frothy lather covering the bobbing backs and flanks of the horses.

Sunday afternoon is devoted either to riding about through the scenic farmlands or to visiting. Quite understandably, young couples prefer just to ride. The wise young man in such a situation makes an effort to cross as many covered bridges as the countryside provides.

Unattached boys and girls find their way into fairly large groups of their own sex and congregate on the farm of one of their number. Girls can, with consummate ease, spend the entire afternoon talking about love, marriage and the hope chest. Boys launch readily into games of "corner ball" (see the Summer-Fall, 1957, *Pennsylvania Dutchman*) or race their sleek rigs along back roads.

Late in the afternoon, those who know where the singing is to be held head directly for it. Others, from distant church districts head their buggies into the centrally located



Four Amish boys in one buggy make haste to the farm of a friend.

town of Intercourse, where they learn the whereabouts of the get-together. Quite frequently, couples effect their rendezvous in town and journey to the singing together.

The young girls at the farm where the singing is scheduled to be held, and their closest friends spend the afternoon preparing for the affair. The benches on which the worshipers sat during church-meeting in the house earlier in the day are usually transferred to the barn. In order to make up tables, two benches are placed, side by side, atop

saw-horses. Some families make lemonade for the expected guests; others just serve well water. The snacks served vary from farm to farm.

As the buggies begin to arrive, the young men who live on the farm, and their closest friends, act as hostlers. It is their function to stable down what in the course of the evening may amount to a hundred-and-fifty horses. If there is not enough room in the barn, they are tethered at the fences.

The first guests to arrive are usually the youngest and



Couple heads along country roads to singing.



Three Amish girls in their open buggy.

most timid. The sixteen-year-olds, who are out on their own for the first time, are always conspicuous, even to an outsider.

They group off according to sex and take places at benches in different areas of the barn. Despite the efforts of the host to arouse a bit of spirit, the youths seem indifferent at first. The singing is, at best, half-hearted. A few of the older people who come "chust to sing a little" seem to carry the action for a while. But, as more and older guests arrive and the benches become better peopled, a type of contagion of enthusiasm seems to catch on. It isn't very long before everyone is singing at the top of his lungs. As befits these deeply religious people, they sing only hymns.

The first hymns to be sung are familiar to all, since they are a traditional part of the church service. They are called "slow tune" hymns and the texts derive from the *Ausbund*,

the oldest Protestant hymnal. The music is a type of chant vaguely reminiscent of ancient Gregorian Chant. All Amish singing is a *cappella*, or, without musical accompaniment.

As the party warms up, the manner of singing changes sharply. The youngsters now sing what they call "fast tune" hymns. These, also, are based on texts from the *Ausbund*; but, are sung in speeded-up and somewhat syncopated cadences faintly reminiscent of modern gospel songs.

In both the "slow tunes" and "fast tunes," a *Foresenger* or song leader introduces each phrase. The honor is usually given to the person who calls out the page number of his or her favorite hymn. Occasionally, weird effects are produced if the *Foresenger* has an especially high-pitched or discordant voice.

The beginning of the "fast tune" singing is a signal, as it were, for integration. Boys who had, up to then, sat timidly

Amish youth all headed one way: to the singing.





Benches are taken from the house and transported to the barn, where they are set up for the singing.

in a recessed corner of the barn suddenly discover they know, or would like to know, one of the sweet young things sitting up near the front. During the first "fast tune," there is a wholesale scramble to grab places at the benches near especially desirable young ladies.

All the social interplay of the singing is not without abundant side action. For example, if a young man wants a place near a special young lady and the boys already sitting there refuse, out of devilment, to let him in, a brief good-natured scuffle may ensue. Moreover, groups of boys who are proud to be wall-flowers roam about outside the barn engaging in an exchange of raillery with the "girl-lovers" inside. And woe to the "girl-lover" who is too accurate in

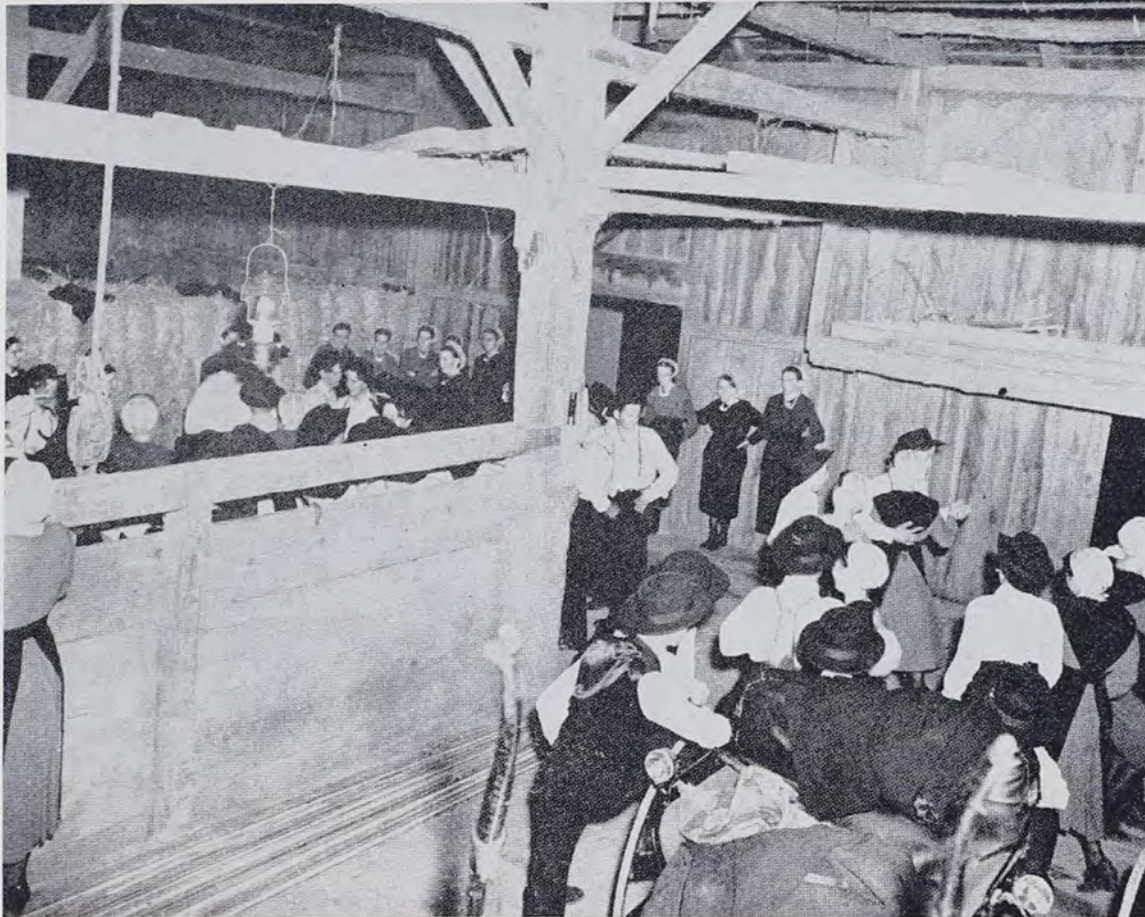
aiming his shoe, or a like missile, into the ranks of the tormentors. At the end of the evening he is likely to find the wheels deftly removed from his buggy and neatly stacked on the ground. Another butt of practical jokes by the wandering group of "unsociables" is the young neophyte who just learns that girls are interesting and gets as far as convincing one of them to go home in his buggy.

It is usually the best looking girls who bear the brunt of boyish enthusiasm. They are teased, kicked, nudged, "spritzed" with water and even, furtively kissed by ebullient adolescents feeling their oats.

Throughout everything, the singing continues, undiminished.



Courting buggies lined up during a singing.



The Sunday evening singing ends up as a barn dance.

For the host family and the neighbors, such an evening is very special. The older folk come over to sing and the young children, by parental dispensation, stay up late. It is quite amusing to observe the four and five-year-olds on the sidelines imitating their older brothers and sisters.

Throughout the affair, pretzels, potato chips and lemonade (or well water) are passed around. Nonetheless, it is a time-honored practice, toward the end of the evening after the elders have gone to bed, for the young men to "raid" the cellar for fruit, root beer, cider, cookies, pies and the like.

As youthful interests are diverted to other things, the volume of the singing gradually diminishes. Suddenly, someone raises the cry, "Hoe Down!" and it is taken up and repeated in all corners of the barn. In a flurry of movement, benches are stacked up in a corner and a large surface cleared for barn dancing. Seemingly out of nowhere, harmonicas pop into the mouths of several of the boys and catchy hoe down tunes pop out. It isn't more than a fraction of a second before the trusty old timbers of the barn are quivering with the beat set up by hundreds of agile feet. Even the rebels who have remained on the fringe of the activities all evening are compelled into the inner circle by the palpitating music.

It is now that all the politics involved in arranging for a companion to take home comes into play. Boys try

desperately to persuade unattached girls of the greater speed, brightness and newness of their buggies. Every devious device is employed in a concerted attempt at persuasion. These include: seeking the intercession of the girl's friends, relatives or neighbors; or telling fibs about the closest competitors. The girls, conversely, play a waiting game, hoping against hope that a certain young man extends the offer of his chariot. If a girl has come with her brother, the enterprising young man who wants to take her home must scurry about to find someone to fill the vacated seat in the brother's buggy. His own sisters or cousins are the most likely candidates.

By the time the evening is over, only the neophytes and wall-flowers are left to go home alone.

As the sound of the horses' hoofs on the road dies out early Monday morning, the reason for the continued and unchanging existence of the Amish becomes all the more manifest. It is simply that the Amish are thoroughly at ease and happy within their own group. They have no necessity to turn outside the group for any of their emotional or social needs. Thus, the outside world is given little opportunity to make destructive incursions into the Amish way of life which would eventually and inevitably cause its disintegration.



*Courtesy: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College
Plymouth Meeting, near Norristown, Montgomery County.*

Church and Meetinghouse **STABLES and SHEDS**

*Byberry
Meeting*



Courtesy: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College



Courtesy: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College

Upping block in front of horse shed at Upper Dublin Meeting.

By **ALFRED L. SHOEMAKER**

Minor buildings in the rural landscape—hay barracks, dry houses, smokehouses, square and round—have been altogether neglected by our architectural historians. Abroad, in Europe particularly, as well as with us in this country, it has been the students of material folk-culture, the folk-lifists, who have pioneered in their study.

In this article I want to turn to the shelters for horses that stood beside our Pennsylvania churches and meeting-houses through two hundred years and more. My aim is merely to introduce the subject. Much research needs to be done in the general field of Pennsylvania and general American material folk-culture before anyone will be able even to attempt a definitive treatment of the material.

Roughly, in this span of years there developed two types of structures, an eighteenth century type and a nineteenth century one.

In the eighteenth century, in its early part at least, people went to church and meetinghouse overwhelmingly on horseback. To shelter the riding horses, stables were put up.

The nineteenth-century church-goers discarded the custom of riding to worship services on horseback in favor of the horse and carriage, and later, approximately from mid-century on, the mode of transportation was principally the horse and buggy. The stables, which could easily shelter a sizable number of riding horses, were not practical to house the many horse and carriages or, later, the horse and buggies. The cost factor alone in building sufficiently large stables dictated another type of structure, not to mention the preposterousness of having stables at least several times larger than the houses of worship themselves.

There thus evolved the horse shed.

In Pennsylvania both the stable and the shed originated out of the meetinghouse culture. It would appear that both structures are, essentially, a Quaker contribution to our Pennsylvania material folk-culture. I have found no evidence that stables were ever built at any church in the Lutheran-Reformed cultural areas of the commonwealth, very probably because here the congregational farm with its adequate barn provided *barn* shelter for the horses. There was thus no need of stables.

One finds evidences of stables at Quaker meetinghouses in Pennsylvania as early as the last years of the seventeenth century. The first deed of the Concord Meeting of Friends, located in Concordville in Delaware County, under date of Dec. 14, 1697, reads, in part: "The other buildings now also erected upon the sd. piece of land shall be for a stable for the services of sd. people."

The *Philadelphia Pennsylvania Gazette* of June 30, 1755, in referring to a theft in Goshen, Chester County, reads: "Whereas, on the ninth instant, there was stolen out of several saddlebags, in the stables belonging to Goshen Meeting-house, during the time of worship . . ."

The *History of Montgomery County*, edited by Theodore W. Bean (Philadelphia, 1844) in reference to Plymouth Meeting says, page 1032: "A school was kept from the beginning in connection with the meeting, and was the only one in the township down to the Revolution. Pupils came to it from miles around on horseback, in consequence of which a log stable was built on the premises."

Mary Rhoads Haines in her "Clovercroft Chronicles"



Courtesy: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College

*Quaker meetinghouse, Robeson, Berks County,
soon after meeting was laid down.*

(Philadelphia, [1893]) records an interesting anecdote out of the Revolution, bearing on stables at Goshen Meeting, page 121: "During the Revolutionary War one day while the Friends were holding service, a group of British soldiers came by and appropriated the horses standing in the stables. Just as they were securing their prizes, the Friends came out of meeting. One young girl, an Ashbridge, ran after them, so incensed was she, and demanded her horse. The officer was so surprised and overcome at her insistence that he submitted to her, and gave her her horse."

The Uwchlan Meeting records of Jan. 8, 1778, allude to the stable there: "A few days ago the Key of the Meeting-house at Uwchlan was demanded by some of the Physicians to the continental Army in order to convert the same into an Hospital for their sick Soldiers; the Friend who had the care of the House and Key refusing to deliver it, forcible Entry was made into the House and Stables and as there is no Prospect of enjoying the House peaceably from next First day it is agreed that Uwchlan Friends hold their meetings at the House of our Friend George Thomas in the Great Valley."

W. T. Ashbridge's "The Ashbridge Book" (Toronto, Canada, 1912) has an interesting tradition concerning George Ashbridge (1703-1773) page 31: "He owned the first carriage used in that part of the county [Chester]. As he could not enjoy his hour of public worship unless his horses were made comfortable, he erected a stone building to shelter them and his carriage on the premises of the Friends' meeting house at Goshen, with a doorway at each end, because he 'never liked to back out.'"

There is a record of Quakers meeting in a stable at Buckingham, in Bucks County, after the meetinghouse burned. The manuscript volume "Historical Sketches of Friends' Meeting," compiled by T. Chalkley Matlack, in the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College, page 97, says: "In the following spring, Fifth Month, 1768, the opening minute reads: 'At a Monthly Meeting held at Buckingham (in the stable, the meeting house being burned since last meeting) . . .'"

In none of the Quaker Meeting histories could I find anything like a detailed description of any of the stables. Among hundreds of photographs of meetinghouses at the Friends Historical Library I found but one showing a stable. It is in *Proceedings Centennial Anniversary, Friends' Meeting House, Darby, Pennsylvania* [1905], photograph facing page 6, with the caption: "Grave Yard and Old Stable."

The only anyway descriptive material I have located giving details of a stable is from Rev. D. K. Turner's "History of Neshaminy Presbyterian Church of Warwick, Hartsville, Bucks County, Pa., 1726-1876" (Philadelphia, 1876) page 158: "In 1810 a Committee was appointed . . . to consider the subject, and devise a proper plan. They reported, that in their opinion 'one stable should be built for horses alone, 60 feet long, and 27 feet wide; the side walls of stone about 7 feet high; doors in the ends; the horses to be fastened to each side; a double roof of cypress shingles; the expense of which they estimate at \$300. They also Thought, that stables for carriages should be erected.'" These plans were, however, laid aside, sheds being put up instead some years later.



Early photograph of Kraussdale Schwenkfelder meetinghouse.

The earliest reference to a stable at a Mennonite meetinghouse known to me is the following entry (I owe it to researcher Alan G. Keyser) appearing on the bottom half of page 189 in the Skippack Mennonite "Alms Book":

Den 14ten Januar, 1754 hat Vallentin Hunsiker empfangen vor dasz Halb-Dach auf den stall am Vorgader Hausz zu machen vor Holtz fahren—10 shilling—sag, zehn shilling bleibt noch 3 Pfund 2 shil. 2 bens solches bleibt auch in Michael Zieglers hand solches zeuge Andreas Ziegler

Christian Stauffer

At an Episcopalian church my earliest evidence for a stable is for the year 1762. Authors Harold Donaldson Eberlein and Cortland Van Dyke Hubbard in their "The Church of Saint Peter in the Great Valley 1700-1940. The Story of a Colonial Country Parish in Pennsylvania" (Richmond, Virginia, 1944) write, page 71: "Further attention to the exterior needs occurred in the summer of 1762, when the Vestry ordered that 'Two Stables should Be built 20 by 16.'"

HORSE SHEDS

Horse sheds, like stables, very probably are, in Pennsylvania at least, of Quaker origin. (What the horse shed picture is in other states I have no means of knowing, though my guess is that the horse shed is a Pennsylvania

contribution to American life.)

I have not been able to establish the exact date or place, when and where the first horse shed was put up at a Quaker meeting. (My feeling is that the time falls somewhere in the very latter part of the eighteenth century.) A thorough study of Quaker Meeting records would, I am sure, bring forth this information. It would naturally be of interest, too, to know whose brain child the meetinghouse open shed was.

As I indicated at the beginning of this article, horse sheds were evolved to shelter the horse and carriages of early meetinghouse-goers. A knowledge of when the first horse-drawn vehicles first became generally used in an area will give us the approximate time when horse sheds were first erected there.

The best and also the earliest printed account of horse sheds (I did not work through the individual Meeting minutes, I repeat) appears in the excellent¹ history "Gwynedd Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1699-1949," page 20:

During the nineteenth century the physical demands of the plant at Gwynedd became more im-

1. After reading through literally hundreds of parish histories in search of information on horse stables and sheds I am constrained to call attention to one which, in my estimation, is the finest of them all. It is Horace Mather Lippincott's "Abington Friends Meeting & School, 1682-1949."

portant. The new road, which was laid out on the east side of the land in 1808, made the trip to the Meeting House pleasanter, and perhaps influenced the members to feel that their horses and carriages should have adequate protection on Meeting days. Members first began to agitate for permission to build carriage sheds in 1807. Two years later, permission having been granted, a shed, for "privit" use, was erected on the north-east end, extending fifty-four feet southwest, and fronting on the new road. Not many years after, the subject of sheds was again brought before the Meeting and a committee of forty men was appointed to confer together and report what they thought best about the matter. Their report recommended the erection of sheds, "some of them . . . on the northwest line of the Lot and some on the Montgomery Road, and that the Public Stable on the northeast side of the Meeting House be taken down and the materials used in the building of said sheds."

By Spring 1822, sheds, large enough to accommodate forty-two carriages and nine single horses, had been erected for the sum of \$840.88½, and as subscriptions amounting to \$888.50 had been procured, a balance remained. (It is interesting to compare this with 1948, when it cost almost the same amount to repair five bays of these same sheds!) There were also six carriage sheds which had been previously erected by individuals for their private use, and since the proprietor of one had died without assigning the shed, and several others were willing

St. David's Protestant Episcopal Church, southwest of Wayne.



Courtesy: Schwenkfelder Library



Salford Schwenkfelder meetinghouse.

Courtesy: Schwenkfelder Library



Sheds at Schwenkfelder Church at Palm.

to dispose of theirs, the Meeting purchased these at eleven dollars apiece.

What a picture fifty or so horses and carriages must have made on First-day morning! And as the owners stood about and chatted in the spring sunlight, it must have warmed their hearts to know that the fine, new sheds, completely paid for, were owned by the group instead of by individuals, and perhaps they could be forgiven if they felt a fleeting moment of pride in their sleek and spirited animals. It is hoped, however, that these were not the

Friends referred to by Joseph Foulke in his story of the members of a certain meeting, who were remarkable for standing about the door of the Meeting House, conversing of markets and other subjects, when assembled for the professed purpose of Divine Worship. One day this group was surprised to find the following advertisement nailed on the door—

“Market without and Meeting within,
And when Meeting is out Markets begin.”

Courtesy: Chester County Historical Society



At the Chester County Historical Society (in this author's estimation the finest county historical society in Pennsylvania) I was directed to the account book of David Haines, 1773–1854, a carpenter and builder in West Chester. Among all the entries there is but one on building a meetinghouse. It reads:

Committee of Westchester meeting house

th 11 Mo. 24th 1813 To going to Philadelphia to get stuff \$3.00
th 9 Mo. 25th 1813 To Building Meeting house \$425.00
th 10 Mo. 12th 1815 To Building sheds at meetinghouse \$86.39

How early horse sheds were put up at the Mennonite meetinghouses, say, of Montgomery County—whether as early as among the Quakers or not—we have no means of knowing. The earliest reference we have to a Mennonite meetinghouse horse shed is 1854. The Skippack “Neutralist” of Jan. 24, 1854, carries a public sale advertisement in which a stand at the old Skippack Mennonite meetinghouse horse sheds is offered for sale. The original reads:

OEFFENTLICHER VERKAUF

Donnerstags, den 2ten Februar 1854, um 1 Uhr Nachmittags, wird auf öffentlicher Vendu verkauft werden, an der Wohnung des Unterzeichneten, in Schippachville, Montgomery County, folgendes PERSOENLICHE EIGENTHUM, nämlich: . . . ferner soil verkauft werden

EIN GUTER STAND

*in den Sheds am Alt-Schippacher Mennoniten Versammlungshause.
 Januar 17, 1854*

I have been able to find but one excellent account of the erection of horse sheds at a Presbyterian house of worship. It is in Earl J. Lightcap Jr.'s 1951 thesis for his Master of Science degree at the University of Delaware, “A History of the Presbyterian Church New London, Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1726–1951.”

Gone are the days when there was an acute need for carriage sheds—but they are still remembered and indeed some of them still remain. At New London they were erected by individuals from the Congregation at their own expense. Construction began in 1846 (when the first section was finished at a cost of \$336) and continued until 1855 when three rows of sheds, capable of holding forty carriages, were completed. The second row had been built before 1857, because in that year it was moved over to the left of the first, and a third section built in the back facing the road and church. The completed structure resembled the letter U with the open end towards the meeting-house. In the center there were non-sheltered stalls available for general use. In front of each horse, stenciled in black letters three inches high, was the name of the owner of that stall. Some of these names—including the word PASTOR—are still visible today. Many of the horses were protected by registry in the New London Association for the Detection of Horse Thieves and other Villians.

Although the Quakers had long had such sheds around their meeting-houses, yet it is

Courtesy: Historical Society of the Reformed Church



*An early view of Friedens Church at Wessnersville, Berks County.
 Note the interesting hitching fence.*



The Mertz Church at Dryville, Berks County, taken around 1905.

believed that New London was the first among Presbyterian Churches in all this region to lead the way in this improvement. [Source: Dubois, *“Recollections of a Life-Time,”* p. 176.]

The shed next to the Old Graveyard burned on July 9, 1910 and was rebuilt at a cost of \$378.97 in the same year.

As a result of a severe storm in 1925 the sheds to the east and south were badly damaged by falling trees. These two rows were removed after that date; the final work being completed in 1941. One section remains today. It is in fairly good condition with a concrete floor. Much of the original timber still exists in the building. This is quite evident by the teeth marks and the results of the horses' chewing which are still noticeable on some of the boards.

Horse Sheds in the Lutheran-Reformed Areas

The first church sheds in the Lutheran-Reformed cultural areas in the State were put up in the period 1836-1837 at Boehm's Church, near Blue Bell, in Montgomery County.

The church minutes read: “At a meeting of the Congregation held at the church on the 31st day of October 1836 for the purpose of making preparations for the erection of sheds near the church for the shelter of horses and vehicles on motion resolved that John Schlater, Sen., Samuel Freas and John Fitzgerald were appointed a committee to superintend the erection of the same commencing at the N.E. corner of the grave yard wall and extending along the same towards the church 160 feet in length and 22 feet in width to be divided in twenty stalls of sufficient height in front to receive covered wagons or pleasure carriages. They are likewise authorized to receive all moneys subscribed for that purpose and to proceed to the erection of the same without delay.”

At the following meeting, on May 15, 1837, the minutes read: “The committee appointed at a former meeting for the purpose of erecting sheds made report they have completed the same at an expense of three hundred and forty two dollars 39 cts. and that they have collected by subscription the sum of three hundred and twenty three dollars being a deficit of \$19.39.”

The basis for saying that the twenty-stall shed at Boehm's Church was the first church shed erected in the Pennsylvania



Meetinghouse sheds on a Sunday morning in the "Horse-and-Buggy" Mennonite country of eastern Lancaster County.

Dutch country rests on the following excerpts from an article by an early pastor of Boehm's Church, the Rev. Samuel Helffenstein, Jr., in the Reformed *Messenger* of Jan. 17, 1844: "Some five or six years back the congregation erected on the site of the church a number of sheds for the accommodation of the worshippers with their vehicles and horses. And here let me call attention to the singular and surprising fact, that Boehm's is the only German Reformed church, within the writer's knowledge, that possesses that useful, I may say indispensable appendage."

The Reverend Helffenstein continued: "As the traveller views the fine and costly temples of the Lord every where in our German settlements, he casts his eyes around in vain to discover the unpretending but most serviceable shed. However far departed we must and do regard 'the Society of Friends' from the true light of God's word, yet in this particular they are an example. Wherever you see a Quaker meeting house (and the sight is frequent in these parts)

there also you see the inseparable and indispensable appendage *the shed.*"

What is the reason that horse sheds were built so much later at the Lutheran and Reformed churches than at the meetinghouses, Quaker and others? The likelihood is that the most important reason was economic. The Quakers, who geographically had the Philadelphia market almost at their front doors, were financially well-off. Their meetinghouses, modest structures, were relatively cheap to put up. There were ample funds to build horse sheds, besides. The Lutheran and Reformed farmers of Northampton, Berks, and Lebanon counties, being far from market, were less prosperous than the Quakers. And their *large* churches cost many times more to build than the meetinghouses of the Plain Pennsylvanians. The church people simply may have been too poor in the early years of the nineteenth century to afford sheds, what with the financial burdens of costlier and costlier churches, not to speak of their money-

conscious clergymen, who had to be supported, too. The meetinghouse people, with their lay clergy, were not saddled with such financial responsibilities.

The prosperous meetinghouse people, living as we have said so near to the Philadelphia market, sported carriages on a Sunday years before the "up-country" Lutherans and Reformed, who walked, rode horseback, or rode to church in their farm wagons up to the 1840's, when the first carriages came to be used among the Dutch farmers in the shadow of the Blue Mountains. The best description we have of going to church in early Dutch Pennsylvania is from the pen of Jonas Heinrich Gudehus, a schoolmaster in the Moselem Lutheran German school in Berks County in the early 1820's. In his volume "Meine Auswanderung nach Amerika im Jahre 1822" (Hildesheim, 1829)—which is

folk-culturally perhaps the most important book on rural Pennsylvania life to come out of the first half of the nineteenth century—Gudehus describes the Pennsylvania Dutch country churches as follows (translation, page 169): "The churches in the rural sections are all surrounded with a large meeting area, upon which many fruit trees grow. Under these trees the church-goers put their horses, vehicles, and sleighs. For in those parts people who live at a distance from church either ride there on horseback or drive, men as well as women. Women there ride as skilfully as the men, frequently even better than the males. These plots of ground at churches are always enclosed, either with planks or other fencing, the purpose being to prevent a horse from straying should it tear loose from where it is tied."

Schoolmaster Gudehus described the grounds at the Moselem Church more fully at the time of his first visit there, as follows (page 81): "The large area around the church and schoolhouse teemed with people and horses. Following the example of others who arrived on horseback I tied my horse to a tree, a simple matter for to this end every tree on the church grounds is provided with a cramp-iron² to which a ring is attached."

An English Friend, Robert Sutcliff, described the area around Quaker meetinghouses in Pennsylvania similarly in his "Travels" (York, England, 1811), page 238: "There is generally a plot of ground round the country meeting-houses in America, sometimes of several acres, planted with shady trees, under which the horses and carriages of Friends stand, during meeting time, and which forms a most interesting piece of scenery."

Let us for a moment return to the subject of the horse sheds at Boehm's Church. The congregational minutes inform us that in the summer of 1854 twelve additional stalls were built, at a cost of \$321.00. A violent storm on Oct. 23, 1878, blew down the two twenty-two-stall sheds. Rebuilt, they were a second time destroyed by a storm, in 1899, at which time they were once again rebuilt, this time at a cost of \$830.00. Part of these 1899 stalls are standing as of this writing.

Of the hundreds of histories of our rural Lutheran and Reformed parishes consulted a mere half-dozen allude to the horse sheds. After Boehm's of 1836-1837, the next in point of time is Alsace near Reading. The *Reformirter Hausfreund*, published at Reading, under date of May 5, 1898, wrote: "A new cemetery was opened in 1854 and sheds were erected to put up one hundred vehicles."

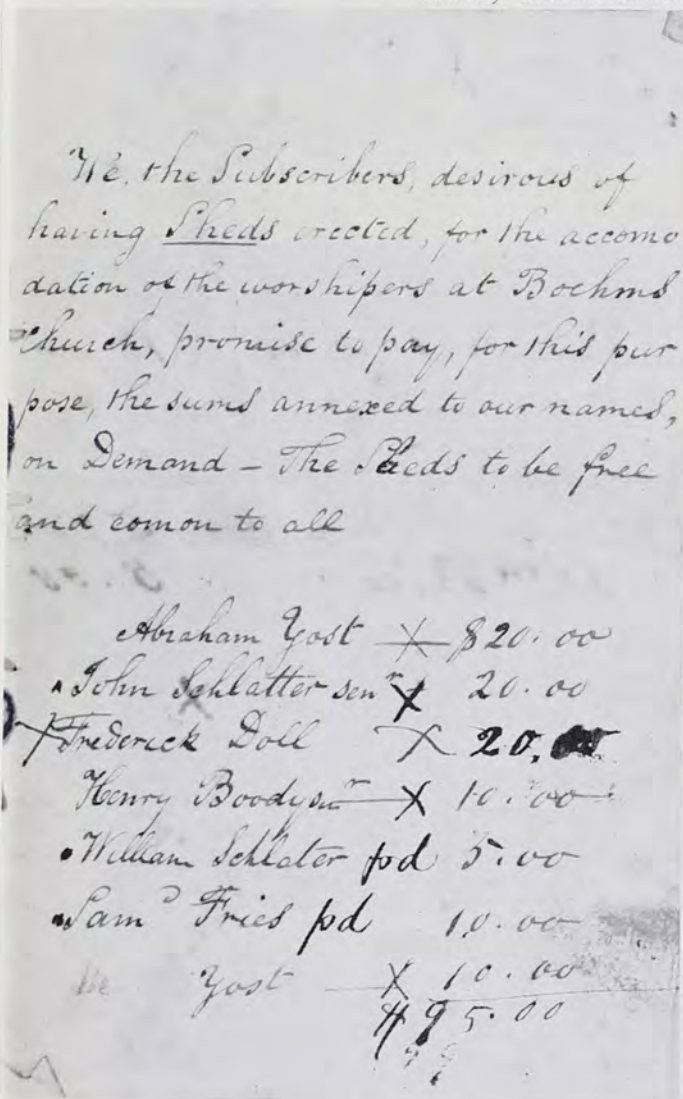
Historian William J. Buck did a drawing of the Old Goshenhoppen Church on March 25, 1858.³ The sketch shows a two-stall shed.

Rev. William J. Rupp in his 1938 "History of the Church on Chestnut Hill," wrote (page 21): "... an account, opened

2. A similar arrangement seems to have been in effect down into the first decade of this century. In the 1958 "100th Anniversary of Lowhill Church" (Lehigh County) one reads: "In 1908 iron rings were placed on the large trees in the grove . . . to tie the horses to."

3. Buck, William J., *How a Sketch of the Old Goshenhoppen Church Was Secured*, in "The Perkiomen Region," February, 1895, vol. 1, no. 6, pp. 88-90. See also "The Centennial Celebration of Montgomery County" (Norristown, 1884), p. 377. The sketch is also reproduced in John Stover Arndt's "The Story of the Arndt's" (Philadelphia, 1922), page 78, but a wrong date, 1856, appears in the caption.

Courtesy: Boehm's Church



Page of 1836 subscription booklet showing sums subscribed to building of first church shed in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country.

December 15, 1869, gives the story of the building of the 'church sheds.'"

Adam G. Lerch in his reminiscences in the 1935 history of Hain's Reformed Church in Berks County has this to say (page 145): "As there were no wagon sheds until about 1880 it was customary to tie the horses along the roadside to the fences and trees."

The 170th anniversary history of St. Paul's (Summer Hill) Church in Schuylkill County, published in 1954, states: "Two years later [1884] sheds were constructed for the protection of the horses used in conveying the members to church while they worshipped. These continued in use to the end of horse drawn transportation use."

In the 1941 "Centennial Celebration of St. Paul's Reformed Church, Fleetwood" one reads (page 9): "In 1887 a piece of land, adjoining the old Church property, was purchased from Jacob Rothermel, Sr., and sheds were erected thereon at a cost of \$445."

In his "History of St. Paul's (Klopp's) Reformed Church, Hamlin, Pa." (Annville, n.d.) the Rev. C. A. Butz wrote (page 60): "Recognizing the desirability, need and duty of taking proper care of the horses, 21 families resolved to erect sheds for their use. They were erected during the fall of 1906 under the direction of the following committee:

Cyrus Dubbs, John Eisenhauer and L. D. Gerhart."

The first horse sheds in the Lutheran-Reformed cultural area of Pennsylvania were put up in 1836-1837; the last, as far as we now know, in the year 1912. Russell S. Baver in his "History of Lenhartsville Friedens (Union) Church, 1856-1956" gives us a detailed account of these sheds:

On June 1, 1912 the consistory had discussed plans for erecting sheds on this ground, but the estimated cost of building them exceeded \$20.00. The joint consistory therefore decided to call an election on June 23, immediately following the church service, to have the congregation decide whether they wished to build them. All members wishing to have their own sheds were requested to hand their names to the secretary before the election. The congregation voted in the affirmative, and thus the consistory decided to build fourteen sheds.

Following completion of the sheds the consistory on November 13, 1912 decided to sell them at \$45.00 a piece and at a subsequent meeting, January 1, 1913, decided to rent those not sold at an annual rental of \$2.50. It was customary for the person



Horse shed at Weaverland Mennonite Meetinghouse.

December the 6th 1836 Received of
John Schlater one of the Comety Feenty
four Dollars and Sixteen Cents in full
for Boarding the Carpenters a building
the Sheds at Boehm's Church
Michael Rapp

Receipt for boarding the carpenters who built sheds at Boehm's.

who purchased or rented a shed to place a name-board on the inside front of the shed. A shed was later set aside for the minister and about two years later (1/1/1923) a shed was also set aside for the organist. These sheds were the first two at the eastern end.

A deed of "Right to Use Church Shed" was given to the purchaser. In this agreement it was stated that the church "... shall keep and maintain the paint on the tin roof of said shed or stabling but that all other repairs, alterations, or rebuilding in case of fire, storm, or otherwise shall be at the cost and expense of the . . . purchaser."

On January 1, 1926 the consistory decided to charge shed rent from persons occupying the sheds while working at certain industries. The rental was \$5.00 per year and the party so renting agreed to vacate such sheds on Sundays or in case of a funeral.

In 1929 the construction of the highway passing the church was the "beginning of the end" of church sheds.

Horse Sheds Still in Use

There is one small area in Pennsylvania where the meetinghouse sheds are used to this day to shelter horses and carriages: it is among the "Horse-and-Buggy" Mennonites of eastern Lancaster County, among the Pike or Stauffer People, the Wengerites, and the Thirty-Fivers. Besides serving their intended purpose, these horse sheds are also the "summer homes" of Pennsylvania's last tramps, the hoboes who enjoy the hospitality of these simple and generous "Team" Mennonites. Under these meetinghouse sheds the tramps build their fires to heat the food they beg from the local Plain People and here they sleep. They live here until the cold weather sets in when they disappear—

South one should suppose—only to return like the birds with each recurring Spring.

In some areas the individual stalls of the church sheds were sold, elsewhere they were rented by the congregation to an individual member. These renters then had a sign painted with their name on it. This they attached to the front of their stall in the sheds. Recently, in visiting a score of sheds still standing I came to the old and crumbling sheds at Frieden's Church at Wessnersville in Berks County. In one of the stalls one can still read clearly the name Jonas Kistler and under it the year 1877. At the Heidelberg Church, near Saegersville, Lehigh County—the church of my youth—I found the name Ulysses George in one of the stalls of the shed, the name of a man whom I remember from boyhood two generations ago.

The church sheds, like the inside of our covered bridges, bear evidences to this day of early "display" advertising, tombstone cutters and buggy and carriage builders being the chiefest of advertisers among them.

An arrangement in the stalls of the shed for the summer months bears mention: many of them had sliding windows, all of wood. These were opened for ventilation on a hot summer Sunday morning and closed in winter against the stiff, frigid blasts.

The framing of the sheds shows a wide range of variation. Here the measuring stick and drawing pencil should come to play, the latter a skill which this author regrettably does not possess. In two places, at Weissenberg and Heidelberg in Lehigh County, the carpenters who built the sheds employed the same roofing patterns one encounters in the mammoth bank barns of Pennsylvania.

With the passing of the horse and buggy—something that has taken place everywhere excepting in a few pockets in Plain Pennsylvania—the horse sheds lost their usefulness. A mere few, most of them in crumbling neglect, remain in this year of grace 1960.

ABRAHAM HARLEY CASSEL

Dunkard Bibliophile

By ROY C. KULP



Roy C. Kulp
Collection

Abraham H. Cassel about 1880.

The largest private collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century Pennsylvania Germaniana during the last century was Abraham Harley Cassel's. In 1893, when Professor Oswald Seidensticker published his "The First Century of German Printing in America," he dedicated it to Cassel, "whose unselfish zeal and inspiring example have been of eminent service to German-American bibliography."

For more than fifty years, historians interested in Pennsylvania's early roots wended their way to the modest two-story brick farmhouse along the Indian Creek, near the village of Harleysville in Lower Salford Township, Montgomery County, to see the famous A. H. Cassel library and to chat with its interesting and learned owner.

Our bibliophile was born on the 21st of September, 1820, in Towamencin Township, Montgomery County, the son of Yellis and Mary Cassel. His mother was the great-granddaughter of the famous eighteenth century printer, Christopher Saur of Germantown, and of Elder Peter Becker, the first minister of the Church of the Brethren (Dunkers) in America.

After traveling thousands of miles, often on foot, and as far west as the Mississippi River, he brought together more than 50,000 items, consisting of books, pamphlets, and manuscripts. His library was particularly rich in the publications of the Franklin, Saur, and Ephrata presses.

Cassel acquired seventeenth century religious manuscripts, some of them brought to this country by his own ancestors. Among these is a little volume,* containing poetry written by Yellis Kassel, Mennonite minister from Kriesheim, Germany; it depicts the trying conditions and horrible persecutions which the early Mennonites had to endure during the Thirty Years' War.

His collection included many fine eighteenth-century account books, journals, diaries, and documents written by

some of the early Pennsylvania pioneers. Among these are two documents¹ signed by Daniel Pastorius; they pertain to the naturalization of sixty-two "High and Low Germans," written in 1691; also a three-page manuscript concerning the laying out of Germantown. Another interesting document is a contract for the sale of land near the Wissahickon Creek, written by Johann Kelpius, the "Hermit of the Wissahickon."

The account book and diary* of Alexander Mack, Jr., 1712-1803, a weaver and bishop of the German Baptist Church in Germantown, from 1748 to 1803, was owned by Cassel. Martin G. Brumbaugh in his "German Baptist Brethren" wrote, "Before me, as I write lies the private diary of this pious man. It is in manuscript and has never been published. What a mine of gold! When its full contents are made known, the memory of this godly elder will be cherished in every believing heart."

Brumbaugh, in his history, mentions another outstanding journal in the Cassel collection. It is the Poor Book* of the German Baptists at Germantown. It is the official record of money received and paid by the deacons, 1747-1806. In this journal, Christopher Saur's signature appears many times.

One of the rarest and oldest books in the Cassel library was the writings of Menno Simons, printed in Holland in the year 1539; this is at present a part of the Cassel collection at Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.

A small but especially valuable part of the Cassel library consisted of a collection of nearly fifty newspapers,* which

1. In the Juniata College Library.

* All items in this article marked with an asterisk are in the author's collection.



Newspapers, etc., with printed articles written by Cassel.

date from 1872 to 1908 and attest to the popularity of this unpretentious Dunkard farmer. Most of them carry a front page story telling about his unusual collection of books. Some of them are from as far west as Omaha, Nebraska; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and Ashland, Ohio.

What with so extensive a library, it is readily understandable why so many of Pennsylvania's notable historians spent days and even weeks at Cassel's home searching through his collection and listening to the mild-mannered collector—such men as John F. Watson, I. D. Rupp, Abraham R. Horne, Daniel K. Cassel, William J. Buck, Henry S. Dotterer, Oswald Seidensticker, P. C. Croll, Samuel W. Pennypacker, Theodore W. Bean, Horatio S. Jones, and Martin S. Brumbaugh.

Gathering all these books was many times a hardship and a real challenge for Cassel. As a boy he had a yearning for books and he dreamed that some day he would have

his own library, but we find that his Plain father was violently opposed to his son's desire for knowledge, and did whatever he could to hinder his son's worldly ambition, allowing him to receive only six weeks of schooling. He wanted to bring up his children in "Pious Ignorance."

Cassel gives us an interesting account² of his early childhood:

As soon as I could read and write a little I became the possessor of a small Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary, which I had occasion to use more than any other book in my life. I had no opportunity of hearing or learning English, except from the Dictionary, and had made it a point never to pass by anything without fully understanding it, which

2. From the December 31, 1875, issue of the *Norristown Daily Herald*.

Cassel's
early
arithmetic
copybooks.



Roy C. Kulp Collection

made it necessary to look up the commonest words, and when the Dictionary was not at hand I would frequently write long strings of words on slips of paper to look up, when I had the chance. I also wrote slips of definitions to commit to memory. In this way I soon understood the language well so far as the meaning of words was concerned. I could read it intelligently without much difficulty, but as I had no opportunity of learning to speak it, it was a long time the same to me as a dead language.

The next difficulty was the want of suitable books. We had no English books in the house, and but very few German, except the Bible and a few hymn books. There were also but very few books in the neighborhood that I could borrow, until Dr. Fronfield and a few other kind friends heard of my case; they kindly gave me what assistance they could, but, as they lived so far away, it did not amount to much. Still I managed to get the most necessary text-books. But now the most serious of all my difficulties arose. Father was so opposed to my studying that he tried by various means to prevent me as much as possible. The most effectual was to keep me so closely at work as to leave me no time.

I might say the love of books was born with me, for, from my earliest recollection—even long before I could read, nothing attracted my attention so much as books—and my parents used to say that even when I was a mere infant sitting in the cradle, or on the floor, that no plaything would interest me except a book, but with a few old books I

would amuse myself for hours, and even when sick or in pain, they would quiet me above anything else.

This fondness for books seemed to grow with me, so that by the time I could read I had a perfect mania for books, and every penny that I could command, was invested in them. Although I loved candy and sweetmeats as much as any child, above all I preferred books. Every scrap of printed matter was so carefully preserved that I might say the foundation of my great library was laid before I was eight years old, and the acquisitions to it were constantly continued under the greatest imaginable difficulty. My parents were as much opposed to my getting books as they were to my studying them, therefore they would hardly allow me any money—the other children would often get a few pennies as an encouragement for being smart. In their estimation I never was smart, and because I would spend it for books such reward was generally withheld from me.

No time was allowed me to do anything for myself, except on Sunday. I would often work harder than on any other day of the week, picking cherries for the neighbors, grubbing roots and gathering herbs for Dr. Fronfield, for which he often paid me double and treble their value, because of the laudable use I made of the money. I also gathered nuts and acorns and whatever else I could, besides cultivating beans, etc., in the fence corners and between the rows of corn, to realize a little money to get books. Later in life when I had more



Collector Cassel in the front of his modest home in 1897.

means to buy them, I was so sternly forbidden not to bring any more into the house, that when I got a book—to escape a severe scolding—I was obliged to hide it somewhere in the barn or under the stack until some favorable opportunity appeared, either after the rest had gone to bed, or on Sunday when they were from home. To prevent me from getting more books they also kept me very scant in clothes, so that I really had none fit to put on to go from home, saying that I might save some of my book money and buy myself clothes.

By the time he was nine years old, he could read and write both German and English, and when only twelve he

could cipher and had mastered mathematics. His Cyphering Books, which have been preserved, are evidence of his ability and knowledge in mathematics.

On the 12th of October, 1840, Cassel accepted an invitation to teach in the local township school, which he continued doing for several years, when he decided to go into another township; here he was once again a great success, attracting much attention because of his popularity with all the pupils. He had a special method of instruction which made him a popular schoolmaster. He was always introducing new studies—children even passed by schools nearer home so that they could attend Mr. Cassel's school. Many local well-to-do parents even preferred his school over a nearby private boarding school. He was heard to say many times, "I put my whole heart into teaching."

On the first of April, 1843, he was married to Elizabeth Rhoads, a Quaker, whom his parents objected to strenuously because of her religious affiliation, even though she accepted the Dunkard faith. They had eight children. Some of Cassel's grandchildren have a wonderful story to tell about their grandfather, how he tried continuously to encourage them to have a special interest in books. He was always delighted in having them come to see him and willingly allowed them to use his library, but he always wanted to see what the title of each book was before he would give them permission to read them, mainly because some of his books were mystery and murder stories; these he forbade them to read. They also recall seeing various notable people coming to see their grandfather's library, such as Governors Samuel W. Pennypacker and Martin G. Brumbaugh who would sit and chat for hours in his upstairs library, talking about old times and books.

Clayton Stauffer, a grandson, used to recall how he and his brother, as boys, one time helped their Grandpop Cassel chop and pile wood. Mr. Stauffer said, "The following day Grandpop came to our house and gave my mother two cents for each of us boys for helping him. The next day he returned and told mother, 'I made a mistake yesterday; I gave the boys too much money. I only wanted to give *one* penny to each of the boys.' My mother thereupon returned two pennies to Grandpop."

Even though Cassel never penned any voluminous treatises, he did occasionally write for some of the local newspapers, and at various times he was a contributor to some church papers on subjects close to his interest: family history, church history, and old books and Bibles.

The last thirty years of his life he suffered from failing eyesight, becoming totally blind the last year of his life.

As Cassel grew older he became concerned about the disposal of his valuable collection of books, desiring that they should be kept together as much as possible. In 1882, he sold to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania approximately two thousand volumes, the best of his collection; a few years prior to this Mt. Morris College in Illinois received more than twenty-seven thousand volumes; and most of the remainder of his library went to Juniata College.³ In spite of this disposition, many of Cassel's books, bearing his nameplate, are still being found. Some of the best parts of his library have, in fact, recently been offered in the book market. Some mystery attaches to their source.

3. Martin G. Brumbaugh was responsible for having the remainder of the Cassel library going to Juniata College, at a price of \$2,500. See Donald F. Dumbaugh's article "Abraham H. Cassel and His Collection" in *Pennsylvania History*, vol. XXVI, no. 4, October, 1959.

Mennonite Folklore

By JOHN R. MUMAW

[This article consists of excerpts, made by the editor, from the author's M.A. thesis at the University of Virginia: "Folk-Lore Among the Pennsylvania-Germans in Wayne County, Ohio." The field work for the dissertation was done in 1931. A.L.S.]

*Raya, raya drupa
De boova mus m'r glupa.*

(Rain, rain drops, the boys we must paddle.) This is a relic of an incantation. It was a charm used to call for rain. The words were repeated while knocking together stones held in the hand.

*Boova-leis!
Mate hen se dousant veis.*

(Spanish Needles. Girls have them by the thousand.)

Ich hop's shunt uft mol g'sawt un fel efter drawgadenkt: vos de hingl do data von sie net de sei shtol shpeicher heta f'r nei tsu shlofa. (I often said it and much oftener thought about it: what the chickens would do if they did not have the upstairs to the hog stable to sleep in.) In earlier years the Pennsylvania Dutch people had no chicken houses. They merely fixed roosts in their hog stables.

N hawna in de shejar hut g'sawt, "Do iss gut lava." N hawna ousevenich, dos net nei hut kena, hut g'sawt, "Es vart vol net long lasta." Un bou'r iss kuma ihn rous tsu yawga un no hut d'r tsvet g'sawt, "Ich hop's g'sawt, ich hop's g'sawt." (A rooster in the barn said, "Here is good living." A rooster outside said, "It will certainly not last long." A farmer came to chase him out and the latter said, "I told you so, I told you so.") In each case the words in quotation marks are spoken to imitate the crowing of the rooster.

Von d'r bredcher rum kumt dun de hingl sich forsh-tekla ovar der howna kumt rous un sawgt, "Pritta is gone." Der welsh-hawna kumt un sawgt, "Sis doubtful, doubtful" un gate nei. (When the preacher comes around the chickens hide but the rooster comes out and says, "The preacher is gone." The gobbler comes out and says, "It's doubtful, doubtful" and goes into hiding again.)

De grosa eila sawga, "Hickory hulse, good, good." (The big owls say, "Hickory wood, good, good.")

Folk Beliefs

If you let a spoon fall a baby is coming on a visit; if it is a knife a woman is coming; if it is a fork a man is coming.

To remove freckles, one must wash with dew on the first day of May before you speak to anybody.

One should not build on Ascension Day lest it burn. It was feared that lightning would strike the building if the carpenters worked on Ascension Day. The person who gave this related how he helped to raise a barn, built on the Alleman farm, four and one half miles northeast of Wooster, on that day. About twenty-five years later it was struck by lightning and it burned to the ground.

Lay the bottom rail in the "up" sign (of the moon). The stake and riders were put on in the "down" sign of the moon. If posts are set in the "down" sign they will not get loose and come up. If you put a shingle roof on a house or barn in the decrease of the moon the shingles will not turn up; if in the increase of the moon they will turn up.

Mr. Jonathan K. Hostettler of Wooster stated that his father always said that clover seed should be sown in the "down" sign and it would root deeply and therefore would not freeze out. When he later worked for another farmer he was told to sow it in the "up" sign so that the roots would scatter and freezing would not tear them loose.

The following account of his father's literal practice about sixty years ago in training a dog to stay at home was related by Mr. Jonathan K. Hostettler, Wooster, as the testimony of an eye witness. First, his father bored a hole into the trunk of a tree. He then caught the run-away dog by the tail and placed the tip of the tail within the hole. A wooden pin was then driven in to hold the hair. The dog was left to pull himself free. The hair remaining in the tree kept the dog at home.

If when one is churning butter the butter fat will not gather, drive a nail into the floor at each leg of the churn. In that way the enchantment is destroyed and you will soon have butter.

One takes a calf out of the stable backwards so the cow will not get homesick for it. When the writer listened to this bit of folklore he was reminded of the many times that he in youth helped to push a calf, backwards, out of the barn, while at home on a Wayne County farm.

The time to stir in the vinegar barrel is the first Friday before new moon and if it is in the sign of the lion the vinegar will get so much the better.

If you have a pain in the side (pleurodynia) take a flat stone, spit on it, and throw it backwards over your head.

A blossom (on a fruit tree) out of time is an omen of death in the family. A bird fluttering at the window after night is an omen of death. It is a bad omen for one to fall sick on Sunday. If celery shoots seeds the first year, it is a sign that someone of the family will die. The striking of the clock at the hour of twelve, while the family was seated at the table was an omen of death. An incident was related of one family that refused to sit down to their noon meal before the clock had struck twelve.

Riddles

Eisich geili, leinich shwensly, ve lenger 's es geili gate, ve kartzler 's es shwensly vart. Answer: *Nodel un nats.* (A small iron horse, a little linen tail, the longer the little horse goes, the shorter the little tail becomes. Answer: Needle and thread.)

Ich kon 'n bend'l fagnippa, fagnippa, un fagnippa un bis du rum gadrat bisht hov ich 'n uf. (I can knot a string, again and again, and until you are turned around I can have it open.) The play is on the word *uf*. It may mean "to open" or "up." In this case either use makes sense but the context leads the person being questioned to think of its meaning "to open" while the questioner means he can lift it "up" while the other turn around.

Customs

Apple snitzing. This was a common occasion for a social gathering. The invitation was extended to both old and young. It was an evening spent in high but controlled spirits. While the cider was being boiled down, the group were engaged in peeling and snitzing apples for a filler.

When the apple butter was well done and set away in crocks, a treat of doughnuts or watermelons was served to the young people.

Wool pulling. Neighbors were invited into the home to help the family pull wool apart. A large pile of wool was washed for the occasion. They also picked out the straw and burs and then it was ready for the card mill.

Corn husking. Many years ago the young people gathered in the corn fields for an evening of social pleasure. Lanterns were hung about to afford light for husking. To find a red ear entitled the young gallant to the privilege of kissing the young lady with whom he was husking. Another old person told how they were invited to a home for a corn husking on the barn floor. They chose up on sides as we do for a spelling match. Then a rail was placed in the center of a large, long pile of pulled ears of corn. While the contest was on between as many as thirty and forty, the corn thumping against the side of the barn made a thundering noise. After the corn was husked they all sat up to a big supper.

Christmas. Many children in the Pennsylvania Dutch homes had no thought of hanging up stockings for Santa Claus. They were taught to set plates on the tables instead. On these appeared candy, chestnuts, cakes and other inexpensive eats. Their Santa Claus was called *Grishkindli* (the Christ Child).

Easter. The Easter rabbit has played a prominent part in the entertainment of children during that season. It was he who laid the eggs which might either be found anywhere in the house or in the garden and in the lawn. Saturday evening was often spent in watching for the rabbit. In some homes nests were placed in the living room hoping that eggs would be laid in them during the night. These nests were made of scarfs, caps, hats and other suitable garments. Easter morning was a time for early rising to see the beautifully colored eggs which became the property of the one whose name appeared in the nest. Among some children, especially those of larger families, a game of hiding eggs was played. This began several weeks before Easter. Anyone finding the hidden nest of his rival was allowed to steal them, if he could do it secretly. The child who could bring to the house the most eggs on Easter morning was considered the winner. It was nothing unusual for a child to bring in five or six dozen.

Ascension Day. No work was to be done on Ascension Day. There once lived a man whose name was Peter Longenecker. He was an old-fashioned country preacher. It was his habit to visit the members of his parish on this day. On one occasion, upon his return from the annual tour, he found his son planting corn. He stopped outside the fence and looking over into the field, said, "O dir velt mensha." (Oh, you worldly people.)

Folktales

Es vor a mol 'n mon, hut milich farkawft. Ar iss olfort an re grick farbei, gonga un hut ols g'shtupt fr vosar in de milich nei shepa. A mol hut de fraw, voo milich grickt hut fun ihm, un glaner fish gsana in da milich. Ar hut no gsat, "Ya, de kee hen vid'r un de grick gsufa den morya." (One time there was a man who sold milk. He always passed a creek and stopped there to dip some water into the milk. One time a woman who got milk from him saw a little fish in the milk. He then said, "Yes, the cows drank water at the creek again this morning.")

Es vor un mon hut eb'r g'blamed fr sei zwivla shtala. No a mole un dawg iss un nagar kuma mit un biskots. No hut

ar sei meshter g'rofa, "Heh, Meshter, here iss dein zwivlein deep. Whee. Shmock usht a'mole sein otum." (There was a man who blamed someone for stealing his onions. Then one time, on a certain day, a negro came with a skunk. Then he called his master saying, "Heh, Master, here is your onion thief. Just smell his breath.")

Lumba Liedlin

Lumba Liedlin (rag rhymes) is the term Mr. David S. Zook applied to these little rhymes.

*Bevali, shneveli,
Hoi geveli.*

(Little Barbara, little chicken mouth, little hay fork.)

*Ich vil dir mol veisa!
Globort op reisa,
Biera runar reisa,
Aw-beisa, un vek shmeisa.*

(I will just show you! Tearing off the palings, tearing down pears, and biting into them and then throwing them away.)

*Mari, barli, gawrda darli,
Hok hous, hingle hous,
Gat 'n aldi fraw nous,
Pikt's besht hingle nous.*

(Little mare, little bear, little garden gate, chop house, chicken house, an old woman goes out, picks out the best chickens.)

*Un chaw duvok,
Kum ous meim sok,
Du shmoksht so gut
Tsue meina shnut.*

(A chew tobacco, come out of my pocket; you smell so good to my snout.)

Counting-out Rhymes

The practice of counting-out is common to the children of all countries. It is the continuation of a custom which apparently has originated in the "superstitious practice of divination by lot." In Scotland it is known as clapping-out; in Germany *auszählen*; in England and in America counting-out; and in Pennsylvania Dutch it is called *opzala*.

*Aw, ba, za,
De kots lawft im shna,
D'r shna gat aveck,
De kots lawft in dreck,
Tshumpt ivar de shtumba
Mit un sok ful lumba,
Tshumpt ivar de sheiar
Mit un sok ful feiar.*

(A, B, C, the eat walks in the snow, the snow goes away and the cat walks in the mud; jumps over the stumps with a bag full of rags, jumps over the barn with a bag full of fire.)

*Ans zva, drei,
Hika, hoka, hei,
D'r Milar hut sei fraw farlora,
Sucht se mit un huntli,
S ketsli hut sie g'funda,
Uns miceli hukt uf'm hous doch,
Un hut sich gons grum buklich g'locht.*

(One, two, three, he he, ha ha, ho; the Miller lost his wife, seeks her with a little dog. The little cat found her, and the mouse sits on the house roof, bent entirely crooked with laughter.)



A spring-house, location unknown, of interesting proportions.

Springs and Springhouses

By AMOS LONG, Jr.

One need not travel far into southeastern Pennsylvania until he comes upon one of the many springs and spring-houses which abound in this area. It is in these lands between the Delaware and Susquehanna that the many spring-houses built and used by the early European settlers during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries still prevail.

The spring supplied the early settlers in a practical way with clear cool water and in most instances also determined the location of the early cabin and other buildings. Nearly always the family dwelling was built on a hill at a convenient distance from the spring.

Spring-houses were built only where there were springs and a plentiful supply of water to feed them and where the severe heat of the summer months made them a necessity. Very often these spring-houses were built right over the spring or very close to it so that the water flowed from the spring into the spring-houses and then into a small shallow stream.

The spring-house was of great value in early pioneer life. It served to cool and keep fresh not only milk and cream but also butter, cheese, meats, and wine. It was also the place for preserving the many other farm products in season for home use and market, beginning with the luscious strawberries in the late spring until the last melons of autumn which were chilled in its cold water. It also served many times as the place for storing apples, turnips, beets, carrots, and other vegetables and foods in the loft or second floor.



Spring-house on the Israel Bertolet farm near Oley.

Courtesy: Berks County Historical Society

Spring-house on Johnson farm, north of Morgantown.



Courtesy: Berks County Historical Society

Where the spring-house was two stories high, the second floor served in many ways. When the room on the first floor was very small, the second floor sometimes was used for butter making and also in some instances served as a smoke-house or room for smoking the family meats. It has also been known to serve as a dwelling place on some occasions.

During the early period of settlement these natural fountains or surface waters were protected from dirt, leaves, and other foreign materials by slightly deepening and building a simple wall of stones around them to confine the water. With the passage of time, these walls many times were plastered or cemented over on the outside surface and whitewashed or painted white and covered over with some type of roof.

The spring-house was built primarily as a cover or protection for the spring. The very earliest, many of them, were built of logs, however, at a somewhat later period, native stone became the most common material for their construction.

They varied in size and structure. Most of them were one story buildings very durably built and contained little or no wood except the door. There was one room or a larger room divided into two sections. The one section or room, in which the separating of milk and cream, churning



In this spring-house at Oley Line Susanna Cox hid her infant after murdering it. Her hanging, in 1809, led to the writing of the most famous of all Pennsylvania ballads.

and making of butter were done on the more sizable dairy farms, was usually larger than the inner room. It was on the first floor—usually entirely below ground level—that the many jugs, earthen vessels of various shapes and sizes, pans and cans with their contents rested in the cold water which covered the gravel floor. There was usually a raised platform or flat stones placed on the ground floor for walking.

There are many dwelling houses which still exist that were also built right over a spring. The cellar then served the same purpose as a spring-house.

The interior of these buildings was usually rather dark since most of them made little provision for light and contained very few or no windows. In those with no windows there was only the light from the open doorway. Usually a wooden or stone shelf was built around several sides of the room. There was also a bench for the tubs, bowls, paddles, prints, and molds and a table on which the butter

was salted and molded.

Some of the spring-houses also contained a fireplace and a chimney, usually located in the larger room to provide more comfort while performing the chores.

Many times on the outside of the spring-house on the east or south side there was to be found a shelf where the washed containers were placed to dry in the sun.

There was occasionally also an outside water trough. Some of these buildings had a walled-in area on the outside which also contained water and allowed more space on the inside during certain times and seasons of the year when the inside was crowded.

Some of the roofs on the very earliest built structures were of red tile; few can be found today, overwhelmingly in the Oley Valley. Most of the roofs at present contain the more common materials, including slate, tin, shingles, and concrete.

On the outside and below the spring-house there was to



Tile-covered Oley Valley spring-house.

Courtesy: Berks County Historical Society

be found many times an adjoining pond in which some trout, catfish, blue gills, or chub were kept and fed to supply the family with their fish. Here also were often to be seen scores of Muscovy ducks and smaller numbers of geese which swam about in picturesque fashion.

Also close by and on the hillside grew the luscious mint and in season there was the fragrance of violets, dandelions, arum, and various other forms of wild flowers to be enjoyed. From the constant flow of water which filled the little brook were also to be found masses of crisp cress clustered about. These brooks and ponds have also been the harboring place for the muskrat and mink and a stop-over for many of the larger birds, including kingfishers, egrets, and other types of heron.

Many trees were located within close range of the spring-house, among them old willows, buttonwoods, and oaks which shaded the roof and helped maintain a cooler temperature on the inside.

There is no doubt that the importance and use of spring-houses have diminished since the introduction of ice boxes and refrigerators and better methods of handling milk. However, many of these old structures are being preserved today and still provide a cover for the family water supply.

Where the spring was located on a rise of higher elevation, it was even more useful because it could be deepened and piped great distances into a cistern or trough by means of gravity flow. On a number of occasions the water was raised from the spring through the use of a ram which gave it still more flowing power.

There are still those places where a pipe has been inserted

through the wall of the spring-house and laid just beneath the surface of the ground and the crystal clear water is allowed to flow freely and continually without freezing, into a trough by the barn for watering the animals or into a cistern for family use.

Sanitation reasons in general, and other factors, such as the high bacteria count of the water, its nearness to the barnyard drainage, inconvenience, the artesian well, and the electric pump have all contributed largely to the decline of the spring-house.

In many instances where no purpose can any longer be found for the spring-house, it has been converted to serve some other purpose: as a place for doing the family laundry or for storage, for instance.

There are still springs to be found along the side of our public roads and highways which have been preserved. These same springs which so faithfully served the needs of the weary traveler and his animals in early times still serve to stimulate and refresh many as they drive by them today during the hot summer months.

In the surrounding mountains one still occasionally comes on the aged cut sand-stone trough into which the water flows. Many regularly visit these spots to fill jugs or other vessels which are then taken along home, this water being used for drinking purposes.

For many of us these beautiful and picturesque little buildings bring back many pleasant memories of our childhood and past. It should be the responsibility of those of us on whose land they still exist to preserve them as a part of our colonial heritage.

Finishing Wooden Surfaces

By JOHN C. CUMMINGS

Since very early times beeswax combined with various oils has been used to finish or polish the surface of wood. The Egyptians seem to have had sundry materials with which they coated wood, sometimes adding a pigment. While Europe was yet in the Dark Ages, the Chinese were producing and using fine lacquers or varnishes.

That oft quoted bit of wisdom, responsible for the fine condition of so much of the English furniture is "Feed the oak with oil, and polish it with wax." The oil may have been one of the nut oils, or perhaps linseed, but the wax most certainly was beeswax. The saying was not *new* in the Elizabethan time.

We can find directions to apprentices, also accounts in day books, both in England and in America, for "polishing wood." However, many of the Seventeenth Century wooden objects in America left their maker's hands more or less devoid of any surface finish, other than the fine polish acquired by handling during the hours of slow, patient handwork in their making. There was little time under the conditions of Seventeenth Century America for embellishing rooms or furniture. Paint was scarce and costly.

Seventeenth Century America was producing flax to be spun into linen. It seems almost inconceivable that some part of the seed would not find its way to an oil mill, then the linseed oil find use either directly, or with an added pigment, upon furniture or woodwork. Pieces exist with red or black, or very rarely traces of other colors, which seem contemporary with the original construction. Together with the late Henry Hammond Taylor, and independently, the writer has observed Seventeenth Century turned chairs with the turnings picked out with red or black, or both. There had been no other finish applied originally, nor had any other paint or finish been superimposed at a later date.

Some early chests show red or black, or a purplish color in the carving.¹ Other chests, with split spindles or boses, have these painted black with mouldings in black, or less commonly, red.² American cane chairs and early bannister back chairs were usually painted black. Slat back chairs,³ Windsor chairs, and many of the case pieces in the simple, native woods almost always seem to have been painted.

Painted *decoration* was in use in the early years of the Eighteenth Century. There are two pieces (a desk box on frame and a very early highboy) in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, also the painted chests found near Guilford, Connecticut, which substantiate this belief. The "Taunton Chests" associated with Robert Crossman⁴ and a group of pieces painted in imitation⁵ of Oriental Lacquer are of the second quarter of the Eighteenth Century.

No discussion of the use of paint and/or painted decoration

should omit mention of Pennsylvania work.⁶ We cannot be absolutely certain how early the "Pennsylvania-German" peasant type of decoration came into use. The earliest date the writer has seen was 1766 on a Bucks County Dower Chest⁷ and the earliest item (not dated or signed) seems to be a miniature coffer in the Bucks County Historical Society Museum.

The preference was for strong colors—vermillion, prussian blue, and smalt being favored in the decorations. Indian red, umber, native ochre, and an odd blue-green, these being often sponged or stippled, were favored as a background. White appears largely as an accent note.

The fashion lasted into the Nineteenth Century and was not confined entirely to the counties termed "the Dutch Country," but showed deterioration in its later use.

Mention of lacquer makes necessary reference to *Treatise of Japanning and Varnishing* by Stalker and Parker, published in England in 1688. This ornamentation was not entirely the same as practiced in the Orient, but the fashion was quite the rage in the time of William and Mary, continuing into the Georgian years. Advertisements indicate lacquering was done here; old inventories refer to "Lacker" furniture; and, of course, the Pimm highboy is famous.⁸

As to varnishes, we find the French Government, early in the Eighteenth Century, granting a patent to the four Martin Brothers for their wonderful "Vernis Martin," which was made and used from 1725 to 1765 for items varying from snuff boxes to the coach that carried royalty. With the employment of woods chosen for their color and beauty of grain, such as fruit woods, walnut, then mahogany, there was an ever increasing use of varnish. Varnishes usually depended upon dissolved gums, but various drying oils also played no small part, and for solvents in addition to the oils, turpentine or alcohol found use. The "spirit varnish" of olden time was actually the prototype of our present day shellac. These were transparent, allowing the color and figure of the wood to show.

In contrast to the finishes just discussed, paints are more or less opaque, covering up or masking the wood itself. The reason lies in the suspension in the liquid vehicle of a solid material termed the pigment, which also confers its own color upon the surface covered.

While a drying oil, usually linseed, is of first importance, nonetheless, other liquid media were employed. There are numerous "receipts" for water paints, using skim milk, sour milk, buttermilk, added eggwhite and what not—some of which produced quite surprisingly good results. This class used earth pigments, most often red oxide of iron, and were actually the forerunners of present day water paints.

Since pigments confer color, it might be well to consider

1. Luke Vincent Lockwood, *Colonial Furniture in America* (New York, 1951), I, pp. 39-40. (Mrs. Bjerkoe in her excellent book covers the same material, pp. 236-237.)

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Antiques*, Vol. LXXII, (July 1957), p. 60.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. XXIII, (April 1933), p. 135.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXIV, (October 1938), p. 192.

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, (July 1925), p. 20; Vol. VIII, (August 1925), p. 79; Vol. X, (September 1926), p. 203; Vol. XI, (February 1927), p. 119, (April 1927), p. 280, (June 1927), p. 474. *Pennsylvania Dutchman*, Summer-Fall 1957, p. 2.

7. *Pennsylvania Folklife*, Summer 1958, p. 20.

8. Joseph Downs, *Queen Anne and Chippendale Furniture* Introduction xiv and #188.

some of them. References to "soote well washd and mixed with oyl" to make a good black seem to be encountered frequently. Certainly it was available in quantity and cost almost nothing, yet it was but little inferior to modern blacks; all of them being carbon.

Earth colors, that is, inorganic compounds occurring in mineral deposits, make up the most considerable group. While the vermilion of ancient times was probably not the same as that of today, nonetheless, the refining of the vivid red mineral, cinnabar (natural sulfide of mercury) to be finely crushed, screened and used in paints, goes back to medieval times. Red lead would yield a dull orange red, but its use was uncommon, at least by itself.

For reds the oxide of iron gave fine, deep shades, such as Venetian red and Indian red. A lighter tone, called by some "coffin red," is the result of changing the heating and grinding conditions of the ferric oxide.

Hydrated iron oxide, as limonite or "bog iron ore," provided the raw material for our first iron furnaces, such as that at Saugus, Massachusetts, but when dried, ground, and sifted it could also be used for brown paint. A slightly different composition yields a dull yellow (yellow ochre).

By strange coincidence, iron also yields a strong, dark blue. What is usually referred to as the first artificial pigment, prussian blue, was patented in Germany in 1704. As one of the steps in its preparation, a curious mixture of organic material, potash and iron, is heated away from air—the real heart of the process.

Another blue is the smalt, used by potters since perhaps the Thirteenth Century. It is prepared by fusing together native cobalt oxide, sand, alkali, and a little niter; the product being a blue glass—also the ancestor of our modern cobalt blues. Being a true glass, it was transparent, so chalk was added to confer opacity, which also gave a lighter color. This additive seems to be an early use of what might be compared to an extender. Glass was difficult to grind, yet needed to be reduced to a very small particle size if it were to be properly usable.

Still other blues are blue verditer, a weak, rather fugitive shade from copper; a not too satisfactory blue from chalk colored by precipitated indigo; and the magnificent ultramarine. This last was one of the best but, since it was made from ground lapis lazuli, its cost was prohibitive.

Greens could be procured from copper compounds. One common sort was verdigris, a basic acetate of copper. This could be had from the corrosion scraped from various brass and copper objects and was easily prepared. To darken it, very small quantities of soot were sometimes added.

Yellow ochre has been mentioned, but its rather dull, somewhat uninteresting shade was not to be compared with the bright, lively "Kings Yellow." The latter compound is a sulfide of arsenic, which is vivid in color, but, due to its toxic nature, was completely discarded when the chromes made their appearance in the early Nineteenth Century.

A related material is Chinese red, not a real red but a sort of terra cotta shade. This is the sulfide of antimony and still finds use for red rubber goods.

Brown from iron has been mentioned but umber was available and more popular, being a better brown pigment in every way.

Although the Dutch process for making white lead was known in the Sixteenth Century, nonetheless, this material seems not to have had a very common application at too

9. Mss. daybook and ledger, dated 1741; present owner unknown.

early a date. Perhaps this was due to its expense or to a lack of availability in quantity. About the mid Eighteenth Century, the use of white paint in rooms in America can be documented, and we have Benjamin Franklin's letter of instructions to his wife as evidence. Substitutes did find use, but in general where white was wanted reliance was apt to be placed upon "white wash."

That pigments were mixed to produce variants, or shades, or tints, we can be certain from surviving examples. The addition of chalk to smalt, or of soot to verdigris, have both been mentioned. Various admixtures of red lead with red oxide of iron can be demonstrated and there are others.

Notice should be given to the use of special undercoats, but without any involvement in the controversy concerning the use of iron as a primer! In eastern Pennsylvania several early clockmakers (notably Augustine Neisser and Jacob Godschalk) primed soft wood clock cases with a fairly light, bright blue, then put over this a very thin coat of black. Just why this was done or what particular advantage and merit this treatment produced is a matter of conjecture. A somewhat similar treatment has been noted on early Eighteenth Century chairs, not only in Pennsylvania, but in New England. However, in this case the blue undercoat is covered with a coat of brown, presumably umber. There are doubtless other combinations which further study will reveal.

An undercoat was necessary in "graining," a process which was intended to give plain wood a more desirable, ornamental, or costly appearance. As soon as the finish coat had been applied, it was worked with graining combs or other tools devised early in the Eighteenth Century.

As the Eighteenth Century advances we meet ever increasing reference to painting of interiors and furnishings. There are advertisements in the South Carolina Gazette, Charleston, South Carolina, in 1735 and 1736, for painting rooms.¹⁰ When William Drayton erected Drayton Hall on the Ashley River in 1740, he had "the rooms wainscotted and painted in three colors."¹¹ Nor can we limit this to the south for there are numerous notices in the newspapers of Maryland and Pennsylvania to the same end which also list colors to be had,¹² although these date from the mid century and later. An even better documentation of pigments was cited by Charles Messer Stow.¹³ This material was contained in the Account Book of the Marshall Drug Store, Philadelphia, 1744 (in the collection of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy). It is interesting to note that apothecaries, looking glass stores,¹⁴ and even a pewterer, were likely sources from which to purchase paints and colors!

Smith's Book,¹⁵ published in 1753, listed various pigments, but seemed more interested in the faults of the colors than in their virtues or usefulness. Nineteenth Century references¹⁶ on paints and painting, together with that admirable storehouse of useful knowledge, *The Universal Receipt Book*, published in various editions,¹⁷ show but little change from earlier writings. However the Nineteenth Century saw the

10. Alfred Coxe Prime, *Arts and Crafts in Philadelphia, Maryland and South Carolina, 1721-1785*, p. 299.

11. Downs, *op. cit.*, Introduction, xxi.

12. Prime, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300, 301, 304, 306.

13. *New York Sun*, Saturday, October 5, 1935, p. 14.

14. Prime, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

15. John Smith, *The Art of Painting in Oil* (London, 1753).

16. *Werner's Nomenclature of Colors* (Edinburgh, 1814).

Nathaniel Wheelock, *The Decorative Painters and Glaziers Guide* (London, 1814).

17. *Universal Receipt Book*, published by Isaac Riley and printed by J. Maxwell (Philadelphia, 1818). Taylor cites an edition of 1825.

discovery and introduction of certain new pigments as the chromes previously mentioned, which led to the obsolescence and abandonment of some colors formerly in favor.¹⁸

Reference has also been available to the Mss. ledger, receipt and day books of Charles Edward Rader, (1830-1870) of Bedminster, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, (now in the Bucks County Historical Society Museum) which show a curious blending of earlier *modus operandi* with technological and scientific advances occurring during the Nineteenth Century. To complete the picture, reference should be made to Schriber's work¹⁹ on carriage and wagon painting—now largely a matter of history—yet published during the present century in that up-to-date metropolis, New York City.

Having discussed various surface finishes of an earlier day, the question arises as to a method for their correct preservation. Many people over the past half century have ruthlessly removed all vestiges of old finish, including every stain or scar and even the patinated surface of the wood. Any example so treated has lost much of its authenticity, interest and value—in fact, it is an act of near-vandalism that is irreparable. The scholarly editor of *Antiques*, writing some thirty years ago, observed, "We have come to cherish the idea of age in our possessions but have failed to appreciate and preserve its aspect."²⁰

If one examines the condition of the majority of the specimens in a great museum or in a fine private collection one does not see skinned scraped or mangled pieces on display. All that the patient years have conferred is quite undisturbed, leaving that lovely, convincing mellowness which age alone can bestow.

It is not at all difficult to preserve, or even to restore properly the vitality and appearance. Superficial dirt or grime may be *gently* washed off with a good, mild soap and water, followed by most careful rinsing with clear water. This treatment will leave the surface clean.

Old paint can be revived by the use of linseed oil, as has been pointed out by several of our best authorities.²¹ Mrs. Braser advocated the use of raw linseed oil—wiping off any unabsorbed excess from the surface.²² Ormsbee²³ recommends the same treatment, with a further extension to cover the "feeding" of varnished or other surfaces in the natural finish. Perhaps our most authoritative, certainly

18. *Antiques*, Vol. LV, (May 1949), p. 354.

19. Fritz Schriber, *Complete Carriage & Wagon Painter* (New York, 1907), p. 17.

20. Henry Hammond Taylor, *Knowing, Collecting and Restoring Early American Furniture* (1930).

21. Esther Stevens Braser, *Early American Decoration* (Springfield, Mass., 1940), p. 105.

Thomas Hamilton Ormsbee, *Care and Repair of Antiques* (New York, 1949), pp. 118-121.

Antiques, Vol. XI, (July 1927), p. 50.

22. Braser, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

23. Ormsbee, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-121.

the most thorough and careful student, was the late Henry Hammond Taylor, who advocated the use of linseed oil and turpentine (equal parts)²⁴ being very careful to leave no excess oil on the surface.²⁵

Still another method which the writer has used for more than thirty years is *gently* to rub the surface with a beeswax feeder wax. Ordinary commercial waxes are paraffin base and should be avoided as the plague! They do not "feed" the wood; they may have a deleterious effect upon old finishes, and they will whiten. A *good* wax may be made by melting a pound of yellow (natural) beeswax and pouring this into a pint and a half of pure turpentine. If a softer wax is desired or the surface is very crumbly, the turpentine may be increased to one quart which gives a very soft, semi-fluid wax. The wax treatment may be used alone, but is often better following the washing and oiling recommended.

The advice of Mr. Henry duPont,²⁶ "Don't pretty things up," is admirable—also it surely comes from one who is a real connoisseur and student. Many pieces were intended to be painted and, when denuded of this finish, are entirely out-of-character, as well as quite improper. An original coat of paint should *always* be preserved even if in rather sad condition. Frequently it is the wisest course to keep an old coat of paint, even if it is not the original one. Many a fine slat back chair or an early chest or soft wood cupboard has been quite ruined by unwise use of the scraper, sandpaper or caustic solvents. Where this harm has been wrought there is little or nothing that can be done to repair the damage.²⁷ It would have been more prudent, as well as displaying more of connoisseurship, had the old surfaces been preserved!²⁸

Those examples, which have come down to us from the patient years of skilled handcraftsmanship are a priceless and vital part of our heritage. Let me beg of you to do *nothing* that will in any way impair them.

24. *Antiques*, Vol. XI, (July, 1927), p. 50.

25. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

26. Joseph Downs, *Winterthur Museum*, p. 6.

27. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

28. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

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3. Herbert Cescinsky, *English Furniture*, Vol. I, pp. 174-226. (Lacquer)

4. Frances Lichten, *Folk Art of Rural Pennsylvania*, pp. 90-109.

5. Lucke Vincent Lockwood, *Colonial Furniture in America*, (3rd Edition 1951), Vol. I, pp. 165-169; 324-325; 344; Vol. II, pp. 119-122, 126, 308, 311, 328. (Painted Furniture)

6. Edgar G. Miller, Jr., *American Antique Furniture*, Vol. I, Sec. 31, pp. 84-85. (Lacquer); Sec. 34, pp. 88-89. (Painting)

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Early Funeral Notices

By JANE KEPLINGER BURRIS

This is the story, as far as known, of Funeral Notices. It is a morbid subject, edged in black, with all the appeal of the melancholy, about which very little is found in print. Much has been written about funeral customs of the past, the feasting, the two-hour eulogies and other quaint observances, but references to funeral notices are scarce and hard to find. Indeed, so very little is on record, that to write anything on the subject, it is necessary to do so from the actual tear-stained relics themselves. The splendid collection preserved in The Historical Society of Montgomery County affords this opportunity. All examples mentioned here, with one exception, are from this collection, and are dated, rather broadly, from 1838 to 1908.

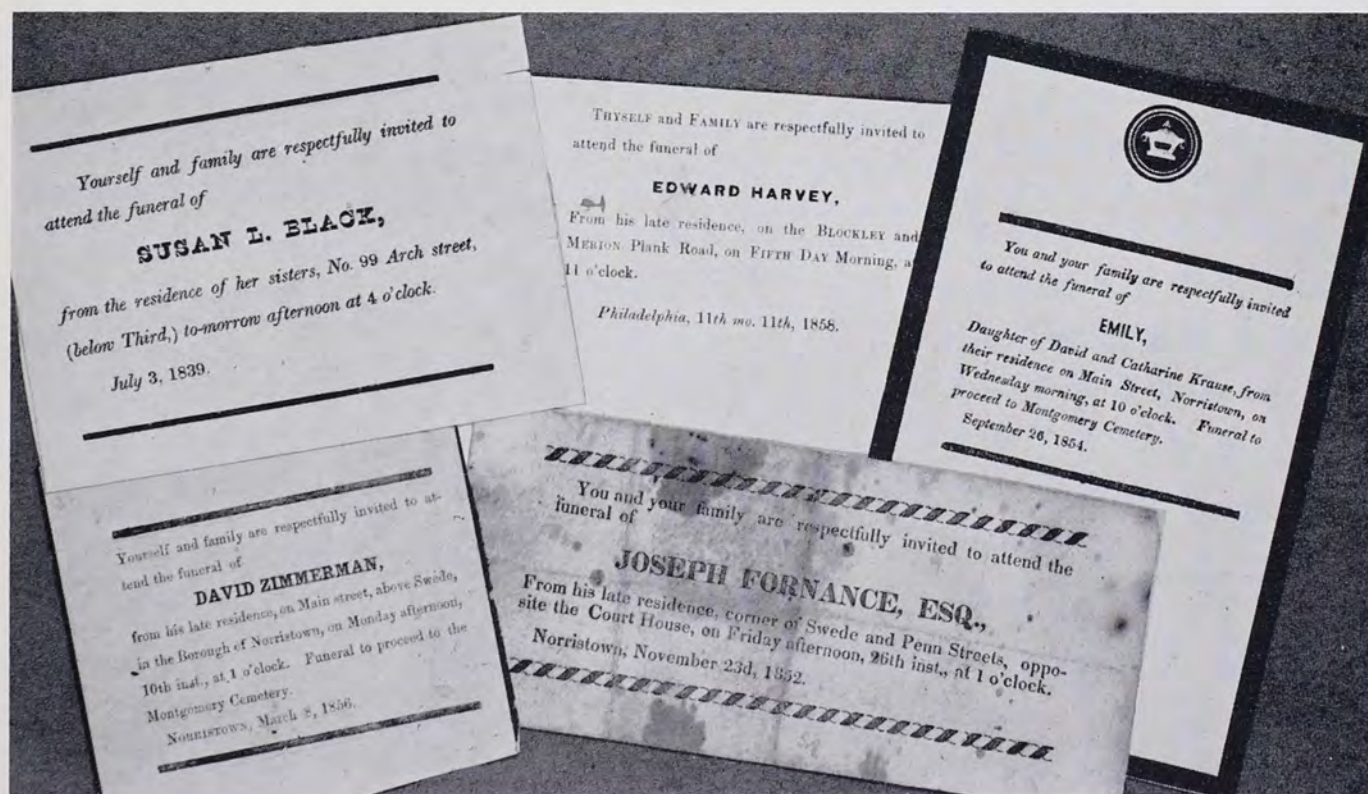
The almost non-existence of topic material probably makes this a first attempt to put the available facts together in writing. This simple act of preemption, however, is not to be considered a definitive treatment of the subject. Or is it? The absolute rarity of sources furnishes a good reason to record what is known. This short, modest essay aims to bridge an obvious historical lack. It thereby attains its only importance.

Even the nomenclature of this pensive subject is to some extent in an unsettled state, being variously referred to as funeral cards, funeral notices, funeral tickets and funeral invitations. Which, of course, are all correct. In the final

analysis, a formal invitation to a funeral, is the proper definition. In Canada, according to the dictionary, a funeral card was a printed notice of the death of a person in the locality which was posted on a pole or other prominent place in the village for all interested persons to view.

It has also been impossible to date how early the use of funeral notices began. Very likely earlier ones are extant than those being considered here. The earliest example on hand is one found in the author's own family papers, James Milnor Pawling, a brilliant young lawyer of Norristown, who died in 1838. This is printed on a single sheet of transparent paper confined by two horizontal lines of black and measures about 2½" x 5". The next earliest as shown is a similar example, that of SUSAN L. BLACK, 1839. Invariable first words were, "Yourself and family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral of." A Quaker notice, as represented by EDWARD HARVEY, 1858, (double-fold) in proper keeping begins "Thyself and Family." Other forms of this same period begin in the more standard "You and your family."

Shown here is that of JOSEPH FORNANCE, 1852, (single sheet) a prominent lawyer of Norristown, who represented Pennsylvania in Congress, 1839-1843. Also shown is EMILY KRAUSE, 1854 (double fold), daughter of Judge David Krause of Montgomery County, betrothed to Hilary



FUNERAL NOTICE.
PLEASE FORWARD.



Miss Mary Reed
Jeffersonville
Pa.

Youself and family are invited to attend the funeral of
Mrs Caroline Salterhorn
e. 10 th inst., at me o'clock P. M., at
dence of Mr Charles Allen
Services at M. E. Church
Quakertown
o'clock.

MORRIS W. ROBINSON
FUNERAL DIRECTOR
CLINTON, N. J.

Youself and family are respect-
fully invited to attend the funeral of

MISS HETTY MARKLEY,

From the residence of Mr. John Boy-
er, on DeMall St., near Ray, on
Friday morning, the 25th of March,
at 10 o'clock. Funeral to proceed to
St. John's Episcopal Church.

Norristown, March 23, 1859.

Youself and family are respectfully
invited to attend the funeral of

REV. NATHAN STEM, D. D.,

From his late residence, on Spring street,
on Friday morning, the 4th inst., at
10 o'clock.

November 2, 1859

Youself and family are respectfully invited to
attend the funeral of

Abraham H. Calvert
From his late residence in Near Warfields
On Wednesday April 24, 1906
at 9.30 o'clock A. m. at the house.
Interment at Helemberg's burying ground
Died April 23 Aged 89 yrs. 7 mos. 2 days
Carriages will meet trains at Salford about
8 A.M.

H. B. SHISLER, Undertaker and Embalmer, Harleysville, Pa.

Youself and Family are respectfully invited to attend
the Funeral of
Jacob Reiff,
From his residence in Whitemarsh, on Friday Morning, the
22d inst., at 10 o'clock. Funeral to proceed to Upper-Dublin.
October 20, 1847.

Hancock, twin brother to General Winfield Scott Hancock of Civil War fame. In addition other interesting examples are reproduced here.

By comparison and study it can be concluded, in general, that the earliest specimens of the 1830's were struck off on a single sheet of thin, white paper known as "Superfine Mourning Paper" with parallel lines of black, with some variation of design. By the late 1850's the general custom was a double fold of heavier stock with a complete black border. This was followed by a card of substantial weight with envelopes to match, with little or no variation in the all black borders. In 1908, when ABRAHAM HARLEY CASSEL, the most noted bibliophile and historian of the Brethren faith in the world, died, a plain white form with a narrow black rim was filled out in longhand with the simple statistics and mailed to the many relatives and scholarly friends.

It was a morbid generation. An age conscious of the mortality of man. This attitude is reflected in the art and literature of the day. Whole families were blotted out by epidemic. Consumption, typhoid, smallpox and diphtheria were unchecked and ran rampant throughout the country. Man and science were not prepared to cope with these calamities. The people were powerless to combat a mysterious foe and cultivated a resigned acceptance of fate, the hand of God.

Infant deaths were high. The old burial grounds testify to this in the row by row of little tombs with white lamb headstones. To rear a child beyond the critical "second summer" was with the hope it would then live to maturity. The "rosy cheeks" and "the picture of health" were fatally deceptive. This was the masquerade of consumption that took high toll in the ranks of young people, especially of marriageable age. Young parents died leaving small children orphans to be brought up in foster homes. An elaborate piece of fancy paper cut work in verse and color by the hand of Sarah Egbert Corson on the death of a young child in 1835 is typical of the excessive morbidity of the era.

"To the dark and silent tomb
Soon I hasten from the womb
Since the dawn of life began
Ere I measure out my span.

I, no smiling pleasures knew
I, no gay delights could view
Joyless sojourner was I
Only born to weep and die.

Happy infant early blest
Best in peaceful slumber rest
Early rescued from the cares
Which increase with growing years.

No delights are worth thy stay
Smiling as they seem and gay
Short and sickly are they all
Hardly tasted ere they pall."

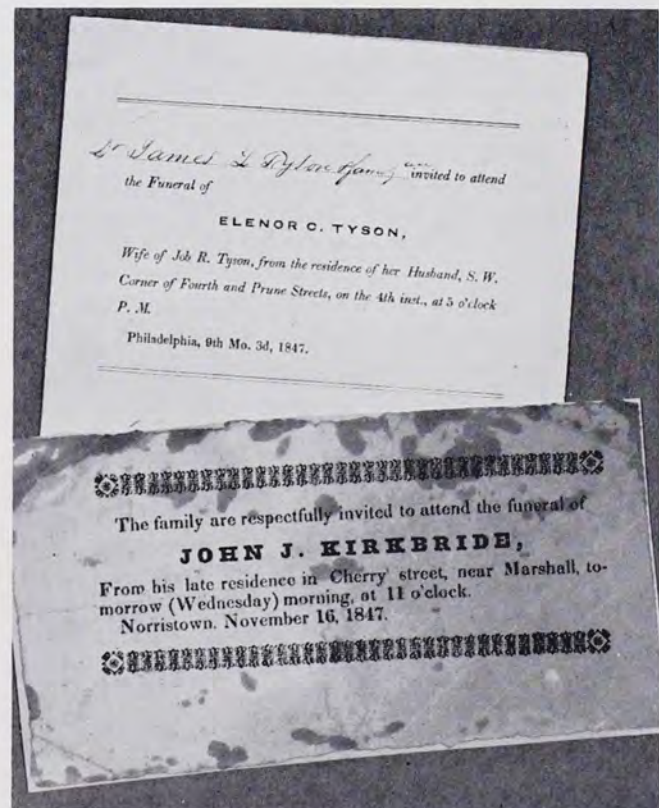
In connection with the customs of the time, although there was a minimum of professional service at the funeral, much ceremonious routine was observed. All duties, whenever possible, were performed by relatives and neighbors. One of the first duties of the family in deep trouble of bereavement was to inform the minister of the death and have the church bells tolled. Sextons devised a code of doleful ringing to indicate whether a man, woman or child, and

then the age of the dead person was sounded. Another first duty was a hurried trip to the nearest source of supply, the village store keeper, and the weekly newspaper office, where, with the paper stock bought and the notices struck off, the messenger bore them home with the ink still damp. While the women cleaned the house and prepared the funeral feast, the men folks drove many miles in all directions to deliver the funeral invitations, from farm to farm, to relatives and neighbors. The first mode of delivery conveying the sad news was by messenger. Later with the establishment of postoffices and railroads, mailing became the accepted mode of delivery. Still more recently the newspaper obituary and the telephone take the responsibility of the task. The survival of the funeral notice is seen in the "Service Record" or "In Memoriam" leaflets received at today's funerals.

Robert W. Habenstine's "History of American Funeral Directing," pages 432-439, makes passing references to funeral invitations. Only two other sources—stray references—have been found on the subject as used by other writers. First, Irving Stone opens one of his chapters in "Love Is Eternal" with a reference to "funeral tickets." The other, Alliene Saeger DeChant in "Down Oley Way" mentions the discovery of "Superfine Mourning Paper" used for printing "funeral notices" in an old general store. There are probably many others to be found.

In sober reflection, it is because of the tenderness with which these pathetic mementoes were cherished, that they have survived the destruction of time. Lovingly and tearfully laid away in the hallowed pages of the Bible in company with other precious keepsakes—a peacock feather, a pressed rose, a remnant of yellowed white satin. Touching testimonials of tears and heartbreak, of laughter and love of long ago—even as today.

"Why dost thou give me one tho't
Am I not gone—am I not forgot?"



Collecting Dialect Folk Songs

By THOMAS R. BRENDLE

The history, dialect, and folk art of the Pennsylvania Germans have been well and exhaustively studied by various scholars over a period of many years. Little attention, however, has been given to the folk songs. Indeed, those persons conversant with the life of our people held the view that our folk songs were a thing of the past; that such remnants as remained were unworthy of collection; that we had to be content with what John Baer Stouidt preserved for us in his *The Folklore of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society, Vol. XXIII, Part II, 1916) and S. P. Heilman in his *The Old Cider Mill* (Proceedings of the Lebanon County Historical Society, Vol. I, No. II, 1899). The writer himself originally shared this view.

In the spring of 1935 the first Pennsylvania Folk Festival under the direction of George Korson was held in Allentown. Here to the surprise and delight of the audience, a group of persons from Jordan Reformed Church, Walberts, Pennsylvania, under the leadership of Paul R. Wieand sang songs which few of those present knew to be extant.

After the festival the late William S. Troxell and the writer, accompanied at times by Paul R. Wieand, made an extended search for folk songs among the Pennsylvania Germans of Berks, Lehigh, Montgomery, Lebanon, Northampton, Monroe, Carbon, Schuylkill, and Northumberland counties.

The first recordings were made with a heavy, cumbersome, three-piece apparatus. In isolated parts where the home of the singer was without electricity the recording was made in a garage or private home equipped with electricity and to which the informant was taken.

The very first results were meager and disappointing: here a few lines were heard; there a few bars were hummed—always only parts, but enough to stimulate further search. The final results, however, exceeded our expectations.

Upon the death of William S. Troxell the recordings were given to the Fackenthal Library of Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to serve as the basis for a study of the folk songs of the Pennsylvania Germans. And to further such a study, popular German-language songbooks published in this country, broadsides with German-language songs, papers with manuscript, books with collections of folk songs from Germany and Switzerland—in short all the material which had been assembled by Troxell and the writer for a definitive study of our folk songs, a study which they had planned to make jointly, were also given to Fackenthal Library. There is now assembled in one place primary and secondary source material which will be hard to duplicate in the future.

It is needless to list all the songs collected, but it is in place to mention the classes into which we had tentatively segregated them and some titles of each class.

Songs of the Immigration

Jetzt ist die Zeit un Schtunde daw.
Herz, mein Herz, worum so draurich.
Ein neues Freyheits-Lied (a broadside).

Mournful Ballads or Trauerlieder

The Mournful Ballads were highly esteemed, and they deserve careful study. Only one of the many which we found in broadside form was sung for us from memory. It was the *Mournful Ballad of Susanna Cox* and was sung in its entirety by Mrs. Jane Masonheimer, of Egypt, Pennsylvania. Other broadside songs of this type which we have seen tell the stories of Johannes Schild, Philip Bebel, James Quinn, Thomas Siegfried, John Wittman, Carlisle, Die Sultans-Tochter, Meyer-Hof, and Joseph Miller.

Songs of Towns

O Schtrassburg, O Schtrassburg.
Hamburg, Hamburg muss ich lassen.
Doo wawr ich moll in Schtadt Reading.
Des iss des Schtick fun da Texas Schtadt.
In Mertztown meet en Cornet Band.

Songs of Love, Courtship, and Parting

Wer lieben will, muss leiden.
Drei Lillien, drei Lillien.
Guten Tag, Harr Gartnersmann.
Wie kumm ich dan an des Grossfawders Haus.
Es wollte ein Jeegerlein Jawga.

Translations of English Songs

O Susanna.
Es wawr en alder Nieger.

Late German Songs

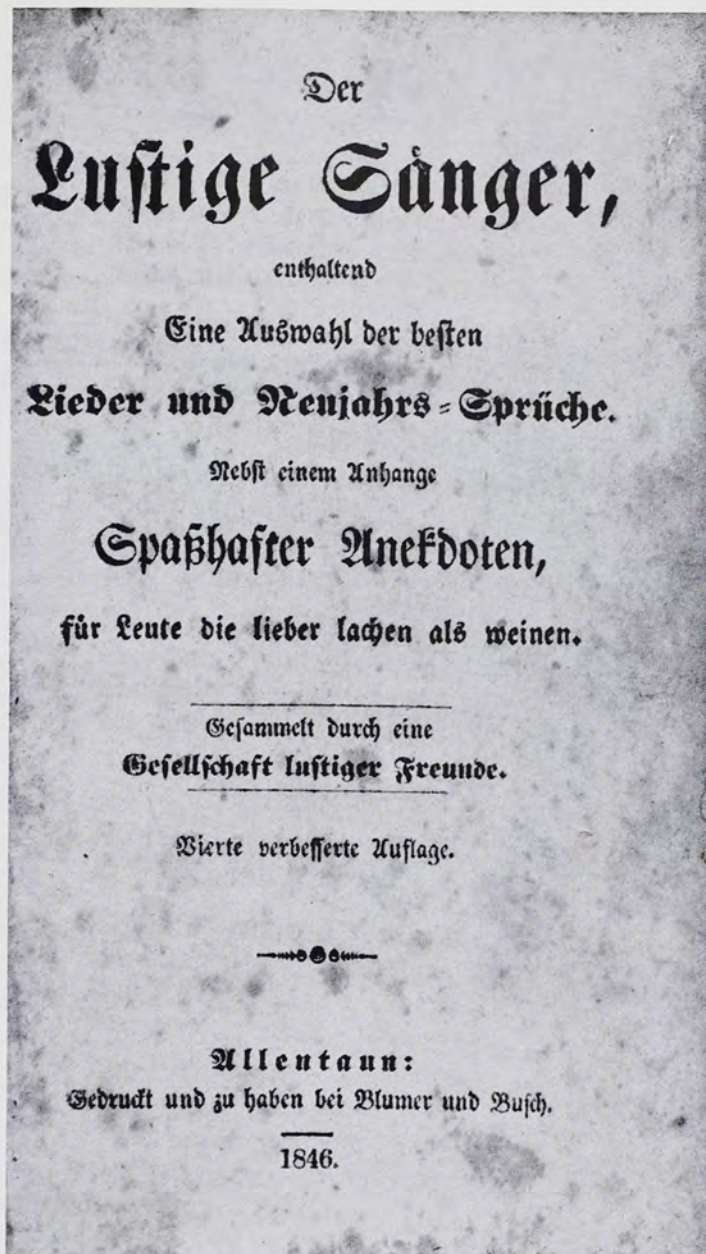
O Dannebaw, O Dannebaw
Scheen iss die Juuchend.
Die lieva, langa Nacht.
Muss ich denn, muss ich denn.
Lauderbach.

Chain Songs

Schpinn, Schpinn, mei lievi Tochter.
Was drawgt die Gans?
Tswitserich Dansa.
Was wart auf diesem Baum?

Four Liners

Drei Wochen fawr Oschdren.
Ich kann nimmi singa.
Wie macha die Deitscha ihr guider, guider Kees?



Title page of the fourth edition of the "Lustige Sanger."

Pennsylvania Folklife Society Collection

Game Songs

*Mer schwimma ivver der Schuyllkill.
Wer will der Havver recha?
Der Bavver hot die Soot geseet.*

The work of collecting our folk songs is far from complete. He who engages in the hunt will gain great reward.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF GERMAN-LANGUAGE IMPRINTS OF PENNSYLVANIA CONTAINING FOLK SONGS

1816

Drei wunderbare neue/Geschichten/oder/Lieder,/Das erste von einem/Kleinen Kinde/und einem/Pudelhund,/welches in Russland, im Jahr unsers Heilands/1808, im Fruhjahr, geschehen ist./Das zweyte von einem/Madchen, Namens Pally J./welches sich nahe bei Littel-York, in Pennsylv./im Jahr Cristi, 1806, zugetragen hat./Das dritte von dem im Walde sizenden schlafenden/Bohmischen Bauern./Auf

grosses Verlangen zum Druck befordert von/Johann George Homan,/in Elsass Taunship, Berks Caunty, Penn./Reading, gedruckt im Jahr 1816. pp. 12.

1831

Sammlung/Vorzuglicher Poesien, Gesange und lieder,/von Deutschen Dichtern./Gesammelt und herausgegeben von/Wilhelm Megede./Reading./Gedruckt: bey Daniel Roths./1831. pp. 492.

Contains a number of songs, among them "Mein Mann ist gefahren ins Heu."

1839

Der/Lustige Sanger,/enthaltend/Eine Auswahl der besten/Lieder und Neujahrsspruche./Mit einem Anhang von/Spassigen Anekdoten,/und humoristischen Bilder,/fur Leute die lieber Lachen als betrubt sein./Gesammelt und herausgegeben von/Johann Friedrich Gutesmuths./Erste Auflage./Allentown:/Gedruckt fur den Verleger./1839. pp. 205.

Der/Lustige Sänger,/enthaltend/Eine Auswahl der besten/Lieder und Neujahrsprüche./Mit einem Anhang von/Spässigen Anekdoten,/und humoristischen Bilder,/für Leute die lieber Lachen als betrübt sein./Gesammelt und herausgegeben von/Johann Friedrich Gutesmuths./Zweite Auflage./Allentaun:/Gedruckt für den Verleger./1841. pp. 205.

Aufblick Der Seele/in den/Himmel,/oder/Neue, schöne, geistliche Buss- und Be-/kehrungs-Lieder, von hartem Frucht-/und Fehljahr 1836 und 1837. Von/ den zwei harten Wintern 1840 und '41, und sonst noch/mehr wunderbare Geschichten/oder Lieder./Süsse heilige Natur./Lass mich gehn auf deiner Spur./Singet dem Herrn ein neu Lied, so/wie David vor dem Herrn mit sei-/nem Mund und Harfe that./Alles zu Gottes Ehr'./Gedenke Mensch, dass du sterben musst!-/Zum Druck befördert von Johann Georg Homann,/Berks County. [1842]

The contents consist of fifteen songs, some of which were written by Hohman himself. One, "Die Sultans-Tochter," appears in a manuscript item in the Schwenkfelder Library, Pennsburg, Pennsylvania. Another, "Fühlt das heilige Entzücken," was widely sung over a long period of years at confirmation services. To this latter song the note is given: "Dankgefühle und Vorsätze der Confirmanten auf den 10ten Tag des Monats May, 1815, in der Merzer Kirche."

Der/Lustige Sänger,/enthaltend/Eine Auswahl der besten/Lieder und Neujahrsprüche./Nebst einem Anhang/Spässhafter Anekdoten,/und humoristischer Bilder,/für Leute die lieber lachen als weinen./Gesammelt durch eine/Gesellschaft lustiger Freunde./Dritte verbesserte Auflage./Allentaun:/Gedruckt für die Verleger./1843. pp. 178.

Complete copies of this edition are rare. Usually the binding is slipshod; in some copies pages are missing; in others the pagination is not consecutive.

Der/Lustige Sänger,/enthaltend/Eine Auswahl der besten/Lieder und Neujahrsprüche./Nebst einem Anhang/Spässhafter Anekdoten, Für Leute die lieber lachen als weinen./Gesammelt durch eine/Gesellschaft lustiger Freunde./Vierte verbesserte Auflage. Allentaun:/Gedruckt und zu haben bei Blumer und Busch./1846. pp. 190.

The copy in hand, in appearance, binding, and printing, is far superior to the copies of the third edition which we have seen.

Lustige Lieder.

A small 16-page booklet, with no further title or place of publication. Contains six songs, three crude woodcuts. Tail piece an eagle with scroll having inscription "Hoffnung besserer Zeiten." Probable date around 1850. This is a most interesting item. One song partly in the dialect. One senses that all the songs were sung at the time of publication. Contents: 1) Yänkie Dudel, sieh dich vor; 2) Weibchen was ich sagen will; 3) Rauh und Rüstig hat das Schwert (Song of the Mexican War); 4) Es hot mich schon verdolt gekränk; 5) So oft ich meine Tabackspfeife; 6) Es wor'n einmal die Schneider.

Westentaschen-/Volks-Liederbuch./Zweite vermehrte Auflage./Philadelphia: Verlag von John Weik./1850. Stereotyped and printed by King & Baird, 9 Sansom St. pp. 256.

According to the introduction this edition is enlarged by one third over the first edition. The aim of the book is to give a selection of folk songs which will stimulate German singing. Reference is made to the fact that an appropriate selection of songs is unavailable despite the large German population in the country. The book ran through a large number of editions. We have come across copies only in Schuylkill County.

Der/Lustige Sänger,/ein Volks-Liederbuch,/enthaltend eine/Auswahl der beliebtesten Lieder und/Gesänge alter und neuer Zeit./Allentown, Pa.,/Druck und Verlag von Blumer, Busch und Co./1856. pp. 159.

This is not a reprint of "Der Lustige Sänger" above, though the title in part is the same. The number of songs is not as large, and only a comparatively small number are the same. In the year 1935 we collected two lines of what we were told was a long song: "Dass mei Fraw nicht leeva kann unna mich un meinen Knecht." The lines appear to come from the song "Michel," which is found on page 70 of the above.

Eia-Popeia./Deutsche Kinderheimath/in Wort und Sang und Bild./Mit Illustrationen von Ludwig Richter und Franz Poggi./Philadelphia./Verlag von I. Kohler,/202 Nord Vierte Strasse./1868.

This book, apparently, circulated quite widely among our people. Six of its illustrations are reproduced in "The Folklore of the Pennsylvania Germans," Part II, Vol. XXIII of the Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society.

Grüss Gott!/Illustriertes Lutherisches/Monatsblatt./Deutsche Volkslieder Mit Noten./3. Jahrgang./Mai und June. Heft 5 und 6./Reading, Pa.

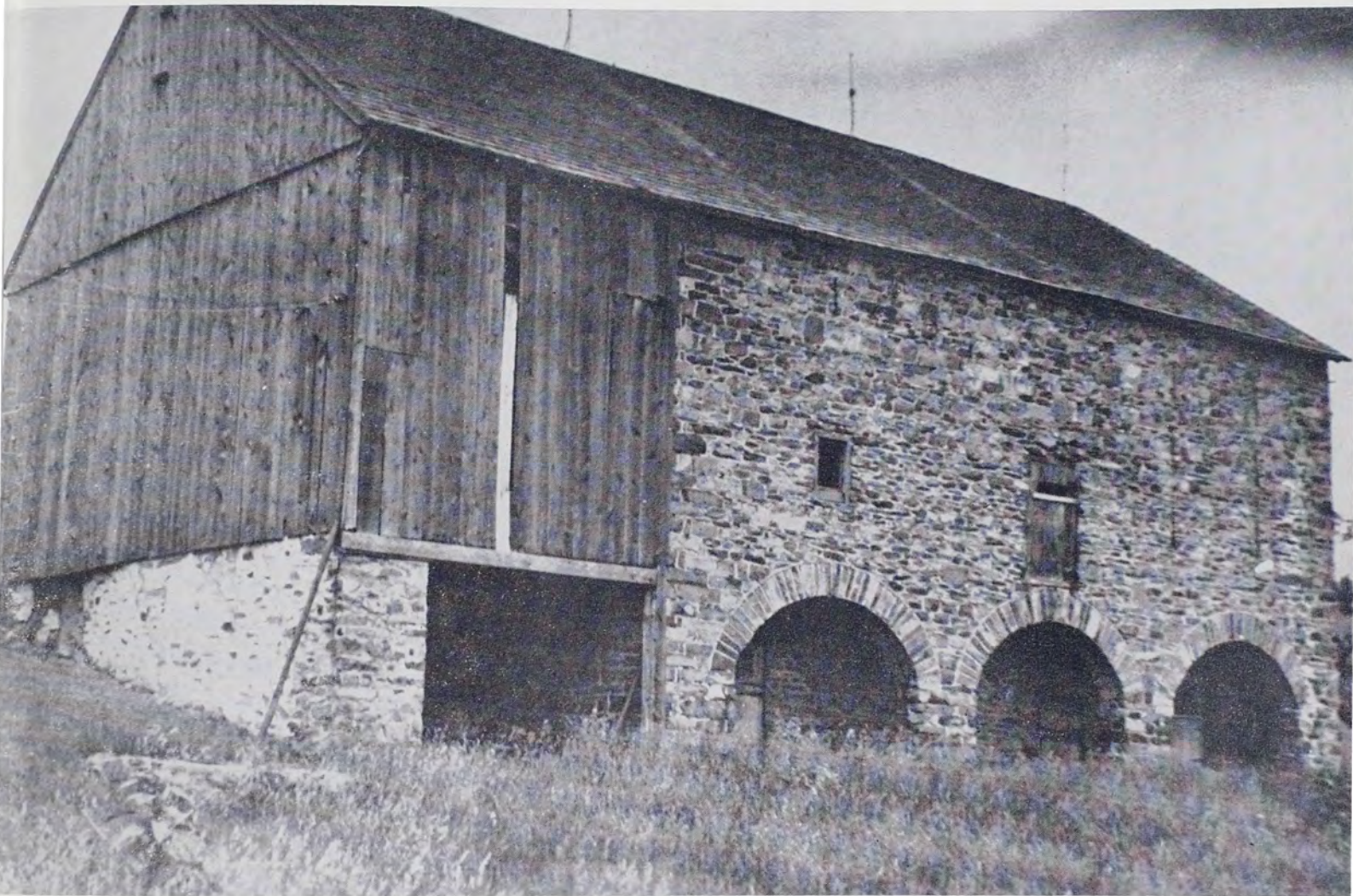
Entered at the postoffice at Reading, Pennsylvania, as second class matter. There is no date; issued probably around the year 1875.

Allerlei Lustiges/in/Vers und Bild.

A collection of rhymes. The book was published in America, but there are evidences of when, where, or by whom. Probably published around 1880.

Der/Lustige Sänger/ein/Volks-Liederbuch,/enthaltend eine/Auswahl der beliebtesten Neujahrs-/wünsche alter und neuer Zeit./Allentown, Pa./Druck und Verlag der Weltbote Publishing Co./1903. pp. 24.

This little booklet contains six "Neujahrswünsche." If we may judge from the agreement in spelling and punctuation, the "New Year's Wishes" which appear in Part II, Vol. XXIII of The Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society, pages 105-114, came from this source. All of the "Neujahrswünsche" of the above, with the exception of one, beginning "Freudenvoll erscheinen wir," go back to the older "Lustige Sänger."



Early photograph of arched forebay barn in Montgomery County. A mere half-dozen of these barns survive.

Lettuce Seed and Distelfink

My German Grandma said to me,
"We shall let this lettuce shoot
To seed so distelfink may eat
The fitful food of frapping root."

Not for her the severed life,
Not for her the pro, the con;
The earthborn and the skyborne
Were multiples of only one.

She saw the season-spanning life
In singularity of seed
And distelfink was bird of soul,
The now-I-am of need.

Walter E. Boyer, '59