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Steve Friesen

Monica Mutzbauer


Christopher S. Witmer

Mary Lamey Hoffer

Harry W. Barner

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Steve Friesen, Monica Mutzbauer, Christopher S. Witmer, Mary Lamey Hoffer, Harry W. Barner, Robert L. Leight, and Catherine L. Emerson



Pennsylvania
Doll life

Spring 1991

THE RAISED-HEARTH
TRADITION

Contributors

HARRY W. "BILL" BARNER, Lt. Col., U.S. Air Force Retired, has compiled hundreds of genealogical charts in extensive files, and written several articles and brochures dealing with genealogy and freemasonry. He is a past master of Army & Navy Lodge #306, A.F. & A.M. at Fort Monroe, Virginia and has published *A Brief History of Freemasonry at Ft. Monroe*. He now resides in Lock Haven, Pa., where he was born in 1927.

STEVE FRIESEN, who has a Master's Degree in American Folk Culture from the Cooperstown Graduate Program of the State University of New York, has done material history research for the past fourteen years. Director of the Hans Herr House from 1985 to 1990, his book, *A Modest Mennonite Home*, was published by Good Books in August, 1990.

MARY LAMEY HOFFER, born in Loganton, Pa., but now living in Avis, Pa., is a member of the Fort Antes Chapter DAR, Jersey Shore, Pa. As chairman of the Chapter's genealogical records committee she oversaw the compilation and publication of two books: *Church Records of Sugar Valley, Pa.*, and *Kelchner Funeral Home Records*. She also contributed an article to *Loganton and Sugar Valley Sesquicentennial 1840-1990*, and has written several articles for the *Barner Newsletter*.

ROBERT L. LEIGHT, Ed.D., is professor of education at Lehigh University. He has served on the board of school directors of the Quakertown Community School District for ten years. Prior to teaching at Lehigh, he taught at Ursinus College, and as a secondary school teacher in Bucks County, Pa. His first eight grades of schooling were in a one-room school in Richland Township.

MONICA MUTZBAUER, who has a Ph.D. in theology from the University of Mainz, is a German church historian whose specialty is dealing with the history of sects whose members have migrated to America. She teaches religious education, German language and literature, and Italian at a high school in Ludwigshafen in the Rhineland-Palatinate.

CHRISTOPHER S. WITMER, born and raised in the Harrisburg, Pa., area, received his undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State University, his Master's Degree from the University of Wisconsin, and was accepted to study in the Deerfield Fellowship Program, Deerfield, Massachusetts, in 1979. In particular, he has special interests in Pennsylvania-German history and vernacular architecture. He currently resides in Kleinfeltersville, Lebanon County, Pa.

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Editorial correspondence:

Nancy K. Gaugler
P.O. Box 92,
Collegeville, Pennsylvania 19426

Subscription, business correspondence:

P.O. Box 92,
Collegeville, Pennsylvania 19426

Folk Festival correspondence:

461 Vine Lane
Kutztown, Pennsylvania 19530
Phone 215-683-8707
800-447-9269

Folk Festival public relations:

Hartmann Associates
461 Vine Lane
Kutztown, Pennsylvania 19530
Phone 215-683-5313

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COVER:

Museum educator Catherine L. Emerson cooking on the raised hearth in the 1719 Hans Herr House. The raised hearth was reconstructed in the Lancaster county dwelling in the summer of 1990, since research indicates one was originally present. Actual use of the raised hearth has demonstrated its efficiency and practicality.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEARTH IS

by Steve Friesen



This early German woodcut illustrates many items also found in 18th-century Pennsylvania-German kitchens, including a cooking pot, a long-handled sieve, a brass cauldron, cabbages, and turnips; note the raised hearth.

These country towns of the farther regions have for the most part quite the look of our German market-towns; the houses, according to the taste of the inmates, are painted divers colors, and the interior arrangement is very little different from the German.¹

Thus observed Johann David Schoepf after a visit to Pennsylvania in 1783. Similarly, when the Hessian prisoner Du Roi the Elder visited Lancaster during the Revolution he noted, "The houses are very clean inside and the way of living is exactly like that in Germany."² Other accounts and the surviving architectural evidence corroborate both of the above observations. The German settler in Pennsylvania built his house with a *stube* (main room; parlor), a *küche* (kitchen), and a *kammer* (bedroom). The house had a central chimney with a heating stove protruding into the *stube*. Log, half-timber, and stone building materials were used in Pennsylvania in much the same manner they were used in Germany. Inside the house could be found an *eck banck* (corner bench), a *schränk* (wardrobe), a sawbuck table,

and *brettstuhls* (board chairs). The diet of Pennsylvania Germans was similar as well. Schoepf remarked that "one finds in the German houses everywhere a warm stove, good beer, and at this season, wurst, hog-meat, and sauerkraut, all of which they regard as national prerogatives [*sic*]."³ Benjamin Rush summarized it best in 1789 when he wrote that "there is a singular trait in the features of the German character in Pennsylvania, which shows how long the most trifling custom may exist among a people who have not been mixed with other nations."⁴ The Pennsylvania Germans clearly held on to their native culture with a tenacity shown by few other immigrant groups of the 18th century.

But with all of the similarities to the Old World there were also differences, most clearly observed in architectural forms. The combination house-barn found in both Switzerland and Germany appears to have been relatively uncommon in Pennsylvania, probably abandoned soon after arrival. This deviation has sometimes been explained as a reversion to the earlier German medieval scattered farmstead, perhaps motivated by the abundance of land in Pennsylvania, since the house-

A well-furnished German kitchen with a raised hearth, illustrated in a cookbook from 1581. Note the "spider" beside the man's right foot. This brick hearth offers additional space to store wood (or the cat).



barn was prompted in part by the shortage of land in Europe. The predominant floor plan of the 18th-century Pennsylvania-German house utilized similar spaces (*küche*, *stube*, *kammer*) to those of Germany, but was much more consistent, to the point of being formalized, in its arrangement of those spaces. There are no existing farmhouses in Germany to which one can point as being prototypes for the *flurküchenhaus* (kitchen-corridor house) plan of three or four rooms which appears to have been common among the Germans there and in Pennsylvania. Material historian William Woys Weaver has advanced the notion that the builders of the Pennsylvania houses may have been influenced by one of the German building manuals popular at the time.⁵ Clearly the early Pennsylvania Germans, in adjusting to environmental and other influences, did not strictly duplicate the traditional culture which they had left behind.⁶

While Rush attributed the Pennsylvania German tenacity in maintaining traditional customs to isolation, many were not that isolated. By 1789 the Germans and the English were living side by side in cities such as Lancaster, as well as in the country. The Germans refused to give up their native tongue but were well aware that they must learn English in order to interact with their English-speaking neighbors. Lancaster County inventories of the 18th century (which were required to be in English) reveal the struggles some Germans went through to function in an alien society. While some English looked with derision upon the "dumb" Germans, there was mingling at all levels. The minister of the German Lutheran Church in Lancaster lamented in 1786 that too many of the most prominent young men in his church were marrying women of English background. Already in the early 18th century the Mennonites of Conestogo (later called Conestoga) were interacting with their English neighbors on a business level, buying and selling

a variety of goods and services. In 1724 one Martin Mylin filed a petition to open a tavern which was signed entirely by English cosigners. There is no question but that the Germans were well aware of English customs and culture. However, as Schoepf, Du Roi, and Rush all observed, most were unwilling to relinquish their "national prerogatives [*sic*]."⁷

Pennsylvania of the 1700s was a colony of cultural plurality rather than a melting pot. But eventually each culture borrowed from the other until both the Germans and the English had developed forms that no longer resembled the material culture of their former homelands. For example, by the 1770s much of Pennsylvania-German farmhouse architecture had been modified to a kind of German-Georgian style which tried to reconcile English Georgian symmetry with the German *flurküchenhaus* floor plan. Innovation had its effects as well. Over time the German five-plate stove, which used a central fireplace, was replaced by the ten-plate stove, which was not dependent on the central fireplace. The fireplace was then free to move to the end of the house, which integrated nicely with a symmetrical Georgian facade. Thus native German material cultural forms were altered over time.

Folklorists have found that the cultural forms which are changed or abandoned last are foodways. Yet while many of the food forms of the Pennsylvania Germans have themselves changed little since the 18th century (e.g., sauerkraut, sausage, apple butter), the Pennsylvania German kitchen itself has changed dramatically as cooking and heating technologies have changed. As a consequence, that area of the house has been altered to a greater extent than any other area, usually with little remaining of its original form. Since there are basically no intact 18th-century Pennsylvania-German kitchens, evidence as to their forms must be gathered through other means. Certainly the best evidence would be given



Raised hearth in a jamb-type fireplace in a farmhouse near Kiel in Schleswig-Holstein.

by period illustrations, but none exist for the period and area desired. However, there are a number of illustrations of kitchens in Germany during the 18th century and earlier. If one is to believe Du Roi, Schoepf, and Rush, these illustrations should provide a major source for reconstructing the 18th-century Pennsylvania-German kitchen. Since, as noted above, the 18th-century Pennsylvania German retained some but not all of his native culture, Old World precedents must be examined in light of New World sources such as eyewitness accounts and diaries, inventories, and the remaining architectural evidence.

GERMAN PRECEDENTS FOR A RAISED HEARTH

During Roman times, the Germanic culture we know today was already forming. The houses of the different tribes were built of logs and usually had a single room with a fire hearth in the center. In most cases this hearth was simply a slightly sunken portion of the beaten earth floor which was designated for the fire. No chimney was used and the smoke from the fire simply vented through the roof. As the Roman Empire expanded north of the Alps, it followed the Rhine River. Major cities of the Empire were established at various intervals along the Rhine, in the midst of the Germanic tribes. Roman influence led the Germans to build stone houses and to group their farmsteads in *hofs*, separate buildings arranged around an enclosure.⁸

The Romans used cooking hearths which were raised above floor level to almost waist height. These were much more convenient than floor-level hearths, and over time the Germans started using a raised hearth for cooking. Even after their single-room houses gave way to houses of two or more rooms, the hearth fire remained in the center of the house on a raised platform. Eventually a cowl was hung over the hearth to collect the smoke and funnel it into a chimney.⁹

The Germanic use of a *stube* or stoveroom grew out

of the central-chimney tradition. This was the main, and warmest, room of the house because it had a heating stove protruding into it. The stove projected out of the wall shared with the kitchen. On the other side was the hearth area from which the stove was fed. Thus the heating and cooking areas, with their use of fueled fires, were consolidated.

Germanic peoples frequently used smoke cowls over their hearths, and these are depicted in woodcuts and engravings from the 14th century until the 19th century. Today a few smoke cowls can still be found over raised hearths in historic houses like the Hippenseppenhof (c. 1599) at the Black Forest Open Air Museum in Gutach, and the Trades House (c. 1300) in Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Raised hearths were usually associated with a smoke cowl arrangement; however, they appear to have been used occasionally with jamb-type fireplaces. Several jamb-type fireplaces with raised hearths have been documented in the Schleswig-Holstein area in particular, as well as in other, scattered areas of Germany.¹⁰

Raised hearths usually ranged from knee to mid-thigh (two to two and one-half feet) in height. This height gave greater ease in cooking, eliminating the need to stoop in order to stir or sample the food. It was also safer since a woman's long dress or apron was less likely to drag in the fire than when cooking on a floor-level hearth. Moreover, the raised hearth conserved fuel because comparatively small fires were used on it. For this reason the nobility, who owned most of the woodland, encouraged the peasants to use it. And, since the raised hearth and the heating stove were usually back to back, fuel could be used interchangeably, another conservation measure. The height of the hearth allowed an arched space at its bottom where fuel could be stored, another point of convenience.¹¹

The cooking surfaces themselves varied in overall

German woodcut showing the use of a raised hearth with a jambed fireplace. Here the hearth's surface is hot enough to warm a long-handled frying pan and several serving dishes.



size. The raised hearth in the kitchen of a member of the nobility or a wealthy family, where servants did the work, could be quite large in surface. The hearth of an ordinary farmhouse would have been smaller, anywhere from two feet by five feet to four feet square. The body of the hearth was made of bricks or stone, or both. The cooking surface itself varied. In some cases it was simply mortar laid over the surface of the stones or bricks. Sometimes the stones or bricks themselves provided the surface. Frequently a special cooking surface of flagstones, and later iron, was laid over the stones or bricks.¹²

Raised-hearth fires were usually smaller than those used on a floor-level hearth (otherwise called a "down hearth"). Several small fires might be built to provide different intensities of heat to different pots. Or, in some cases, a larger fire was built and coals pulled out of it and put under pots, pans, or grills. The surface of the hearth became quite warm, particularly if a single surface of flagstone or iron was used, and the surface itself became a heat source for cooking. On occasion the cooking surface had a shallow depression within which the fire was built. The cooking vessels themselves were specially made for these smaller, more controlled, sources of heat. Such cooking pots and frying pans were often made of clay rather than metal. These clay vessels were designed to be placed on a shallow trivet over hot coals or actually placed in the coals themselves. Low grills held meats above the hot coals on the hearth. While these pots, pans, and grills could be used over hot coals on a floor-level hearth, they were most effectively used in raised-hearth cookery.¹³

As heating and cooking technologies changed, so did raised hearths. One of the modifications was the addition of a *suppenherd*, or soup hearth. According to William Woys Weaver, "Soupmaking became a central feature of southern German cookery because raised hearths were particularly well adapted for gentle boil-



Jost Amman's 16th-century illustrations of occupations and trades include a potter making cooking pots very similar to those found among the Pennsylvania Germans.

ing. Apertures could be made in the hearth surface, and cooking vessels could be set in them, with hot coals underneath. This arrangement produced a more even cooking temperature than the "English" method of piling hot coals around the base of a kettle."¹⁴

Frequently built beside or separate from the main cooking hearth, the soup hearth had a round, deep opening in its surface. Hot coals were placed in the bottom of this depression and the cooking pot was placed in the hole over the coals.¹⁵ In the 1790s the Count of Rumford introduced his new ideas about the conserva-

tion of fuel by using a mass of brickwork like a raised hearth, but with eight copper boilers set in the surface. The boilers were heated by canals which led the heat from a single fire in an oval-shaped fireplace with an ash pit below. The fire was fed through a specially designed door. Some raised hearths were modified to have one area where a fire was under a portion of the hearth surface and fueled through doors.¹⁶

Over the years, variations on closed-fireplace methods led to furnace-like cooking areas which were a transition between the raised hearth and the large iron cookstove which was popular later in the 19th century. These were *castrolherds* or "casserole" hearths, which came into use among the upper classes in the 18th century. A cast-iron plate with holes in it was supported by stones on either side, and the smoke from the fire underneath the plate was directed out a chimney. Pots and pans were set into the holes.¹⁷

As cooking progressed to large iron cookstoves, many of the raised hearths were destroyed entirely, since there was no longer a use for them. This was not difficult since most were simply built on top of the kitchen floor under smoke cowls. One 19th-century hearth in the Mosel region consisted of several columnar stones with a flat cooking surface laid over them. In this case the entire arrangement could easily be removed, leaving no evidence of the raised hearth.¹⁸

Down hearths were more commonly used than raised hearths in some areas of Germany. This was the case in the Mosel Valley. There the hearths were raised only a few inches, if at all. However, these hearths had smoke cowls rather than jambed fireplaces. Thus the hearth floor and the cowl projected from the wall into the room with no sides to the fireplace area. The 19th-century hearth in the Mosel Valley mentioned in the preceding paragraph had this appearance once the columnar stones and cooking surface were removed.¹⁹ But such down hearths appear to have been the exception rather than the rule in Germanic areas. Down-hearth cooking was much more within the English tradition than the German tradition.

ENGLISH HEARTH TRADITIONS

While the Romans did occupy the British Isles, their influence upon the native peoples there was not nearly so great as it was upon the Germanic peoples. After the Romans left, the British simply continued their practice of building fires on a beaten-earth floor if they were poor, and in the center of a Great Hall (without benefit of a chimney) if they were of the nobility. According to one English historian: "Early cooking in an Englishman's home was more akin to an army field kitchen than to a cosy dinner for a few well-chosen guests. Since there was no shortage of wood to encourage more delicate methods of cooking, fires were large and fierce and prevented the cooks from approaching close enough to

do more than haul out the meat from seething pot or turning spit."²⁰

After the British began using a special room for cooking, or built a separate outbuilding for that purpose, they continued to use a central open-hearth area with vents in the ceiling above. Eventually those who built stone houses moved their fires against a wall in order to better direct the smoke toward the ceiling. The use of a smoke cowl or hood to improve the process by funneling the smoke into a hole in the wall soon followed. To aid in drafting the smoke, jambs were placed on either side of the hearth. This led to the jambed, down-hearth fireplace. Over time these types of fireplaces supplanted the central fire which vented through the roof. Large fire dogs and various types of roasting spits were commonly used to cook meats over the blazing fires which were traditional in English cooking. This contrasted with medieval Germanic and Continental cooking which used smaller fires on raised hearths. While both British and Continental cooks used braziers and spits, those on the Continent were usually smaller because of the smaller fires.²¹

By the latter 1500s, shortages of wood in some areas and an interest on the part of the wealthy in more delicate foods (prepared in copper pans over small fires) did bring about the use of Continental raised hearths in some parts of England. However, the raised hearth never became popular in Britain to the degree that it did on the Continent and, where timber was abundant, traditional, large down-hearth fires continued in use. As England moved into the 17th century, areas with shortages of wood started using coal for heating fuel. This practice became particularly common in the cities, where coal-burning fireplaces moved into the parlor and the wood-burning fireplace continued to be used in the kitchen for cooking, since coal was an undesirable cooking fuel. The adoption of coal for heating fuel enabled the British to continue cooking with the large down-hearth fires which they had traditionally used. This contrasts with the Germans, who used the kitchen fireplace as access to the heating stove that warmed their *stube*, using the same fuel for each. Since coal was not an acceptable cooking fuel, nor was it readily available, the Germans continued to use wood for heating as well as for cooking.

Thus the Germans took the various fuel conservation measures described earlier, rather than making major changes in their heating technology as did the British. As late as 1843 an American traveling in Germany remarked: "Nothing but the absence of coals and the dearness of wood are the real causes of the use of stoves. In Germany, coal is uncommon and wood is generally as dear as coal in London."²²

In some British homes the kitchen fireplace hearth was raised a minimal amount between the jambs, frequently only six to eight inches. This "raised" hearth

did not have a cooking or fuel conservation function like the German raised hearth, and was probably more related to ease of cleaning or maintenance. In this respect it is comparable to the raised fireplace hearth areas found in 20th-century construction. This type of hearth was built by some English settlers or their descendants in Pennsylvania. Good examples of this hearth type were recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey in the Harrison Lloyd House at Hopewell Village, and in a Boone house near Stonersville, both in Berks County. Some historians have referred to these hearths as raised hearths, and in researching the raised-hearth tradition of Pennsylvania several promising leads turned out to be “red herrings” of this type.²³

As currently restored,* the kitchen fireplace hearth in the 1719 Herr House is raised above the kitchen floor about three inches. This raised appearance is created by several large flagstones laid upright and extending between the two fireplace jambs. Their minimal height suggests that the flagstones existed primarily to delineate between the kitchen floor and the hearth area. The fact that they may have been around three inches higher than the floor relates to neither the English practice noted above, nor to the German raised hearth.

Thus the English settlers who came to Pennsylvania built their kitchen fireplaces on the ends of their houses rather than in the center. They typically built jambed fireplaces with down hearths. It was also within their tradition to use large wood fires for heating and cooking unless there was a wood shortage. By the 18th century the English arrived with a background of using coal for heating fuel and wood for cooking fuel. In this respect they differed from the Germans, who used wood for both. But when they came to Pennsylvania, where wood was more easily obtained than coal, the English reverted to their earlier woodburning practices. Since the abundance or lack of coal was of no concern to them, the Germans appear to have continued their patterns of wood use at first. There is ample evidence that they did maintain their heating-stove traditions during a good part of the 18th century. But how long, if at all, did they use the raised hearth which was so closely linked to the heating stove back in Europe?

PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN HEARTH TRADITIONS

No extant raised hearths of the types already described as in use in Germany have been found in Pennsylvania. The only “raised hearths” still extant here are the low six- to eight-inch down hearths already mentioned as an English form. The hearth areas closest in form to the traditional Germanic raised hearth can be found at the Ephrata Cloister. While they include a *suppenherd* arrangement with a soup or stew pot, the

*After this was written, a raised hearth was reconstructed in the Herr House. See the accompanying “The Hearth is Where the Cook Is.”



The smoke cowl over the hearth in this fireplace at the Ephrata Cloister is medieval in origin, although the hearth surface is almost floor level.

Ephrata hearths, at eight to twelve inches high, appear to represent a lowering of the raised hearth in the direction of the raised down hearth of the English, a change from the raised hearths illustrated in 17th- and 18th-century German engravings.

It is not surprising that no Germanic raised hearths remain in Pennsylvania. After all, few original raised hearths remain in Germany. Much of what is known about the raised hearth in Germany comes from period illustrations from the 1500s through the 1800s. If raised hearths were once used in Pennsylvania, they are no longer present because of major changes in cooking and heating technology over the past two centuries. There are few unaltered Pennsylvania-German kitchen fireplaces remaining from the 18th century either. For example, William Richardson, writing for the *Pennsylvania German Society Proceedings and Addresses* in 1904, noted that woodboxes were used with “a great fire-place, long since boarded up, because of the introduction of the modern cookstove.”²⁴

While there are no remaining raised hearths in 18th-century Pennsylvania-German houses today, other sources of information about raised hearths are available. Journal accounts offer the unique opportunity of providing eyewitness reports about the life and culture of the Pennsylvania Germans. Of these, the best and only direct reference to a raised hearth being used in Pennsylvania was made by one Anne Royall in 1829. She wrote about visiting a German tavern near Lehigh-ton: “After resting myself by the kitchen fire, admiring the neatness and ingenuity of the cooking establishment (the hearths of a German kitchen are raised above the floor some feet, so that the cooks may not have to stoop over the fire) I walked into a large stove-room.”²⁵



Raised hearth in farmhouse in North Friesland. The jamb and lintel make this fireplace similar to those found in Pennsylvania. This scene was painted by Carl Ludwig Jessen in 1863.

The year that Royall saw the raised hearth is of some interest because it is comparatively late. One would expect the German tradition to have been on its way out in 1829, since by that time some significant changes had occurred in heating and cooking technology. The presence of a raised hearth at such a late date suggests the tradition may have been more entrenched than has been acknowledged. Unfortunately, no other journal accounts, diaries, or other primary sources from the 18th or 19th centuries have been found which make such direct reference to a raised hearth. Considering how few journal accounts exist about five-plate stoves, this should not be surprising. Yet while Rush, Schoepf, and Du Roi mention five-plate stoves they say nothing about raised hearths. Perhaps only a woman, who was concerned with cooking, would have taken notice of the hearth.

Several other accounts did make reference to *suppenherds*, specifically *suppenherds* used by the Moravians of Bethlehem. In 1782 the Marquis de Chastellux visited Bethlehem and wrote about the cooking arrangements in the “house for ‘single women’” or Sisters’ House: “The kitchen is not large, but it is clean and well ar-

ranged; you see there immense kettles placed on stoves, as in our hospitals.”²⁶ A different citation of Chastellux’s remarks refers to the kettles as “earthen pots” and the stoves as “furnaces.”²⁷ This discrepancy could be due to differences in translation. Two years later *The Boston Magazine* had an article on Bethlehem where the kitchen of the Sisters’ House was described as “perfectly cool, clean and neat, a number of coppers built in brick, serve to dress each day’s provisions, which are either boiled or baked, roast dishes I found they were utter strangers to.”²⁸ In 1793, Harriott Horry of South Carolina visited the Moravians in Bethlehem and observed about the Sisters’ House: “The Kitchin is very well calculated for dressing a quantity of victuals which is dressed by only two women for 130 Sisters, but it is all either boiled or baked. The Oven is in the Kitchin and very large, and six Iron Kettles for boiling are set in brick work.”²⁹

The above references all describe a specific kitchen area used by the Moravian Sisters. That kitchen was located in the Sisters’ House Annex, built after 1771. Today, while the Annex is still standing, the kitchen has been bricked up. However, the original 1771 plan still remains. Drawn in both floor plan and elevation form, the kitchen indeed includes the *suppenherd* arrangement with the kettles mentioned above. As shown in the floor plan, the *suppenherd* projected outward several feet from a hearth/chimney area. The elevation shows two cooking kettles set into the *suppenherd*, as described by Harriet Horry. Given the size of the *suppenherd*, there were probably two more sets of kettles behind them, giving a total of six. The elevation shows a bake oven, fed from the adjoining room, to the right of the *suppenherd*. Both the bake oven and the *suppenherd* vent into a ten-foot-wide, arched fireplace opening. While the *suppenherd* area occupies around four and one-half feet of the opening, the other five and one-half feet are occupied by a raised continuation of the *suppenherd* which is two feet, three inches high and two feet, six inches deep. This platform or table has an arched area underneath it, presumably for the storage of fuel. Since this raised continuation of the *suppenherd* is located within the fireplace area, presumably where smoke would be rising from the *suppenherd* and bake oven, it is not a work table. It is a raised hearth.³⁰

The hearth area in the Sisters’ House Annex was similar to a hearth area still remaining in the Single Brothers’ House at Old Salem in North Carolina. That fireplace has a bake oven to the right of the raised hearth. The *suppenherd* is located to the left of the raised hearth and, like the bake oven, vents into the chimney shared with the raised hearth. The hearth is raised a bit less than two feet, and has no storage arch beneath it. In addition to this raised hearth, Old Salem also had potters who made earthen cookware which was suited for raised-hearth cooking.



The Moravian potters of North Carolina made earthenware frying pans and cooking pots which were very similar to those in this German woodcut of 1533. Cooking pots found in Pennsylvania are usually missing their lids.

Archeological excavations at Old Salem have yielded a number of fragments of pottery made by various potters among the Moravians of the settlement. Significant among them are clay vessels of the type used with raised hearths—a clay skillet with short feet, and handled cooking pots which were placed on a raised hearth or in a heating stove to simmer. Inventories in Old Salem also included “saucepans” which may have been footed clay vessels similar to those used on raised hearths in Germany. While the cost of importing ironware from the northern colonies meant more earthenware was made and used in North Carolina than in Pennsylvania, Germans in the latter colony also used a good deal of it.³¹

Among the Pennsylvania Germans one commonly finds cooking pots similar to those found in Old Salem and pictured in association with raised hearths in Germany. The style was not confined to North Carolina or to the Moravians; the Hans Herr House has three of these cooking pots (sometimes incorrectly called apple-butter pots) in its collection. They are usually fairly deep, with only an inside glaze and a single looped handle near the lip of the opening. The carbon deposits on the bottoms and sides of these redware pots indicate they were used for cooking rather than for storage. Shards from similar pots have been found around the 1719 Herr House, and the 1835 German/Georgian-style house near it. Indeed, shards from these cooking pots are found in great abundance at 18th- and early 19th-century Pennsylvania-German home sites, and the pots can also be found at area auctions and antique shops. While these pots could also have been used on a down hearth, they were best suited for use over the small fires often associated with the Germanic raised hearth. They would not have withstood very well the heat from the large English fires used on down hearths. Furthermore, it was the German tradition to use them on a raised hearth.

When the several eyewitness accounts of the Bethlehem Sisters’ House Annex kitchen are compared with the annex plans it is clear that while the observers mentioned the *suppenherd*, probably because it seemed innovative, not one mentioned the presence of a raised hearth. Even Harriott Horry, a woman who made extensive observations about foodways in her diary and even compiled a recipe book, made no mention of the raised hearth. Yet the 1771 plan for the kitchen shows the hearth was indeed present. As already mentioned, raised hearths may not have been considered unusual or important enough to describe. The lack of eyewitness descriptions of such hearths does not disprove their presence among the Pennsylvania Germans.

Much of the remaining evidence of Pennsylvania-German raised hearths comes from the German communal groups of Bethlehem and Ephrata. Since raised-hearth cooking and the *suppenherd* were not limited to communal situations in Europe, this is probably due more to the conservative nature of such orders than to any unique style of cooking on their part. As with Bethlehem, 18th-century visitors to the Ephrata Cloister did describe the community and its peculiarities, but again there are no period accounts describing their hearth areas. Fortunately, several of the original cooking fireplaces, with their partially raised hearths and *suppenherds*, still exist.

The Cloister hearths, located in the Sisters’ House, date to the early 1740s. There are several, although only three appear to have functioned as cooking areas. Of these, two hearths present the Germanic details associated with raised hearths. On the second floor is a jamb-type fireplace with a hearth that is only raised



Redware cooking pots of this type are frequently found in Pennsylvania-German areas. They were commonly used on raised hearths in Germany.

around eight inches. However, a *suppenherd* is placed on that hearth within the fireplace confine, making it more closely approximate the German style than the English. On the third floor is the other fireplace, which utilizes two jambs with a smoke cowl arrangement above. This fireplace is unusual in its L-shaped appearance and, like that on the second floor, it has a hearth raised about eight inches. However, the cowl and the access hole to a heating stove are definitely Germanic. The Ephrata hearths do not reflect the strict Germanic raised-hearth tradition, but are a mixture of different German, and perhaps English, elements. In this respect they may even be transitional in nature.

While there are no period accounts describing the Ephrata hearths, early Pennsylvania-German historians did make some pertinent observations. In his article on Pennsylvania-German colonial architecture, G. Edwin Brumbaugh referred to the "curious European design" of the fireplaces.³² H.K. Landis, writing about the early kitchens of the Pennsylvania Germans, stated that "these Cloister buildings were erected early, and the fireplaces show European influence."³³

Neither Brumbaugh nor Landis made specific reference to any other raised hearths encountered during their research, although both appear to have been aware of the European raised-hearth tradition. It is probable that at the time Landis and Brumbaugh were doing their research the only remaining raised hearths were those at the Cloister. Henry Landis in particular sketched out an imaginative scenario about the origin and demise of the raised hearth: "One can easily visualize the central stone bed for the campfire; in time this became high enough to sit upon, then waist high, with an arch beneath for firewood or charcoal. Then, the hole in the house roof was replaced by a light chimney, with hood above the fire to catch the smoke. The next step was to move this entire outfit to the side wall. The hood was fastened to the wall and flared outward; then was supported by a bracket at the jamb; then by a side wall, and the height of the hearth itself receded to the floor. Thus they developed the open fireplace."³⁴

Landis insinuated that this scenario occurred in Pennsylvania, starting the next sentence with the statement, "About the same time in Germany . . ." He then went on to explore the impact of the iron stove on the German tradition of using tile stoves, eventually citing the iron cookstove as contributing to the demise of the open fireplace. The overall impression left by Landis is that raised hearths were used in early Pennsylvania-German colonial architecture.³⁵

Unfortunately, the sources for Landis's assertion about raised hearths and the open fireplace are not cited. He may have based it on oral traditions, since the Cloister hearths were the only European-style hearths referred to by him in the article. And they, in fact, were lower than the traditional raised hearth.³⁶



This hearth in the Sisters' House at the Ephrata Cloister is raised only slightly. There is a large suppenherd, or soup hearth, in the right-hand portion of the fireplace.

The *suppenherd* was clearly used at Ephrata and by the Moravians, and there is other evidence that *suppenherds* were comparatively common. In 1825, J.F. Watson observed that "the cooking by Pennsylvania kitchens or *furnaces* are conducted without smoke as they only boil or stew."³⁷ This observation probably refers to *suppenherds* as it pre-dates the general use of butchering furnaces. A nice transitional *suppenherd*/butchering furnace dating to just after the mid-19th century can be seen at the Downing House in Downingtown. Since the raised hearth was both a forerunner and an accompaniment to the *suppenherd*, evidence of *suppenherds* in Pennsylvania does indicate the presence of a raised-hearth tradition. After all, the *suppenherds* among the Moravians and at the Ephrata Cloister did not stand alone, but utilized raised hearths for those tasks which did not involve boiling kettles.

It was the advent of iron cooking stoves during the 19th century that changed the nature of the *suppenherd*, and may have resulted in the demise of raised hearths. With the iron cookstove in the house, the *suppenherd* moved to an outbuilding such as a summer kitchen, or into a wing of the house, and was modified to become the familiar butchering furnace. The earliest iron stoves used regularly for cooking, ten-plate stoves, were often placed in the fireplace so they could vent up the chimney. Harriott Horry observed such a ten-plate stove in use in Jenkintown in 1793: "In the Kitchin just within the hearth is fixed a stove which is called a ten-plate stove in which Mrs. Moore told me she roasts every thing. There was also one of these kind of stoves in the parlour and I observed several of them in the private houses in Bethlehem."³⁸



Butchering furnace photographed by HABS in 1958 in the Bertolet cabin. Today no trace of this furnace remains in the cabin, now at the Daniel Boone Homestead.

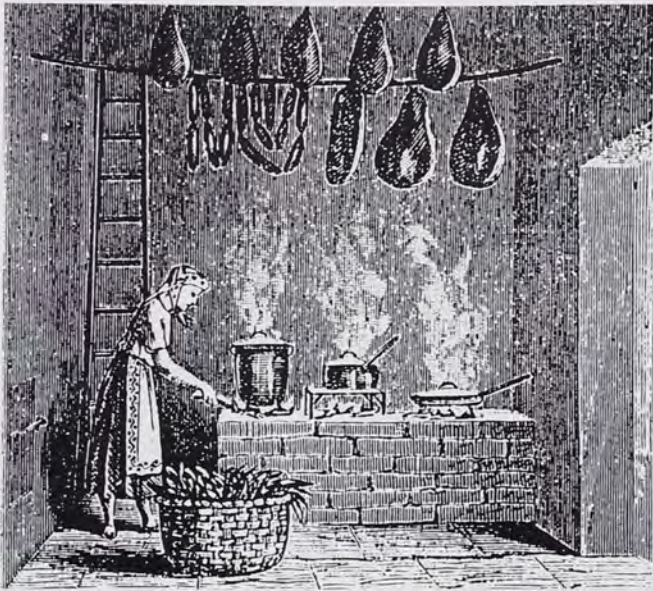
It is probably the iron stove which explains the utter lack of extant raised hearths in Pennsylvania today. One writer recently observed in *Pennsylvania Folklife*, "the cast-iron stove simply replaced the traditional central fireplace, or hearth, in the Continental house type, creating in the process a new vernacular and distinctly Pennsylvania German architectural form."³⁹ If a fireplace originally had a raised hearth, the use of the ten-plate stove as observed in Jenkintown by Harriott Horry would have necessitated its removal. Yet down-hearth cooking would still have been possible. According to Henry Mercer, the ten-plate stove observed by Horry, even though it was used for doing some cooking, did not completely supersede the hearth fire. That did not occur until after the cooking range was introduced. Mercer wrote in the 1920s: "But before 1846, open fire cooking had stopped, cook stoves had been introduced, and the ancestral hearth masked with the usual winged doors." According to Mercer's observations, hearth cooking in general came into disuse after the introduction of the iron cookstove in the 1840s. In some Pennsylvania-German colonial houses the central fireplace was removed altogether; in others, fireplaces were altered to accommodate iron stoves. In those cases where a newer house was built, the older home sometimes became an outbuilding and a large butchering furnace was placed in the fireplace. As with the use of a ten-plate stove in a fireplace, the stove or furnace would not fit without removing any pre-existing raised hearth.⁴⁰

The Bertolet cabin, now at the Daniel Boone Homestead in Birdsboro, Pa., provides a good example of how fireplace areas changed over time. The large butcher furnace present in a Historic American Building Survey photo taken in 1958 was represented by only a small broken square of bricks by 1972. Today there is no evidence that a butcher furnace ever existed in the fireplace.

When Henry Mercer did his research on the earlier five-plate stove, used in association with a central chimney, he saw a number of houses which had such stoves at one time. But, as in the 1719 Herr House, the stoves were gone and all that remained to indicate their previous presence were openings (which had often been filled) in the backs of the fireplaces. Unlike the five-plate stove opening, a raised hearth could be removed with very little evidence remaining of its former presence. Most of the marks left by removing the hearth would be largely superficial and easily covered in the course of remodeling during the years intervening between the first half of the 19th century and today.

A RAISED-HEARTH TRADITION IN KANSAS

A parallel to the Pennsylvania-German cultural area can be found in Kansas among that state's German-Russian Mennonite population. Like the Pennsylvania Germans, these people left Germany at a time when raised hearths were still in use and settled in a completely new environment; in this case the Russian Ukraine. Within that environment their German folk-



A Kansas Mennonite hearth described in the December, 1878 issue of the American Agriculturist as "merely a block of adobe or masonry, two feet high, built in the base of the ordinary style of chimney."

ways were both preserved and altered in ways that were different from their homeland. Then, in 1874 they began moving to the American Great Plains. There, their curious cultural traits invited scrutiny by surrounding Americans, and the reports written by several of these observers describe an architectural and cooking culture remarkably similar to that of 18th-century Germany and Pennsylvania.

An article in 1878 in the *American Agriculturist*, for example, includes a three-room floor plan of a Kansas Mennonite house which follows the central-chimney *flurküchenhaus* pattern often found in early 18th-century Pennsylvania-German houses. Unfortunately the plan does not show where the entrance to the house was located. Yet what the plan calls the living room is clearly a *stube*, with a heating stove projecting out of the back of the kitchen fireplace. Like the large fireplaces of the Pennsylvania Germans, the fireplaces of the Kansas Mennonites were big enough to walk into, and fulfilled a variety of functions.⁴¹

The stove used in the Kansas-Mennonite *stube* was quite different from the stoves used in Germany or by the Pennsylvania Germans, a result of the nearly one-hundred-year sojourn in Russia. They varied in size according to the house. An 1877 pamphlet described one as being five feet long, six feet high, and two and one-half feet wide. Much of that was the passage through which the smoke traveled and a heat chamber which trapped the heat of the smoke. The firebox itself was about four feet long and had a height and width of around one and one-half feet. In Russia and on the Great Plains the Mennonites used it to burn hay and straw. Like the iron five-plate stove, it used radiant heat

and was so efficient it only needed small quantities of fuel. It was, basically, a more complicated and more efficient descendant of the heating stoves found in German *stubes* and, like them, was fueled from a kitchen fireplace. There, one observer wrote, "instead of the American cast-iron cooking stove one finds the Russian brickstove with the wide German chimney, used for smoking meat and sausage."⁴²

The article in the *American Agriculturist* illustrated and described this cooking hearth and its placement: "The cooking place and doors of the straw stove that heats the building, are all in the base of the chimney, which is eight feet square, with a stone floor; the walls are vertical for about eight feet, when they are gradually brought in, reducing the interior of the chimney to about twelve inches at the comb of the roof . . . The upper portion of the chimney is the family smoke-house . . . On one side of the base is a large cauldron, for wash days, set in a furnace of adobe or sun-dried bricks; on the other side the cooking-range, also of adobe; having a sheet-iron top, with holes cut for the pots and kettles."⁴³

This Kansas-Mennonite "brickstove" was clearly similar to the *castrolherd* or casserole hearth described earlier in the section on the German raised-hearth tradition. Like the *castrolherd*, it grew out of a raised-hearth tradition. Vestiges of that tradition remained among some of the Kansas Mennonites as further described in the article: "The most primitive cooking arrangement was seen in Harvey Co., it being a "hearth" like that in figure 4. This is merely a block of adobe or masonry, two feet high, built in the base of the ordinary style of chimney. The cooking is done on this by building a fire with straw or corn-cobs under each cooking vessel."⁴⁴

The primitive cooking arrangement described by the *American Agriculturist* article was clearly a raised hearth. The vessels used for cooking on the hearth could have been made of iron or earthenware, but they resemble those made by the 18th-century Moravians in Salem and those illustrated in early German woodcuts. The hearth was set in "the base of the ordinary style of chimney." In other words, the raised hearth was in a jambed fireplace like those used earlier by the Pennsylvania Germans.

These Kansas cooking hearths had their roots in the German raised hearth and, like the Pennsylvania-German hearth, went through changes far removed from the parent Germanic culture. Also like the Pennsylvania Germans, the German-Russians used jambed fireplace areas rather than open fire areas with smoke cowls. However, where the Pennsylvania Germans developed an iron-stove technology for both heating and cooking which eventually led them to abandon the walk-in fireplace, the German-Russians developed a brickstove technology (for both heating and cooking) which continued to use their jambed, walk-in fireplaces. Is it pos-

sible that had the Pennsylvania Germans not had such ready access to iron, they might have continued to use the raised hearth as the Mennonites did in Russia?

The centrally placed, brick hay-burning stoves, raised hearths, and *castrolherds* of the Kansas Mennonites were soon abandoned in favor of the iron cookstoves popular in the United States. While evidence still remains of the hay-burning stoves (like the five-plate stoves of Pennsylvania) no extant raised hearths survived. If Kansas raised hearths could be so easily eradicated between 1874 and the present, it is not surprising that no 18th-century raised hearths can be found in Pennsylvania.

RAISED-HEARTH EVIDENCE IN PENNSYLVANIA TODAY

When a five-plate stove was removed from a central fireplace the opening was frequently filled with stones. Yet a few houses had openings remaining to indicate such stoves were used. There were also a number of accounts describing the stoves, perhaps due to their uniqueness to the English, who were accustomed to using fireplaces for heating. With this background, the careful architectural historian can find evidence of five-plate stove use even when the opening has been filled. Similarly, there are clues, although less obvious, which can be sought out to determine the original presence of a raised hearth.

While the removal of a raised hearth would leave superficial marks, such marks may not always have been re-plastered. In 1977 the Reber Farm in Berks County was demolished in the creation of Blue Marsh Lake. At that time the farm was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey. One of the buildings on the farm, built around 1835, had a fireplace in one corner. This had the folding wooden doors often placed over fireplaces after they were no longer being used. A photograph taken by HABS in 1977 shows a definite mark within the fireplace at the height of around two feet above floor level. The mortar and stones above that mark are in comparatively better condition than those below it.

It is possible that a raised hearth was built into the fireplace at one time and then removed, with the removal process damaging the stone and mortar. It is also possible that a butchering furnace was built into the fireplace at one time and later removed. However, if Henry Mercer is to be believed, the folding wooden doors came soon after fireplaces fell into disuse. Butchering furnaces appear to have been more commonly used in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It seems unlikely that wooden doors would have been left on the fireplace if it was later retro-fitted with a butchering furnace. It is also unlikely that they would have been added after removing a butcher furnace, since those furnaces were used well into the 20th century.

Very similar marks remained in the fireplace of the summer kitchen of the Heck-Stamm-Unger Farm, also demolished in 1977 to make way for Blue Marsh Lake. The main house of the farm dated to the 18th century and at one time had a central fireplace which may have been removed around 1830. The summer kitchen was not dated by the Historic American Building Survey but appeared (in the HABS photographs) to be as old as, or older than, several other buildings dating to 1860. The marks were probably not left by a butchering furnace because a butcher's shed containing a furnace was built in 1920. Why would another structure and furnace be built if the summer kitchen had a furnace in it already? Thus it is possible that the marks were left by a raised hearth.

But since there are other explanations (such as the presence of a butchering furnace) which can account for marks in fireplace areas, less disputable evidence of their presence must be found. In houses where the fireplace interior has not been re-plastered, that evidence may be presented by smoke channels. In some houses such a channel was left in the back wall of the fireplace to help direct smoke up the chimney. If a house had a raised hearth, the smoke channel would start at a higher point than if it did not.

One of the better examples of a smoke channel can be found in the Antes House. Located off of Pennsylvania Route 73 west of Zieglersville in Montgomery County, the Antes House was built in 1735 by the Antes family, German immigrants involved with the Moravians. The house has gone through several owners who have changed the fireplace area, but is currently owned by the Goschenhoppen Historians, who are hoping to restore it. Today all that remains of the first-floor kitchen fireplace is the back wall and one of the jambs with a portion of the original lintel in it. At some point a doorway was opened through the back wall of the fireplace between the kitchen and the room on the other side of the fireplace. The floor of the kitchen was altered as well.

Despite all of these changes, a portion of the original smoke channel remains. The smoke channel is between one and two inches deep, and contains carbon deposits from the smoke. It is located to the left of the heating stove opening. The Antes House may have had a masonry or tile stove, since the distance between the main-stove opening and the smoke vent above it is greater than that spanned by the iron five-plate stoves of the period. The smoke channel begins about one and one-half feet above the base of the stove opening, which is itself about one foot higher than the original kitchen floor (the floor level is indicated by marks in the one remaining jamb and by the other floors in the house). This means the channel begins about two and one-half feet above the kitchen floor, a fairly common height for a Germanic raised hearth. Since the door was cut through

Kitchen fireplace in the ca. 1735 Antes House. The arrows indicate the smoke channel; note the relationship of the smoke channel to the stove opening.



the back of the fireplace a portion of the smoke channel is missing, but it appears as though the channel was originally around five feet wide, beginning about one foot to the left of the stove opening and extending to the jamb.

The jamb itself has a mark at the height where the smoke channel begins on the back of the fireplace. Above the mark the jamb still has mortar which was painted red at one time. Below the mark there is no mortar but simply the bare stone of the jamb. Similarly, the mortar is missing below the smoke channel but not within it, and the mortar still remains in the area of the stove opening. These missing areas of mortar form an outline very much like a raised hearth. The placement of the smoke channel in relation to the stove opening indicates that the fireplace had a floor-level hearth surface extending between the two jambs, with a raised hearth insert approximately two and one-half feet high, five feet wide, and two and one-half feet deep (the depth of the jamb). Since the stove opening was only one foot above the floor level, this raised hearth did not extend through the entire fireplace.

A central-chimney log house in Adams County near Hanover, Pennsylvania, also had a smoke channel in the fireplace. As in the Antes House, the channel originated a couple of feet above floor level, but in this house it was set to the center of the fireplace, which was a good deal smaller than the fireplace in the Antes House. Just below the channel and extending across the entire back of the fireplace was a ledge. On one end of the ledge the left-hand jamb had a built-in bake oven, and on the other end of the ledge a fire crane sat in the corner formed by the right-hand jamb. The bottom of



Right-hand corner of fireplace in the Adams County log house. Top arrow indicates position of the iron ring which supported a wooden crane. The lower arrows indicate the two foot high ledge running along the back wall and the right jamb.

The smoke channel and ledge in this Adams County log house suggest the previous existence of a raised hearth. But, as in so many Pennsylvania-German buildings, the fireplace has since been removed.



the crane was set in a stone in the ledge and was supported by an iron ring. Since such a ledge has no logical use in a down-hearth situation, it is possible it is evidence of a raised hearth which was removed. From a photograph taken of the fireplace, the height of the ledge appears to be around two feet. Like the Antes House, this house had evidence of a stove opening. Unfortunately, detailed research on the fireplace is no longer possible, since it was destroyed when the house was moved during the 1980s.⁴⁵

Since the central fireplace with a heating-stove opening was commonly linked in Germanic tradition with a raised-hearth cooking area, a stove opening in a Pennsylvania-German house could be the initial clue in determining whether that house had a raised hearth. Just as the opening in the back of a centrally placed fireplace indicates the early presence of a heating stove, a smoke channel in the chimney might further show the house once had a raised hearth.

Wooden fire cranes may also indicate the previous use of raised hearths. Fire cranes were a part of both the English down-hearth tradition and the German raised-hearth tradition. However, wooden fire cranes appear to figure more in the German tradition than in the English. The remaining wooden fire cranes in Pennsylvania, found mostly in German homes, work differently than those made of iron or steel. The metal cranes were placed either in a back corner of the fireplace or near the front of one of the jambs. Some were nearly as long as the fireplace was wide and would swing out of the fireplace. This allowed the cook to remove pots without interference from the large fire. But the wooden cranes in the Martin's Corner House in Chester County (a log building erected c. 1769) and those in the 1719 Herr

House are placed too high and do not swing out of the fireplace. There is no structural explanation for this, since wood certainly swivels as well as steel. But if a fireplace had a raised hearth there was no need to swivel the pots out of the cooking area, since the cooking fires were relatively small. Instead, the crane would be used with a trammel or pot hooks to adjust the height of a pot over a given fire, but not used to swivel the pot out of the fireplace itself.

In his early research on Pennsylvania-German kitchens Henry Landis drew a connection between wooden fire cranes and raised hearths, although he did not name any specific buildings. He specifically linked them to the use of fat lamps for lighting within a fireplace: "The earlier fireplaces had a wooden crane to carry the fat lamp (*fett omshel*); and the kitchen also had a very long wooden crane near the ceiling from which hung fat lamps by wooden trammels made on the saw-tooth design. Where there was a central raised wood-burning hearth these lighting cranes were quite convenient, but they were not in general use in the Colonies."⁴⁶ Again, even though he states it was not in general use, Landis refers to the raised hearth in the context of Pennsylvania.

If the wooden cranes were indeed used to support fat lamps, they would have something on them from which a fat lamp or a fat-lamp trammel could be hung. Indeed, the Martin's Corner House and the 1719 Herr House both have a nail driven into the crane at the same level as the fireplace lintel. This nail would support a fat lamp or a fat-lamp trammel, but would not be strong enough to hold something as heavy as a pot.

Pennsylvania-German houses which had raised hearths may have had a special chimney design best

suiting for a raised-hearth situation. This is suggested by the experience of the Fairmount Park Commission with the Wilhelm Rittenhouse dwelling in Germantown. When the house was restored in 1976 the restoration architect hired for the job by the Fairmount Park Commission determined that an existing raised hearth in the house was not original. That hearth was more like the English raised down hearth in that it stood only around five to seven inches high and filled the entire fireplace. Since whitewash and carbon were found behind and underneath the hearth it was removed. The base of the fireplace hearth area under the raised portion proved to be flagstone.

Photographs of the fireplace done before restoration show a left fireplace jamb which is of brick, a right jamb which appears to be both brick and stone, and a back wall which appears to be of stone. While the restoration architect assumed that the brick was original, this is questionable since the back wall was of stone. Since it is a central-chimney house with a stove opening in the back wall, there is ample reason to believe that the original fireplace was in fact made entirely of stone. When one considers that the portion of the house containing the fireplace was built in 1705 and an early, Georgian-style addition was attached behind the fireplace in 1713, it is very possible that the fireplace was first altered as early as 1713. It was again altered in the late 19th or early 20th century when a coal heater was placed in the proximity of the fireplace. And it was finally altered in the course of the 1976 restoration. There may have been other alterations as well, including the addition of the five to seven inch high hearth that was removed in 1976. While the flagstone hearth area was judged by the architect to be original, it could still have had a Germanic raised hearth placed on top of it at one time. Since such a hearth could be as easily removed as the five to seven inch high hearth was at restoration, no physical evidence of a Germanic raised hearth would remain.

After the Park Commission restored the house with a floor-level hearth, they began to use the fireplace for cooking demonstrations. Immediately they had trouble getting a suitable draft in the chimney; smoke from the fires tended to come into the room, a situation aggravated by the fact that the fireplace did not use a horizontal wood lintel, but had an arch. Over time they experimented with raising the fires on a built-up grate to see if the draft was improved. And the draft did improve. Once the fires were raised close to two feet from the floor the smoke went up the chimney rather than into the room. Fairmount Park historian John McIlhenny had suggested the chimney was made incorrectly, thus necessitating the addition of the five to seven inch high hearth.⁴⁷ However, given the construction abilities, as well as the Germanic traditions, of the early Pennsylvania-German settlers, it is very likely that the chimney

was properly constructed, but intended to function with a raised hearth.

THE 1719 HERR HOUSE

Christian Herr arrived in Pennsylvania with a group of Mennonite families in 1710. Rather than staying in the Philadelphia area, as had earlier Mennonite immigrants, this group proceeded into the forest, becoming the first settlers of what later became Lancaster County. In 1719 Christian built a stone house, probably the first in that early community. The Germanic style of the house's floor plan and its architectural features show that, like the other first-generation immigrants observed by Du Roi, Schoepf, and Rush, Christian was little influenced by the surrounding English culture.

Christian's 1719 house was occupied by his descendants until the 1860s. From that time until it was restored in the early 1970s the house was not a residence and remained relatively unchanged; the hearth area was not remodeled, so any marks showing the earlier presence of a raised hearth were not destroyed. But when the house was restored in the early 1970s, the restorers were not aware of the raised-hearth tradition and simply replastered the fireplace interior. Because of this, little evidence to suggest an earlier raised hearth exists today. Fortunately, a number of photographs were taken in the early part of this century and also before restoration work began.

As one of the oldest remaining Germanic houses in Pennsylvania and a house which, because it was unoccupied after the 1860s, has experienced relatively little change, one would expect the 1719 Herr House to show evidence of a raised hearth, and it does. There is evidence of smoke channeling, if not an actual smoke channel; an original wooden fire crane remains; and down-hearth fires draw badly in its chimney.

There are many similarities between the Antes House fireplace and that of the 1719 Herr House. Both are relatively early stone buildings with central fireplaces and Germanic features throughout. Each has an opening in the right-hand portion of the fireplace which probably accommodated a masonry stove rather than a five-plate stove. Both have massive lintels, each of which has a diagonal cut in the fireplace side to help direct the smoke. While the 1719 Herr House does not appear to have had a smoke channel, a 1910 picture of its fireplace shows a very clear deposit of smoke carbon at about two feet above floor level, with no carbon deposits below.

As already mentioned, wooden fire cranes may have been connected with the use of raised hearths in the early Pennsylvania-German houses. The 1719 Herr House has a wooden crane which is set so high it does not swivel out of the fireplace. Certainly a lower crane of iron would have been more convenient when doing down-hearth cooking. However, for raised-hearth



The 1719 Herr House as it looked in 1910.

cooking the crane would be set higher because the hearth was higher and there would be no reason for the crane to swivel out of the fireplace because of the smaller fires associated with raised-hearth cooking. Furthermore, to reiterate Henry Landis: "The earlier fireplaces had a wooden crane to carry the fat lamp (*fett omshel*); and the kitchen also had a very long wooden crane near the ceiling from which hung fat lamps by wooden trammels made on the saw-tooth design. Where there was a central raised wood-burning hearth these lighting cranes were quite convenient."⁴⁸ The Herr House fire crane does have an old nail at just the right point to hang a fat lamp. Needless to say, with down-hearth cooking a fat lamp hanging from the crane would be virtually useless. With the small fires used on a raised hearth, the fat lamp would have functioned similarly to the lights found on range hoods today.

Finally, there is the chimney in the house. The particular construction of the chimney in the 1719 Herr House seems to prevent an effective draft if one does down-hearth cooking. Every Christmas the Hans Herr House Museum sponsors candlelight tours which include cooking in the fireplace. Invariably difficulties are experienced similar to those at the Rittenhouse homestead, where smoke enters the room rather than going up the chimney. On several occasions the museum has hung a heavy blanket over the top three feet of the fireplace opening to keep the smoke from pouring out under the lintel. If the fire were raised around two feet it is very possible that this problem with the chimney draft would be eliminated, as it was at the Rittenhouse Homestead.



A nail, driven into the diagonal brace of the fire crane in the Herr House, supported a fat lamp used to illuminate raised-hearth cooking.



The wooden fire crane in the 1719 Herr House did not swing out of the fireplace as did the iron or steel cranes used by the English. It served to support pots in position over the raised-hearth fires.



This ca. 1925 photograph of the kitchen fireplace in the Herr House shows a clear disturbance of the mortar on the left jamb and back wall near the fire crane, an area that would have been occupied by a raised hearth. The missing mortar to the right marks the original heating-stove opening.

An airtight case does not yet exist for the presence of a raised hearth in the 1719 Herr House. The missing plaster below the carbon deposits may have been weakened by repeated fires on the hearth and eventually fallen, rather than having come off when a raised hearth was removed. This would also tend to dispute the conclusion that the carbon deposits above originated from a raised hearth, since the carbon-covered plaster would have fallen. Such a circumstance would be conceivable if this were the only part of the fireplace that pointed to a raised-hearth presence at one time. However, the combination of evidence from the carbon deposits, the fire-crane placement, the poor draft of the fireplace, and historical tradition indicate that a raised hearth was probably used in the 1719 Herr House.

The type of raised hearth first utilized in the 1719 Herr House is suggested by the hearth space itself. The location of the stove opening precludes any raised area in the right-hand portion of the fireplace. Furthermore, the chimney opens to the outside directly above that portion of the hearth which becomes wet in heavy rains. Since this part of the hearth was used for access to the heating stove and had no fires on it, the rain falls harmlessly on the floor-level hearth and seeps through the bricks to the ground below. The mark on the fire crane and the height of the carbon deposits in the 1910 photograph suggest the height of the raised hearth: twenty-two inches, or nearly two feet above the brick hearth surface. Since the hearth surface is itself nearly four inches higher than the floor, that means the raised hearth would have been close to twenty-six inches above the floor level. The width of the hearth, nearly four feet, is also suggested by the carbon deposits. The depth of the hearth, three and one-half feet, is suggested by the



This detail of the ca. 1925 photo of the Herr House fireplace shows a mark on the fire crane support and carbon deposits on the back wall at the two foot height customarily occupied by a raised hearth.

area of deteriorated whitewashed plaster which was at the height of the mark on the crane support and which, as in the Antes House, extended the entire depth of the left jamb in another early picture of the fireplace.

The draft of a chimney, the smoke channel in the back of a fireplace, and the placement of a fire crane could all be indicators of raised hearth usage. More intensive research on each of these factors clearly needs to be done in the Pennsylvania-German cultural area. Some research may involve inspecting remaining 18th-century Pennsylvania-German houses. Unfortunately everything from remodeling to restoration (by restoration architects who were not aware of the raised-hearth tradition) of fireplaces during the 20th century has often destroyed even these shreds of evidence. More early photographs must be sought which, even though they probably will not show actual raised hearths, may show some of the above indicators prior to their destruction by either remodeling or restoration.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

When doing historical research on ethnic groups in America, one's orientation is very important. The interplay of different ethnic groups with each other and with the dominant culture has resulted in extensive hybridization of cultural characteristics. It is very easy to begin with mistaken assumptions based on a present affected by that hybridization, rather than on the actual past.

The popular idea that Pennsylvania German pioneer life was similar to pioneer life in the 19th century is not correct. This has happened in part because of the assumption, based at least partly on fact, that the Scots-Irish of Pennsylvania borrowed such forms as the log cabin from the Germans and then moved westward. It

The 1719 Herr House as presently restored. The German style of the house's floor plan and its architectural features show that like other first-generation immigrants observed by DuRoi, Schoepf, and Rush, Herr was little influenced by the surrounding English culture.



has also happened because some historians, such as Ellis and Evans in their 1883 *History of Lancaster County*, borrowed liberally from the American frontier experience of the 19th century to fill gaps in their knowledge about colonial settlement. Recently published research indicates that the “backwoods frontier” of westward expansion had its roots with the Swedes and Finns of the Delaware Valley, and had much less relationship to the Pennsylvania Germans than previously thought. For example, we know that the Germans did not use the large blazing fire of the Old West log cabin, but continued to use heating-stove methods brought from Europe. Early researchers such as Ellis and Evans made effective use of historical documents and oral histories in writing about the social history of the Pennsylvania Germans, but erred in their assumptions about the *material* history of the Pennsylvania Germans.⁴⁹

The mistake too commonly made is in reading history backward rather than forward. For example, people often assume the Mennonites were a liberal split from the Amish, since today the Amish are more conservative in outward forms. But the Amish were a split from the Mennonites. Similarly, it is a mistake to make assumptions about the 18th century based on the 19th century. If we read history backward from today it is easy to assume that the Pennsylvania Germans did not have raised hearths or even that they had only a few raised hearths, because no raised hearths are now in existence. But the fact that raised hearths cannot be found in Pennsylvania today does not mean they did not exist in the past. If we simply assume they did not exist we fail to acknowledge that changes occurred in hearth areas during the 19th century, and thus we prejudice our view of history.

If we read history forward, starting with German tra-

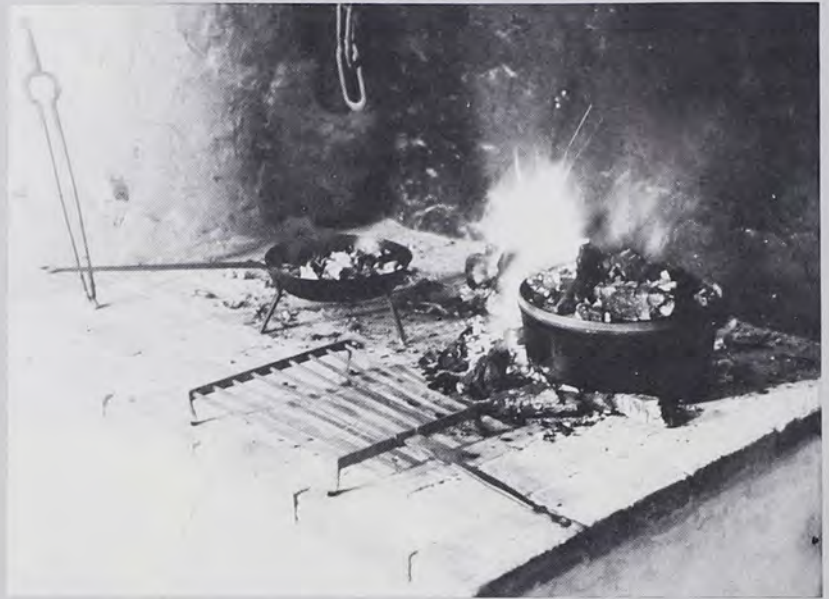
ditions and tracing those traditions to 18th-century America, we end up with different assumptions. The task is to approach the issue from a German immigrant’s perspective. For the German immigrant the raised hearth was the norm and the down hearth was the exception. The use of a jambed fireplace may even have been unusual to them. For these early immigrants the jambed fireplace could have been an innovation within which a traditional raised hearth was placed. Given this perspective the fact that the only mention of a raised hearth was made by Anne Royall in 1828 is not surprising. Prior to that time, the wealthier classes of the Continent and of England—who were the people writing journals—were acquainted with raised hearths. Thus the visitors to the Moravians in Bethlehem remarked on the *suppenherd*, which was a new innovation to them, but said nothing about the raised hearth, with which they were familiar.

If we read history forward rather than backward, we will spend less time looking for proof of the use of raised hearths in Pennsylvania and instead look for the ways and reasons the raised-hearth tradition was modified in the context of the New World. For some of the Germans one such modification could have been placement of the raised hearth in a jambed fireplace rather than under a smoke cowl. Reading history forward shows us that *suppenherds* and butchering furnaces did not spring out of nowhere, but were continuations and modifications of the raised-hearth tradition. Comparison to other Germanic groups like the Kansas Mennonites can help with this process. It is possible that more research in the Pennsylvania-German cultural area, research which avoids 20th-century assumptions and which knows what evidence to seek, will discover that the raised hearth, like Mercer’s heating stoves, was much more common than previously thought.

THE HEARTH IS WHERE THE COOK IS

by Catherine L. Emerson, Museum Educator

Bread bakes in a Dutch oven while sausages and apples fry in a "spider." Tongs were used to move hot embers about the hearth for cooking on frying pans, gridirons, or in Dutch ovens.



In August of 1990, after extensive discussion by the Museum's board of directors, the Hans Herr House reconstructed a raised hearth in its fireplace. Our research suggested that such a hearth was originally present. If future research proves this conclusion incorrect, the raised hearth can be easily removed with virtually no trace of its ever having been present. In this respect it is much like the original raised hearth which we believe was used in the house and later removed. Theory is one thing; practical experience sometimes quite another. Hands-on experience cooking on the raised hearth has further convinced me the house indeed had such a hearth when it was first built.

The raised hearth in the Hans Herr House is a joy to operate and safer than the traditional English down hearth. It eliminates the danger of petticoat hems catching fire. Lifting heavy pots and kettles and thereby hurting a back (or spilling the contents onto the fire or the cook) no longer poses a problem. The question visitors continually ask is "Why didn't these hearths become more popular? They are so much easier to use."

Another benefit of the new raised hearth is the lack of smoke in the kitchen area; previously the chimney did not seem to draw properly. When we conducted cooking demonstrations on the floor level, smoke almost suffocated the interpreter, the visitor, and anyone in the attic above. Now the chimney draws properly even with the front door open.

The present position of the hearth surface in relation to the fire crane offers additional proof of a raised hearth in the Herr House. With a floor-level cooking

surface the crane was too high, at an odd angle, and did not swing properly for effective employment over down-hearth fires. Early descriptions also called for a fat lamp to hang from the crane; the Herr House crane has a nail for holding such a lamp. But the fat lamp was too high and therefore decidedly useless for down-hearth cooking. With the raised hearth, the crane is at a more usable height and angle. It more accurately swings over the cooking surface, allowing careful positioning of pots over the small hearth fires. The cooking area is now closer to the fat lamp, which more effectively illuminates the work.

One disadvantage of cooking on a raised hearth in a 20th-century museum is the availability of proper wood. The coals used for much of the cooking were best supplied by hardwoods. Because small fires were usually used, the fuel must also be small. In heavily forested 18th-century Lancaster County, it would have been easy to pick up bundles of hardwood faggots from the ground. Today, the Herr House solves this problem by getting local cabinetmakers to donate hardwood scraps. The constant tending of the fires poses another problem. It can be quite a trick to prepare the food and tend the fire, all while answering visitors' questions. The fires cannot be left for long or they burn out. The larger, down-hearth fires used in most hearth-cooking demonstrations require less vigilance.

German raised-hearth cooking employs many small fires—one for each pot—much like the burners on a modern stove. The cook starts a fire and then, as others are needed, pulls coals from the first, adds tinder, a puff

Raised hearth as presently reconstructed in the Herr House. The hearth occupied the left-hand portion of the fireplace, while the right-hand portion provided access to the heating-stove opening.



of air from the bellows and a second fire is made. This can be repeated if still more fires are wanted. Conversely, two small fires can be pushed together to form an ample bed of coals for baking in a large dutch oven.

Because the Hans Herr House is ethnically German, we felt the cooking practices and foods demonstrated should also reflect its ethnicity. In 1568, Jost Amman and Hans Sachs printed *The Book of Trades (Ständebuch)* in Frankfurt am Main. Their description of the cook's trade includes preparing "rice, vegetables, fowl, fish and pickled foods" for the gentry. "Millet, barley, lentils, peas and beans, sausages, soups, turnips and cabbage" were prepared by the cook for workers and farmers. According to them, the farmer, despite working very hard, ordinarily "lives on coarse bread and water."

The foods eaten by Germans in 1568 were much the same as those eaten by their 18th-century Pennsylvania-German descendants. Johann David Schoepf remarked in 1783, ". . . one finds in the German houses everywhere a warm stove, good beer, and at this season, wurst, hog-meat, and sauerkraut, all of which they regard as national prerogatives [*sic*]." We know Pennsylvania German farmers made breads from wheat, rye, and barley, all commonly grown crops. They ate turnips, cabbages, parsnips and pickled eggs. All of these foods had their German antecedents.

Apples played an important role on both sides of the Atlantic. They were consumed raw, baked plain or in cakes, boiled in dumplings, and squeezed for cider and liquor. A British soldier wrote in 1778, "In the greatest part of our march [through Lancaster County] the inhabitants were making cyder, for in almost every farm there is a press."

One of the biggest differences between the Germans and their Pennsylvania cousins concerns the amount of meat eaten. The Pennsylvania-German farmer consumed massive quantities of sausage, pork, and other meats. In the matter of diet, the colonial was better off than his or her European counterpart. When Gottlieb Mittelberger visited the colonies in the 1750s, he was amazed at the wealth of foodstuffs consumed by the Germans and wrote: "I don't think that there is any country in which more meat is eaten and consumed than in Pennsylvania." The majority of the meat eaten was pork; 18th-century Pennsylvania-German cooking appears to have revolved around the hog.



Susie Shenk, a museum volunteer, cooking on the Herr House's reconstructed raised hearth. Raising the height of the fire helped prevent German women's skirts from catching fire, a problem frequently encountered by the English with their floor-level hearths.

One of our most popular dishes at the Hans Herr House is *Gumbis*, a one-pot dish often made from apples, onions, pork, and cabbage. The recipe for this dish came from Switzerland and Germany with the original settlers, and is the forerunner of *Schnitz und Knepp*. We have found in our cooking demonstrations and seminars that if people are brave enough to sample *Gumbis*, they will usually come back for a second helping. The red-ware cooking pots still found in area antique shops are ideal for cooking *Gumbis*, and come out of the raised-hearth cooking tradition.

In 1734 David Seipt, a Schwenkfelder, wrote back to Germany ". . . much wheat bread, mostly hearth-baked, is used here." It appears that the early Pennsylvania Germans did more baking in dutch ovens than in outside bake ovens. Again, baking with a dutch oven is much more efficient on a raised hearth than on a down hearth.

The convenience of raised-hearth cooking has enabled us to dramatically increase our cooking programs at the Hans Herr House. And, since the Hans Herr House has the only usable raised hearth in Pennsylvania, we feel an obligation to share this too-long neglected aspect of our Pennsylvania-German heritage.

ENDNOTES

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- ¹¹Fahrenkamp, pp. 6, 58, 63; Feild, pp. 78, 86; Weaver, p. 255.
- ¹²Fahrenkamp, pp. 6, 8-9, 58, 63; Benkar, pp. 96, 107, 120.
- ¹³Fahrenkamp, pp. 8-9, 10, 53; Benkar pp. 92, 96, 107. Note: This and the preceding endnote refer to illustrations used by these authors which depict the various approaches to raised hearths. Similarly, the references in endnotes 10 and 11 also have illustrations which show raised hearths. The references in these four endnotes do not necessarily discuss raised hearth construction on the selected pages.
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- ¹⁶Benjamin, Count of Rumford. *Essays, Political, Economical, and Philosophical*. First American edition from the third London edition. (Boston, 1799), pp. 8, 9, 15-17.
- ¹⁷Letter from William Woys Weaver, August 3, 1988.
- ¹⁸Weaver, p. 257.
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- ³⁰Sister House Annex Floor Plan, drawn Dec. 5, 1771. In the collection of the Moravian Archives. This kitchen is also depicted and described in William J. Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture and Town Planning*, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: U. of North Carolina Press, 1967), pp. 42-44. Like many researchers unfamiliar with raised hearths, Murtagh describes it as an open fireplace.
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- ³⁴Landis, p. 10.
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- ³⁹James D. McMahon, Jr., "An Elizabeth Furnace Tenant House: A Pennsylvania German Structure in Transition," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, XXVIII (Winter, 1988), p. 73.
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- ⁴⁵Letter of June 16, 1989, from Clark Hess, who photographed and then later acquired the house after it was moved but before he could prevent the fireplace from being destroyed.
- ⁴⁶Landis, p. 73.
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- ⁴⁸Landis, p. 73.
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“PHILIPPS GEHN IN AMERKA”: The Palatinate Emigration in German Schoolbooks

by Monica Mutzbauer



Rural Schoolchildren Leaving Their School by Oskar Pletsch (1830-1888): from Horst Schiffler and Rolf Winkler's *Tausend Jahre Schule*, Stuttgart and Zürich,

1985; p. 116. (Courtesy of Chr. Belser AG für Verlagsgeschichte und Co. KG., Stuttgart, as are the other two illustrations from the same book.)

In quite different situations recently I was reminded of two aphorisms which are relevant to the intent of this essay. The first of these I heard among my pupils at school as they were learning their Latin lesson. It is the old and famous maxim “*Non scholae, sed vitae discimus*” — “We are not learning for school, but for life.” The second is the German proverb “*Bleibe im Lande und nähre dich redlich.*” — “Stay at home and earn an honest living” — used by Joachim Heinz as the title for his new and very interesting study of Palatinate emigration.¹

Heinz's work seeks the reasons for and the development of emigration movements during the 18th and 19th centuries, and gives detailed information about changing laws and policies concerning emigration from the various regions of the Palatinate. An impressive examination of historical documents leads him to conclude that emigration from the region was a constant phenomenon between 1700 and 1900, and, contrary to the impression given by most literature, was caused

primarily by economic, not religious, problems, especially during the 18th century.²

Reading documents which identify the causes of Palatine emigration as social and economic, documents which describe years of mismanagement, hardship, and reprisals, leads one to wonder how much ordinary citizens knew about the exodus and the reasons for it. How, for example, was the subject dealt with in Palatinate schools where, according to the Latin aphorism already mentioned, pupils were being prepared for life? A study of the school textbooks of the period sheds considerable light on the matter, as we shall see.

* * *

Since the time of the Middle Ages, different governments in Germany had tried to establish compulsory schooling for everyone, but they did not succeed until the late 19th century.³ During the Enlightenment, edu-



King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia shows a personal interest in education by attending a school lesson

himself. 1858 painting is by Adolf Menzel; from *Tausend Jahre Schule*, p. 86.

cation, formerly the task of the church, became the concern of secular governments. Their goal was to make a practical and useful education available to all,⁴ and with the beginnings of industrialization in the last century it became even more important to reach that goal. From now on a knowledge of modern languages, history, geography, and mathematics would be more important than a knowledge of Latin or the catechism.⁵

From this background the first school textbook (*Lesebuch*) appeared in 1776. Called *Kinderfreud* (*Friend of the Children*), it contained little stories showing that good behavior was rewarded and bad behavior punished. But there were also texts about geographical and historical topics, or natural history (e.g. "A Thunderstorm;" "The Magnet").⁶ Such *Lesebücher* were found in Germany until the 1950s.⁷ Although in early editions of these textbooks the first chapter is often still reserved for the texts and teachings of the Christian faith, most later editions present a mixture of geography, history, and narrative texts.

One would expect these texts to deal with the emigration movement since it was so widespread in the Palatinate at the time it could hardly be ignored. And, as a thorough examination of the literature will show, the issue is dealt with — to a greater or lesser degree — in all three subject areas. Interestingly, each presents a very different point of view. Geographically, the Palatinate is described as a paradise on earth and emigration is barely mentioned. In historical reports the problems of the region are alluded to in general terms — hard winters, bad harvests, the injustices perpetrated by

foreign rulers — and the sufferings of the populace are often glorified. The narrative texts — poems, letters, stories — tell of the everyday life of the people, and of the full range of emotions, from despair to happiness, they experienced; individual lives are described, and different fates are revealed.

Undoubtedly the geography texts are the most pleasing. In these the Palatinate is described by its associations with the Rhine River, with its wine-making culture, and with its castles.⁸ In an 1863 *Lesebuch*, for example, we find a very poetic image of the region: there are descriptions of many small villages hidden between orchards and vineyards on the banks of the Neckar, and of Heidelberg with its narrow streets toward the *Kaiserstuhl*.⁹ Typical farmhouses of the Palatinate, decorated with flowers and handcrafts, are depicted,¹⁰ and the authors speak of nuts, fruit, and tobacco; of the fertile soil and the beauty of the country.

These kinds of reports conjure up a land of milk and honey, and so are logically titled "Fröhlich Paltz, Gott-erhalts" ("Happy Palatinate, May God Preserve You").¹¹ Naturally the inhabitants of such a land *must* be happy and contented: As the country, so are the people.¹² Palatines are characterized as people who enjoy life; who love the soil and are proud of being peasants.¹³ Even unattractive traits recognized as typical are presented as lovely; as, for example, the *Krischerei* — the necessity every native feels to comment on everyday events in a loud voice. Some reports even try to give a scientific explanation for the typical Palatine character.



Local scene in the Palatinate region shown in a 1914 *Lesebuch*. (*Lesebuch für die 3. und 4. Klasse der*

pfälzischen Volksschulen. Bearbeitet von Stephan Dellmeier, Pirmasens 1914, p. 279.)

A 1925 *Lesebuch*, for instance, traces the roots of the German tribes and concludes that Palatines are a mixture of *fränkisch* and *alemannisch*.¹⁴ They are further described as independent, defiant, and so successful the entire region was able to recover from the devastating effects of the Thirty Years' War in only a decade. In fact, it is said that "even the ox of the Palatine brings forth calves" ("*Dem Pfälzer kalbt selbst der Ochs*").¹⁵

It must also be mentioned that such discussions of the Palatinate and its people always have a humorous aspect. Of their tendency toward loudness it is said "*andere Leute reden auch — aber leiser*" ("other people also talk — but not so loud"). Then, to give us an example of local behavior, one writer takes us to a rural inn on Sunday. As we approach we are sure we hear a hundred quarreling people, but when we enter the building we see only a small number of people — perhaps a dozen — engaged in friendly discussion.¹⁶ Speaking of education, which is broad rather than deep, this same author says: "*Die Bildung des Pfälzers geht mehr in die Breite als in die Tiefe*" ("A Palatine is able to talk about a lot of things, but he doesn't know anything much about them").¹⁷

In summary then, the conclusion to be drawn from these geography texts is that life in the Palatinate during the 18th and 19th centuries was idyllic: Here was a country blessed by God and inhabited by happy and contented human beings; emigration seems not to have existed.

However, when moving on in the *Lesebücher* to the history lessons, we see an entirely different picture. For

even when these chapters are introduced by poems which again proudly describe the land as a "paradise" or "garden of God"¹⁸ the sad events of the past are reported with great earnestness. Here we find texts which tell of the cruelties of war and of the sufferings of the people; of the catastrophes of hunger and illness; of a time of ethical and moral indifference. The reports in the *Lesebücher* go on to tell us about robbery and murder on the roads, and about the infertility of the soil because of devastation or the flight of the peasants. Students are given detailed descriptions of the destruction: the fields, ready for the harvest, were laid waste; there were no more vineyards on the hillsides or orchards in the valleys;¹⁹ the cities of Worms and Speyer ceased to exist. There is also an account of the brave but terrible end of the town of Kusel.²⁰ It is said that the Palatinate, once a place of smiles — a paradise — was now like a sad and lonely cemetery.²¹

Nor is the question of responsibility neglected. Blame for the desolation is laid on foreign sovereigns seeking to increase their power, and who, when thwarted, made their fury felt over a wide area: "*Da gab der allerchristlichste König . . . den ebenso furchtbaren als un menschlichen Befehl, die Pfalz und die Lander am Rhein in eine Wüste zu verwandeln . . .*" ("The Christian king ordered the Palatinate and the whole country along the Rhine changed into a desert . . .").²² But the people are said to respect their own rulers, who are not faulted for catastrophes. During a great famine, for example, when *Kurfürst* Max III, sovereign of the Bavarian region, heard of the sufferings of his people he decided to help

6. Die Auswanderer.

1. Ich kann den Blick nicht von euch wenden;
ich muß euch anschau'n immerdar;
wie reicht ihr mit geschäft'gen Händen
dem Schiffer eure Habe dar!
2. Ihr Männer, die ihr von dem Raden
die Körbe langt, mit Brot beschwert,
das ihr aus deutschem Korn gebadet,
geröstet habt auf deutschem Herd;
3. Und ihr, im Schmuck der langen Röcke,
ihr Schwarzwaldbmädchen, braun und schlank,
wie sorgsam stellt ihr Krüg' und Löpfe
auf der Schaluppe grüne Bank.
4. Das sind dieselben Löpfe und Krüge,
oft an der Heimat Born gefüllt;
wenn am Missouri alles schwiege,
sie malten euch der Heimat Bild:
5. Des Dorfes steingefasste Quelle,
zu der ihr schöpfend euch gebücht,
des Herdes traute Feuerstelle,
das Wandgemälz, das sie geschmückt.
6. Bald zieren sie im fernem Westen
des leichten Bretterhauses Wand;
bald reicht sie müden, braunen Gästen,
voll frischen Trankes, eure Hand.
7. Es trinkt daraus der Tscherokeese,
ermattet, von der Jagd bezaubert;
nicht mehr von deutscher Rebenlese
tragt ihr sie heim, mit Grün besaubert.
8. O spracht! Warum zogt ihr von dannen?
Das Redarthal hat Wein und Korn;
der Schwarzwald steht voll finst'rer Tannen,
im Speffart klingt des Äplers Horn.
9. Wie wird es in den fremden Wäldern
euch nach der Heimatberge Grün,
nach Deutschlands gelben Weizenfeldern,
nach seinen Nebenhügeln zieh'n!
10. Wie wird das Bild der alten Tage
durch eure Träume glänzend weh'n!
Gleich einer stillen, frommen Sage
wird es euch vor der Seele steh'n.
11. Der Bootsmann winkt! — — Sieht hin in Frieden!
Gott schütz' euch, Mann und Weib und Greis!
Sei Freude eurer Brust beschieden —
und euren Feldern Reis und Mais. Ferdinand Freiligrath.

The most printed poem about emigration in German Lesebücher. (Deutsches Lesebuch für Mädchenschulen. Herausgegeben von A. Ernst und J. Trews. Band 3: Haus und Welt; 5. Aufl. Leipzig and Berlin 1899, p. 426f.)

immediately by donating money and buying corn. His "officials" are said to have mismanaged the crisis.²³

A special report for schoolchildren was written by Johann Gottfried Seume, a famous author of his time.²⁴ When, like a lot of other young men, Seume was wandering from town to town looking for work and adventure he was captured by officials of the *Landgraf* von Hessen. This ruler was called a "seller of souls," because he sold men to England where they became part of the army sent to America to fight against the colonists in the War of Independence. Seume tells about the prison at Ziegenhain where he was arrested, about his escape plan which failed and, finally, about the uncertain fate which awaited him in America.

Seume's story is just one of many such reports by individuals of their personal experiences as emigrants. Of course, unlike Seume, most made the decision to leave voluntarily, as a consequence of the social and economic problems mentioned (or hidden) in the texts we have already talked about. Their letters and stories, together with poems about the mass movement, make up the narrative texts in the third part of the *Lesebücher*.

One poem, "Die Auswanderer" ("The Emigrants"), appeared in more than a dozen editions of the *Lesebücher* between 1854 and 1927. The author, Ferdinand Freiligrath, (1810-1876), expressed political criticism in his poems and was forced to leave Germany more than once. In "Die Auswanderer" he watches a group of emigrants loading their belongings onto a ship bound for America. Sentimentally, he describes such things as the last bread baked in the oven at home, and the jugs formerly filled at the village well. Then comes the question: "Tell me, why are you going away?" But there is no answer. The poem ends with a sad complaint about the lost homeland, and with good wishes for a better future in America.²⁵

Another poet, Peter Rosegger (1843-1918), an Austrian, wrote "Ein Freund ging nach Amerika" ("A Friend went to America"). It tells of his receiving a letter from a friend now living in the New World. The friend asks for roses to be sent from the homeland so he can give them to his bride. Then, a year later he wants water to be sent for the baptism of his child. Finally, he needs earth from the Old Country in order to bury his wife and child. In the last verse of the poem Rosegger comes to the conclusion that even though his friend has found a new life in America, he suffers from homesickness. Even during the times of greatest joy and greatest grief he longs for the blessings of the old homeland:

Und so ersehnte der arme Mann
auf fernsten, fremden Wegen
für höchste Freud, für tiefstes Leid
des Heimatlandes Segen.²⁶



This picture, painted by J. M. Voltz in 1823, shows school life in town. The children and teacher are well-

dressed, and there is an atmosphere of order and discipline. (*Tausend Jahre Schule*, p. 102).

A third poem, which appears in an 1891 *Lesebuch*, is addressed directly to schoolchildren. In "Das Kind des Auswanderers" ("The Child of the Emigrant") a young boy complains about the impending loss of all he loves at home as the horses and wagon wait, ready to depart. Students can readily identify with him, for the things he mentions are a part of every child's world: the familiar garden with its flowers; the meadows where he used to play; and his friends and comrades in the village.²⁷ There is no thought of exciting new adventures; the last scene describes the farewell of the neighbors, and their rather depressing wish that God might accompany the travelers in their search for a new life.

Another poem called "Der Auswanderer" ("The Emigrant") appeared in a 1929 *Lesebuch*. The dominant theme in this work is nationalism, not surprising in the context of the times. Indeed, the entire text is an accusation: the emigrant is said to have forgotten his duties to the homeland in the desire for a better life in a foreign country; emigration in these circumstances shows selfishness and egoism. To emphasize that point there are verbal pictures of the poor mother left suffering at home, and of friends who remain behind and give their all to their native land.

A more agreeable work than the above-mentioned poem is the story of a family from the Palatinate, the Philipps, who go to America in 1910; it appeared in a 1921 *Lesebuch*.²⁸ Realistic and well-written, it has an attractive mix of tragic and poetic elements. Its dialogues are in the Palatinate dialect, with the sentence "Philipps gehn in Amerka" repeated often, as a sort of motto. The family's final activities and emotions are described for the schoolchildren with typical exactness. The agent who arranged the journey is portrayed unsympathetically (red face, splendid apparel); we are told of the auction in which the house and fields were sold; and we are given a list of the items the family has taken with them, such as the beds and the spinning wheel. Even the son's chaffinch in his birdcage is mentioned. From the neighbors, who are discussing the family's decision to leave, we get some information about the economic situation in the Palatinate at the time: In order to get a job, most of the inhabitants must travel to other regions in the winter and work as day laborers. They speak about America as the "land of milk and honey," and mention the hundreds of Palatines who have just emigrated and whose letters home are full of enthusiasm for the new land.

Speaking of letters, they are a key element in the *Lesebuch* literature which deals with emigration, since there were a great number of them written to friends and relatives who remained behind. These letters give a vivid picture of the living conditions the newcomers found in America. The earliest one is printed in an 1887 *Lesebuch*,²⁹ and is from a young man named David who has emigrated to Wisconsin and is now writing his first letter to his mother back home.

David, telling of his journey (which began at Bremerhaven), comments humorously: "*Beim jüngsten Tag kann kein größeres Durcheinander sein, als wenn man mitsammen zuerst aufs Schiff kommt*" ("There can be no greater confusion on Doomsday, than when the passengers of a ship all come together for the first time"). The trip lasts forty-two days, and he uses the time to learn his first English expressions. When he arrives and has his first encounters with Americans, he says ". . . und die wissen zu schmeicheln und zu heucheln, daß man meinen sollt', man hätte lauter frisch-ausgekrochene Engel vor sich, aber es ist ein Rätubergesindel" ("people know how to flatter and dissemble so that one would think they are all newborn angels, but in reality they are a gang of thieves"). His next experiences are better, however, and he says he likes the fact that Americans honor poor people, who can become successful through their own efforts. He now characterizes them as honest and industrious, and notes he himself is working harder than he did at home. Letters like this were always interesting for people who also planned to emigrate, for they gave suggestions helpful to those who would follow after. In this vein, David's advice is for emigrants to take enough clothes and shoes with them, because these articles are very expensive in the United States; it is also advisable, he writes, he learn some English before starting the journey.

A letter of more literary and political significance appears in a 1927 *Lesebuch*; the author is Carl Schurz (1829-1906). Schurz, one of the most famous and successful German-Americans, arrived in the United States in 1852 and spent three years in Philadelphia before moving to the mid-West. A general in the Union Army during the Civil War, he went on to become an important newspaperman, a United States senator, and a member of the cabinet in the Hayes administration. Fittingly, Schurz's letter is not concerned with the details of everyday life, but with observations about social and political conditions in his new homeland. He writes of the atmosphere he finds in New York and Philadelphia, and of his admiration of the democracy and liberty evident in the life of Americans.³⁰

The last texts among the letters which appear in the *Lesebücher* are parts from what appears to be a whole collection of correspondence. The author, Johannes Gillhoff, tells about a young man from Mecklenberg,

Jürnjacob Swehn, who has emigrated in order to acquire a farm of his own. Writing to his old teacher at home, Swehn tells how, shortly after his arrival in America, he decided to wander through the country looking for a farm job.³¹ There is a great deal of humor in his accounts of his first farm experiences as, for instance, when he is ordered to milk a cow for the first time: "*Die Kuh merkte auch bald, daß ich nichts davon verstand. Sie sah mich mit Verachtung an und schlug mir den Schwanz um die Ohren. Als das geschehen war, schlug sie hinten auch noch aus, und ich und mein Eimer, wir flogen in den Dreck*" ("The cow quickly noticed that I did not understand milking. It looked at me with contempt and hit my face with its tail. Then it kicked out and my bucket and I landed in the dirt").

More than once, as Swehn travels from farm to farm, his just-earned money is stolen, and he begins to fear his dreams will never be realized. But he did succeed eventually in buying his own farm property, and another letter tells of his getting started there, describing such tasks as building a wood house, making furniture, and preparing the fields for planting.³² In yet another letter — it must have been one of his last — Swehn looks back on his life, talks about his wife and his children who have been born in America, and confesses that he has always been homesick.³³

In addition to literary texts like those just mentioned which deal directly with the topic of emigration, are reports written to pass judgment on those Germans who have left and on their lives in foreign countries. Such judgments are often condemnatory — with emigrants described as people trying to escape their own inadequacies — and filled with warnings for those considering following the same path.³⁴ During the time of imperialism at the beginning of the present century a new theme began to appear in these kinds of writings. It was the idea that Germans in America, Russia, France, and other countries should retain their language and culture which would be a bridge linking them to the homeland.³⁵

These kinds of writings are also interesting in another respect, since for the first time they ask — and clearly answer — the question of who and what was responsible for the mass migrations of previous centuries: A lack of liberty and the economic mismanagement of various past governments are the reasons given for these departures. Of course, when these books appeared the great emigration movement was already over, so it was no longer dangerous to speak about responsibility.

* * *

Returning, then, to our question at the beginning concerning how much the schoolchildren of the Palatinate were taught about the emigration movement and the

reasons for it, we can answer by saying, "Not a great deal." Certainly they got an overall impression of the movement itself, but hardly a clear idea of its scope, or the reasons for it as presented in Heinz's study on emigration. That can be explained, in part, by 19th-century teaching methods. Without a doubt there had been put forth in Germany many detailed pedagogical concepts since the time of Goethe's "pädagogische Provinz" in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehr- und Wanderjahre*. Friedrich Schleiermacher, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Pestalozzi are just the most famous names among those who developed ideas of education aimed at producing people able to think, and to recognize and decide issues for themselves.

In most 19th-century German schools, however, reality shows us another picture. Many times teachers themselves were not well-educated, for they were often otherwise unemployed craftsmen hired for the job if

they could read, write, and sing. So teaching methods were usually not varied, but were generally just the reading of texts, memorization, and dictation. There was no room for asking, for discussing, for doubting, or for criticizing. In short, there was no time at all for the methods included in the didactic practices of today.

But today, when such methods *are* the norm, the topic of emigration has nearly disappeared completely from the school curriculum. After the Second World War when school life in Germany was reorganized, new textbooks were edited. Now the *Lesebuch* serves only for instruction in literature; history and geography are taught separately, but emigration is barely mentioned. Most students in the Palatinate now do not know why many of them have relatives in America. And they are always very astonished when I show them a map of Pennsylvania and they see names like Manheim, Hanover, Nuremberg . . .

ENDNOTES

¹Joachim Heinz: *Bleibe im Lande und nähre dich redlich. Zur Geschichte der pfälzischen Auswanderung vom Ende des 17. bis zum Ausgang des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Beiträge zur pfälzischen Geschichte. Band 1. Kaiserslautern 1989.

²Heinz, *op. cit.* p. 243f.

³Horst Schiffler/Rolf Winkler: *Tausend Jahre Schule. Eine Kulturgeschichte des Lernens in Bildern*. Stuttgart und Zürich 1985, p. 85.

⁴Fritz Blättner: *Geschichte der Pädagogik*. Heidelberg, 14. Auflage 1973, p. 87.

⁵Blättner, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

⁶Blättner, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

⁷For this and the following aspects of the study I examined a collection of about 1,000 *Lesebücher*, especially those used in the Palatinate and the Bavarian regions between 1848 and 1942. These books are part of the "Hans Loschky-Sammlung" of the Stadtbibliothek Ludwigshafen/Rhein.

⁸*Lesebuch für den 8. Schülerjahrgang der Gemeinschaftsschulen Bayerns*, Ausgabe für die Pfalz, bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Dr. Joseph Prestel u.a. Kaiserslautern o.J. p. 314.

⁹D. Georg Wilhelm Hopf: *Deutsches Lesebuch*, Dritter Theil. Nürnberg, 3. Auflage 1863, p. 150.

¹⁰G.N. Marschall (ed.): *Deutsches Lesebuch für höhere Lehranstalten*, 2. Band, München 1878, p. 496f. Prestel, *op. cit.* p. 318ff.

¹¹J.G.F. Pflüger: *Badische Vaterlandskunde*. Ein Lese- und Lern-Büchlein für Schulen und die Jugend überhaupt. 3. Auflage 1866, o.O., p. 110.

¹²Marschall, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

¹³Marschall, *op. cit.*, p. 501ff.

¹⁴August Caselmann/Fritz Treuheit: *Lieb Heimatland. Deutsches Lesebuch für höhere Lehranstalten*, 5. Band, 1. Auflage. Nürnberg 1925, p. 78ff.

¹⁵Caselmann/Treuheit, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

¹⁶Caselmann/Treuheit, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

¹⁷Caselmann/Treuheit, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁸Ludwig Solereeder: *Vaterländisches Lesebuch für Schule und Haus*. Dritte Abtheilung, 6. und 7. Schuljahr, München 1867, p. 178.

¹⁹*Deutsches Lesebuch*, *op. cit.* (1893), p. 379.

²⁰*Lesebuch für die 5., 6. und 7. Klasse der pfälzischen Volksschulen*, bearbeitet von Hauptlehrer H. Haass in Kaiserslautern, Kaiserslautern 1923, no. 208.

²¹*Lesebuch für die 5. und 6. Klasse der Volksschule sowie für die Sonntagsschule*, bearbeitet von pfälzischen Lehrern, 13. Auflage, München 1885, p. 650.

²²*Deutsches Lesebuch für Mittel- und Oberklassen der Volksschulen*, herausgegeben von mehreren öffentlichen Lehrern, 6. Auflage, Nürnberg 1893, p. 378.

²³*Lesebuch für die Mittelklassen der Volksschulen*, bearbeitet von mehreren Volksschullehrern, 11. Auflage, München o.J. p. 289f.

Lesebuch für den 6. und 7. Schülerjahrgang der Gemeinschaftsschulen Bayerns, Ausgabe für die Pfalz, herausgegeben von Johann Beck u.a., Kaiserslautern 1928, p. 437ff.

²⁴Caselmann/Treuheit, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

²⁵*Buch für die deutsche Jugend*. Eine Sammlung von Lesestücken aus deutschen Klassikern. München 1854, p. 21f.

²⁶*Lesebuch für die evangelischen Schulen der Rheinprovinz*. 3. Teil (5. bis 8. Schuljahr), Bielefeld und Leipzig 1929, p. 462.

²⁷W. Jülting/H. Weber: *Die Heimat. Drittes Lehr- und Lesebuch zur Pflege nationaler Bildung*. 28. Auflage 1891, p. 187f.

²⁸M. Wilking u.a. (ed.): *Lesebuch für die 8. Klasse der pfälzischen Volksschule*. Kaiserslautern 1921, p. 204-208.

²⁹*Lesebuch für Volksschulen*. Dritter Teil, Lahr 1887, p. 166-169.

³⁰Deckelmann/ F. Johannesson (ed.): *Deutsches Lesebuch für höhere Schulen*. Fünfter Teil, 9. Schuljahr, 4. Auflage, Berlin 1927, p. 161-165.

³¹Caselmann/Treuheit: *Lieb Heimatland! Deutsches Lesebuch für höhere Lehranstalten*. Vierter Band, 2. Auflage, Nürnberg o.J., p. 77-79.

³²*Deutsches Lesebuch für Volksschulen*. 5. und 6. Schuljahr. Bielefeld und Leipzig o.J., p. 124-126.

³³*Lesebuch für die evangelischen Schulen der Rheinprovinz*, *op. cit.* (see note 26), p. 468-471.

³⁴W.J.G. Curtmann: *Das Vaterland, ein Lesebuch für die oberen Klassen der Volksschulen*. Darmstadt, 2. Auflage 1848, p. 179f.

³⁵Johann Beck u.a.: *Lesebuch für den 6. und 7. Schülerjahrgang der Gemeinschaftsschulen Bayerns*. München 1927, p. 364-368; Ernst Bender/Wilhelm Etzel: *Deutsches Lesebuch*. 2. Band, 4. Auflage Karlsruhe 1936, p. 124-127.

THE BARNER FARM: A Connection to Clinton County's Pennsylvania-German Heritage

by Christopher S. Witmer,
Mary L. Hoffer
and
Harry W. Barner



The Barner farm as seen from the south. (Photographs by Christopher S. Witmer)

Most studies of the Pennsylvania Germans and their culture have focused on the core locations in the southeastern section of the state. However, it is a well-known fact that Pennsylvania-German settlements covered large and widely scattered areas throughout Pennsylvania, although scholarly studies documenting this movement are exceedingly rare. Consequently, it is the intent of this article to document the background, movement, and cultural legacy of one particular German family — the Barners — in what was then the remote wilderness of north-central Pennsylvania of the early nineteenth century.

The Barner family of Clinton County, Pennsylvania, traces its origins to Adam Barner (1740-1818), who emigrated to America in 1758 from Canton Berne, Switzerland. Adam Barner was a tailor by trade, and served, apparently, as an indentured servant for seven years.¹ By November of 1764, though, he was living as a single freeman in Robeson Township, Berks County;² in September, 1768, however, he is taxed as a married man. His wife, Veronica (1737-1820), appears to have been the widow of one John Bunn (1723-1766). Evidence for this comes from a Letter of Administration, dated 28 August 1766, on file in the Berks County Courthouse, in which Veronica is named as the widow of the deceased. Then, the follow-up estate account, dated 18 May 1764, is for Adam Barner and Veronica, his wife, late Veronica Bunn, Administratrix.³

In 1772 Adam Barner applied for and received a warrant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for one

hundred acres of land in Brunswick Township, Berks County (now West Brunswick Township, Schuylkill County). But this parcel was found to have infringed upon the claims of the proprietaries and was therefore returned to the Land Office in 1773.⁴ Barner, nevertheless, remained on the Berks County tax rolls during this period.

In 1778, however, Adam Barner was taxed for fifty acres of land in what was then Greenwood Township, Cumberland County (today Liverpool Township, Perry County). And, on April 17, 1785, he received a deed from one John Pfouts for one hundred and ninety acres in the same township and county for a consideration of £110, Pennsylvania money. This tract was later surveyed and found to be two hundred and twelve acres and eighteen perches.⁵ Then, on December 13, 1785, Barner was warranted fifty adjoining acres, which was probably the original Cumberland County land he was first taxed on in 1778.⁶ This tract surveyed out to fifty-four acres and one hundred and forty-four perches, making the total amount of land owned by him slightly more than two hundred and sixty-seven acres.

Barner's property was located just west of the Susquehanna River in the eastern end of the county in an area known as Barner's Church, near Liverpool. It was an area strongly Pennsylvania German in character, as attested to by St. John's (Barner's) Church itself. It served as a union church for Lutheran, Reformed, and Mennonite congregations.

Adam Barner's wife was born Maria Euphronica

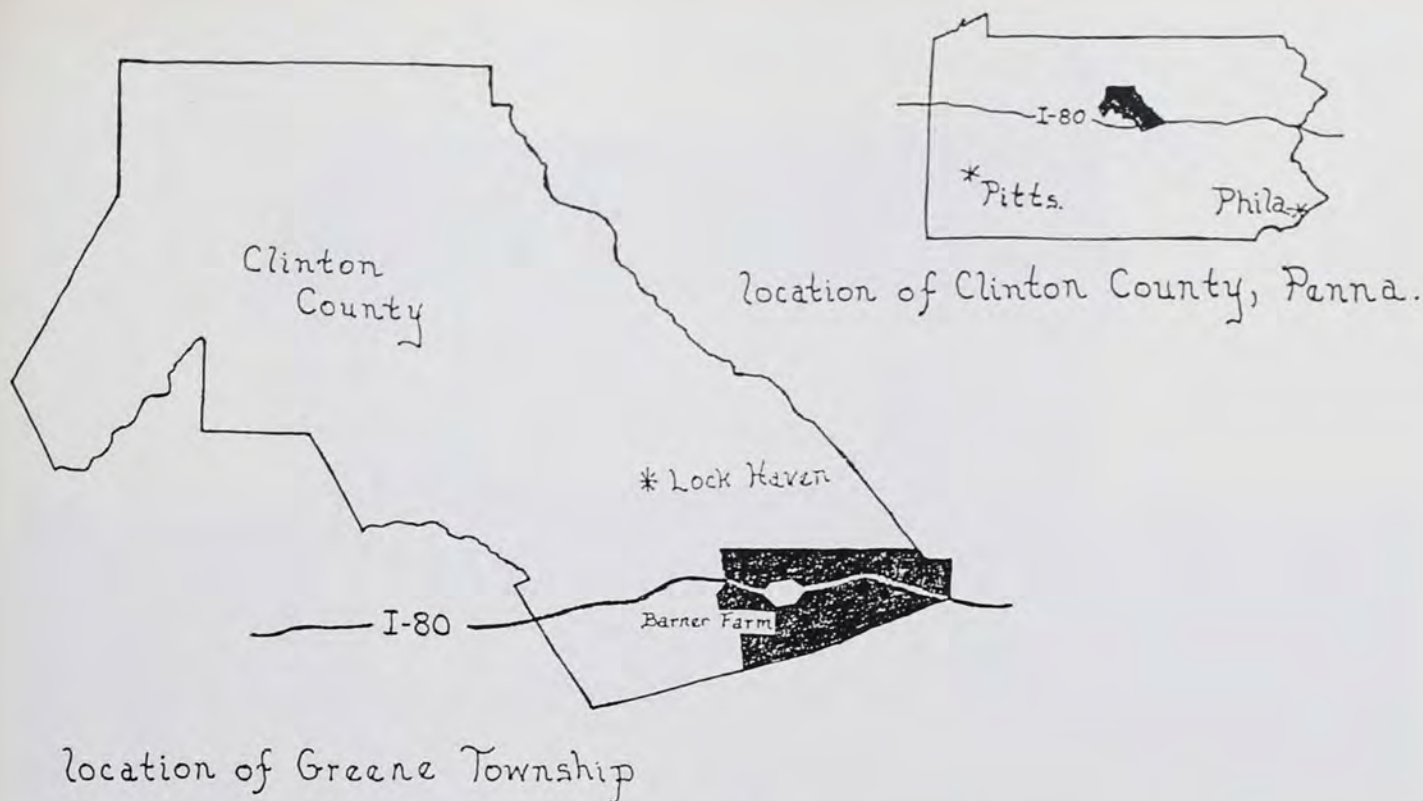


Figure 1.

(Anglicized to Veronica, as shown in the estate papers) Conrad, but she was widely known in the family as Fanny (Bunn) Barner.⁷ Adam and Fanny raised their family of about ten children — three known Bunn offspring from her first marriage, and two sons and five daughters from their union — on the above-described property in what is now Perry County. On May 30, 1798, they conveyed all their land to Fanny's son, John Bunn, Jr.⁸ Then they apparently lived the remainder of their lives in the same area, and were members of St. Michael's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pfout's Valley.

It was John Henry Barner, perhaps the eldest son of Adam and Fanny, who established the Clinton County farm we are interested in. Henry — as he was usually called — was born in Robeson Township, Berks County, and as a child moved with his parents to Greenwood Township, Cumberland County. Little is known of his early life except that he was married to Susanna Bunce (1775-1847)⁹ about 1793,¹⁰ and that he was assessed for an eighteen-by-eighteen log house along the Mahatongo Creek in Greenwood Township, Mifflin County (now Susquehanna Township, Juniata County) in the Federal Direct Tax dated October 1, 1798. He is definitely traced through the Greenwood Township tax rolls in 1802, 1803, and 1804. Then, no name like Henry Barner appears on the 1805, 1806, or 1807 township tax rolls. The tax books for the years 1808-1810 are missing from

the Mifflin County Courthouse in Lewistown, but in the 1811 and subsequent years' tax books there is again no Henry Barner listed.

It would appear that Henry Barner's move with his family to Sugar Valley in what is now Clinton County was completed on or before April 1, 1807¹¹ for, in addition to the evidence above, on 22 November 1814 he received a warrant for four hundred acres which reads "... interest thereon from the 1st April 1807 to be paid ...". And the subsequent survey notes that "... the improvement on the above tract of land consists of a dwelling house and barn — about fifty acres of cleared land, and Henry Barner and family actually residing on same and agreeable to information it was first improved April 1, 1807."

Technically, this tract was situated in Wayne Township, Lycoming County, until an act of the Assembly on March 23, 1818, annexed a territory "including Henry Barner's farm" to Centre County from Lycoming County. During this period the borders of the two counties were in dispute until a joint commissioners' report was filed on May 23, 1820; it stated that they had employed surveyors Abraham Weber of Centre County, and Adam Wilt of Union County to resolve the lines. Adam Wilt was Henry Barner's brother-in-law, being married to his sister Elizabeth.¹² It is certain the Barners were considered permanent residents of Miles Township, Centre County by 1812, as Henry appears on the tax rolls at that time. Later, this area was incorporated into Logan Township, and then finally became Greene Township, Clinton County (see Fig. 1).

Location of Barner Farm, Greene Twp, Clinton Co.

Key:

--- original 430 acre patent of Henry and Susanna Barner - 1817

▨ 133 acre Christian Barner farm of 1848 containing original homestead buildings

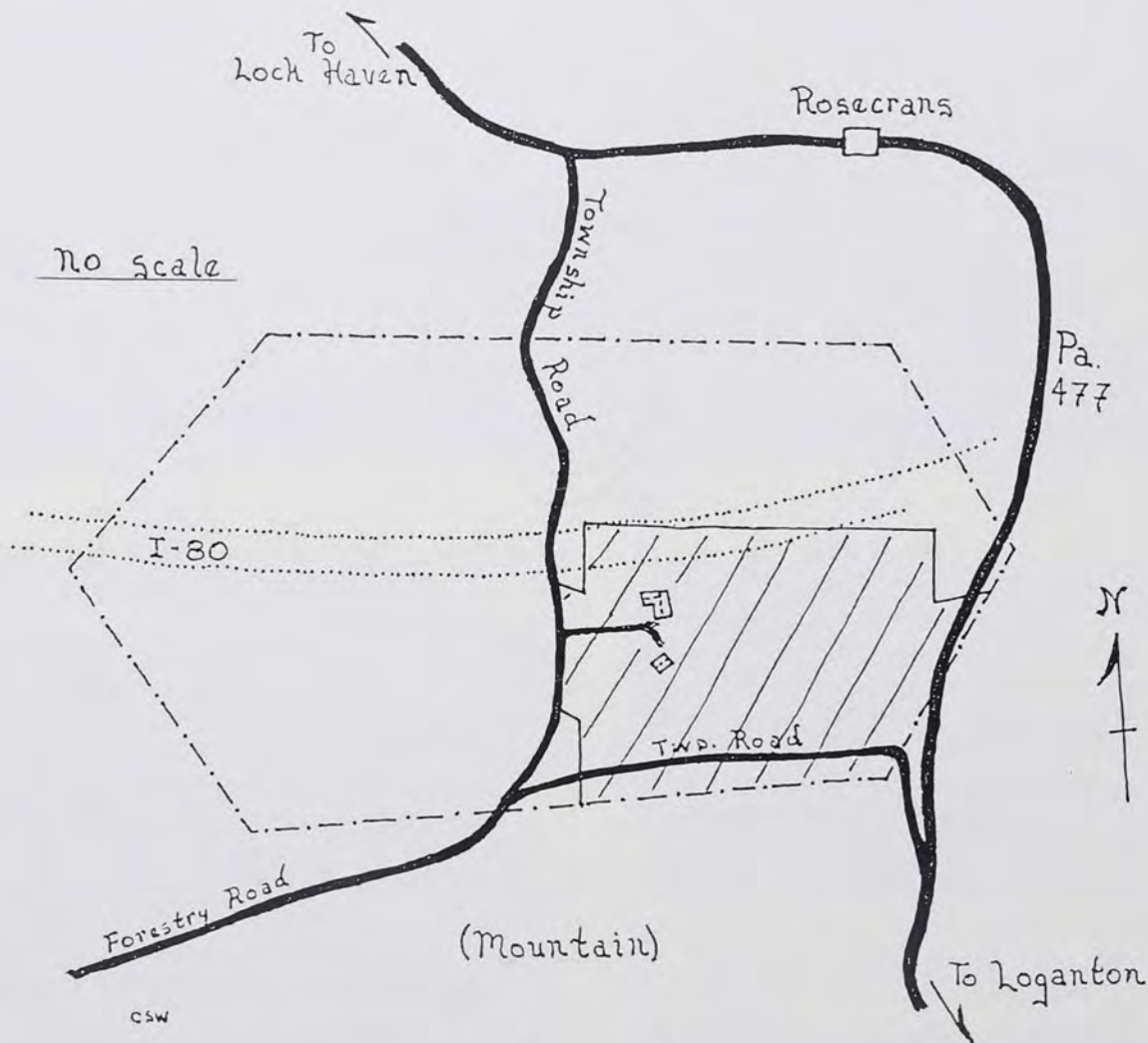


Figure 2.

Nothing is known of the Barner family's journey from Greenwood Township, Mifflin County to Sugar Valley, although one could speculate on the probable route taken. John Blair Linn's *History of Centre and Clinton Counties, Pennsylvania* sheds some light on this. At the time the Barners made the trip Sugar Valley was difficult to reach, except perhaps on foot or horseback, as it is surrounded by high mountains. Passage would have had to be made through the "Brush Valley Narrows" (on the border between Centre and Union Counties) between Buffalo Valley and Brush Valley into what is present-day Wolfe's Gap on the south side of Sugar Valley. This route seems to have been the earliest

road into the area.¹³

The tract of land Barner chose to settle was a flat area on the top of Sugar Mountain — now better known as Loganton Mountain — which is located between the Sugar and Nittany Valleys. The Barner homestead was relatively large. Henry obtained a warrant for four hundred acres on November 22, 1814; it was surveyed on May 18, 1815, and on December 4, 1817, a patent was granted to Henry Barner for four hundred and thirty acres measuring roughly one mile long, and two-thirds of a mile wide. By 1850 the residual farm consisted of just one hundred and thirty-three acres cut from the original tract (see Fig. 2).



The Barner house as seen from the southeast.

Interestingly enough, Linn, in his *History*, mentions John Barner's arrival on Sugar Mountain, noting that he preferred locating there because he thought the soil there was better than in the valley, but that he (Barner) afterwards discovered his mistake.¹⁴ Linn does not give his source for this information, but it does not seem likely a blunder of such proportions was possible, given Barner's background in farming, as well as in carpentry. A more likely explanation is that he always intended to start a sawmill or two and, in fact, Centre County tax records show there was one in existence by 1822. Conditions were right for such a business, for there was an abundance of softwood available — pine trees continue to flourish in the region today — and Pepper Run and Summer (now called Mill) Creek, which flow through the property, are excellent sources of water power.¹⁵ Two more facts support the suggestion that farming was not Henry Barner's primary occupation: as late as 1848 only about fifty acres (not much more than ten percent) of the tract had been cleared;¹⁶ and, in his will, Barner refers to himself as a carpenter, not a farmer.

Linn also tells of an incident involving the Barners during their early days on Sugar Mountain that goes to show that while isolated, the region was not totally cut off from the rest of the world. It seems that a prominent Philadelphian, Dr. Caspar Wistar, who had business interests in the area, sometimes visited there himself. On

one such trip he heard that Henry Barner had killed an unusually large mountain lion which had been threatening his livestock. Wistar went to see the animal, which was more than eleven feet long and which, according to Linn, "was the largest animal of the kind ever seen in that part of the country." By the time he arrived, however, it had been dead for some days, and all he saw was "the grinning head of the panther in an advanced state of decomposition, but, being prompted by an 'extreme' devotion to the cause of science, he desired to procure it for dissection regardless of its condition. Accordingly he ordered his servant to place the head in his carriage that he might take it back to Philadelphia. This the negro did, but he said to himself, 'Bad smell! Bad smell!'"¹⁷

* * *

The property originally settled by the Henry Barner family has an early log farmhouse and a barn which are especially important for north-central Pennsylvania-German vernacular construction forms. It is not known whether the existing house and barn were the first such buildings on the farm, but certainly there were other early structures such as a bake oven, pigpen, or springhouse that did not survive. The several frame outbuildings in existence today are of late nineteenth or twentieth century construction.

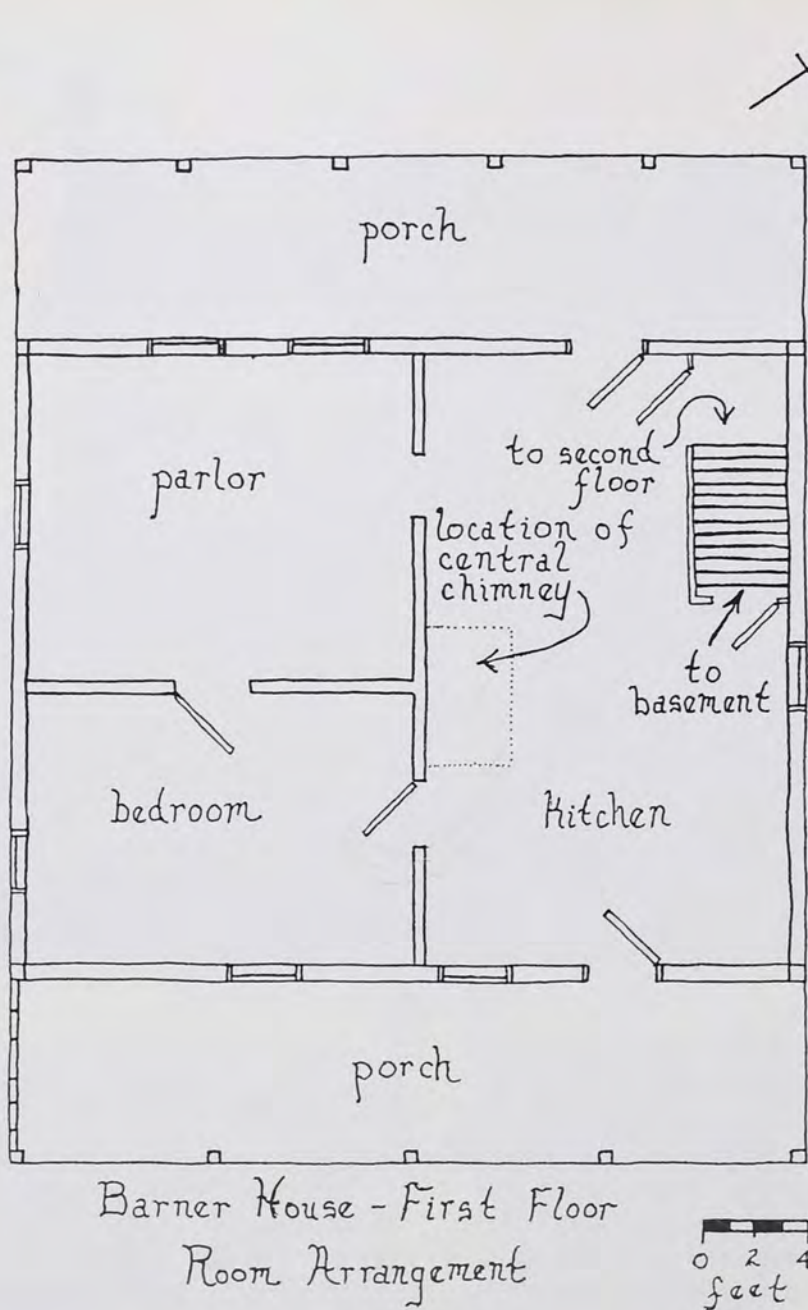


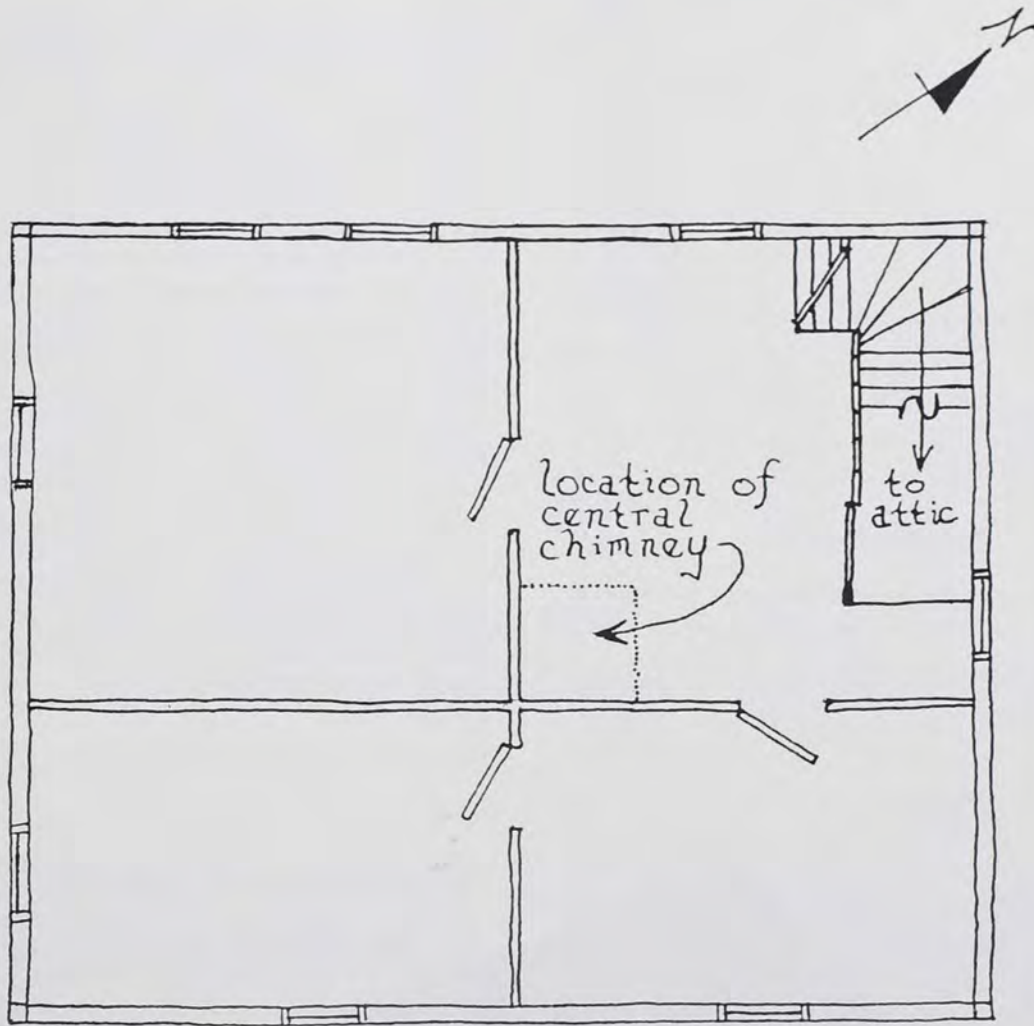
Figure 3.

The house, of log construction, is a two-story bank house, probably built in the first decade of the last century. It is thirty feet, five inches long, and twenty-five feet, five inches wide. The logs were covered with narrow horizontal clapboards, probably sometime in the mid- to late 1800s, but they are still visible from the interior in the staircases leading to the attic and cellar. The type of corner notching has not been determined, but it is probably dovetail or "V" notching as it is in most of the other log houses in the region. The logs are chinked with chunks of wood laid between them, and daub has been applied over the chinking. The front and back porches are late nineteenth century additions.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Barner house is its Continental Central-Chimney floor plan, a type of construction strongly favored by the Pennsylvania Ger-

mans.¹⁸ The first floor, which retains its original three-room configuration (see Fig. 3), exhibits almost all the typical design elements: the long *küche*, or kitchen, which can be entered from opposite sides of the house through off-center doorways, and which retains in its northern corner the original vertical-board partition that encloses the staircase; the *stube* (parlor or living room) which is the largest room on the second side of the house; and the *kammer*, or typical first-floor bedroom, often reserved for elderly family members, which takes up the remaining space on the second side.

Missing from the house today is its central chimney. Integral to the design — typically, it dictated the division of the house into two sides — its large, walk-in fireplace would have opened into the kitchen. It was removed at an unknown date, probably in the late nine-



Barner House - Second
Floor Room Arrangement

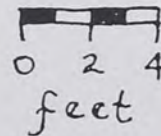
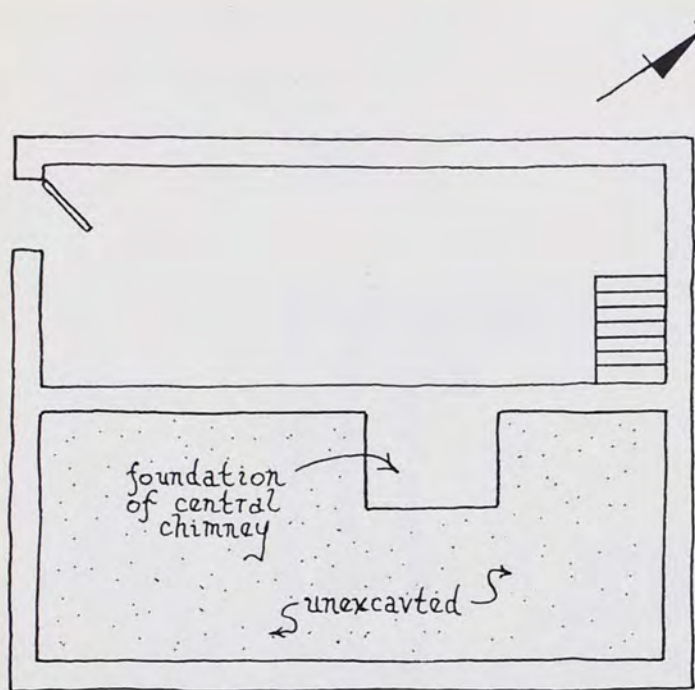


Figure 4.

teenth or early twentieth century, judging by the size and the type of the replacement end chimneys. The central chimney's foundation can still be seen in the basement, and further evidence of its existence can be found in the attic where a sizeable hole remains in the center of the attic floor, and where a patch can be seen in the roof. It cannot be determined whether the *stube* originally had a five-plate stove which would have been attached to the central chimney. Susanna Barner's 1847 estate inventory does include "one stove and elbow" which is probably a free-standing, ten-plate stove. However, the inventory also mentioned "2 stove plates," which may suggest parts of a disassembled five-plate stove but which were, perhaps, simply firebacks for the fireplace.¹⁹

The second floor of the Barner house (see Fig. 4) seems to have been divided into four rooms, as was also typical of the Continental style. The second floor has what appear to be the original six-panel doors with raised paneling; they would have been period design at the time the house was built. However, details of the other original interior features are uncertain at best, for little of the early woodwork is visible. The walls and ceilings are plastered, making it difficult to determine if the joists were originally exposed or not.

The attic is constructed of fourteen sets of square-hewn common rafters mortised, tenoned, and pinned at their peaks. Approximately every other set of rafters was held together by a collar. The central chimney rose through the peak between the sixth and seventh set of



Barnert House Basement
Plan

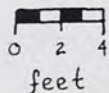


Figure 5.

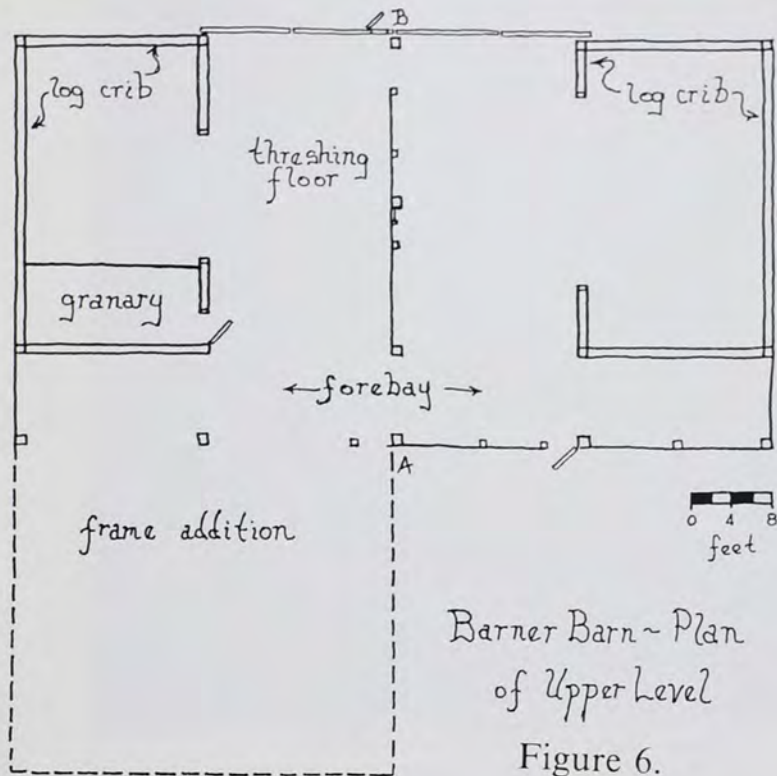
rafters.

The house is built into the side of a hill, and only the western half of the basement is excavated (see Fig. 5). There is access to the basement from the kitchen and, outside, from a ground-level door on the northwest corner. This entrance has a later frame-and-clapboard foyer attached to the outside. The house's foundation walls are rough fieldstone, and the floor is hard-packed earth. The basement also has a number of wooden shelves of undetermined age along the walls, probably for the storage of canned goods. The exposed joists supporting the first floor are rough hewn, flattened on two sides, with some still having bark on them.

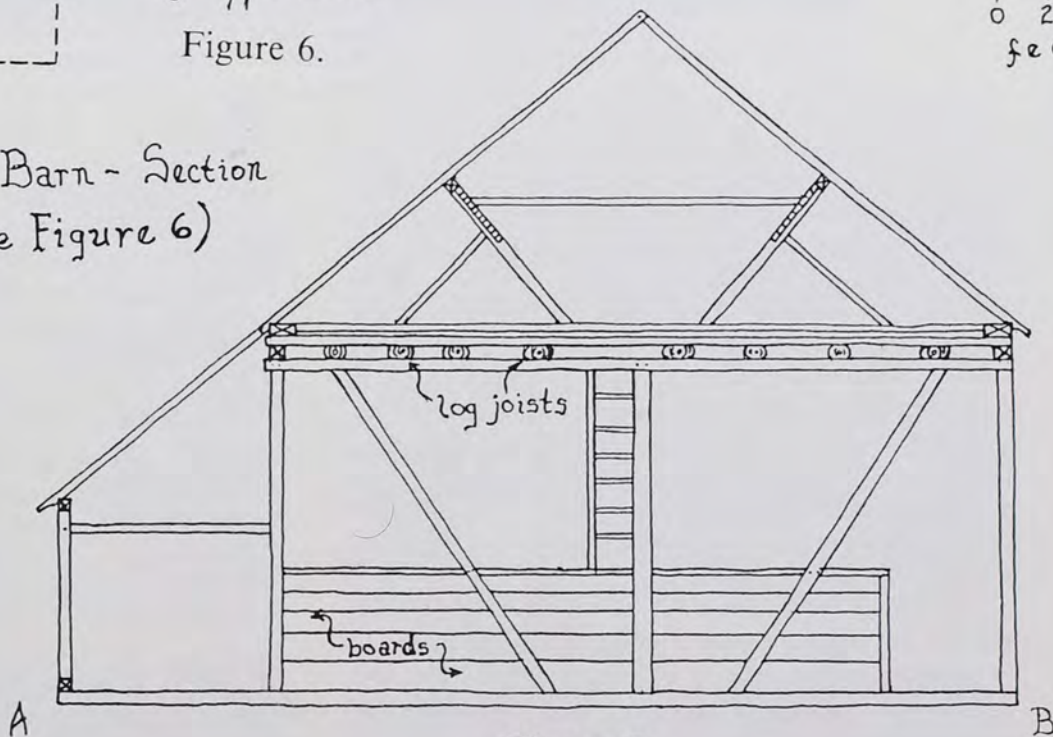
The barn, of the well-documented type variously known as forebay, bank, or "Swisser,"²⁰ is another outstanding example of Pennsylvania-German vernacular architecture. In front, the foundation measures seventy-two feet, seven inches, while the sides are thirty feet with an additional eight feet, eight inch cantilevered forebay along the southwestern side. There is, too, a more recent frame addition along part of the front, which seems typical for a great many barns of this part of central Pennsylvania.



The Barnert barn as seen from the southeast.



Barner Barn - Section
A-B (see Figure 6)



Unfortunately, inside, on the ground level, the original stall configuration was removed some years ago and replaced by a more contemporary system. The upper floor, though, has an extremely well-preserved forebay log-crib structural system which serves as hay and straw mows. This system has "V"-notched log cribs on each end of the barn (see Fig. 6). The cribs measure approximately eighteen feet, nine inches by thirty feet; they support a roof system composed of splayed purlin posts, purlins, and common rafters. The two open bays

between the cribs are separated by the bent, or heavy timber framework (see Fig. 7). Above the bay closest to the north crib is an overden (*over-denn*²¹), a loft often used to store unthreshed grain shocks or surplus hay and straw. After drying the shocks were tossed down to the threshing floor (*dresch-denn*²²) where they were threshed with hand flails or, more recently, by threshing machines.



South log-crib mow of Barner barn; note "V"-notched logs.

John Henry Barner died of a gunshot wound sometime in December of 1822. Family accounts of the tragedy say that "retiring one night in the best of health, he was found dead in bed the next morning, being shot during the night by some unknown assassin who was never found or brought to justice for the terrible crime."²³ No account of his death can be found in any of the regional newspapers of that day, and the family version, which raises more questions than it answers, is open to serious doubt. For example, when he died his wife and fifteen of his children were living. Assuming that most of them were still at home, it seems likely an assailant would choose circumstances — a different time, a different place — in which his victim would be more vulnerable to attack.

The real story of Henry Barner's death may never be known, but there are at least two possibilities: patricide or suicide, perhaps due to a terminal illness, with the subsequent "unknown assassin" story circulated to avoid disrespect for the family. However it occurred, Henry may have had a premonition of his impending death, for he made a will on August 15, 1822, just a few short months before he died. On January 23, 1823, his estate was inventoried and appraised. The following items were listed:²⁴

1 Sorl mare	\$39.00	1 Grinstone	\$2.25
1 Dark Brown mare	35.00	1 Turning bench and	
1 Dark Bayhors	20.00	joiners tools	50.00
1 Britebay mare	10.00	1 Wolf trap	4.00
Set of hors gears	20.00	1 Lot of old iron	1.75

1 Waggon	25.00	1 Sled	3.50
2 Plows	10.00	1 Harrow	3.25
1 Lot log chains and		1 Scythe and cradle	.75
Double Trees	5.00	1 Crosscut saw	2.00
4 Heifers	16.00	1 Ax and Mason	
3 Calfs	6.00	Hammer	1.00
10 Sheep	12.50	1 Grubbing How	.30
1 Wheelbarrow &		1 Saadle	.50
Shuvel	2.00	2 Sickles	.16
1 Cutting Box and half		½ Bushel flaxseed	.82
bushel	2.50	1 Riffle gun and	
1 Windmill Sive	.75	pouch	14.00
and Hayfork		His Book ²⁵	147.00
1 Flax brack	.25		
1 Log Sled	.30		
9 Shots [shoats]	8.00	Total	\$450.73

It should be noted that this inventory is the personal property of Henry Barner, and many of the items listed seem to have been associated with the barn and out-buildings, except perhaps for the rifle, pouch, and book. A number of interesting points concerning his life emerge from a study of this list of his possessions. His claim to being a carpenter seems to be well-supported by the fact that a turning bench (lathe) and joiner's tools are listed, and the inclusion of a log sled and log chains likewise suggest a sawmill operation. Otherwise, there appear to be the typical items that might be found in any farm inventory of the time: a wagon, plows, a harrow, a scythe and cradle, a grubbing hoe, sickles, etc. It seems the Barners grew flax, no doubt a major source of



North log-crib mow of Barner barn; note the granary entrance door on left and the log joists above which support the overden.

home-produced linen, as the inventory mentions a flax brake and flax seed. A flax heckle, mentioned in the 1847 inventory of Susanna's estate, was probably kept in the house, which explains why it does not appear with the other flax-related items in Henry's inventory.

If this inventory tells us much about life on the Barner farm during Henry's lifetime, his will (with all its misspellings) gives us a glimpse into how it was to continue after the patriarch's death:

Last Will and Testament of Henry Barner: In the name of God, Amen, I Henry Barner, Carpenter of Centre County, Logan Township in the State of Pennsylvania to [do] make this my last will and testament hereby revoking all others —

Item — I give and bequeth to each and evry of my ten sons a young coalt sucessively raised as the produce of the mares that are on my prefsent place on wich I now live to be theres as the[y] are of age and grow up —

Item — I give and bequeth to each and every of my fife girls to each and every of them one cow and one bet [bed] as the[y] are on [of] age and grow up —

Item — I give and bequeth to my two sons Henry and Adam Barner the parsonal property for their own us[e] after beeing apraised by two fit parsons [persons] and true inventory made their of and my real property as long as my dear wife is alife or dur-

ing her widowhood to farm the same for the benefit of the family, or if the[y] not except [accept] so, then to give the widow every year forty bushels of weat and ten bushels of rye, and one hundred wait of pork, and one hundred wait of beef and forty wait of clean skutcht flax and ten pounds of wool and the use of three cows and of potators and kabitsh [cabbage] and turnips and the third bushel of what the[y] raise and after manuring of the gardens the one third is for the use of the widow and the younger children for maintaining them and if the[y] can not agree to live in one house the[y] must build and erect a seperet house to an [at a] convenient place and shell finish it in such a manner fit for to live in —

Item — I give and bequeth to my dear wife Stafe [stove] and clock, and the kitchen trefser [dresser/cupboard] and household and kitchen furniture as long as she lives or during her widowhood and of the produce of the sawmill the[y] are to give the widow the one third of the income of it for schooling and bringing up the younger children in manner fit for tradesman or as the circumstances will allow and the[y] are to keep sufittant fier wood [sufficient firewood] for the widow, and if the[y] not agree to, I give the privilege to my dear wife to lent or lease the same to any other parson or parsons whar she sees proper for the tarm of her lifetime or widowhood and after her death I will and bequeath the

whole of my estate to be divided among my fifteen children in equal shear and share alike after public sale being made thereof of all the real and personal property or by the best advantage to the children hoping that the[y] will live in love and harmony together ajsit [assist] and advice [advise] with their mother in working and improving for her and their own advantage —

I do hereby appoint my dear wife Susanna Barner and my two sons Henry and Adam Barner Executors of this my last will and desiring that the[y] may pay all my just debts and execute justly and uprightly with the whole of my family as the[y] will not be afraid to answer for it in the presents of Almighty God in Witnifs I set my hand and seal this Fifteems day of August one thousand eight hundred and twenty two 1822.

Witnifs Presents	(Signed By)
Henry Herring [in German],	Henry Barner
John Shitz [Sheets]	[in German]
Henry Herring Jun.	

Centre County Henry Herring and John Shitz [Sheets] came before Frank L. Smith register for the probate of wills and granting Letters of Administration in and for Centre County, subscribing witnifses to the within instrument named and now deceased that they saw him sign seal and heard him the said Henry Barner publish and declare the said instrument of writing as and for his last will and testament, that at the same time the said Henry Barner was of sound and disposing mind memory and understanding that they severally signed the said instrument of writing as witnifses to the execution of the same, in the presence of the said Henry Barner and at his request and in the presence of each other, also that they saw the other subscribing witnifs Henry Herring, sign his name as witnifs. Sworn and subscribed the 25th December AD 1822 before me, F.B. Smith, Register.

John Shitz [Sheets]
Henry Herring.

* * *

Little is known of the Barner homestead and its activities in the years between the death of Henry and his wife. Susanna Barner did not remarry, and when her husband was buried there were at least four children under ten years of age. The Barners had twenty-one children (and there were no multiple births), of whom fifteen reached maturity. According to one account, Susanna “ate her meals by having all [the] children sit in [a] circle on [the] floor. She got a piece of bread for each child, spread it, and took a bite from each piece, or



This well-used, well-crafted sidesaddle (now in the possession of H. W. Barner) is believed to have been owned by Susanna Barner who “at the time her youngest child was married was still able to ride horseback over the mountains to visit her children.”

other food as she went around the circle. She got her meal in this way. On Sunday she had her family stand around the table and in this manner impressed the Sabbath.”²⁶

Obviously life for Susanna Barner was not easy, and she seems to have been a remarkable person, for “the trials and hardships she was forced to endure in her primitive mountain home were many; the wild animals which haunted the forests often killed her cattle; and she was compelled to work early and late in order to keep her family together until they were able to care for themselves.”²⁷ Another report says “she was one of the best of women, very strong, being able to [shoulder and]²⁸ carry three bushels of wheat, and at the time her youngest child was married she was still able to ride horseback over the mountains to visit her children.”²⁹

After her husband’s death Susanna Barner shared the farm with Henry Barner, Jr., the estate’s primary executor, and his wife, Catherine (Kern) Barner; they started their own family of thirteen children in April, 1830. In 1840 Henry Jr. bought and moved to his own farm of three hundred acres; it encompassed the entire present-day village of Carroll, about five miles east of Loganton. Then Christian Barner, the youngest surviving son, took over the family farm and Susanna lived with him and his family until she died (“while paring apples”³⁰) in 1847 at age seventy-two. She was buried in the “old cemetery in Sugar Valley.”³¹

This “old cemetery” was the graveyard at Schracktown Lutheran and Reformed Church (once known as the Centerville Cemetery), located about one mile east of Booneville — about halfway between Booneville and Loganton. “The first burial in the Schracktown Ceme-

tery was in 1806 and the last burial was just one hundred years later in 1906.”³² This is where Henry Barner was interred, and family accounts say Susanna was buried “with him.” The few records of the Schracktown Church which escaped several inundations and conflagrations over the years attest to the fact that the Barners were indeed members there; and no doubt their children who died in infancy and childhood were also buried in the cemetery, as were Samuel Karstetter and John Heckman, first and second husbands of their oldest daughter, Catherine (1803-1878).

The church building Henry and Susanna Barner knew is long gone, having been abandoned about 1851 when the new St. Paul’s Evangelical and High German Reformed Church was built in Loganton. The cemetery is still in existence, though over the years many of the tombstones have been removed or decimated by the ravages of time. There is no evidence that Henry Barner ever had a stone marking his grave, but the widow of a Barner descendant recalls seeing Susanna Barner’s tombstone about 1940, and “although the stone was crumbling the following inscription was still legible”:³³

SOME WOMEN HAVE CHILDREN
AND OTHERS HAVE NONE
BUT HERE LIES THE MOTHER
OF TWENTY-ONE.

Susanna Barner’s estate appraisal and inventory was completed on December 11, 1847, and is listed as follows:

1 Clock	\$25.00	2 Iron pot and	
Stove and elbow	7.00	Kitchen furniture	\$5.00
Beurou	4.00	1 Lot pewter ware	2.00
Salt box	.75	1 Copper tea kettle	1.00
5 Chairs	1.25	Smoothing irons	.50
1 Table	2.00	1 Bench	.06¼
3 Beds and 4		Kitchen dresser	5.00
bedsteads	25.00	Knives and forks	.25
1 Stand	15.75	Pepper Box	.25
1 Chest	2.00	1 Pair steel yards	1.50
Cradle	.75	1 Cow bell	.50
Small chair		1 Lot of books	2.00
and basket	.06	Weavers Loom and	
2 Spinning wheels		Apperatus	10.00
and reel	5.00	2 Iron kettles	6.00
Dough trough	.25	2 Tubs	.50
1 Lot of old barrels	.12½	2 Stove plates	.50
1 looking glass	.25	2 Wool cards	.25
1 Bench	.25	1 Overcoat	1.00
		1 Flax heckle	1.50
		Total	\$112.74¾
		(Clerk’s error — total was	\$127.74¾)

This detailed household inventory no doubt includes many items from Henry’s lifetime, and confirms that Susanna received the stove and dresser (“tresser”) men-

tioned in his will. Judging from the contents listed, the Barner household seems to have been a well-furnished and prosperous one.

* * *



Bill Barner and Mary Hoffer at the Barner farm (November, 1985).

Eight of the sons and all five of the daughters of Henry and Susanna Barner who reached maturity went on to have their own large families, bearing from seven to thirteen children each; there were thus some 121 grandchildren of the couple. On August 29, 1849, nearly two years after Susanna’s death, the original 430-acre Barner tract was sold at public sale. It was purchased by George and Catharine Achenbach, who re-sold it immediately in two parcels. On October 17, 1849, one parcel of three hundred acres, thirty-six perches, was conveyed in joint ownership to George Spyker, Henry Spyker, and George Sharp, all of Aaronsburg. Christian Barner bought the remaining parcel of one hundred thirty-three acres, one hundred and ten perches, which included the log house and barn. He owned it until May,

1864, when it was sold to one John G. Klepper and, at which time, after fifty-seven years, Barner ownership of the property came to an end.

But, although the Barners are long gone from the property, their house and barn remain and are important, not only for their typical Pennsylvania-German characteristics, but for the help they give us in determining how far the forms reached. Classic vernacular architectural forms such as these are more commonly associated with core German settlements in the southeastern part of the state. However, the Barner farm clearly shows that these forms initially appeared on the frontier where they retained their strong ethnic characteristics. No doubt there were other, similar structures built by early German pioneers in the area. Windshield surveys would indicate however, that those which survived in the region are exceedingly rare.

ENDNOTES

¹“Adam Barner (father of John Henry Barner) was born in Switzerland and emigrated to America in early manhood, before the period of the Revolution. He was hired out for 7 years to pay his passage across the ocean. When the Revolutionary War broke out, he was pressed into the military service, and continued in the army until the close of the war, after which he settled in (what is now) Liverpool Township . . .” *Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of the Juniata Valley, Comprising the Counties of Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Perry, Pennsylvania*, 1897. p. 1316. 1758 being given as the precise year of Adam’s emigration seems to originate in the writings of Mrs. Annie Gertrude (Barner) Gamby (1876-1960), who organized the annual Barner Reunion in Liverpool, Pa., in 1920.

²County tax rolls, Berks County Courthouse and Berks County Historical Society, Reading, Pa.

³John Bunn estate papers (packet), Berks County Courthouse, Reading, Pa.

⁴Book of Land Warrants, East of the Susquehanna, Pennsylvania State Land Office, Harrisburg, Pa. Adam Barner warrant dated 15 October 1772 for 100 acres; surveyed for Adam Barner, 19 November 1772, comprising 99 acres, 72 perches with allowances. Warrant released back to State Land Office, 29 June 1773, because this tract infringed upon the land of the proprietaries.

⁵Deed to Adam Barner from John Pfouts dated April 17th, 1785 — and recorded July 17th, 1786 — Cumberland County Court House, Carlisle, Pa. — Vol 1, Book H, page 272. “John Pfouts, Greenwood Township, yeoman, sells for 110 lbs Pennsylvania money paid to him by Adam Barner of the same Township, County and State aforesaid, grants and releases to Adam Barner land that lies on a run that flows into the Susquehanna River and adjoins other lands of John Pfouts — part of an original tract of 300 acres that came to John Pfouts from Michael Pfouts — the latter having it by conveyance or deed.” John Pfouts signed his name in German. John Bunn, Jr. in 1791 received a warrant for this tract; surveyed to John Bunn, Jr. in 1803 containing 212 acres, and 18 perches; and patented to John Bunn, Jr. in 1833.

⁶Warrant to Adam Berner by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania dated December 13th, 1785 for 50 acres of land, more or less, in Greenwood Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania Book of Land Warrants, West of the Susquehanna, Pennsylvania State Land Office, Harrisburg, Pa.; surveyed for Adam Berner 16 January 1785 containing 54 acres, and 144 perches. Subsequently sold and deeded the warrant to John Bunn, Jr., May 30th, 1798 for 50 lbs by Adam Barner and Fanny his wife all rights to said land and title thereto. Signed by Adam Barner (in German), and Fanny (with her mark).

⁷Approximate marriage date of Adam Barner and Fanny “Bunn” — widow, between 22 August 1766 and 18 May 1767 is revealed by tax rolls change from S(ingle) to M(arried), and from the John Bunn, Sr. estate Account. Also Fanny’s 3 known Bunn children’s births were: (1) Johan Jacob Bunn, born 7/14/1758; (2) Elizabeth Bunn, born 11/22/1760; and (3) John Bunn, Jr., born 12/01/1765. John Bunn, Sr. must have died just prior to 28 August 1766 — the date the Letter of Administration was issued to his widow, “Veronica.” Record of remarriage is presently unavailable; only deduction.

⁸John Bunn, Jr. (1 December 1765 — 5 August 1847) was born in Robeson Township, Berks County and died in Thompson Township, Seneca County, Ohio and was probably the 3rd child of Johannes (“John”) Bunn Sr. and Fanny (Conrad) Bunn. John Bunn Sr. was born about 1723 in Skippack Township, Philadelphia County (now Montgomery County), Pa. and was the son of Peter and Gerretje (Jansen) Bon (Bunn). This Peter Bon (1675 — 3 July 1745) emigrated to America about 1702 from Crefeld, Germany and was married to Gerretje (Gertrude) on 1 April 1711 by Reverend Paulus Van Fleck. Several, or all of the children of Peter Bon were baptised in the Bensalem Dutch Reformed Church at Schepack (Skippack). Johannes Bunn Sr. was married to Maria Euphronica Conrad, 18 August 1757, in the Augustus Evangelical Lutheran Church, Trappe, Pa.

⁹Susanna Bunce was born probably in Cumru Township, Berks County (ca. 1775), and was probably the daughter of Thomas Buntz who shows up on the tax rolls there for 1760 and 1761; Berks County Historical Society, Reading, Pa. Her mother’s name is presently unknown.

¹⁰Approximate marriage year of 1793 is via deduction. John Henry and Susanna Barner are recorded as having had 21 or 22 children — depending upon the account that is read — none of whom were twins. Their eldest child, Benjamin Barner, was born 8 May 1794 and the births of the children continued regularly until about the time of Henry’s death in December 1822. Ten sons and five daughters grew to maturity. Eight sons and five daughters married and had large families of their own.

¹¹The supposition that Henry Barner and family had made their move to the Sugar Valley area by 1807 is also supported by family records that state their 10th child, David Barner, was born in Nittany Valley on 14 April 1807. Also the current tax assessment office in the Clinton County Courthouse, Lock Haven, Pa., employs a large file card on this property and its more recent history and owners. But the card reads that the “log house was constructed 1780 and the log barn in 1800.” The reliability and source of this information is unknown.

¹²John Blair Linn, *History of Centre and Clinton Counties, Pennsylvania*, 1883, p. 34.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 353. “Roads.”

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 612; “mistake?” The fact that Henry Barner apparently lived on this tract for at least 7½ years before applying for his warrant supports the contention that this was not a mistake.

¹⁵This fact is further supported by the Orphans’ Court Sale Notice in the *Democratic Whig* of July 26, 1848 which states in addition to the sawmill on the property, the tract was noted for the “Best White Pine Timber.”

¹⁶*Ibid.*, *Democratic Whig*, Bellefonte, Pa., July 26, 1848.

¹⁷Linn’s *History*, p. 614.

¹⁸See Robert C. Bucher, “The Continental Log House, *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 12:4, pp. 14-19.

¹⁹See Henry C. Mercer, “The Bible in Iron,” pictured stoves and stoveplates of the Pennsylvania Germans, Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, Pa., 1966, 3rd. ed.

²⁰See Alfred L. Shoemaker (ed.), *The Pennsylvania Barn*, Pennsylvania Folklife Society, Kutztown, Pa. 1959, pp. 28-34.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 46.

²²*Ibid.*

²³*Commemorative Biographical Records of Central Pennsylvania*, including the counties of Centre, Clinton, Union, and Snyder . . . , 1898, J. H. Beers and Co., Chicago, Ill., p. 693.

²⁴Centre County Library and Historical Museum, Bellefonte, Pa.

²⁵Large amount suggests accounts due from a ledger book.

²⁶Contained in the handwritten notes found among the George Cleveland Lyter (1884-1955) “Papers on the Barner Family of Central Pennsylvania.”

²⁷*Commemorative Biographical Records*, p. 711.

²⁸Lyter, “. . . Being able to shoulder and carry . . .”

²⁹*Commemorative Biographical Records*, p. 693; also, a well-used, well-crafted sidesaddle has been handed down through at least three generations of the Barner family and is now in the possession of H. W. Barner, Lock Haven, Pa. It is believed to be that used by the widow, Susanna Barner.

³⁰Lyter.

³¹*Commemorative Biographical Records*, p. 711.

³²*125th Anniversary — Loganton and Sugar Valley — 1965 — Memories of The Old Lutheran and Reformed Church Located One and One-Half Miles Southwest of Loganton*. By Laura Smith.

³³Sophia Paul of Hatboro, Pa.

A Teacher With A Heart: CARRIE FRANKENFIELD HORNE

by Robert L. Leight



When Carrie Frankenfield Horne retired in 1965 the senior class at Palisades Junior-Senior High School dedicated its yearbook to her. This is the picture used with that dedication.

The one- or two-room rural school was the cultural mainstay of country life in Pennsylvania for a long period of time. In such schools, children ages five or six through the early teens shared the same classroom, and for many of them this was like an extended family, with

the teacher filling the role of a surrogate parent. In this closely knit environment a teacher could have an exceptional influence. As centers of culture, country schools were very often symbolic of the values of education and hard work of rural Pennsylvania-German communities.

One such school was the Passer School, located in rural Springfield Township in Upper Bucks County. Built in 1877 as a one-room school with a bell tower, the school served its local community as an educational facility until school consolidation closed it in February, 1953. During much of that time it also housed a Sunday School organization. The building still stands, maintained by a local school group which opens it a few times a year for homecomings and fundraising events. A second classroom had been added about the turn of the century.

That the school has been maintained for more than a quarter century after the last students attended it, is remarkable evidence that the experiences of the scholars there were meaningful. Although the Palisades School District has existed as a larger jointure of schools in the area for more than thirty years, and though more modern school buildings have replaced the small country schools, the Passer School, now preserved as a community center, is a substantive reminder that a tightly knit community thrived there not so long ago. As is often the case, this country school is identified with a particular teacher who worked there.

That teacher was Carrie Frankenfield Horne, who attended the school as a student for eight years between 1904 and 1912. She returned there as a teacher in 1947 and taught during the final years of service of the Passer School as a public school. She was one of the original teachers in the Palisades Junior-Senior High School, thus aiding the students in their transition from the small, local community school to the larger consolidated school.

A TEACHER WITH A HEART

A member of a teaching family — both an older brother and sister preceded her in the profession — Carrie Frankenfield Horne was a teacher with a heart. She developed an extraordinary empathy with the young adolescents that she taught in the Passer School and the Palisades Junior-Senior High School. In 1965 when Carrie Horne retired from her active teaching at Palisades Junior-Senior High School, the class of 1965 dedicated its yearbook to her. School principal



The Passer School where Carrie Horne was both teacher and pupil.

Theodore A. Brown, who had supervised her work in the high school for a dozen years, wrote a dedication: "Here is a teacher who has dedicated the latter years of her career to understanding those who are not very good at explaining, and explaining things to those who are not very good at understanding. Always concerned with high standards of performance, she stimulates students to do what they cannot do. She leaves a trace of herself in every student she teaches." (Yearbook, p. 2).

The student editors of the yearbook added the following comment after noting her contributions to the community: "She has the gift of restoring self-confidence in her students with a few words and a friendly pat on the back. It isn't often that one finds a person so young in spirit and so devoted to helping others, but yet we have." (Yearbook, p. 2). A quarter century has passed since Carrie Horne's retirement, yet she is still remembered by those associated with the Passer School and the Palisades School District.

For example, one of the students at the Passer School went on to become a teacher and a colleague of Mrs. Horne at the Palisades Junior-Senior High School. The student, Willard Wilson, remembers Carrie Horne as the most important influence upon his educational career, for she was an enthusiastic, inspirational teacher. Wilson had been selected as the captain of the safety patrol at the Passer School when Mrs. Horne taught there in 1947, and he recalls that she always insisted that as a student leader he emphasize the positive and avoid telling students what not to do.

Willard Wilson also remembers Carrie Horne's enthusiasm for teaching. She began each day with an encouragement to "Dig right in." As she critiqued the work of her students her comment often was, "You can do better than this." Mrs. Horne's enthusiasm continued as she and Wilson became colleagues at Palisades. Rather than leave the room when he came to teach health to her students, she remained, and together they taught the material, relating it to the rest of the students' courses. Nor did her concern for her pupils cease at the end of the school day. Wilson recalls that when a group of eight students at Passer had to stay for a late bus, she taught them to play pinochle, thinking it a good form of recreation.

Carrie Frankenfield Horne's career as a teacher was rather typical. Coming from a rural Pennsylvania-German background, she attended the normal school at Kutztown, which provided the credentials for her to become a professional teacher. Like many others, she married after a few years of teaching and left the profession to give her full attention to raising a family and being a full-time wife and mother. She was widowed and devoted a second career to teaching in the days of intense teacher shortages after World War II. She was a member of the generation of teachers who were involved in the transition from the small, decentralized rural school to the modern consolidated school. Although her career was typical, it was clear to those whose lives she touched that Carrie Horne was a special person.

BACKGROUND

Caroline Frankenfield was born on May 21, 1898, in the then predominantly Pennsylvania-German community between Quakertown, Coopersburg, and Hellertown originally called Fair Mount. (When a post office was established in 1888, the community and its school were renamed "Passer.") Her parents, William and Mary Frankenfield, were tailors. The Frankenfield family traces its origins to Simon and Eva Frankenfield, who came to America from Germany in 1748; they have lived continuously on their tract of land in Springfield Township in Upper Bucks County since colonial times. As already mentioned, Carrie's generation became educators; she followed a brother and sister into the teaching profession. Her husband, Irvin Horne, was a teacher too, and later became supervising principal of schools in Whitemarsh, Montgomery County. Her daughter, Mrs. Robert E. Heiland, also became a teacher.

Carrie attended the Passer School for eight years. One room was considered the primary room, and after completing four years there she graduated to the "big room" for four more years of schooling. As she remembered it, "One of those four years, maybe two, my teacher was my own sister. That was a little difficult sometimes because I was sure to behave myself. I better have! Not only that, but she was pretty hard on me when it came to final exams because she gave the final exams to us to enter grammar school. I was heartbroken because I had a perfect arithmetic paper but she took one point off. I couldn't understand [why]. But then, to ease my heart, in the evening she told me she had to do it because I missed one decimal point in one of the places."

By 1903-04 Springfield Township began a high school in nearby Pleasant Valley. Some of the students doubled up their elementary school work in order to enter high school earlier: "I think they must have given them some kind of test so they got to high school very young. My sister and parents frowned on that and insisted that I have eight years at Passer before I went to high school. I think it was a good thing."

When asked why she chose teaching as a career, her reply was, "Well, in those days it was really about the only thing a woman could do. I guess it was just drilled into me that being a teacher was a pretty fine thing, because my father always made my sister feel that she had a wonderful calling and was doing a wonderful thing. He tried to ingrain that in all of us."

After study in the Passer School and graduation from Springfield Township High School, Carrie Frankenfield attended Keystone State Normal School at Kutztown, Pennsylvania, which later became Kutztown State University. She explained that "In those days you could become a teacher by going to a normal school for a six-

week summer session [after which] you could get a special teaching permit from the county superintendent . . . My sister took me to Keystone Normal with the idea of enrolling me [in the six-week program] . . . But the principal urged her to try to get me through two years [of schooling] . . . I guess he was anxious to see another two years of a Frankenfield.

Life at Keystone Normal School was highly regimented. Mrs. Horne remembered that she needed a letter from her mother to be permitted to go home over the weekend. Students were assigned to specific tables for dinner where they were overseen by members of the faculty. Carrie's dining-table supervisor turned out to be her supervisor in the model school, where she did her practice teaching. He was, she says, a man "noted for not giving any high grades. He was very stingy with his grades. I happened to be one of the people seated at his table in the dining room . . . and I guess I was one of his special people, because he always called us that, and I did pull the highest grade."

At the conclusion of her two years at Kutztown Carrie Frankenfield had earned a normal-school diploma. Then, after two years of satisfactory teaching as approved by the county superintendent of schools, this became a permanent certificate which permitted her to teach any subject listed on it in any classroom in the state. As she said, the certificate listed subjects from "A" (algebra) to "Z" (zoology).



Carrie Frankenfield Horne, taken at the time of her graduation from Kutztown Normal School.

TEACHING IN THE LEHIGH VALLEY

By the time Carrie Frankenfield was ready for employment the United States was fighting in World War I. She was hired to teach in the Washington School in Northampton Heights, which is now a part of the Bethlehem School District. She lived in Allentown with her sister and another teacher and commuted to the Washington School. After two years she applied to teach in the Allentown School District where, although the schools were crowded, the pay was much better. She got a job teaching second grade in an annex of the Jefferson School. The salary was one hundred and five dollars a month; she would have received seventy-two dollars a month in Northampton Heights. After working two years in the Allentown School District she married, had a daughter, and left teaching for more than twenty years.

TEACHING IN COUNTRY SCHOOLS

At the end of the Second World War Carrie Horne returned to her childhood home in Passer; her parents had died and she moved into the Frankenfield homestead. She was hired to teach at Wimmer's School in nearby Richland Township; it "was a one-room school, with grades one to eight, with a big fat stove in the corner that had to be tended like any other stove. We did have a pump with water." Despite its inconveniences, the job turned out to be a blessing: "Unfortunately my husband died that March, so it was a very difficult year for me. But I was very grateful and thankful that I was teaching, because, for some reason or other, children can be very understanding and helpful. Those kids at Wimmer's School were like that. They helped me through the year."

After the death of her husband Mrs. Horne left the Upper Bucks County area for a short period of time to teach in Conshohocken where her daughter lived. But she returned to Passer in 1947, and "taught at the Passer School, my old school. I taught seventh and eighth grade there. I had a wonderful time."

When Carrie Frankenfield attended the two-room Passer School it served eight grades, with four grades in each room. But in 1936, when the Springfield Township School District began bus transportation, Passer became the District's middle school; now one room housed the fifth and sixth grades, the other the seventh and eighth grades. When Carrie Frankenfield Horne returned as a teacher, the building was crowded: "We opened school one fall and I had forty-four youngsters in my room. The teacher in the other room [also] had forty-four. Between the two of us we had eighty-eight youngsters." Space was a problem outside as well: "We didn't have enough playground space, but we had a very active PTA. The PTA bought a three-acre tract to the



Carrie Horne, ca. 1950, when she was teaching at the Passer School.

north of the school . . . After picking up all the stones, we managed to have two, three ball diamonds, so that we could have three good ball games going at one time."

The Passer School Parent-Teacher Association that Mrs. Horne mentions was a model of volunteerism. When, for instance, the school was wired for electricity in 1936, most of the work was done by volunteers, who also raised money for the materials through donations and dinners; then the organization paid the electric bills for many years. In addition, PTA members installed running water in the two school rooms, and purchased a typewriter and a spirit duplicator for the teachers to use.

Perhaps even more remarkable than these achievements was their commitment, already mentioned, to the purchase of additional land for the enlargement of the playground. There was a great deal of interest in organized sports such as baseball and football, but the school grounds were too small for such sports. So, in 1947 the PTA purchased three acres adjacent to the school from a farmer for seven hundred and fifty dollars — an enormous amount for the small volunteer group at that time. The school board loaned the sum to the PTA, and contributed an additional one hundred dollars for grading the property. The students, though,



*Mrs. Horne with a copy of her book **The Schoolhouse on the Hill**.*

continued with the hard physical work of removing small stones to make the field smooth and safe. In fact, "the favorite punishment was picking up stones . . . because there were millions and millions of stones."

Finally, however, the stones were cleared, the fields were seeded, and there was sufficient room for three baseball or softball diamonds on the playground tract. Finally, too, by 1953 the loan was repaid due to the hard work of PTA members. According to Mrs. Horne, "One big moneymaking event at that time was a one-night carnival held in August, 1949, on the Springfield High School grounds. Feature attractions were Asseba and Sabina with Ray Herring's Band. At this time this was a very popular Pennsylvania Dutch radio show." (*School House on the Hill*, p. 5).

Another group made a contribution to the Passer School as well, for it was more than just an educational center. On Sundays it became a religious center as there was a Sunday School organization which met there. This organization purchased an organ and a piano which were available for school use.

TO THE JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

The move from the Passer School to the new Palisades Junior-Senior High School was an exciting, yet nostalgic one; it took place on February 2, 1953. By this time Passer housed only grades five through seven. The school day began with the regular opening exercises, then books and other materials were packed in boxes and shopping bags so they could be carried to the new building. Carrie Horne remembered that "that was

a difficult day. In fact, unashamedly, I cried. A lot of children were crying too. We had [had] a very happy experience together . . . those years at Passer were, I would say, the highlight of my teaching career. I loved it there."

Mrs. Horne taught science under a departmentalized structure for two years at Palisades. When some of the students had difficulty making the adjustment to the new system of the junior high school, she volunteered to provide a transitional class in order to improve their chances for success. She was assigned the same group for two years, from seventh through eighth grades. In a self-contained classroom Mrs. Horne taught academic subjects, and specialized teachers handled physical education, art, music, industrial arts, and home economics. In time, her assignment became a self-contained special education class for educationally handicapped students. She was thus the first special education teacher for secondary students in the Palisades schools. Essentially, there existed in the mid- and late 1950s the type of class relationship and philosophy that has been advocated as the "least restrictive environment" for the learning handicapped in contemporary education.

Because she was concerned that her students were placed in a departmentalized situation after they left her class at the end of the eighth grade, she experimented with holding some eighth graders back in her class for an additional year while teaching the regular subjects. "But that was a hard year because I had twenty-five students with three grades to handle." This population included mentally handicapped, poorly motivated, and underachieving students.

When asked to compare teaching in a country school with teaching in the departmentalized junior-senior high school, Mrs. Horne replied: "I think that it was quite different. There were very few youngsters that you could get close to, and for the first time, when I got over there, I experienced a gang that would stick together. If you punished one, you had difficulty with the whole gang." She went on to say, "This was not true in the country schools in which I taught, because if there were two or three who banded together, you could get your good kids to help you disperse that gang and to back you in disciplining them. This was not true when you had a larger gang in the larger set-up. I felt that way and I was just uneasy. I was unhappy because I was not close enough to the youngsters."

Teachers like Mrs. Horne eased the transition from the country school, which was a small world of face-to-face relationships, to the sophisticated modern school, where relationships are likely to be more superficial and formal. A fourteen-year-old from a farm family who had attended small, local schools could easily be lost in the relative sophistication of a junior-senior high school. Mrs. Horne sensed this, and saw that the self-esteem of the unsophisticated country kids could be bolstered if they found some success in school: "I tried to find something that they could do well, and work on that so that they would have a feeling of accomplishment . . . Many of them have artistic talents." The same techniques succeeded when Mrs. Horne worked with the mentally and emotionally handicapped students.

Willard Fluck, one of her colleagues as a teacher and who later saw many of her students as the school guidance counselor, had reflected upon the influence of her experience in country schools upon her teaching personality: "Through her warm and understanding personal qualities, and her years of teaching in a one-room school kind of situation where she had to learn to teach all who came to her, whatever their assets or liabilities, Mrs. Horne had become a truly outstanding teacher. She asked to try her hand at helping the student who had the rest of us baffled."

This, then, was the heritage and challenge she left for the members of the teaching profession who would follow: to find the best qualities in all, to help them to be successful, and to help each one to respect himself or herself as a human being. On January 6, 1988, she passed away. Her obituary noted that she had been a teacher, a founder and past president of the Passer Community Association, a founder of the Springfield Township Historical Society, and a member of the township's historical commission. But a newspaper article could not put into words her influence upon the many students whose lives she touched. She loved them and her country school at Passer; there was no doubt where her heart was: "Someone once asked me if I'd like to go back to teaching while I was still capable, [and] what would I say if I had a choice between a country school and a well-built departmentalized school? I said, 'Give me the country school anytime.'"

NOTES

On August 21, 1986, the author interviewed Mrs. Horne at her home near Coopersburg, Pennsylvania. The interview was audiotaped and transcribed. These transcriptions are the source of the quotations of Mrs. Horne in the article.

Mrs. Horne has written a history of the Passer School which she titled *The Schoolhouse on the Hill* in 1974. Portions of this history were read at the homecoming of the school in 1977. Quotations are cited as *Schoolhouse on the Hill*.

Willard Fluck had been a teacher at Springfield High School and was a member of the original faculty of Palisades Junior-Senior High School and a guidance counselor during the tenure of Mrs. Horne in the school. He provided a copy of the 1965 yearbook, the *Palisadian*, which was dedicated to Mrs. Horne. It is cited as "Yearbook." He also provided the comment about her contribution to the Palisades' students.

Another former colleague, Willard Wilson, was also a student of Mrs. Horne at the Passer School. He shared his insights into her contributions as his teacher at the Passer School and later as a peer at the Palisades Junior-Senior High School.

Mrs. Robert Heiland shared scrapbooks and other memorabilia which documented the teaching career of Mrs. Horne. Particularly useful was the October 1989 newsletter of the Springfield Township Historical Society, which provided background about the Frankensfield family.

Oldes un Neies

Old and New

BOOK REVIEW

Steve Friesen, *A Modest Mennonite Home*. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1990.

In early July, 1710, a small group of Mennonites from the Palatinate left from London on the *Mary Hope*; on September 23 the ship reached Philadelphia. Since land in the Philadelphia area was expensive and the Mennonites were poor, they headed for Conestogo — a wilderness area in present-day Lancaster County, bounded on the southwest by the Susquehanna River — on what was then Pennsylvania's western frontier. (The first city in the region, Lancaster, was established twenty years later, in 1730.)

The emigrating group included Hans (John) Herr, Christian, his older brother, and, according to tradition, their father, Hans Herr. Christian Herr built a log house on his 500 acres and lived in it until 1719 when he built one of the first stone houses in the area. As Friesen notes: "In size and style, it was comparable to the medieval farmhouses the Mennonites had known in the Old World. Similar houses were built by other German immigrants, but today the 1719 Herr house is one of the few remaining buildings of its kind in North America."

Christian's stone house is, of course, the "modest" dwelling of the book's title, although interestingly enough it is known today as the Hans Herr House, probably because of the father's prominence in the early settlement. For, according to one early historian, Hans was the community's "venerable minister and pastor." Hans did live in the house, however, for he and his wife, Elizabeth, were a part of Christian's household.

Beginning with the Herr family's Anabaptist roots in Switzerland, author Friesen tells their story and the story of their property to the present time; the Herr

House is a museum today, and the account of its rescue and restoration is a fascinating one. As the title suggests, the emphasis is on the house itself; yet this is more than the story of a building. It is the story of a religion, a community, a family, and a way of life that has maintained its vitality to the present day.

Well researched, well-written, and with exceptionally attractive illustrations by photographer John Herr (who played in the abandoned house as a child), this book will not disappoint anyone with an interest in early Pennsylvania history and/or culture.

GRANTS AVAILABLE TO STUDY IRISH-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

The Irish American Cultural Institute, an educational foundation based in St. Paul, Minnesota, administers the Irish Research Funds program to support the study of Irish-American history, literature, and life. Typical grants range from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The application deadline is August 1, 1991. The 1991 round of grants will be reviewed in October, and grants will be made early in 1992.

Grants are available to projects in all disciplines and from anywhere in the country; proposals which feature a New York or a Midwestern dimension are particularly encouraged. Grants are made from endowed funds donated by the Irish Institute of New York and the O'Shaughnessy family of Minnesota. Another fund has been pledged by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Philadelphia.

For further information, contact the Irish American Cultural Institute, 2115 Summit Avenue, University of St. Thomas (#5026), St. Paul, MN 55105, or phone (612) 647-5678.

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