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Pennsylvania Dollhouse

SPRING
1981

A Memento

*from
"Grandfather's
Farm"*



Contributors



A teacher and educator all his working life, Charles Alexander Stevenson was born in Morgantown, West Virginia, on June 30, 1901. He penned the following memories of visits to his grandfather's farm in a series of letters to a cousin, Robert P. Stevenson, during the years 1975 to 1980. Charlie, as most of his friends know him, was then living in retirement at his home in Morgantown with his wife, Helen, also a retired teacher.

NOTE: Charles Stevenson has recently died.

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(Inside front cover)

COVER:

Richard G. Stevenson, the Grandfather of "Grandfather's Farm," in his Zouave Regimental uniform during the Civil War, from a daguerrotype. The returned veteran, of Scotch-Irish ancestry, was typical of many who sought their fortune in new farm development in post-war years. His wry sense of humor, tenacious belief in himself, and delight in the antics of an active grandson are obvious throughout the following account.

Layout and

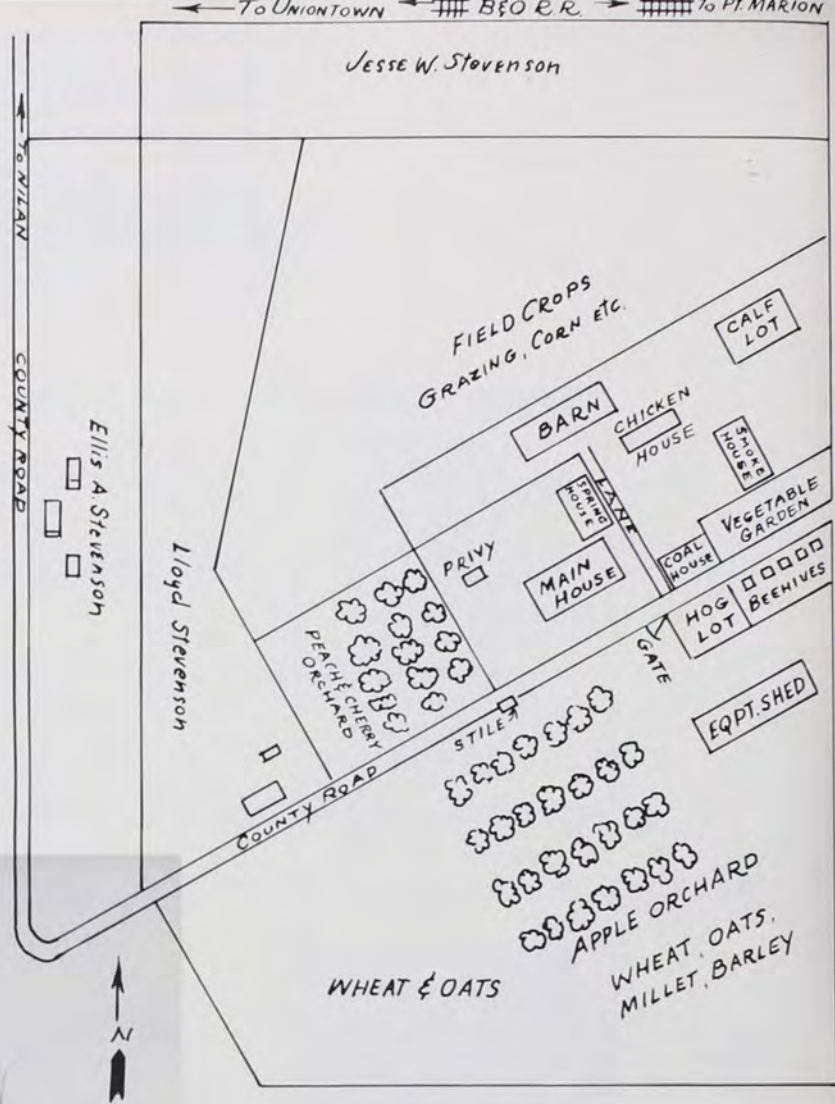
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The Good Life on Grandfather's Farm

by CHARLES A. STEVENSON

Transcribed and Edited
by ROBERT P STEVENSON



DRAWN FROM MEMORY - PLOT OF STEVENSON LANDS NOT SCALED

The Stevenson home presented this appearance from the township road in 1920. At lower right, note hitching post near open gate of picket fence enclosing the yard.

As a boy I spent much of my vacation time, both Summer and Winter, visiting my grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Gregg Stevenson. At that time, in the first and second decades of the 1900's, they lived on a gently-sloping farm in the hills above Nilan, Pennsylvania, a village that sits in the bottom lands on the eastern shore of the Cheat River soon after that stream crosses into southwestern Pennsylvania from West Virginia. Less than two miles due southward from the farm the famous Mason-Dixon line stretches East and West.

The farm consisted of about eighty acres. It was the third farm my grandparents had tilled since their marriage on March 14, 1872, seven years after Grand-

father took off the blue of a soldier in the Civil War. They lost the first through signing a note for a relative and lived on the second only briefly. In the 1890's Richard and Susan Stevenson moved their family to the former Frankenberry farm above Nilan, the scene of the happy memories I want to recall for you.

For the most part the eighty acres lay well [were well situated] sloping easily southwestward toward the Cheat. Recalling the farm now, I can trace every part of the land, from the wheat fields across the township road that divided the farm to the calf lot beyond the barn and the garden patch that lay along the road a short distance north of the house. The

house itself was handy to the road, and the road was dusty in Summer and muddy in Winter and Spring except when the ruts were frozen.

By the time of my visits there, only three of the seven Stevenson children remained at home: my Uncle Ellis, my Uncle Harry, and Aunt Estella who, however, was married in 1910 and departed to lead her own life. Uncle Ellis, an expert carpenter, eventually built his own home just down the road near that of his brother, my Uncle Lloyd. Uncle Harry remained at home and at the death of my grandparents inherited the homeplace. My Aunt Essie, the elder of the two daughters, was then working in Pittsburgh as secretary to the manager of the William Penn Hotel, my Uncle Joe had left home and was seldom heard from thereafter, and my father, Jesse Walton Stevenson, had established himself in the lumber milling business in Morgantown, West Virginia.



Castle Keiser, located along the Cheat in Nilan, was a famous summer resort of the Victorian age. Vacationists from Pittsburgh came there by train and in packet boat. One Stevenson son, Lloyd, worked in it as a teenager. One of his jobs was to mow spacious lawns where guests played croquet.

From our home on a hilltop in Morgantown to Grandfather's farm was fourteen or fifteen miles by road, but in those days we mostly travelled back and forth on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. As a young man in the 1890's my father had helped build these tracks when they were extended from Uniontown, Pennsylvania, to Cheat Haven, Nilan, Point Marion, and then into West Virginia along the Monongahela River to Morgantown, Fairmount, and beyond. Every mile of this track was the scene of memories for my father. As a teamster on the grade construction, he had the job of managing a pair of heavy draft horses hitched to a dump wagon. These wagons were side dumping. End pivots on the bed permitted the load to be dumped either to the right or left. The wagons were loaded by some of a gang of one hundred fifty or so day laborers employed on the job with picks, mattocks, and long-handled shovels. The muscles of these men did the same work accomplished by today's huge earth-moving machines.

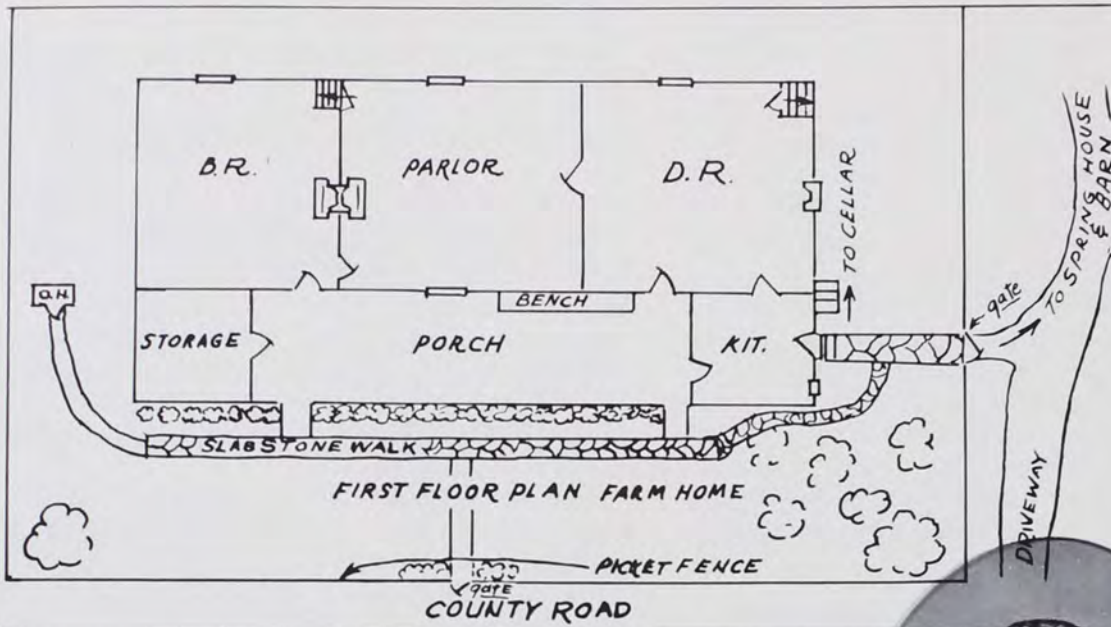
The trip from our home to Grandfather's took

approximately two hours. We needed a half hour or so to walk to the B & O station a mile and a half away in the valley below. How long we rode depended on the type of train we caught, a flyer or an accommodation. The latter stopped at Nilan, and it was then just a brief walk up the hill. The flyers deposited us at Point Marion, the Pennsylvania town located within the point of land formed where the Cheat joins the Monongahela. There, after the train had departed, we walked the ties of the long railroad trestle that spanned the Cheat. Later, when the present highway bridge was built across the Cheat shortly before World War I, we took that route. There had been a ferry before the highway bridge was built but for some reason my folks never used it.

East of the Cheat we turned right and followed a road along the river until we could turn up the hill at Nilan. Grandfather's house was set back only a few feet to the left of the road. Originally, this was a simple log cabin, but by the time I knew it the logs had been mostly covered and a dining room and a small kitchen had been added to the northeastern end, with a bedroom and storage garret above this space.

This bedroom was unheated, and Uncle Ell and Uncle Harry slept there. I can still see them scurrying down the steep stairs, shoes and socks in hand, to finish dressing before the dining-room fireplace. In cold weather, the iron grate there, very deep and perhaps forty-two inches long, was kept filled with hot, glowing coals. On the mantel above the fireplace was a pendulum clock, a dish in which Grandmother kept change, and a bowl filled with paper tapers.

As a youngster I was always delighted when Grandmother said: "Son, I believe we should fill the taper jar." (I was always "son" to each of my grandparents.) This activity usually occurred in the evening after the dishes had been washed and put away. Then, when the white tablecloth had been removed from the dining-room table, carefully folded, and stored away, we spread out a couple of sheets from the *Genius*, the daily newspaper that came from the county seat, Uniontown. With sharp scissors we cut the paper into strips about one-half inch wide and eight inches long. Next, taking one of the strips, Grandmother taught me how to wet my thumb and forefinger with my tongue. "Not too wet," she would say. Then, beginning at one corner, we would roll the strip into a tight spiral about five inches long. That done, we would pinch the top and bend it forward to hold the spiral snug and tight. Thus we produced the tapers that Grandfather touched to the fireplace coals and then used to light his corncob pipe and Grandmother used to light the coal-oil lamps and for many other uses for which matches usually would have been required. Just for fun, I still occasionally make a few tapers, just to keep my hand in.



Susan Moore Stevenson was a native of Greene County, PA. This photo shows her at age 18, then a student at Greene Academy, Carmichaels, PA.

The dining-room ceiling was made of tongue-and-groove boards about $3\frac{1}{4}$ or $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, each with a bead running down its center. These, in all probability, were cut from yellow poplar, the tulip tree. In this ceiling was a recess about six inches deep directly above the fireplace hearth, the recess being about as wide and as long as the hearth itself. In the unheated room directly above this ceiling recess my grandparents stored their seed sweet potatoes during the Autumn and Winter months. Warmth rising from the dining-room fireplace was apparently sufficient to keep them in good condition until the next planting time arrived.

The kitchen was off the dining room, facing the road, with a door leading to the porch that ran the full length of the house. There, on a stool back in the corner, I sat as a young boy, happily listening to the stories that Grandmother told as she worked. Some were happy stories, some nostalgic, some about my father and Uncle Ellis, some historical and some philosophical. For those years, Grandmother was a very special woman. In her younger days she had attended Greene Academy, at Carmichaels, Pennsylvania for four years, studying such college-level subjects as Greek, alchemy, calculus, trigonometry, and grammar and syntax. So as she prepared meals, I listened, enjoyed, and asked a trillion questions. Aunt Stella was there, too, in my youngest days, but Uncle John courted and married her when I was about ten. Thereafter, Grandmother and I had the kitchen to ourselves.

In one corner of the kitchen was the wood box. It was my job to keep this filled. The wood was for

summer use in the kitchen range or for starting coal fires in it or the fireplaces elsewhere in the house. During the Winter we mostly burned coal. The four-burner kitchen range was the source of heat for the kitchen. Burning coal was more convenient than using wood. If one covered a coal fire properly before retiring, a quick punch and a shake of the grate handle had a good fire going in a matter of minutes. It was at this time that Grandmother taught me a useful trick. When the coals were warm but no flames were showing, she took a little sugar from the bowl on the table and sprinkled it on the coals. It ignited almost instantly. Thus I learned something of the chemistry of sugar, that it is a carbohydrate, a volatile form of carbon.

Behind the door to the porch was a huge barrel that, when full, must have held two hundred pounds of flour. The wood was satin smooth from years of

usage and the smoothing action of the flour. The barrel had a wooden cover with a sculptured handle made by Uncle Ell.

A window to the left of the stove looked out to the northeast on the coalhouse and the vegetable garden along the road and the smokehouse below the garden. Beneath the window was a homemade table with a maple top two inches thick. White oilcloth usually covered this, but when the covering became dowdy or unsightly Grandmother removed it and worked directly on the beautiful curly-maple top. This was a solid plank about thirty-two inches wide and five or six feet long set upon three inch by three inch legs. The table contained two dovetailed drawers, each with a curly maple face and sides, back, and bottom of yellow poplar. The top, never painted, was scarred by many knife and meatsaw cuts but it was always meticulously clean and polished, no doubt from the grease of meats cut there. A #2 coal oil (kerosene) lamp hung from a metal bracket on the kitchen wall.

In reference to an oil lamp, #2 signified the size of the wick and holder. A #2 lamp was then, and still is, the most common size of household lamp. Some homes in those days also had at least one smaller lamp, #1. I became acquainted with this lamp nomenclature as a teenager when I worked at the Star Glass Company plant in Morgantown, West Virginia. The men there who made lamp chimneys were called "gaffers."

Men who shaped such items as goblets and tumblers were "blowers." Anything larger than a #2 lamp I believe was specified by name, for example, lantern, boulevard, etc.

The kitchen range had a tank for hot water, a huge lower oven, and a warming shelf above with a semi-cylindrical cover that turned back to permit use of the shelf. The stovepipe went through this shelf, providing warmth. Grandmother kept meats and vegetables hot there for the periods she needed to complete the meal. The kitchen floor was made of wide white oak planks, tongue and grooved. These boards were white from years of scrubbing with sand and a hand-held brush, a twice-yearly procedure (in early Spring and early Autumn).

The dining room also served as the everyday living area. The dining table was large, with eight oak chairs around it. Above the table hung an oil lamp which, through a system of weights and balances, could be raised or lowered. It was a beautifully plain lamp with a #2 burner and wick and a crimped-top chimney. These glass chimneys were made, I believe, at the Emmenegger Chimney House in Nilan down the road. Near the fireplace were two rockers, each with checked gingham covers, blue on Grandfather's chair, pink on Grandmother's.

A large black walnut corner cupboard stood in the

corner between the window on the west wall and a large expanse of open wall opposite the fireplace. In a letter that I still have Aunt Essie wrote that this cupboard was made wholly of black walnut; it had been brought across the Alleghenies, and even in the early 1900's was already two hundred years old.

On the window ledge stood three shaving mugs and a shaving stand, which was a mirror on a pedestal. There I watched the shaving processes of Grandfather and my two uncles. When Father and Mother came for the weekend, Father used Grandfather's razor. An intriguing event in my early life was watching Uncle Ell shave the back of his own neck. This was effected by a two-mirror system: the one on the shaving stand and a spare in his left hand. He sat with his back to the stationary mirror, adjusting the spare with his left hand, and then with a broadblade straight edge razor in his right gave himself a neat neck shave right up to the hair line.

The dining room floor was covered with loom-woven strips of carpet twenty-seven inches wide. The strips were sewn edge to edge by hand and then tacked to the floor. When a particular area became worn, this section was taken up and a new piece put down. Small-figured wallpaper covered the walls, and the beaded-board ceiling was painted a light gray.

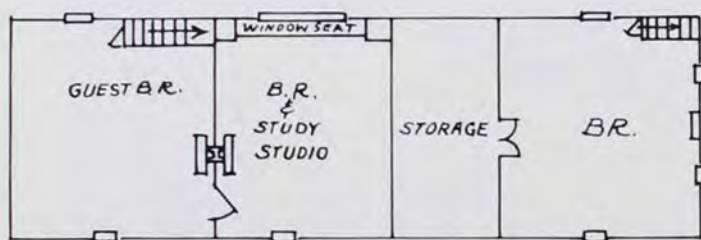
From the dining room one could enter into the middle room of the house, the parlor, and on through the parlor into my grandparents' bedroom at the far end of the house. Both parlor and bedroom had plastered and papered walls and beaded-board ceilings which were kept painted.

Like many other Pennsylvania farm homes, this one had two front doors but neither provided entrance directly to the parlor from outdoors. The door at the north end of the porch opened into the dining room, the one at the other into the bedroom. From the parlor, a window looked out onto the porch.

The parlor was used only on Christmas or other special occasions. It was somewhere around sixteen feet wide and twenty-two long, with a four-flue chimney in the center of the wall between parlor and bedroom. In the corner near the dining room on the wall away from the road stood a foot-pumped upright organ with a mirror and small bracketed shelves above the keyboard. On the organ shelves Grandmother kept a photo or two, a small lamp with a #1 burner and chimney, or a vase of flowers in season. The room had a horsehair sofa (actually a love seat) and a horsehair chair. No wonder people had good posture in those days! Such furniture forced erectness. NO other way. Additional seating was provided by a large reclining Morris chair with removable cushion. A large Bible rested atop a red-oak stand whose four legs ended in glass-ball feet held in place by brass fingers. This was not a family Bible, just a Holy

Book. On the lower shelf you sometimes could see several magazines, probably brought home from Pittsburgh by Aunt Essie. The huge wood-burning fireplace had brass andirons. Store-bought wall-to-wall carpeting of green plush covered the floor.

Similar carpeting was found in the adjoining bedroom, also a large room. Furniture there included two double beds, a rocking chair, and a straight-back split-hickory chair. A coal-burning grate in the fireplace provided warmth for the room. On the mantle above could be seen a pendulum clock and two tall vases. In the Summer the door to the porch was opened for cross ventilation. A huge walk-in closet provided storage for clothing and other items.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN FARM HOME

In the southwestern corner of the parlor a batten door opened on to stairs that led to the second floor. Here was the guest room, a place truly to behold! It had two beautiful wooden beds, one of oak, the other of gorgeous black walnut, each with its snowy-white bedspread. The floor was carpeted and the walls (the rough-hewn logs with chinking exposed) were covered with many, many coats of whitewash, a yearly chore. This room also had a coal-burning grate in its fireplace. Between small French windows on the side facing the road hung a homemade picture frame with "God Bless Our Home" printed in script. The miters were rough and did not form a tight joint. So to strengthen the corners the unknown craftsman had glued thin strips of black walnut on the diagonal across each joint.

Off the guest room toward the center of the house was a pretty, feminine bedroom and study, with typewriter and an old cylinder-type talking machine, the haven of Aunt Essie while at home. This room had dainty rosebud wallpaper and chintz draperies and sheer curtains at the long window looking out to the westward. Under this window was an inviting window seat. The draperies and curtains must have been inspired by those in the William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh where Aunt Essie worked. The room was off limits to about everyone except Aunt Essie and to me, her favorite nephew.

It remained her boudoir when she retired from professional life and came home to stay. It continued so until she moved down the road to keep house for Uncle Ell after both Grandfather and Grandmother had died.

At Grandfather's when you had to respond to a call of nature, you usually went out one of the front doors, turned to the right, and trotted down a path for about 150 feet to "The Privy," vine covered but without ornamentation. No crescent or star featured this door. This was a three-holer, two large holes for adults and a smaller one, lowered in stairstep style, to a lower level where the short legs of a little fellow reached the floor. Thus he did not have to sit with arms spread out behind him to keep from falling through to what, it then seemed, would have been a fate worse than death. With my safety assured as a wee lad, I could then sit with the ever-present Sears Roebuck catalog and look through the harness section and wonder about the feed-mixing mills and hammer mills, two pieces of farm equipment that to this day I never have seen.

Inside, our privy was no bare-board affair. Grandmother had tastefully decorated the walls and the shed-roof ceiling with scraps of leftover wallpaper. Neither did it emit the odors so frequently associated with country outhouses. A box of slaked lime stood in one corner along with a short-handled shovel. When the residue below became visible, a shovelful of lime covered it up. In addition to the Sears catalog, you could choose from a small box of corn cobs, always the choice of my Uncle Harry. I tried a cob once, but once was enough. For some time thereafter, I walked "spraddle-assed," a descriptive colloquial term Grandfather used when one was galled between the legs.

From the other end of the house, a door opened out of the kitchen to stone steps and the drive that led to the barn and all of the outbuildings on the westerly side of the road, the coalhouse, the smokehouse, the chickenhouse and the springhouse. You also went that way to reach the fruit cellar and food storage area under the dining room. Grandmother kept all of her canned goods and sausage-filled crocks there.

Down the lane directly behind the main house was an old log building which was once used as a home. It was a story and a half structure with a springhouse underneath where the milk was kept in crocks. Part of the first floor was divided into huge bins, one for wheat, one for oats, one for millet and buckwheat mixed as chicken feed, and one for bran and middlings (particles of intermediate size obtained by sifting ground grain during the production of flour).

In another section, the harness room, odd harness, sleigh bells, ox yokes, and miscellaneous items were kept. The top floor was given over to the storage of farm tools and equipment, axes, two-man saws, and one-



Springhouse at the Stevenson Farm as it appeared in 1920. This log house was the original home on the Frankberry farm and may have been built as early as 1800.

man crosscut and the like.

Outside the springhouse was a spring that must have run at the rate of ten gallons or more per minute. The water was so cold it hurt my teeth. The spring overflow followed a channel that Uncle Ell had dug through the springhouse and then lined with cement. Standing in this ever-moving water were ten or twelve crocks of milk and/or cream. What a delight it was on a hot day to go there with a tin cup and have a drink of ice-cold milk; or, with a quick trip with the forefinger around the top of a crock, gather a coating of rich cream which was then licked off. Grandmother told me this cream was very good for a sore throat, once when mine was very sore. It was also good for the palate at any time. Grandmother taught me this forefinger trick of gathering cream without disturbing the cream itself. Those who have never tried it have missed one of the joys of living on a farm in the early 1900's. The springhouse also was used to cool watermelons for the Fourth of July or other fruits that were best served cold, Seckel pears, for instance. Oh my!

About fifty feet from the house adjoining the county road was the coalhouse, located there so coal could be unloaded from the wagon without extra effort. Nearby was the wood storage area, grindstone, a huge chopping block, and a pair of sawbucks. All wood derived from dead trees or cutting undergrowth was sectioned and stacked in this area.

Beyond the coalhouse below the garden was the smokehouse and its curing racks. Here on butchering day in the fall the slaughtered hogs were cut up and the meat placed in the smokehouse to cool out. The hams were salted and peppered on a large table before the smoking process, carried out within an enclosed area inside the smokehouse. The enclosed area had a pipe through the roof to carry off the smoke



View of the township road in front of the Stevenson home, looking north. Many flowering shrubs lined the inside of the picket fence surrounding the yard to the left.

from the smouldering fire of hickory and sassafras. To me the smell of this smoke and the hams and shoulders was just out of this world! After smoking, each ham and shoulder was placed in a woven feed sack that Grandmother had carefully washed and dried. The sacks were then tied and hung from the crossbeams of the building. Hams usually lasted from one butchering to the next.

The sausage also was ground in the smokehouse. Fat cut from the meats was placed in a large black kettle over a fire for rendering. After the fat had been rendered, we put the solids through a lard press. What then remained was referred to as "cracklins." These were used in making cornbread and corn pone. When fresh out of the press, the cracklins were choice tid-bits for those turning the crank and carrying away the solidified lard. I was permitted to turn the crank but the gallon crocks of lard were never entrusted to me. Pudding, souse, and sausage were prepared on the large smokehouse table, then taken to the springhouse for storage. Pudding and souse were eaten rather quickly, for seemingly there was then no convenient means of preservation.

Souse was made from the head meat and had a slight vinegar taste; it was sourish. The meat was held together with gelatinous material obtained by boiling bones of the head. Pudding was made from the livers of the hogs, ground up and then seasoned. Delicious!

Below the smokehouse toward the barn was a large corncrib. This was like an inverted A-frame, with the peak of the A cut off. The slats were covered with hardware cloth to keep mice and rats from eating or soiling the corn. The crib was about ten feet long, eight feet wide at the top, and three at the bottom of the cut-off vee. The corn provided feed for the four farm horses. These included Lucy and Bird, a pair of matched black mares, and Old John, the big, power-

ful animal I was permitted to ride. Once I loped him. A neighbor witnessed the incident and told Grandfather. The latter cautioned me against running the big animal, but I was always sure that Old John enjoyed the little canter with a six-year-old boy astride his broad back.

Below the corn crib and almost opposite the springhouse was the chickenhouse, where forty or fifty laying hens and a couple of roosters were kept, a pure strain of Barred Rocks. In laying season we collected thirty to thirty-six eggs each day. The eggs were taken on Saturdays to Berg's Store in Point Marion and bartered for necessities. We usually took from sixteen to eighteen dozen, for which we received an average of twelve-and-a-half cents a dozen. Sometimes we took some surplus cash home. In the Spring, Grandmother set her own eggs and raised the chickens.



Front of barn as it appeared in 1920, with one of the huge sliding doors open. An earthen ramp led hay and wagons up to the barn threshing floor. The stables were below.

The barn at Grandfather's farm was built in about 1910 on the stone foundation of a previous structure. The building measured about fifty by ninety feet and was enclosed from the weather by six-inch cover siding. A ridgepole and rafters of long poles four or five inches in diameter supported a corrugated iron roof. The barn floor was of two-inch oak planks laid on logs that had been leveled with an adze. Uncle Ellis was the engineer-designer and did most of the work himself except for some help in setting the roof.

The stable underneath had wooden stalls, a heavy plank wood floor for the stock to stand on, and concrete troughs that permitted a manure scoop to run down the channel, thus saving time and energy in cleaning the stable.

A feed room separated the areas where the horses were stabled and the cows stanchioned. In the feed room you could see four or five large oak barrels which had been obtained down the road at the Mueller distillery in Nilan. The barrels held ear corn, oats,

and bran, and one was filled with water as a precaution against the always-present threat of fire. Work in the barn and stable was almost always performed before and after daylight hours with the light from a kerosene lantern. The feed room also had a fodder chopper and a hand-cranked corn sheller that I always liked to operate. Hay was thrown into the feed room through a four-foot by four-foot opening in the barn floor after first being forked to the floor from the mow.

Outside the barn was the watering trough, fed by the ever-running water from the spring above the springhouse. I don't recall that the trough ever froze over. The trough had been hollowed out from a huge log. It was about twelve feet long, two feet wide, and eighteen inches deep. A wooden conduit neatly hollowed out from a chestnut tree at least twenty feet long carried water from below the springhouse to the trough. The conduit was shaped like a roof gutter, about five inches across and three inches deep. This was the handiwork of Uncle Ellis. Water poured out of the conduit into the trough night and day.

In bad weather we let the horses out of the stable twice a day to go to the trough. They were always very frisky at such times. They kicked up their heels, farted and ran for the water. After the horses had returned to their stalls we took out the cows. While the animals were outside we cleaned out the bedding and the concrete troughs where the manure and urine collected. After we had shovelled out the debris we cleaned up with a couple of buckets of water. New bedding came from the straw rick just outside the stable door. The stone walls of the stable were about twenty inches thick with supporting posts at the ends of the feed mangers. At the right of each divider was a feed box for middlings, bran and such-like. Racks (mangers) alongside the feed boxes were filled with timothy hay and corn fodder. The fodder cutter cut the long stalks into pieces twenty to twenty-four inches long, but the cows ate only the leaves, not the stalks. Each stall also had a salt-lick box.

It took us about two hours to do all the barn chores, cleaning the four cow stalls and four for the horses, Lucy and Bird, the matched blacks; Big John, and Bob, a skittish sorrel.

Then Grandfather did the milking, usually three cows with one dry. We had lots of milk, churned our own butter, and buttermilk was a real treat, especially when it had floating flecks of butter.

I never knew Grandmother to do any work at the barn but after Grandfather died in 1919 Aunt Essie eventually came home to stay, and she then took over the milking. By that time there was just one cow, but Aunt Essie still had milk to spare, which she sold for twenty-five cents a gallon. Her customers brought their own glass jugs to the house.

Grandfather never kept a bull. His cows were



Cutting wheat in the back field northeast of the Stevenson home in 1911 or earlier. In the foreground near the shock of wheat, is Dick Stevenson. Beyond him on the seat of the binder is Lloyd Stevenson and, riding the horse, Harry, youngest of the family of seven children.

serviced by a bull owned by Jess Baker who lived a mile and a half up the road. On one occasion while I was very young Grandfather trained a yoke of oxen calves. It was a great experience getting those little fellows to pull a small sled and haul a bucket of water up the hill. Grandfather sold them after they had been trained.

The straw pile beside the barn was replenished each year by the annual threshing. What a feast Grandmother put out on the big dining room table on those occasions, piles of steaming roasting ears at each end, platters of ham and chicken, and at least twenty pies. A boy like me did not eat with the men. But I heaped up a plate and sat on the stone steps outside the kitchen while listening to the guffaws and loud talk coming from the dining room.

On one occasion Grandfather agreed to let me go along, after the threshing had been completed at our place, and see the operation up the road at the Black farm. As the steam tractor pulled the thresher up the hill, I first walked alongside but then decided to ride on the tongue, not thinking that if I fell the wheels would crush me. Grandfather spied me, finally stopped the tractor, and sent me home.

About twenty acres of Grandfather's farm were located on the eastern side of the road. About one hundred fifty feet back from the road stood a two-story pole-roof building where Grandfather stored all of his major farming equipment: a reaper and binder, two mowing machines, a corn planter, a potato planter, a spring-tooth harrow, a wood-frame harrow with spike teeth, a manure spreader, a hay rake, a two-horse buggy and a single one, a lime spreader, various hand equipment such as grain cradles, scythes, and brush hooks were seen there also. Overhead were two sleighs, a two-horse job with red-leather upholstery and a one-horse cutter. Grandfather was always careful to see that every piece of equipment was cleaned and oiled

before storage. No plowshare was ever hauled in on the old hickory-soled wooden sled until it first had been covered with grease. While thinking of the farm equipment, I must not forget the road wagon used for just about all hauling purposes except manure. The bottom of the bed on this wagon was a sight to see! It was made of "six-quarter" (1½ inch) solid black-walnut planks. Years of usage in hauling coal, and bags of wheat and other grain had put a sheen on this walnut as fine as on any hand-finished walnut cabinet.

The buggy with shafts for a single horse had no top, just the seat with slats to the rear. That provided a platform on which we hauled bags from Jess Berg's store in Point Marion. Uncle Harry took almost as good care of the buggies and sleighs as he did of his own brass-radiator Model T Ford runabout. He kept a can of red enamel, and each Autumn before time for snow he touched up the red decorations on the one-horse cutter. Believe me, that sleigh was just about the prettiest thing a child's eyes ever saw. Complementing this piece of art were the brass sleigh bells that were attached to the harness. These, too, were always shined to perfection.

One Christmas vacation when I was eleven or twelve my parents also came to the farm, and Grandfather took time to show me how to handle the horse and sleigh, quite a different matter from driving a buggy or wagon. Aunt Essie was due in on the B. & O. from Pittsburgh for the holiday. The ground was covered with good sleighing snow. I helped Uncle Harry put the Sunday harness and string of sleigh bells on Bob, the beautiful sorrel of about 1100 pounds. Then I drove the sleigh up to the house, where Grandfather took over for the drive down to the station at Nilan.

He came out of the house carrying a large lap robe, used in sleigh or buggy to warm the legs of driver

and passenger. He came up to the sleigh saying "You look like a genuine driver, Boy. Think you could go to Nilan and meet your Aunt Essie?" If I had been wearing a hat I think it would have popped. But as it was I wore a knit toboggan, the old country term for a woolen pull-on. "Yes, sir!" I replied and was off down the road. At Nilan, I tied Bob back a hundred feet or so from the tracks. He was skittish and would shy at anything unusual. The train was due at eleven in the morning. By my dollar Ingersoll, it came in right on time. Aunt Essie looked so beautiful as the conductor helped her down the steps. I gallantly took her valise (no "overnight cases" then), escorted her to the sleigh. After helping her up, I climbed in on my side, took up the lines, and with a "Gid up, Bob" was off up the hill through a lightly falling snow.

Also located on the eastern side of the road not far from the equipment building was a hog lot, enclosed by a fence about 100 feet by 100 feet, and the apiary with its six to eight hives of Italian bees, an improved strain. Grandfather always insisted on the best stock line, purebred Jersey cows, a blooded boar, and Barred Rock chickens. In this hog lot, one of two on the place, was kept the blooded boar, for which Grandfather had paid about two hundred dollars. I am sure that over the years he more than recovered this investment in fees charged for boar service. At the same time he had the boar for his own brood sow. The hog lot had a slop trough and a feeding area for corn to fatten the half dozen or so developing porkers. The "slop" was water with which all dishes were first rinsed before any soap was put into the dishpan. Grandmother always set this rinse water on the porch outside the kitchen to be carried across the road to the pigpen.

Beyond and to the right of the equipment building east of the road was a large orchard, mostly apples but also around twenty peach trees, three or four Bartlett pears, and a couple of Seckel pears. The apples were of many varieties — Wolf River (the largest apple I have ever seen), Walgreen, Baldwin, Grimes Golden, Early Transparents, Winesap, Ramsey, Rambo, Northern Spy, Russet; there was one tree with apples so sour that Grandfather always referred to it as "That G--d-- Ben Davis." Several had fruit of such high sugar content that everyone always called them "sweet apples." The trees were in perfect rows to ease cultivation and mowing between them. Several types of grain grew in adjoining fields.

Grandfather owned and operated his own cider mill. All windfalls and imperfect fruit went into the mill and along about Christmas time some of the cider was hard. Then, it was Uncle Harry who showed me how to get to the goodies. When the cider in the barrel had frozen, he made a hole in the ice through

the bung and then used a long straw to get the real McCoy. A few pulls on the straw and we were both ready to meet the Devil head on! We had at least three cider barrels most years, the barrels obtained from the Mueller Distillery at the cost of fifty cents each. The barrels had a wooden spigot at the end. Our vinegar from one of the barrels was a delicious dressing for coleslaw, sliced onions and the like.

Down the road a piece astride the fence surrounding these fields was an interesting rural feature that I have not seen for many years: a stile. Uncle Ellis built it of white oak and then painted it white. It consisted of steps up alongside the fence to a top platform, then down other steps inside the field. A man could climb a fence, even one with barbed wire on top. The stile enabled a woman with long dresses to get over easily and safely. Our stile was on the way to the apple orchard.

The farm was well fenced, and the fence rows were mostly clean. On days when there seemed nothing else to do, I turned the crank of a grindstone while my grandfather held the blades of three or four scythes against the upper edge of the slowly turning circular stone. After the initial grinding, Grandfather used a whetstone to hone the blades to a fine edge. Then we set off to cut "filth," a term applied, it seemed, to any weed or young growth growing where we didn't want it to grow. With a scythe over my shoulder, walking between Grandfather and Uncle Harry, I felt every inch of ten feet tall.

When the fields were plowed it seemed that the farm must have been a frequent stopping place through many, many Indian generations, for we turned up many artifacts. At one time we had a cigar box filled with such things as flint arrowheads, a stone cutting tool shaped like the head of an axe (probably a tomahawk), and a hollowed-out stone, a mortar in which grain was ground. At one time Grandfather turned up a stone about eighteen inches square and twelve thick with rows of cut-out symbols that seemed to be some sort of writing. For more than half a century this stone lay near the beehives. I looked for it after Uncle Harry's death but it had disappeared.

Grandmother was always busy. I don't know how she accomplished all she did, washing, cleaning, cooking and doing the dishes. But I never remember her doing any of the outdoor chores except feeding the chickens, her cats, and Old Prince, a big white dog, part bull and part shorthaired hound. He was a good watch dog, kept chained during the day but free to roam and protect the place at night. On one occasion, Old Prince in later years cornered a pair of would-be thieves in the chicken house. Grandfather, his shotgun at the ready, escorted the pair back to the shanty town that had sprung up at a coal mine operation on the back acreage, once owned by Uncle Ellis.



The Stevensons, Susan and Richard, seated in the front yard of their home with a granddaughter, Garnet Hare. Photo from 1915 or 1916.

Grandmother never canned peas, corn, or other vegetables, but she did dry corn and green beans. Grandfather usually planted the "telephone" variety of garden peas; these grew three or four feet tall. At Grandfather's we called our green beans "fodder" beans. These were just about the best ever, especially when cooked with a ham bone that still had a bit of meat clinging to it.

The beans were Kentucky Wonders. They were picked before becoming fully mature and then dried in the pod. After the strings had been carefully removed, they were placed out in the sun on a drying rack. This took several days. Grandmother then placed them in a hot oven for a brief period to complete the drying. Finally, she placed the dried beans in burlap bags and hung the bags to the rafters in the cellar. For use, the dried beans were soaked in water overnight before long cooking. A toothsome delicacy, I tell thee true!

Grandmother set the table at every meal with individual serving dishes of honey and individual glass salt dishes about one and one-half inch in diameter and an inch deep. I do not remember whether these were taken up after each meal for storage or whether they were simply refilled the next time. The table always had a white tablecloth. To me as a child it looked like a medieval banquet table from the history books, laden with everything good, even rhubarb, apple, or berry pie for breakfast. In mid-Summer Grandmother usually baked a few gooseberry pies. A clump of gooseberry bushes grew in one corner of the garden.

An almost daily chore with which I helped both at Grandmother's and at my own home was cleaning the oil-lamp chimneys. A piece of newspaper was crumpled up, forced into the larger end of the chimney, and then rotated inside. Then the outside was buffed with the same paper. My, how that chimney

did shine! At Grandfather's home, we cleaned five or six lamps and at least two lanterns. The oil lamps gave a soft, yellowish light, very good to read by.

A chore I really liked was helping Grandmother with the churning, in the kitchen during the Winter, on the porch in the Summer. I sat on a backless stool as I raised and lowered the churn handle. At such times Grandmother often told me a tale or two from her fund of family stories.

A long time ago (or so it seemed to me then) Grandfather was returning home from a Saturday afternoon trip to New Geneva when he noticed Grandmother racing along the shore of Georges Creek turning over stones as fast as she could. He stopped the buggy, hurried down to the creek, and yelled: "Sue! What the hell are you doing?" Without looking up, Grandmother replied: "Hunting hellgrammites. See that string of pickerel? They're biting on hellgrammites!" So Grandfather took off his Sunday shoes, rolled up his pants, and helped hunt the larvae. The story ends with the report that Grandfather Dick and his Sue caught a washtubfull of fish in Georges Creek that long-ago Saturday afternoon. The time was the middle 1870's. They were then still living on their first farm in Tomcat Hollow.

And there was the story about how my father (Jesse Walton) and Uncle Ellis, at the ages of six and seven, respectively, carried eggs to the store in New Geneva. Between them, they carried a tub filled with eggs while each held a bucket of eggs in the outer hand. For such small boys, this was a matter of carry and rest, carry and rest until they reached the store in New Geneva. But apparently such work didn't harm the lads. Each lived to be more than 75 years old.

On Sunday evenings Grandmother always prepared a plate supper, usually put at our respective places around the long dining room table, but in the Summer, weather permitting, we were served on the long front porch. I can still envision my plate: a cold leg of chicken, a slice of homemade bread with its beautiful brown crust and covered with butter churned earlier in the week, two pieces of pie (one of raspberry or blackberry and in Spring and Summer the other invariably rhubarb with granulated sugar sprinkled on the top crust). A huge serving of golden cake topped it off. The three-layer cake was covered with an icing that tasted like seafoam candy. Along with this you got copious servings of cold milk fresh from the springhouse.

On one such occasion when I was only about six I noticed that while the rest of us were all eating so "high on the hog," poor Grandmother was having only bread and milk. So I asked her why. "This, Son," whispered my five-foot, three-inch grandmother, "is a penance for my sins of the past week." I didn't understand until many years later. I then learned that

Grandmother had been raised as a Quaker.

From about the age of twelve, I went to a dentist in Morgantown named Dr. Charles Conn. Some years later than that Dr. Conn told me that the first set of dentures he ever made were for Grandmother. They were such a fine fit that he sent prospective patients to see her. She was a walking advertisement for Dr. Conn, a native of Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

Along with the standard crops usually found on southwestern Pennsylvania farms, Grandfather also grew his own smoking and chewing tobacco. I can still envision clumps of it drying in the granary. When properly cured, the smoking tobacco was stored in a stoneware jar with a lid. Grandfather's procedure was to take a piece of the tobacco from the jar, hold it with his gnarled left hand and then, with the fingers of his right, manipulate the leaf until the texture was just right to suit him. Finally, pinch by pinch, he placed the tobacco into his corncob pipe, tamping it just so with the forefinger of his right hand. It constituted a ritual if you ever saw one! With everything just right, he then reached for a paper taper from the bowl on the mantel, touched it to a hot coal in the fireplace, and sucked on the pipe while holding the flame to the bowl. It looked so peaceful and satisfying that I eventually tried it myself. I found it godawful.

Grandfather had three or four corncob pipes, at least one of them homemade. The bowl was a large cob, about two inches in diameter, with the pith cleaned out down part way, and a hole bored near the base for the mouthpiece, the latter a five-inch length of elder from which the center pith had been reamed out. In those days corncobs and elder wood was always easy to come by. Elderberry bushes grew in many places on the farm. Grandfather's homemade pipes seemed to smoke well.

He also twisted some of his tobacco for chewing. This was done with a sugar syrup and ended up shaped exactly like the old "E-Twist" tobacco then available at general stores. In fact, Grandfather had three or four E-Twist boxes in which he stored his homemade twists.

Richard Gregg Stevenson was a swarthy-skinned man with a high forehead, stood about five feet eight, and was quite muscular. Some in the family have always insisted he looked exactly like the first Adlai Stevenson, the one-time Vice President whose bust can be seen in the corridors of the Capitol in Washington. Aunt Essie, who became interested in family history in her old age, believed that forebears of Adlai went on into Kentucky in the late 1700's, leaving behind kin in Greene County, Pennsylvania, among them my grandfather's own grandfather, Asa Stevenson, of Clarksville. But such a kinship has never been proven and seems doubtful.

Grandfather loved to read in his leisure time. When

I was ten or twelve I sometimes read to him, especially the Uniontown *Evening Genius*, which arrived by mail six days a week. We also sat together and listened to the old Victrola play "Tenting Tonight." That song deeply moved him, undoubtedly bringing back memories of his own experiences in his early twenties during the Civil War, then less than half a century before. Grandfather talked very little of his war days but I do recall he mentioned being present at the surrender at Appomatox. Returning home in 1865, he brought with him his Springfield rifle and his uniform as a member of a Zouave Regiment, whose



Faded tintype shows Richard Gregg Stevenson in uniform of a Zouave, a Commando-type unit assigned to special duty in the U.S. Army in the Civil War. "War was Hell," he liked to say, "but being a Zouave helped make it fun." The full pantaloons of the uniform were red, with off-white leggings and a wide white belt. A red turban topped off the uniform, patterned after that of a famous French outfit.

function was to reconnoiter at night and fight by day, much like the Commandos of World War II. "War was hell," Grandfather said, "but being a Zouave helped make it fun." The Zouave uniform was patterned after that of a famous French fighting unit. The full pantaloons came well below the knees and were red in color with a wide white belt. Below the pantaloons were off-white canvas leggings. The uniform was completed by an above-the-waist cutaway coat, topped by a red turban.

A neighboring farmer who also had been a soldier once told me that on one occasion Grandfather's outfit needed to get artillery across a stream in mid-February while it was running full of ice. Grand-

father, this veteran said, volunteered to swim the river with a string between his teeth and then pulled a rope across. When I sought further details from Grandfather, he simply said: "Martin talks too much!"

Another story told in the family was that young Richard Gregg Stevenson was hunkered down in a worm-fence corner, pants down, answering a call of nature while the sound of heavy guns and rifle fire filled the air. Grandfather said he heard a whiz and felt something glide down his back. "I was afraid to move, thinking maybe I had been shot." When he did move, he found a rifle ramrod stuck in the ground behind him. His explanation: some rifleman had fired his rifle without removing the ramrod from the barrel.

Like many countrymen, Grandfather had a sense of coming weather events. "Better get our chores done early," he would say. "There's a mountain storm on its way." I never knew how he could sense it was to be a mountain storm but it usually was a dilly.



G.A.R. comrades photographed at a reunion, roughly around 1916. R. G. Stevenson is at left rear, wearing white hat. Dick Stevenson's name may be found on a plaque in the lobby of the Fayette County Courthouse, Uniontown, listing all members of Will F. Stewart Post #180, Grand Army of the Republic. The three unidentified veterans may have been members of the same post.

A memorable event in my earliest life was a trip with Grandfather to the grist mill, located on the south side of Georges Creek at New Geneva. This was when I was about five years old, in 1906 or 1907. (Other sources say that during these years the owner of the steam-operated New Geneva mill was Thomas Beatty Eberhart. In the early years of the century, Mr. Eberhart also operated a small steam-propelled boat on the Monongahela, the Daisy. This boat carried freight and passengers back and forth between Martin, Pa., where the railroad from Pittsburgh then ended, and

Morgantown, West Virginia.)

Grandfather prepared for the journey to the grist mill the night before. After the evening chores were done, he loaded eight or ten large bags of wheat into the old road wagon. What fun it was for little me to stand knee-deep in the bin of wheat and try to shovel wheat into the gunny sacks. After the novelty of handling the heavy scoop had worn off, I held the bags open while Grandfather scooped in the wheat. The loaded wagon was then pulled into the shed.

Bright and early next morning we set off for the mill. Riding high on the seat of the wagon pulled by the matched black mares, we rolled up the country road to the farm home of Johnny Black. Mr. Black came out from the front porch and Grandfather stopped the team. Our neighbor chuckled and said: "See you are going to the mill, Dick. Take care of that boy and don't trade him to the miller." Grandfather nodded, put his big hand on my leg protectively, and vowed he never would consider anything like that. I felt very secure.

We went on up a rather steep grade known as Day's Hill, past the house of Morgan (Morg) Day and on to the main highway, now known as Route 119, from which we turned off on the road to New Geneva. As we passed the old Fallen Timbers one-room school, Grandfather said, "That's where your Daddy went to school. He started when he was five." On arriving at the mill we found one wagon ahead of us. Grandfather pulled out his big watch, turned to me and said: "Well, Charlie, we made good time. It's only 8 o'clock." I was then introduced to the miller, who was covered head to foot with the dust of his trade. "Want a job, little feller?" he asked. I assured him I already had a job helping Grandfather, but I looked up at him to see if I had said the right thing. He nodded and winked at me.

While the miller was grinding our wheat Grandfather and I ate the lunch that Grandmother had put up for us. While the sacked flour was being loaded, I was quite surprised to see that we also got bran and middlings, as well as a gallon of cracked wheat for breakfast eating. When Grandmother cooked some of this several days later, I thought it was just about the best cereal I ever had eaten. When we arrived home from the mill, she gave me a big hug and said we were going to have fried sausage and apple pie for supper. Grandfather put the new flour into the huge barrel that stood behind the door in the kitchen. We sat on the porch that evening as dusk fell. I watched Grandfather smoke his pipe and we all listened to the plaintive call of the whip-poor-will coming from somewhere out in the fields.

Each Saturday except during the Winter months a trip to Point Marion was a part of the weekly routine at my Grandparents' home. This was called "going

to the Point." I went along on many occasions. Our major objective usually was the large store operated by Jess Berg. In my mind's eye I still can see Mr. Berg. He was a man large in stature and girth who wore a white shirt with arm bands to hold up his sleeves. I understand that he came from very humble origins, but at the time I knew him, about 1910, his big store handled just about everything that one could find today at a modern mall.

Saturdays the day began as usual at Grandfather's. We all arose about 5 a.m. to have all the feeding chores completed before Grandmother called "Breakfast!" at about 6 o'clock. Ample servings of cereal, ham and eggs, and homebaked bread sliced at least three-fourth inch thick with our own butter and comb honey on the side, were topped off with a piece of pie. We then set off to do what the seasonal work plan called for, hoe corn, work in the vegetable garden, put up hay or similar chores. If it was a rainy morning we did indoor things: went over the harness, greased the wagon wheels, or perhaps the wheels of our two buggies.

After dinner at noon came the process known as "cleaning up" to go to "the Point." For Grandfather this meant shaving and bathing, changing into clean clothes; not "Sunday clothes" but a clean suit of underwear (usually long johns), a clean blue shirt, and a clean pair of work pants. The shoes he put on, however, were his "Sunday best." For me, cleaning up meant taking a cake of soap and towel down to the big watering trough, originally a huge log twelve to sixteen feet long that had been hollowed out at least twenty inches deep. In the heat of Summer this type of bathing was fine, but at other times the water was so cold that I'm afraid it all was mostly a splash and a promise.

Back in the house, I put on my knee pants and my pale pink blouse (it was *not* a shirt), and my Grandmother combed and parted my hair. My handsome grandfather with his huge white moustache and I climbed into the runabout, pulled by the fractious gelding named Bob. Grandfather preferred to drive Bob because he had spirit, but I never liked the gelding. He was too quick with his hind feet and liked to show his big front teeth. With a basket of eggs secured to the slats behind the runabout seat, we drove leisurely down to Nilan and then along the Cheat River to Point Marion.

Our first call was at Berg's Store. A couple of old chairs were located at the back of the large storeroom, which had its own particular general-store odor. Grandfather and Jess Berg sat in those chairs and chatted while I perched on a nail keg, watching and listening to all of the interesting things going on within the store. What the two old friends talked about was little different than what they would talk about today: the

weather, politics, and "the good old days."

When we were ready to leave Grandfather gathered up our purchases into a split basket. Then Mr. Berg called "Just a minute Dick." We waited while he went behind a large display case with a rounded glass front and filled a bag with candy. Then Mr. Berg repeated the operation. Coming out, he handed one sack to me, the other to Grandfather. "That one's for Sue, Dick." I thanked him, and we were off for home.

Grandfather's farm could never have functioned as efficiently as it did without the remarkable skills of Uncle Ellis, his eldest son. It would be fair, I think, to call Uncle Ell a throwback to the self-sufficiency of pioneer days. He could do just about any rural task that needed doing. He was a crack shot. With his Barney Engle muzzle-loading rifle in hand, he could boast that a squirrel visible at any distance was just as good as ready for the pot. I remember this gun as a boy, especially its beautiful black-walnut stock, meticulously inlaid with brass scrolls.

Ellis Adolph Stevenson remained under the parental roof through most of his life. Early in life he and his brother Joseph, five years his junior, left home together. It is said they had a bet about which would return home first. Ellis soon came back. Joseph never returned, at least not during the lifetime of his parents. I never heard Grandfather or Grandmother mention Joseph, and I suspect there may have been some sort of disagreement before he left. We eventually heard he had died and had been buried in a potter's field in Pittsburgh.

Uncle Ellis had a Lincolnesque figure, standing six-foot two, with broad shoulders and a physical constitution that never seemed to tire. He split fence rails in Lincoln's fashion. Going to the woods, he would chop down a white oak and cut it into fence-rail lengths. I remember watching the process. He first drove an iron wedge into each end of the log to start the split. He also had on hand a number of homemade hickory wedges, each about three inches in diameter and sharpened at one end into a long wedge. He drove these in succession down the widening crack until finally the log split in two. He then repeated the process over and over until the entire log had become a pile of rails. He worked with machine-like rhythm. When he used an axe there were few glancing blows. A cut that he had chopped seemed sawed rather than axed.

I also watched Uncle Ell make shingles. Rough boards about one-half inch thick were first split out from the log and piled with thin sticks between to air dry for several months. When it came time to make the shingles, he sat on a sawhorse on which he had mounted a device to hold each shingle-length board as he tapered one end with a drawknife. The old coalhouse and the corn crib were both roofed with shingles he had made.

The tools Uncle Ell used always had to be perfectly sharp. He was almost compulsive with a file and

sharpening stone. It seemed every time I went to Grandfather's he was sharpening something, the kitchen butcher knife, the paring knife, the scissors, his own Barlow knife, or honing his own or Grandfather's straightedge razor.

But perhaps the greatest accomplishment of Uncle Ell's seventy-six years of life (1873-1949) was the house, barn, and garage he built in 1920, entirely with his own hands. Located down the Nilan road about three hundred yards from Grandfather's house, they stood just beyond the home Uncle Lloyd had already built. But no wife ever came to grace the establishment. Uncle Ell remained a bachelor. He occupied the property after the death of his parents. Aunt Essie lived with him as his housekeeper in their final days.

In building his home place, Ell Stevenson even cut stone for the foundations and burned lime on a kiln in his property to get the lime needed for mortar and plaster. He framed the house, put on siding, roofing, and gutting; wired it for electricity, plastered the entire house with the finish white-coat plaster, built the chimney and installed the furnace, and dug and cemented a cistern with a water capacity of nearly 2500 gallons, besides digging and walling up a well forty feet deep with water too cold to drink. The finish wood trim inside the house included sound but wormy chestnut in the dining room, cherry in the living room, pine in the kitchen, and oak on the second floor.

As an avocation, Ell very much enjoyed his apple orchard. In the spring of 1919 he set out a hundred trees of many varieties. During the Depression years he sold or gave away literally hundreds of bushels of fine fruit. He also grew black raspberries, currants, gooseberries, Concord grapes, and sweet corn. And each year there was a small patch of field corn to feed his one horse. The horse lived to be forty-two years old. For years Ell also tended from twelve to fifteen hives of honeybees.

At Grandfather Stevenson's, attendance at church was not an every-Sunday affair. When he planned to go, he announced the fact on Friday so that certain preparations could be performed on Saturday by Uncle Harry. These preparations included going over the Sunday harness for the black mares with a cloth saturated with harness oil. After the oiling, the leather was then buffed briskly with pieces of old sheepskin until the entire harness looked brand new. Each bridle had two pictures of horseheads painted on a shiny celluloid surface. These were purely for ornamentation, and I believe they were called cockades. Uncle Harry's next act was to blow on these beautiful "buttons" and then with his blue bandana lightly rub them until they looked like polished glass. The harness was then straightened and hung on pegs in the granary, not the stable where the work harness was kept.

Uncle Harry next rolled the buggy to a place near the

watering trough and washed it all over with water and old rags, drying it with fresh cloths. That buggy really looked great. The wheel spokes were striped with red lines but the rest of the vehicle was glossy black. The top had an isinglass window in the back curtain. Rolled up over the front of the top was another curtain, also with a large isinglass window through which the driver could see when it was lowered in driving rain. Once the buggy, with its tufted leather cushion and back rest, was entirely spic and span it was rolled back under cover.



Hitched to the Stevenson family's church-going buggy, the black mares Bird and Lucy pose for their picture on the township road in front of the Stevenson home. Team faces north.

On the beautiful Sabbath morning that I remember best my heart was full and overflowing at my good fortune at sitting between my grandparents. Grandmother was beautiful in her black dress with the white collar that rose on her neck. In front of the collar she wore a gold brooch, a gift from Grandfather on their wedding day, March 14, 1872, or so she had once confided to me. Grandfather wore a dark suit with a white shirt and a black-bow string tie which I watched Grandmother tie before we set out. On his head was an off-white Panama hat. I was dressed in a pink-on-white waist with a blouse effect, knee pants, and black stockings and shoes. Grandmother had carefully combed and parted my hair.

On this journey to the Mount Moriah Presbyterian Church the black mares seemed to be feeling their oats, as the old saying is, and wanted on their own to step up the pace. But Grandfather would tighten the reins and say in his deep voice: "Steady, girls!" When the three of us walked into the big rectangular church building, the tall windows were all open and most of the pews were filled except for a few in the rear.

Some details of the interior of the church on that warm Summer Sunday still come back to me after

seventy years. A massive oak pulpit in the center of the rostrum held an equally massive Bible. Behind the pulpit were two chairs with arms. The preacher sat in the chair at the left, dressed all in black with a white shirt and black bow tie. In the front right corner I saw a foot-pumped organ and the organist young and pretty in a flouncy yellow dress. The choir sat near the organ, four women and a medium-sized man and a really big fellow whom Grandmother later told me sang bass.

The preacher stepped to the pulpit, asked us to bow our heads, and began to intone what (to me at least) was a long, long prayer. As he finished he said "Amen" and all the men in the congregation, as if by signal, responded in unison "Amen." The organ began, the choir arose, and we all stood up. To this day, I remember the melody and the words, some of them at least: "Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee."

We sat down and the ushers passed up the aisle taking up the collection. Grandfather put in a bill, I gave up my nickel, and Grandmother put in a coin of some denomination. The preacher read from the Bible and then began his sermon. Leaning on the pulpit he seemed to be talking directly to us in even melodic tones, exhorting us to lead a good life and to be kind to one another. Then I remember I began to drift off. Soon Grandmother's loving arm wove around my small shoulders and held me safely against her body.

I awoke with a start. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord!" shouted the preacher as he brought a big fist down on the Bible. Grandmother gave me a smile that I cherish to this day. The preacher trailed off his sermon into the milk-and-honey tones with which he began. The organist resumed her seat, the choir rose. We stood and sang a hymn with a refrain that ran



Blanche Crawford Stevenson and her husband, Lloyd, at their home in the 1960's.



Lloyd Stevenson listening to his radio, seated in the swing on the porch of his home. He lived to the age of 96.

something like "Oh there's Power, Power, wondrous working Power in the Precious Blood of the Lamb." As the tones of the organ died away the preacher extended his arms toward us and gave the blessing: "Keep us safe, oh Lord, while we are absent one from the other." Then there was much milling around and chatting and my grandparents showing me off. I remember one man saying, "Come back, Dick, and you too, Little Dick." The man didn't even know my name! We got into the buggy, Grandfather turned the mares toward home, and I promptly fell asleep again.

Today that old church is long gone but its churchyard remains. Down over the hills from its site you can find the graves of Grandfather and Grandmother, Richard Gregg Stevenson (1841-1919) and Susan Moore Stevenson (1850-1925). Just a few feet eastward from the church site are the graves of Grandfather's own parents, Ellis Bailey Stevenson and Permelia Eberhart Stevenson. In about 1830 Ellis Bailey Stevenson set up a woolen mill on Georges Creek with equipment bought from Albert Gallatin and operated the mill until a flood washed it away in 1859. Permelia Eberhart Stevenson died in 1865 just a few weeks before her son Richard (my grandfather) returned home from the battles of the Civil War.

Although Grandfather died at his farm home on June 29, 1919, I did not feel that his life story had really come to an end until August 10, 1977. On that day we went to the Herod Funeral Home in Point Marion, Pa., for the funeral of Grandfather's last surviving child, my Uncle Lloyd. At his death Uncle Lloyd was three months and eight days short of his 97th birthday. Thus ended the first generation of the family established when Richard Gregg Stevenson and Susan Emily Moore were united in Holy Matrimony on March 14, 1872.

The Folklore of Local History

by MAC E. BARRICK

County histories, as Richard Dorson noted in his essay "Local History and Folklore," usually begin with references to Indian and local topography, enumerate the first settlers, churches, schools, stores, lodges and civic organizations, devote chapters to the Revolution and the Civil War, recount the prominent local citizens and conclude with descriptions of the newest edifices in town. "Somewhere toward the end," he added, "was apt to be a chapter on village witches, appearances of the Devil, reports of Captain Kidd and his treasure, and sketches of local characters and eccentrics."¹ Though county historians in Pennsylvania generally followed the pattern described by Dorson, rarely did they include the chapter on witches or devils that would have been of such value to the folklorist. The local eccentric however is occasionally mentioned in Pennsylvania county histories, probably because he is a documentably historical figure. But the stories told about him are often documentably folkloric.

Surprisingly, histories written by lawyers and judges contain a goodly number of stories about these local characters. Most, it is true, are in the nature of clever witticisms and the urbane humor associated with the professional classes, like Judge Samuel W. Pennypacker's remark when the heavily plastered ceiling of his Philadelphia courtroom collapsed in 1893, "Fiat justitia ruat ceiling."² Wilmer MacElree in his *Side Lights on the Bench and Bar of Chester County* (West Chester, 1918) cites several similarly clever remarks, for example:

A countryman, named Perkins, called at [William Darlington's] office one day with some peaches for sale.

"Take them to the house," said Darlington.

Perkins did so and returned for his money.

"How much are they a basket?" inquired the counsellor.

Perkins named a high price.

"Too much," said Darlington; "too much. I can buy them anywhere for less."

"That is true, Mr. Darlington; that is true. My peaches are just like your law: Not a d— bit better than anybody else's, but they've got a little more reputation." (p. 361)

MacElree's history is somewhat unusual in that he provides critical comment on an earlier local historian, Judge John Smith Futhey, of whose *History of Chester County* (Philadelphia, 1881) he says: "Its style might be more varied and its biographies more interesting, but it must be remembered that the book was written in the intervals of a very busy life" (p. 384). "In the quiet of his office, Futhey loved to hear a humorous story, and he could tell one," MacElree adds, as if chiding Futhey for not including such stories in his history. Though MacElree chooses not to recall any of Futhey's humorous stories, he does include a few in his own work that are of interest to folklorists. One more is noteworthy:



Judge J. Smith Futhey

Another country innkeeper . . . engaged a painter to paint a Sign of the Bear and was asked: "Will you have your bear with or without a chain?"

"Is it cheaper without?" inquired the landlord.

"It certainly is," replied the painter.

"Make it without then," said the landlord. The agreement was made, the painter drew the bear in water colors and departed.

In a few days the colors faded and the bear disappeared. When the landlord next saw the painter he taxed him with foul

play, but got the reply: "If you had given me more money I would have put a chain on the bear and then, my life for it he never could have run away." (p. 94)

This anecdote has widespread circulation in folk and other literature. In one variant Hogarth, asked to paint a picture of the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea, paints the canvas red, explaining that the Israelites had gone over and the Egyptians had drowned. In another variant, a painter paints fewer birds than he is paid to, explaining that the windows were open and the others escaped. A Spanish version has a painter hired to paint one thousand virgins explain that most of them are inside a house in the background; he is told to expect his pay only when they come outside.³

If the local eccentric is a preacher, he naturally attracts to himself stories told about notable evangelistic figures of the nineteenth century or about preachers in general.⁴ H. Hollister's anecdote of Elder Anning Owen seems to be such a story:



H. Hollister, M.D.

A good story is told of Elder Owen by an uncle of the writer, who heard him preach at a quarterly meeting, held at the court-house in Wilkes Barre, in the winter of 1806. Never closing his sermons without reminding sinners of the danger of *brimstone*, it had at length become so proverbial that the boys in a sportive mood (for there were sons of Belial in those days), had a living illustration of the virtues of his doctrine, at the Elder's expense. In the south wing of the court-house there was a large fireplace, in which smoked a huge beechen back-log. Behind this some of the boys had placed a yellow roll of the genuine article before the meeting had commenced in the evening . . . Although ignorant of the joke the devil was playing upon him, he soon appreciated the odor of his resistless agent. Turning his eye upon the uncoverted portion of the congregation, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "Sinners! unless you are converted you will be cast in the bottomless pit." Pausing a moment as he glanced indignantly upon the tittering ones who were enjoying the scene in an eminent degree, he raised himself to his utmost height, elevated his voice to a still loftier key, and at the same time bringing down his clenched fist with a pow-

erful stroke upon the judge's desk, cried out, "Sinners, why don't you repent, *don't you smell hell?*"

Similar stories have been told of Lorenzo Dow and Moses Dissinger, though the detail of the burning brimstone at least seems unique. The personal anecdote is always of questionable historicity, even when recited by the participant himself. For example, Sojourner Truth's interruption of Frederick Douglass' abolitionist speech with the cry, "Frederick, is God dead?", has been documented as occurring in Fanneuil Hall, Boston, and at Andover, Massachusetts, yet Douglass himself stated that it happened at an Abolition convention in Salem, Ohio.⁶

Those few historians who do include references to witches or demons generally label them "superstitions" in the table of contents or index, since that was the nineteenth century "buzzword" for such matters as belief in witchcraft, the appearances of ghosts or the devil and the acceptance of miraculous occurrences by Roman Catholics, particularly among the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who wrote many of the county histories. Stories of witches were occasionally printed to show the naivete of the early settlers, especially if they were Pennsylvania Dutch. Witness George Dallas Albert's *History of Westmoreland County*:

The opposition to innovation which was noticed by Tacitus in their ancestors in the woods of old Germany may yet be seen in their offspring. In that age (we mean the early Westmoreland age) many houses had horseshoes nailed to the lintels of the doors to protect the inmates from the power of witches. Brimstone was burnt to keep them from the hencoop, and the breastbone of a chicken put in a little bag and hung round the necks of the children to ward off the whooping-cough. Horse-nails were carried for good luck, and beaux hunted for four-leaved clovers to get their sweethearts to look upon them favorably. A broth made from dried fox-lungs was given to patients suffering with a consumption, and carrying the rattles of a rattlesnake which had been killed without biting itself would cure the headache and protect from sunstroke. Old women were even blamed for riding the unbroken colts at night, and more than one person incurred displeasure because his neighbor's rye was worse blasted than his own.⁷

Or the much-reprinted incident from James L. Morris' diary for 1842:

There was recently a case of witchcraft near here; it was thus: the dinner pot of a family, which had been used a couple of days before, was found to contain three small balls of silvery lustre. These balls were a token of witchcraft, especially as some of the family had been very restless at night and unable to sleep. It was plain that they were bewitched, so the balls were taken and according to the regular method in such cases, were fired from a gun into a tree, a white oak, and shortly after a woman in the immediate neighborhood complained sadly of a sore leg. The case was now plainer than ever. It was undoubtedly one of witchcraft and the woman with the sore leg was the witch that had bewitched the family and that was shot by the silver bullets. So the witches are not all dead yet.⁸

Similar practices and beliefs as well as legal proceedings involving colonial witches are described in Futhey's *History of Chester County* (pp. 412-414), for the apparent purpose of holding them up to ridicule. An interesting example of how witchcraft beliefs develop

and spread appears in J. H. Newton's *History of Venango County* (Columbus, Ohio, 1879, pp. 133-134); though the author asserts that the delusion in question is the result of mental derangement, he nonetheless includes the story as a valuable part of the social history of the area he is studying.

Regretfully too often does one encounter such remarks as this: "There are legends about this old house worth the telling, but this trip is not long enough to encumber it with tales that may not be true";⁹ or Michael Novak's tempting hint that, following the Lattimer Massacre in 1897, the local Slovak priest, Father Richard Aust warned that God would punish the guilty deputies who shot down unarmed miners. "From this," says Novak, "a legend grew up about a curse under which the deputies would henceforth live, and in later years children listened to macabre tales of how each of the deputies, one by one, were dying painful or unusual deaths. Even as an old man, John Moye of Lattimer, although he was born after the massacre, was to recall such stories vividly."¹⁰ Not one story does Novak include, though to do so would have gone far to humanizing the immigrant miners he is depicting.

Such an attitude reflects the usual distrust that historians show for oral sources, but it is particularly strange coming from local history writers whose source material is usually the oral or written reminiscences of early settlers, frequently inaccurate or imaginative. A classic example is William J. Canby's "The History of the First United States Flag and the Patriotism of Betsy Ross, the Immortal Heroine that Originated the First Flag of the Union," a paper based on a conversation between Betsy and Canby, her grandson, when she was eighty-four and he eleven. Yet on the basis of this conversation rests the widely accepted tradition that Betsy Ross created the first American flag. Regional Pennsylvania historians frequently accepted similarly legendary or folkloric accounts of local events as established fact.

For example, the story is told of Lewis Wetzel, the Indian fighter, that on one occasion when he was splitting chestnut rails in the Ohio Valley, he found himself surrounded by six Indians. "One of the braves informed the white man that he was to go with them. He said he would be glad to accommodate them, but pointed to the log and said it would have to be split first, and that the sooner that was done the sooner they could be on their way. In order to hurry this job Wetzel suggested that the Indians help him. This evidently appealed to their sense of humor, for they readily assented. Lewis showed them how to arrange themselves, three on each side of the log, grasping it in the crevice and pulling as he drove the wedge deeper. When the six had their fingers inserted deep in the crack with one blow of his axe Wetzel drove

the wedge flying out. The log pinched together and held the six Indians as in a vise. The rest of this log-splitting bee consisted of tomahawking and scalping six trapped reds and going home with the evidence of a half-day's work."¹¹ This incident is usually attributed by Pennsylvania and New York historians to another Indian fighter, Tom Quick (1734-96),¹² or his contemporary, New York's Timothy Murphy.¹³ The story has circulated throughout most of the eastern United States and much of Europe.¹⁴

Another widely-circulated legend is associated with an early Lebanon County heroine:

Down at Newmanstown, Heinrich Zeller, one of the early settlers from Schoharie, built a stout home in 1745 which was also to become a neighborhood refuge from the Indians. The building, Zeller's Fort, has stone walls two feet thick and strong, heavy doors. According to legend, Christine, the wife of Heinrich Zeller, was another early Pennsylvania heroine. It is said that she single-handedly decapitated three Indian braves at the loophole in the cellar wall where the water flows out from the spring. She wielded her axe on them one at a time while they were trying to crawl through the hole to enter the house.¹⁵

Ann Hark, in *Blue Hills and Shoofly Pie* (pp. 102-107), romanticizes the incident and raises the number of Indians to "five, then six, then seven," showing the adaptability of folk legend to the imagination of the teller and the credulity of the listener. Legend it has become though, whatever historical or factual basis it may have had, for the same incident has been told widely in Europe and Asia. Leonard W. Roberts recently collected an interesting version of it in the Kentucky mountains.¹⁶

Local historians often adapt to their own texts stories drawn from sources carelessly accepted as authentic. Such is the case with Michel-Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur's *Journey into Northern Pennsylvania and the State of New York*, published in French in 1801. Crèvecoeur drew from a variety of earlier publications, not all of them trustworthy, and invented additional material as suited his purpose.¹⁷ Yet at least two of his Indian anecdotes have been incorporated into local or county histories. One of these presents a modern-day reaction to officious questions:

"Aren't you cold?" I inquired of a nearly naked Powatootami one freezing day.

"Is your face cold?" he countered haughtily.

"No," I told him, "my face is accustomed to the whip of the wind and ice."

"Well, my body is all face!"¹⁸

This was picked up and reprinted as historical fact by Thomas Lincoln Wall in his history of Clearfield County in 1925 and by Pierce Swope in *Pennsylvania Dutch Essays* in 1967, though a folklorist in 1963 traced it back through Fuller and Montaigne to a classical Roman source, where it was attributed to a Scythian, rather than an Indian.¹⁹

Another story related by Crèvecoeur has had wide circulation:



Hendrick the Mohawk and Sir William Johnson

"One day," Sir William Johnson told me, "old Nissooassou came to my house and said:

"O father, last night I dreamed that you gave me a fine scarlet-coloured suit, trimmed with gold, with a hat to match."

"You don't say!"

"Yes, on my word as a Sachem," he replied.

"Well, then you shall not have dreamed in vain, for I shall present you with them, gladly."

"The next day," continued Sir William, "having invited him to dinner, I saw my chance, saying:

"Henrique, I, too, had a dream last night."

"What did you dream, father?" he asked me.

"That in the name of your tribe, you gave me a small piece of land on the Tienaderhah, known as Acerouni."

"In terms of acres, how much land does this include?"

"Ten thousand," I replied.

"After a few minutes of thought, he said to me:

"Well, you shall not have dreamed in vain, either, for I shall give you this little piece of land; but don't take it into your head to dream any more, good father."

"And why not, Henrique? Dreams are involuntary, aren't they?"

"You dream too hard for me and soon you wouldn't leave any more land for our people." (*Journey*, pp. 18-19).

The motif is a familiar one in American folk literature, and Ernest Baughman lists examples from New York, South Carolina and Georgia.²⁰ Nearer to home, the same legend was told about Conrad Weiser and Shikellamy, where the dreams involved a rifle and the large island of Que in the Susquehanna River near Selinsgrove. The story is told in the twentieth century as an ethnic joke about a white man and a black, where the white man dreams away the black man's land and crops and the black man has to dream them back.²² There is another, less polite, version involving the white man's sister.²³

Ethnological legends occasionally figure in Pennsylvania county histories, if not in discussing the origin of natural phenomena at least in the naming of them. Rare is the area that does not boast a Lover's Leap from which a despairing Indian maiden has thrown herself to give the place a name. J. W. Brodhead included

a literary legend of one, written by Mrs. E. S. Swift, in his history of the Delaware Water Gap.²⁴ Ella Zerbey Elliott wrote of another on the pinnacle of Sharp Mountain, where Wanomanie killed herself, "all because her father Sagawatch would not allow her to marry the dusky lover of her choice."²⁵ And more recently, Fred W. Diehl described Montour County's Lovers' Leap and its legend, of a certain Delaware maiden who fell in love with a young Huron brave. "When the old chieftain learned of his daughter's interest in the young Huron brave, he forbade her seeing her lover, and kept close watch to prevent their meeting. They continued however to meet secretly, and one dark evening her father, spying on them, gave chase. The lovers ran, and coming to the brink of the chasm ravine, clasped hands and plunged to their death on the sharp rocks of the rushing stream below."²⁶ Baughman notes that "this motif is very common all over the United States, especially in stories told about Indian lovers by whites" (motif A968.2). Saltus Galteri in Normandy was similarly named for a lover who leaped from a cliff, expecting his mistress to leap with him.²⁷ Breakneck, in Bradford County, has acquired a similarly colorful name legend, despite the logical explanation provided by a local historian:

Breakneck, the lower part of Sheshequin, was known by that name at the time Sullivan's army passed through the narrows. Col. Hubley states in his journal: "So high and so narrow was the path at Breakneck Hill, a single false step must inevitably carry one to the bottom, a distance of 180 feet perpendicular;" and yet, an army of more than 3,000 men with their long train of packhorses, marched through this dangerous pass in safety . . .

It has been said that a squaw fell from the precipice years ago and broke her neck, and it is generally supposed this circumstance gave name to the place, and a face was painted on the rocks, by a rough artist, commemorating the event, which, perhaps, is still visible.²⁸

In many mountainous areas of Pennsylvania a prominent geological feature is a barren area filled with rocks and boulders of varying sizes. Such areas are called Devil's Turnip Patch or some similar designation. One in Franklin County near the Maryland border is called the Devil's Race Course, as Jacob Stoner noted without attempting to explain its origin (*Historical Papers*, p. 65). One explanation for such phenomena was given by Charles Miner in his *History of Wyoming* (Philadelphia, 1845): "For some miles on the old 'Lack-away' road, from the Delaware to the Susquehanna, there is a super-super-abundance of stone. It was a standing joke, that Satan coming from New England with a load for Wyoming, his apron string broke on those hills, covering them with stones, and so the valley was left free" (p. 389, note). Obviously Miner didn't intend the story to be accepted as fact, but he found it amusing enough to include in his text and alleviate in this way what might have been an otherwise boring recital of historical data. A similar story was told of a like area near Tylersport:



Local inhabitants have named it "the devil's potato patch" and have this to say of it.

The devil had heard that potatoes were very good to eat, and he decided that he would collect a store for himself. He had heard, too, that potatoes were hard and roundish.

In his travels through the low country he had found nothing that was hard and round, but when he came to the wooded hills of Ridge Valley, he found hard objects and decided these must be potatoes, and he busily collected a heap of them.²⁷

Colorful placenames are occasionally ascribed to equally colorful origin tales in these histories, by a process easily recognizable as folk etymology. "It is notorious that popular interpretations of place-names are often ludicrous and show nothing except the creative imagination of country people who appear to have a built-in onomastic faculty and can invent explanations for names that would defy any poet's attempts at their improvement."³⁰ Conway Wing's *History of Cumberland County* (Philadelphia, 1879) provides several of these imaginative explanations, one for the origin of the town-name Lisburn: "Tradition asserts that a spinster whose name was Elizabeth Burns presided at an early period over a cake and beer establishment, and the 'young bloods' of the vicinity spoke of a visit to her store as a trip to 'Liz Burns,' from which grew the name of the village" (p. 200). Another story explains the source of two stream names in the western half of the county: "The first industry started by its inhabitants was the conversion of their surplus corn into whiskey, and a number of distilleries started up, tradition says one on each farm, and the community, from a sense of the fitness of things, called it Whisky Run. The next stream west, and only a mile distant, was jocosely called Brandy Run, because brandy is next and near to whiskey, and a little better" (p. 235).

Generally the more unusual the name, the more unusual is the explanation. Regarding Ringtown, in northern Schuylkill County, we are told, "the village takes its name from a thieving act which occurred in one of the town blacksmith shops in 1830. This act caused an enemy of Benj. Nehf to speak sneeringly of the place as Ringtown. The theft was that of a hub-ring which is used to hold an old-fashioned wooden wagon wheel hub together. That title clung to it

despite the efforts of its founders, and, having long since lost its significance, it is now acquired in by all."³¹

Other colorful central Pennsylvania names include Ono, Aitch and Snow Shoe. The first two, we are told, were compromise names adopted when residents could not agree on any other:

Ono will doubtless be familiar to many motorists, as it is situated along Route 22, about 24 miles east of Harrisburg. Selecting a name for their settlement in this Pennsylvania German area was far from an easy problem, as every proposal put forth kept meeting a continual rebuff of "O no! O no!" The expression of disapproval was finally accepted as a compromise and so the village became Ono.

From what the writer has learned, the good citizens of a little settlement along the Huntingdon & Broad Top Railroad had also faced difficulty in selecting a suitable name for their village. Name after name was suggested and just as promptly declined, and then when further efforts appeared hopeless a member of the group proposed that the first initial be taken from names of pioneer settlers and so arranged as to spell a name for their settlement. Thus initials were taken from families in this order: Anderson, Isenberg, Taylor, Crum and Henderson, and the village became AITCH.³²

It is also stated that Aitch is simply the pronunciation of "H", the letter of the alphabet at which the name-seekers gave up in disgust (Rung, p. 369). Snow Shoe, in Centre County, supposedly received its name when, about 1775, "a party of white hunters went out on the old Chinlacamoose trail and were overtaken in these high table-lands of the Allegheny Mountains, near the forks of Moshannon Creek, by a heavy snow-storm. Their provisions becoming exhausted they had to make snow-shoes and walk in them to the Bald Eagle settlement. It required about two days to travel in these snow-shoes a distance of thirty miles."³³

Names purportedly derived from Indian sources are particularly subject to contamination of etymology, especially when the names sound remotely like English. W. F. H. Nicolaisen (art. cit., pp. 1-14) has studied a number of such name formations, and there are many others in Pennsylvania. Nevin Moyer, the Linglestown historian, collected the following story of how the Swatara Creek obtained its name:

There was an Indian hunter, traveling through the forest in search of game. If he was lucky or unlucky on up to the point of reaching this wide and beautiful creek, I am not able to say, but at any rate when he reached the creek, he had only one arrow, which was sweet and dear to him.

He was not along the shore of this beautiful creek very long when all at once he spied a beautiful buck deer on the opposite shore. This he wanted to get so he up with his bow and arrow, took steady aim, drawing the bow string good and hard, then letting the arrow go. With great force it hit the deer at the vital spot, bringing it to the ground.

When this happened, he could not hold back his feelings of joy but said, "Oh! My 'sweet arrow'."

Some tell the story that he missed the deer and the arrow went away back into the forest and was lost. Because it was his his only arrow and not being able to shoot again, he uttered with as sigh in broken English, "Oh! My sweet arrow."³⁴

In fact, as Moyer notes, the name derives from in

Iroquian word, Swahadowry, meaning, "Where we fed on eels."³⁵ The anecdote provides insight into the attitude of local residents regarding the Indian, portraying him consciously or subconsciously as an innocuous, simple-minded child of the forest. A similar attitude is apparent in the following explanation of the name Neversink, near Reading:

When white men first came to Exeter and Cumru Townships, they drove all the Indians but one to the far side of the river. This one could not swim. He wanted to get across to his friends so he killed a lot of birds and took their wings and sewed them together, making himself two large wings. Then he went to Flying Hill, a high cliff overlooking the river and said, "When I fly I will NEVER SINK." He jumped. His wings broke and he fell into the river and drowned. The spot where this happened is still called Neversink.³⁶

Many central Pennsylvania creeks have names beginning with the Indian stream prefix *Cone-*, and many have been given imaginative transliterations; *Conewago* is said to be a corruption of "Can I wade it," and *Condoguinet*, of "Can I go in it." Another suggested origin for the latter name is this:

Two Indians, so the story runs, had discovered a deer at or near the present site of Orrstown, and were chasing it towards the mountain. With a few bounds it had cleared the stream and was already beyond the further shore, while the hunter's dog was bravely but slowly swimming the stream in pursuit. Both the hunters paused on the near bank and were watching intently the progress of the chase — the dog against the deer. Presently the one Indian turned to the other, and gazing calmly into his face, and without a tremor in his voice, said: "Can a dog win it?"

These Indians are both dead.³⁷

Of course, historians will frequently dismiss too quickly as folkloric such place-name explanations. John Watson mentions, and immediately rejects, the derivation of *Frankford* from "*Frank*, a black fellow, and *his ford*, where he kept a ferry for passengers on foot; . . . besides its looking too artificial to be true, there are obvious reasons against that cause of its name."³⁸ As George Evans has noted, imaginative invention occurs when the folk "come to *think* about a particular place-name: where they use the name in a matter-of-fact way in their ordinary daily commerce they are in a sense transmitting true history and no fabrication" (*Where Beards Wag All*, p. 188). When a historian tells us that a name was given to a site by an original settler, no matter how trivial the reason for the name, we might well believe him. Many unusual Forest County place-names were so invented: "Ebenezer Kingsley was the pioneer hunter of Tionesta. He settled in that section in about 1825. Kingsley was a very eccentric man, and a great hunter and trapper. He named nearly all the streams of that section, such as Bear Creek, because he shot a bear there; Jug Handle Creek, because he broke the handle of his jug at its mouth; Salmon Creek, because he shot a salmon at its mouth, etc."³⁹ Such explanations are probably authentic, since the process is still active. Within the past thirty years, a hunting trail in Doubling Gap, Cumberland County,

has acquired the name "Gin Bottle Trail" from the fact that a hunter hung an empty gin bottle on a limb along the trail. Though the bottle is long since gone, victim of another hunter years later, the name has stuck and will probably inspire a more imaginative explanation in years to come, when someone stops to *think* about the origin of the name.

In the same way that the folk mind often provides a highly imaginative explanation for an unusual local place name, an equally imaginative explanation is sometimes given for an unusual feature of local architecture. A tunnel or cave, we are told, was constructed as a means of providing refuge during Indian attacks or to aid runaway slaves in escaping from their owners (an Underground Railroad must obviously have underground tunnels).⁴⁰ Ventilation slits in early stone barns are declared to have been used by early settlers as loopholes for firing at attacking Indians⁴¹ (who would presumably never think of setting fire to the shingle roof from the unslitted front or back of the barn). And an octagonal schoolhouse built many years after the last Indian attacks was so constructed because "In days of the Indians an armed guard stood at each window as a lookout for the redskins."⁴² Eight armed men with nothing else to do in a labor-intensive culture than to stand at the window while the schoolmaster taught his charges!

In this confusion over chronology can be seen the myth-making tendency of primitive narrators to blend the time-element of all past events into a single concurrent whole, a tendency evident even in the relatively more sophisticated mind of the local Pennsylvania historian. If grandfather relates a story told to him by an earlier ancestor, the story is accepted by the listener as occurring within grandfather's lifetime, and the entire course of local history is skewed accordingly. Then, too, the selective memory of the folk recalls the good things, the more significant occurrences, and generally only those events that contribute to the aggrandizement of the local culture. The local hero acquires the traits of other admired heroes and soon the believed illusion is accepted as more authentic than any historical fact could be. As a final illustration, John Steinbeck once recalled visiting the town where he was born:

I talked with a very old man who had known me as a child. He remembered vividly seeing me, a peaked, shivering child walking past his house one freezing morning, my inadequate overcoat fastened across my little chest with horse-blanket pins. This in its small way is the very stuff of myths — the poor suffering child who rises to glory, on a limited scale of course. Even though I didn't remember the episode, I knew it could not be true. My mother was a passionate sewer-on of buttons. A button off was more than sloppiness; it was a sin. If I had pinned my coat, my mother would have whaled me. The story could not be true, but this old gentleman so loved it that I could never convince him of its falsity, so I didn't try. If my home town wants me in horse-blanket pins, nothing I can do is likely to change it, particularly the truth.⁴³

The truth of history lies in its interpretation. The

influence of the past depends on contemporary attitudes toward it, and those attitudes are often best expressed in the anecdotes which remain in the oral tradition. "The anecdote . . . is an aspect of oral information that should be scrupulously recorded by the collector of oral sources as the seemingly more weighty historical facts. Weighty facts often have a tendency to decrease in importance as time goes on, while the minuscule sometimes grows to a new dimension."⁴⁴ Documentary evidence will always be available, but the oral sources, once lost, can never be recovered.

The future writer of local history would do well to remember that *history* and *story* both derive from the same source. Just as an incident accepted today as historically true might subsequently prove to be folklore, today's legends and rumors might be proven true by later research. At any rate, what the folk of a given era believe to be true is important evidence of the folk mentality and deserves to be recorded.

NOTES

¹Dorson, "Local History and Folklore," *Detroit Historical Society Bulletin*, 18 (1961); reprinted in *American Folklore and the Historian* (Chicago, 1971), p. 149.

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³See Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index*, no. J1491; cf. Alfred H. Miles, *One Thousand & One Anecdotes* (New York, 1895), p. 225-226; Rafael Boira, *El libro de los cuentos* (Madrid, 1862), II, 160-161. A modern variant is in Larry Wilde, *The Official Dog Lovers Joke Book* (Los Angeles, 1978) p. 38.

⁴See Barrick, "Pulpit Humor in Central Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 19, No. 1 (1969), 28-36, esp. pp. 30-31.

⁵*Contributions to the History of the Lackawanna Valley* (New York, 1857), pp. 274-275.

⁶Clarence Macartney, *Not Far from Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh, 1976), p. 90.

⁷Philadelphia, 1882, p. 48.

⁸"Of Folkloristic Interest," *Pennsylvania Dutchman*, 4, No. 13 (March 1, 1953), p. 5; cf. Richard H. Shaner, *Hexerei* (Macungie, Pa., 1963), p. 16; Joseph E. Walker, *Hopewell Village* (Philadelphia, 1966), p. 377.

⁹Jacob H. Stoner, *Historical Papers* (Chambersburg, 1947), p. 231.

¹⁰*The Guns of Lattimer* (New York, 1978), p. 163.

¹¹C. B. Alleman, *The Life and Times of Lewis Wetzel* (Scottsdale, Pa., 1932), pp. 69-71.

¹²See Carrol B. Tyson, *The Poconos* (Philadelphia, 1929), p. 34; Harold W. Thompson, *Body, Boots and Britches* (Philadelphia, 1940), p. 51; Ann Hark, *Blue Hills and Shoofly Pie* (Philadelphia, 1952), p. 214; Errol Vincent Coy, *All New Book 2-Cracker Barrel Tales* (Shippensburg, 1979), p. 82.

¹³Emelyn Gardner, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, New York (Ann Arbor, 1937), pp. 26-27; Harold Thompson, p. 51.

¹⁴Cf. Richard Dorson, "Comic Indian Anecdotes," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 10 (1946), 122; rep. in *Folklore and Fakelore* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), pp. 276-277. The story is listed by Aarne and Thompson in *Types of the Folktale* as type 38, in Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index* as motif K1111, and in Ernest Baughman, *Type and Motif-Index of the Folktales of England and North America* (The Hague, 1966) as motif K551.29*.

¹⁵Edna J. Carmean, *Lebanon County, Pennsylvania — A History* (Lebanon, 1976), p. 69.

¹⁶*Up Cutshin and Down Greasy* (Lexington, Ky., 1959), pp. 140-141. For Europe and Asia, see Aarne and Thompson, type 956B and Thompson, motif K912.

¹⁷See Percy G. Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars, 1660-1800* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962), pp. 129-131.

¹⁸Crèvecoeur, *Journey*, tr. Clarissa Bostelmann (Ann Arbor, 1964), p. 16.

¹⁹Hall, *Clearfield County, Pa., Past and Present* (n.p., 1925), p. 83; Swope, *Lebanon County Historical Society*, 14, No. 2 (1967), p. 5. See Cecily Hancock, "The 'Me All Face' Story; European Literary Background of An American Comic Anecdote," *Journal of American Folklore*, 76 (1963), 340-342. Cf. Dorson, "Comic Indian Anecdotes," p. 119; *Notes and Queries*, 6th Ser., 4 (1881), 467, 498. A Spanish version relating to a scamp in Málaga appears in Boira, II, 209.

²⁰Baughman, motif K66(aa), to which add: B.A. Botkin, *A Treasury of American Anecdotes* (New York, 1957), pp. 58-59; Bennet Cerf, *The Laugh's On Me* (Garden City, N.Y., 1959), p. 249.

²¹See George Dunkelberger, *The Story of Snyder County* (Selinsgrove, 1948), p. 203.

²²Baughman, motif K66(ba)*; Andrea Greenberg, "Form and Function of the Ethnic Joke," *Keystone Folklore Quarterly*, 17 (1972), 150.

²³Daryl Dance, *Shuckin' and Jivin': Folklore from Contemporary Black Americans* (Bloomington, 1978), p. 172, no. 312.

²⁴*The Delaware Water Gap: Its Scenery, Its Legends, and Its Early History* (Philadelphia, 1867), pp. 94-126.

²⁵*Old Schuylkill Tales* (Pottsville, 1906), p. 146.

²⁶*A History of Montour County, Pennsylvania* (Danville, 1969), pp. 11-12.

²⁷Frederic Tubach, *Index Exemplorum. A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki, 1969), p. 88, no. 1098.

²⁸Mrs. George A. Perkins, *Early Times on the Susquehanna* (Binghamton, 1906), p. 54.

²⁹Thomas R. Brendle and William S. Troxell, *Pennsylvania German Folk Tales* (Norristown, 1944), pp. 92-93. Cf. Baughman, motif A977.3.1(a)*. The Devil is often conceived of as inhabiting mountainous, rocky areas; see Maximilian Rudwin, *The Devil in Legend and Literature* (La Salle, Ill., 1973), p. 62.

³⁰George Ewart Evans *Where Beards Wag All. The Relevance of the Oral Tradition* (London, 1977), p. 188. Cf. also Richard Dorson, *Jonathan Draws the Long Bow* (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), p. 188.

³¹Joseph H. Zerby, *History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, 1936), II, 1021.

³²Albert M. Rung, *Rung's Chronicles of Pennsylvania History* (Huntingdon, Pa., 1977), p. 357; cf. a similar derivation for the name of Onoville, N.Y., in W.F.H. Nicolaisen, "Some Humorous Folk-Etymological Narratives," *New York Folklore*, 3 (1977), 9.

³³William J. McKnight, *A Pioneer History of Jefferson County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1898), pp. 182-183.

³⁴"Moyerettes, 1915-1940," p. 103. This is a typescript miscellany of folklore and history compiled by Mr. Moyer. A copy is on deposit in the Shippensburg State College library. Cf. Yvonne Milspaw, rev. of Howry Espenshade, *Pennsylvania Place Names, in Folklore Forum*, 3 (1970), 43-44.

³⁵William H. Egle, *Notes and Queries*, I (Harrisburg, 1894), p. 353; George Korson, *Black Rock* (Baltimore, 1960), p. 156.

³⁶Alfred Shoemaker, "Old Berks Folklore, Legends and History," *Reading Eagle*, January 24, 1949, p. 11.

³⁷Linn Harbaugh, "Truths and Traditions of Early Times," *Kittochintny Historical Society Papers*, 5 (1908), 324.

³⁸*Annals of Philadelphia*, II (Philadelphia, 1927), p. 72.

³⁹W. J. McKnight, *A Pioneer Outline History of Northwestern Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1905), p. 527. Cf. the colorful names and explanations for them in B.F.G. Kline, Jr., *Pitch Pine and Prop Timber* (Lancaster, 1971), pp. 116-121.

⁴⁰John Ward Willson Loose, "Myths of Local History," *Lancaster County Historical Society Journal*, 68 (1964), 176-179.

⁴¹Cf. Eric Sloane, *An Age of Barns* (New York, 1967), p. 68.

⁴²John J. Greene, "Octagonal School in Newburg More Than Hundred Years Old," *Newville Valley Times-Star*, April 26, 1934, p. 1; *Borough of Newburg Centennial* (Newburg, 1961), p. 69; Coy, *Cracker Barrel Tales*, p. 32. Most such schools in Pennsylvania were built between 1810 and 1820.

⁴³*Travels with Charley* (New York, 1962), pp. 73-74.

⁴⁴George Ewart Evans, *From Mouths of Men* (London, 1976), p. 143.

Photo—Pennsylvania Folklife Society

1. Landjugendtrachtentanzgruppe [Country Youth Costumed Dancers from] Nanzdetschweiler, Pfalz, in fourth of July Parade at Folk Festival during 1979 New York to St. Louis Tour. Margret Gohlke and Wolfgang Krück carry their banner.



Photo Essay:

Design: WILLIAM K. MUNRO

Text: WILLIAM T. PARSONS

PENNSYLVANIA~PALATINAT INFORMAL FOLK CULTURAL EXC

During the past ten or a dozen years an informal intermingling of cultural cousins has occurred in the form of occasional individual and group visits and exchanges between the German Rhineland-Palatinate and culturally German sections of Pennsylvania. Intellectual and cultural ties which link wider stretches of a German-language-speaking homeland with New World settlements from New Jersey to Missouri, have also emerged in a number of public appearances and programs.

Thus Professor Karl Scherer, successor to Dr. Fritz Braun at the Heimatstelle Pfalz in Kaiserslautern, renewed friendship visits in 1974 much as Dr. Alfred L. Shoemaker, the Reverend Doctor Don Yoder, Professor Otto Springer and Preston Barba and teachers and folk cultural specialists Walter Boyer, Al Kemp and Paul Wieand had inaugurated in the early 1950's. Swabian Baden-Württemberg, the Rhenish Palatinate and Bavaria then took turns entertaining the travelling American ambassadors of dialect, folk humor and general goodwill. In turn, particularly during the 1960's those homeland regions sent German students, professors and other cultural representatives to Pennsylvania. Exchange of ideas in the form of symposia, seminars, summer schools and other programs had

helped re-establish personal and folk cultural ties broken by the misgivings and aggravations of two World Wars.

Thus the relatively recent series of visits, gatherings, exchanges and meetings to be noted in this photo essay, represents a strengthening and renewal of the previous effort. Church, school, home and personal bonds are important to the many people the photographs and the incidents touch upon. Village and university, farm and castle are not at all incongruously in juxtaposition. It is not too grand to say that all former participants hope to continue the dialogues and conferences in numerous gatherings at moments to come.

Indeed, as we look forward to the 1983 Tercentenary of initial German settlement in Pennsylvania at Germantown, plans multiply. We hope the value and strength of personal understanding through such one-on-one contacts may be apparent and forceful. Increased appreciation of our own cultural heritage may be a most valuable by-product of this exchange. It will be pleasant to welcome history, language and folk cultural scholars from Germany, Switzerland, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States to the Kutztown Folk Festival and to Ursinus College in the Summer of 1981.



Photo—Hefelfinger

2. Planning sessions have taken place by airmail, transatlantic telephone and in person. Leaders Karl Scherer, Leiter of the Heimatstelle Pfalz, Kaiserslautern (l.) and William T. Parsons, Program Director at Ursinus (r.) confer in 1974, when Scherer also lectured in a U.S. History class.

ANGES



Photo—Bachem

3. Planning also involves field study: Roland Paul of the Heimatstelle and the Bürgermeister of Steinwenden (both at r.) pause in a walking tour of the Pfarrhaus in Steinwenden, from whence Carl David Weber emigrated to found Stockton, Calif. Making the house tour in January 1976 were (l. to r.) Dr. W. T. Parsons, Dr. Don Yoder, Frau Ursula Scherer, Prof. Karl Scherer and Dr. Alex Waldenrath.

Photo—Antje Sommer

4. Architectural style in Pennsylvania: field study tour of the Morgan House in Towamencin Township, July 1976.

Photo—Storms

5. In the Palatinate, Haus Mühlberg at Enkenbach-Alsenborn, locale of 1976 Enkenbacher Symposium and other folk cultural gatherings.

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Photo - Hefelfinger

6. Banquet-Reception at Wismer Hall, Ursinus College, May 1974, to honor the visit of Karl Scherer and the Program Committees (1974-75) of Pennsylvania German Society. Standing (l. to r.), Doris Daub, William Parsons, Kathy Cheston Caruso, Lydia Taxis, Karl Scherer, William Daub; Seated (l. to r.), I. Clarence Kulp, J. Douglas Davis, Anne Riehl McCann and Don Yoder.

Photo - Parsons

7. Original Pfälzer Gerichte [Grumbeerfescht] v. RegierungsPräsident Keller, Zum Lokschuppen, Elmstein, Pfalz, 11. Jenner 1976. Potato dishes of the Palatinate in the Palatine Forest, a folk cultural treat. Seated clockwise around the table from l., Karl Scherer, Forester-General H. Weygand (partly hidden), Alex Waldenrath, State President of the Palatinate Hans Keller, Frau Ursula Scherer and then Editor Don Yoder.



Photo - Parsons

8. Informal folk cultural exchange at Kutztown Folk Festival, July 1976: Roland Paul of the Heimatstelle Pfalz and I. Clarence Kulp of the Festival & Penna. German Studies Program, discuss Pennsylvania and German-American themes with visitors from Connecticut.



Photo - Weschler

9. Informal discussion of folk cultural topics in an upper workroom, Heimatstelle Pfalz Kaiserslautern, September 1979. Scherer, Parsons, and Paul review recent American and Pfälzer Volkskunst materials. Following the 450th Anniversary of Protestant Estates at Speyer, Paul and Parsons helped inaugurate the new Wanderpfad #4 by hiking from Kusel to Burg Lichtenberg.



Photo - Parsons

10. At Enkenbach, Bruno Klemm sang Pfälzer songs from his book "De Guckuck" while Heinrich Kröher of the Folksinging Twins, Os and Hein, appreciates the performance, 1976.

11. Merritt Freeman entertained on the Main Stage at Kutztown Folk Festival with songs and jokes in dialect and in English. He is an outstanding Deutsch speaker when not busy as undertaker. July 1979.



MARIA ASSUNTA: BERWICK'S ITALIAN RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL

by DONALD E. BYRNE, JR.



St. Joseph's Church

All photographs by the author.

Every year since 1910 the Italian community in Berwick, Pennsylvania, has celebrated the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 15 with a festival which closely resembles traditional religious festivals of southern and central Italy. This unbroken series of celebrations in Berwick has kept alive a Catholic folk piety of ancient vintage which is still practiced in the regions of the immigrants' origins — primarily Abruzzi, Apulia, Campania, and Calabria.¹

Lamentations over the decline of festivity in technological society notwithstanding, contemporary American life offers a smorgasbord of festivals to its people.² In addition, contemporary scholarship offers a variety of ways to classify and analyze such festivals.³ For classificatory purposes, the clearest and simplest designation applicable to the Assumption festival in Berwick is that it is a religious folk festival. Among the various kinds of religious festivals (e.g., those associated with the rites of passage), the Berwick celebration exemplifies the calendar festival; that is, it is tied to a specific feast of the Roman Catholic church year — in this case, that of the Assumption of Mary into heaven, defined dogmatically in 1950 by Pope Pius XII but celebrated and believed for centuries prior to the definition. In the context of southern Italian religiosity, the Assumption festival is a *fiesta paesane*, that is, a festival linked to the traditions of a particular town or region. The Berwick celebration is also a folk festival. Contemporary folklorists define folklore as cultural materials which circulate orally or by example, in traditional form, among members of any group.⁴ It is clear that the Assumption festival meets these criteria: it is a cultural phenomenon, traditional

for southern Italian peasants and immigrants, and transmitted in an informal oral and exemplary fashion. In addition, the Assumption festival is a living folk festival. The Italian community in Berwick has never become aware that it has a "folk" festival. Since its inception, the festival has served an important, even necessary function within the community, even though, as we shall see, that function is changing. In other words, the festival has not been celebrated in order to preserve the folk traditions of the Italian community; it has been celebrated to express its life.

The primary purpose of this paper originally was, and to some extent remains, ethnographic. Even had the festival disappeared completely, or survived only as a self-conscious folk festival, accurate and complete description of what happened would serve a valuable function.

As the study progressed, however, it became obvious that the folklore could not be regarded simply as an anachronistic survival, or as a quaint but functionless relic of a bygone era. Through the years the festival changed as the Italian community changed. More accurately, while the structure of the festival remained relatively stable, the meaning of the celebration underwent a metamorphosis corresponding to the changing self-conception of the Italian community. The structure provided one vehicle whereby such change could take place in an orderly fashion. To use an overworked term, the festival provided "roots" for the transition within the community. Ironically, having served this function, the festival today is in danger of disappearing. It helped mid-wife its people from one world to another, and finds itself lingering in the old

world. Today attempts are being made to bring the festival and its meaning, or *a* meaning, back together. Perhaps, as in the case of some Italian communities in central Pennsylvania, the festival can become an exuberant expression of ethnic distinction. Although such a step would reunite structure and meaning, it would also indicate that the festival had become something new: neither traditional Italian religious folk festival, nor typical American carnival, but an Italian-American celebration through which ethnic solidarity is expressed in religious terms. In the context of the current sociological debate over cultural homogeneity vs. ethnic heterogeneity, the Italians of Berwick currently fall somewhere in between total assimilation to American culture and self-definition as an ethnic group.⁵ While they seem to seek the same economic and social levels of achievement as their Protestant (and other Catholic) neighbors, they are acutely aware of being different, and are proud of the difference. The uncertain status of the festival mirrors the uncertainty of the community as to the kind and degree of difference it wishes to sustain. Hence, a second concern of this paper is change — change within the festival and change within the Italian community. In this process folklore has been more than a mere anachronism (although unless further change occurs, it may end up as such); rather, folklore has functioned as an ingredient of social change.

In order to illuminate both purposes of this paper, therefore, two festivals will be examined. One of them is in the present: it was staged this year, and next year, and perhaps for many years to come. The other festival is past: it lives in the memories of surviving immigrants and their immediate descendants. For these, the festival as it used to be celebrated is a benchmark for assessing present festivals. One first generation informant phrased his pained feelings this way: "You can see it phasin' away, even the celebration. It's still there, but the main topic is phasin' away."⁶ While allowances must be made for the observation that lamentations about the loss of festival spirit are themselves part of the festival tradition, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that there is at least considerable difference between the two festivals. Such a conclusion is supported not only by remembrances of the participants, but also by newspaper accounts of past festivals and by my observation of festivals in 1975, 1977, and 1978. This paper will describe each festival, and conclude with reflections on the changes that have contributed to the difference between the two.

I. THE ASSUMPTION FESTIVAL PAST

Precisely at six o'clock on Saturday morning, August 15 (or if the fifteenth did not fall on a Saturday, the first Saturday following the fifteenth), six large



Maria Assunta Lodge

aerial bombs parted the sky over the West End of Berwick, signalling the climactic day of the Festival in honor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven.⁷ The bombs were detonated at the grounds of the *Società di N.S. Maria SS. dell' Assunta Catholica Apostolica Romana*,⁸ customarily called the Maria Assunta Society, on the corner of Monroe Street and Assunta Avenue. Maria Assunta's grounds and lodge, built in 1922, are two blocks north of St. Joseph's Church, completed in 1926.

Maria Assunta played a key role in the Festival. The Society was founded by a group of Italian men in a barber shop on Freas Avenue in 1910, just eight years after the first Italian immigrants arrived in Berwick. From 1910 to 1921 Maria Assunta staged the Festival with neither parish nor pastor. In 1921 St. Joseph's Chapel was established on Freas Avenue as an Italian mission by Fr. Leonard Baluta, pastor of St. Mary's Church on Mulberry Street. Although St. Joseph's Church was completed in 1926, it was not until 1928 that the parish was fully constituted, with a pastor, Fr. Francis Albanese, appointed by Bishop Phillip McDevitt of Harrisburg.⁹ For the first eighteen years of its existence, the Festival was almost entirely by and for the laity with Maria Assunta as the fulcrum.

For Maria Assunta, the Festival represented a tangible way of honoring and securing the continued patronage of its namesake, the Mother of Christ assumed into heaven. As its full name suggests, however, the Society was not founded solely for this purpose. It was a "società di mutuo soccorso" (a mutual aid society). It was also a fraternal organization: according to its by-laws, only Italian Catholic males and their male descendants could belong.¹⁰ For those who belonged, and for their families, Maria Assunta provided a social and economic bulwark against a hostile environment. That environment was concretely represented by the sprawling 135-acre industrial complex

of the American Car and Foundry Company which abutted the Italian community on the east and which loomed over it like an angry Titan.

Today the American Car and Foundry Company is gone, having moved in 1961 to more profitable pastures. Its massive rusting skeleton remains, inhabited by a host of lesser industries. In the first decade of the twentieth century, however, the Company was a booming industry.

The beginnings of the Company can be traced to a small foundry established in 1840 by Mordecai William Jackson and George Mack. In 1861 the foundry began making mining cars, and by 1865 six eight-wheel coal cars for the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad were being produced every day. Reorganized in 1872 as the Jackson and Woodin Manufacturing Company and again in 1899 as the American Car and Foundry Company, the once crude foundry emerged at the turn of the century as the largest producer of freight and passenger cars in the eastern United States.

In 1902 the railroads of the country began to call for steel cars for the transportation of coal. The Company retooled and expanded to meet the demand. By 1905 it was producing not only steel coal cars, but steel subway and passenger cars as well. By 1907 Company workmen were hammering out enough cars for four average freight trains per day.

The Company's rapidly increasing productivity presupposed an abundance of cheap labor. Between 1900 and 1907 the total work-force increased by three thousand from 2500 to 5500 laborers.¹¹ Available jobs drew immigrants like a magnet; Ukrainians, Hungarians, Slovaks and Italians flocked to Berwick to try their hands at the wheels of American industry. Those who came to Berwick were an epiphenomenon of the flood of European immigrants who provided the labor force for American industrial, agricultural, and geographical expansion.¹² In the first decades of the twentieth century, Italians of the Mezzogiorno (central and southern Italy) were the most numerous arrivals.¹³

The first Italians in Berwick, however, migrated not from across the Atlantic but from nearby towns in the anthracite region of central Pennsylvania, to Scranton and Hazleton.¹⁴ Quickly word spread from those who found jobs to *paesani* in America and Italy who were looking for jobs. Fathers came, then sons, then wives and daughters, then friends from the same village, financed by years of hard work and frugal living in the boarding houses of the West End.¹⁵ As one immigrant succinctly put it: "One drug the other, you know what I mean?, one drug the other."¹⁶

Those who expected to find a pot of gold in the roaring shops of the American Car and Foundry Company, however, were quickly disillusioned. Because they were "foreigners", and because they were Catholic, Italians were last to be hired and first to be fired. A 94-year-old immigrant remembered: "When I ask for job here,

the first thing they tell ya, 'What are ya, an Italian?' 'Yes.' 'Goodbye.' What am I gonna do about it? It ain't my fault!"¹⁷ Italians were "wops", "Dagoes", or "spaghetti eaters." The last epithet recalled today with appreciative humor by those Italian women who are asked to prepare spaghetti sauce and meatballs for Protestant church dinners.¹⁸ According to another immigrant, "You could get a job, if they need you... naturally, most of the foreigners got the hardest."¹⁹ Some informants remembered being put to work in suffocating heat, casting wheels in the wheel foundry, or painting cars in the finishing shed, ten cents an hour, ten hours a day, "like it or not."²⁰ Under such pressures some immigrants accumulated what savings they could and returned to the less hostile climate of Italy.²¹

Better jobs and more steady work were available to those who were willing to change their religion. Harold Breece, a Presbyterian who was Company personnel manager in those days, was widely remembered for his efforts to proselytize with the carrot of employment.²² Such dubious evangelization was only mildly successful; one informant estimated that some forty families out of five hundred succumbed to the enticements of Breece and became Presbyterians. For these, an Italian Presbyterian Church was founded on the corner of LaSalle and Center Streets, not far from St. Joseph's; "they didn't want them uptown," that is, at the First Presbyterian Church on Market Street.²³ In time many of the "converts" drifted back to St. Joseph's or were accepted "uptown"; the gray stucco edifice of the Italian Presbyterian Church is now a furniture warehouse. As a consequence, however, of leaving the Roman Catholic fold, Presbyterian converts forfeited membership rights in the Maria Assunta Society. To meet their need for fraternity and mutual aid, Italian Presbyterians founded the Giuseppe Garibaldi Mutual Beneficiary Society in 1911.²⁴

Undoubtedly many of the converts embraced their new faith sincerely. One immigrant, however, told a story which indicates that such conversions were regarded by some as mere survival mechanisms.

Angelo Ferro...he had a cow...He brought the cow, to pasturize him down here someplace. There was no houses, all grass. And that property belonged to a Squire of the Peace, Fenstermaker by name. At that time, although it was West Berwick and Berwick, two boroughs...we had our own city hall here, where the fire hall is now...and this Squire of Peace farmed himself, barefoot...he never put his shoes on (laughs). Oh man! He get ahold of cow with rope to pull him away, and Angelo, he said, "What are ya doin', man?"

He say, "That cow, he eat the grass on my property."

(Angelo): "And what are ya gonna do?"

(Squire): "I'll bring him by City Hall...You pay a fine, and I'll give your cow back."

Now what?

(Angelo): "I ain't got no money—how much you want?"

He wanted ten dollars, for fine, just like that.

(Squire): "Let's make a deal with you. You a Catholic? If you join my church, and quit the Catholic Church, I give your

cow back and you pay no fine."

Ah! All right. So he quit the Catholic Church, and he went to Presbyterian Church over here, and settled.

When Father Baluta find that out, he say "Hey, Angelo, I understood you are attending church."

"Yes, Father," he say, "I go to that church to save my cow, but I come to your church to save my soul."²⁵



Joe Jordan and Millie DiGiandomenico, two of Berwick's oldest Italian immigrants. Joe told the story of Angelo Ferro's cow.

The American Car and Foundry Company was both hope and fate for the anxious immigrant. Once employed, a man could provide for himself and his family by dint of incessant work and unwavering frugality. Safety standards, however, were not what they are today; injuries, mutilations, and deaths through industrial accident were not uncommon among ordinary laborers. Yet there was no workmen's compensation, disability insurance, health insurance, or life insurance. No labor union protected workers from unforeseen layoffs. The only recourse Italian workmen had was to band together to protect themselves and their families. Members pooled their meager resources to provide a five hundred dollar death benefit and a dollar and fifty cents per day sick benefit. The five hundred dollars could fulfill the immigrant's desire for a dignified burial, complete with procession and marching band, while the sick benefit could mean the difference between survival and dissolution for his family.²⁶ Hence the benefits of the Maria Assunta Society extended far beyond religious patronage and fraternal fellowship for its members. Maria Assunta provided the bedrock for economic and hence social solidarity of the entire community by protecting the fundamental institution of Italian immigrants: the family.²⁷

The six bombs at six o'clock of the Festival day awakened a West End packed with visitors. For those of the Berwick diaspora (first or second generation sons, daughters, relatives and friends who had left for one

reason or another) Festival week was the High Holy Days and Berwick a Jerusalem to which one must return. People took their vacations during this week in August in order to come and stay for the entire week preceding the procession.²⁸ The Festival was Homecoming, a time for family units to renew their bonds.

In preparation for Homecoming, houses were cleaned, and yards made neat and sparkling. New clothes were bought for the children,²⁹ and everyone was arrayed in his or her best.

Everybody wore their best, especially on the last day, going to church and marching in the procession. Everybody wore their very best...

That's how the business places in town would welcome that week because everybody would go, more so than on Christmas and Easter, that one week, people really went shopping, even as far as going out of town. But mostly in town, though, they bought all new clothes. Oh, they wore their best finery. Oh yeah. Everything...everything, trying to outdo each other (laughs).³⁰

Pilgrims would start trickling in at the beginning of the week; the influx grew to flood proportions by Friday. Familial conviviality was the mood, kindled by traditional food and drink. Hosts bought kegs of beer and laid out lavish feasts for relatives and for visitors who moved from home to home to renew old acquaintanceships.

Just the traditional Italian foods...Like roast chicken and potatoes, usually, and the home-made macaroni and the...oh, we'd make our own, yeah the home-made pasta. And...like, chicken, and veal was mostly at that time, because it was very, very reasonable. You could buy a whole calf for a few dollars...

And roast veal and roast chickens, and Italian...what they call Italian potatoes, and salads, and all kinds of home-made pastries... it was a joy, it was a pleasure, yeah.³¹

The joy of the Italian women, however, was diluted by the hard work Homecoming demanded of them:

They'd all congregate back here, maybe for a whole week before the festival. And then, and then, the poor ladies! The cooking, and the...ohhh! And then, you couldn't go to the markets like you do now and get chickens, (laughs)...

Practically every house had people visiting, and the hosts, or hostess...as far as sleeping on the floor in the kitchens to accommodate the visitors. Oh, yes...(laughs)...uh-huh. I used to dr...I... I looked forward to it and yet I used to dread it...We really worked, my mother before me, and I after her. It was fun, but it was a lot of work. And yet, at the time, we didn't mind the work, thinking of seeing all the people coming home again. We looked forward to it, but not the work.³²

Soon after the morning salute, the women were again busy, readying breakfast for their guests and family. Others in the community were stirring as well. For a week, Italian and American flags had adorned the streets of the West End³³; many homes hung their own flags for the final day. In St. Joseph's Church, Anthony Lovecchio arranged cut flowers and candles in the niche of the statue of the Virgin Mary.³⁴ Private shrines of Our Lady, or Saint Anthony, or the Infant Jesus of Prague were receiving similar attention in the side yards of numerous homes. At the Maria Assunta grounds, finishing touches were being put on the carnival, band, and judges' stands. Many devotees of the Virgin readied tables, decorated with flowers and candles, in front of their homes, in order that the procession

might stop there for a special intention.³⁵

At seven o'clock there was another blast, again from the area of Maria Assunta. Children, by now awake and fed, ran into the streets. Adults paused from their labors long enough to come to their porches to listen. This time it was not aerial bombs, but the ebullient tooting of a brass band: the Colonial Band.

A Festival without a band was unthinkable. One immigrant remembered that in his home town, Rocca Vivi, the townspeople, too poor to field a town band, would nevertheless pool meager resources to hire a visiting band for the annual Assumption Festival. "We had famous bands," he said proudly.³⁶ Another aged man, who played clarinet in Berwick's "Famous Fifty" band during the 1920's and drummed for the Colonial Band for decades, remembered that his father was a drummer in the band that played the St. Anthony procession in Montefreddo.³⁷

One informant recalled that in his home town, bandstands were erected in the town square where, after the procession, the musicians would assemble to give afternoon and evening concerts.³⁸



The Colonial Band, led by Joseph Malatesta.

The Italians of Berwick had "their own" band. Only eleven years after the Italian colony in Berwick began staging festivals in 1910, it had a standing band, first called the Royal Italian Band, then the Boys' Band and Colonial Boys' band, and finally, by 1925, simply Colonial Band.³⁹ For the Italian colony that was its matrix, the Band provided music for the Festival: a Friday evening march with Maria Assunta, punctuated by aerial explosions, to St. Joseph's for Vespers⁴⁰; the Saturday morning serenade; band concerts at the carnival grounds Saturday afternoon; and finally, music before the evening fireworks. For the rest of Berwick, and for neighboring communities, the Colonial Band played at a variety of civic and social occasions.

At Festival time, however, the Band was at its best. Dressed in crisp officers' uniforms, the players stepped smartly through the streets of the West End, rewarding wide-eyed children and adults alike with spirited renditions

of Italian military marches and patriotic American songs, such as "Anima Nobile", "Liberty", "Paradise", "The Angel", "America First", "Flag Day", and "Perseverance".⁴¹ After thoroughly rousing the West End, the Band sometimes ventured "uptown", at least as far as Market Street, to announce to all that the Italian "big time" had come.⁴²

At eight o'clock members of the Maria Assunta began to assemble in their hall. Whatever a member's personal devotion to Mary, his participation in the events of the Festival was *de rigueur*. One officer of the Club took names at every event; those who were not present, to march in the procession and to work at the carnival, were fined the substantial sum of a dollar, unless they had provided a substitute, such as a son, for themselves.⁴³ When everyone had assembled, Maria Assunta marched en masse to St. Joseph's, as they had the evening before, and took their places in the pews. Shimmering banks of candles and the fragrance of the flowers around the Virgin's shrine greeted them and all others who entered the Church.

At nine o'clock, a Solemn High Mass began in honor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven. Defined as a dogma (i.e., authoritatively proclaimed as an article of faith) for Roman Catholics in 1950, the Assumption of Mary was a matter of belief and devotion for centuries in both Eastern and Western Christianity. Simply stated, the dogma of the Assumption contends that, upon completion of the course of her life on earth, the Mother of God was taken up, body and soul, into heavenly glory. Although the belief is founded in the apocryphal (i.e., non canonical) literature of the patristic era, it has, over the centuries, received considerable theological elaboration. Such elaboration was winnowed and focused in Pope Pius XII's definition of the dogma (in the Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*, November 1, 1950), which claimed a firm, if implicit, foundation for Mary's Assumption in Holy Scripture. Mary's "fulness of grace", mentioned in Luke 1:28, meant freedom from sin, even original sin (hence the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, defined in 1854), and consequently freedom from punishment for sin, namely death and bodily corruption. Her immediate bodily resurrection, however, was not seen simply as a personal privilege; her destiny, rather, was a prototype of the destiny of every follower of the risen Christ and indeed, of the destiny of His Body, the Church. In theological language, the dogma had ecclesial and eschatological corollaries. In simple language, Mary was presented as a model and source of hope for every believer. Moreover, as the New Eve (a comparison based upon Romans 5:18ff), Mary was seen to stand in a unique relationship not only to the New Adam, Christ, but to the new mankind he founded. With Christ she shared those events whereby mankind is redeemed. Thereby she became Mother of the new race.

Such a pivotal role in Salvation History argued, for Pius, to the propriety of the Assumption. At the side of Christ in his redemption, Mary should also be at his side in the victory over sin and death.⁴⁴

It is difficult to imagine that theological precision of the sort found in the papal definition played a major role in the piety of the immigrants. They were interested in survival, not theology. More precisely, theirs was an existential folk theology with interests other than those of official church.

For them, Mary was primarily a patroness. She acted as an intermediary between God and Man. As one immigrant said, she was like a lawyer, praying before God on their behalf.⁴⁵ Every town and village in southern Italy had such a patron, whose intercession was necessary in a world driven not by the laws of nature but by spiritual forces, malevolent as well as benevolent. The patron was a bulwark against hostile natural, social, economic and political forces. Without such protection, individuals, families, villages, indeed, the entire social order would be overwhelmed.⁴⁶

In this folk theology, the Assumption Festival had several purposes. It was a time to thank the patroness for past protection. It was a time to beg for future favor. It was also a time to begin anew by returning to a beginning point, not in time but in eternity. By ritually contacting its source (the patroness) the entire community was freshened, as if the New Year began in August. The structure of the Festival accentuated this aspect. Families gathered together; people, homes, the very streets wore new clothes. Ordinary time was suspended in favor of the extraordinary: grinding labor was interrupted, bands marched in the streets, feasting and visiting became the rule rather than the exception. The gut-wrenching frugality of every day gave way to the extravagance of candies, games, rides, and bombastic fireworks. No Feast of Fools, with its inversion of social and moral hierarchies, was this festival. Yet it was extravagant and exuberant enough to teach that humdrum existence was not all there was and that daily life was translucent to a higher order without which communal survival was impossible.⁴⁷

The worshippers assembled in St. Joseph's Church were prepared, therefore, for a service which would match the solemnity of the occasion. On this point, the official Church agreed: even before the definition of 1950, according to the *Missale Romanum*, the Feast of the Assumption was a double of the first class feast with an octave, and a Holy Day of Obligation. Church law required attendance at Mass on this feast, and on this feast, and on its vigil, fasting and abstinence from meat. Religiously speaking, it was appropriate to pull out all the stops.

Led by Ray Calabrese, the choir sang Leonard's "Third Mass", accompanied by Miss Rose Silvette, organist.⁴⁸ At the consecration of the Mass, there was a pause. A

signal was given to the Colonial Band, standing outside the church. Scarcely had it begun playing a lyrical version of "Ave Maria" when a fusillade of ground bombs exploded at the Maria Assunta grounds, just as the Host and Chalice were being elevated at the altar.⁴⁹

At the conclusion of Mass, laity and clergy alike streamed into the street in front of the church. Confusion reigned as the procession began to coalesce. Gradually components sorted out: at the head of the procession a color guard, or children of the parish, dressed in white and carrying flags, or mounted officers of Maria Assunta; next, various parish organizations, such as the Rosary Society, with a colorful banner, or girls' sodalities, or the Boy Scouts, or first communicants dressed in white, carrying Italian tricolors and American flags; next, the cross and candlebearers, altar boys in buckling two by two lines, and the priest, Father Albanese; next, with a space reserved for the statue, the Colonial Band; and finally, members of Maria Assunta, colorful and proud in red, white, and green sashes and caps.⁵⁰

Bu 10:45 all was in readiness for the appearance of the Madonna. She was an immigrant, too; in 1922, Nick Ratamess, then president of Maria Assunta, had made a special trip to Italy to obtain a statue worthy of the Festival.⁵¹ For most of the year, hers was a quiet niche near the front of the church, lit by vigil lights and attended by pious women. But today was her day of triumph. There was a hush in the ranks as she emerged from the door of the church into the morning sunlight, borne aloft on a flowered platform by six strong men. Six alternates flanked them. Members of the same extended family, or men from the same town, the bearers of the statue had won their privilege by bidding hundreds of dollars that morning in a fiercely competitive contest with other such groups.⁵²

Immediately a handkerchief signal flashed to an observer at the grounds of Maria Assunta, and *la batteria* exploded: a series of machine-gun-like detonations, punctuated by the louder blasts of aerial bombs from which Italian and American flags emerged.⁵³ At the same time, The Colonial Band broke into a rousing march, "Rosary", and the bells of the church began pealing.⁵⁴

Amid the uproar, the Virgin wound down the steps of the church to her place in the poised procession, between Father Albanese and the Colonial Band. As she took her place of honor, a beautiful blue and gold silk canopy, carried by four women, moved into place over her head.⁵⁵ From her garments long blue streamers, to which offerings would be attached during the march, fluttered in the slight morning breeze.⁵⁶ At last the signal was given for the procession to move.

Although there were variations from year to year, the route of the procession generally girdled the Italian sector of the West End. From St. Joseph's Church it moved on Monroe to Sycamore, then to LaSalle, to Freas, to Warren, and back on First Avenue to St. Joseph's.⁵⁷

This is a distance of approximately two miles; depending on the number of stops made for people to pin offerings on the streamers, the procession took from one to two hours.

Other ethnic groups lived in the West End, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Hungarians, primarily on the other side of Washington Street. This area was known as "The Avenues", and was sometimes derisively called "Jugtown" or "Frogtown" by the Italians, although relationships in general among the groups were benign.⁵⁸ Each of these ethnic groups had its own fraternal organization on or near Freas Avenue, and each attended its own church. The Ukrainians went to Ss. Cyril and Methodius Church on Warren, and the Slovaks and Hungarians went to St. Mary's on Mulberry. For those Ukrainians who had embraced Russian Orthodoxy, there was Holy Assumption Russian Orthodox Church a block from Ss. Cyril and Methodius. Some non-Italian homes were within the area circumscribed by the procession; their occupants perhaps watched, but did not participate. The space within the circle of the procession belonged to the Italians, and the solemn march renewed their claim to it.



A porch shrine along the route of the procession.

or blue cloth, flanked by candles and cut flowers. When the Madonna reached each shrine, the procession halted.⁶¹ The bearers rested the statue on or near the shrine, and its owners pinned money, gold or diamond rings, or bracelets on the blue ribbons attached to the statue.⁶² Others simply approached the statue as it moved through the streets, handing their offerings to men who pinned them on the ribbons, and received a holy card in return. Such gifts, which accrued to St. Joseph's Church, were offered in thanksgiving for past favors, to fulfill a vow, or to beg for future assistance.

When the procession arrived back at St. Joseph's, around noon, it disbanded, after appropriate concluding prayers conducted by Father Albanese. The Mother of God returned to her quiet niche in the Church, where she was the object of private prayers and devotions throughout the day. Everyone's attention turned to the next phase of the Festival, the carnival, which was coming to life at the grounds of the Maria Assunta lodge.

Those who strolled to the carnival area in the afternoon, perhaps with excited children in tow, found it gaily decorated with flags and streamers. Electric lights, over seven hundred of them, had been strung to provide illumination for the evening hours.⁶³ As the *Berwick Enterprise* reported, plenty of traditional American carnival food was available and consumed:

The carnival grounds were filled early and the Berwick band concert was the feature of the evening. There was a carnival spirit to the crowds and grounds, with stands galore, resembled a county fair. The balloon man and the squawker man did a big business and not only with the children. Lemonade by the dozen barrels, soft drink by the dozen cases, frankfurters by the hundreds and the never failing peanuts by the bushel went to appease the appetite of the crowds.⁶⁴



Members of the Maria Assunta Society marching in the procession.

As the colorful procession moved over its route, bombs were detonated periodically from the Maria Assunta grounds.⁵⁹ The streets were decorated with flags and flowers, as were many homes. Some of those in the procession recited the Rosary between spirited renditions of marching music: "Anima Nobile", "Liberty", "Paradise", "The Angel", "Hymn to St. Ann", all repeated again and again—by the Band. Others simply walked, with quiet solemnity, such as the Maria Assunta Society, eye-catching in its tri-colors, or the ladies of the Rosary Society, resplendent in blue and white dresses.⁶⁰ Some of the marchers talked with each other, or joked with bystanders.

Those who were not marching waited and watched on porches or in front of their homes. Some houses had permanent outdoor shrines of Mary standing on white

In addition, traditional Italian festival foods tempted hungry palates. Concessionaires from New York City rented stands for fifty dollars and sold delicacies such as *confetti* (or "wedding candy": a vanilla flavored confection with almonds or liqueur inside), *nocella* (roasted filberts on strings), and *torrone* (honey and almond flavored block candy, broken for sale with a hammer).⁶⁵

For the children, Reithofer's Shows of Bloomsburg provided entertainment: a merry-go-round, ferris wheel, and trained white mice. There were balloons and tin whistles to buy, games of skill and chance to play, and Punch and Judy shows to enjoy.⁶⁶ For the adults, there was plenty of beer, sold at a stand at the rear of the Columbia Hotel on Freas Avenue.⁶⁷

The carnival ran through the afternoon into the evening. Inexorably the West End became clogged with cars and people, drawn from all of Berwick and central Pennsylvania for the evening fireworks display. Visitors ate, drank, and played games; they listened to band concerts in the late afternoon and again in the evening.⁶⁸ For Maria Assunta members and their guests, there was dinner and a dance in the Lodge.⁶⁹

By nine o'clock all were anticipating the climax of the Festival: the "Big Fireworks". Fireworks were a *sine qua non* of every festival in Italy; one first generation Italian remembers returning to Italy during the 1970's and watching, on August fifteenth, fireworks splitting the dark skies in every direction from the villages and towns nestled in the foothills of the Apennines.⁷⁰ The custom, transplanted to Berwick, had made the Assumption Festival and Maria Assunta, which financed the display, famous throughout central Pennsylvania.

Months prior to the Festival, a special committee of the Society had contacted two major fireworks companies, offering each a flat fee to fire as well as the opportunity to compete for a gold medal and a large cash prize.⁷¹ During the week preceding the Festival, each Company arrived, its president personally directing operations, and rented a shed or garage. In such quarters skilled workmen began assembling elaborate "set pieces", that is, fireworks attached to wooden frames, with complicated timing sequences and colors designed to depict both still and moving scenarios. Competition was intense among these companies, most of which were owned by Italians. Not only was a substantial bonus involved, but also reputation and future business. Henry Bottiere, president of North American Fireworks Company, was quoted in 1931 as saying:

The Berwick celebration is very widely known, it is my company's first appearance here. I am not trying to make any money but I want people throughout the state to know that when they say "The Company who fired in 1931 in Berwick" to know it is a guarantee of good fireworks."⁷²

Each company took elaborate security precautions, even going so far as to guard its set pieces at night, lest

henchmen of competing companies sabotage their efforts.

They would connive like hell to win that prize. In those days even a \$300, \$500, \$1000 prize was worth a lot of money. It meant money in their pocket. But they had these garages, and they were very secretive, very secretive, and guarded them, even slept there, so one wouldn't sabotage the other one. That's how competitive it was!"⁷³

Presidents of the companies took the judges' decisions personally. In 1922 the judges, who were usually prominent civic leaders, declared a tie between the Specialty Fireworks Company and the Hudson Fireworks Company. President I. Yurillo of the latter company was "so enraged that he would not accept his half of the \$150 prize which was then awarded to Calvano."⁷⁴ In 1934 the Enterprise reported that the presidents of the companies firing that year were bitter enemies and would not shake hands at the conclusion of the display.⁷⁵

By ten forty-five all was in readiness. The crowd, already large by reason of the numbers who had returned for Homecoming, was swollen to impossible size by the influx of sightseers. The peak years seem to have been the 1930's when, according to newspaper estimates, crowds numbered in the sixty to one hundred thousand range. During these years the fireworks displays were held at a variety of locations, such as the Berwick airport, to accommodate people. Many came by automobile, as many as twelve thousand of them in 1934, each paying fifty cents. Traffic to Berwick was so heavy that, according to the newspaper, a lady driving to Washington D.C. ended up in Berwick instead and had to watch the fireworks.⁷⁶ Others came by trolley from Bloomsburg, or by jitney from Mocanaqua. Two enterprising souls from West Pittston came by train and persuaded the engineer to make a special stop near the site of the fireworks.⁷⁷ Those on foot paid ten cents to watch the display. One member of Maria Assunta remembers:

We used to have a pedestrian gate...one time I was working on the pedestrian gate, and we used to charge ten cents for grown-up people; kids, thirteen, fourteen, sixteen years old, we didn't make them pay at all. I came home with a thousand sixty dollars! Just on dimes! That's ten thousand people...that was only one gate. Yeah."⁷⁸

In the judges' stand, honored guests were comfortably seated (unless it collapsed, as it did in 1929): county and state officials, the Maria Assunta Lodge of Pottstown, and one year William Woodin, president of American Car and Foundry Company, who used to provide fireworks for Fourth of July celebrations in Berwick.⁷⁹ Next to the guests were the judges, whose unenviable task was to decide which of the two volatile presidents had prepared a more worthy display.

Tension mounted as the two competitors flipped a coin to determine the order of firing. The second firing was considered preferable, since it would leave the freshest impression on the judges' sensibilities. Moreover, if he felt himself at a disadvantage after the first company

had fired, the second president could "beef up" his display with "really big stuff" that he was assumed to keep in his truck.

They would flip a coin who would go first, and who would go second because the second man had an advantage over the first, because, they had such rivalry among Italian fireworks shooters... that they would almost kill each other to be first or second, because the second one had the advantage to win, because he had hidden...the second man was usually...a conniver...the second man would put everything in it. They'd put dynamite, even dynamite, in their ground bombs, to make an impression on the judges...he'd put the stuff that he had hidden...the conniver would get out the big stuff he'd have hid in the truck or something. He'd have the big stuff and he would put the big stuff up, you know, the beautiful all different colors with American flags... parachutes, with American and Italian flags—if this one had five, he put ten or twenty up.⁸⁰

At precisely eleven o'clock the first company began with an elaborate series of orange, white, and green starbursts, punctuated by deafening explosions. Then came the set pieces: the Italian and American flags together, a colorful flower vase, the rising of spring, a forest with birds flying out, fighting cocks, George Washington, a church altar with a cross, and a Madonna turning into an American flag. These were alternated with a variety of unusual aerial and ground effects: parachutes, streamers, pinwheels, whistling beetles, double spirals, squirmers, flares, star sprinkles, firefalls, gyroles, whistling wheels, gyronnelles, and the usual starbursts and aerial bombs, all in brilliant colors against the dark sky. Some of the aerial bombs had as many as sixty detonations and sixteen starbursts. Without a pause, when the set pieces were finished, the final barrage began. So thunderous were its concussions that the ground shook, children cried, ladies fainted, and automobiles windows were broken.⁸¹ Four-foot bombs, weighing twenty-five pounds, shot six hundred feet into the air from tubes embedded in sandfilled fifty-gallon drums. In what was called the finest of the final bombardments in 1932, over 495 bombs exploded.

Echoes of the first company's display had hardly died from the surrounding hills when the second company began. The entire process was repeated, including set pieces such as a vase of roses flanked by flags, the Liberty Bell, a fight between battleships, scenes from World War I including "Over the Top" and "No Man's Land", two bicyclists riding, racing automobiles, a horserace, Dante in Hell, and Mary's Assumption into heaven.

Some two hours after the fireworks began, the last bomb exploded. Faces blackened with powder, presidents of the two companies approached the Judges' stand for the decision. Some years, the decision was easy. In other years, there were split or unpopular decisions, leading to angry outbursts by the loser or collections initiated by sympathetic spectators to provide a second prize.

Even before the prize was awarded, people began to make their way home. There was the usual number of lost cars and children. Some years, pickpockets circu-

lated in the crowds and performed their art while victims gazed open-mouthed at the sky. One year a man, lying in the weeds to watch the final bombardment, was run over by someone trying to beat the traffic. For everyone from out of town, there was an enormous traffic jam.

For those who remained in Berwick, it was an impressive sight to watch the cars forming a slowly moving illuminated chain winding across the old bridge over the Susquehanna, up Nescopeck Mountain, and over the top. By two-thirty, the last car had left Maria Assunta's grounds. Apart from a monumental clean-up, the Festival was over for another year.⁸²

II. THE ASSUMPTION FESTIVAL PRESENT

At the 1960 Assumption Festival, the Legion and Semenza Fireworks Companies provided a ninety-five minute display to commemorate the Golden Anniversary of Maria Assunta in a special way. Five years earlier, in 1955, the last of the "big-time" fireworks competitions had been held. From 1956 to 1959, and from 1961 to 1967, the Semenza Company continued to provide "modest but colorful" displays which Lodge officials regarded as a "touch of the old time celebrations",⁸³ designed to "keep alive the spectacular celebration phase of yesteryear."⁸⁴

Although the cost of liability insurance, and indeed of the fireworks themselves, was rising steeply, money, I was assured, was no problem.⁸⁵ Maria Assunta is very wealthy, and generous as well; one can hear, at the drop of a hat, a list of recent contributions. Rather, the fireworks are said to be the victim of urban development. In the "old days", the fireworks display could be held in the open fields adjacent to Freas and LaSalle or, to handle the larger crowds, at nearby airports. By the fifties, however, all such areas had been developed; residents complained about the noise, congestion, and property damage. Thereupon restrictive local ordinances were passed, and the fireworks fizzled.⁸⁶ If only a large tract of land near the airport had been purchased some years ago, one Lodge member said wistfully, the fireworks would still be alive.⁸⁷

Fireworks were not the first of the traditional festival elements to be changed or deleted. When Father Francis Albanese, the first pastor of St. Joseph's retired in May, 1952, he was succeeded by Father Francis Mongelluzzi. In the parish bulletin of August 10, 1952, just prior to that year's Festival, Father Mongelluzzi issued a stern prohibition against the practice of pinning money to the statue:

A WORD ABOUT THE PROCESSION ON SATURDAY

The purpose of the Procession on Saturday is to give honor and reverence to the Mother of God under her title of the Assumption into heaven and to invoke her intercession for Peace in the World. Anything that might be a sign of disrespect to the Blessed Mother should have no place in the procession. The pinning of money on the statue as the Procession makes its way through the streets certainly is irreverent. It very frequently shocks the sensi-

bilities of those not of our Faith and sometimes even is a cause of blasphemy on the part of those who do not understand our devotion to Mary. Hence the cooperation of everyone is asked to help make the Procession a true devotional event. Once the Procession begins, it will continue uninterrupted to the end. The Rosary will be recited continuously during the Procession. All, both those in the Procession and those standing along the streets, are asked to assume an attitude of humble reverence and devotion and to take active part in the public prayers that are being offered. There will be no pinning of money on the statue at any time during the course of the procession. Special envelopes are found in the pews this morning. Anyone wishing to make an offering in honor of the Assumption may do so by placing it in an envelope and dropping the envelope in the collection basket either on Friday, Saturday, or next Sunday.⁹¹

Father Mongelluzzi's sensitivity to the possibility of scandal was adumbrated during the pastorate of Father Albanese, the first pastor. His *Journal of Sunday Announcements*, kept from January 1947 to May 1952, indicates his strong support of traditional forms of Italian folk piety. People from Foggia are urged to observe the Feast of the Apparition of St. Michael the Archangel on May 8; those of Roccasecca the Feast of La Madonna della Grazie on July 2; those of Rocca Vivi the Feast of St. John the Baptist on June 24; and so on, through the calendar of patrons. There is mention of the traditional blessing of homes and Easter baskets during Holy Week. Yet, with regard to the procession, he warns his parishioners: "Do not forget that we have prejudiced anti-catholics in LaSalle St. 1.2.3.4. Ave."⁹² And again:

Warning for the good order of the procession on Saturday morning. The procession is a manifestation of faith, not a baseball performance. We should be either following the procession, or praying at home, while the image is passing. Stretching ourselves on the porch (with a pipe!) is just a plain sign of ignorance and bad manners.⁹³

Even laymen were aware of the less edifying dimensions of the practice of pinning money on the statue. A first generation informant remembers:

In the old days they have something that they don't have anymore, too; they used to, as the statue used to proceed down through the streets, they used to pin a dollar, two dollar bill, five dollar bill, ten dollar bill, etcetera. Then there was always, always that rivalry; maybe one businessman, or one woman, want to outdo each other. That's the way the Italians are; they're always trying to be more impressive than the next person. Suppose I'd be there, and I'd pin a five dollar bill on it. My next door neighbor'd watch me, see, he'd put a ten dollar bill on. Hey, hah hah, cumbah, y'know? That's the rivalry, the intense rivalry, the intense rivalry of the thing. Put a ten dollar bill on. And they'd brag all over, hey, you cheap son of a bitch, you know?⁹⁴

However widespread such rivalry was among lay folk, Father Mongelluzzi's prohibition had a wider significance than simply forbidding it. His dictum exhibited a vivid awareness of the possibility of scandal, and hence, indicated the encroachment of a pluralistic environment upon the self-contained world of folk piety. Further, his prohibition of a traditional folk practice showed that, however subtly, control of the Festival was passing from laity to clergy. In addition, by forbidding a practice whereby the people concretely signified their desire to secure the protection of the patroness and by offering an alternative reason for the procession ("intercession

for Peace in the World"), the pastor was reinterpreting the folk theology of survival, and the world view that supported it, in favor of official Marian piety. That the people acquiesced to such modifications indicates that, by 1952, much was changing within the community.

The tradition was further modified in 1958 when the customary day of the procession was changed, apparently in order to emphasize the religious phase of the Festival. Instead of falling on the first Saturday after August 15 (the day of the Feast), the religious part of the Festival was shifted to the evening of the day on which the Feast fell, whether Monday, Wednesday, or Sunday. Due to inclement weather, the first evening procession scheduled in 1958 was cancelled, but the plan was revived in 1960 and continued to be the pattern until 1974.⁹⁵

This change in the religious phase of the Festival coincided with a change in the social phase. In 1954, for the first time, the carnival at the Maria Assunta grounds lasted for an entire week—from Monday through Saturday, rather than Saturday only. From 1955 to 1957 the traditional pattern returned, but in 1958 the innovation became normative. Along with enhancing the profitability of the carnival, this change reflects the fact that an increasingly affluent and involved Italian community had other things to do on Saturdays.

Both changes, the day of the procession and the duration of the carnival, reflect the decline of popular enthusiasm for the tradition during the mid-fifties. Before the 1956 Festival, Father Mongelluzzi warned in the parish bulletin:

We ask all to participate in the procession, especially the Rosary Society, the Parish Council, the C.W.V. (Catholic War Veterans), the boy scouts, altar boys, all school children, and all members of the parish. Men of the Maria Assunta Society are particularly urged to attend. Unless the participation is better than the last two or three years, there is grave danger that this procession will be discontinued next year.⁹⁶

Against this background of declining enthusiasm, which coincides with the coming-of-age of the second generation and with increasing affluence among all members of the community, such innovations represent an attempt to save the tradition by making it more attractive for those with conflicting interests.

In 1963, Father Dominic Mammarella became pastor of St. Joseph's. Under his instigation, the lagging festival revived and flourished extravagantly. The August 15, 1964 edition of the Berwick *Enterprise* headlined an "Assumption Procession of Exceptional Beauty Today", with participation the largest since the Marian Year in 1954. New features included costumed page boys holding long blue ribbons attached to the moving statue, a "Living Rosary" (ladies carrying a large facsimile of the rosary), and finally, an Assumption Queen and her court, riding on a float.⁹⁷ The 1965 procession, witnessed by four thousand people, was characterized by even more lavish pageantry. School children dressed as the Twelve Apostles and forty other

saints marched, along with a float bearing the May Queen. At the end of the procession, the May Queen crowned the statue of the Virgin Mary.⁹⁵ In 1966 another float was added, and two hundred women sang hymns accompanied by the accordion of Tony Miller.⁹⁶ In 1967 the statue was carried for the first time on a float. Sixty feet long and decorated with five thousand ribbons which spelled "Feast of the Assumption" on the side, the float carried the Madonna in a specially decorated grotto.⁹⁷ In 1968 there were many floats, although the statue was again carried by hand.⁹⁸ The trend of these years toward lavish pageantry, floats, and young Queens clearly indicates the impact of secular American celebrations, especially parades and beauty pageants, upon the traditional piety. Clearly, too, initiative for the festival was coming at least as strongly from the clergy as from its traditional source: the Maria Assunta Society.

The drift toward extravagant innovation continued until 1971, when Father Frederick Farace became pastor. Under Father Farace, elements such as the "Living Rosary" and the post-procession crowning of the statue continued. The use of floats and Queens apparently ceased, however, and the crowning of the statue became the responsibility of elderly ladies of the parish, who were selected for the honor in accord with their contributions to the community and who rode in an open convertible during the procession.

In 1974, the procession was returned to its traditional date: the first Saturday after August 15. This return to custom was balanced by a departure from tradition. For the first time, other Catholic churches of Berwick, St. Mary's and Ss. Cyril and Methodius, were invited to attend. Further, the participation of Catholic churches from other communities, such as Christ the King, in Benton, and St. Mary's, in Mocanaqua, were solicited.⁹⁹ In addition to becoming interethnic and intercommunity, the Festival also became ecumenical. Christ Episcopal Church of Berwick participated in 1974 and, in 1977, the rabbi of the local synagogue, Oheve Shalom, attended the post-procession dinner at Maria Assunta.¹⁰⁰ Such changes indicate continued attempts both by clergy and concerned laity, such as Alfred Dalberto, to find a *raison d'être* for the traditional festival.

Contemporary celebrations of the Assumption Festival (as I observed them in 1975, 1977, and 1978), begin on the Monday night preceding the Saturday procession, with a carnival and food fair at the Maria Assunta grounds.

Approximately a half acre in size, the grounds are the location for the modern, plush Lodge, for a small brick pavilion with kitchen facilities, for a parking lot, and for a grassy open area. The Lodge, built in 1922 and renovated frequently, houses, on the first floor, a cocktail lounge, dining rooms, kitchen and lounge, and in the basement, a social hall often used for wedding receptions, game rooms, and various meeting rooms.

For the carnival and food fair, the entire facility is utilized.

The grassy area is strung with colored lights. Beneath them, hungry customers can purchase a wide variety of standard carnival foods: caramel corn, popcorn, candy floss, homemade suckers and hot roasted peanuts, grape, lime, and cherry flavored snow cones, and french fries made on the spot from real potatoes, eaten with gobs of catsup. These concessions are maintained by commercial vendors. From its brick pavilion, Maria Assunta members sell pizza frita (fried dough eaten with a sprinkle of confectioner's sugar), Italian sausage and porchetta sandwiches with or without peppers, hot corn on the cob, soft drinks, and from a freezer in the bingo area, mountainous ice cream cones. Near a side door of the Lodge, a table is set up, and pizza, fresh from the ovens of the kitchen, is available for twenty cents a slice.

For the children, there is a variety of games: penny and nickle tosses, a grab bag, roulette, a ball roll, ping pong and goldfish game, and dart balloons. Standard stuffed animals, tumblers, shot glasses, canes, ashtrays, and hats reward winners of these games of chance and skill. For the adults there are other games: a mechanical horse race, and bingo in the pavilion. The remaining space is taken up with rides: a small ferris wheel, pony ride, revolving airplanes and cars for the smallest tots, and for the more adventurous, a moonbouncer.

Between the pavilion and Monroe street, a flatbed truck serves as a stage. Various groups entertain. One night it is the Hess family, father, mother, and three children, playing country music. Mr. Hess, full of sincerity and corny humor, plays a skillful fiddle and guitar and sings lead; his wife thumps a bass, and keeps forgetting the words. One son plays rhythm guitar, another the snare drum. Even the three year old daughter gets into the act. Another night the Dominoes, a local group, play popular instrumental music. Twice during the week, the favorite Colonial Band performs. Carnival goers, especially the older folk, sit at picnic benches in front of the truck, converse, and enjoy the music.

Meanwhile, inside the Lodge, Italian dinners are served each night: brosholi, spaghetti, lasagna, veal parmigiana, gnocchi with meatballs, manicotti, veal scaloppini with salsa, and so on. Advertisements in the *Enterprise* call attention to the event as a "Food Fair", indicating perhaps that ethnic food is recognized as the most significant identifying mark of the community to the public at large.

The week is not only carnival and food fair, it is also Homecoming. This traditional aspect of the Festival remains, although in diminished fashion, according to older informants. "It's nothing like it was in the old days," one informant said.¹⁰¹ An elderly lady remarked that since the fireworks ended, there was not so much to pull people back.¹⁰² According to another informant, the younger people don't have the sentimental attach-

ment to the Festival that the older people do.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, many do return, either for the week or, more commonly, for the week-end, more from a desire to renew family ties, however, than to participate in the events of the Festival.

Religiously, in the high point of the Festival is the actual feast day of the Assumption, which may fall on any day of the Festival week, from Monday through Saturday. The tenor of the services however, is much different from that of past celebrations. To a great extent, this change is the result of the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, which emphasized the centrality of the seven sacraments in Catholic piety, with the Eucharist as the keystone. According to the Council sacraments are not mere mechanical gestures; they are opportunities for the believing community to encounter the person of Christ. Personal faith is essential for the efficacy of sacraments; such faith is nurtured by a simplified, meaningful ritual (e.g., use of English in services), by proclamation of the Word of God, and by congregational participation in the liturgy.

Under Fathers Mammarella and Farace, St. Joseph's parish has been in the forefront of implementing the reforms of Vatican II. Few vestiges of the traditional, extra-sacramental piety remain. To be sure, there are votive candles at the rear of the church, costing \$1.50 and \$.25 for the large and small sizes respectively, which the pious may light for a special intention. Just above the narthex there is a statue of the Sacred Heart, done in the traditional humanistic style. Near the right front of the church, the statue of Mary assumed into heaven, also humanistically rendered, stands in its niche. According to one informant, these two are the survivors of a much larger company of saints who once stood watch in the church and invited the faithful's attention.¹⁰⁴

By contrast, the present church focuses, even architecturally, on a single point. The interior, done in blues, tans, green, and natural wood, points with clean, straight lines and squares of descending size through the nave and directs one's attention to a stylized figure of the risen Christ, suspended against the dark surface of the rear wall. In front of this figure is the altar, and to the left of the simple table, the pulpit, where the Word is proclaimed. The interior of the church clearly says: the risen Christ, personally encountered through sacrament and word, is the focus of this believing community.

During the Mass for the Feast of the Assumption in 1975, Father Farace's sermon gave verbal reinforcement to this central liturgical motif. From the beginning of her life, when she said, "Be it done unto me according to Thy Word," to the end, Mary lived a life of absolute trust in God. Her life is the exemplar of the life of personal, Christocentric faith to which every Christian is called. Because of her unique faith, Mary was the first of all Christians to rise with Christ. Celebration of

her Assumption, therefore, exemplifies faith in Christ and offers hope that those who believe in him will rise with him.¹⁰⁵

Liturgical reform at St. Joseph's is not only enhanced by architecture and fashioned by clergy, but embraced by the people. There are lay lectors, commentators, and ministers of communion. There is a well-trained choir. Congregational singing is enthusiastic. Almost everyone in the church receives communion, and during the Mass, very few rosary beads, signs of pre-Vatican II, non-participatory Eucharistic piety, are seen.

Priests and people at St. Joseph's express pride in their progressivism. "We are the number one parish in the diocese," I heard more than once. Whatever its overall ranking, St. Joseph's lags behind no one in liturgical development. Furthermore, there are indications that, in the fashion of the 1970's, change follows change: the charismatic movement is quietly taking root among certain groups of laity.

Such changes in the devotion and piety of the people of St. Joseph's would seem to suggest that the folk theology of survival must be reinterpreted in order to escape becoming anachronistic. Father Farace's sermon, summarized above, indicates that such reinterpretation is going on. Mary is not a patroness with supernatural powers but a believer. She is first among equals. Similarly, Father Mammarella, reappointed pastor in 1976, subordinates Marian piety to Christo- and theocentric piety. For example, in his concluding prayer at the 1977 Festival, just after the statue of Mary had been crowned, he prayed:

May God the Father send his special blessing upon each and every one of you—his blessing of protection, his blessing of deliverance from all evil and from all harm. May Jesus, the son of God, now grant to each and every one of you a peace that only he can give. And may the Holy Spirit guide you this day and every day, so that you will enjoy the peace and happiness of the kingdom. In joy, in happiness, let us now accept the blessing of our Triune God: may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, come upon us and remain with us forever. Amen.¹⁰⁶

Whether such reinterpretation is rendered more or less difficult by a large Marian shrine just outside the church is problematic. Like liturgical reform, the shrine came after Vatican II, was initiated by Father Mammarella, and is a matter of parish pride. It is located in an area bounded on one side by the church, on another by the rectory, and in the rear by the parish school. It faces Monroe Street. A twenty foot statue of Mary carved from white Carrara marble, dominates the shrine. She is depicted being assumed into heaven on a cloud, with cherubs flying beneath her feet. Around the base of the towering statue is a thirty-five foot, ten-thousand gallon reflecting pool, which houses a fountain, including cycles of water changes, bubblers, and aerated sprays, as well as a system of seventy-eight water lights which illuminate the fountain at night in cycles of red, green and amber.¹⁰⁷ To the south of the shrine is the "Rosary



The Fountain Shrine next to St. Joseph's Church.

Walk", which depicts scenes from the life of Christ in a series of mosaics framed and supported by marble.

Such an awesome, lavish Mary is not easily assumed into the new piety of Vatican II developing at St. Joseph's. She is at the center of the parish plant, and dominates it visually. As I will suggest later, she perhaps represents an alternate reinterpretation of the traditional piety than that suggested by the new liturgy and the contemporary clergy.

If the Feast of the Assumption does not fall on Saturday, the traditional day of the procession, then another Mass is celebrated on Saturday morning at nine-thirty. This Mass is preceded by the traditional morning aerial salute; instead of six bombs at six, however, it is eight bombs at eight o'clock. No longer does the Colonial Band march through the streets and serenade the entire West End; before Mass, however, it performs its traditional task of marching Maria Assunta members from the Lodge to the church.

During the Mass, the flamboyant effects of the past, such as bomb blasts during the consecration of the Mass have given way to the simpler participatory worship of the post-Vatican II era. The ceremony concludes with the singing of the Lourdes hymn, "Immaculate Mary", which everybody knows and sings with great feeling, especially the "Ave Marias" of the chorus.

When the hymn is finished, everyone files out and waits for the procession to form. Buses, bringing Sisters of Ss. Cyril and Methodius from Danville, who used to teach Sunday school at St. Joseph's, or delegations from other parishes, add to the customary confusion. A uniformed policeman, blocking Monroe Street with his patrol car, lights flashing, attempts to

direct traffic, while the nuns alight from the bus and swirl around the street. The procession chairman, from the Lodge, must wait for other clergy besides the pastor of St. Joseph's before giving the signal to begin. At length Father John Bilanych of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, resplendent in a blue and silver brocade cape with an ikon of Mary on the back, hustles in from the direction of the Avenues with a small contingent of altar boys. Father Thomas Kujovsky, pastor of St. Mary's, makes his appearance with a similar group.



The "Living Rosary" — an important component of the Assumption Festival Present.

Finally the procession is poised, ready for its star. At the head of the line is a police car. Behind it waits the Colonial Band, then a convertible carrying the two elderly ladies who will crown the statue, then a younger lady on foot, carrying the crown on an ornate pillow. Immediately behind her is the "Living Rosary", and behind it the Rosary Society. The sisters and parish contingents follow, and after them local parish groups, led by Father Bilanych. Maria Assunta stands ready to bring up the rear; just before the Lodge members is a place for the statue and the pastor of St. Joseph's

As if to entice Mary from the church, the Band strikes up the "Hymn to St. Ann". People chat and mill around. The shape of the procession fluctuates and threatens to disappear. Suddenly, Mary emerges and stops at the head of the steps, surrounded by a group of husky bearers scowling in the bright sunlight. Around her neck is a large crystal Rosary. The base of the statue depicts her as the woman of the *Book of Revelation* (12.1), borne up by angels, with the moon under her feet. The platform on which she stands, carried on poles by four young men, is decorated with blue and white bows. The bearers, and the alternates at their sides, are selected for the honor by the pastor, not by the traditional competitive bidding. At a signal, the



Under its canopy, the statue is carried in the procession by members of Maria Assunta.

statue once more descends the steps of St. Joseph's for her pilgrimage through the community. She is covered by the traditional blue-fringed white canopy, carried by four men, as she enters the procession.

Contemporary processions observe the traditional route, more or less, with one significant exception. After traversing Monroe, LaSalle, Freas, and Warren, instead of turning east back to St. Joseph's, the marchers continue along Warren to the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Ss. Cyril and Methodius, before returning on First Avenue to St. Joseph's.



The statue emerges from Ss. Cyril and Methodius after the blessing of flowers.



Ss. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church, site of the blessing of the flowers during the procession.

Such a change enlarges the territory claimed by the pilgrim statue, not as an aggressive gesture, but as an ecumenical one. To be sure, Ss. Cyril and Methodius is as Catholic as St. Joseph's, claiming the same creed and owing allegiance to the same Pope. Nevertheless, it serves a different ethnic group - the Ukrainians - with a different ritual, traditions, and ritual language. As if to counterpoise this difference to the unity of the procession, the marchers stop and enter the church, as the traditional *a cappella* Ukrainian women's choir sings, in haunting harmonies, the Lourdes hymn in Old Slavonic and English. Inside the church, a lengthy Litany is sung antiphonally between clergy and choir. At its conclusion, the group moves outside to the steps of the building for the blessing of flowers. According to Father Bilanych, this custom is of considerable antiquity

in Eastern liturgies. It rests upon a pious tradition associated with St. Thomas, the doubting Apostle. When the Mother of God died, so the tradition says, Thomas was absent. He wanted to see the tomb for himself, to prove she had expired. When it was opened, it was found to be filled with flowers.¹⁰⁸ To commemorate this story, a young girl, dressed in traditional Ukrainian garb carries a bouquet of flowers to the clergy waiting on the steps of the church. The flowers are blessed, then placed at the base of the statue for the remainder of the procession.

St. Mary's, Berwick's Slovak church, has a similar custom. During the Mass for the Feast of the Assumption, flowers, herbs, and seeds are blessed, as well as first fruits of gardens. Father Kujovsky, the pastor, associates this ritual with the story of St. Thomas as well as with traditional Assumption blessings in central Europe. Mary, the Queen of all God's creatures, is asked to bless these creatures because her gift, like theirs, is one of life.¹⁰⁹

Throughout the procession, both before and after the stop at the Ukrainian Church, there are detonations at Maria Assunta. Outdoor shrines in the Italian sector, especially along Monroe and LaSalle, are decorated, but there are only one or two portable altars in evidence. Streets are not decorated, although many homes sport Italian and American flags. During the march, the Band plays intermittently; in between pieces, a martial beat issues from the drums. No large mass of spectators is gathered, although small family groups watch from porches or steps. As the procession moves down Freas, Warren and First Avenues, the streets are almost deserted, except for those in the procession. Dogs bark at the procession from fenced-in yards or at picture windows.



Joseph Jordan stands next to the statue after placing the crown on its head.

When the procession returns to St. Joseph's, an hour and two and a half miles later, the marchers fold into the space in front of the fountain shrine. The plaster statue of Mary, placed on a pedestal, is dwarfed by the immense marble image of the Virgin behind it. With the assistance of the priest, the two elderly ladies crown the statue as the Lourdes hymn is again sung by the people. In the background, explosions from Maria Assunta accentuate the climax of the day's events. After benediction, or a brief concluding prayer and blessing, the people disband, although many remain to kiss the statue.

Immediately after the 1977 Festival, there was a luncheon at Maria Assunta to honor the Sisters who had participated

in the procession as well as to recognize the four major faiths of the Berwick community—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Orthodox. Representatives of each faith attended the sumptuous Italian-style meal, and made brief speeches afterwards.

In the evening, the carnival plays for the last time, featuring a rock and roll band. Inside the Lodge, a dance band entertains members of Maria Assunta and their guests.

III. THE ASSUMPTION FESTIVAL FUTURE?

The differences between the two festivals, as I suggested at the beginning of this paper, indicate changes within the Italian community, which in turn help explain the modifications of the traditional festival.

First of all, Maria Assunta has changed. It no longer has the function it used to have—namely, providing a bulwark to support its members and their families—in and against a hostile environment. This function has disappeared partly because Maria Assunta was so successful in performing it. Maria Assunta is the victim of its own success. It helped set families on their own feet; it helped the community become self-sufficient. "Why was Maria Assunta so successful in Berwick, and not Garibaldi, or the Sons of Italy," I asked a former president of the Lodge. "We stuck together," he replied without hesitation.¹¹⁰ Having come of age, through "sticking together", the Italian community no longer needs Maria Assunta to exist in a hostile world.

To be sure, the hostility of the environment has all but disappeared. By 1936 the American Car and Foundry Company was unionized, and the union began to provide economic protection hitherto available only from Maria Assunta. The Ku Klux Klan melted away as an aggressive anti-Catholic force in the late 1920's.¹¹¹ Enthusiastic participation of Italian men in both wars undoubtedly broke down barriers of prejudice. Increasing numbers of Italian men became businessmen and, over the years, grew affluent, contributing greatly to the economic well-being of Berwick. Involvement in civic and business organizations and political participation, even office-holding (the present mayor of Berwick is Italian), increased correlatively. Italians came to be accepted as loyal, hard-working, important members of the community.

As hostilities cooled, Maria Assunta gained enormous prestige in the community. It was no longer an organization of beleaguered have-nots, but a group of men with considerable economic, social, and political clout. "There goes a millionaire," I was told more than once at the Lodge. In part, Maria Assunta's prestige derives from its continued fraternal exclusiveness: only males with Italian fathers may be full members. Others are entitled only to social membership. For example, the son of an Italian mother and a Slovak father may belong only as a social member. Such exclusiveness, it

is obvious, is a weakness as well as a strength. As exogamous marriages are increasingly contracted and older members die, the available membership pool will decrease. When this happens, Maria Assunta will be faced with the choice of dying out with its exclusivity intact or, by mandating more flexible membership requirements, losing its distinctive character. Maria Assunta's prestige is built upon the shoulders of an inevitably shrinking group. Such a dilemma, apparent to some members of the Lodge for years, is indicative of a wide range of pressures on the Italian community toward assimilation into the larger culture.

Despite its prestige, Maria Assunta is not the working organization it once was. Only a handful of members — perhaps 50 out of 375 — are actively involved in its various programs including the Festival. Office-holding is considered a burden, rather than a privilege. Many rules are no longer strictly enforced — for example, that members must march in the Assumption procession. One member told me during the 1977 procession that, because it was a sunny day, fewer men from Maria Assunta were marching; “They’re all out on the golf course,” he said.¹¹²

To be on the golf course in Berwick means that one belongs to the once exclusive Berwick Country Club. This is but one of many recreational, fraternal, civic, social, and political organizations to which Italian men might belong today with a real sense of belonging and involvement. In an earlier day, Maria Assunta was the sole organization demanding loyalty. But today, intensity of commitment to Maria Assunta's goals has been eroded by a wide variety of demands. As I said earlier, such a plurality of loyalties ironically results from the organization's nature. Today, men belong to the Lodge primarily to enjoy its prestige, secondarily its fraternity, and far down the list, to receive benefits and work for it.

The metamorphosis within Maria Assunta means a change in its perception of the Festival. Celebrating Mary assumed into heaven is no longer an act of survival, but rather a ritual honoring the memory of her former place within the community. The sense of having “made it” in the larger society diminishes the need to appeal to her patronage. Nowhere can this change be seen more vividly than in the contrast between the two images of Mary. There is, on the one hand, the “old” Mary. Her statue immigrated from Italy, in 1922, with the help of Nick Ratamess, president of the Lodge. When she was destroyed in the 1954 church fire, a similar image was purchased in Freeland, Pennsylvania. Each year she made a pilgrimage around the community, marking its boundaries and reclaiming the space within for the Italian community. All within this space could expect her patronage and were welded into a community by a common reference point. Such symbolic reclamation of space



Contrasting views of Mary: in front, the Madonna of the procession; behind her, the Madonna of the Fountain Shrine.

was necessary for the group at a time when, like the statue, they were still “on the way”. Like Mary, they were pilgrims — mobile, without a place — anxious, therefore, to define their place apart from, rather than included within, the encircling society. By contrast, the “new” Mary of the Fountain Shrine erected in the 1960's stands fixed, immobile, and certain of her place at the center of the community. As her appointments suggest, she has “arrived,” just like the group she sanctions. The towering white Carrara marble contrasts strongly with the fragile, painted plaster of the old Mary, especially when the two are visually juxtaposed at the end of the festival procession. Her lavish fountain and lights suggest an affluence foreign to the pilgrim Mary. The new Mary no longer defines restricting boundaries. Rather, she stands at a center with a potentially unlimited radius. The whole world is hers, and her people's. From her point of view, therefore, the traditional Festival is an anachronism.

The new Mary incarnates a new folk theology, still not entirely reconcilable with ecclesiastical Marian theology, but also different from the earlier folk theology of survival. In the new folk theology, a Mary vertically distant from her children benignly blesses their successes. Just as the power of the old Mary reflected a pre-scientific, pre-industrial peasant worldview in which spiritual causality was determinative, so the role of the new Mary reflects a different, modern worldview in which human agents are determinative. The patronage of the new Mary recognizes their efforts, rather than assists them.

A second change within the community, besides development within the Maria Assunta Society, is the

generational transition. A few — perhaps fifteen — of the original immigrants survive today. Along with their descendants, the first generation, they were the bedrock of *Maria Assunta*, the community, and the festival. The second generation has reached familial and occupational maturity, and the third generation is emerging. For two reasons, the relationship of these subsequent generations to the Festival is problematic.

The first reason is simply geographical. Many of the second generation moved away from Berwick either because higher education, with which their parents struggled to provide them, expanded their horizons, or because they needed jobs, especially after the American Car and Foundry Company closed in 1963. The immediacy of this generation to the community and to needs which nurtured the Festival was necessarily diminished; ipso facto, the Festival itself suffered.

Secondly affluence, which was an important factor in changing *Maria Assunta*, also affected the generations. The stress of immigrants and the first generation on material betterment, the lessening of estrangement from the larger culture, and enhanced opportunities for participation in the post-war "affluent society" pointed the second generation to think of fulfillment no longer in familial and communal terms but rather in individualistic terms. For example, one first generation father spoke wistfully of a son who was a successful out-of-state businessman. This recently divorced son had just purchased an expensive, two-seat sport car and could no longer provide transportation for his parents when they came to visit him: he rode alone. The father interpreted this purchase symbolically as evidence of the individualism of the second generation.¹¹³

To be sure, among the second generation there is reverence for family, or at least for parents and godparents, and the Homecoming aspect of the Festival remains important for them. Yet, according to first generation informants, there is the unwillingness, or perhaps the inability, to perceive their goals in terms of the Italian community. All that is left as a mark of identification is Italian food; even in this regard, the favorite recipes and cooking skills have not been appropriated by many of the second generation. In one Berwick Italian-style restaurant operated by the second generation, aging parents still do the cooking.

A third factor affecting the Festival is Berwick's religious and ethnic pluralism. Once I asked a recent immigrant from southern Italy if the Festival in Berwick was like the Festival in his home town. He said, "It's different there; everybody does it." What he meant was that, in his village, because everyone is Italian and Catholic, the Festival is not self-conscious. It is a religious and cultural "given" which no one thinks to question. In Berwick, on the other hand, those who would enjoy the exuberant folkways of their

native village faced the classical loss of innocence: there were "Others," with different religious and cultural traditions. For one thing, Protestant pluralism was well established in Berwick long before Italians came. For another, Ukrainian, Slovak, Hungarian, and Irish immigrants provided ethnic pluralism. Merely by its silent presence, if not by active hostility, such diversity engendered pressure to conform. Hence distinctively Italian components of the tradition fell by the wayside. One of them was the pinning of money on the statue, forbidden by Father Mongelluzzi as a source of scandal in 1952. Another was bidding for the privilege of carrying the statue. Yet another was the fireworks, which are uniquely Italian insofar as they are employed for religious occasions. In short, it would seem that more colorful and dramatic elements of the Festival succumbed one by one to pressures of a pluralistic milieu.

Closely related to pluralism is a fourth factor, secularization. Secularization is perhaps inevitable in a pluralistic environment. For the early immigrants, as for their forebears, the Virgin or saint was the keystone of an arch which included family, friends, work, the village, this world and the next — in short, known reality. Everything held together as a sacred totality by virtue of the sacred reality which supported it. In Berwick, however, pluralism — not only religious, but other kinds — provided options. (With the advent of television, according to one informant, such pluralism has affected the hearts even of the surviving immigrants.)¹¹⁴ Ineluctably, the single, sacred universe of the community was fragmented. Devotion to Mary became but one of many religious options; family life dominated by the father but one of several social options; traditional values such as loyalty and obedience but one of many moral values; thrift and cash buying but one of several economic options. As generations progressed, they were confronted increasingly by many worlds, with confusing and sometimes conflicting demands. In the face of such fragmentation, the festival could not mean what it did in the days of its innocence. The sacred totality symbolized by the procession around the Italian sector of the West End has disappeared. Even the open circle radiating from Fountain Madonna is circumscribed by other spheres of influence.

A fifth factor affecting the festival comes from the Catholic Church itself, particularly from the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Such reforms clearly subordinated devotion to the saints and Mary to devotion to Christ. Worship and sacraments were strongly identified, so that non-sacramental forms of devotion — even the popular Rosary — were relegated to the periphery. Any parish, such as St. Joseph's, which vigorously implemented the reforms of the Council, would experience ambivalence about the importance of a festi-

val in honor of Mary. Further, however much the reforms of Vatican II were concerned to make worship meaningful to the man in the pew, they also took piety out of his hands by centralizing and regulating devotional practice through the agency of the clergy. In this context, traditional folk piety could survive only at the periphery, or by modifying itself. To some extent, the ecumenical innovations of the modern Assumption festival represent just such an effort to make the festival more congruent with the spirit of the post-conciliar Catholic Church.

CONCLUSION

Many of the changes which have occurred in the festival are undoubtedly evidences that a process of assimilation has taken place within the Italian community of Berwick. The festival, like its sponsors, is becoming Americanized.

A final assessment of the festival would be much easier if it had become so Americanized that it ceased to exist. The continuance of the celebration may be interpreted, however, not only in terms of assimilation and Americanization but also in terms of resistance to such processes. Structurally, at least, the festival still exists, and is distinctively Italian.

This is not to say that what it means to be an Italian in Berwick and to stage an Assumption festival are the same as they were in the past. To understand this problem of change within continuity, or continuity notwithstanding change, it is helpful to distinguish between the structure and the meaning of the festival.

Despite erosion over the years, the essential religious and social structure of the festival (e.g., the procession with statue and band, the carnival, Homecoming) has remained. But the meaning underlying the structure has changed. In the festival "Past", various structural components evoked a traditional sacred universe within which the Italian peasant colony could locate itself. Present celebrations, however, while maintaining traditional structures, have a different meaning. The Festival "Present" expresses, or is on its way to expressing, not so much a religious meaning but an ethnic meaning. Instead of being absorbed by American culture or by the American Catholic subculture, thereby losing its Italian distinctiveness, and instead of remaining a peasant colony without any dialogue with its environment, the community in Berwick is becoming something new — an Italian-American community, or an ethnic group, expressing its social distinctiveness in religious terms.

In this process of dynamic change, the structure of the festival has played a dual role. On the one hand, structure has provided stability and continuity. Where one might have expected a folk culture to disappear under the onslaught of an industrial and pluralistic

society, one discovers instead a vehicle whereby the community could change slowly without losing its sense of identity. On the other hand, the persistence of the structure masks the dramatic transformation that is taking place. The old structures of the festival are potentially the vehicles whereby the ethnic community can express its new identity.

Today in Berwick this new community is struggling with the festival that helped it to evolve. The Assumption festival "Future" is an open question. The old ways may die with the immigrants. Or they may be renewed, partly through the patience of older generations insisting on traditional ways, partly through the persistence of young Italian-Americans searching for ways to say who they are.

FOOTNOTES

¹*Maria Assunta Society Commemorative Book, 1910-1977*, edited by Vito Dalberto. Berwick, PA., 1977, n.p.

²For a lamentation, see Harvey Cox, *The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969. For evidence to the contrary, see Robert J. Smith, "Festivals and Celebrations," in Richard M. Dorson, ed., *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972, pp. 159-72.

³Smith, "Festivals", pp. 159-72. See also Bruce B. Giuliano, *Sacro O Profano? A Consideration of Four Italian-Canadian Religious Festivals*. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1976, p. 9ff.

⁴Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1968, pp. 1-6.

⁵For advocacy of ethnic heterogeneity, see Andrew Greeley, *Ethnicity in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974. For a negative reaction to the rise of ethnicity, see Orlando Patterson, *Ethnic Chauvinism: The Reactionary Impulse*. New York: Stein and Day, 1977. Timothy L. Smith reviews the literature of the debate and notes the role of religion in defining American ethnicity in "Religion and Ethnicity in America," - 83 *American Historical Review* (December, 1978), pp. 1155-85.

⁶Taped interview, 3/29/78; Ronald L. Grimes, *Symbol and Conquest: Public Ritual and Drama in Santa Fe, New Mexico*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, p. 193.

⁷What follows is a reconstructed version of the Festival, pieced together from interviews and newspaper accounts. The first immigrants arrived in Berwick around 1902 (Taped interview, 4/19/78); the first Festival was held in 1910 (Taped interview, 4/19/78) or 1912 (Taped interview, 4/5/78). The heyday of the celebration, however, appears to have been the period between 1921, when St. Joseph's Chapel was founded for Italian immigrants, and 1955, when the "big-time" fireworks displays at the conclusion of the Festival were eliminated. During this period minor variations occurred from year to year, so that not all of the elements of the reconstructed version here presented found expression every year. Nevertheless, the reconstructed version accurately represents the remembered version, which fuses together details from the past without dwelling upon variations.

⁸*Constitution and By-Laws of the Maria Assunta Society, Revised in 1977*, Title I, Art. 2.

⁹Alfred Dalberto, Mss. History of St. Joseph's Church, 1978, n.p.

¹⁰*Constitution and By-Laws*, Title I, Art. 1.

¹¹*The Story of Berwick, 1786-1936, Written and Compiled for the Berwick Sesquicentennial Celebration, 1936*. Edited by Howard P. Bevilacqua. Berwick, Pa., The Modern Print Shop, 1936, n.p.

¹²John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press,

1955, p. 14.

¹¹Joseph Lopreato, *Italian Americans*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1970, pp. 12-13.

¹²Taped interviews, 4/4/78; 4/19/78.

¹³Taped Interview, 4/19/78.

¹⁴Taped Interview, 4/5/78.

¹⁵Taped Interview, 4/5/78.

¹⁶Taped Interviews, 4/5/78; 4/19/78.

¹⁷Taped Interview, 4/5/78.

¹⁸Taped Interviews, 3/29/78; 4/19/78.

¹⁹Taped interview, 4/4/78.

²⁰Taped interviews, 4/5/78; 4/19/78.

²¹Taped interview, 3/29/78.

²²*Maria Assunta Society Bicentennial Souvenir Booklet, 1776-1976*, edited by Vito Dalberto. Berwick, Pa., 1976, n.p.

²³Taped interview, 4/5/78.

²⁴Taped Interview, 3/29/78.

²⁵See Richard Gambino, *Blood of My Blood; The Dilemma of Italian Americans*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1974, chapter 1.

Another element of the hostile environment was the Ku Klux Klan, which burgeoned in Pennsylvania during the mid-1920's. Emerson H. Loucks, *The Ku Klux Klan in Pennsylvania: A Study in Nativism*. New York: The Telegraph Press, 1936. Many informants remember crosses burning on the hills surrounding Berwick during the 1920's. One first generation Italian man remembers hearing that Maria Assunta members carried guns in the Assumption procession for self-protection. Another tells the story of an Italian woman who, when the Klan paraded through the Italian sector, ran out and unmasked one Klansman shouting, "You son-of-a-bitch; I buy groceries from you every day, and now you're marching down my street with a hood!" Taped Interviews, 3/29/78.

²⁶Interview, 8/15/75.

²⁷Interview, 8/15/75.

²⁸Taped Interview, 4/4/78.

²⁹Taped interview, 4/4/78.

³⁰Taped interview, 4/4/78.

³¹Taped interview, 4/4/78.

³²*Berwick Enterprise*, 8/21/48.

³³Taped interview, 4/4/78.

³⁴Taped Interview, 4/4/78.

³⁵Taped interview, 4/5/78.

³⁶Taped interview, 4/4/78.

³⁷Alfred Dalberto, Mss. History. Joseph Malatesta, Mss. History of the Colonial Band, n.p. Prior to the formation of the Colonial Band, other bands, such as the Nescopock Band, the Lime Ridge Band, or Berwick's "Famous Fifty" Clarinet Band were hired to provide music. *Enterprise*, 8/18/17; 8/7/20.

³⁸*Enterprise*, 8/20/32.

³⁹Some of these selections are still played by the Colonial Band at the Festival.

⁴⁰*Enterprise*, 8/13/33.

⁴¹Taped interview, 3/30/78.

⁴²Article, "Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume II. New York: The Universal Knowledge Foundation, 1913, pp. 6-7; article, "Assumption of Mary," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. I. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967, pp. 971-5. See also Edward Schillebeeckx, *Mary, Mother of Redemption*. Tr. by N.D. Smith. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964.

⁴³Taped Interview, 4/8/78.

⁴⁴See Phyllis Williams, *South Italian Folkways in Italy and America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934, chapter 9.

⁴⁵See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. New York: Harper & Row, 1961, *passim*.

⁴⁶*Enterprise*, 8/20/32.

⁴⁷*Enterprise*, 8/16/41.

⁴⁸*Enterprise*, 8/16/24. Participants in the procession and their order are summarized from accounts in the *Enterprise*, 1917-1955.

⁴⁹Taped interview, 3/29/78.

⁵⁰Taped interviews, 3/30/78, 4/4/78. This was common practice in Italy. The money went into the parish coffers.

⁵¹Taped interview, 3/29/78; *Enterprise*, 8/18/34.

⁵²*Enterprise*, 8/18/78; 8/21/48.

⁵³*Enterprise*, 8/18/78; 8/21/48.

⁵⁴*Enterprise*, 8/21/48. In Italy the Madonna was often adorned with beautiful, hand-made garments. Taped interview, 4/4/78.

⁵⁵*Enterprise*, 8/17/35.

⁵⁶Taped interview, 4/13/78.

⁵⁷*Enterprise*, 8/19/33.

⁵⁸Taped Interview, 4/19/78.

⁵⁹*Enterprise*, 8/21/48.

⁶⁰*Enterprise*, 8/16/30.

⁶¹*Enterprise*, 8/18/17.

⁶²*Enterprise*, 8/16/20.

⁶³Conversation, 8/17/77; taped interview 4/4/78.

⁶⁴*Enterprise*, 8/18/30; 8/17/34.

⁶⁵Taped Interview, 4/19/78.

⁶⁶*Enterprise*, 8/15/23.

⁶⁷*Enterprise*, 8/15/23.

⁶⁸Taped Interview, 3/29/78.

⁶⁹Some of the companies who competed over the years were: Hudson Fireworks Co., New York; Newcastle Fireworks Co., Pittsburgh; Palisades Fireworks Co., New York; Vineland Fireworks Co., Vineland, N.J.; International Fireworks Co., Farview, N.J.; Specialty Fireworks Co., Hoboken, N.J.; Vardaro Fireworks Co., Philadelphia; Neptune Fireworks Co., Silver Lake, N.J.; and many more. The all time favorite was the Legion Fireworks Company which competed fourteen times and lost only once.

In some years three companies competed, as in 1924-26. In other years only one company fired, as in 1931-32. The amount of the prize varied from \$50 to \$1000. *Enterprise*, 1917-55.

⁷⁰*Enterprise*, 8/15/31.

⁷¹Taped Interview, 3/30/78.

⁷²*Enterprise*, 8/15/23.

⁷³*Enterprise*, 8/20/34.

⁷⁴*Enterprise*, 8/17/53.

⁷⁵*Enterprise*, 8/22/49.

⁷⁶Taped interview, 4/4/78.

⁷⁷*Enterprise*, 8/16/35; 8/22/55; 8/22/32.

⁷⁸Taped interview, 3/30/78.

⁷⁹Conversation, 8/15/75.

⁸⁰Details of the displays are culled from elaborate accounts in the *Enterprise*, 1920-55. The number and kind of set pieces varied from year to year.

⁸¹*Enterprise*, 8/18/58.

⁸²*Enterprise*, 8/15/59.

⁸³Conversation, 8/20/75.

⁸⁴Conversation, 8/15/75.

⁸⁵Conversation, 8/20/75.

⁸⁶*St. Joseph's Parish Bulletin*, 8/10/52.

⁸⁷*Journal of Sunday Announcements*, 8/7/49.

⁸⁸*Journal of Sunday Announcements*, 8/12/51.

⁸⁹Taped interview, 3/30/78.

⁹⁰*Enterprise*, 8/16/58; 8/19/74.

⁹¹*St. Joseph's Parish Bulletin*, 8/12/56.

⁹²*Enterprise*, 8/15/64.

⁹³*Enterprise*, 8/13/65; 8/15/65.

⁹⁴*Enterprise*, 8/16/66.

⁹⁵*Enterprise*, 8/16/67.

⁹⁶*Enterprise*, 8/16/68.

⁹⁷*Catholic Witness*, 8/8/74.

⁹⁸*Enterprise*, 8/20/77.

⁹⁹Taped interview 3/29/78.

¹⁰⁰Taped interview, 4/19/78.

¹⁰¹Conversation, 8/15/75.

¹⁰²Conversation, 4/21/78.

¹⁰³Sermon, 8/14/75.

¹⁰⁴Taped prayer, 8/20/77.

¹⁰⁵Alfred Dalberto, Mss. History.

¹⁰⁶Conversation 8/15/75.

¹⁰⁷Interview, 8/18/77.

¹⁰⁸Conversation, 4/27/78.

¹⁰⁹Loucks, *Ku Klux Klan*, p. 110.

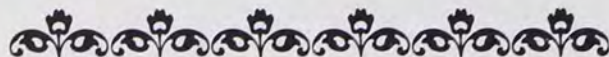
¹¹⁰Conversation, 8/20/77.

¹¹¹Taped interview, 3/30/78.

¹¹²Taped interview, 4/21/78.

Oldes un Neies

Old and New



Editor and Circulation Manager alike come to expect a kind of polite acceptance of the articles and projects we undertake for the Pennsylvania Folklife Society; we even appreciate the occasional enthusiastic accolades. We were really not prepared, therefore, for the avalanche of responses after initial copies of Judith E. Fryer's 25-Year INDEX to PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE first appeared in public on 6 December 1980. We thank you for the words of kindness and praise for we believe Miss Fryer and Bernadine T. Collin have edited excellent Index components.

We did expect there would be some call for Back Issues and Reprints once our patrons found the INDEX to be an easy locator, as it surely is. Indeed we had our Genealogy lists ready by the date of delivery of first cartons of the INDEX from the printer. We did not anticipate the flood of orders which has followed. One result we sadly report is the immediate sellout of all remaining copies of our slim stock of Volume 21 of PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE Back Issues. Reprints we can still supply.

There has also been some concern about delay in delivery. Since we did keep the pre-publication price at an absolute minimum and did hold the pre-pub. price almost four full weeks after actual publication, we had to send out initial mailings under Bulk mailing regulations, including enough orders accumulated to meet the weight requirements for mailbags. Thus far, we have NOT charged extra for postage since it has been our policy to give as much as possible for the money. From your responses and from addresses we are in position to trace, we know that some copies of the 12 December 1980 mailing took from three to five weeks for delivery. At this writing it is not certain that the 29 January 1981 delivery is travelling any faster. You do understand why, in a few cases, we have even delivered by hand when along our route of travel, for speedier service, avoiding the mails altogether.

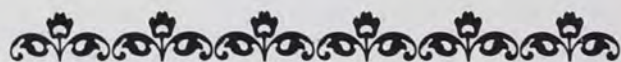
If you have not yet ordered and do want your own personal copy of the INDEX (both faster and more convenient than to use library, museum or historical society copies) we remind you that the price of the INDEX has now advanced to \$11.95. Incidentally, if you purchase an INDEX and, after all that palaver about slow postal delivery, you wish your INDEX to be mailed First Class Mail, then do include \$2.00 additional for such 1st Class postage and handling.

Topical Reprint Lists on Genealogy, Fraktur and Folk Art are now available, as are lists of recent and older Back Issues. Additional Lists on Folk Music, Powwow, Food and Cooking, as also on Needlework will follow shortly. Bear in mind that any article listed in the INDEX can be supplied in Reprint, even though we may no longer have Back Issues, or even though the requested article is not actually in stock at the moment it is requested. In such cases, it may take a bit more time to furnish such article on request. As with other organizations, custom reprints require some extra time. At the time of writing we face such considerable postage bills that we must start to ask a postage and handling fee with each order.

Orders for Back Issue and Reprints and requests for lists of the same may be directed to:

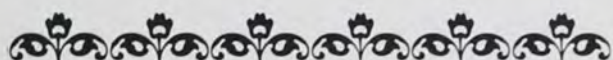
Nancy K. Gaugler
Back Issue & Reprint Service M-301
P.O. Box 92
Collegeville, PA 19426

For those persons who wish to visit with us and discuss research problems and questions of family history, come to the Penna Folklife Society Archives Room, Myrin Library 301, Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA, any Monday afternoon from 2 to 4 p.m. Or come to the Kutztown Folk Festival, look us up at the URSINUS TENT, 27, 28, 29 & 30 June or on 3 or 5 July, 1981.



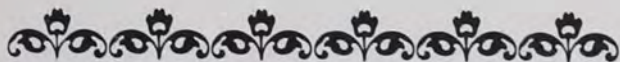
We see by the 8 January 1981 edition of the *Miami Herald* that the Pennsylvania Dutch Reunion of Florida, which has been active for almost thirty-five years now in South Florida, was scheduled to meet on 21 February 1981 at Miami Shores Country Club. As for similar early reunions held at first at Fort Lauderdale, Ruth and Walter Hunsicker, Harvey Bair and June Kuhns have made this year's plans also. They look for about two hundred fifty Florida *Deitschers* to attend. All four active leaders had lived in the Allentown area of the *Lechadaal* before their removal to sunny Florida. 'Tis not the least surprising therefore, to hear they will be importing Dopey Duncan from over Emmaus way, to Miami for the last parts of February.

In a world of crisis, turmoil and hostility, this strikes us as the best kind of rejoicing in our own Pennsylvania German heritage, even when at a distance from the Dutch Country. After all, the Grundsau Lodsches and various Fersommlinge are gathering at this time of the year on home soil; why not a celebration at a distance? Congratulations to the Hunsickers and friends for their persistence and concern. Culture islands of the folk in many other areas could enjoyably follow their example. Generations to come are bound to thank their predecessors for such fine productive efforts. We are aware of unfortunate timing of this notice which will not appear until fully a month after the 1981 Pennsylvania Dutch Reunion of Florida has already met. Mark down the event for next year's calendar though.



The Department of Architecture of the College of Arts and Architecture of The Pennsylvania State University at University Park is conducting a research project entitled "Pennsylvania Preservation Technology Project" for the State Historic Preservation Office. These two organizations, using federal historic preservation grant funds, have identified several goals. First and foremost, they will prepare a resource directory of artisans and professionals who specialize in historic preservation projects. Second, after a survey of owners of historic Pennsylvania properties, intended to isolate problems most commonly encountered, they plan to compile a kind of preventive maintenance technical assistance list. This should also help property owners newly interested in historic preservation.

The third goal is both related to and supportive of the first two: a bibliography of preservation information shall be compiled, along with standardized procedures to get material into the hands of an interested public. Persons who desire applications for listing in this directory or just information, contact Denson Groenendaal, "Penna Preservation Technology Proj." Dept. of Architecture, Penn State Univ., University Park, PA, 16802.



We call the attention of the reader to special information exchange and educational features of the 1981 Kutztown Folk Festival, scheduled this year from 27 June to 5 July 1981. An URSINUS TENT will be operating independently at a convenient spot on the Festival Grounds for the very first time. The

Ursinus College one-credit seminar will meet there the five weekdays of Festival, 29 June to 3 July 1981 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. daily. I. Clarence Kulp will present *Folk Music of Southeastern Pennsylvania*.

On Monday afternoon, 29 June 1981 a Researchers' Round Table is scheduled in the URSINUS TENT from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. History, Sociology and Folk Culture specialists will be there to exchange ideas about their own topics and about related fields. We expect friendly but heated discussions may arise. Bring your own ideas and questions. Professor William T. Parsons, Editor of the *PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE*, will preside.

Similarly on Friday afternoon 3 July 1981, a Dialect Specialists' Day will convene from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. in the URSINUS TENT. Topics and Needs will be examined and both classroom and farmyard treatments are likely to emerge. The day is under the direction of Professor Evan S. Snyder, *Deitsch* class teacher at Ursinus. Come one, come all. Wonn ma bissel Deitsch schwetzt, ko'ma reikumma un mach bekonnt sei eegnie Schtick! Es soll immer meeglich sei, ass mer beim Kutztauner Folks Fescht eppes uff Deitsch haere maag; so deet's ma neikumma un mach eich dahaem! Es ward annere freindlich Leit doh sei, ma muss net hocke sich so gans lennich!

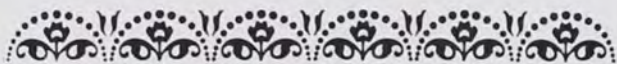
All those persons who come to the 1981 Kutztown Folk Festival and who read poetry in the dialect, *uff Pennsylvfaanisch Deitsch*, in Yiddish, *uf Pälzisch*, *Schwowisch* or in Frankfurter, Elsesser, Schweitzer or other dialects, be certain to look up W.T. Parsons, Editor. You will know him by his tape recorder. If you read in dialects other than Penna Dutch or Pälzisch, please bring along your own poetry to read and that we may photocopy. We have a lot in PA Deitsch un Pelzisch and have some odd poems in other German dialects but those resources from neighboring German areas are spotty for us.



Take note that after years of service, Box 1053, Lancaster, PA, has been closed as a mailing address for the Pennsylvania Folklife Society. It is no longer valid and has been phased out over an 18-month period. Editorial, business and subscription matters shall all be directed to P.O. Box 92, Collegeville, PA 19426 which has now functioned for two years. Folk Festival, Quilt Contest and information about booths, demonstration areas and sales franchises at the Kutztown Folk Festival of the Pennsylvania Folklife Society, shall address the Folk Festival Office, College Blvd. & Vine St., Kutztown, PA 19530. Persons wishing to contact Gail Hartmann at the Folk Festival

Office by telephone shall note the number is (215) 683-8707, where she may be found almost daily in June and July. In other seasons, call Saturday mornings for best results. If you get no answer on first try, keep calling.

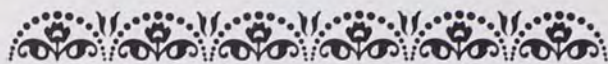
While we are giving notice, you should also take note that the former Pennsylvania Dutch Folklore Center of Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, no longer exists, but has now become the Pennsylvania Folklife Society of Ursinus College, P.O. Box 92, Collegetown, PA 19426. Mail sent to the old address or to the old organizational name may well end up in a dead-letter office. We are trying to get the word around in every way we can think of. To this end, for example, we will be describing both aspects of the organization in the forthcoming Don H. Tolzmann, ed., *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GERMAN-AMERICAN VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS*, to be published by the Greenwood Press early in 1982. Meanwhile all assistance to correct the incorrect addresses is most appreciated.



All Archives are combinations of practical and curious objects. The practical ones aid in locating, translating, researching and understanding the subject at hand, in our case, the Pennsylvania Dutch community. Strange or curious items may also help to illuminate that subject, but do so in a very particular way; they are quite specialized. Archives Collections depend to a major degree upon the concern and generosity of patrons.

Often, as a retired person assembles items collected over a lifetime, he sets aside runs or batches meaningful to him and sometimes to others. At times he then assigns or designates them to persons or organizations who will use and appreciate them. We have received by such donations, approximately forty or fifty nineteenth century German Almanacs, many not previously in our collection, following publication of a tally-list in these pages some months ago.

Newest to arrive in this line of collectanea are several dozen programs of Grundsau-Lodsches and Fersommlinge directed to us by the late Elmer and Lillie Stoudt of Obelisk, PA, and the late Florence G. Parsons of Palmerton. We cannot claim to come even close to a complete collection of every program for every Lodsch and every Fersommling for every year, but we are closer to that goal now than we were three months ago. Both for display and as research tool, we hope eventually to complete that collection. If you have any which are endangered by periodic clean-ups, just send yours along; where we have duplicates, we do exchange with other interested parties.



Sadly we also note the rough road encountered by many language programs in American formal and informal education these days. It must be a sign of the times, we suppose, but the elimination of foreign language requirements and even of opportunities for study must be counted a major cultural loss.

We who concern ourselves with preservation of regional dialects and trials and tribulations associated therewith, are shocked indeed to find even mainstream modern language study under drastic threat. How are we really to appreciate the nuances of dialect variations when we no longer, as a whole people, maintain speaking acquaintance with mother tongues? Perhaps the frailties of human system are ever evident, for we notice that German-Americans in Pennsylvania have been concerned with this problem for a full 290 years.

Somewhat related, we believe we have finally managed, in our Pennsylvania German Studies Program in December 1980, a satisfactory reprinting of *Frey's Pennsylvania Dutch Grammar* taken directly from the notebook cut-out forms which appeared successively on page 8 of *The Pennsylvania Dutchman* from 1949 to 1951. The new printing is a definite improvement on my miniaturized version of December 1979 whose reduced sized print was really no longer readable. Any persons who purchased that little yellow-cover illegible gem, can redeem it for the newer larger item. Just send it to: W.T. Parsons, Series Editor, P.O. Box 92, Collegetown, PA 19426. You will be rewarded by return mail.

In another small but fortunate purchase, we located a handful of unbound copies of the original printing of Don Yoder, *Pennsylvania Spirituals*, Lancaster, 1961 (LC M61-1018) and had them bound in durable Library Binding. That, of course, resulted in high unit prices but we had received so many requests for copies while unavailable that we thought to give it a try. Less than a half-dozen now remain, even at the relatively high price necessary to recoup those costs. So the first customers who each send in \$22.50 for the now hard-bound book, plus \$1.50 postage and handling, get the books. Sorry, but because of extensive demand and scarce supply, just one book per customer.

Same kind of discovery has brought to hand about a dozen of Alfred L. Shoemaker's *Christmas in Pennsylvania*, Kutztown, 1959, in hard cover. They may be purchased for \$13.75 plus \$1.25 postage and handling. Orders will be filled in succession as they are received but as with the Yoder item, just one Christmas book per customer.



Ursinus College Studies at Kutztown Folk Festival 1981

Each summer since 1974, Ursinus College has offered lecture courses and seminars on topics which concern matters Pennsylvania German, including the unique opportunity to take college credit courses at the Kutztown Folk Festival. In June, July and August, such courses will once again be available to students of Ursinus College and other colleges and to others who are interested in subjects offered. This is part of a larger Summer School Program at Ursinus. The schedule of PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN STUDIES PROGRAM classes for 1981 is:

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN STUDIES PROGRAM SEMINARS

Topics on the life, culture, customs and values of the Pennsylvania Germans. Individual topics supervised and directed by researcher professors and specialists. Research and folk cultural interviews, panels or workshops. One week of classes each. *One semester hour credit each seminar.*

SEMINAR AT KUTZTOWN FOLK FESTIVAL: June 29 - July 3, 1981 9-11:30 am
PGP 437. Seminar: Folk Music of Southeastern Penna. I. CLARENCE KULP, JR.

A study of folk musical variations from the earliest Pennsylvania German settlement area. Comparison of texts and tunes from several locations; differences to be found in music of the Plain Folk and Church Germans. Three class hours per day. *One semester hour.*

SEMINARS AT URSINUS COLLEGE: Mondays to Fridays 9-11:30 am
PGP 426. Seminars: Penna German Woodworking & July 6-10, 1981
Cabinetry (Die Schreinerei) HOWARD KRIEBEL

A look into the world of the early Pennsylvania German cabinetmaker: his woods, techniques and examples of quality work, together with some insights into usable antiques. Three class hours per day. *One semester hour.*

PGP 427. Seminar: The Schwenkfelders July 13-17, 1981
MARTHA B. KRIEBEL

Discover the smallest denomination in the world which is right here in southeastern Pennsylvania. A study of changes which migration exerts on a religious movement...and some unique discoveries. Three class hours per day. *One semester hour.*

PGP 428. Seminars: Pennsylvania German Pioneers July 20-24, 1981
WILLIAM T. PARSONS

A baker's dozen of biographies of migrants to Pennsylvania from German-speaking areas of origin to New World achievements. Three class hours per day. *One semester hour.*

Three credit course

AT THE PETER WENTZ FARMSTEAD

SESSION D July 27 - August 14, 1981
PGP 306. Penna German Art: Decorative Arts ALBERT T. GAMON

The decorative arts in Eastern Pennsylvania, where Central European traditions of the Pennsylvania Germans were modified by their proximity to English-speaking neighbors. Living history and audio-visual approach to the Pennsylvania Germans and decorative arts; how those arts affected the people. Three class hours per day. *Three semester hours.*

For further information on the courses, costs, arrangements and concerning the availability of other services related to the Summer School, send inquiries to the Editor at his Editorial Address, or to: Prof. Thomas E. Gallagher, Jr.
Corson Hall, Ursinus College
Collegeville, PA 19426

32nd Annual

Pennsylvania Dutch

KUTZTOWN

BETWEEN ALLENTOWN & READING, PA.

**FOLK
FESTIVAL**

June 27~28~29~30
July 1~2~3~4~5, 1981

The Festival and its Sponsorship

The Kutztown Folk Festival is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Folklife Society, a nonprofit educational corporation affiliated with **URSINUS COLLEGE**, Collegeville, Pennsylvania. The Society's purposes are threefold: First, the demonstrating and displaying of the lore and folkways of the Pennsylvania Dutch through the annual Kutztown Folk Festival; second, the collecting, studying, archiving and publishing the lore of the Dutch Country and Pennsylvania through the publication of **PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE Magazine**; and third, using the proceeds for scholarships and general educational purposes at **URSINUS COLLEGE**.



FOR THE FOLK FESTIVAL BROCHURE WRITE TO:

Pennsylvania Folklife Society
College Blvd. & Vine, Kutztown, Pa. 19530

