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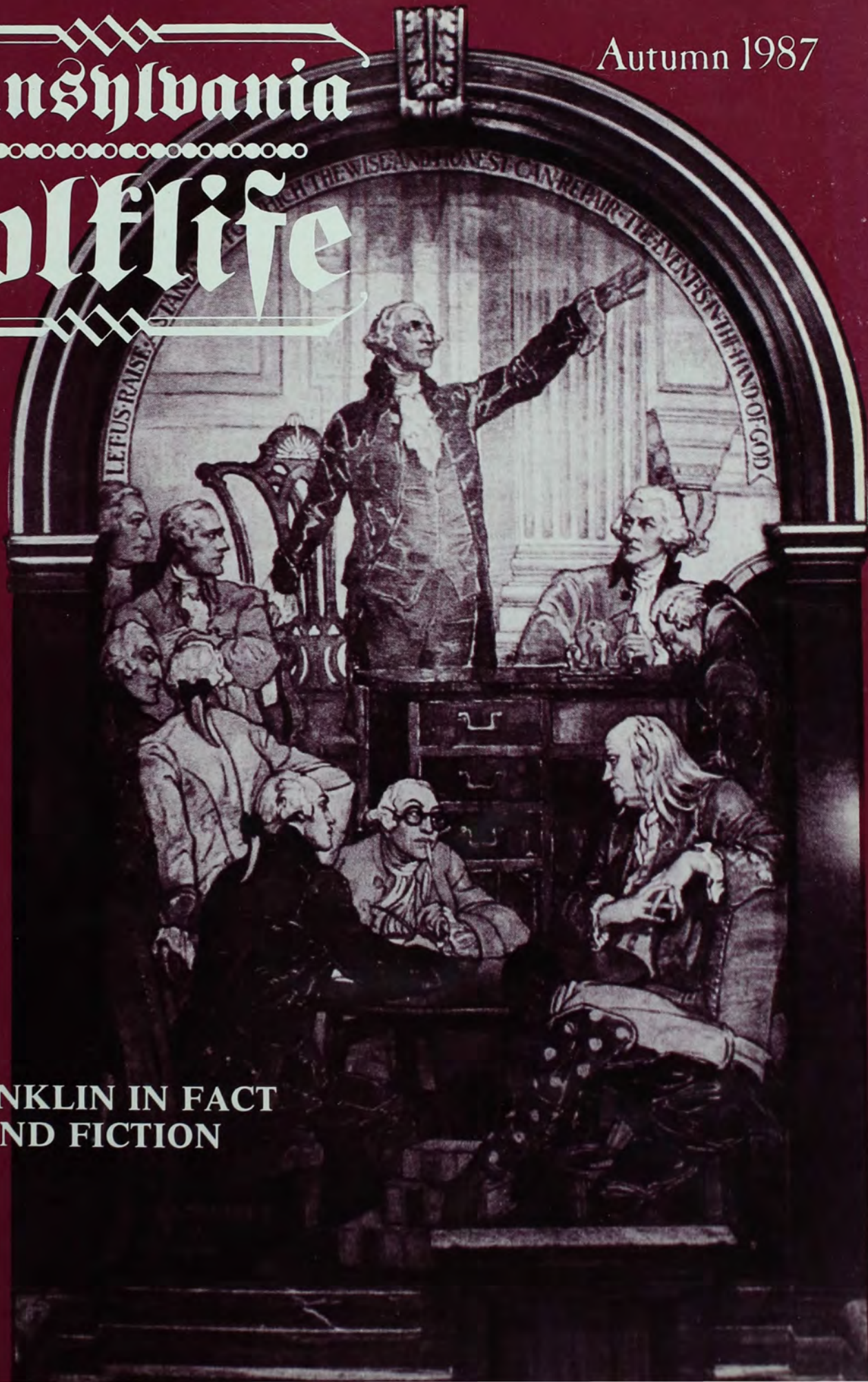
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Autumn 1987

Pennsylvania Dollars



FRANKLIN IN FACT
AND FICTION

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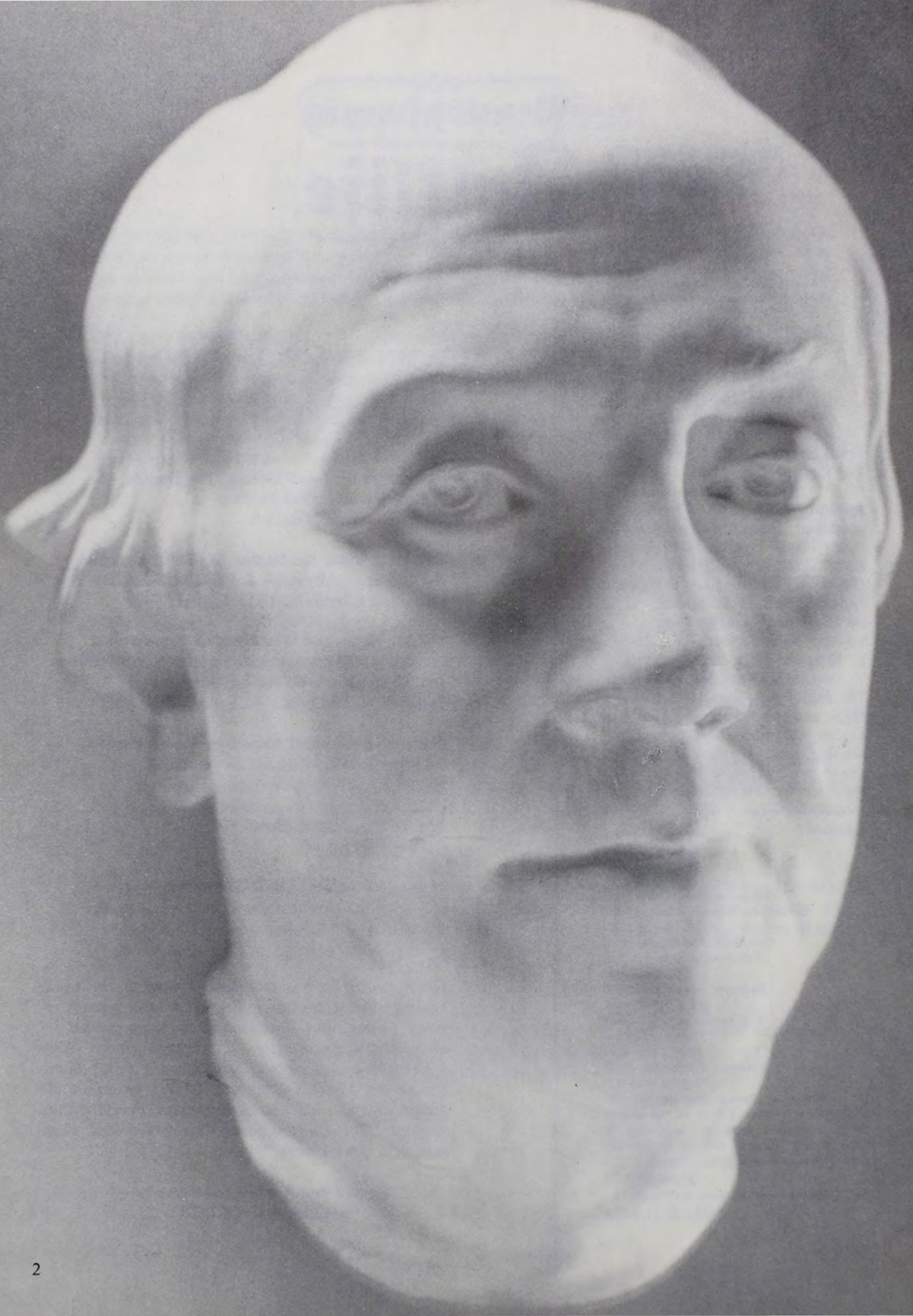
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(Inside front Cover)

COVER:

Often quoted in this bicentennial year of the U. S. Constitution is Benjamin Franklin's well known remark — as that document was being signed — about the decoration on Washington's chair: "Now I know it is a rising and not a setting sun." Painting is the Violet Oakley (1874-1971) mural in the senate chamber of the state capitol in Harrisburg entitled "The Constitutional Convention and Creation of a True Union."

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FRANKLIN IN FACT AND FICTION: THE DOUBLE PERSPECTIVE OF LELAND BALDWIN

by Edward W. Chester



Leland D. Baldwin, 1897-1981.

History is filled with the exploits of great men. Why is it, then, that some of these great men are folk heroes, while others are not? Why is Benjamin Franklin a folk hero, while John Adams is not, although Adams was one of the key leaders of this nation during the American Revolution, and later (unlike Franklin) a President of the United States? What is the mysterious alchemy which denies to an Adams that which it bestows on a Franklin? In answering this question we will examine various published and unpublished writings of the late Leland Dewitt Baldwin, the author of *Whiskey Rebels: The Story of a Frontier Uprising*; *Pittsburgh: The Story of a City 1750-1865*; and the late-eighteenth century frontier novel *The Delectable Country*.¹

In 1944 Leland Baldwin published his study *God's Englishman: The Evolution of the Anglo-Saxon Spirit*.² While commenting on the development of the Arthurian legend he observed:³

Some time after the year 500 a Romanized Briton named Artorius forged to the front as a British general. Now heavy cavalry, clad in chain mail, had for a century or more been the mainstay of the Roman armies on the Continent, and it may be conjectured that Artorius saw that if he could raise

a corps of armored cavalymen he could overcome the ill-armored Saxon infantrymen who fought with spears. At any rate in a series of twelve battles Artorius stopped the Saxons cold. In the last and greatest of these battles, at Mons Badonicus in Dorsetshire, about the year 520, Artorius and his corps seem to have won their greatest victory quite without the aid of allies. Thirty years or more of peace followed in south Britain and King Ambrosius reigned from the ancient stronghold on the hilltop of Old Sarum. Artorius seems never to have been more than a *dux bellorum*, but he has come down in Celtic legend as King Arthur, and his *equites cataphractarii* became the Knights of the Round Table.

Artorius, or King Arthur, lived nearly a millenium before Johann Gutenberg carried on his experiments with movable type. The result of the latter is the avalanche of books, magazines, journals, and newspapers which confront us today. Yet this development by no means has sharpened the distinction between fact and fantasy, between history and folklore. Abraham Lincoln is a case in point. The American intellectual historian Ralph Gabriel has pointed out that in the years following his assassination "a bulging sheaf of Lincoln stories, authentic and apocryphal, was collected. Legends grew up about him."⁴ The noted philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson also observed of Lincoln that had it not been for the existence of the printing press, he would have become mythological eventually.⁵

For one to become a folk hero it is not essential for one to be physically handsome and personally charming. Not everyone has the attributes of a John Kennedy. As a matter of fact, a folk hero may be homely and crude, Abraham Lincoln being only one example out of many which one might cite. In discussing the development of the Lincoln legend, Leland Baldwin has observed that "the revulsion against the rather common portrayal of the ugly gorilla from the prairies of Illinois started the poets and other creators of folk myths upon their task, and even sneering *Punch* regretted its failure to recognize this rail-splitter, as true-born king of men."⁶ The balding and paunchy Benjamin Franklin, too, was hardly the matinee idol type.

Nor does one have to possess great learning or lofty intelligence to become a folk hero. A case in point is Mike Fink, the famous riverman, whom Leland Baldwin discussed in his classic work *The Keelboat Age on Western Waters*.⁷ In writing about this Paul Bunyan of the boatmen, Baldwin observed that: "to him were ascribed sooner or later most of the exploits that the young West loved to retell and exaggerate."⁸ Other folk heroes similarly have received credit for the accomplishments of others, as was the case of George Washington, who in the opinion of some observers singlehandedly won the American Revolution. Here again military triumphs led to folk hero status.

On the other hand, in Benjamin Franklin we have the folk hero as an intellectual: an image that is probably the exception rather than the rule. Among other things, Franklin was the author of an autobiography, the founder of the *Saturday Evening Post* (his picture appeared on its cover once each year), and the thinker of visionary political concepts. It was Franklin who thought such lofty thoughts as the union of the thirteen colonies in 1776 (foreshadowed by his Albany Plan of 1754); an alliance with France (which was to become a reality in 1778); the development of a global British Empire (which a century after his death had become the biggest colonial empire in the world); and the formation of some sort of league of nations (a century-and-a-half before it became a reality). But Franklin also was the compiler of that popular collection of sayings known as *Poor Richard's Almanac*, where he brought together such memorable quotes as "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," "God helps those who help themselves," and "a penny saved is a penny earned."

When Franklin was not coming to public attention with his writings and publications, he was affecting the common man's everyday life with his inventions: the lightning rod, the Franklin (pot-bellied) stove, and the bifocal lens. But Franklin was more than an inventor; he also was a scientist. As Leland Baldwin has pointed out, America has produced only a few pure scientists of major importance, who were interested in knowledge for the sake of knowledge: Joseph Henry, Josiah

Willard Gibbs, Benjamin Franklin. Every school child knows the story of how the latter went out on a cloudy day and flew his kite into the sky, in search of an understanding of that magical and mysterious force known as electricity. What better way to become a folk hero than to do battle with the very forces of nature itself? One recalls the story of how the eleventh century British King Canute rebuffed the flattery of the courtiers by showing his inability to turn back the waves breaking on the seashore. Whereas the monarch could not defeat nature, the American triumphed over it.

That such an amazing man as Benjamin Franklin would generate a large number of both scholarly and popular writings is not surprising. Aside from George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, few Americans have been honored with more biographies than the multisided Franklin. The latest of these, by Esmond Wright, thus sums up this complex and gifted man:⁹

We honor him not only for his success and his services but also for his style. Both in prose style and in personal style, he was characteristically American. He made his name as a journalist. His prose heralded Mark Twain; his ribaldry and anecdote anticipated Lincoln; in the quality of his journalism with its simplicity and verve, he parallels H. L. Mencken. He could be by turns Rabelais and Poor Richard, Swift and Holy Scripture, and, however earthy or however savage, end with a joke. In prose style and in manner he was witty, salty, candid, and razor-sharp. He was a true representative of the American people, who by his death in 1790 were a united nation, thanks in large part to his work.

Having noted that many individuals have written about Benjamin Franklin, some of them with great skill and insight, the question rises as to what is the need for still another essay on him? Surely by now almost every piece of consequential information about him has been unearthed, and set forth in print. On the other hand, it is still possible to obtain new insights into Benjamin Franklin by placing him in a new perspective. And that is what we plan to do during the remainder of this essay, where we will examine how Leland Baldwin treated Benjamin Franklin both as a historical personage *and* as a fictional character in his writings. As far as the author is able to determine, this constitutes a unique approach rarely, if ever, attempted by others before, with respect to him or any other historical figure.

* * * *

While completing his work on a Ph.D. degree at the University of Michigan, on November 23, 1931 Leland Baldwin attended a lecture by Raphael Sabatini, the author of such works as *Captain Blood* and *The Seahawk*. Sabatini spoke on "Fiction in history and history in fiction," and during the course of the evening he discoursed on the relationship of propaganda and various other things to certain historical mysteries and

misconceptions.¹⁰ Sabatini, it should be noted, also was interested in such historical figures as Columbus, Cesar Borgia, and Torquemada.

The historian Leland Baldwin also produced novels at various points in his career, including four yet unpublished ones dealing with the fortunes of John Penburn and his family and friends from 1742 to 1834. In 1939 Lee Furman of New York published his *Delectable Country*, a novel of the Whiskey Insurrection and the western rivers. In the Foreword to his long (715 pp.) fictional account, Baldwin noted that its background came from his three monographs, *Whiskey Rebels: The Story of a Frontier Uprising* (1939); *The Keelboat Age on Western Waters* (to be published in 1941); and *Pittsburgh: The Story of A City* (1937). While admitting that his novel had a strong factual basis, Baldwin also warned that he was taking certain liberties with the facts where such a technique served his artistic purpose: "Those familiar with the history of western Methodism will readily recognize Peter Cartwright as in some respects the prototype of Daniel Strong, but they will be astonished to find western Pennsylvania subject to the Philadelphia Conference in the later 1790's. It should be added that Sam Brady was defended by James Ross, not Brackenridge; that the big freeze on the Ohio was in December 1796; that the yellow fever epidemic in New Orleans actually began in September 1796; and that Philip Nolan may not have been in New Orleans in the spring of 1796."¹¹

Similar liberties with the facts occur in Leland Baldwin's unpublished novel *The Lightning and the Sceptre*, whose title was derived from Turgot's epigram on Houdon's bust of Franklin: "He snatched the lightning from the sky and the sceptre from the hands of tyrants."¹² Here, however, most of the alterations occur with respect to the minor events and personalities rather than the major ones. The conversations between Benjamin Franklin and John Jay are based on material found in Frank Monaghan's *John Jay*, where the writings of Franklin himself and the letters of Madame Brillon follow the original. (Franklin's unfulfilled romance with this French lady in the novel parallels that between George Washington and Sally Fairfax in his unpublished play, *The Votary of Love*.) As for other departures from the historical record in which Leland Baldwin engaged, the latter observes that:

Francis Lund, a fictitious character, has been assigned the roles played by Alexander Wedderburn and Lord Stormont; Gideon Storrs is also a fictitious character, but he had his parallel in Edward Bancroft, an associate of Franklin in Paris. So far as is known William Franklin did not journey to Paris in 1782, but at that time his son Temple seems to have been mixed up with a Mlle. Jupin under circumstances unknown. Mary Temple also is a fictitious person, as the mother of Temple Franklin is unknown; William Franklin's mother may or may not have been (Franklin's wife) Deborah. The (Governor Thomas) Hutchinson letters were given to Franklin by a person whose

name was so well concealed that the identification of him with (David) Hartley is only a reasonable conjecture.¹³

Rather than begin his treatment of Franklin with his youth and adolescence, Leland Baldwin instead omits the first 42 years of his life in *The Lightning and the Sceptre*. In the opening scene we find Franklin on the banks of the Schuylkill River on a summer night in 1748, where he was holding what might be described as an "electrical picnic." Absent from Baldwin's novel is the famous episode from a later date where Franklin flew his kite into the clouds on a stormy day, in the process risking electrocution in search of the elusive truth about natural phenomena.



Benjamin West's painting of Franklin discovering the identity of lightning and electricity.

The main attraction at the "electrical picnic" was "a bewildering jumble of glass jars coated with tin foil, wooden wheels, copper wires, glass tubes, and iron rods on spikes."¹⁴ When William Franklin warned one of Franklin's black assistants of the dangers involved in handling a Leyden jar, the rather stereotyped Negro replied, "Ah don' want none o' dat 'lectric fluid in me, please suh."¹⁵ This gathering was being held at the expense of two turkeys, which rather than being decapitated were to be electrocuted. In the process of dispatching the two unfortunate fowls into turkey heaven, though, Franklin received an electrical shock which temporarily rendered him unconscious. As he adjusted the apparatus, he observed: "Behold a modern miracle, gentlemen. We have become gods and can bring down lightning on the turks even as Jove once hurled thunderbolts at the Greeks."¹⁶ Once he had recovered, Franklin impaled the now dead turkeys on a spit which he turned with electricity, while he kindled the fire itself with an electrical spark.

Electricity, of course, has its inside as well as its outside applications. Hanging in Franklin's house was a portrait of the then King George II of England, a puffy, long-nosed man in a heavily powdered wig, which painting might as well represent King Louis of France. "However, the King held in his hand at a drunken angle an authentic sceptre of gilded metal wired from behind in such a manner as to give a shock to the sacrilegious hand that might try to remove it."¹⁷ At this time Franklin still remained loyal to the mother country, as the outbreak of the American Revolution lay more than a quarter century in the future. Significantly, later in the novel Franklin physically destroyed this work of art, in the process symbolically registering his permanent break with Great Britain.

Sometimes when one encounters an incident in a historical novel, it is difficult to determine whether this episode actually happened, was totally fictional, or was based in part on real events. An instance of fact and fiction coexisting together in *The Lightning and the Sceptre* is the famous corn pudding incident, which occurred at a dinner which Franklin hosted for Governor Robert Hunter Morris of Pennsylvania in 1755. A few days earlier Morris had presented Franklin with the Copley Medal for scientific experimentation, which a committee of the Royal Society of Great Britain had bestowed upon the American scientist. In return, Morris desired to obtain Franklin's support for additional defense spending, as the Quaker element in the colony stood opposed to this.

When Morris arrived at Franklin's home for dinner, his host laid before him a meal, consisting not of electrocuted turkeys, but rather of "a great earthen bowl of corn mush flanked with smaller bowls and a pitcher of milk."¹⁸ Franklin described this modest offering to the Governor as the national dish of America, just as

oatmeal was the national dish of Scotland. While the Governor's secretary, Lund, found the porridge distasteful, as did the less openly expressive Governor, Franklin asked for a refill, which his guests declined. He then informed his guests that "I put two allegiances before their honors; one of them, as I think Mr. Lund knows by now, is His Majesty; the other is the people of Pennsylvania."¹⁹ (Franklin had invited an unsuspecting Lund to touch the electrical sceptre attached to the portrait of King George II, and the resulting shock was the germ of the growing hostility of Lund towards Franklin which manifests itself throughout the novel.) Once his guests had departed, however, Franklin brought out of hiding a platter of roast turkey and a bottle of red wine, which he then proceeded to cosume.

Years later Leland Baldwin wrote an essay entitled "Benjamin Franklin and the American Psyche," in which he pointed out that the sawdust pudding episode did indeed occur. However, "the story as told did not seem to ring quite true to Franklin, so I added a stinger of my own" (i.e., the turkey and the wine).²⁰ Here we see still another example of the novelist interpreting an event more freely than the historian.

It is only natural that the folk hero would become involved in a series of memorable episodes, but incidents such as this one are permeated with a comic element, which one does not always find in stories about folk heroes who win great military triumphs. (Even the story about George Washington chopping down the cherry tree has an earnest moral tone to it.) But Benjamin Franklin was a thinker, not a fighter, and the ways of genius are mysterious. In writing about Henry Ford, Allan Nevins and Frank Hill have observed about the pioneer automaker that Carl Sandburg had found the touch of the ridiculous in him just right, "as though all creative, inventive geniuses must expect misunderstanding, and in order to live must have a little element of the clown."²¹

Although Benjamin Franklin was not a general, there are military events in *The Lightning and the Sceptre*, in particular certain incidents preceding General Edward Braddock's disastrous attack on Fort Duquesne in 1755. Here Franklin prophetically but futilely warned Braddock of a possible Indian ambush. Baldwin the novelist paints a quite contrasting picture of the leading dramatis personae in this milestone defeat; Postmaster General Franklin's role in the preparations for battle was to obtain a large number of wagons for the use of the British troops. To Franklin, General Braddock was a "heavy-set, red-faced Irishman who could have given aces to any man in his army and out-blasphemed him,"²² while the youthful George Washington possessed "a distant manner" and spoke with "a cold hauteur."²³ (This rather unflattering portrait of young Washington also permeates the play *The Votary of Love*.) However, writing in 1952 as a historian, Leland



Franklin's son William, Royal Governor of New Jersey.

Baldwin admitted that Washington had redeemed the defeat which he suffered at the hands of the French at Fort Mifflin in 1777, by covering the withdrawal of troops from Ft. Mifflin with British troops; Baldwin also called the reader's attention to an article by Stanley Pargellis throwing new light on old ideas about Braddock's alleged "stupidity."²⁴

During this same period (1754) there occurred the Albany Congress, whose narrow objective was to improve relations with the Iroquois Indians, but which also had the broader goal of bolstering intercolonial defense. In Chapter II of *The Lightning and the Sceptre* there is a conversation between schoolmaster Charles Thomson and Franklin, in which Thomson informs Franklin that Governor Hamilton wanted Franklin to attend this congress as a delegate. Franklin not only accepted the invitation, but also pulled a completely thought out plan of union from his desk drawer to present at Albany!

In this age of near-instant solutions to complex problems on half-hour long television programs, one might suspect that novelist Baldwin again was playing loose with the facts. This fictional account, though, was essentially true. Franklin, had, in fact, offered a plan for uniting the colonies as early as 1751, and the new "Short Hints" differed from the original scheme in only one significant aspect, in that the revised version was to be imposed by Parliament, rather than achieved through voluntary action. But while Baldwin the novelist made the claim that "the plan found favor throughout the colonies,"²⁵ as a matter of fact every assembly which considered the plan that the Albany Congress adopted turned it down, with the exception of

the legislature of New York. The British government, which regarded it as too democratic, was even more shortsighted. Baldwin the historian later took cognizance of this indifference, or even hostility, when he wrote *The Stream of American History*.²⁶

Some of those who attended the Albany Congress, including Thomas Hutchinson and John Penn, remained Loyalists in the age of the American Revolution. (The picture which Baldwin the novelist draws of those members of the Penn family residing in London is significantly quite negative.) Others, including Stephen Hopkins and Benjamin Franklin, openly took the side of the colonies. But as was the case with the Civil War, family was divided against family in the American Revolution. A case in point is William Franklin, the son of Benjamin, who later became the Governor of New Jersey and a supporter of the crown during the American Revolution. Not surprisingly, this divergence in loyalties irrevocably damaged their personal relationship.

When we first met William Franklin in *The Lightning and the Sceptre*, he was a youth of 18 who assisted his father at the "electrical picnic." Possessed of "cool, haughty eyes, . . . a few humdrum months as an officer in the army on the Canadian frontier had made him insufferably high and mighty."²⁷ Later on, in London, Benjamin and William began to draw further and further apart. William conducted a clandestine love affair with one Mary Temple, who died while giving birth to his illegitimate child. The father's response was compassionate rather than condemnatory: "Son, everyone makes errata. My greatest was in wronging your mother, and though I tried to make it right it will always



Franklin's wife, Deborah Read Franklin.

stand as a black mark against me."²⁸ In real life Benjamin had fathered an illegitimate son as a young man, and the mother may have been Deborah Reed, whom Franklin eventually married.

Although it is not uncommon for the folk hero to be as successful in love as he is in battle, Franklin's wife Deborah (or Debbie) was not exactly a prize. In many respects a good woman, she was lacking in beauty, culture, and excitement; certainly this was not the most suitable longterm companion for a genius. Deborah admitted this herself early in the novel: "I don't even live in the same world as you do and I know I never can no matter how hard I try. Yours is a world of books, and business, and politics. I don't understand them things; I'm only good for keeping house, and gossiping over the counter, and — and nagging you when you come home."²⁹ It is not surprising that Franklin left Deborah behind when he went abroad for extended periods, and instead sought the company of such cultured women as Madame Brillon, a married lady whom Franklin half seriously asked to be his wife in paradise (i.e., Heaven). In Paris members of the fairer sex literally threw

themselves on their aging American visitor, who obviously enjoyed being the center of attention.

Since the main thrust of this paper is an examination of Benjamin Franklin's real and fictional experiences (especially those in Pennsylvania), we will pass more briefly over his pre-Revolutionary activities in Great Britain, and his experiences in France during the American Revolution. As for his British sojourn, one should note that the most beautiful descriptive passage in the novel is that of Vauxhall Gardens in London near the beginning of Chapter V; this surpasses anything which Baldwin has to say about Philadelphia, or even Paris. The more memorable episodes of Franklin's stay in England include his unsatisfactory meeting with Lord George Grenville, the Doctor of Laws degree from St. Andrews University in Scotland, his famous assessment of the Privy Council as "a pack of Damned Rascals,"³⁰ the friendly exchange with Edmund Burke in Parliament, his encounter with the future Revolutionary pamphleteer Thomas Paine, and his long-delayed talk with William Pitt, who, like Burke, was sympathetic towards the American cause.

In the midst of these more serious events the comic and humorous side of Franklin continued to surface on occasion. Once he became stuck in a bathtub at his London home, an episode which more likely would feature a far more elephantine public figure of the William Howard Taft variety, or a fictional character like Sir John Falstaff. Like Lincoln, Franklin also told jokes, sometimes on solemn occasions. When at a meeting back in America John Jay shuddered at the prospect of war, and noted that it was the younger men who would have to fight it, Franklin's response was: "I think the [British] ministry would take greater pleasure in hanging the old men than in shooting the young ones."³¹ Earlier, when Lord George Grenville had asked Franklin what type of tax the colonists would prefer to a stamp tax, Franklin invoked his parable of the turkeys. "We have a story in America," he observed, "of the farmer who called his turkeys together and thus addressed them: 'I have invited you to meet me to know with what sauce you would prefer to be eaten.' 'But we don't want to be eaten at all,' replied the turkeys. 'Ah' retorted the farmer, 'now you're dodging the question.'"³² Later, in France, the Deist Franklin copied the example of Jesus Christ by stilling the wind-buffed surface of a pond. Observing that "miracles" no longer seemed difficult to him, he had sprinkled some oil from a hole in the head of his staff on the waters.

By the time that Franklin left Great Britain for the United States, he not only had lost his position as Postmaster General at home, he also had become disillusioned with the prospects of an amicable settlement of the political differences between the mother country and the restless thirteen colonies. Even William Pitt proved unable to persuade Parliament to reverse its policies towards America, while across the Atlantic Ocean the battle of Lexington and Concord was on the horizon.

Once Franklin had returned home, events moved quickly towards independence. He listened to Thomas Paine reading from his *Common Sense*; later John Adams and he conferred with Thomas Jefferson when the latter wrote his Declaration of Independence. But while Baldwin the novelist restricted himself to the observation that Franklin and Adams had been so kind as to propose certain amendments to this document, Baldwin the historian observed in his last published work that: "When Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence of the human right to life, liberty and property it seems to have been Franklin who amended it to the form we know — life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."³³ One will recall that it had been the British political thinker John Locke, not Jefferson, who a century earlier had formulated the trinity of life, liberty, and property which Franklin saw fit to prevail upon Jefferson to alter.

The Continental Congress now sent Franklin to join

Silas Deane and Arthur Lee as delegates from the newly independent United States to the French government in search of aid. Whereas Franklin, despite his scientific and other accomplishments, had been looked upon by the British as still another political malcontent from the provinces, he was regarded by the French as a distinguished visitor worthy of both honor and hospitality. As Bernard Fay has written of him: "When Franklin was living in France, he claimed that his face was as familiar there as the moon. This was no exaggeration: innumerable prints and engravings pictured the Patriarch everywhere; columns in the newspapers were devoted to his activities, and historians wrote about him constantly."³⁴ Although a Deist in religion, he arrived in bewigged Paris dressed in a brown suit and fur cap, as the populace cheered the old "Quaker." Obviously his adopted home city of Philadelphia was far more cosmopolitan than Pittsburgh several hundred miles to the west, yet to the French he still embodied the spirit of liberty that one had encountered on the frontier throughout history. The eighteenth century French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau earlier had called for a return to primitive simplicity as a prelude to the creation of a perfect society, and Franklin was an obvious role model for this better future.

Franklin's conversations with French leaders such as the Comte de Vergennes were more successful than those with their British counterparts had been, and by 1778 he had successfully negotiated an alliance between France and America. In bringing the latter to fulfillment he had to overcome the double dealing of some of his associates who were in the pay of the British, in particular Edward Bancroft (who appears in *The Lightning and the Sceptre* as the fictional character Gideon Storrs.) Franklin's confrontation with Storrs, as described by Baldwin, was surprisingly calm and restrained. He also talked with the youthful Marquis de Lafayette, who later was to contribute so much to the revolutionary cause in the United States.

Without question one of the most electrifying moments which Franklin experienced during his years in Paris was his meeting with the famous writer Voltaire, now 84 years of age. As described by the novelist Baldwin, Voltaire "was the picture of debility, thin, wrinkled, and sick, but his eyes blazed with the oldtime spirit that had made him the firebrand of his century."³⁵ After Franklin had been introduced, Voltaire quoted from James Thomson's *Ode to Liberty* in English; he then proceeded to bless Franklin's grandson, Temple, with the expression "God and Liberty."³⁶ A few days later Voltaire delivered a speech at the Academy of Sciences, in which he advocated a revision of the French dictionary, with he himself covering the "A" entries. As Franklin was present for the occasion, a clamor arose for the emaciated Voltaire and the corpulent Franklin to hug each other. "Behold," someone shouted, "how



Benjamin Franklin and Richard Oswald discussing the Treaty of Peace at Paris.

charming it is to see Solon and Sophocles embrace.”³⁷

In 1783 Great Britain agreed to a peace treaty with the United States which ended the American Revolution. Benjamin Franklin served as one of the peace commissioners. But John Jay was convinced that the Comte de Vergennes wanted to prolong the conflict so as to give France’s ally Spain an opportunity to regain the colonies which it had lost, especially Gibraltar. When Franklin protested that to make an agreement with England without the approval of France would violate the peace instructions which the American commissioners had received from Congress, Jay declared that he placed the honor and dignity of America above these guidelines. It was the latter’s position which prevailed,

and the United States signed a separate peace treaty with Great Britain.

When Benjamin Franklin returned to the United States in 1785, he only had five years left to live. Nevertheless, the Pennsylvania Assembly elected him to serve as the President of that state for three years, and then in 1787 he served as one of the 55 delegates to the Constitutional Convention. According to the novelist Baldwin, it was Franklin who proposed “that in one branch of Congress each state should have one representative for each 40,000 inhabitants, counting three-fifths of the slaves, and that money bills should originate there; that in the second branch each state should have an equal vote.”³⁸ Actually, as the historian Baldwin



Franklin tears the lightning from the sky and the sceptre from the hands of tyrants; from an old French engraving. The seated figure with her arm on Franklin's lap represents America.

wrote later in *The Stream*, it was probably John Dickenson of Delaware who conceived the Great Compromise of a Senate composed of two members from each state, and a House elected by popular vote according to population.³⁹

But if the novelist Baldwin has dealt freely with the facts about the Great Compromise, there is no question but that it was indeed Franklin who commented at the time of the signing of the Constitution about the painted sun on the back of the Convention President's chair. At the end of *The Lightning and the Sceptre* Franklin observed: "I have often during the course of this convention, in the midst of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at the sun painted on the president's chair

without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. Now, at least, I have the happiness of knowing that for us, and for our children, and for the world, it is a rising and not a setting sun."⁴⁰

* * * *

In assessing Benjamin Franklin many years later as a historian, Leland Baldwin wrote at the beginning of his essay "Benjamin Franklin and the American Psyche" that Franklin was as interesting to the people of his own generation as he was to those of later eras, a cir-



Diogenes discovering Franklin; a French print made and presented to Franklin in July, 1780. Below Franklin's portrait is a Latin inscription which says: "Nations! Stop and wonder: Diogenes has found a man."

cumstance which was not as true of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, or Abraham Lincoln. This claim is made both because of Franklin's impressive record of accomplishments in a number of areas, and because of his frequently paradoxical and contradictory nature. In his novel Baldwin has focused on five aspects of Franklin's career: the electrical experimenter, the political leader, the successful diplomat, the troubled father, and the unfulfilled lover. He also touches on his role as an inventor (the Franklin stove) and as a journalist (the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.) But this leaves unexamined many other aspects of Franklin the man, and let us now see how many of these Baldwin the historian treats.

One might begin by noting that Benjamin Franklin was the first of America's great civic leaders, the man who did more than anyone else to develop Philadelphia.

In basically rural America he was the quintessential urbanite. Franklin was the chief founder of the American Philosophical Society, and he also helped to establish the college which later was to become the University of Pennsylvania.⁴¹ In addition, Franklin was an economist who influenced Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, the first recorded advocate of daylight savings time, and one of the earliest abolitionists in the United States.⁴² Few individuals in American history have been so active at so many levels: local, state, national, European; if anyone deserves the appellation of universal genius, it was he. On a less lofty level one might add that, like George Washington, Franklin was an inveterate land speculator, an aspect of his career with which Baldwin the novelist might have done more.

But the accomplishments of Benjamin Franklin mentioned throughout this essay by no means explain fully



Franklin sets America free; from an old French engraving.

why even today, as in his own time, he remains an object of fascination to so many people. Indeed, few other men in American life have been so complex. As Leland Baldwin has sagely observed, "Franklin embodied the American spirit, for we as Americans are today being subjected to a battle of claim and counter-claim basically similar to but far more bitter than has been the battle over Franklin."⁴³

In developing this point Leland Baldwin noted that although the Deistic Franklin clearly rejected Puritan theology, he still gave his allegiance to its moral preachings in his *Poor Richard's Almanac*, and then proceeded to frequent the fleshpots of London and Paris for thirty years. As for the irreconcilability of determinism and freedom of the will, a dilemma which continues to bedevil religious thinkers even today, to Franklin "freedom of the will is a logical impossibility but a practical necessity."⁴⁴

Although like Thomas Jefferson, Franklin inhabited the liberal end of the political spectrum, he lacked Jefferson's confidence in human nature. To him the rule of the masses was no more of a panacea than rule by the aristocracy. The prosperous, self-made Franklin, moreover, was no bland defender of property rights. Leland Baldwin even saw him as a prophet of the welfare state, a spiritual ancestor of Franklin

Roosevelt's New Deal.

Then there are foreign affairs. Despite the fact that Franklin was one of the first individuals to conceptualize the British Empire, he also was one of those American leaders who in 1776 broke away from the mother country. Basically an isolationist like the other Founding Fathers, Franklin helped to negotiate the Franco-American alliance of 1778, the only permanent alliance which this country entered into prior to the end of World War II. The man was indeed a study in contradictions.

As we take leave of Benjamin Franklin, it is hoped that through our examination of the writings of Leland Baldwin we have demonstrated that this unique individual who became a folk hero on two continents was no one-dimensional Mike Fink-type figure. Rather, like Abraham Lincoln, he possessed great depths, and had that rare capacity of inspiring respect and even affection from other individuals who really did not understand him. (Most people tend to dislike that which they do not truly comprehend.) As Bernard Fay once wrote, Franklin was "the most accessible and the most mysterious public figure of the eighteenth century."⁴⁵ This being the case, it is no wonder that he retains his Mona Lisa-like fascination for us today, both as a historical personage and as a fictional character.



Portrait of Franklin made in France; frontispiece of Bernard Fäy's *Benjamin Franklin, The Apostle of Modern Times*. "Franklin has no wig. He is in the 'plain Quaker dress' which so touched the tender hearts of France" (p. xiii).

ENDNOTES

¹(Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1939), pp. 326; (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1937), pp. 341; and (New York: Lee Furman, 1939), pp. 715.

²(Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1944), pp. 265.

³p. 22.

⁴Ralph Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought* (New York: Roland Press, 1940), pp. 452. See p. 408.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶Leland D. Baldwin, "The Historical Background of American Literature," unpublished manuscript, no date, pp. 17. See p. 14.

⁷(Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1941), pp. 264.

⁸p. 110.

⁹Thomas D'Evelyn, "The Reluctant Revolutionary Who Became a Founding Father," in *Christian Science Monitor*, April 23, 1986, p. 21. This book review quotes from Esmond Wright, *Franklin of Philadelphia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 404.

¹⁰Leland Baldwin to Ruth Baldwin, Ann Arbor, Michigan, November 23, 1931, in Baldwin Papers, c/o Ruth Baldwin, Santa Barbara, California.

¹¹See the Foreword to *The Delectable Country*.

¹²A copy of this undated 259 page novel may be found in the Baldwin Papers. See the title page for the Turgot epigram. We will abbreviate future references to this work as *Lightning/Sceptre*.

¹³*Ibid.*, Foreword.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 31.

²⁰Leland D. Baldwin, "Benjamin Franklin and the American

Psyche," in the *Pitt* newsletter, Winter 1956, p. 18.

²¹Allan Nevins and Frank Hill, *Ford: Expansion and Challenge* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1957), pp. 714. See p. 618.

²²*Lightning/Sceptre*, p. 35.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 36.

²⁴Leland D. Baldwin, *The Stream of American History*, 2 volumes (New York: American Book Company, 1952). See I, 194. We will abbreviate future references to this work as *Stream*.

²⁵*Lightning/Sceptre*, p. 16.

²⁶*Stream*, I, 199.

²⁷*Lightning/Sceptre*, p. 4.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 67.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 64.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 120.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 73.

³³Leland D. Baldwin, *The American Quest for the City of God* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1981), pp. 368. See p. 71.

³⁴Bernard Fäy, *Franklin: The Apostle of Modern Times* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1929), pp. 547. See p. 512.

³⁵*Lightning/Sceptre*, p. 183.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 184.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 185.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 253.

³⁹*Stream*, I, 292-3.

⁴⁰*Lightning/Sceptre*, p. 259.

⁴¹*Stream*, I, 154-5, 215.

⁴²"American Psyche," p. 17.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵Fäy, p. 514.

JOST HITE: FROM THE NECKAR TO THE SHENANDOAH

by Nancy K. Gaugler and Ralph Connor



Jost Hite's descendants left many structures which still stand in the Shenandoah Valley; the most famous is Belle Grove in Middletown, Va. which is now administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

INTRODUCTION

by
William T. Parsons

Historians tend to be single-minded and to try desperately to keep things simple. That is not realistic, of course, since one visible characteristic of life is a complicated interrelationship. Still, for years they regarded immigration as an isolated event, and simply categorized migrants by century and national origin.

In the 1950's it became evident to the more alert researchers that immigration into one country was, in

fact, emigration from another. To some degree the young German historians of Post-World War II vintage teamed with the older generation of genealogists to try to put villages of departure from the Rhineland together with areas or churches to which they came upon arrival in Pennsylvania or other German speaking settlements in British America.

Happily for us, the study of genealogy gained a new respectability among historians when their penchant for vital statistics fed volumes of information into the recently attempted quantitative history. What many historians had demeaned as ancestor worship now add-

ed data which historians had long overlooked.

Students of the migration phenomenon further noted in the next decade that migrants ("freights") from the same village or from a single valley often shipped on the very same vessel. New insights became apparent. Tally and indentification of clusters of passengers who came from a particular town led to identification of others who had resided in the near vicinity.

The phenomenon of internal migration from one part of the United States to another furnished even more clues. Cultural baggage came not only from Europe to America, but from one state to another. It crossed mountain ridges and spanned river valley systems. Yet it was only recently that the real breakthroughs became evident.

In 1985, after fifteen years of intensive research, Henry Z. Jones, Jr., published his two-volume opus *The Palatine Families of New York, 1710*, and introduced us to a brand new assessment of the Schoharie, N.Y. settlement. He approached the study more from a genealogical than from an historical point of view. Jones is at his best when he describes the people involved. They are the essence of history, of course. His understanding of their lives shows in his intensely personal accounts. Henry Jones demonstrates that both history and genealogy are fascinating as he carries his subjects from their native German principalities to England and then to New York province.

With those details, Jones sets the stage for us to understand internal migrations from New York to Virginia. His good friend, Ralph Connor, carries the story even further by an examination of Jost Hite in the migration history of Pennsylvania and Virginia. Both of these writers note that people are the essential ingredient of history. Who were these country folk who adventured into America?

The Rhineland Germans who came to New York province soon found that Hollanders had set up a semi-feudal patroon system in their original settlements. That resembled too closely the system Germans had fled from. German farmers, sponsored by Englishmen, landed in a province still largely Holland Dutch in flavor. It would take a long time before English culture took over.

English leaders proposed that the Germans would work to extract pine pitch and tar to supply the extensive demands of ships of His Majesty's Navy. That way, Germans engaged in a profitable enterprise, served as supply point for colonial raw materials, and settled a portion of the New World wilderness at one and the same time. Of several villages which were planted, the most familiar to us is Weisersdorf, where Johann Conrad Weiser, Senior, was a leading light.

Yet the timing was bad, since Pennsylvania had developed its own unique status between 1683 and the German arrival in the Schoharie Valley. Unusual folk

communications had developed in early America, serving Negro, German and other economic enclaves. It is still not clear just how a strange people in a new land, living miles from commercial port facilities, learned good news and bad so very rapidly. They did, though. Of course some Germans in New York province did have relatives or friends in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia or the Carolinas. It is possible that a few got news from that source, but we are not certain.

However it happened, Schoharie settlers soon knew of the much more favorable land tenure terms in Quaker Pennsylvania. It took the more adventurous (or the more discontented) among them only a half-dozen years to begin their trek to Pennsylvania. Some went by water to arrive in the port of Philadelphia where many other Germans had already settled.

More of them, however, traveled overland by a line of least resistance, along river valleys which led directly into the Quaker province. A characteristic of the main valleys of the mid-Atlantic region is that they all run from northeast to southwest, with a great variety of mountains separating those parallel valley systems.

Schoharie families such as Weiser and Schaeffer moved down into Womelsdorf or Tulpehocken. They brought their Lutheran faith with them, just as the Rieth family (Reed in Pennsylvania) maintained their German Reformed church ties. Some of those families became fixed in their new home, where descendants may be found even today. Jost Hite found himself relocated in the Perkiomen Valley, garden spot of the more economically favorable Pennsylvania.

Of those who did not settle permanently in Pennsylvania, some continued the trek even further down the valleys which slanted into Western Maryland. Hagerstown became so thoroughly a German settlement that the new government believed it safe to establish Hessian prisoner-of-war camps in their near vicinity. Many Americans watched the process whereby Hessian prisoners-of-war often melted into the Maryland countryside and could not be found to be repatriated to their German state of origin at war's end.

The last of those valley migrations led Maryland and other Germans even further southward. They settled in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, some of them already there by the 1730's. Once again their cultural values accompanied them, and they and the settlers of the mountain west of Virginia became the most vocal southern objectors to the slave system. Still, some of them adjusted even to that in time.

As generations go by, our collective memory of the past dims. Many people assume that no one really suffered until the twentieth century. Thus we miss the real reasons our ancestors left the Germanies for old England and why they came to America. Accouterments of life change but essentials remain. People do remain much the same from century to century.

THE OLD GERMAN BARON

Starting, in 1710, as an immigrant on the New York subscription list in a camp on the Hudson River, Jost Hite progressed in less than twenty years to the developer of 140,000 acres in Virginia's beautiful Shenandoah Valley. Hite's descendants left many structures which still stand in the Valley, and his children and grandchildren "made notable contributions to the land into which Jost and Anna Maria Hite had come as immigrants. Their roles during the Revolution, in the conquest of the old Northwest, and in the settlement of Kentucky alone suffice to qualify the weaver of Bonfeld as the founder of a great Virginia family."¹

Jost Hite's achievements stemmed from his own abilities without the advantage of noble birth, for although he was called "the old German Baron," he was no more a member of the nobility than you or I; his title was not hereditary but was bestowed upon him by his associates for reasons that, so far as I* can find, history has not recorded. We may speculate that it was in recognition of his position as a leader in his community (which he was), or an expression of his bossiness (which I suspect was his nature). Nor is the belief in his nobility the only misconception concerning him, for I have not found any of my ancestors who is the subject of a larger number of incorrect reports than Jost Hite.

Indeed, when I first began to investigate my antecedents, I found that my brothers and I often had different versions of stories that we had heard from our parents. I would have saved myself much time if I had taken this omen seriously at once; it was actually some time before I realized that family tradition for any tale handed down by word of mouth is generally misleading.

According to family tradition, the Hite's came to America in Jost's own ships — the brigantine "Swift" and the schooner "Friendship" — and brought sixteen families with them.² Hite was also said to be in possession of huge bags of gold,³ and his wife, Anna Maria, was thought to be the daughter of Louis DuBois, a nobleman. And, although no documentation is offered, Jost Hite was said to have been a fur trader at some point in his career in the New World.⁴ Even if the documented facts of Hite's life and work are somewhat more prosaic than those listed above, they are nonetheless remarkable in their own right; and if most family traditions are inaccurate there is generally some reason back of their origin. And so, along with the

*My *Yost Hite--From the Neckar to the Shenandoah* was originally published in 1980 by Genealogical Services and Publications (Library of Congress Catalog #84-81704). When the first person is used in the text of this article it refers to me. Ms. Gaugler has added to and brought up to date the story of my ancestor. —Ralph Conner

documented facts in this account of Jost Hite's life are some speculations — clearly identified as such — as to how they might have originated.

FROM OLD WORLD TO NEW

His baptismal record⁵ shows his name as Hans Justus Heyd. In America his name had many versions; I shall call him Jost Hite which seems the simplest and is perhaps the spelling most frequently used. (In referring to documents, however, I shall use the spelling given in the source.) A church in Bonfeld, a village in the Neckar Valley, not far from the Neckar River and between twenty and twenty-five miles southeast of Heidelberg, records his birth on December 5, 1685. His father, Johannes Heyd, was a butcher and a civic councilor in Bonfeld, and his mother, Magdalena, died April 6, 1695; Johannes married Anna Maria Schultz on March 6, 1697.⁶

The Bonfeld records also report the birth of Anna Maria Merckle, daughter of Abraham and Anna Veronica Merckle, on January 16, 1687; and her marriage to Johan Justus Heyd, linenweaver, on November 11, 1704.⁷ Descendants of the Merckley (Mercklin) family, known in America as Markley, had traced their ancestors to Bonfeld and showed Anna Maria on their *Stamtafel der Familie Merckle (Mercklin)*,⁸ they did not show her married name. This was discovered by Jones and his collaborators who also found the following information about the ancestry of Anna Maria: Abraham Merckle, her father, was born March 2, 1664, and married Anna Veronica (maiden name unknown) in 1684. Jörg Mercklin, father of Abraham, was born in 1603 and died in 1686; Eva, widow of Jörg, was born in 1617 and died in 1690; her maiden name is also unknown. Prior to Jones's documentation, all reports said that Hite had married Anna Maria DuBois, and many of these suggested a variety of relationships between Anna Maria and the aforementioned nobleman, Louis DuBois; none offered any documentation.⁹

The next documented event in the Hite story concerns their emigration. A 1709 list of passengers embarking from Rotterdam includes "in the fifty party of Palatines on a vessel commanded by Captain William Newton . . . 'Joost Heÿt and vrouw—2 adults, 1 kindr.'"¹⁰ The Bonfeld church book lists both Johannes and Justus Heyd, with their families, as emigrants. Seeking a safer home and better economic prospects, the Hites joined over 13,000 other Germans in making their way to Rotterdam and thence to London; in 1710 about one-fifth of these Germans arrived in New York — the largest single group of immigrants in colonial times. His father was then dead, but Jost, his wife, infant daughter, and stepmother were among the fortunate ones who reached this land.

The child with Jost and Anna Maria in the "fifth party" was their daughter Mary (baptized Maria Elisabetha

in the town of Treschklingen, a few miles northwest of Bonfeld, on January 2, 1708); their first two children had died in Germany shortly after birth.¹¹ The next two children, Elizabeth and Magdalena, were born in the Province of New York: On March 4, 1711, Elizabeth was baptized in the Old Dutch Church of Kingston, New York;¹² and Magdalena was baptized in the same church on September 6, 1713.¹³ There is an anomaly in the data concerning these three girls, for on the list of those given subsistence in New York by Governor Hunter in 1710 is "Johan Jost H yd 2 adults, 0 children under 10."¹⁴ (The name of Maria H yd is also given. This is believed to be Jost Hite's stepmother, probably the only survivor of the Johannes Heyd family.) The New York subsistence list of 1712 includes Johann Jost Hayd with 2 adults, 1 child.¹⁵ One child is missing on both reports. Jost and Anna Maria also had five sons. It is not known whether the oldest, John, was born in New York or Pennsylvania, but the other four — Jacob (1719), Isaac (1721), Abraham (1729), and Joseph (1731) — presumably were born in Penn's colony.¹⁶

BACKGROUND OF THE 1710 IMMIGRATION

As already noted, the Hites were part of a very large group of emigrating Germans: between June 13 and August 2, 1710, ten English vessels brought to New York 2,378 immigrants — mostly Germans, but including a few Swiss and Dutch.¹⁷ It was not by chance that the majority were Germans, for England, judging that wealth and power came to a country from a large and productive population, undertook, in the early 1700's, an intensive campaign along the Rhine to obtain colonists for America. William Penn had earlier toured part of this area and had obtained settlers; Pastorius had led a group from there to found Germantown in 1683, and in the early 1700's there were already many "Pennsylvania Dutch" in the New World.

Many things made the Rhineland a likely place to seek colonists. There had never been a united Germany; it would be a century-and-a-half before that came about. What we today think of as Germany was then a number of independent duchies, principalities, small states, and free cities too small to defend themselves against a major aggressor. They became a battleground for most of the wars. During the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) the Palatinate, Hesse-Darmstadt, Alsace, Baden, W rttemberg, and all the area between the Neckar, Main and Rhine Rivers was fought over, pillaged and burned. When, in 1685, the Elector of the Palatinate died leaving no son as heir, Louis XIV of France invaded to press the claim of his brother as heir. (Louis' brother had married the sister of the late Elector.) Possibly Louis also wished to punish the Germans for the shelter they had given the Huguenots. His second invasion in 1693 was especially destructive: buildings were burned and the farmers were forced to plow under their crops.

THE STATE OF THE POOR PALATINES, AS HUMBLY REPRESENTED BY THEMSELVES UPON THEIR FIRST ARRIVAL IN THIS KINGDOM, ABOUT JUNE, 1709

We the poor distressed Palatines, whose utter Ruin was occasioned by the merciless Cruelty of a Bloody Enemy, the French, whose prevailing Power some years past, like a Torrent rusht into our Country, and overwhelmed us at once; and being not content with Money and Food necessary for their Occasions, not only dispossess us of all Support, but inhumanely burnt our Houses to the ground, where being deprived of all Shelter, we were turned into the open Fields, and there drove with our Families, to seek what Shelter we could find, being obliged to make the cold Earth our Lodgings, and the Clouds our Covering.

In this deplorable Condition we made our Humble Supplications and Cries to Almighty God, who has promised to relieve them that put their Trust in him, whose Goodness we have largely Experienced, in disposing the Hearts of Pious Princes to a Christian Compassion and Charity towards us in this miserable Condition, who by their Royal Bounties and large Donations, and the exemplary Kindness of well-dispos'd Nobility, Gentry, and Others, We and our poor Children have been preserv'd from Perishing; specially since our Arrival into this happy Kingdom of GREAT BRITAIN. While not only like the Land of Canaan, abounds with all things necessary for humane Life, but also with a Religious People, who as freely give to the Distressed for Christ's sake, as it was given to them by the Almighty Donor of all they enjoy.

Blessed Land and Happy People! Govern'd by the Nursing Mother of Europe, and the Best of Queens! whose unbounded Mercy and Charity has received us despicable Strangers from afar off into Her own Dominions, where we have found a Supply of all things Necessary for our present Subsistence; for which we bless and praise Almighty God, the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, and all Her good Subjects, from the highest Degree to those of the meanest Capacity; and do sincerely and faithfully promise, to all our utmost Powers, for the future, to render our selves Thankful to God, and Serviceable to Her Majesty, and all Her Good Subjects, in what way soever her goodness is pleas'd to dispose of Us: And in the mean time be constant in our Prayers, that God would return the Charity of well disposed People a thousand fold into their own Bosoms, which is all the Requittal that can at present be made by us poor distressed Protestants.

THE PALATINES.

Scarcely had the survivors begun to recover when the area became a battleground for the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1714). The plight of the Palatines is described in their own words in a letter addressed to Queen Anne intended to acquaint British officials with their unhappy condition (see box).¹⁸

Even without the hardships of war, there were many reasons why these people might welcome an opportunity to leave. Most of them were little better than slaves; their rulers spent heavily and imposed severe taxes; while Catholic and Protestant religions were recognized there was no real freedom of worship. (Subjects were required to practice the religion of their ruler. This required some flexibility of conscience — there was a period of 130 years when no two consecutive rulers of the Palatinate were of the same religion.) Finally, incredible tales are told of the severity of the winter of 1708 and this may have been the last straw for many a German who was at the same time being beguiled by a milk-and-honey campaign designed to attract colonists to the British colonies.

England was not prepared for the result of this promotional effort. In 1709 large numbers of Germans, with a few Swiss, made the four-to-six weeks trip down the Rhine to Holland. Joined by a few Dutch, about 13,500 of them crossed from Rotterdam to England. About 3,500, mostly Catholics who would not change their religion as required for citizenship, were returned to Germany. In England temporary camps were built and arrangements made to feed the newcomers, but conditions were such that the immigrants had almost as many hardships as they had left behind. The reactions of the English people were like those which we, in our times, have seen toward large groups of refugees: at first, sympathy and interest (perhaps amusement) in their “foreign” customs; then resentment at the cost of maintaining so many foreigners “when our own poor need help.”

The London Board of Trade decided that some of these immigrants should be sent to the Province of New York to produce tar and pitch from the pines there. This must have seemed a masterful solution to two problems at once: what to do with the Germans and how to reduce Britain’s dependence on Scandinavia for naval stores — a naval power like Britain felt insecure in having to depend on others for the tar and pitch required for its fleet.

Only about one-fourth of the immigrants reached America. It is estimated that 1,000 died in camp in England, 3,498 were settled in Ireland, and many were scattered throughout England.¹⁹ About 650 were sent to North Carolina and in April, 1710, 2,814 sailed in ten ships for New York. Before reaching America two to four months later, 446 had died at sea. There were 30 births during the voyage. Death had made orphans of 74 children who were at once “bound out” to New York

families.

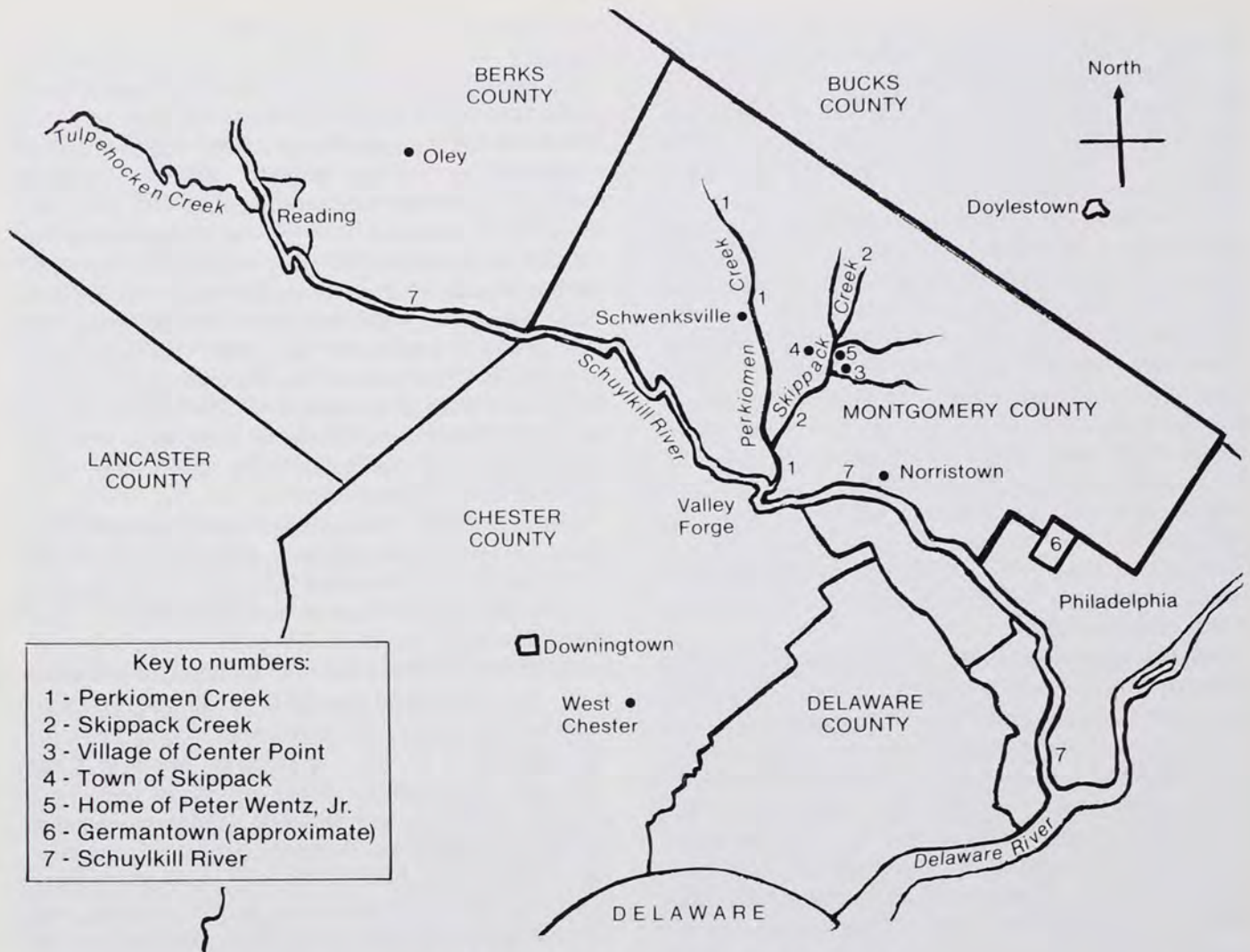
The immigrants were landed on Nutter Island, later called Governor’s Island, in New York Bay. In 1710, New York had a population of 6,000;²⁰ the immigrants represented an increase of about 40% in the city’s population and they were taken care of with great difficulty. It is estimated that 250 more died during the summer. In October, 1710, they began to be moved to camps along the Hudson River, leaving behind widows, single women, and children “unfit for the great and good design of making tar and pitch.” Unfortunately, no tests had been made on the white pine of the Province of New York and it turned out that this species did not yield enough naval stores to make their recovery worth while. It is said that only 200 barrels of tar were extracted from 100,000 trees.²¹

Things now went from bad to worse for the colonists. Instead of the 40 acres promised, they were given lots 40 by 50 feet for log cabins and gardening — too small to grow enough food for their own requirements. The food supplied to them was poor; Governor Hunter had trouble obtaining reimbursement for his expenses in feeding them. They also found that the Covenant they had signed in London made them indentured to the Crown for life. Indentured or not, the colonists began to make their own arrangements. Many settled in New York along the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys on land they obtained from Indians. When the Schoharie settlement had trouble about titles to the land there, some came down the Susquehanna River to the Swatara and Tulpehocken creeks and settled there, not far from the present Reading, Pa. Jost Hite followed a different route.

JUST HITE IN PENNSYLVANIA

Almost all of the references here cited which discuss the life of Jost Hite say that he came to Germantown, Pennsylvania about 1716 or 1717. For example, Pennypacker says that “Heijt” was living in Germantown in 1716;²² and Smyth quotes Pennypacker as reporting “Heydt’s” name on a list of Pastorius’ Germantown settlers in 1716.²³ Accordingly, when I began to seek records of Hite in Pennsylvania, I started with the records of Germantown. I did not find the list mentioned by Smyth and I found *no* reference in those records to Jost Hite. But when I began to search elsewhere I found that on May 9, 1714, “Yeost Hyde” purchased 150 acres of land along the Skippack Creek (in present day Montgomery County) from Johannes Kolb; and that, on May 16, 1716, he added to that land four-and-one-half acres purchased from Peter Wentz.²⁴

Since the above-cited church records clearly show the Hite family still in Kingston, New York in September, 1713, and the Pennsylvania deed records just as clearly document the Skippack land purchase just ten months



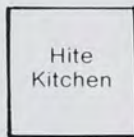
HITE COUNTRY IN PENNSYLVANIA

Scale: 1" = 9 mi. approx.

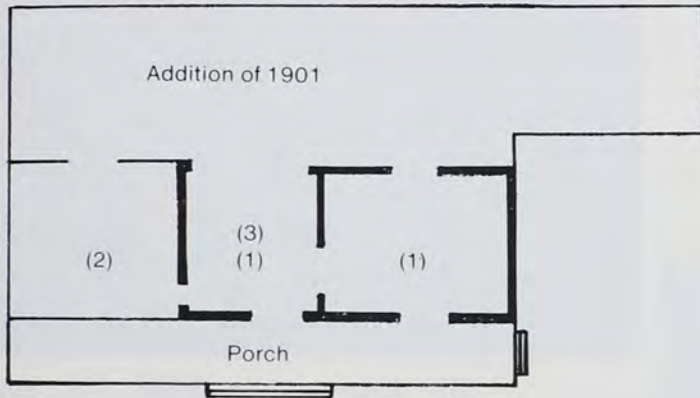
later, it seems unlikely that Hite actually resided in Germantown. How then to account for the statements of Pennypacker and Smyth — both careful investigators — that he did? The best explanation would seem to be that they considered Germantown to be the center of the Germans of the Philadelphia area, but that the German residents along the Skippack were also considered a part of Pastorius' colony. Germantown was certainly the commercial and cultural center for Pennsylvania's Germans, and Pennypacker (and others) appear to have regarded the settlements along the Skippack and Perkiomen creeks as extensions of Germantown. In short, I suspect that "Germantown" referred to the area populated by Germans as well as to the specific town as we know it. Germantown, also referred to as "German Township," is now, of course, part of the City of Philadelphia; in 1683 it was eleven square miles in area.²⁵ It is nineteen or twenty miles from the Skippack, and four or five miles farther from the Perkiomen.

The first outgrowth of the original Germantown was the settlement on the Skippack which began in 1702. This area was known for fifty years or so as Van Bebber's Township or Bebber's Township. It was about 6,000 acres along the Skippack Creek near what is now the village of Evansburg, Pa., which was colonized by Matthias Van Bebber. Among the early settlers were Hendrick Pannebecker in 1702; Jacob, Johannes and Martin Kolb, weavers from Wolfsheim in the Palatinate, in 1709; and Solomon DuBois, son of Louis DuBois, from Ulster County in New York, in 1716. It is surprising to note the high proportion of the early deeds in this area are to residents of Ulster County, N.Y., including many Pawlings and DuBois'.²⁶ Jost Hite, however, is not listed in Van Bebber's Township.

From the deed describing Hite's land along the Skippack it is not possible to locate it precisely — referring as it does to "corner posts" that no longer exist. However, one can obtain a fair idea of its location because part of it was purchased from Peter Wentz. One



THE PENNYPACKER MANSION
(Schematic)
Not to scale



- (1) - Area enclosed by stone walls at least 2 ft. thick. Certainly built by Jost Hite. Hite built first and second floors.
- (2) - Date of this area not definite. Believed built when acquired by Peter Pennypacker. Possibly built by Hite.
- (3) - Large hall with stairway.

of the corner posts mentioned in the deed is "in the line of Peter Wentz land." The Peter Wentz farmstead on Route 73 at Schultz Road, Worcester Township, Montgomery County, Pa., built in 1758, has been recently restored. Its site was part of 956 acres purchased in 1743 by Peter Wentz, Sr., and added to the 650 acres of his existing farm located on what is now Fisher Road, north of Route 363.²⁷ It is this 650 acres which probably adjoined Hite's land. A branch of the Skippack is just west of this area. A likely location for Jost Hite's land is about a mile northeast of the present village of Center Point, Pa. This would probably not have been in Van Bebber's Township.

* * * * *

On December 17, 1718, Hans Jost Heijt purchased six hundred acres on the Perkiomen Creek from Joseph Kirkbride, his wife Mary, and Thomas P. Stevenson and his wife Sarah.²⁸ On May 20, 1719, Hans Yeost Hyde (also spelled Hide in the deed), yeoman, and his wife, Anna Maria, sold 141½ acres on the Skippack to Peter Tyson;²⁹ the remaining 13½ acres of Hite's holdings on the Skippack have not been traced.

One can only speculate as to why Hite left the Skippack location. A good possibility is that he wanted more land; at least he purchased a much larger tract. Then too, he may have already been planning the grist mill he would subsequently build (sometime between 1720 and 1730, the exact date is not known) on his new property, and wanted the better water flow he would have on the larger Perkiomen Creek. Jost Hite did not build his mill at the mouth of the Perkiomen as is sometimes

reported;³⁰ it was several miles above the mouth of that stream, just outside of what is now Schwenksville, Pa.

The site that Hite selected for his home was on an elevation which now has a view across a rolling meadow toward the stream and village below. In the interior of the present day mansion the structure built by Hite can be identified by its unusually thick stone walls. Hite family tradition³¹ says the house was built in 1720, and Pennypacker also suggests that date, noting that a stone in the east wall (long covered by plaster) is said to show the date of construction.³² The Hites built the kitchen as a separate structure, and it has been altered little, if at all, since colonial times. But in 1901 the house was enlarged and renovated, "preserving its walls two feet thick, low ceilings, rounded windows, its great flat stone steps, its separate stone kitchen with oven fireplace and oak beams, its oven, well and oaken bucket, and all of its attractive features."³³ During the period September 26-October 8, 1777, before and after the Battle of Germantown, the house was used as Washington's headquarters and the mill was used as a barracks for troops.³⁴ At that time the major additions to the house had not been made, and it was probably much as Hite had left it. Several years ago the house was acquired by Montgomery County and today is open for viewing by the public.

The mill built by Hite has not fared as well. Although the Bonfeld church records identify Hite as a "linenweaver" and the deed, when he sold his land to John Pawling read "Hans Yost Height, Weaver," the mill on the Perkiomen is described as a *grist* mill. Some of the histories cited earlier which deal with Hite say that he operated a textile mill, but I have found no evidence of this except these references to him as a



Photograph of the Pennypacker home taken June 17, 1899 by W. H. Horner at a Field Day Excursion of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the Revolution.



The Pennypacker mansion, 1976; looking at the part built by Jost Hite.



The rebuilt Hite mill had been converted into an inn before it was destroyed by fire in January, 1980; it has not been reconstructed.

weaver. His mill certainly was a grist mill; not only does the 1730 deed so specify, but the Pennypackers operated it as a grist mill for decades.³⁵ (The 1730 deed is the earliest reference to the mill; probably it had been built a few years earlier.) In 1898 the mill burned, and a newspaper account of the fire says that “a grist mill has been on the site since 1730.”³⁶ The fire did considerable damage but the mill was rebuilt at once with a similar wooden construction and a photograph (in the Library of the Montgomery County Historical Society) taken before the fire shows that in external appearance it was much like the reconstructed building. This rebuilt mill was destroyed by fire on January 18, 1980; it was not replaced.

Summaries of the various deeds referred to in this report are appended; the fact that Johannes Kolb, of whom Jost Hite bought his first land, was a fellow weaver might be of significance. More interesting, however, is the conveyance of one hundred acres by Jost and Anna Maria Hite to Jacob Merckle for the token price of five shillings.³⁷ Merckle (1701-84) was Anna Marie’s brother. He was born in Wimpfen, the Hessian enclave near Bonfeld. Henry Z Jones has noted that

relatives and friends tended to move together and to maintain their close relationships.³⁸ Among the sailing lists of 1709 and the subsistence lists of 1710-12 we find the names Kolb, Wentz, Stephen, Merckel, and DuBois. Many of these names will be noted elsewhere in this report. There were also the names of Baumann, Fuhrman, and Christman; one must wonder if these families were related to the Bowman, Froman, and Christman who married Hite’s daughters.

In 1716, a couple of years after Hite purchased the land on the Skippack, Solomon DuBois came from Ulster County, N.Y., to Van Bebber’s Township.³⁹ Solomon was the son of Louis DuBois who had come to America in 1661, living for a time in New Paltz and later in Kingston, N.Y., where Elizabeth and Magdalena Hite were later christened. John Pawling, to whom Hite sold his Perkiomen property in 1730, also came from Ulster County. Pawling had planned that, when he purchased the mill and land, two tracts — one of 54½ acres and one of 3¾ acres — would be separated from the “plantation” and attached to the mill. A half interest in these tracts was sold to Isaac DuBois for 125 pounds. Isaac DuBois, also from Ulster County, N.Y., was the son of



Two views of the Hite kitchen. The kitchen was built as a separate structure and has been little altered since colonial times.

In 1901 the Pennypackers had the original Hite house enlarged and renovated, but preserved "its separate stone kitchen with oven fireplace and oak beams, its oven, well and oaken bucket, and all of its attractive features."



Solomon and the grandson of Louis DuBois; he was to have been the miller. Unfortunately, Isaac died before the mill had passed from Hite to Pawling, leaving five daughters to whom Pawling conveyed (deed unrecorded) a half interest in the two tracts just three days after his purchase.⁴⁰ Two of Isaac's daughters, after marriage, went to the Shenandoah Valley. Pawling died in 1733; it was from his heirs and those of Isaac DuBois that Peter Pennypacker purchased the Perkiomen property. When Hite went to Virginia, the first land he obtained was from John and Isaac Van Meter; John Van Meter was the son-in-law of Louis DuBois.

* * * * *

There are two documents in the Pennsylvania Archives referring to Jost Hite. In Minute Book I, 1725: "Hans Yost Hyde requests the grant of about 50 acres adjoining to his Plantation on the south East side."⁴¹ The disposition of this request, if any, is not known. The second reference is in a petition. In April 1728, an attack by eleven Indians on a nearby community was

repulsed by a group of German farmers. A petition, dated May 10, 1728, to Governor Gordon seeking protection from Indians was signed by a number of Germans, including Yost Hyte, Jacob Markley and Christian Neuswanger.⁴² Some have speculated that this incident led to Hite's decision to leave Pennsylvania, but this seems unlikely in view of his destination. A major consideration in making grants to Hite in Virginia was to obtain settlers to "protect the frontier" and Hite was well aware of this.⁴³

Jost Hite's move was likely prompted by the same reasons that his fellow settlers in the Shenandoah Valley were to state later in court: "And hearing by the hunters and traders, the common finders out of back lands, that the lands in the Colony of Virginia were rich and good, we were inclined to bear the burden of dangers and hardships in hopes to provide not only for ourselves but to prevent as much as in us lay, the slavery of our posterity." Among such traders and hunters known to Hite and other erstwhile residents of the colony of New York were John and Isaac Van Meter who, by 1729-30, were scouting in the back parts of Maryland and Virginia.



Ruins of Jost Hite's first home in Virginia; near John Hite's Springdale.



Jost Hite's second home in Virginia; built in 1760, it is directly across Route 11 from John Hite's Springdale. It is said to have been the residence of Jost and his second wife Maria.

THE HITES IN VIRGINIA

Some years after his move to the Shenandoah Valley, when he was involved in litigation over his Virginia land grants, Jost Hite gave a deposition which said that in 1731 he sold the "land on which he then lived . . . within fifteen miles of the City of Philadelphia" for 650 pounds.⁴⁴ However, in a document dated January 8, 1730, Hans Yost Height, Weaver, and Anna Maria, his wife, leased their property to John Pawling for one year for five shillings. On the next day, January 9, a deed was written conveying the property to Pawling for 540 pounds. Both documents refer to 500 acres, the grist mill and other buildings.

Although the deed to Pawling was drawn in January, 1730, Jost Hite did not acquire his Virginia lands until more than a year-and-a-half later. Why the Hites sold at that particular time, and their history from January 9, 1730 until they arrived in Virginia are unknown; I have seen no firm evidence of the location of the Hite family during that period nor of the exact date they made their trek — Hite family tradition gives 1732 as the date of the move to Virginia. Hite's deposition in the above mentioned litigation states that he was a resident of Pennsylvania in 1731, and that he sold his property there in that year (contrary to the date of the deed). One may speculate that Hite had an understanding of some kind with the Van Meters and expected to obtain grants in the Shenandoah Valley at an earlier date than actually came about.

It was June 17, 1730 when John and Isaac Van Meter, brothers, obtained their grant in the Shenandoah Valley.⁴⁵ John Van Meter was a fur trader who sometimes went on hunting expeditions; in this way he saw the Valley and became interested in its possibilities. The Van Meters held their grant for a little over a year

before selling it to Hite on August 5, 1731. On October 21, 1731, the Council of Virginia granted Hite and Robert McKay an additional 100,000 acres, contingent upon their securing one hundred settlers within two years. An additional forty settlers were required for the 40,000 acre grant obtained from the Van Meters.

When they set out for Virginia, Jost and Anna Maria Hite were accompanied by their children (including Mary Bowman, Elizabeth Froman and Magdalena Christman and their families) and by Robert McKay, Robert Green, William Duff, Peter Stephens, and others whose names I have not seen. There was said to be a total of sixteen families, and their route was supposedly from what is now York, Pennsylvania to a point two miles above the present Harper's Ferry where they crossed the Cohongeruton (Potomac) at Packhorse Ford (later Mecklinberg, now Sheperdstown, West Virginia). They then continued down the Shenandoah Valley.⁴⁶ For many years, until trails were made across the Blue Ridge to the East Coast, most settlers going to the Shenandoah Valley started from Pennsylvania taking this route or one near it.

When Hite's party reached the Shenandoah Valley they were, in Hite's own words, "put to such Hardships and Difficulties as are scarcely to be conceived being Obligated to Live in their Wagons till they Built some small Huts to shelter themselves from the Inclemency of the Weather and so far Distant from any settlement but especially from any such as could supply them any Provisions or Necessaries that they could scarce procure any one thing nearer than Pennsylvania or Fredericksburg which were near two hundred miles Distant and to which for the greatest and most Difficult Parts of the way they were Obligated to make roads."⁴⁷ Hite settled on

the Opequon Creek, about five miles south of the present Winchester; the rest of the party settled nearby. Hite seems to have moved a few times in Virginia; his original location, now known as "Springdale," will be mentioned later.

* * * * *

Jost Hite's haste in getting to Virginia to secure his grants "was fully justified. The authorities in Williamsburg had only a vague, if any, concept of the vast territory beyond the Blue Ridge, and they were apt to issue additional grants to other applicants."⁴⁸ Hite had legal problems with his grants soon after his arrival in the Shenandoah,⁴⁹ and they were but a foreshadowing of the problems he was to experience; problems which resulted in the well known Hite vs. Fairfax litigation: the so-called Fairfax Controversy.

Hite's legal problems with Lord Fairfax came about as the result of land grants made by Charles II. That monarch had presented to Lord Colepepper a tract of land, including the area between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers, from the ocean westward to a line connecting the headwaters of these two streams. Little was known of this area; it is doubtful if the king knew how much he was granting or that Colepepper knew what he was receiving. Lord Colepepper's last remaining heir, Lord Thomas Colepepper, willed this grant to his daughter, Lady Catherine (wife of Baron Cameron) who gave it to her son, Thomas, Lord Fairfax.⁵⁰

About 1736 Lord Fairfax, deciding to find out what he owned, came to Virginia and appointed a commission to review the boundaries of his property. He decided that the headwaters of the Potomac were west of the Blue Ridge and that the settlers in the Shenandoah Valley were within his grant. He asked them to pay quitrent; some acceded but Jost Hite instead brought suit against Fairfax. In 1748 Fairfax had his grant surveyed, employing as one of the surveyors a lad named George Washington. This survey showed the Fairfax grant to amount to about five million acres, including both the 40,000 acres obtained by Hite from the Van Meters, and the 100,000 acres granted him by the Council of Virginia. In 1786, long after the death of both litigants, the suit was settled in favor of Jost Hite. John Marshall, later Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was the lawyer for Fairfax; George Washington was among those who contributed to Marshall's fee.⁵¹

* * * * *

Anna Maria Hite died in Virginia in 1739⁵² and two years later Jost married Maria Magdalena Neuschwanger, the widow of Christain Neuschwanger, his friend and neighbor in both Pennsylvania and Virginia. Their marriage contract, dated November 10, 1741, lists the property she brought to the marriage and

provides that, after her death, half shall be returned to her heirs.⁵³ (There are no known issue of this marriage.) Hite's will was signed April 25, 1758; it names his sons and the children of Joseph, who had died earlier.⁵⁴ Jost died in early 1761; the will was probated May 7, 1761. The site of his burial is unknown. Detailed accounts of the history of the Hite family in Virginia have already been given,⁵⁵ and I shall not here attempt to review this period in Jost Hite's life. I shall simply mention some of the remaining evidences of Hite's early presence in the Valley, and the accomplishments of some of his posterity.

As already noted, Hite's descendants left many structures which still stand in the Shenandoah Valley, and perhaps the most famous is Belle Grove, Middletown, Virginia, which is administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It was built by Major Isaac Hite, Jr., the son of Isaac and the grandson of Jost Hite. Isaac, Jr. studied at William and Mary where, in 1777, he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa; the first man

APPRAISAL OF JOST HITE'S PERSONAL PROPERTY, 1761

(Frederick County Will Book, III, p. 75.
Appraised 26 June 1761).

1 Linen sheet Containing 1 yrd and ¼ at 3 p ^t yard	£ 0.12.9
3 Handkerchiefs @ 2 p ^t peece	0. 6.0
2 Old shirts @ 2 p ^t peece	0. 4.0
3 Good shirts @ 6/p ^t peece	0.18.0
3 Caps	0. 2.6
1 Cravatt	0. 0.9
4 Pillow Cases @ 1/6 p peece	0. 6.0
2 pair of Trowsers @ 2/6 p peece	0. 5.0
3 Sheets @ 6/ Each	0.18.0
Stockings	0. 5.0
Old trousers and Jackets	0. 2.6
2 linen Jackets @ 5/p ^t Each	0.10.0
Old Coat and Jacket	0. 6.0
a pare of Leather Breeches	0. 8.0
old box scales and steel etc	0. 0.6
Eleven Dutch books	1. 9.0
D ^o . a large Bible	1.10.0
cash 5 pistreens	0. 6.3
Rasor, Stone, Combs Spectacle & sundries in till of chest	0. 7.0
a bottle and glass	0. 2.0
a trunk 3/ chest with dutch lock	0. 3.0
2 old Rugs @ 3/p ^t peece	0. 6.0
a Green Rug	1. 0.0
a Blankett	0. 8.0
a Tobacco box	0. 1.6
a Featherbed, Bolster and pillows underbed Bedsted cord & Vallins	4. 5.0
a old pewter pint pot with cover on	0. 1.6

elected by the charter members. Later, he served on the staff of General Muhlenberg. He married Nelly Conway Madison, a sister of James Madison (there was another Hite family connection to the Madison family as well: the second wife of Jost's son Jacob, Mrs. Francis Madison Beale, was James's aunt). Belle Grove, about fifteen miles southwest of Winchester, is said to have been built from plans drawn by Thomas Jefferson, and to have been visited by James and Dolley Madison on their honeymoon.⁵⁶

Also still standing is Springdale, built in 1753 by Jost's eldest son, Colonel John Hite, on the site where his father first settled. On this site remnants of structures built by Jost can still be seen. Also along the Valley Road (U.S. 11) south of Winchester are the Bowman House, the Froman House, and Chrisman's Spring — the homes of the three daughters of Jost and Anna Maria Hite. In the same general area are the Hite Mill and Long Meadows. Long Meadows was the home of Isaac Hite, Sr.; nearby is the Hite graveyard where Anna Maria is believed to be buried.⁵⁷ One Hite grandson has already been mentioned; of the sons of George and Mary Bowman, one was a colonel in the Revolution, one was an officer in the Kentucky militia, and two were members of the George Rogers Clark expedition. And at least one of his Chrisman grandchildren served with Clark as well: Henry, believed killed on the Illinois expedition. A great-grandson, Joseph Chrisman, also served with Clark on a punitive expedition against the Shawnees in 1782.⁵⁸

CONCERNING THE FAMILY TRADITIONS

The above discussion of the Hite children and grandchildren brings to mind one of the most widespread family misconceptions — that Anna Maria Hite was a DuBois. (As has already been noted, prior to Jones's discoveries *all* published reports claimed she was a member of that noble French Huguenot family.) Although we now know this was not the case, there is indeed a connection between the Hite and DuBois families: 1) Louis DuBois had a daughter, Sarah, who married Joost Jansen Van Meteren. Among their children were Rebecca and Isaac; 2) Rebecca Van Meteren married Cornelius Elting. Among their children were Sara and Alida (Eleanor). Sara Elting married John Hite, Jost's oldest son. Eleanor Elting married Isaac Hite, third son of Jost and Anna Maria; 3) Isaac Van Meteren married Catalina Hendrikes. Their daughter, Rebecca Van Meter, married Abraham, the fourth Hite son. In summary, three of Jost Hite's five sons married great-grand-daughters of Louis DuBois.⁵⁹

It is my experience that, except for genealogists, few know their ancestors beyond their grandparents; but

they are likely to know the name, if not the relationship, of someone famous. I can imagine some of Hite's grandchildren meeting and finding that each had been told they were descended from a nobleman, Louis DuBois. Who would guess that the descent was from three of his great-granddaughters, when Anna Maria seemed so much more logical. By this time, of course, they were long separated from the Merckles of Pennsylvania, who might have known Anna Maria's real parentage.

In the same way there may be an element of truth, a reason, for the other legends surrounding Jost Hite. The story of his having brought with him huge sacks of gold may be rationalized by assuming that he brought a little gold which has been inflated by time. There was a possible source for a small amount of gold, for Bonfeld assessment records⁶⁰ show that Johannes Heyd, Jost's father, owned a house and some land. Father and son emigrated at the same time, and presumably Johannes sold his property before leaving, and took with him those receipts and such other money as he had saved. Johannes's widow is on the subsistence list for 1710 but apparently did not live much longer. Jost, then, may have had his father's savings; if he did, it is easier to see how he was able to buy land in Pennsylvania at such an early date.

Of his arrival on these shores in his own ships — the "Swift" and the "Friendship" — one can only say that it is not the mode of travel to be expected of a linenweaver from Bonfeld or of a family on the New York subsistence list. Yet a story so specific deserves some attention, and its origins may be found in the will of Jacob Hite, second son of Jost and Anna Maria. A codicil, dated December 22, 1771, to his will signed March 7, 1770, reads: ". . . I the subscriber have given my son John Hite in the Will above mentioned one sixth part of the Brigantine Swift and her Cargo [and] one eighth part of the Schooner Friendship without any part of her Cargo . . ."⁶¹ Perhaps as word of these ships was passed along, there developed a misunderstanding of their original owner, making them the property of Jost rather than Jacob. (I have found other cases of generation mistakes in family stories.) The fact that the ships were only partly owned, or that shares were bought in a voyage, could also have been misunderstood in time.

One more story concerning these vessels must be dealt with. It concerns the sixteen families who supposedly accompanied Hite on the voyage. Again, such a specific number arouses curiosity; it seems likely that this number was correct for something and found its way into the "two ship" fable by misunderstanding. Since sixteen families were also said to be in the party that Hite led from Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley, its origins may well lie there. There is also a possibility that sixteen does not relate to the trek to the Shenandoah, but to something not yet found. Some of the names of

those in the party have been given, but I have not seen sixteen.

And one final story concerning Jost Hite may also be connected with the move to the Shenandoah; the story of his having been a fur trader. Considering the chronology of his life as we now know it, Hite certainly could not have spent much time engaged in that activity, but he may have done so in a limited way. It does not seem in keeping with Hite's character to suppose that he would move to Virginia and accept the responsibility of finding 140 settlers for 140,000 acres of land that he had not seen. I have seen no record of a visit by him to the Valley before 1732, but it is hard to believe that he did not make one. If so, it would be logical for him to accompany his friend, John Van Meter, the fur trader. And Hite was an enterprising kind of man who would pay for his trip by taking along some trade goods and buying a few furs on his own. The telling and retelling of his experiences in trading furs could, in later generations, have made him a fur trader, even if he did it only once.

CONCLUSION

T. K. Cartmell, who was himself a descendant of Jost Hite,⁶² devotes much space to the support of his positive statement that Hite was the first white man to settle in the Shenandoah Valley on the north and west side of the Shenandoah River.⁶³ Whether or not this is correct, Hite was certainly among the first in this area. He was an important factor in the development of the Shenandoah, and "his name has never vanished from the Valley he helped to people." His service in directing and accelerating the settling of a vast area is an undisputed achievement.⁶⁴ The enterprise and foresight he demonstrated throughout his life was perhaps best summed up by George Washington when he wrote: ". . . only look to Frederick, and see what Fortunes were made by the Hite's and first takers up of those lands. Nay how the greatest Estates we have in this colony were made, was it not taking up and purchasing at very low rates the rich back lands which were thought nothing in those days, but are now the most valuable land we possess."⁶⁵

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was Miss June B. Barekman of Chicago, Ill., who gave me the first lead that let me trace the ancestry of Harriett Chrisman Ross, my great-grandmother, to Jost Hite and it was Harry E. Chrisman of Denver, Colorado, who stimulated my interest in searching the records in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, where I then resided. Both gave me continued help and, more important, their friendship; I am grateful for both.

The generosity of the late Mrs. Margaret H. Pennypacker of Schwenksville, Pa., with the records of the Pennypacker family con-

tributed greatly to my research, as will be evident from the text. The list of references will attest to the excellent help given by Mrs. Florence R.J. Young of the Library of the Historical Society of Montgomery County, Norristown, Pa., and Miss Clare Conway of the Schwefelder Library, Pennsburg, Pa. Mrs. Lydia Taxis of Norristown, Pa., gave me important information and John F. Cooper of Arlington, Va., sent data that saved me much time and effort. I am glad to have this opportunity to thank them for their friendly assistance.

Ralph Connor

APPENDIX

SUMMARIES OF DEEDS

1. Hans Yeost Hide and his wife, Anna Maria, to Peter Tyson dated May 20, 1719 - for 141½ acres of land on the Skippack - for 90 pounds. Witnessed by John Pawling and Benjamin Faig. Phila. Deed Book F, Vol. 2, pp. 48-51.

Of the land Hite deeded to Tyson, 137 acres was from a purchase of 150 acres he had made from Johannes Kolb on May 19, 1714 and the remaining 4½ acres from Peter Wentz on May 16, 1716. The deed recites the previous ownership of the land. Kolb had obtained his land from two different sources and the two plots had different histories. I shall refer to Hite's land as Lots I and II obtained from Kolb and Lot III from Wentz.

Lot I - Hite deeds to Tyson 87 of the 100 acres he had obtained in Lot I from Kolb. (I have found no record of what happened to the other 13 acres.) Kolb had obtained this 100 acres as a part of 200 acres purchased from Peter Bellar and his wife, Alice, on November 5, 1712. Bellar had purchased the land from James Shattick on September 13, 1711. James Shattick and Edward Lance had obtained 1000 acres from Thomas Pearce on August 23 & 24, 1704; Shattick was the survivor. Thomas Pearce was the "second Heir" of Richard Pearce of Limerick, Ireland, who had been granted the 1000 acres by William Penn on May 3 & 4, 1682.

This deed was written by Francis Daniel Pastorius as appears not only from the handwriting but from an entry in his occasional book where under date of Nov. 1718 he charged Height with the cost of it. The tract was on the Perkiomen opposite where Schwenksville now stands and on it Height built a mill which was long known during the colonial and revolutionary era as Pennypacker's Mill. Washington encamped there for about two weeks in September 1777 and from it marched to make the attack on Germantown. Height sold his interest in January 1730, removed to the Shenandoah Valley, and is famous in Virginia history as the first settler in that state west of the mountains and the founder of an influential family.

On the back of the original deed is the following, believed to be in the handwriting of Governor Pennypacker:

"This deed was written by Francis Daniel Pastorius as appears not only from the hand writing but from an entry in his occasional book where under date of Nov. 1718 he charged Height with the cost of it. The tract was on the Perkiomen opposite where Schwenksville now stands and on it Height built a mill which was long known during the colonial and revolutionary era as Pennypacker's Mill. Washington encamped there for about two weeks in September 1777 and from it marched to make the attack on Germantown. Height sold his interest in January 1730, removed to the Shenandoah Valley, and is famous in Virginia history as the first settler in that state west of the mountains and the founder of an influential family."

This Indenture made the sixteenth day of July, In the year of our Lord one thousand Seven hundred & twenty eight *Between* Hans Joest Heyt of the County of Philadelphia & Province of Pennsylvania Yeoman & Anna Maria his wife of the one part *AND* Jacob Merckly of the said County & province Husbandman of the other part *Witnesseth* that they the sd Hans Joest Heyt & Anna Maria his wife for & in consideration of the sum of five shillings to them in hand paid by the sd Jacob Merckly the receipt whereof they do hereby acknowledge *Have* bargained & sold & by these presents *do* bargain & sell unto the sd Jacob Merckly *A Certain* tract or parcel of land Situate Lying & being in the sd County of Philadelphia Beginning at a post in a line of John Paulins land running by the same North East one hundred perches to another Post thence South East by a line of Markt trees one hundred and sixty perches to a third post thence South West by a line of trees one hundred perches to a white oak thence by a line of trees North West one hundred & sixty perches to the place of beginning Containing one hundred acres of land *together* with all & singular the Buildings ways wotts waters water Courses Swamps Meadows Cripples woods underwoods timber and trees Commodities privileges Improvements hereditaments & appurtenances whatsoever thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining & the Reversions & Remainders - Rents Issues & profits thereof *To Have* & *to Hold* the sd one hundred acres of land & premises hereby bargained & sold or mentioned so to be with their appurtenances unto the sd Jacob Merckly his heirs Executors admirs & assigns from the day of the date hereof for & during unto the full End & term of one year from thence next Ensuing & fully to be Compleat & Ended *To the Intent* & purpose that by vertue hereof & of the statute made for transferring uses into possession the sd Jacob Merckly may be in actual possession of the sd tract or parcel of land hereditaments & premises hereby bargained & sold & be Enabled to take & accept of a Release & Confirmation of the same to him his heirs & assigns forever *In* *Witness* whereof the sd parties to these presents have Interchangeably set their hands & seals hereunto Dated the day & year first above written *in* *and* *Delivered* in the presence of us
Joh Pawling
Isaac DuBois
Jost Heydt
the
comptrolers high
marshal

3. Hans Joest Heyt and Anna Maria, his wife, to Jacob Merckly dated July 16, 1728 - for five shillings. Witnessed by John Pawling and Isaac DuBois. Signed by Jost Heydt (or Height). Anna Maria made her mark.

"To have & to hold the sd one hundred acres of land & premises hereby bargained & sold or mentioned so to be with their appurtenances unto the sd Jacob Merckly his heirs Executors admirs & assigns from the day of the date hereof for & during unto the full term of one year from thence next Ensuing & fully to be Compleat & Ended To the Intent & purpose that by vertue hereof & of the statute made for transferring uses into possession the sd Jacob Merckly may be in actual possession of the sd tract or parcel of land hereditaments & premises hereby bargained & sold & be Enabled to take & accept of a Release & Confirmation of the same to him his heirs & assigns forever"

The above document was not recorded. It is held by the Schwenkfelder Library, Pennsburg, Pa.

This Indenture made this Eighth Day of January In the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty Between Hans Yost Height of Perkeoming in the County of Philadelphia Weaver and Anna Maria his Wife of the one part And John Pawling of the same place Yeoman of the other Part WITNESSETH that the sd Hans Yost Height and Anna Maria his Wife for the Consideration of five Shillings Lawful Money to them in Hand paid by the said John Pawling the Receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged HAVE bargained & sold & by these presents DO bargain & sell unto the said John Pawling A CERTAIN Messuage Grist Mill Plantation or Tract of Land thereunto belonging situate at or near Perkeoming aforesd Beginning at a white oak in a Line of a Tract of Land reputed the Society's Land at a Corner of the Land late of Nathaniel Puckle Thence by sd Society's Land North East two hundred twenty nine perches Thence South West three hundred and sixty perches Thence North West two hundred twenty nine perches Thence by sd Puckle's Land North East three hundred and sixty perches to the place of Beginning Containing Five hundred Acres besides the usual Allowance for Roads And all the Geers Impliments Utensils & Things belonging unto or in the Use or Service of the sd Mill together also with all & singular the Buildings Improvements Ways Woods Waters Water Courses Dams Banks Mounds Millraces Freeboards Easements Emoluments Rights Liberties Priviledges Hereditaments & Appurtenances whatsoever unto the sd Messuage Mill and Plantation of Land aforesd respectively belonging And the Reversions & Remainders thereof And all the Rents Issues Muletures Toll & profit thereof TO HAVE & TO HOLD the said Messuage Gristmill Plantation of Land unto the said John Pawling his Exrs Admrs & Assigns For & during & unto the full End & Form of one whole Year next ensuing the Date hereof IN WITNESS whereof the said Parties to these presents have interchangeably set their Hands and Seals hereunto DATED the Day & Year first above written

Witnessed by the presence of
by Hans Yost Height Brockden
William Parsons

Witnessed by
Anna Maria at this
place of

Thomas Hake
Paul Fromen

Annamari Height
her mark

4. The complete text of the lease to Pawling dated January 8, 1730 follows:

THIS INDENTURE made the Eighth Day of January In the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty BETWEEN Hans Yost Height of Perkeoming in the County of Philadelphia Weaver and Anna Maria his Wife of the one part And John Pawling of the same place Yeoman of the other Part WITNESSETH that the sd Hans Yost Height and Anna Maria his Wife for the Consideration of five Shillings Lawful Money to them in Hand paid by the said John Pawling the Receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged HAVE bargained & sold & by these presents DO bargain & sell unto the said John Pawling A CERTAIN Messuage Grist Mill Plantation or Tract of Land thereunto belonging situate at or near Perkeoming aforesd. Beginning at a white oak in a Line of a Tract of Land reputed the Society's Land at a Corner of the Land late of Nathaniel Puckle Thence by the sd Society's Land North East two hundred twenty nine perches Thence South West three hundred and sixty perches Thence North West two hundred twenty nine perches Thence by sd Puckle's Land North East three hundred and sixty perches to the place of Beginning Containing Five hundred Acres besides the usual Allowance for Roads And all the Geers Impliments Utensils & Things belonging unto or in the Use or Service of the sd Mill together also with all & singular the Buildings Improvements Ways Woods Waters Water Courses Dams Banks Mounds Millraces Freeboards Easements Emoluments Rights Liberties Priviledges Hereditaments & Appurtenances whatsoever unto the sd Messuage Mill and Plantation of Land aforesd respectively belonging And the Reversions & Remainders thereof And all the Rents Issues Muletures Toll & profit thereof TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said Messuage Gristmill Plantation of Land here (?) & all & singular other the premises hereby bargained & sold or mentioned so to be with the Appurtenances unto the sd John Pawling His Extrs Admrs & Assigns For & during & unto the full End & Form of one whole Year next ensuing the Sale hereof IN WITNESS whereof the said Parties to these Presents have interchangeably set their Hands and Seals hereunto DATED the Day and Year first above written.

Sealed & delivered
by Hans Yost Height

In the presence of
Ch. Brockden
William Parsons

Sealed & Delivered
by Anna Maria in
the Psence (?) of

Thomas Hake
Paul Fromen

Signed by Hans Yost Height
Annamari Height [her mark]

The above document was not recorded. It was in the possession of the Pennypacker family until 1980, when it was received by the author.

This Indenture

Made the ninth day of January In the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty
 Between Hans Yost Height of Perkioming in the County of New Castle and Anna Maria his wife of the one part and John Pawling of the same place
 Witnesseth that the said Hans Yost Height and Anna Maria his wife for and in consideration of the sum of Five hundred and forty pounds
 lawful Money of Pennsylvania to them paid by the said John Pawling have granted bargained sold released and confirmed and by these presents do grant bargain sell
 release and confirm unto the said John Pawling in his actual heirs now being by virtue of a bargain and sale unto him thereof made for the term of
 one year by the said Hans Yost Height and Anna Maria his wife by Indenture bearing date the day next before the day of the date hereof made between
 the same parties as these presents) And to his heirs and assigns A CERTAIN Messuage Grist Mill and Plantation or Tract of Land thereto belonging situate
 at or near Perkioming aforesaid BEGINNING at a white Oak in a line of a tract reputed the beauty's Land at a corner of the Land late of Matthew Lucke
 Thence by the said South five South East two hundred twenty nine perches Thence South West three hundred and sixty perches Thence North West two hundred twenty nine
 perches Thence by the said Lucke's land North East three hundred and sixty perches to the place of beginning containing by computation five hundred Acres beside the
 usual allowance for Roads. It being the last described of two Tracts of Land which Joseph Kirkbride and Mary his wife Thomas Thomson and Joseph his
 wife by their Deed of the fifteenth day of November 1729 did give unto the said Hans Yost Height and Anna Maria his wife in fee
 The Deed on Record at Philadelphia Book F Vol 2 Page 44. And all the here Implements Utensils and Things belonging unto or in the Use or Service of
 the said Mill Together also with all and singular the Buildings Improvements Ways Ledges Waters Watercourses Lime Banks Mounds Race Traces boards
 Easements Emoluments Rights Liberties Privileges Perquisites and Appurtenances whatsoever unto the said Messuage Mill and Plantation of Land aforesaid
 respectively belonging and the Reversions and Remainders thereof And also the Sinks Spins Mutchers Toll and Profits thereof and of every part and parcel
 thereof **Do have and to hold** the said Messuage Grist Mill Plantation of Land Hereditaments and all and singular other the premises hereby granted
 or mentioned to be granted With the Appurtenances unto the said John Pawling his heirs and assigns To the Use and behoof of him the said John Pawling
 his heirs and assigns forever Under the yearly Quitrent hereafter accruing for the same to the Chief Lord of the Fee thereof **And** the said Hans Yost Height
 and his heirs the said Messuage Grist Mill Plantation of Land and all and singular other the premises hereby granted or mentioned to be granted with the Appurte-
 nances unto the said John Pawling his heirs and assigns Against him the said Hans Yost Height and his heirs and assigns and against the said Joseph Kirkbride
 and Thomas Thomson and their heirs and assigns respectively and against all other Person and Persons whatsoever shall and will Warrant and power defend by these
 presents **And** the said Hans Yost Height for himself his heirs Executors and Administrators doth Covenant Promise and Grant to and with the said John
 Pawling his heirs and assigns by these presents in manner following To say that he the said Hans Yost Height now at the time of the sealing & ratifying
 hereof is the true Sole and lawful Owner and Proprietor of the said Messuage Grist Mill Plantation of Land Hereditaments and premises hereby granted or
 mentioned to be granted with the Appurtenances and is lawfully rightfully and absolutely seized thereof and of every Part and parcel thereof as of a good
 indefeasible Estate of inheritance in Fee simple without Condition Limitation or other Contingency to alter or Defeat the same **and** that he the said Hans Yost
 Height now at the time of the sealing and Delivery hereof hath good right lawful and absolute power and authority in himself to grant release and con-
 firm from the same unto the said John Pawling his heirs and assigns in manner and form aforesaid **and** that free and clearly acquitted and discharged of and
 from all and all manner of former and other Burdens Debts Liens Incumbrances Powers Rents Charges Duties Taxes Arrears Debts Liens Charges
 of Rent Tithes Charges and Incumbrances whatsoever **and** that all person and Persons whatsoever having or lawfully claiming or that shall or may ever after
 have or claim any Estate Right Title or Interest in or to the premises or any Part or parcel thereof shall and will at any Time or Times upon the
 Request Cost and Charges in Law of the said John Pawling his heirs and assigns make account and acknowledge or come so to be all and every such person
 and other reasonable Act and Acts to do or to be done or to be done in Law whatsoever for the further and better Memory and confirmation of the said
 Messuage Grist Mill Plantation of Land Hereditaments and premises hereby granted or mentioned to be granted With the Appurtenances unto the said John
 Pawling his heirs and assigns as by him or them or by his or their Council learned in the Law shoud be reasonably devised advised or required **in**
Witness whereof the said Parties to these presents have interchangeably set their hands hereunto at the day and year first above written

Witnessed & Delivered
 in the presence of us
 the said Hans Yost Height
 his wife Anna Maria
 Hans Yost Height
 William Parsons

Witnessed & Delivered
 by Anna Maria
 her wife
 Thomas Hake
 Paul Fromen

Witnessed & Delivered
 by Hans Yost Height
 Anna Maria
 Hake

5. Hans Yost Height and Anna Maria, his wife, to John Pawling dated January 9, 1730 - 500 acres for 540 pounds. The signature of Hans Yost Height was witnessed by Ch. Brockden and William Parsons. The mark of Anna Maria was witnessed by Thomas Hake and Paul Fromen. Fromen was a son-in-law of the Hites.

"... a certain Messuage, Grist Mill, and Plantation or Tract of Land thereto belonging situate at, or near Perkioming . . . containing by computation Five hundred acres besides the usual allowance for Roads . . ." Deed states this is the land obtained from Kirkbride et al as shown in a deed recorded in Philadelphia Book F, Vol. 2, p. 4.

This deed was not recorded. It was owned by the Pennypacker family until 1980, when it was received by the author.

ENDNOTES

- ¹Henry Z Jones, Jr., Ralph Connor, and Klaus Wust, *German Origins of Jost Hite Virginia Pioneer 1685-1761* (Edinburg, Va., 1979), p. 26.
- ²See, for example, J. W. Wayland's *The Bowmans, a Pioneering Family* (1943; reprinted 1974); Virkus, *Compendium of American Genealogy*, Vol. 7, p. 858.
- ³D. V. Stephens, *Peter Stephens — and Some of His Descendants* (Fremont, Nebr, 1936); Julia Davis, "The Shenandoah" in *Rivers of America*, ed Hervey Allen (1945).
- ⁴T. K. Cartmell, *Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and Their Descend-*

- ants* (Reprinted by Virginia Book Co., 1963).
- ⁵Jones, Connor, Wust, p. 10. The recently published findings of Jones and his German collaborators (pp. 9-14, 35-36), is the first documentary evidence of the origin of Jost Hite. Earlier there had been a variety of undocumented reports of Hite's origins. He was said to have been from Strasburg, Germany; to have been of Dutch ancestry; to have been from Alsace. He was called "The Old German Baron" or "Baron Hite," and some of his descendants believed he was truly a nobleman. Wust (pp. 27-30) discusses futile attempts to confirm his nobility, and comments on some of the other myths about Hite.

⁶Ibid., pp. 10-12.

⁷Ibid., p. 12.

⁸Rev. Schumann, *Stammtafel der Familie Merckle (Mercklin)* (Bonfeld, 1886). Copy in the Library of the Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, Pa.

⁹Many examples could be given; see for instance, *West Virginia Historical Magazine*, III, pp. 51, 103; S. Gordon Smyth.

¹⁰Jones, Connor, Wust, p. 8.

¹¹Ibid., p. 12. The information about Mary's baptism is from Henry Z. Jones, Jr., *The Palatine Families of New York, 1710* (Universal City, Cal., 1985), Vol. II, p. 1178.

¹²R. E. Hoes, *Baptismal and Marriage Registers of the Old Dutch Church of Kingston, N.Y.* (1891), p. 96, No. 1992. She was sponsored by Corn. and Rebekka Elten.

¹³Ibid., p. 103, No. 2155. Her sponsors were Jacob and Magdalena Capoesyen.

¹⁴Knittle, *Early Eighteenth Century Palatine Emigrations* (1937; reprinted, Baltimore, 1965); MacWethy, *The Book of Names* (1933), p. 68; *Yesteryears*, Vol. 13, No. 52, p. 206.

¹⁵Knittle.

¹⁶There is one reference — p. 119 in S. Gordon Smyth's "Hans Joest Heydt, The Story of a Perkiomen Pioneer," *Historical Sketches, Historical Society of Montgomery County IV* (Norristown, Pa., 1910) — to a daughter named Susannah who married Abraham Weissman, but I have seen no verification of this. The dates of birth and the marriages of those generally listed as the children of Jost and Anna Maria Hite are: Mary (b. before 1709) m. George Bowman; Elizabeth (baptized 3/4/1711-) m. Paul Froman; Magdalena (baptized 9/6/1713, d. 1771) m. Jacob Chrisman; John (b. after 1713, d. 1792) m. Sara Elting 1737; Jacob (1719-1776) m. (1) Catherine O'Bannon, (2) Mrs. Francis Madison Beale; Isaac (5/12/1721-9/8/1795) m. Eleanor Elting 4/12/1745; Abraham (5/10/1729-1/17/1790) m. Rebecca Van Meter 12/3/1751; Joseph (1731-pre 1758) m. Elizabeth (McKay?). D. V. Stephens gives 1723 and 1729 as the dates of the births of Isaac and Joseph, respectively.

¹⁷*Yesteryears*, XII, No. 48, p. 165; J. J. Weber, *The Palatines of New York State* (1969-70).

¹⁸Ulrich Simmendinger, *True and Authentic Register of Persons Still Living, by God's Grace, who in the Year 1709, Under the Wonderful Providences of the Lord Journeyed from Germany to America or New World . . .* Reprinted 1977 by The Bookmark, P.O. Box 74, Knightstown, Ind. 46148.

¹⁹*Yesteryears*, XII, No. 48, p. 165.

²⁰*Proceedings of The Pennsylvania German Folklore Society*, Vol. 9, pp. 4, 5, 16.

²¹*Yesteryears*, p. 165; J. J. Weber.

²²Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker, *Pennypacker's Mills in Story and Song* (Phila., 1902). This was written by Judge (later Governor) Pennypacker whose ancestor acquired the property in 1747 and operated the mill that Hite built; the Pennypacker family occupied the Pennypacker mansion until the death of the Mrs. Margaret Pennypacker (widow of the Governor's grandson) several years ago. So far as is known, only three typed copies of this manuscript were made; Mrs. Margaret Pennypacker kindly let me examine a copy.

²³S. Gordon Smyth, p. 119.

²⁴Philadelphia County Deed Book F, Vol. II, p. 48. A 1718 journal kept in the Land Office of the Proprietaries of Pennsylvania records the following: "1 mo 15 1718 Hans Yost Hide recd. quitrent 100 ac 10 yrs. & 50 ac. 14 yrs. near Skippack in full 0 17 0 - 1 2 8." There is an identical entry for Peter Wentz. (This was probably March 15; March was the first month of the Julian calendar.) Smyth interpreted this as quitrent that was past due and as indicating that Hite was interested in this land as early as 1703-04. It seems more likely, considering what we now know of Hite's early life and in view of the "recd." above, that it was the payment of future quitrent, and that Hite was the recipient of the money.

²⁵E. W. Hocker, *Germantown: 1683-1933* (Published by the author, 1933).

²⁶*Van Bebber Township History-Skipack and Perkiomen -1682-1793*, in the Library of the Historical Society of Montgomery County, Norristown, Pa.

²⁷*Peter Wentz Homestead*, pamphlet available from Montgomery County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Court House, Norristown, Pa. 19404.

²⁸Philadelphia County Deed Book F, Vol. 2, p. 4. The original deed

was in the hands of the Pennypacker family until 1980, when the author received it. A note on the back of the original is reproduced with the deed in the appendix.

²⁹Philadelphia County Deed Book F, Vol. 2, p. 48.

³⁰T. K. Cartmell; Rev. J. J. Bowman, *The Bowman Family; Some Prominent Virginia Families*, p. 332. The location of Hite's mill is quite definite: Hite sold it to John Pawling who sold part of the "plantation" to Isaac DuBois. In 1747 the Pawling and DuBois heirs sold their holdings to Peter Pennypacker, the Governor's ancestor.

³¹Dr. John W. Wayland.

³²Samuel W. Pennypacker, *Pennypacker's Mills in Story and Song*.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Samuel W. Pennypacker, "Pennypacker's Mills," *Bulletin of Historical Society of Montgomery Co., Pa.*, Vol. VI, p. 53; "Montgomery County Mills," *Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society*, Vol. 39, p. 18.

³⁶Call Number C/5/8 p. 38 at the Library of the Historical Society of Montgomery County, Norristown, Pa. A newspaper clipping dated in pencil 12/21/1896; name of newspaper not given.

³⁷The lease from the Hites to Merckley was not recorded. The amount of five shillings in the lease to Merckley has no significance. It seems to have been the procedure in those days to write a lease for five shillings and the next day to write the release for the full amount of the sale. The Pawling documents are examples of this.

³⁸Jones, Connor, Wust, p. . .

³⁹*Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society*, Vol. IX, p. 193; *The Pennsylvania Magazine*, Vol. 4, p. 1.

⁴⁰S. W. Pennypacker, *Pennypacker's Mills in Story and Song*.

⁴¹*Pennsylvania Archives*, Series II, Vol. XIX, 730.

⁴²Ibid., Series I, Vol. I, 214.

⁴³Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division; Peter Force Collection, 8D. No. 45 (Hite, McKay vs. Fairfax).

⁴⁴Ibid. I now think that there may have been some confusion in the dates because of the fact that there was confusion in the calendars used. In 1730, for example, sometimes the Julian calendar was still used, sometimes they changed to the Gregorian. These documents were signed in January — which was the eleventh month in the Julian system, and the first month in the Gregorian. When Hite gave his deposition he may have been thinking of the then generally used Gregorian calendar; they may have used the Julian calendar when signing.

⁴⁵*West Virginia Historical Magazine*, Vol III, pp. 51, 103.

⁴⁶*William and Mary Quarterly Magazine*, Series 2, Vol. 9, p. 335.

⁴⁷Library of Congress (Hite, McKay vs. Fairfax).

⁴⁸Jones, Connor, Wust, pp. 22-23.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 22: "On June 15, 1732 he [Hite] had to enter a 'Caveat to stop the granting of a Patent to William Russel' for land on the west bank of the Shenandoah which he clearly conceived to be included in the Vanmeter grant."

⁵⁰"The Shenandoah"; T.K. Cartmell, *Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and their Descendants*, chapter entitled "How and by Whom the Shenandoah Valley was settled."

⁵¹Albert J. Beveridge, *Life of John Marshall*, Vol. I, p. 196.

⁵²Jones, Connor, Wurst, p. 24.

⁵³Ibid., p. 38.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 39.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 21-27; Wust also has an interesting and accurate account of the story of the German colonists in Virginia: *The Virginia Germans* (Edinburg, Va., 1969).

⁵⁶Dr. John W. Wayland; "The Shenandoah."

⁵⁷Rev. J.J. Bowman.

⁵⁸National Archives: Pension application file No. R1936 of Joseph Chrisman.

⁵⁹William Heidegerd, *The American Descendants of Cretiern DuBois of Wicres, France-Part I* (New Paltz, N.Y., 1968).

⁶⁰Jones, Connor, Wurst, p. 13.

⁶¹Will of Jacob Hite, Will Book 1, p. 154, Berkeley County, Martinsburg, W. Va. Codicil dated Dec 22, 1771.

⁶²Jones, Connor, Wust, p. 27.

⁶³T. K. Cartmell.

⁶⁴Jones, Connor, Wust, pp. 25-26.

⁶⁵John C. Fitzpatrick, ed. *The writings of George Washington* (Washington, 1931-44), II, p. 455. Quoted in Jones, Connor, Wust, p. 26.

THE MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS IN MARYLAND, VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE LANDSCAPE

by Roger W. Fromm

Early in the eighteenth century as German immigration to Pennsylvania increased, the Pennsylvania Germans pushed westward looking for cheaper and larger parcels of land. Even some of the newly arrived Germans went directly from Philadelphia for the same reason. Until after the Revolutionary War, however, they were effectively discouraged from going too far west beyond the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania because of Indian strength in that mountainous area. In fact, German settlers beyond the Susquehanna were dissatisfied with the largely Quaker (and certainly not including any Germans) Pennsylvania government's indifference to protection for settlers in the hinterland.¹

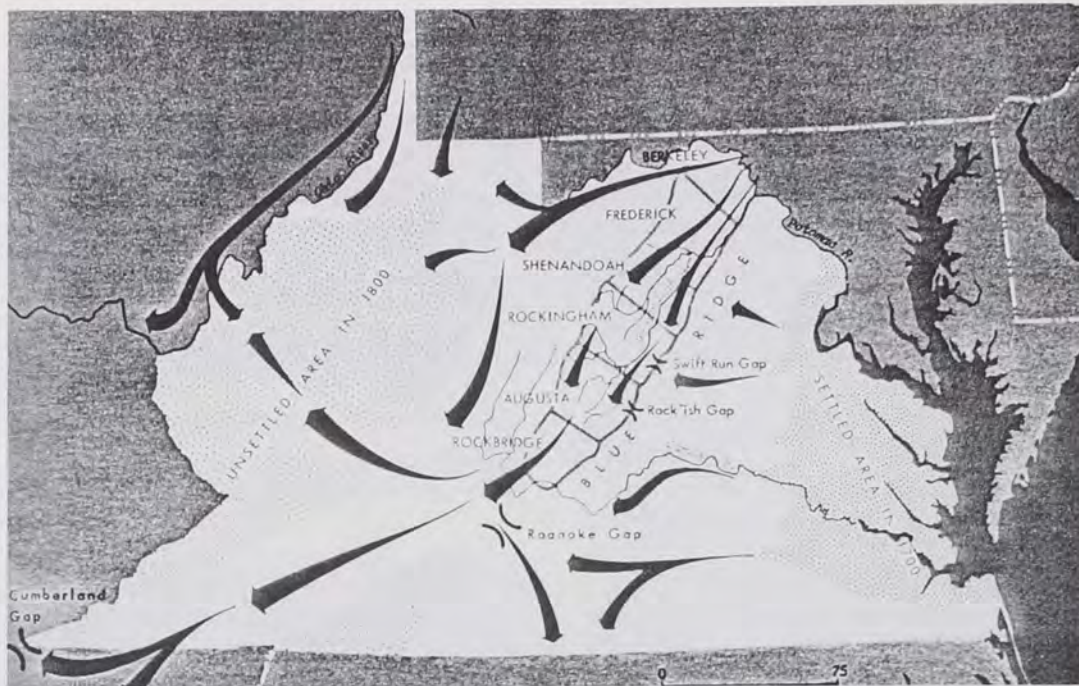
Topography too played a part in migration, as valleys reached southwest into Maryland and Virginia. Also pulling Pennsylvania Germans in the same direction was the offer by southern officials of land to settle — the Virginia government fostered settlement west of the Blue Ridge Mountains as a buffer against the Indians.² (Although, as it turned out, there was little Indian activity in that area.) In response to the Virginia encouragement, Charles, Lord Baltimore, made a generous offer to Pennsylvanians: two hundred acres of land to any person with a family who would settle in Maryland between the Susquehanna and the Potomac.³ This induced many to stay in what are now Frederick and Washington counties, and not make the farther trek to Virginia or North Carolina. Moreover, in the case of Maryland, many Pennsylvania Germans merely crossed over into that colony without knowing it, as the boundary at that time was not delineated very carefully.⁴

Climate was another factor that influenced migration, as word of milder winters and generally better weather was a temptation to many. A severe winter in Pennsylvania in 1740-41 was apparently the impetus required to increase the flow south.⁵ And, for some, after serving out their period of indentured servitude, going south seemed the fastest way to cheap land and independence.⁶ A contemporary French traveler, J. P. Brissot de Warville, adds yet another reason for the outflow: he thought that some Pennsylvania farmers,

including Pennsylvania Germans, emigrated to the South because they had heard that farming was easier there. Rather uncharitably he added, "from this you will see that Pennsylvania is the great outport of the United States for Europeans and that, after performing the office of a sieve by detaining all those people who possess the stamina of industry and virtue, it allows a passage to the rest to those states which are accommodated to their habits of indolence and vice."⁷

Migration records available show that the average stay in Pennsylvania before going south to Virginia was between seven and ten years.⁸ Given the number of Germans in southeastern Pennsylvania and the number of solidly German areas and communities there, this relatively short length of time seems to preclude any profound "Americanization" before the Germans moved south. Thus, they would have carried with them a German culture only somewhat diluted.

On the journey south the migrants traveled on what was variously called the Great Wagon Road, the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road, or simply the Great Road. Starting in Philadelphia, it went through Lancaster and York before turning southwest across what is now Adams County to the Monocacy River near the Pennsylvania-Maryland border. Then the route followed the river south until turning west across the South Mountain at Crampton's Gap, after which it again continued south to the Potomac River. The latter half of the route was an old Indian trail and was not improved to road status until the 1740's.⁹ The rest of the route was an old Indian trail as well, and extended down the Shenandoah Valley and beyond, into Virginia's Great Valley to either the James River Gap or Roanoke Gap where it turned south to North Carolina. In North Carolina it continued to the Yadkin River and finally to Salisbury and Mecklenberg (now Charlotte).¹⁰ This was the general route (there were some variations), and the Great Valley of Virginia could be said to be the main thoroughfare for Pennsylvania Germans moving south after leaving Maryland: it was the longest single portion of the Philadelphia to Yadkin River, North Carolina



*Migration routes in 18th century Virginia (from Robert D. Mitchell, "The Shenandoah Valley Frontier," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, LXII, Sept. 1972, p. 463; reprinted with permission).*

distance of 435 miles.¹¹ It wasn't until 1750 that most of the Great Valley stretch to Roanoke was well cleared, and roads from the Great Valley leading southeast and east were improved only after Virginians feared that the north-south trade from Philadelphia was getting too strong.¹²

The journey over the Great Road was made on horseback, on foot, and by Conestoga Wagon. The settlers took with them subsistence crops (many migrations took place just after harvest), a few domestic animals, some household goods, a Kentucky rifle, and frequently a Bible; craftsmen also took their tools. As would be expected, wagon travel on an Indian trail was difficult.

When considering the number of Pennsylvania German migrants to the southern colonies/states, one must keep in mind that general population levels in the eighteenth century were very low. One estimate of *all* the Germans in Maryland (20,000), Virginia (25,000), and North Carolina (8,000) at the outbreak of the American Revolution totals only 53,000; and the vast majority of these were Pennsylvania Germans — especially in Maryland and Virginia.¹³ Contemporaries (and later observers as well) perceived the Pennsylvania Germans as making up great numbers of migrants: de Warville states that all 3,500 men of the Orange County, North Carolina militia during the Revolution were from Pennsylvania (although all were not German);¹⁴ travelers of that era thought Pennsylvania Germans were in the majority throughout Virginia's Shenandoah Valley;¹⁵ and Nead points out that, prior to 1760, of the thousands of Germans who settled in Maryland, almost all were Pennsylvanians.¹⁶

A present day scholar, James T. Lemon, remarks on the high mobility of Pennsylvanians, especially between

1758 and 1763, and quotes one Thomas Burton of Lancaster reporting to Thomas Penn concerning the migration that "they are daily removing to Carolina."¹⁷ Based on records of letters to Pennsylvania from those already in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, Lemon sees Pennsylvania as a "distributing center to the south and west,"¹⁸ and then he refers to the Shenandoah Valley as "an extension of Pennsylvania" because of its settlement by Pennsylvanians.¹⁹ Mitchell says that prior to 1760 most of the settlers in the Shenandoah Valley were from Lancaster, Chester, Berks, and Philadelphia counties, and that most of these were German and Scotch-Irish with a few English and Welsh.²⁰ Benjamin Franklin estimated that 40,000 people, most of them Germans, had emigrated from Pennsylvania to North Carolina by 1763.²¹ This no doubt warmed his heart, but the high numbers were probably wishful thinking. There were also estimates that, by 1775, western North Carolina was ten to thirty percent German, most of them also from Pennsylvania.²² In 1765, a reported one thousand German wagons passed through Salisbury, North Carolina, going farther south. And the migration continued into the early nineteenth century.²³ An archivist of North Carolina has stated that "to Lancaster and York counties in Pennsylvania, North Carolina owes more of her population than to any other known part of the world."²⁴ He was referring to Germans and Scotch-Irish.

In Maryland, Pennsylvania Germans first settled on both sides of South Mountain in Frederick and Washington counties. "With their keen scent for good soil they picked out fertile spots in the woods, made their clearings, built their cabins and barns and planted fields of wheat and corn."²⁵ Lutherans, Reformed,



Hupp homestead (1755) in Shenandoah County, Virginia. (All photographs by the author.)

Sign in front of building gives a brief history of Zion Evangelical and Reformed Church in Hagerstown, Md.; marker, also in front of church, noting that Jonathan Hager was not only the founder of the town, but the co-founder of the church as well.

Mennonites, Moravians, and Dunkards, settling the hamlet of Graceham, twelve miles north of Frederick, reflected the variety of religious groups that went south, and later filed into counties farther west. The first Germans arrived from Pennsylvania in 1729, with the first church being built in 1733; and Monocacy, north of Frederick, was the first settlement.²⁶ Moravians (from Easton and Bethlehem), Mennonites, and United Brethren were numerous there, while Lutherans and Reformed dominated in the Hagerstown area.²⁷ Hagerstown (named after Pennsylvania German Jonathan Hager, who came to the area in 1739), and Frederick, laid out in 1745, consisted primarily of Pennsylvania German settlers; Sharpsburg was another early settlement. While pre-Revolutionary times saw the settlement chiefly of Germans from Pennsylvania, after the war Germans settled directly from Germany or moved to the hinterland from Baltimore. And then the Hessians came, probably drawn in part by knowledge of Germans in the area.

A more dramatic settlement of Pennsylvania Germans occurred in the Great Valley of Virginia, principally in the Shenandoah Valley. Adam Miller arrived in what is now Page County in 1727 from Lancaster. He was well liked with the area and urged family, friends, and neighbors to go to Virginia. When the Jost Hite (Heydt) family and fifteen others left Philadelphia (now Montgomery) County and settled near Winchester, Virginia in 1732, it was the beginning of the large scale movement south, for Hite returned to Pennsylvania to tell people of the virtues of the Shenandoah. Rineharts, Kauffmans, Selsers, and Stricklers were among those first coming. Both groups included Lutherans, Reformed, and Mennonites.²⁸

After crossing the Potomac River, these settlers —

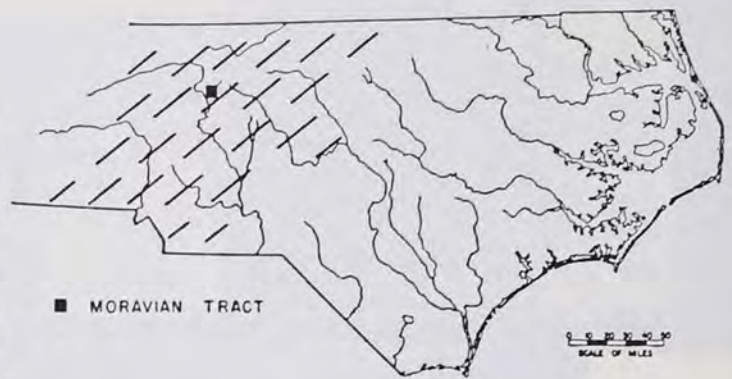
and those who came later — took one of four different routes to the Shenandoah Valley: 1) West through approaches to Winchester along the south fork of the Potomac into Hardy, Pendleton, Highland, and Bath counties, the first two of which are now in West Virginia; 2) on the east side of the Shenandoah Mountains along present day Route 42 through Frederick, Shenandoah, Rockingham, and Augusta counties; 3) along present day Route 11 through the same counties listed in number two above; and 4) on the west side of the Blue Ridge along what is now Route 340 through Warren, Page, and Rockingham counties into Augusta County.²⁹ In the Valley, Harrisonburg, Winchester, Strasburg, Woodstock, Newmarket, and Stephansburg were virtually German towns. Woodstock, incidentally, attracted the second generation of the Pennsylvania German Muhlenberg family, as Henry's son, Peter, was pastor of a Lutheran church there. Many of these towns were so heavily German that German was spoken in them up to 1850.³⁰ The Lutherans throughout the length of the Valley joined the Lutheran Synod of Pennsylvania, reflecting the north-to-south rather than east-to-west movement of people and ideas.³¹

The Germans were not alone in coming to Virginia from Pennsylvania. The Valley of Virginia lies between two mountain ranges, the Allegheny and the Blue Ridge; both run northeast to southwest. The Valley is divided in two, with a slope to the north and another to the south. The better farming area is in the northern portion, that drained by the Shenandoah; it was settled more by Germans. In the southern portion, drained by the James and Roanoke rivers, the Scotch-Irish were dominant. English settlers coming either from Pennsylvania or pushing west from Piedmont and coastal Virginia were scattered among them in good numbers.³²

Land, of course, is what brought most settlers to Valley Virginia, and farming is what they did on that land. A contemporary French traveler characterized the Shenandoah as having good soil on a limestone base, good water drainage, and a climate better than that of Pennsylvania. He saw superior grains and fruits being grown in Virginia on land that cost much less than it did in the sister colony to the north.³³ (In the 1740s, one Shenandoah landowner, William Beverly, claimed that his lands were sold to Pennsylvanians for one-third the price of land in southeastern Pennsylvania.)³⁴ The aforementioned traveler, who considered the Pennsylvania German farmer “the most honest, the most industrious, and the most thrifty of farmers,”³⁵ compared Shenandoah Virginia favorably with eastern Virginia, claiming that a better farming operation was obvious. And then, paying a compliment, he said: “When you see the Shenandoah you think you are still in Pennsylvania.”³⁶ A later observer of the Pennsylvania German in Virginia thought that “as agriculturalists their main achievement was to make the Valley of Virginia . . . the richest farming country in the state.”³⁷ Of course the Shenandoah Valley was not solely an agricultural area. It also was an area of commercial interchange and an avenue of service and migration south. It was, in fact, the “vital link” from north to south until 1800,³⁸ and many Pennsylvania peddlers worked the area, especially after 1750.³⁹ Also, cattle drives from North Carolina to Pennsylvania through the Valley were not uncommon.

As Shenandoah Valley land prices increased, even more Germans and Scotch-Irish from Pennsylvania went beyond that area, some to southwestern Virginia, but more through gaps in the Blue Ridge and then south across the Dan River into the North Carolina Piedmont. Some went to the valley of the Yadkin (on both sides of the river) as early as 1745, and the 1750-75 period saw a great influx of Germans, who settled portions of twelve counties of Piedmont North Carolina.⁴⁰ Cabarrus and Rowan counties were the most heavily German.

The close of the French and Indian War in 1763 meant greater safety in more remote spots, and encouraged the Germans to leave the more populated areas and venture farther south. Within Piedmont North Carolina the influx eventually led to a western movement to the Blue Ridge. The Moravians, who settled Forsyth County in 1753 from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, were the first whites to cross the Blue Ridge.⁴¹ They purchased 100,000 acres from Lord Granville and the government and called it “Wachovia” (“meadow-stream”). Within this area they established Bethabara, Salem, and Bethania; settlements with communal economies that emphasized religion, agriculture, crafts, and music. (All were in or around present-day Winston-Salem.) The Morvians, who grew all their crops more intensively than other farmers, were conservationists



*Delineated area shows the approximate location of most of the German settlers in North Carolina, 1750-1775. (From Harry R. Merrens, *Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century: A Study of Historical Geography*, Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1964, p. 60; reprinted with permission.)*

and their farms had a different appearance. One traveler commented: “The moment I touched the boundary of the Moravians, I noticed a marked and most favorable change in the appearance of buildings and farms, and even the cattle seemed larger, and in better condition.”⁴² In the urban settlement of Salem, built for tradesmen, the 1767 record lists a store, a pottery, a gristmill, a sawmill, and a tavern. The Brethren were noted for having “planned their trading activities with great care, diligently supervising them and organizing their economic activities with a view to exploiting the most profitable market possibilities.”⁴³ Salem eventually attracted Moravians directly from Germany.

But, as in Valley Virginia, most Germans settled in North Carolina’s Piedmont to farm. And, while the majority of them managed to get the best farm land (just as they had in eastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Valley Virginia), there were many — along with the Scotch-Irish — who had to settle for frontier land in the mountains or on the fringes; these colonial Germans rivaled the Scotch-Irish as frontiersman from Maryland to North Carolina.⁴⁴ In 1755, North Carolina Governor Arthur Dobbs visited German areas in the Piedmont and attested to the prosperity of its farms, telling of the many domesticated animals and varieties of grains — wheat, barley, oats, rye, and corn — found there. He reported that they were making “good butter and tolerable cheese, and . . . had gone into indigo with good success . . .”⁴⁵ One Arnold Poschen told of the food brought to him by Pennsylvania Germans when he first arrived in Davidson, North Carolina: “The people from all parts of the county brought us abundant flour, corn, hams, sausages, dried fruits, chickens, turkeys, geese, etc., so much so that there has been scarcely any necessity to spend one farthing for our housekeeping up to this time.”⁴⁶ It should also be noted that Piedmont German farming differed from most of eastern North Carolina farming in that dairying was prevalent.⁴⁷



Church of the Brethren, Sharpville, Md.



*Monument in Mt. Olive, Shenandoah County, Va.:
A Union Church
Evangelical Lutheran
and
German Reformed
Dedicated Nov. 14, 1824*

These Germans, set apart from most North Carolinians by language and religion, considered themselves quite different and were not at first amenable to close relations with other groups. In 1789 a German pastor wrote concerning the harmful effects of intermarriage with the English or Irish. The country Irish, he said, were "lazy, dissipated, and poor [and] the English do not adhere to any definite religion, do not have their children Christened; nor do they send them to any school, but simply let them grow up like domestic animals."⁴⁸

Lutheran, Reformed, and Moravian churches were the dominant religious forces among the Germans in Piedmont North Carolina, but it wasn't until the 1770s that most groups had church buildings. As they had done in eastern Pennsylvania, some Lutheran and Reformed congregations combined to build churches and schools. They also followed another early Pennsylvania practice, that of sending delegates to Europe to obtain pastors. One result of this was the pastorate of Adolph Nussman who arrived directly from Germany in 1773 and, because of the scarcity of ministers, served congregations in seven counties.⁴⁹ Nussman has been compared to Pennsylvania's Henry Muhlenberg.

A closer look at the two counties which attracted most Pennsylvania Germans in this early period reflects the general experience in North Carolina. There were reports of twenty-two families in Cabarrus and Rowan counties in 1747, and settlement was significant prior to 1750 as one 1894 monument inscription declares: "Sacred to the memory of those members of the Lutheran and German Reformed churches who were buried here prior to 1750."⁵⁰ Wills, deeds, church records, and gravestones document settlers from Pennsylvania's York, Lancaster, Lehigh, Northhampton, and Berks counties. Many of the surnames current during the colonial period in the North Carolina counties are familiar in the Pennsylvania counties as well: Edelman, Bieber, Barringer, Misenheimer, Krause,

Seitz, Kohlman, Kruse, Klein, and Heilig, among others.⁵¹ By 1771, a Lutheran pastor in Salisbury reported that there were nearly "three thousand German Protestant families" in Rowan and three other counties. The 1790 census indicates fifty-five hundred Pennsylvania Germans in Rowan and Cabarrus counties: Of all free whites, twenty-three percent were of Pennsylvania German origin, and in certain areas of these counties they formed forty percent of the population. By 1800, large scale immigration from Pennsylvania had stopped.⁵²

* * * *

What difference did this Pennsylvania German migration make to these areas of the South? Folk culturalist Henry Glassie sees four major centers of cultural dispersal in the East during the first two hundred years of settlement in colonial America, one of which is southeastern Pennsylvania. (Southeastern New England, Chesapeake Bay, and coastal Carolina and Georgia are the other three.) Southeastern Pennsylvania, of which Germans determined much of the character, was "the most important of the material folk culture regions, for both the North and South were influenced by practices"⁵³ which emanated from there.

Pennsylvania German material folk culture had many facets. One of the most widespread in the South was the log cabin for which they had their own Germanic traditions, and to which they added the influence of the Swedes and Finns of southeastern Pennsylvania and Delaware. The first Germans moving south from Pennsylvania were seen as "a vanguard carrying new cultural patterns to the southern frontier, including German vernacular housing."⁵⁴ Although the Germans considered their log cabins temporary, they built many that lasted generations. Many towns along the Great Wagon Road were described as log house towns. Most of their cabins featured a center chimney (other groups built the



Bank barn in Clarke County, Virginia.



Bank barn in Frederick County, Virginia



The author in front of a barn on the Isaac Hite, Jr. property in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley; Isaac Jr. was the grandson of Jost Hite, one of the first white settlers in the Valley.

chimney at the end of the house), a long, deep fireplace, and three rooms on the ground floor. Barns and churches were also built of logs.⁵⁵ The Pennsylvania Germans hewed logs with two or four flat surfaces and interlocked them carefully to make a very tight fit at the corners. Log building skills were picked up by other settlers, and eventually became commonplace on the landscapes of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, as well as in other Southern states; they persisted at least until after the Civil War. One log building scholar credits "the Germans of Pennsylvania and the Scotch-Irish under the influence of both Germans and Swede-Finns, for being the prime disseminators of log construction methods . . . in the area east of the Mississippi . . ."⁵⁶

The central chimney house plan eventually had wider application with other building materials, particularly stone. This, combined with English elements, produced what was for many years the predominant house type in Maryland and Valley Virginia, although its predominance eventually gave away to a basically English-type house which was dispersed from eastern Virginia.⁵⁷

The log cabin and the other central chimney houses were not the only structures brought to the South by the Pennsylvania Germans. Foremost among the others is the two-level barn (with the lower level for stabling and a ramped, upper level for hay and grain storage), most commonly with — but often without — a forebay.⁵⁸ Some variations of this basic type are found more in

Valley Virginia and Maryland than in North Carolina, where other, earlier Pennsylvania German types are more common. The basements of all types were usually stone, but the rest was of stone, brick, board, or log, depending upon local materials.

The famed Conestoga wagon, named after the Conestoga River Valley in Lancaster County, is also considered to be of Pennsylvania German origin. First made in southeastern Pennsylvania in the area of the largest German population, it was used by migrants in their trek over the Great Road. It was then used and made in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, predominately where Pennsylvania Germans migrated;⁵⁹ the Moravians in North Carolina built them after their settlement. These Salem wagons, which were made until 1883, evolved over the years, but nevertheless reveal unquestionable Conestoga influence.⁶⁰ In New Market, Virginia, the Minnick family used their family-made Conestoga wagons up to 1882.⁶¹

The so-called Kentucky rifle was also a product of southeastern Pennsylvania. This rifle, adapted to frontier conditions from its European predecessors, was designed to shoot game and afford protection against the Indians. It was probably the original handiwork of German artisans in Lancaster and surrounding counties. In the large German population of the area, records list many German gunsmiths, and by 1730 rifle-making was a big industry. Its customers were hunters, explorers, new settlers, and migrants; Lancaster was not only adja-

cent to the wilderness, but was a major town on the Great Wagon Road south.⁶² In addition to producing the weapons, Lancaster was a center for gunsmithing apprenticeships, and craftsmen who learned their skills there later went south to Virginia and North Carolina. The Kentucky rifle soon became commonplace in those colonies as well, and by the time of the American Revolution, throughout the south where Pennsylvania German migration was strongest, rifle shops were manufacturing the Kentucky rifle.⁶³

Another Pennsylvania German craft that went south with the migrants and left a lasting cultural mark was pottery making. Redware, sgraffito (incised or scratched decoration on redware, which is traced directly to the Germans or Swiss), slipware, and heavy stoneware jugs and crocks were common utensils and appointments. J. F. Sachse started a pottery in Strasburg, Virginia about 1750; it lasted into the twentieth century. At one time Strasburg had nine potters in business, with Adam Keister of Pennsylvania one of the first. Keister's sons moved to localities in what is now West Virginia, and established potteries there.⁶⁴ Many potteries were started in the nineteenth century by descendants of the original settlers and by later migrants. German folk art decorations consisting of tulips, birds, grapes, other fruit, and Biblical scenes were evident on most of their work.⁶⁵ The Wachovia Moravians also were noted for their pottery with a tulip motif; their Brother Gottfried Aust was well known throughout North Carolina for his work. Also, near current Hickory, North Carolina was Jugtown, so-called because Pennsylvania Germans made slipware for the area.⁶⁶

Pennsylvania German furniture was and is much in evidence, especially in Valley Virginia. Here floral inlaid furniture of Pennsylvania design was made and used in abundance. Corner cupboards, blanket chests, dough trays, dry sinks, cradles, dressers, benches, chairs, and tables have left the flavor of German Pennsylvania throughout the migration area.

The Shenandoah Valley epitomized the Pennsylvania German South, with all aspects of material culture in evidence. It had German clockmakers (with Middleton's Jacob Donner and Anthony Kline operating in the mid 1700s);⁶⁷ Bridgewater, Cedar Run, Winchester, Dayton, and Harrisonburg were centers for German stone craftsmen and their tombstones of German folk art design;⁶⁸ German fraktur birth certificates and baptismal certificates abounded; and throughout the area one found the three-or-four-stringed mountain dulcimer which "is almost surely a modification of Pennsylvania Dutch instruments of the zither family."⁶⁹ Moreover, Pennsylvania Germans ate their traditional foods in the South and these became known to other settlers. Leberwurst, pfnhase (similar to scrapple of today), sauerkraut und speck, among other foods, found their way to tables along the Great Wagon Road.⁷⁰



Row Houses, Potomac Street, Hagerstown, Md.

Along with the Pennsylvania artisans, tradesmen, and farmers mentioned above went the Pennsylvania town, primarily German but with a British influence as well. Zelinsky has described it as one of "sheer compactness or tightness" in which houses were built close together and where front yards were virtually eliminated, placing the houses close to the street. With plenty of land available there was apparently no practical reason for this, so Zelinsky reasons it must stem from European tradition. It spread to Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia (but less so to North Carolina) where there is a "total anarchy" of residential, business, retail, professional, and government structures in all size categories of towns which cannot be matched in any other area of the nation. The use of brick predominates, with stone and stucco also common; the brick is often painted red. Duplex houses with mirror images halves abound. The well-used alley, often named, paved, lined with shops, and lighted, is another feature.⁷¹

Most sources give credit to the Pennsylvania Germans, wherever they went, for effective agricultural methods that resulted from their choice of land and traditional work habits. Not only did they produce abundantly, but they also treated domestic animals well and conserved the land.⁷² From Maryland to North Carolina travelers and local observers praised their farms. Early travelers agreed "that agriculture in the Shenandoah Valley, where Germans from Pennsylvania were the leading farmers, was better conducted than east of the Blue Ridge."⁷³ The Pennsylvania German farmers "early brought to [the Shenandoah Valley] their superior agricultural techniques and their ability at handling livestock, chiefly cattle and hogs."⁷⁴ Wherever



Tombstones in cemetery at Sharpsville, Md. mark the graves of descendants of Pennsylvania German settlers.



he farmed the Pennsylvania German made his farm a self-sufficient one that looked to the future in that he took care of his land, manured it, and let part of it lie fallow each year.⁷⁵ Among the transplanted Pennsylvania Germans, the Moravian was unique in that he systematically organized an economic operation that included commercial farming.⁷⁶ The Pennsylvania Germans are given credit for advancing agriculture in North Carolina “by introducing meadows, practicing soil conservation, and by founding the Rowan Agricultural Society, the first in Piedmont North Carolina.”⁷⁷

Related to agriculture was slavery with its concomitant plantation system. The Moravians, Mennonites, Dunkards, and German Quakers considered slavery a sin, and the Lutherans and Reformed disapproved. When they had slaves, they usually had no more than one or two with whom they would work side-by-side in the fields.⁷⁸ In general, the Germans, along with the Scotch-Irish, are credited with helping to confine slavery, for the most part, to the eastern sections of the states they migrated to.

In 1790, Virginia’s Shenandoah County, the county with the highest percentage of Germans, “had the lowest proportion of slave owning households in the state.”⁷⁹ Of course, the Germans were not growing tobacco and hemp, the two most labor demanding crops, although presumably they could have grown those if they had wanted. In 1800, in North Carolina, two effective critics of slavery in the Piedmont, Hinton Rowan Helper and Dr. Henry Ruffner, were of Pennsylvania ancestry.⁸⁰ There were, certainly, factors of agriculture, topography, climate, and the ever-present Scotch-Irish to consider, but there is no question that the incidence of slavery in Pennsylvania German areas of the South was insignificant compared to other localities.

One of the more obvious, indisputable marks on the South from Pennsylvania German migration concerns religion. Lutheran, Reformed, Moravian, and Mennonite have had the more lasting impact. Their church buildings are evident on the landscape from Frederick, Maryland to Charlotte, North Carolina. Well into the

nineteenth century, German Bibles, catechisms, psalters, and hymnals were a part of the scene. Some of the original churches such as the Lutheran Zion Church started in 1774 near Salisbury, North Carolina, were still being used in this century.⁸¹ Southern Lutherans and German Reformed placed themselves under the direction of the Pennsylvania Germans, that is, those still in Pennsylvania, for all of the eighteenth century, and they retained a synod system long after they were no longer a part of the Pennsylvania Synod. It is clear that “from Pennsylvania came much of the Lutheranism in the Southern colonies.”⁸² Such institutions of higher education as Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Virginia; Roanoke College (Lutheran) in Salem, Virginia; Salem College (Moravian) in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and Lenoir-Rhyne College (Lutheran) in Hickory, North Carolina, are permanent reminders of Pennsylvania German religious influence.

Another of the churches’ lasting influences was music, with the music of the Moravians being especially noteworthy. They accompanied all important events, religious and secular, with music — singing, brass, and organ playing a distinctive style. To this day the Moravians in the Winston-Salem area draw non-Moravians to hear their music. The Lutheran and Reformed churches also brought much music to their communities. Joseph Funk of what eventually became known as Singers Glen in the Shenandoah Valley made his town a center for the study and practice of vocal music and of music publishing. For fifty years, music emanating from Singers Glen influenced the musical scene in Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina. Its *Harmonia Sacra* had seventeen editions.⁸³

As many Germans saw their faith and culture tied to their native tongue, they held on to their language in many areas well into the nineteenth century. Publically, German was used over a wide-spread area into the 1820s, and it survived much longer in the home; the Moravians kept German as their official language until just before the Civil War.⁸⁴ In the more remote areas, however, the German language survived into the twen-



tieth century, and as late as 1964 there were isolated hamlets where German was still spoken.⁸⁵ German language newspapers, such as the *Virginia Volksberichter und Newmarketer Wochenschrift*, as well as German advertising in English language papers were once a common feature of Southern Pennsylvania German areas,⁸⁶ but today the evidence of German origins primarily takes three forms on the landscape: tombstones, place names, and surnames. The Shenandoah Valley, with the largest concentration of Pennsylvania Germans outside of Pennsylvania, includes the following place names: Cline, Molers, Sangerville, Snyder, Foltz, Hinckle, Siler, Keller, Myerstown, Hamburg, Koontz, Mauck, Frieden, Harnsberger, Ottobine, Suters, Wittig, Zerkle Station, Lantz Mills, Maerstown, etc.⁸⁷

This is not the case so much in North Carolina where Germans were usually in the minority. There, most place names are of Scotch-Irish or English origin. One exception would be in Winston-Salem where many places and things, including commercial establishments, are named after the Moravian's Wachovia. The minority posture of the Germans in Piedmont North Carolina induced many of them to Anglicize their names, so Zimmerman has become Carpenter; Schneider, Taylor; Weiss, White, and Klein, Small, Little, or Short.⁸⁸

* * * *

Frederick Jackson Turner said that “the [Pennsylvania German farmers’] limestone farms became the wheat granaries of the country. Their great, well-built barns, fine stock, and big Conestoga wagons were an object lesson to the other sections.”⁸⁹ If there is an element of truth in this we might assume that a similar effect took place where the Pennsylvania Germans lived in the South and that other methods and habits mentioned above were observed and used as models. Perhaps their agriculture is what has made the most impact there. It, along with the concomitant architecture of barns and other farm buildings, town plans in some areas, and

religion are what has survived and influenced the nature and flavor of Valley Virginia, Maryland, and Piedmont North Carolina.

The picture is, however, complex. In North Carolina, for example, where the Piedmont was settled mainly from the North, urban settlements developed along with rural settlements. The Moravians were the prime example of early urban dwellers. Their Winston-Salem along with other cities in the Piedmont make up the largest urban area in North Carolina today.⁹⁰ The largely German and Scotch-Irish migration to North Carolina along with differences in physiography and economy has made the contemporary sectionalism vis-a-vis eastern North Carolina with its basic English and Highland Scotch population.⁹¹ The lack of a large Black population in German/Scotch-Irish areas contributes to this sectionalism as well.

In summary, the Pennsylvania Germans did not take a monolithic culture to the South. Theirs was first of all a combination of German cultures — Rhine Palatinate, South German, Swiss — and, as indicated above, added to that were elements of Swedish, Finnish, English, and Scotch-Irish culture. When they went south, however, their cultural baggage was *predominately* German, and once in the South, their culture had to struggle to maintain itself, especially starting in the nineteenth century. As we have seen, it did well, influencing its surroundings to this day. With few exceptions though (Mennonite settlements would be one), contemporary descendants of those Pennsylvania Germans have done a good amount of blending in. Some would see this as the “melting pot” successfully at work. One student of American culture considers that “it was the Anglo-Saxon lowlander South that eventually dominated the Piedmont and eroded the outlander traits of its transient Pennsylvania settlers.”⁹² But, considering their numbers, the Pennsylvania Germans effect on the landscape was, and is, considerable; it has made areas of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina something quite different from what they would have been without

the migration. Most importantly, perhaps, the Pennsylvania German culture was a very significant part of the general Pennsylvania culture which spread into and influenced the South.

ENDNOTES

¹Daniel Wunderlich Nead, *The Pennsylvania-German in the Settlement of Maryland* (Lancaster, Pa., 1914), p. 39.

²Robert D. Mitchell, "The Shenandoah Valley Frontier," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, LXII (1972), p. 466.

³Albert Bernhardt Faust, *The German Element in the United States — With Special Reference to Its Political, Moral, Social, and Educational Influence I* (New York, 1927), p. 168.

⁴Mitchell, p. 465.

⁵Nead, p. 44.

⁶Harry Roy Merrens, *Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century — A Study in Historical Geography* (Chapel Hill, 1964), p. 8.

⁷J. P. Brissot de Warville, *New Travels in the United States of America, 1788*, translated and edited by Durand Echeverria (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), p. 270.

⁸Mitchell, p. 469.

⁹Nead, p. 46.

¹⁰Hugh T. Lefler and William S. Powell, *Colonial North Carolina: A History* (New York, 1973), p. 99.

¹¹Merrens, p. 12.

¹²Mitchell, p. 477.

¹³Faust, p. 283.

¹⁴De Warville, p. 270.

¹⁵Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *The Old South: The Founding of American Civilization* (New York, 1942), p. 171.

¹⁶Nead, p. 56.

¹⁷James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania*. (Baltimore, 1972), pp. 75-76.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 75-76.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 164.

²⁰Mitchell, p. 468.

²¹Merrens, p. 54.

²²Ibid., p. 61.

²³Lefler, pp. 101-02.

²⁴Horace Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders: A Narrative of Adventure in the Southern Appalachians and a Study of Life Among the Mountaineers* (New York, 1936), p. 438.

²⁵Wertenbaker, p. 170.

²⁶Faust, p. 167.

²⁷Thomas O'Brien Hanley, *The American Revolution and Religion: Maryland, 1770-1800* (Washington, 1971), p. 156.

²⁸Elmer Lewis Smith et al., *The Pennsylvania Germans of the Shenandoah Valley* (Allentown, Pa., 1964), p. 24.

²⁹Ibid., p. 58.

³⁰Faust, p. 192.

³¹Ibid., p. 183.

³²Ibid., p. 186.

³³De Warville, p. 271.

³⁴Mitchell, p. 467. According to Lemon (p. 69), sometime after 1765 the price of good farm land in the valleys of Maryland and Virginia started to follow, but not catch up to, prices in Pennsylvania. Many Pennsylvanians then wound up on the not-so-desireable hillside land. Included were many Germans. This fact belies the conventional notion that the Scotch-Irish alone were the true frontiersmen.

³⁵DeWarville, p. 271.

³⁶Ibid., p. 237.

³⁷Faust, p. 210.

³⁸Mitchell, p. 463.

³⁹Ibid., p. 470.

⁴⁰Carl Hammer, *Rhinelanders on the Yadkin: The Story of the Pennsylvania Germans in Rowan and Cabarrus Counties* (Salisbury, N.C., 1943), p. 26.

⁴¹Lefler, p. 109.

⁴²Merrens, p. 119.

⁴³Ibid., p. 165.

⁴⁴Some of these settlers were poor, and they took the cheapest land; Faust, p. 267.

⁴⁵Hammer, p. 78.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 79.

⁴⁷Merrens, p. 139.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 59.

⁴⁹Faust., p. 230.

⁵⁰William H. Gehrke, "The Beginnings of the Pennsylvania German Element in Rowan and Cabarrus Counties, North Carolina," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LVIII (1934), p. 348.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 353.

⁵²Ibid., p. 367.

⁵³Henry Glassie, *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States* (Philadelphia, 1968), p. 36.

⁵⁴C. A. Weslager, *The Log Cabin in America* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1969), p. 215.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 217.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 336.

⁵⁷Glassie, p. 75.

⁵⁸Henry Glassie, "The Pennsylvania Barn in the South, Part II," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, XV (1966), p. 13.

⁵⁹George Shumway et al., *Conestoga Wagon, 1750-1850: Freight Carrier for 100 Years of America's Westward Expansion*, 2nd ed. (York, Pa., 1966), p. 12.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 243.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 269.

⁶²John G. W. Dillin, *The Kentucky Rifle*, 6th ed., (York, Pa., 1975), p. 27.

⁶³Ibid., p. 53.

⁶⁴Smith, p. 208.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 214.

⁶⁶Wertenbaker, p. 182.

⁶⁷Smith, p. 219.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 224.

⁶⁹Glassie, *Pattern*, p. 79.

⁷⁰Nead, p. 75.

⁷¹Wilber Zelinsky, "The Pennsylvania Town: An Overdue Geographical Account," *Geographical Review*, LXVII (1977), pp. 136-37.

⁷²Lemon; Lemon concludes that the Germans, as others, took what land was available when they got here and that no farmers, including the Germans, were "efficient" until the 1800's. Agricultural reformers were disappointed in the contented Pennsylvania farmers. The difference seems to be that between self-sufficient family farms and later specialized farming. In that sense, Lemon is using the standards of a later period for a previous one.

⁷³Jean Gottman *Virginia at Mid-Century* (New York, 1955), p. 96.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 207.

⁷⁵Wertenbaker, p. 192.

⁷⁶Merrens, p. 175.

⁷⁷Gehrke, p. 369.

⁷⁸Wertenbaker, p. 193.

⁷⁹Mitchell, p. 474.

⁸⁰Clement Eaton, *The Mind of the Old South* (Baton Rouge, 1964), p. 240.

⁸¹Hammer, p. 35.

⁸²Edwin Scott Gaustad, *Historical Atlas of Religion in America*, Rev. ed. (New York, 1976), p. 18.

⁸³Wertenbaker, p. 181.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 190.

⁸⁵Smith, p. 69.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 182.

⁸⁷John Walter Wayland, *The German Element of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia*, (Charlottesville, 1907), p. 91.

⁸⁸Lefler, p. 102.

⁸⁹Albert Bernhardt Faust, *The German Element in the United States — With Special Reference to Its Political, Moral, Social, and Educational Influence II*, (New York, 1927), p. 36.

⁹⁰Merrens, p. 176.

⁹¹Lefler, p. 217.

⁹²Raymond D. Gastil, *Cultural Regions of the United States* (Seattle, 1975), p. 179.

BETHESDA EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN FARMERS MILLS: FACT AND FOLKLORE

by Hans F. Sennholz



*Bethesda Church in
Farmers Mills as it
appears today.*

Most people never grow weary of their church. It is a place where man seeks truce to his dissensions and animosities; where he may find new hope and the promise of peace; where he opens his heart and reaches out for his Creator. Man is never so happily inspired as when he builds a church.

During the first half of the 19th century Jacob Albright, a Methodist preacher of German descent, was inspiring hundreds of congregations in Pennsylvania to build new houses of worship. With great missionary zeal his followers founded missions especially among the descendents of German immigrants in eastern Pennsylvania, and from there throughout the northern states and Canada. They created a new denominational organization (1803) which they later called the Evangelical Association (1816). Its teaching was deeply rooted in Methodism although many of its intellectual leaders came from Reformed, Mennonite and Lutheran backgrounds. John Wesley's Methodism itself had been an 18th century offshoot of the Church of England, searching for scriptural holiness through methodical study and devotion, which had led to the nickname

"Methodists." Now, through Jacob Albright and his disciples, it was reaching out to millions of Americans of German descent: The Evangelical Association was calling for personal salvation through conversion when, by God's initiating grace, man responds to His invitation by entering the Kingdom and His church.

Early in the century Evangelical missionaries were reaching the hearts and minds of many people in Pennsylvania's Centre County. In Farmers Mills they were meeting with a number of devoted families, reading and discussing the Bible, and conducting worship services in private homes. It is difficult to estimate the beginning of this early congregation. But we do know that in neighboring communities (e.g. in Aaronsburg) Evangelical Association meetings were held as early as 1806 and houses of worship were erected during the 1840's. In Farmers Mills meetings were held during the 1840's and probably earlier, and a house of worship was built in the following decade. Old newspaper reports point at 1855 as the year when the Evangelical Church was completed and dedicated to the service of God. In consideration of its location right on the bank of Penn's

Creek it was named Bethesda Evangelical Church for a pool in Jerusalem which, according to Scripture, had healing powers (John 5: 2-4).

Bethesda Church was built on the land of Michael and Elizabeth Ream who, in many ways, spearheaded and promoted its construction. In 1865, when the last pew had been installed and a brand new Sheffield bell had been lifted into its place, the land and structure were legally deeded to the Evangelical Association, U.S.A., for a consideration of \$20. Henceforth a board of trustees was to manage the church's affairs.

It was not the only church in Farmers Mills. In 1853, members of the Reformed and Lutheran churches had built a Union Church on a lot donated by John Rishel. Both groups formed an active congregation that from the beginning exceeded in numbers the Evangelical Association. For a total population that never surpassed 200 souls, the prospects of the Bethesda Church in competition with the St. John's Union Church were rather limited. Its membership never consisted of more than a dozen families.

Most Bethesda members were farmers. In those years agriculture was the country's largest business. It was prosperous, as farmers were selling a growing share of their crops on distant markets. A generation earlier the Pennsylvania farmer was still dressed in home-spun clothing made by his wife or daughters from wool raised on his farm. By now farmers bought ready-made cotton cloth produced in factories, and sold their wheat, livestock, lumber, milk and butter to millers, merchants and dealers. This transition from mother and daughter power to water and steam power brought great change not only to farming but also to social life.

In Farmers Mills the economic life of farmers hinged around the flour mill, store and tan-yard of Adam Fisher. He was running a mill, built in 1815, with four runs of stones. Rebuilt and modernized in 1864, it served the community until 1936 when a flood burst the mill dam and brought the wheels to a permanent halt. During the Civil War, public meetings were held at the store and mill, which were addressed by eminent figures, such as Judge James T. Hale, member of Congress. In 1867, Major Jared Fisher, Adam's son, opened another general store at the bridge, not far from the church. He sold his interest to his partner, Mr. Gettig, in 1872. The Fishers also brought a post office to Farmers Mills and served as postmasters.

A rural community needs a blacksmith who makes, repairs and fits horseshoes, and otherwise forges, shapes and repairs farm implements with an anvil and hammer. Robert Jackson Smith served his community in this capacity. In 1865 when the Bethesda Evangelical Church was deeded to the Evangelical Association, he became a trustee together with John Ream and William Weaver. Robert Smith and his only descendents, three generations of Homans, gave valuable support to the

Bethesda Church in its 106 years of colorful history.

The most popular and respected man in those years probably was John Rishel, Justice of the Peace for a period of 20 years. While the Rishels were founders and staunch supporters of the Union Church, their family ties were equally strong with the Bethesda Church. Catherine Homan Rishel the Judge's wife and mother of Judge Martin L. Rishel, was Evangelical. Their son-in-law, William Weaver, was listed as a Bethesda trustee.

In those years the social life of a community centered around its churches. There were many classes of Sabbath School taught by the senior congregation members. Formal worship services were conducted every second Sunday when an itinerant minister addressed the congregation. Occasionally Sunday evening services were held, or mid-week prayer meetings in the evening. The church then lit up with kerosene lamps, simple fixtures sitting on brass wall brackets, two on each side. A beautiful chandelier with 6 kerosene lamps was hanging from the ceiling. It washed the sanctuary with a soft light, but bright enough to read the Scripture or sing a hymn. The Bethesda congregation was a singing congregation. Even those members who could not carry a tune were moved to join in. They were singing gospel-type songs, with cheerful melodies and lively rhythms. The organist, who played a melodeon, led them in tempo.

It was a joyful, active congregation that supported to the best of its financial ability the numerous missionary programs of the Evangelical Association. The Ladies Aid Society frequently collected money from its members and other residents and organized fund-raising festivals. On those occasions the church and the yard were decorated with Chinese lanterns and festive posters, and a local brass band played popular hymns while the ladies were serving coffee, cake and home-made ice cream to the visitors.

They all were proud of the community band that was known and appreciated all over the county. At the turn of the century, long before radio, television, and recorded music, for musical enjoyment and entertainment people depended on local talent and performance. In Farmers Mills Samuel Homan, Robert Smith's son-in-law, conducted a ten-piece band of trumpets, slide trombones, bass and tenor horns with drum and fife, that would be professional today and would put many a high school or college band to shame. He played a great trumpet, composed many hymns and songs, and wrote the arrangements for the band.

There were few big political and social issues in those decades between the Civil War and World War I. Surely the economic depressions of 1873 and 1893 were felt even in Farmers Mills, for farm product prices tumbled and heavy losses were suffered, especially by farmers with mortgage debt. And, during the 1880's, the con-

gregation suffered severe losses in membership when several families answered the missionary call for settlement at the frontier. Some of them moved to Jewel City, Kansas, formed a new congregation, and built a house of worship that is still standing today; it resembles the one they left in Farmers Mills.

Because of a division within the Evangelical Association in 1891, a minority of the churches withdrew and formed a new denomination known as the United Evangelical Church. By 1906 the Farmers Mills congregation decided to join the dissenting group and formally associated itself with the United Evangelical Church. The transfer was recorded in the Bellefonte Court records by trustees Amos Dunkel, Harvey Rote and John Rote. A compensation of \$150 was paid the The Evangelical Association. The United Evangelical Church remained a separate denomination until 1922 when a reunion with the Evangelical Association was affected under the new name, Evangelical Church. In 1946, this denomination then merged with the United Brethren in Christ, another evangelical denomination formed by 18th century Germans in Pennsylvania. The united denomination adopted the name Evangelical United Brethren Church (EUB). In 1968, finally, seven years after the Bethesda Church was formally closed as a EUB church, the full circle was completed with a merger between the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church. After 165 years of separation from John Wesley's Methodism, the German descendents finally joined the mother church.

Since 1964 the Bethesda Evangelical Church has been the private property of Hans and Mary Sennholz. It is most fitting that they should be the owners, as Mary Sennholz is the great-granddaughter of Robert Smith, the first trustee. Mary and Hans were joined in wedlock before its alter and the Evangelical congregation in 1954, and feel forever bound not only to each other, but also to the church that joined them. There is no economic reason for its private ownership, merely an emotional attachment and a deep feeling of moral obligation to maintain and preserve its noble heritage. This is difficult and costly in our age of disregard of property and wanton destruction. The antique lights and the beautiful chandelier already have vanished and are difficult to replace. And yet, the Bethesda Evangelical Church lives on, not only in the hearts of its former members all over the country, but also as a beautiful structure pointing at the heavens and the Creator of all.

Over the years several Christian denominations and associations have shown considerable interest in renting or purchasing the old church. They have come from all over the state to see it in its beautiful setting down in the valley by Penn's Cave. In every instance their interest diminished as soon as they discovered the lack of modern conveniences and facilities, such as bathrooms

and kitchens. If the owners would only spend the necessary funds to modernize it, it would be in great demand.

In moments of daydreaming and reflection upon their own marital happiness that began one Sunday afternoon in the Bethesda Evangelical Church, Hans and Mary often voice the hope that, some day, the church will open its doors again as a wedding chapel. Beautifully decorated and crowded with faithful friends and neighbors, as it was just 24 years ago, Bethesda would live again for the glory of God and the happiness of man.

* * * * *

The story of Bethesda Church would not be complete without a word about the ghost stories that are deeply embedded in the folklore of Penns Valley. It is difficult to trace their origin, and surely we may write them off as the product of intoxication, or of too fertile an imagination, or as the workings of the subconscious. But we may also argue that they actually relate to supernatural occurrences, such as meetings with spirits that have transcended the grave. These ghost stories have come down through the years by word of mouth, as they were told and retold by neighbors and visitors to the church. Most senior citizens in the valley vividly recall the old tales.

Until it was razed a few years ago, a small house, one of the oldest in the valley, stood not far from the church, on the other side of the Swamp Road. In the 1880's, Jacob Schultz and his wife Rebecca lived there, carving out a meager living on nine acres of land and doing odd jobs for farmers in the neighborhood. They used to tell of the following experience, which they believed was an actual encounter with the ghost of a young woman with a baby in her arms.

The incident took place on a starless night in early May, when the Schultzes were still sitting on their front porch, relaxing after a long, hard day. They were about to retire for the night, when the air suddenly turned cold and they sensed the approach of someone; it turned out to be the shadowy form of a young woman in mourning, passing by on her way to the church. Their scalps tightened and fear would not let them move as they watched the dark-robed shadow enter the church. Soon the interior was washed with soft candlelight, and they could clearly see her silhouette as she moved slowly from pew to pew, as if she were introducing her baby to each member of the congregation. After the last "introduction," she left as quietly as she had come. All the while, the Schultzes were sitting, quivering with fright, unable to move or talk until long after the ghost had left.



But the next day they could not keep quiet about what they had seen. For some people the story was just too much to believe, although others have reported similar experiences, especially near midnight on May 3. They are convinced that the ghost of a young woman, who actually had been a member of the congregation during the Civil War, often returns to the church on the anniversary of the Battle of Chancellorsville. It seems her childhood sweetheart had joined Captain Andrew Musser's Company D of the Centre County Regiment (the 148th) in August 1862, and was killed eight months later in Virginia, in that terrible battle which was responsible for the deaths of so many fathers and sons from Penns Valley. When she gave birth to a beautiful boy in June 1863, there was no father, for he lay buried in a soldier's grave near Chancellorsville. But the congregation never accepted her story of young love and war tragedy, and the members shunned and wronged her with every opportunity, refusing to welcome her baby. After a while both disappeared and were never seen again, but their ghosts often return in search of the kindness and love which the congregation denied them.

Nor is this the young mother's only nocturnal activity, for her ghost may also be heard at times when the fog settles over the swamp and the moonrays enfold the beautiful church spire. Many people have heard moaning, weeping and sighing in the valley, and a ghostly voice calling for the baby's father — "Will . . . Will . . ."

* * * * *

When you visit Penn's Cave, which is down the road from the church just half-a-mile, you are in ghost country. Many visitors to the Cave who spent an evening of fun and relaxation on the picnic and playgrounds, have heard the tolling of a distant church bell. Its mournful

sound comes from the direction of Bethesda Church, just over the hill. Some visitors on their way home to Spring Mills, driving slowly along Penn's Creek road, have been startled and frightened when they suddenly heard the tolling bell. In the dark you cannot see the church, and if you are unaware of its location some 500 feet off the road down in the swamp, you can be completely mystified by the sound in the dark. But don't panic or faint from fear even if you should suddenly observe a ghost crossing the road. Just halt your car and let it pass. In the days of horses and buggies, the horses would suddenly stop in sight of a ghost. Nothing on earth could move them until it had gone.

The oldtimers of the valley have a simple explanation for the tolling bell and the midnight ghosts. They are convinced that upon the death of an old member of the Evangelical congregation, the ghosts of the departed are searching in vain for a final resting place. The church has no cemetery, which the location so close to the creek and swamp clearly makes impractical, but the ghosts of the departed do not readily concede this fact, and therefore haunt the neighborhood and toll the bell after a member's departure.

The senior citizens of Farmers Mills, in fact, expect visits from the ghosts of their departed members, and therefore refuse to be alarmed when shadowy figures are seen moving about the church at night. But they *can* still be frightened by the ghost of a headless rider who is seen, occasionally, roaming the hills and valleys of Farmers Mills. When the moon breaks through dark winter clouds it may appear for brief moments, galloping across the fields as if it were about to make a cavalry charge. The residents are reluctant to discuss their encounters with that ghastly horseman, although they are of the opinion that it is the ghost of one of their ancestors who rode with the One Hundred and Sixtieth Pennsylvania Cavalry (Anderson Troop), and lost his life in December 1863, charging Confederate artillery down in Tennessee.

The senior citizens of Farmers Mills vividly recall their supernatural encounters. But unfortunately, unexplainable phenomena usually remain unreported in today's newspapers and periodicals. They are so difficult to document and therefore invite doubt or even ridicule. Most writers summarily dismiss the reports about the visitors from the spirit world, or merely mention them in passing. But it is inconceivable that a writer about the long history of the Bethesda Church can ignore them.

THE TOURIST BUREAU SHUNS ME!

by Guy Graybill

I hoped that by now all of you would have heard much more about Pennsylvania; but I know that you haven't. Well, it certainly isn't my fault. I've really tried to make it famous; but those people at the state tourist bureau simply have closed minds. They are too narrow in their vision. They are just the opposite of the type of people that we need in tourism. In short, they don't think big!

For example, everyone knows that fame (*and* tourism fortune) comes to those states and areas which promote something unique about themselves. People listen when one mentions the rutabaga capital of the world or the home of the world's largest field mice or the applebutter center of the universe. So why shouldn't Pennsylvania reach for something like that; something that really grabs the imagination of every tourist?

Wishing to help, I thought long and hard about the possibilities. Finally I came up with a sure-fire winner. I wrote a detailed proposal and submitted it to the state tourist bureau. It was simple in conception; but it would be vast in its application. The Nittanys and the Poconos are two mountain groups in central and eastern Pennsylvania, respectively. They sit about one-hundred miles

apart. Hire a couple of contractors, I proposed, to construct a corrugated tin roof connecting the two and covering the area between. That would give the Keystone State the world's largest picnic pavilion! Tourists, I pointed out, would be glad to drive a couple of hundred miles to be able to lunch in a spot where a sudden downpour would hardly be noticed. Unfortunately for state tourism, the tourist planners scoffed.

I briefly considered not trying to help the state if that was to be the reaction of those who are supposed to encourage tourism; but while cleaning brush from the edge of my lawn some weeks later, I got another idea. Rather, I got the idea that evening when I started scratching my hands and ankles and several other parts of my anatomy. I felt sure that I'd never heard of a poison ivy festival being held anywhere. I checked. Sure enough, another proposal was born. We could make Troxelville, where the late naturalist, Euell Gibbons, lived, the poison ivy capital of the world! That town could host a Poison Ivy Festival, complete with a poison ivy parade, an ivy queen, hats, sweaters and a few scratching contests! I presented this proposal in person to the tourist bureau. The members snickered. I tried to be



flexible. "How about a poison *oak* festival?" I suggested. They laughed.

I should have quit right there; but the creative juices were now flowing. I soon offered the suggestion that we flood the state's lower fields with stagnant water, import some *Anopheles* and turn Pennsylvania into the mosquito capital of the world. There was no interest. So I mailed another plan, under which we would modernize Philadelphia. With this proposal we would recast the Liberty Bell, to eliminate that unsightly crack; turn Independence Hall into a fast-food restaurant; and completely up-date Elfret Alley! That proposal came back unopened.

Over the next year or so I offered several gems of promotional genius: 1. Hire a contractor to tunnel underground and connect all the state's several natural caves, giving the commonwealth the world's largest cavern; 2. Establish a Breakdancers' Hall of Fame; 3. Extend Groundhog Day to a week; 4. Have Pittsburgh host the world's only horseless rodeo; and, 5. Hire writers from *The National Enquirer* to rewrite the state's history!

As fast as one plan was rejected, another was in the mail: 1. Get a plumber to fix the ugly leak at "Falling Water" in Bear Run! 2. Create a massive canal from Erie to Philadelphia in order to encourage ocean-going vessels to use the state. The canal might be named for one of our former governors — the Dave Lawrence Seaway! 3. Advertise Centralia as the East Coast's only geyser basin! 4. Deepen Pennsylvania's 'Grand Canyon' to a greater depth than the one in Arizona! 5. Let Renova, an economically depressed area, regularly send parking violation tickets to Philadelphia city officials! 6. Encourage a television producer to use Chester County as a setting for a glitzy new T.V. series, PAOLI VICE!

Wasted genius; that's what it was. The members of the tourist board actually began to act hostile toward me. I am, however, a patient man. I decided to give it one more try. You see, I was toying with this splendid idea, and hated to discard it. The tallest mountain in North America, as everyone knows, is Mt. McKinley in Alaska. It is 20,320 feet high. What most people *don't know*, however, is that the Andes Mountains of South America have *forty-two* peaks that are higher than Mt. McKinley! Surely they'd be willing to sell us just one peak; and no matter which one we bought, it would give Pennsylvania the highest mountain in North America! Besides, we'd not even have to bring the entire mountain; but just slightly more than half. We'd need just enough to be sure that we had the entire peak. We've got several excavators in the state who could provide enough 'fill' to restore the remainder. In addition, Pennsylvania is much warmer and much closer to the great population centers than is Alaska. Tourists would literally flock to the area to see such an incredible natural feature. As I was completing this proposal I mentioned to some of the board members that I would personally deliver this plan to their next meeting. I was locked out!

Alright, fine. I can take a hint. If they don't want proposals that are too large for their puny minds, it's fine with me. I'm finally washing my hands of the entire effort. I think I'm cured. Although, come to think of it, while I was driving south of Chambersburg the other day, I saw — near Mont Alto — some lovely, large rock outcroppings. A local fellow told me that it is called "White Rock." Hmm. I wonder if we couldn't hire a sculptor to carve those rocks into a sort of "Mt. Altomore," with huge busts of noted Pennsylvanians, such as William Penn, Ben Franklin, Daniel Boone and Andy Warhol . . .

CORRECTION

I have been notified of an error of fact in my article on the effect of the movie *Witness* upon the Amish of Lancaster County, published in 1986 and 1987. I wish to correct that error. Amos Fisher was not photographed at a public meeting and no picture of him appeared in any Lancaster newspaper thereafter, nor did he have to apologize to the *G'mee* afterwards as I said. I do apologize to the Fisher family and to Dr. Monica Pieper, who read my paper at Essen in July 1986, as well as to Werner Enninger. John A. Hostetler first questioned the matter. Correct that error in the books, *Internal and External Perspective on Amish and Mennonite Life 2*, Essen: Unipress, 1986, 100, and in *Pennsylvania Folklife 36:3* (1987): 132.

I accepted an unsubstantiated story and failed to check out the sources. Correct your copy.

William T. Parsons



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Wednesday, 28 October 1987 North Penn Portrait Video-tapes by Jay & John Ruth, w/discussion & program	7-9:30 p.m. at Ursinus
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