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Pennsylvania

Folklife

Autumn 1983

Wyoming Valley

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COVER:

The Wyoming Massacre of July 3, 1778, since subjected to many an interpretation, is shown here in all its legendary savagery by 19th century artist Alonzo Chappel.

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The Wyoming Valley is located in Luzerne County in the mountainous anthracite region of northeastern Pennsylvania. Formed by detached, outlying ranges of the Allegheny Mountains and situated on the Susquehanna River, it is approximately twenty miles long and five miles wide. It includes 3 cities: Pittston, Wilkes-Barre, and Nanticoke; and approximately 29 boroughs and townships.

RITUAL AND FOLKLORE IN PENNSYLVANIA'S WYOMING REGION: OLD TO NEW WORLD WONDER

by Clement L. Valletta



Until 1867, packet, produce, and coal arks drawn along the North Branch Canal provided commercial and some passenger transportation before the railroad era.

Residents of the Wyoming Valley in Northeastern Pennsylvania give enthusiastic loyalty to their region. Even local college graduates do not usually venture far away if they can help it. Older residents enjoy the peace and quiet of an area large enough to have urban conveniences but small enough to retain village charms. From Pittston in the north valley (pop. 9,930) to Wilkes-Barre (51,551) and Nanticoke (13,044) to the south, a patchwork of boroughs, urban sections, and generally human scale give residents a definite sense of place. Ethnic and religious characteristics fit neatly with neighborhoods and sections and none of these has suffered the urban decay common to large cities in the Northeast. Nor does the region convey a surface sense of excitement and change.

Newcomers often suffer a mild degree of culture shock. Why, they wonder, doesn't individuality matter more than group identity? Past reputation and tradition seem more important than the present; religious and ethnic identity more predictive of human nature than personal competence. Individual loyalty to religion, group, and family elders probably goes beyond what most Americans would deem normal or necessary. In such an environment traditional folklore has to thrive; rings of ethnic and occupational lore intertwine the larger circle comprising regional identity, and multicultural activity in everything from the "ethnic" political

ticket to the many religious commemorations of local events are the real motion beneath the calm surface.

Just about every major American group has at one time or another lived and worked in the region. In the 18th century Connecticut Yankees fought Pennsylvania men, many of Scotch-Irish and German stock, for the land along the Susquehanna; and Delaware fought Colonials, Tories fought Patriots, and Iroquois and Tories fought Patriots. The brisk trade of agricultural staples in the early 19th century, and the discovery of anthracite's utility in 1808, dotted the Susquehanna with coal arks and boats and, by 1830, the North Branch Canal connected to the Nanticoke Dam, soon making transportation to Philadelphia possible. As mining increased to match the market for anthracite, Welsh and English immigrants familiar with the needed techniques offered their services, as would Irishmen evicted from famine-ruined lands owned by bankrupt Anglo-Irish and English landlords. Afterwards, a progression of ethnic tides flowed: German and Eastern European Jews; Poles from the three regions governed by Russia, Austro-Hungary, and Germany, with Russian Poles predominating; Magyars; Slovaks; Lithuanians; Tyroleans; Russians; Ukrainians; Ruthenians; Italians from the North, Central, the South, and Sicily; Syrians; Lebanese; and, in recent times, refugees from Europe and Asia. The small but long-resident black

community goes back to local slave beginnings in the 18th century. What economic progress they have made is owed to family continuity through the later centuries. There have also been contingents of Swedes, Czechs, Greeks, Albanians, Rumanians, and Croatians.¹ Such multi-group experience can not be measured in a relatively short article.

Out of such diversity, however, comes the regional identity of the Wyoming Valley, shaped by industrial and natural influences paralleling to some extent the broader history of America: settlement and expansion in the 18th and early 19th centuries, industrialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the contemporary composite of many traditions.

Samples of each era include printed and oral legends, memorates, and folk beliefs, all of which may convey some feeling for the identity of each era, and especially of how broad impersonal forces were experienced in a regional context. The narratives have their own intrinsic value as folklore and deserve commentary as such; nevertheless, I was primarily interested in how the folklore mirrored and resonated the region's people. That preoccupation led to the view that much of what they valued—and hence expressed in their identity or sense of themselves as a people—derived from a general but strong religious orientation. That they had to endure hardships in settling might begin to account for their tenacity. It may be also true that each group upon settling had to build home and church to give sanctity to their efforts and to their dignity as a people, and since there were so many groups and so many religions it was inevitable that the concerns of each reinforced the beliefs of all. Furthermore, one's religious affiliation had a lot to do with one's progress up the economic ladder, as well as one's place in the social hierarchies. Yet beneath the religious and social diversity there lay the rich subsurface common to all

civilizations—myth and its ritual expression in sacred word and ceremony. One can never be absolutely sure just how myth or ritual is reflected in folklore, but some important connection always seemed present, at least for that folklore and those beliefs that mattered most to the people of the Wyoming region. The folklore and its ritualistic elements varied in relation to formal religious beliefs. Some beliefs were made of native American materials, of both Judeo-Christian and pre-Christian origin, while some others were Old World imports. Yet both evidently filled what Carl Jung has called a religious need of the collective unconscious.² That fulfillment took regional, group, and individual shape in ways only the narratives can begin to suggest. Selected narratives and commentaries are given in chronological order, beginning at the time of the American Revolution.

The Wyoming Battle and Massacre

The early, unspoiled landscape of the Susquehanna Valley did not have a Washington Irving to describe its beauty or its promise to young Americans seeking a free but secure landhold at the colonial frontier. There spread before the pioneer as he gazed down the mountain-side mile after mile of level land enriched by spring floods; land laced with streams along which to build homes, and with open fields to till. Settlers would eventually occupy eight townships, each five miles square, along both sides of the Susquehanna River. Called Westmoreland, the early Connecticut outpost was almost immediately a battleground. In 1763, Delaware Indians attacked white settlers despite treaties signed to maintain peace. Most of the warfare after that took place between Yankees and Pennamites as both groups justified possession of the same land chartered them on separate occasions by Charles II.



“The descent into the Valley of Wyoming” was one of many popular landscapes of the area, described by English poet Thomas Campbell in 1809 as “one of the happiest spots of human existence, for the hospitable and innocent manners of the inhabitants, the beauty of the country, and the luxuriant fertility of the soil and climate.”

Yet it was not the Yankee-Pennamite Wars which have been most remembered then or now; it was rather the Battle of Wyoming or, as some call it, the Wyoming Massacre, which took place on the afternoon of July 3, 1778, just north of Forty Fort, above Wilkes-Barre. The many and varied accounts of the battle reached all parts of America and Europe. The English poet, Thomas Campbell, in his long work *Gertrude of Wyoming* refers to "the desolation of Wyoming in Pennsylvania," and although "the scenery and incidents of the poem" are connected with that event he forbears "to quote any of the historical pages which give a minute detail of it, because the circumstances narrated are disagreeable, and even horrible." He goes on to report that travellers describe "the infant colony as one of the happiest spots of human existence, for the hospitable and innocent manners of the inhabitants, the beauty of the country, and the luxuriant fertility of the soil and climate. In an evil hour, the junction of European with Indian arms, converted this terrestrial paradise into a frightful waste."³ Wyoming thus inspired a poet to transform history into a Judeo-Christian version of the American edenic myth, the "image of once-and-future paradise" laid waste by Indian and European villains.⁴

Historians like William Gordon, Charles Botta, and John Marshall in referring to the Massacre probably based their first accounts on a July 20, 1778, version printed in the *New York Journal* and later published in Poughkeepsie and elsewhere. It is worth noting carefully for its legendary significance measured in part by its inevitable historical inaccuracy:

Saturday morning, July 4th, the enemy sent 196 scalps into Fort Kingston which they invested on the land side, and kept up a continual fire upon. That evening Col. Zebulon Butler with his family quitted the fort and went down the river. Col. Nathan Denison went with a flag to Exeter Fort to know of Col. John Butler what terms he would grant on a surrender. Butler answered, 'The hatchet!' Col. Denison returned to Fort Kingston, which he defended till Sunday morning, when his men being nearly all killed or wounded he could hold out no longer, and was obliged to surrender at discretion.

The enemy took away some of the unhappy prisoners, and shutting up the rest in the houses set fire to them, and they were all consumed together. These infernals then crossed the river to Fort Wilkesbury, which in a few minutes surrendered at discretion. About seventy of the men, who had listed in the Continental service to defend the frontiers, they inhumanly butchered; and then, shutting up the rest, with the women and children, in the houses, they set fire to them, and they all perished together in the flames. After burning all the buildings in the fort they proceeded to the destruction of every building and improvement (except what belonged to some Tories).

When these miscreants had destroyed the other improvements they proceeded to destroy the crops on the ground, letting in the cattle and horses to the corn, and cutting up as much as they could, or what was left. Great numbers of the cattle they shot and destroyed, and cutting out the tongues of many others, left them to perish.

Captains James Bidlack, Robert Durkee and Samuel Ransom being made prisoners by the enemy, they stripped Bidlack, tied

him to a tree, and stuck him full of sharp splinters of pine knots; then, piling a heap of pine knots around him, they set all on fire, put Durkee and Ransom into the fire, and held them down with pitchforks. Parshall Terry, the son of a man who bore a very respectable character, had several times sent his father word that he hoped to wash his hands in his heart's blood. Agreeable to such a horrid declaration, the monster, with his own hands, murdered his father, mother, brothers and sisters, stripped off their scalps, and cut off his father's head.⁵

The article received wide publication in other journals, yet it and other accounts varied a good deal from what may actually have happened. The two men named Butler who headed each side were not related; the Tory Butler did not say "The hatchet!"; the numbers of each side were more like 350 Wyoming Militia, 200 Rangers, 500 Indian; some 150 Militia men died; the atrocity did not continue beyond the surrender the next day; women and children were not executed; the parricide probably did not occur, nor the murder of the rest of the family by the son. The facts remained and still remain embedded in legend. Local historians like Charles Miner tried to correct the earlier versions, but Miner himself (some 65 years after the event) recounts this horror of the night of July 3, 1778:

Prisoners taken under solemn promise of quarter, were gathered together, and placed in circles. Sixteen or eighteen were arranged round one large stone, since known as the bloody rock. Surrounded by a body of Indians, queen Esther, a fury in the form of a woman, assumed the office of executioner with death maul, or tomahawk, for she used the one with both hands, or took up the other with one, and passing round the circle with words, as if singing, or counting with a cadence, she would dash out the brains, or sink the tomahawk into the head of a prisoner. A number had fallen. Her rage increased with indulgence. Seeing there was no hope, Lebbeus, Hammond, and Joseph Elliott, with a sudden spring shook off the Indians who held them, and fled for the thicket: Rifles cracked! Indians yelled! Tomahawks flew! but they escaped, the pursuers soon returning to their death sports. The mangled bodies of fourteen or fifteen were afterwards found round the rock where they had fallen, scalped, and shockingly mangled. Nine more were found in a similar circle some distance above.⁶

In the years after the Massacres of Wyoming and of Cherry Valley, General Washington ordered General John Sullivan to march north into Northern Pennsylvania and New York and wreak havoc upon the orchards, crops, and towns of the Iroquois. Thus was avenged Indian and Tory brutality.

Accounts of the Battle of Wyoming undoubtedly gained sympathy for the American cause.⁷ It gave in its circulated versions substance to that article in the Declaration of Independence about the brutality of the English King: "He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions." The death and suffering of the Wyoming militia (most of them too young or too old for the regular Continental army) have been interpreted in the Valley in the way

described in the 1928 Sesquicentennial booklet: "The news of the inhuman death of these men aroused the sympathy of the nations of Europe and as result, in the belief of some historians, played a large part in inducing them to proffer the military aid which ultimately proved so effective in bringing victory to the American Cause."⁸

The sesquicentennial affair formed the ritual center about which the entire area celebrated its history, its industrial and social progress, and its future promise. Not only was local history made known in the 1928 booklet but national homage to Wyoming registered: "because of the fame of the Battle, one state, sixteen counties, and sixty-four lesser municipalities have taken the name Wyoming." Parades and floats to replicate the area's history, a reenactment of the Battle, floats and displays by ethnic and civic groups, athletic events (especially a marathon race at the site of the Battle), industrial and automotive demonstrations, exhibits of wares, and, of course, the usual speechmaking, all signified the Sesquicentennial.

The Centennial had also been an elaborate affair. On July 3, 1878, exercises were held at the Wyoming monument from 9 a.m. till late in the afternoon; on July 4, there was a parade of the Grand Army of the Republic, municipal bodies, and civic societies. It was reviewed by President Rutherford B. Hayes who, speaking as the nation's leader and symbol, said: "I claim some of the glory and endure some of the sorrow" of the Battle of Wyoming.

The Battle had that significance to the nation (at least in the period of great national and industrial expansion, 1870 - 1930) that approaches the realm of myth. In the beginning was the Battle, the bloody and heroic event about which there were many narratives that have been ever since signified in ritual, word, and deed. Wyoming was the promised yet edenic paradise, possessed by Americans, violated by savages, but restored through martyrdom. Thus was paradise earned in bloodshed.

The American-style rituals replete with monument, celebration, speeches, and presence of the President as high priest did not happen right away. During the first four decades after the Battle, Wyoming residents were not altogether sure just where the mass grave of the dead militia was located. Perhaps living memory did not require a marker. In 1832, the mass grave was found, the bones retrieved, placed in crates and stored in a room behind a warehouse. "The disinterred were first displayed to a large crowd attending ceremonies that year, after which Mr. Nicholas Butler, Minister of the Presbyterian Church, Wilkes-Barre, spoke: . . . 'Let this scalped skull (lifting one up high) answer. These heroes whose mouldering bones are before us, met the savage foe on the very soil we are now treading and purchased everything we love at the price of their lives . . . Will you permit the remains of your

ancestry to sleep in silence and solitude without a stone to tell the passing stranger where they rest?' "⁹ The residents were not moved enough right then, though within another two years the cornerstone of the monument was laid and, after repeated delays, capped in 1843. The final enclosing fence and landscaping were not completed until 1864.

The Commemoration that began in 1832 with exhortation and climaxed in the later heyday of the Valley's industrial might, entered, in the 1960s and 1970s, a period of what might be called revisionism. The committee of the 1971 commemoration invited as speaker Sydney F. Wise, then Director of the Canadian Directorate of History, whose topic was, "The Other Side of the Battle of Wyoming." He questioned English and American misconceptions about Indian methods of warfare and a non-existent monolithic Indian culture. There were many diverse Indian nations and cultures, he said, and furthermore "it was not a question as Theodore Roosevelt suggested of them (the Indians) being 'loosed' on the frontier but rather that British need coincided with their opportunity, an opportunity which they would have seized in any event." The year 1778 was the first opportunity Loyalists and Indians had to fight their own war for their own objectives. The Iroquois wanted a secure southern door to the metaphorical longhouse and some of the Loyalists wanted a return to their Susquehanna home, from which Yankees had evicted them.¹⁰ The Bicentennial celebration was, as can be imagined, not nearly so elaborate as the 1876 and 1928 affairs.

American ritual may somehow revolve about its primary edenic myth as the Wyoming event was a version. But the American habit of turning an event into rhetoric has had its predictable results. Psyche must not actually see Cupid, perhaps. A latter-day Psyche, Freudian analysis, can also be applied, if not forced too much, along these lines: The first oral and printed accounts (see above) of the Battle spoke of a parricide, matricide and fratricide, a Tory son killing a Patriot father and their family. When placed within a context of Tyrant King as Father, fertile earth as Mother and family, the murders in the narrative reenact the Oedipal myth, but the son symbolizes the tyrant and the family signifies civilization and earthly home murdered by the Tory son. The ancient taboos about parricide and incest reverse generations. Instead of the American son killing the British father and having the American earth, it is the Tory who commits the taboo offences, thus condemning himself and relinquishing thereby all rights and claim to the "once-and-future paradise."¹¹

At the historical level, the Battle was a defeat and perhaps a military mistake, because the militia should not have left the fort, and when they did, they should have sent scouts to determine the enemy's exact position before proceeding. But of course America eventually

won, and the British and Indians were removed. The Battle took its place as a moral if not actual victory, giving substance to the Declaration's outrage at British use of Indian "savages" and gaining sympathy and material aid for the Revolutionary cause.

Rhetoric, Freudian analysis, and historical revision may yet turn the mythic narrative of Wyoming into little more than sacred dust (and also take the life out of recent local rituals). But, at the time, and for at least a century and a half afterwards, the heroic event, remembered in narrative and ritual, seemed to live in people's hearts, expressing and fulfilling their sense of themselves as Americans and inheritors of Wyoming sacrifice. Even rhetoric and analysis testify to the power of this early Wyoming legend.

The Lattimer Massacre

An agricultural society replete with cyclical images of death and rebirth can give added meaning to ritual and man's sacrifice. The tree of liberty, so an image went, was fertilized by the blood of martyrs. But in an industrialized society such as the Wyoming region was to become, man had to remove himself more and more from nature. He had to work out new relationships not only to nature, but to other forces—technology, the marketplace, and capital investment—reaching into the Valley from far away. New York bank interests and English investors in the major railroad coal companies, for instance, would exercise control over local attempts to unionize or otherwise improve conditions in the mines in the 19th century.



"Lattimer Shooting," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sept. 12,



"Identifying Bodies in the Stable of Undertaker Boyle," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sept. 12, 1897.



As the Lattimer trial opened, the New York Evening Journal of February, 1898 portrayed Sheriff Martin as the "Modern Exponent of American Liberty."



The Lattimer Posse

In 1872, the first industry-wide pool in America was formed by the major railroad coal companies. Franklin B. Gowen (later nemesis of the Molly Maguires) organized the combination by enlisting the support of the presidents of the Lehigh Valley, Delaware and Hudson, Lackawanna, and Pennsylvania; all were major controllers of the coal mines and yet unmined coal lands of the Wyoming as well as of the Lehigh and Schuylkill fields. The companies agreed to fix prices and limit production to predetermined quotas.¹² Against such combined strength, there was little that mining unions like the Workingman's Benevolent Association could do. The legendary exploits of the Molly Maguires took place mainly south of Wyoming but the success of Gowen and his Pinkerton agents in destroying the Mollies and, by implication, in discrediting the WBA and even its successor the Knights of Labor, affected the entire anthracite region until the late 1890s. By then the influx of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe, together with the growing organization of the United Mine Workers, made possible the successful strike of 1902 and the

rise of the U. M. W.¹³ Before that, there was to be more bloodshed and sacrifice.

From the viewpoint of folklore and ritual, the events of September 10, 1897, at Lattimer, near Hazelton, deserve mention. During the labor unrest of that summer, immigrant striking miners marched from colliery to colliery to recruit more strikers; county authorities were called upon to check the strikers, with force if necessary. Luzerne County Sheriff, James Martin, a resident of the Valley, recruited some 90 deputies, most of whom worked for the mine companies as coal and iron police operatives. Martin and his men, armed with Winchester rifles, caught up with the strikers marching on Lattimer, and in a confrontation that is still not entirely explained, the sheriff tried to stop the marchers. The miners believed they had the right to march peaceably, led as they were by the American flag. Even though deputies earlier tore one flag down from their hands, the strikers had another and evidently believed the Hazelton authorities who had told them that they had the right to march, symbolized by the flag they were carrying. The sheriff walked out in front of the 420 marchers to read them the riot act, but the men misunderstood the sheriff and proceeded. "Angered the Sheriff reached first for the flag," but one of the marchers pulled it away.¹⁴ Looking to see who was leading the marchers, the sheriff grabbed one, put the revolver to his chest, had it pushed away by others and then pulled the trigger of the revolver. It misfired. Soon afterwards someone (some say the sheriff, others are not sure) yelled, "Fire." The man who held the flag was the first to fall. The marchers, fired upon by the deputies, fled; 19 were killed and 39 wounded. All but 6 were shot in the back. This happened at about 3:45 on the Friday afternoon of September 10, 1897.

The "Ballad of the Deputies" was printed in the Hazelton *Daily Standard*, September 17, 1897:

How proud the deputies must feel
Who took so brave a part
In that conflict where their rifles
Have pierced the manly hearts
Of honest fellow workmen
Without pistol, gun or knife,
Without the smallest weapon
To defend their sacred life.

We cannot forget the bravery
Of those noble warlike men,
Who after shooting victims down
Took aim and fired again.
Oh, noble, noble, deputies
Our heads are bent with shame,
We shake with fear and blush to hear
The list of cowards' names.

Though the press of Philadelphia
May uphold the Sheriff's name,
It makes the crime no lighter
And it lessens not the shame.

The crime you have committed
Leaves a stain forever more
On the fair name of Hazelton
Such as was never known before.
The region is in mourning
For the victims who have died,
In trying to maintain their rights,
The rights they were denied.

Beneath the starry banner
Though they came from foreign lands,
They died the death of martyrs
For the noble rights of man.
Oh, noble, noble, deputies
We will shout the news aloud,
The Sheriff was a coward
And he led a cowardly crowd.

Can you still live here and witness
The destruction you have wrought,
Where you'll hear the little orphans
Mourning o'er their fateful lot?
And hear their widowed mothers
Crying for the ones they loved,
And praying prayers of vengeance
To the Mighty One above.

If the courts of justice shield you
And your freedom you should gain,
Remember that your brows are marked
With the burning brand of Cain.
Oh, noble, noble, deputies
We always will remember,
Your bloody work at Lattimer
On the 10th day of September.

The hour and day of the event did not go unnoticed in editorial comment. Nor was the word "martyrdom" lightly used by the prosecution's most capable attorney, James Scarlet of Danville. The sheriff and his deputies were put on trial for murder, a trial which attracted national attention. Mr. Scarlet, in his summation, said, "American freedom has not come by the blood of Americans alone. It was achieved by the blood of Englishmen, Irishmen, Frenchmen, and Poles mingled together upon the altar of our country's liberty, a sacrifice to the cause of human rights"; and later in the summation: "You heard Deputy Platt say, flip-pantly that it was the blood of a martyr which stained his clothing. I tell you . . . those words so lightly spoken will prove prophetic. For it is written that the blood of a martyr shall not be shed in vain and that whatever the decision in this case may be, there shall be no more slaughter by a Sheriff and his posse in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania."¹⁵ Scarlet spoke eloquently, but the sheriff and his posse were declared not guilty by the jury.

A plaque has since been placed at Lattimer where the shootings took place and ceremonies have been held there occasionally but, for the most part, the Lattimer Massacre seems all but forgotten by local residents. This has been explained in part by the self-effacing temperament of Slavonic people.¹⁶ Perhaps this is so because Korson does not, so far as I know, present any folklore about Lattimer.

The mythic references to “martyrdom” were made not by Slavs but by nativists who were defending the Slavs. Yet some local people remember hearing about the tragedy and the trial. In Plains, close to Wilkes-Barre, where Sheriff Martin’s house still stands, former miners when asked about Lattimer, will not say much at first, but sooner or later will point out how “easy” it was for “a man to get black-balled in the mines. They didn’t like you to be talking about some things and if you did, you’d be out of a job. Men had big families in those days.” The tragedy at Lattimer continued beyond 1897, but its significance was not uttered aloud in legend. It is remembered but listed as one among many violations of the miner by the powers that were. Retribution would come in its own way and at its own time—or so the miners seemed to imply. The Lord takes care of his own.

The forgotten Lattimer Massacre contrasts with the much commemorated Wyoming Massacre in many ways, at least on the surface. Attorney Scarlet’s references to martyrdom and sacrifice on the altar of freedom were not accepted outwardly by the Slavs themselves. The defense attorneys—especially John Lenahan—likened the Slavs to “a lawless horde,” like “Huns under Attila, the Scourge of God”—terms reminiscent of Indian savagery of 1778. The once-and-future paradise of 1897 was possessed by the white man and there could be no reversal, for the villain was defined. In this sense, the Slav represented a newer version of the old savage villain, a villain who did not deserve rights he had not earned, nor indeed, did he deserve to live if you violated the law. Such was the burden of the editorial in the *Wilkes-Barre Record* after the verdict: “. . . if law and order could be preserved only by resort to violence and bloodshed it was better that the offenders against the law should perish than those who were defenders of the law”; and further “. . . this class of foreign labor has multiplied crime, immorality and lawlessness. . . .” “The one thing remaining is to make the effort to Americanize them.”¹⁷

The Slavonic and other inheritors of Lattimer would make their own kind of Americanization. Unwilling and—because of their economic position perhaps—unable to commemorate Lattimer openly, they nonetheless remembered in their own way. After the passage of 50 years a marker would be placed at the site and a few articles written, but words were to the new immigrants less important than actions. They joined ranks around holy symbols that were secularized but no less significant in America. The Lattimer dead were martyrs, the U. M. W. union a crusade, and (as will be discussed further in the conclusion), Johnny Mitchell became the miners’ “patron Saint.” This immigrant synthesis of ritual and folklore can be seen in an Old to New World context.



This wall hanging incorporates in cloth the multiple origins of the Wyoming peoples.

An Old-New World: Multi-Cultures and Continuity

Immigrants naturally saw American experience through an Old World lens. To them the events at Lattimer were perhaps not as important as political independence for Slovakia, or Lithuania, or Poland. Valleyites of those ancestries, like others elsewhere in America, contributed money and political influence in the cause of their homeland’s independence.¹⁸ To the new immigrants—and of course to many of the old immigrants—America stood for a kind of universal freedom for all ethnic groups and nation states around the world. This political view was accompanied by an economic one since most men came here initially with the thought of returning. According to an Ukrainian immigrant account:

While everyone was thinking of returning home, the life did its own thing. One started gradually to get used to America. If one was married, he brought his wife and children here. If unmarried, he looked for a wife. One never dropped the thought of returning home, but kept postponing it. And when he got a job which looked like a steady occupation, when he got married in America, when the children began to grow up, he couldn’t return to the old country regardless of what he was saying. If he went there, it was just for a visit.

The only true immigrants, it is said, were the Irish and the Jews. The Irish had little or no choice but to emigrate because of evictions and famine in Ireland, and the Jews because of harsh anti-Semitism throughout Europe. The other new immigrants, mostly young males, came to make as much money in as short a time as possible in order to return and buy land made available by land banks and other agencies in Europe. The great powers of Russia, Austro-Hungary, and



Some of the Valleyites—like the Lithuanians (Lietuva)—seem to share the sentiments of Nobel-prize winning poet Czeslaw Milosz, whose passion remakes a strip of land between Lithuania and Poland into a testament to lost freedom. St. Casimir is the patron saint of these lands.

Germany, caught up in world-wide forces of an industrial and money-based economy, had to find ways of maintaining the solvency of large land holders whose farming and manufacturing practices were becoming obsolete. The governments would provide low-interest loans to small farmers who wanted more land. In addition, the small holders themselves engaged in cooperative financial associations to acquire land.¹⁹ How many came here and returned home is not known exactly, but estimates range from one quarter to two-fifths. The number who wanted to return and did not or could not probably varied with the state of the American economy. While in America, a Welsh mining laborer, John R. Williams, wrote home to a friend about the region in 1895:

Labor is so plentiful that operators can do just what they please. Pennsylvania is swarming with foreigners—Poles, Hungarians, Slavish, Swedes, and Italians, etc.—who are fast driving the English, Welsh, and Scotch miners out of competition. Noticeably, the Poles and Hungarians are a harder-working people and physically stronger men than the English and Welsh. They live much harder and at about half the cost and can stand more and harder work than our countrymen.

Before the influx of the foreigners I have named into this country, the Welsh had the best show in the mines here, but in consequence of their foolhardy and unreasonable impositions in pretty well everything, they at length became perfectly unmanageable and the operators had no alternative but to send and get whole cargoes of the foreigners I have named, who now practically monopolize the business, and no longer will America hold out a friendly hand to the British miner who must stay at home and do the best he can there or come here and starve. There are in America today and especially in the West, thousands upon thousands of our countrymen who would gladly return to England and Wales if they could only do so, but they cannot find the money.²⁰

But this economic form of separation, of using industry and mining to further one's own special interests, soon worked the other way in the American

ethnic community. Opportunities for advancement came from the booming growth of ethnic populations needing foodstuffs, drink, and services of all kinds. These opportunities must have attracted the bourgeois interests of those immigrants who set up stores, shops, small banks, saloons, funeral homes, contracting services, and small industries. It was as if the American dream of progress and freedom was lived out new, ethnic group by ethnic group, just as it had been for previous groups of English, German, Welsh, and Irish settlers. Once those immigrants who decided to stay started families, they began to live that American experience common to virtually every group beginning with the Puritans—to make a New England, New Holland, New Germany, etc. in America. That meant setting up a sanctified environment of church—and often school—dedicated to a Patron. Church, family, and neighborhood comprised the new homeland. Within the neighborhood in the Wyoming region, most immigrants had tiny farms in their own backyards where staples were grown in abundance to be canned for the winter, and where chickens, ducks, and often pigs and sometimes even cows were raised. In the southern anthracite fields which were more spread out, the company-owned store and house were more the rule than in the more compact and built-up Wyoming region.

Once established in America, the immigrants found that conditions were not very different from what they had experienced in their homelands. While it was true that American industry outranked any other in the world, it was also true that industrial work was not unknown to the immigrants before they arrived in the New World. Recent scholarship has shown that many new immigrants were mobile, moving from village to European city or to another country in search of money to send home.²¹ America was not always the first emigrant destination. Furthermore, the industrialization (and hence the changes) forced on an agricultural way of life were going on in both the Old and New Worlds, but America offered if not better opportunities, ones that could be taken advantage of more quickly. It was a place to make money to save or send home, and once the immigrant miner was here there were the means at hand to protest for more. Many of these themes emerge in the song, "Me Johnny Mitchell Man" written by Anthracite troubadour, Con Carbon, to appeal to the Slavonic worker's loyalty in the 1902 strike.²²

Once settled in this ethnic neighborhood and employed at the local colliery, the heads of household deployed their family as an economic unit much as they had seen their parents do in the Old World with, of course, new twists. The children could work as breaker boys in the mines or as bobbin tenders in the silk mills. The wife had to run the house and take care of the boarders (usually of their own nationality)



Breaker boys at work and, in a photographer's pose, at play. They worked a 10 to 12 hour day.

who worked in the mines or metal fabricating plants. Since coal mining was an erratic source of income what with strikes and seasonal layoffs, the entire family had no choice but to work together. As late as 1920, the anthracite commission found that the head wage-earner could bring in only 50 per cent of what the household needed.²³ It was no coincidence that entrepreneurs established silk and other textile mills in the anthracite region; in fact, northeast Pennsylvania out-ranked all other regions in state production of silk.²⁴ Soon after the state of Pennsylvania made it unlawful in 1903 to employ those below 14 years of age, technology was developed to pick impurities mechanically out of the coal.²⁵ Breaker boys were no longer available, so in this instance labor necessity was the mother of mining invention. Still, the breaker boy system continued in the Valley well beyond 1903, as this 71 year old Irish-American woman remembered:

Pickin' slate is terrible, terrible work for young boys. We'd send the boys out in the morning to the breaker but before they went, we'd wrap their fingers tight so they wouldn't get hurt from the pickin'. It wouldn't do any good through, they'd come back at night their fingers bleeding and their backs achin' from bending over all day. They'd cry and cry sometimes because of the pain. But what could we do, there was no more money in those days and all those kids to feed.

In the Old World major land-owners controlled the economic destinies of the small holder; in the New, the five or six major railroad coal companies controlled the work lives of the miners. The new immigrant was at the same rank in the hierarchy he was in Europe, only in America it was an "underground aristocracy" with English or Anglo-American owner-bankers, Welsh superintendents, and Irish foremen. As in Europe, the peasant groups here formed their own religious bodies and their own cooperatives to extend credit, buy and sell goods, and to protect themselves with insurance policies.²⁶ From Europe to the Wyoming region, continuity counted as much as change.

Anthracite Superstitions

The same old fate in New World dress dropped the mine roof, filled the mine with gas, and killed wantonly. The following poem is from the son (not himself a miner) of a miner who often repeated it:

The powder burns you see upon my face
I'll tell any man it's no disgrace
For I've earned my living from the time of my birth
Way down in the bowels of mother earth.

You laugh and scoff at the life I lead,
And at the superstitious beliefs I heed,
But you've never been down in the earth below
So what right do you have to mock me so?

Several superstitions may have had more sense than "superstition" about them. If a car of coal that a mining laborer had just loaded spilled accidentally, the laborer would often refuse to reload it. According to a miner (62, Protestant, German) there was some justification for this belief: "When a miner's car would spill over, the miner would be so damn mad that he would become careless and probably cause an accident of some sort and because of this, it would be better if he did not reload his own car."²⁷ Older miners would not go into a mine that had no rats, and as every greenhorn knew "when the rats run, you run" because "they sensed a cave-in before you did." For much the same reason, a mule driver would not go into a working if his mule refused, after much urging, to go. The fireboss had to check the roof because the mule could



Mules were used well into the 20th century, but by 1920 the use of dynamite and power-driven cars and tools made mining less a craft than a modern industry, with newer, but no less potent, hazards for the miner.

probably hear it about to break loose. There were occasions when it was best not to go to work: "If a loved one is returning from a trip, say, or you haven't seen a close friend in a long while, you should celebrate and take the day off, or else you will have bad luck" (same informant). It was a good idea evidently to keep one's mind on one's work.

Many other superstitions that were more like informal religious beliefs, linked formal religion to the everyday occupation of mining. A few miners would not go near those miners who cursed for fear the Lord would take offense and there might be an accident. One miner, a carrier of black powder necessary for blasting, was especially sensitive, and "Any time Steve would come near Warren, he would curse up a storm and it drove poor Steve crazy. Warren did it himself and got others to do it. Finally it drove Steve to quit and move to another mine" (same informant). The miners did not work on Good Friday from one to three o'clock, nor did they start a new job on Fridays. For some the religious tie was definite, but "There was a great many people who were not religious and for them it was a superstition; they did not want to tempt fate." Miners did not work on Ascension Day. Italian miners did not work on St. Barbara's Day since she was their protector and to work then would be "an insult." Polish miners blessed themselves with holy water each morning and carried holy medals.

To miners and their families, this rather prophetic message would make sense: "We moderns are so captivated by and entangled in our subjective consciousness that we have forgotten the age-old fact that God speaks chiefly through dreams and visions."²⁸ One of many accounts of dream warning remains fixed in an informant's (middle-aged German Catholic) memory:

When I was about ten years old around 1930, I can remember my father telling me the story of my uncle's death. One night my father had a bad dream concerning an accident at the mines. This dream included my Uncle Bill; he was one of the men my father saw in his dream. The next day my father tried to stop my uncle from going to work. My Uncle Bill would not believe this dream and went to work. That day he was crushed to death by a runaway coal car. My father believed if he could have convinced my uncle to stay home, he would not have died. I don't know about other dreams, only this one. Whether or not I believe in these dreams, I'm not sure but this one was true and it's hard to disprove A dream is a look at the future.

Stories of the ghosts of dead miners haunting the mine are well known, and so were those of ghosts at the surface—ghosts of trapped miners whose dead bodies were never recovered. In a mine patch near a shaft that caved and trapped a miner, several residents of the Irish-American village report their experiences that began shortly after the cave-in of some 42 years ago:

The shortest walk for me was through the field, and usually it was about midnight that I'd be walking home. I never saw a soul when I was walking through there at night, and I didn't

even carry a flashlight or lantern. I was surprised to see a lantern coming toward me, and even more shocked when I saw it was a lamp on a miner's hat. I kept walking and came upon this man with this miner's hat on. I stopped a few feet away from him to light a cigarette and he asked me if I had a light. I turned my head and reached into my pocket for a match; when I looked up he was gone. I never ran so fast in my life and I barely slept that night. The thing that bothered me was I didn't have a sip to drink that night; I was sober as a judge.

Another report is from a woman living near the colliery:

The last time the ghost appeared it was at our back fence, the lantern rose a bit like someone was looking for something, but we didn't see anybody. It went out again and we were petrified, we thought it would come closer still, but it didn't, we didn't see it again that night. From then on we didn't sit on the porch late at night and we kept an eye on the field. The following night nothing happened, but the next night, when we thought it was all over with it showed up again and did the same thing to us. It was that trapped miner, I tell you, and all our neighbors saw it too. They should have never left him down there.

There were of course superstitions that had little relation to ritual, and could be explained as instances of ominal magic. Such a one is recounted by a former miner (of German Protestant descent):

If certain men's oil lamps went out and they could not keep them lit they would leave the mine and go home because they figured something was wrong at home. Dave Miller worked on the same shift as I did and one day as we were going into the mines, Dave was having trouble lighting his lamp and he began to worry. Because as he told me he once knew a man with this problem and when he went home, his house was burned down. So when he still could not keep it lit, he quit and went home. When Dave went home, everything seemed to be all right from the outside, but when he went in and went upstairs he found his wife in bed with another man. He simply told this guy he was a better man than he was and left the house and never returned.

Mining sooner or later tested a man's courage; meeting the physical challenge in a super-human way and living to tell about it gave miners their finest moments. They enjoyed, and still do, story-telling at the saloons. Some tales were circulated at home, like this mining version of a traditional test of fear (H 1416 and Death in Grave Yard, N 384.2). It is told by a Polish-American woman:

Miners always sat around taverns boasting of their strength and their bravery. One miner used to boast that he was the bravest and after a few drinks the rest of the miners decided to test him. There was a superstition that centered around a certain cemetery in their community. Everyone was afraid to go near it after dark because it was haunted. Well, these miners gave the boasting miner a stick that he was to take to that cemetery at twelve o'clock midnight and drive it into a certain grave. The rest of the miners would go in daylight to see if it was there. The miner with the stick at midnight donned his long cloak (which was the garb of the day) and set out for the cemetery. He was very scared but he went to the grave and drove the stick in. Without realizing it, as he drove the stick into the ground, it also caught his cloak. When he went to get up, he couldn't as he felt something holding him. He thought the corpse reached up and grabbed his cloak and wouldn't let go. In the morning when the other miners went to check for the stick, they found him laying on the grave—dead. He died of fright.



The Susquehanna River swirling into the collapsed Knox mine in January 1959 ended the era of deep mining in the Wyoming Valley.

Mining required both the strong back of the laborer and the clever ability of the miner, the one who decided how to get at the coal and just where to set the powder charge. A contract miner was paid for each car of coal he produced, and the miner in turn paid the laborer. According to a retired miner of Welsh descent, a contract miner could produce a lot of cars from the straight pitch chamber, one that extended straight up from a main gangway. The miner could blast the chamber and coal fell straight down into a box at the bottom, from which laborers loaded the cars. There was a tall-tale account of a 19th century Welsh miner who “could blast in his chamber one time, and then go back to the Old Country to visit his family. He’d return a month later and his two laborers would still be loading coal . . .”

Another miner of English descent, who is now well into his 80s, said he was the best laborer the Sugar Notch Coal Company ever had:

It was almost as if I didn’t have a backbone; I could work in a coal chamber 20 inches high and get more coal out with one hand than the others could get with two. My hands were so strong and hard from callouses that I almost never needed a shovel to get the coal to the coal cars. One day when I was working I got caught between two pillars. It took a long, long while to get me out and when they did I found my arm was broken. I walked to the main shaft to try to get to a doctor up on top but when they said I had to wait an hour I said never mind and went back to work. One day some greenhorn miner was set to fire the charges in the far wall of the chamber I was in. Something went wrong and they went off. I was standing only a few feet away and I was lucky that the holes were facing the other way, otherwise I’d have been blown to bits. Yeah, I guess I really was something in my day. As I recall, I fired that greenhorn right on the spot. I got asthma from working in the mines those 30 years, but I enjoyed it. If I had a chance to repeat it, I probably would. It was hard sometimes getting to the mine before daybreak and leaving after dark. For a while there, it seemed I never saw the light of day except on Sunday . . .

On the Thursday morning of January 22, 1959, the swollen Susquehanna River broke into the Knox mine south of Pittston and trapped 45 workers; 33 men were rescued, but 12 lost their lives. Mining beneath the river had been common practice, but never within 18



One of the survivors of the Knox disaster that took the lives of 12 men.

inches of the bottom. The flooded mine workings resulted in the virtual end of deep mining in the Wyoming region. What follows is an account by a survivor of Slavonic ancestry:

We were mining 18 inches below the water. We could hear the river. We got a break around half past eight. We heard the breaking and the sound of water rushing in. I saw three men get smashed against the pillars right in front of my eyes. They got killed right there. I said, “Boys, come on. We got to get out of here.” We started walking. The water was already up to our chests and it kept pouring in on us. And there were chunks of ice falling all around us, too—chunks 10 feet long and three feet thick. I remember when it happened because it was at half past eight. I said, “Come on, there’s a show, the 26 Mule Borax Team on at half past eight and there’s 26 of us. I’ve got to see it.” We saw the rats running in front of us. My father always said, “Never kill a rat in the mine. He’s your best friend. Follow him if anything ever happens.” So we did, but a rat is this big (motions to about a 10-inch span with his hands) and he can fit in a hole in the wall. I’m a lot bigger than a rat. I can’t go where he can, so we kept walking through the water. We stumble. One guy was carrying a case of dynamite. If we couldn’t get out we were going to take the dynamite way out. We kept walking for a while. We keep ending up at the same place though. We didn’t know exactly where we were or where to go, but I had a feeling about walking in a certain direction though. I don’t know what made me go that way. I had never been in that part of the mine before but I’m glad I did or else I wouldn’t be here now. God was with me. The foreman was with us and I said to him, “Give me about 20 minutes to come back.” I was in water to my neck now. I came to a place that was a gangway, a shaft for air that drops down far. But I didn’t know it was there because of the water. I stepped and went down over my head. Something made me grab a hold of something and I pulled myself back up and out of it. I had a new pair of pants on that day and they were frozen stiff by that time from the cold water. I crawled through a little hole and down the other side. When I came out I saw a man waving a light maybe 20 feet ahead of me. He said, “You’re safe now.” I said, “There’s 25 more men back there. I got to go back for them.” I didn’t have to go back in the water for them but I felt I had to. It wouldn’t be right if I didn’t. When I got back to them I told them I saw the man with the light. They said, “Eddie, you’re crazy.” I said, “I saw him. Those of you who want to come can come. Those of you who don’t want to, can stay here.” So I led them out to the gangway but this time I knew it was there and I swung around the side of it. I tied a rope, oh maybe 20 feet, up ahead to a rock to pull them across with. They widened the little hole out to maybe two feet by four feet with

their tools. They had tools, you know. But we had only two lights between all of us. By the time we reached the man with the light, they had lowered a rope to pull us out with. I found the way out so I should have been the first one out but they were all in a hurry. All they were thinking of was their families. I was too. I was the last one out.

On January 22 each year a religious service is held in commemoration of those who died and those who survived.

Multi-culture and Folk Beliefs

Religious diversity distinguishes the Wyoming region and has since its founding. In 1819, for instance, three religious bodies in Wilkes-Barre all wanted to continue to use jointly the Bible Society building at Public Square. But soon the Methodists objected to the Congregationalists' desire to have a shorter catechism, and the Congregationalists removed the evergreens that the Episcopalians used to decorate the building at Christmas time. So the Episcopalians built their own church; the Methodists used the second floor of the court house as their meeting place; and the Congregationalists held services in their own meeting house.²⁹ It is not difficult of course to trace such early religious differences to English class and ethnic distinctions. With the passage of centuries, Protestant internal differences have blurred along with the class, ethnic, and hence folk differences. At present, the most interesting folk beliefs and practices seem part of Catholic tradition because of the comparative recency of that immigration. Moreover, the verbal and Scriptural orientation of Protestantism and Judaism may be somewhat less given to the more ritualistic practices ordinarily associated with Catholicism.

Such generalizations are risky, for it is especially difficult to assess the multi-cultural meanings of American regional life. To those Protestants whose descendants fought on one side or the other at the Wyoming Battle, expression of feeling has ritual expression that extends beyond the church to the entire community. That they also happen to comprise the older Wyoming families makes their and the community's commemoration one and the same. That they also constitute something of a local elite, having been around longer and in control of most local resources, has given them the added burden, as seen in the reaction to the Lattimer Massacre, of "Americanizing" the recent immigrants. Part of that mission has had to do with the labeling, begun at Wyoming, of "savage," un-American practices on the one side and "civilized," American ones on the other.

Since such labeling involves social, economic, and political power, the attitude of the elite becomes significant, going back, as it does, to the rationalism of the 18th century and the industrialism of the 19th century. The "machine in the garden" is imaged well by a coal colliery standing black before an Appalachian spring. Determining what was natural and what neces-

sary, what was rational, what irrational, American and not American has become more and more difficult in the region as coal mining progressed over the decades. The coal pillars that were left at the first mining were removed at the second mining, and the surface has often subsided, cracking homes and streets; even those in Forty Fort and Wyoming beneath the site of the Battle. "Savagery" has taken on new meanings in the modern era.

For other groups, especially the Irish, the Americanization process has taken on even greater ambiguity. Whereas the old Protestant elite may still look back contentedly to the early days, the Irish have had to become "American" and at the same time "Americanize" the immigrant through, as it turned out, the Catholic Church. Irish control of the regional and national Catholic Church was perhaps best symbolized by the Rev. J. J. Curran, the local pastor who worked closely with President Theodore Roosevelt to settle the 1902 strike. They became friends, Roosevelt coming to visit Father Curran several times, perhaps most notably in 1905 when Father Curran and Roosevelt reviewed the convention and march of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union.

A long term difficulty for the Irish hierarchy has been, however, in dealing with the ethnic plurality of the diocese. In 1938, for example, Luzerne County "was surfeited with 70 national (or ethnic) congregations as opposed to 28 English speaking parochial groups (Irish and German)."³⁰ Except for the formation of the separatist Polish National Catholic Church in Scranton in the 1890s, the problem of "trusteeism" remained largely internal, albeit heated. Whether or not the Irish bishops greatly appreciated cultural diversity and immigrant initiative, they did have to accept that reality: "As the ghettos multiplied . . . separate congregations were formed without (the bishops') knowledge; plots of land were purchased; . . . churches were from start to finish a lay enterprise. Having gone that far by themselves, they would then 'request' a blessing upon their project as well as the appointment of a pastor who shared their national origins."³¹ Since the bishops by and large went along, it made it easier ecclesiastically for ethnic diversity to persist; nevertheless, the ethnic parishes had to struggle to maintain their traditions against what some regarded as the Hibernianization of the Catholic Church.³²

Both the Irish Catholic hierarchy and laity in the 19th century faced what remains an unresolved issue to many local Irish Americans: Are the Molly Maguire legends fact or fiction? A local historian who is also a kind of tradition bearer writes in his book, *The Great Molly Maguire Hoax*, of "Gowen's Molly Maguires," and of Gowen's "envy" of Jack Kehoe's political power. Gowen, the "Grand Mogul of Hard Coal Land," decided, according to McCarthy, that "Kehoe



Baptist

The simple dignity of churches of Welsh founding; the Welsh have, to this day, carried on in the Valley the ancient tradition of the eisteddfod, a competition of singing and recitation.



Baptist



Congregational



Presbyterian



An early rendering of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, the Irish Catholic mother church of the area, established in 1845.

St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church was founded by German immigrants in 1855; this German Gothic building was erected during 1883-86.

St. Conrad's Young Men's Society was chartered in 1810 with the "idea of keeping men of German descent together."



St. Patrick's R.C. church evolved in 1921 from St. Mary's as the parish grew along the Rolling Mills section of Wilkes-Barre.



Sacred Heart Church, associated with Fr. Murgas, and Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Cathedral, associated with Fr. Toth, were established in the 1890's and built in this century along North Main St., beside churches of many other national origins.



The Polish Union of the U.S. of N.A. organized in 1890 in St. Paul, MN moved to Wilkes-Barre in 1908. It offers insurance and home loans to its members as well as a living "symbol of family love."



The Poles early formed civic and cultural associations; pictured are a Chopin Society and a Polish-American unit of the Red Cross.



had to go.”³³ Kehoe has been recently pardoned (1979) by the Commonwealth for the crime for which he was hanged in 1878, thus giving some credence to those who believe the Molly Maguires “never existed” or as the pardon of Kehoe reads: “The trials and executions were part of a repression directed against the fledgling mine workers’ union of that historic period.” A Scranton-based folk group, “The Irish Balladeers,” have recorded an album (under the Avoca label) featuring several mining songs, including the following one, written by Charles Rogers, a member of the group:

Sons of Molly

When the wind blows wild at night as the breaker melancholy,
If you stand in the dark with your ear to the wind you can hear
the son of Molly,
Deep in the dark of the old mine shaft you can smell the smoke
and fire, and the whisper low in the mines below is the
ghost of Molly Maguire.

Now I’ll tell you boys Mickey Doyle is my name and I come from
Carbon County
And I shot the boss of the Lansford Mine and my soul is up for
bounty
But I will die with my head held high for I fought for the men
below
The men who slave and sweat and die, down in that black hell hole.

Now I’ll tell you boys Edward Kelly is my name and I’m hanging
in the morning,
For I shot Jack Jones for skinning my bones and I curse the
sound of morning
But I will die with my head held high for I fought for the men
below
The men who slave and sweat and die, down in that black hell hole.

Now I’ll tell you boys Alex Campbell is my name and this is the
day I’ll expire
And I will fall from the gallows’ wall just for being a Molly
Maguire
But I will die with my head held high for I fought for the men
below
The men who slave and sweat and die, down in that black hell hole.

When the wind blows wild at night as the breaker melancholy
If you stand in the dark with your ear to the wind you can hear
the sons of Molly,
Deep in the dark of the old mine shaft you can smell the smoke
and fire, and the whisper low in the mines below is the ghost
of Molly Maguire.

The multi-cultural context and the Irish role as middleman between old and new immigrants may have something to do with Irish sensitivity to the old legends. A local folk group notes that while members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and other societies enjoy “the old rebel songs” they do not much care to discuss the history of the Molly Maguires. One would think the songs and legends, while interesting, are and should remain a part of the past and have no great importance in the present. But a kind of legendary lore about the legends themselves has developed. Local Irish consciousness seems caught between two conflicting interpretations: The Mollies as cult-heroes on the one hand but on the other a band of “murderers,” excommuni-

cated by the church and condemned by both old and new immigrant groups. Thus, one wonders just how such folk beliefs and attitudes may fill the unspoken needs of practitioners. Ethnicity may do more than contribute to an individual’s “sense of identity” in the spread of “urban industrialization and standardization.”³⁴ Carl Jung puts the point perhaps too strongly, but his viewpoint may be relevant to ethnic as well as pre-modern belief: Modern man can “translate his ideas into action without a hitch, whereas the primitive seems to be hampered . . . by fears, superstitions, and other unseen obstacles to action. The motto, ‘where there’s a will, there’s a way’ is the superstition of modern man.” But, according to Jung, modern man is “blind to the fact, that with all this rationality and efficiency he is possessed by ‘powers’ that are beyond his control. His gods and demons have not disappeared at all; they have merely got new names. They keep him on the run with restlessness, vague apprehensions, psychological complications, an insatiable need for pills, alcohol, tobacco, food—and above all, a large array of neuroses.”³⁵

Be that as it may, folk belief does give at least symbolic substance to gods and demons. Elders fill the role of guide and teacher, church ritual serves loosely as the text, and tradition assumes the archetypal shapes of the unconscious. A most direct expression in ethnic folklore is the ongoing cycle of death and rebirth: good is associated with health, fertility, and divine blessings; evil with sickness, the evil eye, and witches.

To the Irish, according to a woman who emigrated when a youngster, death was a passage to a better life, so why not celebrate with a party. The corpse should be dressed in the clothes he wore while living rather than in a brand new outfit. They practiced wailing or keening, and kept the night vigil because “maybe the person wasn’t really dead.” The interviewee repeated the old Irish folk song “Paddy Murphy’s Wake,” which she said was a “true story of just one vigil that her mother told her about”:

The night that Paddy Murphy died,
The night I’ll never forget,
All the boys got blooming drunk,
And some ain’t sober yet.

As long as the bottle was passed around,
And the boys were feeling gay,
O’Leary and his bagpipes, the music then did play.

Oh, that’s how they showed their respect to the Paddy Murphy’s,
That’s how they showed their honor and their pride.
They said it was a sin and a shame, and they winked at one another,
And everything in the wake house went, the night Pat Murphy died.

Mrs. Murphy sat in the corner, pouring out the grief,
While Kelly and his buddies, the dirty-rotten thieves,
They snuck into the attic room and a bottle of whiskey stole.
They put the bottle on the corpse to keep the liquor cold.

(Third stanza repeated)

T'was two o'clock in the morning, some dirty blue-eyed scamp,
He wrote upon the coffin Murphy was a tramp.

In the German neighborhood of Wilkes-Barre lives a woman who remembers the healing work of her grandfather, a pow-wower. Her grandfather "was the seventh son of a seventh son and was born with a veil over his head. He used (Johan George) Hohman's book in practicing and could stop bleeding very well. Once he was summoned to Pittsburgh to stop a case of bleeding, which he did. One thing about him and most other pow-wowers is that they did not make their living from pow-wowing. They performed it as their duty in life." She remembered some of his remedies. "When a child was liver-grown (had severe abdominal pains) he would take his thumbs and middle fingers and rub them in good grease. Then, he would follow the countour of the ribs with these fingers, while naming the three highest names, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He repeated this three times." She also said her father could cure waste of life (a type of malnutrition) by using special herbs, the names of which she did not know. "He would put these in water to form a cloudy liquid in which to bathe the child. When the water cleared, it meant the child was cured." Another type of homeopathic cure was given by another German-American resident: "To cure goiters, take the shells of eggs and dry them on the stove. When the moon is waning, take and crush the egg shells and mix them with honey and swallow the mixture. Do this for three periods of the moon and the goiter will disappear."

Folk belief integrates natural, human, and supernatural realms with references to the Christian trinity and to the number three, as triangular unity, in pre-Christian tradition. Folklore "outers" those feelings and instincts of the unconscious and so does religion, but it is not always certain where folk belief begins and religious belief leaves off.³⁶ What so many people in the Wyoming Valley feel about their folk belief and their religious belief seems tied to some need that goes beyond retaining a sense of identity. Especially is this so for Polish Americans, as in the following narratives and descriptions associated with part of the church calendar. The sources are mainly middle-aged and elderly women from DuPont, a Polish American community. While some of the practices, with the notable exception of the Christmas *wigilia* and Easter *paska*, have changed or are no longer practiced, the residents do not seem content about or easily reconciled to the changes:

St. Andrew, he starts advent There's St. Andrew and St. Catherine. He starts it and she ties it. After (sic) St. Catherin's Day it's strictly Advent. And we weren't allowed music in the house whatsoever 'til Christmas Eve after the Christmas Eve supper at the vigil.

The *wigilia* (vigil), or waiting for the birth of the Christ child, is celebrated with the Christmas Eve Supper. It begins when the members of the household

break the traditional wafer, *oplatek* (from the Latin *oblatus* meaning gift) and each shares a part of the whole or else each has his or her own wafer. This custom goes back to the 11th century as part of Polish ecclesiastical ritual and then as a more general custom, but the ritual used in its preparation continues. Oftentimes a religious order of nuns using the finest ingredients will make the wafers and emboss them with scenes of the nativity. Christian communion at the *wigilia* is made very familial. As one young person described it, the meaning of *oplatek* is the sharing: "The heart somehow softens and is willing to forget the frequent annoyances . . . even serious offenses that may occur during our daily lives." The supper begins when the first star is sighted; everyone has fasted until then. The father and mother break off a bit of each other's *oplatki*, and they embrace and kiss after exchanging good wishes. Each person then breaks bread with everyone else. The supper may vary in its details from region to region in Poland and hence in America, but usually the number of meatless courses is fixed at seven, nine, or eleven. There must not be an odd number of people at the table, although this has changed in America as families have grown smaller. An extra plate may be set if someone of the family is away or it may be set in expectation of the visit of Christ in the form of a stranger who may come. Under the white tablecloth is placed a thin layer of clean hay in honor of the Christ child. The practice may also derive from a pagan winter-time practice celebrating expected fertility of the grain. Pieces of "straw" under the cloth had uses for divining the future:

. . . when the whole family was here we used to pull straws. Who pulled the shortest straw, he would die the first, and who pulled the longest one was gonna live the longest. . . . well, the three of use are old now; now we don't want to pull a straw

This bit of ominal magic had other applications: "We looked at the straw under the children's plates and who got the shortest or longest straw—I can't remember—would be next married." The straw also had the power of touch: "On Christmas Day when you went to mass you'd take a piece of straw; one would pass it to the other one and you'd have that saying you'd never be broke, and you'd carry it around, or you'd put it in your wallet or keep it home."

When animals were kept, the father would "take any remaining *oplatki* and place a part of it in apple slices for the cows" and other animals. "After this the cows would talk at midnight. At midnight, at Christmas Eve, if you go over to your barn, and you have animals, they will talk They say that one man was trying to find out if the animals talked. He went over to the barn, and one animal said to the other, 'You know, we're going to lose our *pogodoz*,' meaning master. And you know he didn't live long. He died after, just because he was nose-y to find out."

December 26, St. Stephen's day, was in Poland the time to bless horses' feed. A tradition of throwing oats combined pagan and Christian elements since the throwing of kernels imitated a fertility rite, and, at the same time, was an association with St. Stephen's martyrdom by stoning by those who tried to corrupt him. "They had a bag of oats that they carried in their jackets, and they kept on throwing over the members of the family . . . from the choir—and then later they stopped because they didn't want mice to come in church." The many-symbolic meaning of Candlemas Day or Mary's Purification, February 2, has this Polish legend: "In February, one day—it was a cold day—there was a pack of wolves that used to come around. And to scare the wolves away, the Blessed Mother appeared with a blessed candle, and since then they feel that February 2, would be the day to call Candlemas Day . . ." (The legend of the candles also has roots in the old Roman custom of honoring the goddess Februa, the mother of Mars, during early February.)

The coming of Eastertide meant a strict Lenten fast culminating in Holy Week. For some Poles and Ukrainians in America, there is the custom of *Boze Rany*, God's Wounds. On Palm Sunday parish members strike each other gently, with pussy willow branches substituted for palms in northern regions, in imitation of Christ's scourging. Among the many uses of the blessed palm (or pussy willow as the case may be) in a given church are these practices: "We always put a piece of the palm in the stove, and we opened up the draft to let the smoke go out to protect from lightning." "After we brought the pussy willow home, we swallowed (one of the buds). We swallowed one so we don't get sore throats. It was for diseases of the throat." Good Friday carries with it the superstition of not looking into a mirror, and there must not, absolutely must not, be any singing on that day: "Sing on Friday, cry on Sunday." Holy Saturday is the time for fixing the Easter basket, *paska*, filled with the traditional bread and cheese, eggs, and meats, and taken to midnight church services for blessing. Even then the power was useful: "When we came home from church after the basket was blessed, we went around three times. And believe you me . . . we never had ants in the house; now we got ants in the house. We have ants 'cause now we're ashamed to go around with the basket."

Now that there are small families, available technologies like insecticides, and the accompanying change in attitude toward the old magic, residents and their old beliefs no longer have quite the in-group feeling and support they once had. This is also evident in the cures of the evil eye, but such belief and practice continues at the borders of medical practice where no cure is available for a minor but very disagreeable malady.

The negative shadow of the human psyche, those demons that would snatch away health and prosperity, needed identifying, pacifying and, through rite, exorcizing. In a society of limited good, pain and loss were more prevalent (or at least more obvious) than in a modern society of virtually unlimited goods and perfectibility. Within the former group, each person's "omnipotence of thought" counted, since one person's good fortune (of food, drink, health) was another's loss.³⁷ Those who through witchery held evil thoughts could harm others. While modern man believed that his will power and drugstore chemistry could cure many illnesses, a person living in a tight group and believing in the power of evil wishes might seek remedies of a communal and personalistic kind. The group society would be unused to and largely unaware of mass-produced over-the-counter medicines, which even if known have to be taken individually or within the immediate family. Causes of the evil eye and its remedies have their origin in strong personal feelings and are treated within the group. There may be in addition to social circumstances psychological implications for evil eye beliefs.



These traditional designs of Easter fusing Christian and pre-Christian symbols derived from Eastern Europe.

In Jungian terms, the negative shadow often repressed and buried does not remain so, but takes shape in the form of dreams and in the projection of repressed feelings upon the motivations of others. Among any group but especially among a close-knit one, two of the most powerful negative feelings are those of envy of others and excessive pride in one's own good fortune. Whether or not the evil eye is a projection of those feelings, it can be seen usually in their vicinity. Fear of the gods may partially define superstition, but such belief rests upon that more classical admonition of knowing one's place; excessive pride invites destruction if not by the gods then certainly by one's own foolishness and the ill will of others. Others cannot help feeling as they do and at times acting upon ill feelings.

The evil eye may even be attributed to someone who does not realize he is conveying it. Such a view hides the darker shadow of one's own secret, repressed envy. In the subculture's omnipotence of thought and universe of limited good, projections of personal malice gain extraordinary power especially as placed in the other, but the other, or theoretically one's own self, can be unaware of that power. Nevertheless, the traditional black power of the evil eye loomed and to some still does.

The several narratives and descriptions that follow reveal various sources of bad luck and sickness, and refer to "causes" and means, sometime rites, of detection, prevention, and cure. The first group are Polish and Russian, as practiced or remembered by women residents. Some misfortunes can never be forgotten as in this account of the narrator's pride in her fowl and their untimely end:

I had 17, year-old, nice little baby ducks. Seventeen, I had them . . . there where a pond was and the patio is now. And the ducks was swimming so nice—oh, *Jesus Mario*. Seventeen. An investigator came, an old lady who said, "They're beautiful baby ducks. Oh, my God, I've never seen such beautiful baby ducks. Are they beautiful!" She went back (home) and every one went . . . (motions with hands that they turned over), everyone turned, died. Hon'st ta God!

People who are affected by what is called the "overlook" in Polish-American folklore, suffer such maladies as nausea, excessive dizziness, severe headaches, and the like. To detect its presence, "place ten pieces of chipped bread (cubes) into a glass of water. If the bread floats, you do not have the overlook; if it sinks to the bottom, then you have been overlooked." If affected, "take three pieces from the glass, and eat them; then place your hand on top of the glass, remove it and place it in a corner for about an hour. Then wash your forehead with the water and empty it." Another form of verification requires that "you must take a clothespin, break it in half and burn the right hand side. Break the charred part into three pieces, drop them into a glass of water. If the pieces sink, you've been overlooked. Drink the water three times, wash your forehead and wrists, and then empty the water." Since it is difficult to cure a child who has been overlooked, and since the consequences (colic, high fever) are severe, it is the usual practice to place a piece of ribbon or cloth—bright red—on some prominent part of the child's clothing, to prevent the child from being overlooked. "If the mother feels the child has been overlooked, the mother while bathing the baby should touch the forehead and then spit and do the same for both wrists of the baby." The rite of purification—or is it a mild exorcism?—employs water as cleansing medium, the number three, and in the final case saliva, which also has traditional curative powers. These blend with and antedate Christian usages.

What follows are several tales of Russian witchcraft told by a variety of Russian-Americans from Plymouth.

Since most of their accounts were in broken English with Russian, or to be specific Ukrainian, words many changes were necessary. The several accounts are given in succession; some more than others illustrate the close relationship between religious and folk belief:

A chair is first built consisting of 40 pieces—one piece for each of the 40 days of Lent. Then on Good Friday the chair is placed in the back of the church. One has only to sit in this chair to see clearly the witches before him in the church. My brother was once building a "chair" in private, until discovered; I immediately destroyed it. But why? As the belief goes, one does see all the witches in the congregation, but the beholder of the sight also becomes a witch.

A close friend of mine was visiting an old man reported to be a warlock. When the question was put to the old man, he said he was the king of the witches in the community. Upon her disbelief, she was told to sit in the back room of the old man's house, to watch out the back window, and to wait. The view from the back room was of a great pile of manure and little else. But at exactly ten o'clock the view changed. The pile of manure seemed to glow, as if ablaze; and there appeared, from seemingly nowhere, 14 people. These people had wash pails on their heads and their coats were turned inside out. Also, there was that infamous old man, definitely the leader, reading to his disciples from a Bible.

There was a woman who constantly received gifts of milk and butter from a lady thought to be a witch. This woman was caught one day by a friend who asked why the butter and milk were being thrown away. The woman told her friend that it wasn't right to eat gifts from a witch. Unfortunately, the friend was not the only one who heard this remark—the woman thought to be a witch also heard it. One week later the woman who made the remark became very sick, and within one month, went mad. This woman is still living in an asylum and is now 103 years old.

After the viewing was complete at the funeral of a reported witch, the casket was closed and taken to the church to complete the ceremony. The casket was closed during the trip from the funeral home to the church. When the casket was reopened in the church, a great black bird flew out and smashed through a stained-glass window to freedom. The body in the casket was deformed. No matter what they did to the body, it always managed to turn on its side. The people of the church said the black bird was the devil claiming a soul owed him.

Years ago it was forbidden by the Russian church to hold a wedding ceremony during the Lenten season. If special permission was given to marry, it was expressly forbidden to hold a reception. It so happened that a family celebrated a wedding on the Saturday before Easter. This was to have been the day Christ was laid in his tomb. Late that afternoon, while the family and friends were enjoying their forbidden reception, the ground opened up and swallowed the house and all those within. The community dug as far as 1,000 feet and found nothing. Then, as a memorial to the 35 missing souls and a warning to others, the community erected a gravestone over the spot on which the house had once stood. The caretaker of the cemetery said he was sure glad he didn't have to dig 35 graves.

A few years ago one of my friend's daughters was hexed by an unknown witch. The person became bedridden and sick with open sores. Now it is believed that the hex must be removed by the witch who did the hexing, but there was no way to find this witch. Fortunately, an old man on the same street told the person of a way to locate witches, using some weeds of sorts, and a recipe. The weeds were to be boiled in water until the odor was dispersed throughout the entire house. This would cause

the witch who did the hexing to be drawn to the house completely powerless. This was supposedly all done as stated, and the result was that the person was immediately cured.

Although the event described in the next section happened several years ago, Italian-American belief in *mal'occhio* (evil eye) persists into the present. It is now common practice for those afflicted to call a woman who knows the special prayers and she will administer the rite over the telephone! What follows gives some idea of how the powerful *mal'occhio* extends supposedly beyond medical science:

They (Marie and John) were married a few months, let's say five or six, and she suddenly started getting these violent headaches. She had a good married life with her husband; Uncle John was good to her. He worked for the thrashing company and he'd come home at three, three thirty and whatever work Marie didn't do, he'd do. He'd help her with the cooking and everything. The neighborhood women were jealous of her. There was this one neighborhood woman that had this power—they called it "the gift." The people say that she was born with it. And she cast a spell on my aunt because she had such a good life with her husband. She cast a spell and caused her to get these violent headaches. She used to throw up with them. So they took her to the doctors and they couldn't help her. They even took her to a doctor in Scranton, and in those days people didn't go to Scranton to see a doctor. She was sick about six months I'd say. Finally, Uncle John heard about this lady up in Old Forge. She was one of these old-fashioned ladies with the full black skirts and the shawls over their heads. You know, they'd go around Pittston a lot about 30 or 40 years ago. When we were little, my mother used to tell us to cross the street when we saw them so they couldn't put a curse on us. We never looked at them. So, anyway, Uncle John heard about this lady and he had her come down. She had this pan of water (makes the rim of a dish with her fingers), and in this pan of water she'd put oil. Then there's something like an incantation that she'd say. I don't know what you'd call it—something like a prayer, I guess. If the oil spread apart, she couldn't do it. There'd be no use for her to continue. That meant that you had it. She had to come down three or four weeks before she finally . . . Marie would be in bed most of the day. She couldn't walk. See, I was about 11 or 12 years old at the time. I used to go over there and sit with her, I know. We lived close and she was my mother's sister. So, finally she got the oil to stop spreading apart. The spell was that hard—that woman that cast this spell on her—it was so strong and powerful that she had to try very hard to get rid of it. So she finally got rid of it.

The rite of removal is evidently not always the same. The procedure mentioned in the previous account differs somewhat in the following one:

A person who has been overlooked will feel tired or sick. To remove the evil eye, the person must go to someone who knows how to remove it. The sign of the cross is made with the thumb three times on the forehead while a prayer is said. If the person starts to yawn, as well as the other people in the room, and the person removing the spell, the spell is leaving. If they can't yawn, more has to be done. The next step is to fill a soup bowl with water and place a drop of oil in it. The dish is placed over the sick person's head. If the oil spreads out, the person has it. If the oil gathers in spots, like eyes, the person is not suffering from the evil eye. Salt is then added to the dish. It is sprinkled in the water in the sign of the cross three times, while a short prayer is said. If the oil spreads out, the person has the spell on him. This is done three times, and

then the spell is gone. The person who has the spell should not let Friday pass without having the spell removed; otherwise, he will become very sick.

As with the Polish practice, the traditionally curative powers of prayer, water, and in this last case salt, were all available in what was a kind of home remedy with supernatural support. Although the visible world was one of limited good, the invisible world was one of *unlimited* power. In more mundane terms, the source of the malady, another's envy, gave personal feelings the most significance, whether or not the "cause" was a projection of the group's negative shadow (fear of the other a projection of one's own negative feelings), the rite worked out person and group anxiety about feelings of jealousy. It also modified the excessive pride a person might take in mate, children, or even in some possession or good fortune. Those who win a lottery, for example, are expected to share their winnings with family and friends. Sharing dissipates the evil forces, and spreads the wealth.

Let us turn now to that most ritualistic of practices, the religious festival in all its communal dignity. Group devotion to the Holy Mother is still very much alive in Pittston where the descendants of two Sicilian villages carry their patrons in procession each year. The Mother of the Rosary is the patron of Montedoro, and the Mother of Sorrows, the patron of Serradifalco. A procession of people of all ages and occupations follow the patron, borne upon a float, heralded with band music and fireworks while thousands of onlookers line the streets and sidewalks. In the feast of the Mother of the Rosary a midnight serenade takes place. Dozens of men, led by an orchestra, stroll about, visit and serenade friends who welcome them with refreshments. This practice follows closely the Sicilian original where the celebration, longer than that of the American, begins Friday and extends to Sunday.

In America, a rivalry has developed between the Montedoro and Serradifalco groups to see who will collect the most money. People give money (a one to twenty dollar bill) to men standing on the float to be pinned on the ribbon attached to the statue. When a goodly amount of money is donated, the men raise the money in their fists and shout in Sicilian and in unison with the rest of the procession, "Praise be to the Patron," calling out her name. The group which collects the most money claims, in good humor, to be "better" than the other. People promise money or flowers as a token of appreciation for a favor granted them from the Blessed Mother during the past year.

The persistence of ethnic folk beliefs in the Valley will probably depend upon the continuity of the familial and group identity that give such folk beliefs their value and definition. Such identity appears by rites and customs that go beyond outward display. This point is made by a young man of Polish descent who describes his mother's belief and then offers his own testimony

and conclusion about church belief and superstition. He first prescribes a method for finding out what it is that so disturbs a child that he cries continually in his sleep:

When the child was in a sound sleep, the mother should boil a pot of water and melt the blessed candle. She would then place the pan of boiling water over the child's forehead and pour the melted wax into the boiling water. A figure would begin to take shape which was that that the child feared. This was to be done for three consecutive nights; afterwards the fear would be removed and the child would no longer have his nightmares.

I once watched this done on my next door neighbor's little girl. Almost immediately after the wax had been poured into boiling water a figure of a rat began to appear. My mother did it again for the next two nights and afterwards the child did not have nightmares about rats, although she still was afraid of them.

Superstitions and family traditions are as important as church beliefs and customs. To the person who does not believe, they mean nothing; to those who do, they can mean everything.



The Agnes flood, described as the "worst natural disaster in American history," inundated the Valley on June 22, 1972 from "mountain to mountain."

The Agnes Flood

The last set of narratives are about the great flood of 1972, also called tropical storm Agnes or "Agony," as Milton Shapp, the then Governor, put it. On June 22, 1972, the Susquehanna, swollen from 11 inches of rainfall (after the storm came, left, and returned) rose some 21 feet above flood stage to 42 feet. It burst the levees and flooded the entire Valley, "from mountain to mountain." There had been other floods but nothing like that; it was called by then President Nixon, "the greatest natural disaster in American history." The Valleyites would later receive government aid largely through the efforts of Congressman Daniel J. Flood who has himself become a legend in the Valley. (That it was an election year and a year in which a flood also occurred in the home state of Nixon's opponent, South Dakota Senator George McGovern, may have helped rush the political process a bit.)



This image appeared in a photograph taken of the Wyoming region's sky, reportedly just 2 days before the Agnes flood.

There were many tear-filled anecdotes such as the one about the person who said—before anyone really knew how devastating the flood was—"I'm not worried, we just had our basement waterproofed." Then there was the man who decided to stay by himself in his home and told his wife to leave. She did, taking the small old Datsun and leaving behind the big, new Oldsmobile, a fact the man did not notice until after the flood hit. As the water rose and as he moved from the first to second floor, and then again to the attic, and finally to the peak of the roof, he said each time, "There're two cars, a Datsun and an Oldsmobile, and what does she take? She takes the Datsun." (Well, one would have had to be there.)

The narratives that follow help in understanding the Valley people and how they coped. They cherish their homes probably as much or more than any other group one can imagine. To these people of proud, hard-working backgrounds, the home was almost a sacred object; saved for, worked for, maintained, and loved. Many Catholic families had holy statues and crucifixes and Protestants had the Holy Scriptures at an important place in their homes.

The narratives, falling into quasi-religious and secular categories, are characterized by a sense of wonder at natural and, for some, divine power. In either case one may agree with Carlyle's Professor Teufelsdröckh "on the necessity and high worth of universal Wonder; which he holds to be the only reasonable temper for the denizen of so singular a Planet as ours. 'Wonder, says he, 'is the basis of Worship: the reign of wonder is perennial, indestructible in Man'"³⁸ And so it was in the Wyoming Valley during its most recent time of peril.

In the fall of 1972, the now defunct paper, *Wyoming Observer*, published a picture of a cloud formation

taken from an airplane on June 20, 1972. The picture was taken by an out-of-state friend of a local resident, Mrs. John Petras of Edwardsville, and sent to her after being developed. The paper reported: "People who have seen the photo feel it could have been some kind of a warning to people in the Valley that the flood was going to come." Others evidently interpreted the photograph as a form of "trick photography" and still others as "a punishment from God." Although its interpretations vary, residents still remember that photograph. Other religious tales often dealt with a cross, statue, or Bible. According to one informant: "I heard about some people who had five feet (of water) on the second floor. When the water went down there was mud all over everything except for a clean spot around the cross over the front door, which was about six feet under the water level." Another informant said: "We were newlyweds with a tiny baby and were living in an apartment that was completely inundated and gutted by the flood. When we went back everything we owned was only rubble—broken furniture, clothing, books, toys—most things washed away. But we had a large statue of the Infant Jesus atop an armoire and although He toppled off the broken armoire, He was intact, remained whole and slightly dirty. He gave us hope and determination to go on!" Another told of a floral shop in Wilkes-Barre; water covered its roof but: "In the shop there was a statue of the Blessed Virgin with a wreath of artificial flowers around the base. Anyway, after the water went down everything in the shop was all wrecked and broken and muddy, but the Blessed Virgin was standing in the same spot, completely clean. The artificial flowers were all muddy but not the statue, and when they picked it up, there was a clean spot underneath on the table!" A widower described what happened to him: "I have this table up in my bedroom with a Bible on it. On top of my Bible I have a picture of my wife, God rest her soul, she's been dead now for eight years. Now the water went about four to five feet higher than this table but the Bible and the picture of my wife was not disturbed at all when I returned. My whole room was a wreck. Dressers and a chest of drawers were toppled but not this table with the holy Bible and my wife's picture on it. There wasn't even any of that darn mud on it."

Others related extraordinary but earthbound occurrences. Warned before the flood of a water shortage afterwards, a Kingston resident filled several pans and a water pitcher. "When I returned and saw the mess, the refrigerator was toppled over and all four pots were on the floor—each one in a different room—I noticed the glass pitcher was in the same place I placed it when I left, but it was empty. The flood water had gone up to our second floor far over the stove and pitcher yet this glass pitcher remained there but didn't have any water

or mud in it." In another account, a flood victim remembered trying to move a large chair from one room to another before the flood, but found "it wouldn't fit through the door way. Here it was now (after the flood) in this room and it wasn't even broken."

One of the most widely told tales concerns the doctor who dreamt a week before the flood of seeing the body and casket of his dead wife surrounded by water. In one account: "A doctor was at the Wilkes-Barre - Scranton Airport where bodies from the washed out Forty-Fort Cemetery were being brought in and processed for reburial. A casket came through the line which contained the body of the doctor's wife who had been dead for 30 years. He knew it was his wife's because her initials had been carved into the side of the coffin. Then the doctor had a heart attack." In another version, it was not a doctor but the county coroner and, in still another account, it was a doctor in Forty-Fort who found the remains on his front porch. In this last version there was reason for the wife's return: "She told him not to bury her in the Forty-Fort Cemetery . . . But he did anyway so she came back to be buried somewhere else."

The tales about the flood bespeak a sense of wonder. From the view of those who suffered "the wrath of Agnes," personification and awe gave one emotional endurance. It was not a time for rationality or common sense, not when one's home and a lifetime of work were in muddy ruins, and when one didn't have flood insurance (as 99.9 per cent did not) and didn't know whether to rebuild or leave. At the spiritual level, one felt confused, abandoned by one's spiritual protectors and yet in desperate need of spiritual support. Out of some such ambivalence as this may come an interpretation of the tales.

From a rational point of view, the oppositions defied reconciliation: of divinity as wrathful judge and also as protector, of nature as giver of bounty and as wrecker of havoc. If the statues, many blessed, and the Bibles offered no protection and were themselves sullied what then was their worth? If the flood was to come why was there no warning so that people could save their belongings? The tales that one heard came back time and again to the holy artifacts, as if, in telling about them, meanings could come forth.

Yes, it was true the holy objects were flooded, yet *they* remained clean, untouched. Although no one noticed the figure in the sky, still it *was* there, proven by the photograph. So one need not feel condemned, nor need one abandon all hope. There were awesome signs of divine presence. And, after all, there were but two known deaths attributed to the flood; there could have been many more. Death and burial were not final, as the disinterment of graves at the Forty-Fort Cemetery demonstrated: "Who said when they bury you, that's

it?" ran one of the comments. Reality outran common sense, and a common sense attitude was unrealistic. Better, after suspending one's normal feelings, to believe and act and survive in unity with those real powers of man - nature - divinity that defied common sense. A sense of awe had its uses.

As several letters to the editor made clear, the flood proved man's "helplessness in the face of such mighty forces of nature"; man's "total dependence" on God; "reminders to avoid the spirit of proud self-sufficiency"; and even that God "would spare us the horrors of concentration camps, but would purify us through great disturbances of nature." But there were just as many comments about "Americans having to pick ourselves up and fight back," and moving "forward to a brighter future."³⁹

From Folklore and Ritual to Folklife

To generalize about folklore and ritual is to tread where angels fear At an abstract level, Jung provides a useful starting point, defining archetypes as "forms or images of a collective nature which occur practically all over the earth as constituents of myths and at the same time as autochthonous, individual products of unconscious origin." These archetypes or motifs "in the mythology and folklore of different peoples . . . repeat themselves in almost identical form." Whereby the "drama of repentance, sacrifice and redemption" has an apparent uniqueness but an underlying similarity.⁴⁰ According to Jung, Catholic and Protestant have each experienced religion in different ways: "With the demolition of protective walls (intercession of the church between man and God), the Protestant lost the sacred images that expressed important unconscious factors, together with the ritual which, from time immemorial, has been a safe way of dealing with the unpredictable forces of the unconscious."⁴¹ Within the short space of a few pages, Jung's analysis implies something of the complexity of abstracting about ritual and folklore, especially that folklore which is close to myth and religion.

Perhaps that complexity helps to explain why studies of American myth and ritual tend to fall under literary criticism if not under the rubric of folklore, particularly legend, since historical time, a secular attitude, and a disbelief in gods characterize the American more than other much older world, including native Indian, traditions. But precisely for that reason can folklore and ritual serve to understand regional and American experience. For if world motifs or archetypes persist in every culture but are seen as "folklore" in an advanced one like America's then the folklore of the region in and of itself, in relation to its origins, in its changes over time, and in its subcultural expression of values can well complement and benefit from local and national historical as well as literary, economic, psychological,

and religious studies.

A difficulty in this approach is in moving beyond folklore in the name of folk studies. Surveying Wyoming folklore and ritual was selective at best and at worse distorted by a preoccupation with ethnic materials. Moreover, no attention was given to such important local folklore as the Indian captivity of Frances Slocum (who remained with the Indians) or of Campbell's Ledge overlooking the Susquehanna not only because of their general irrelevance to ritual, but also because they did not fit the view of what "really" mattered to the residents. Still, the folklore and ritual selected led to a consideration of origins, of early local history, of the interrelation of one subculture to another; of, in a word, the "folklife" of the region.⁴² From the dynamic perspective of folklife, folklore and ritual assumed a central, though often unnoticed, position much as Auden describes Breughel's *Icarus* . . . "the expensive delicate ship that must have seen/ Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,/ Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on." ("Musée Des Beaux Arts")

Not noticing something is more likely if it is not expected, perhaps. While it has long been expected, for an ethnic example, that "the religious and ethnic sentiments of immigrant minorities are anachronisms that must give way to the processes of modernization and assimilation," it turns out that ethnic groups were not necessarily destined to assimilate nor were they very resistant to change. The past and present "resurgence" of ethnicity may be a new academic term for an old pattern. Throughout southern and eastern Europe, modernization and urbanization had been going on before the high tides of immigration; and "a long-existing cultural diversity, the intertwining of religious feelings with ethnic interests and identities gave both to faith and to the sense of peoplehood a fluid and instrumental quality that was more future-oriented than backward-looking. Emigrants to the United States regrouped on this side of the Atlantic into larger aggregations that both preserved and revised inherited patterns of language, religion, and regional culture."⁴³

The Wyoming folklore and ritual studied reveal that "fluid and instrumental" quality from its earliest period when conflicting claims led Yankees, Pennamites, Tories, and Indians to battle. Each group had its own conception of the land, yet each saw it as having traditional *and* potential value. To the European-Americans the land, as described, seemed a "once-and-future" paradise; whereas to the Iroquois it meant a loss to be made up if a traditional way of life was to be preserved. Narratives about the Battle served to confirm (if not worsen) general opinion about Indian savagery, and also to describe the militia as martyrs in the cause of independence. Legend approached myth as respectful attitudes became almost

MINSTRELS OF THE MINE PATCH

ME JOHNNY MITCHELL MAN

Now you know Mike Sokolosky—
Dat man my brudder.
Last night him come to my shanty,
Un me tellin': "V'at you cummin' fer?"
Him tellin' 'bout tomorra dark night,
Every miner all, beeg un shmall
Goin' fer on shtrike.
Un him say t' me: "Joe, me tellin' you
Dunt be 'fraid or shcared fer nottink, nevair, nevair do."
"Dunt be shcabby fella," him tellin' me again.
I'm say, "No sir! Mike, me out o' sight—
Me Johnny Mitchell man."

CHORUS

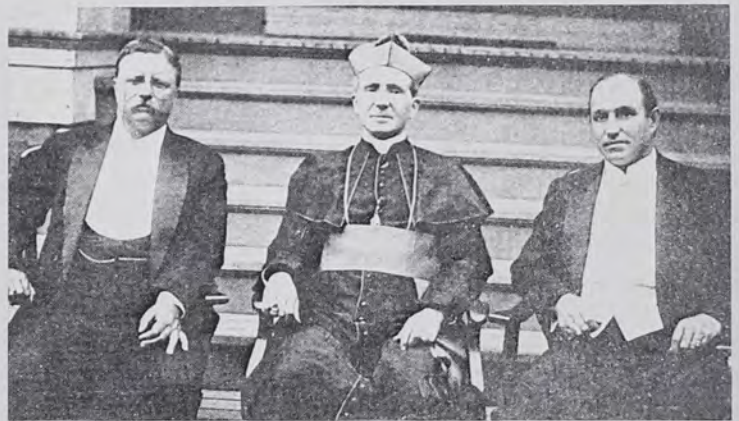
Me no 'fraid fer nottink,
Me dey nevair shcare,
Sure me shtrike tomorra night,
Dats de biziness, I dunt care.
Righta here me tellin' you—
Me no shcabby fella,
Good union citizen—
Johnny Mitchell man.

Now me belong t' union, me good citizen.
Fer seven year me livin' here
In dis beeg America.
Me vorkin' in de Prospect,
Vorkin' Dorrance shaft, Conyngham, Nottingham—
Every place like dat.
Vorkin' in de gangway, vorkin' in de breast,
Labor every day, me nevair gettin' rest.
Me got plenty money, nine hoondred, maybe ten,
So shtrike kin come, like son-of-a-gun—
Me Johnny Mitchell man.

According to George Korson, this song, one of several different ethnic versions, was written by minstrel Con Carbon to help unify the miners for the great strike of 1902.



Johnny Mitchell



Theodore Roosevelt, Bishop Hoban of the Scranton diocese, and John Mitchell attending miners' parade in Wilkes-Barre in 1905. It was a time when Mitchell's hold over the U.M.W. needed strengthening.

sacred. Subsequent commemorations, or secular rituals, preserved that important aspect of regional culture but also modified it in a sense, to fit changing circumstances—from a living local and national memory until the 1830s to a much-exhorted effort to build a fitting monument in the 1840s; to a regional and (with presidential blessing) national ritual in 1878; to a totem-like, multi-cultural celebration in 1928; and, in recent times, to a much-interpreted event.

In America's pluralistic society, the dominant legend, as the Wyoming Battle was, revealed a mind-set that also had ironic implications. The archetypal version of America's creation admitted of no rivals in 1897, the heyday of local and national power, when Sheriff Martin and his posse fired upon the marchers at Lattimer. That each side fought for the flag on the afternoon of September 10, 1897, and that the first marcher to fall was the one carrying the flag were perhaps not merely accidental circumstances. There

were many versions of belief in America, and earlier ones and later ones sometimes clashed.

Within each group—as well as from group-to-group—there were constant changes and also transferences of value from religious to secular realms. Following upon Smith's interpretation of religion and ethnicity (and his synthesis of older and newer theocentric organizational imitatives) it would be expected that a "secular" event would be interpreted in sacred terms. Thus can be seen the inter-relation of the ethnoreligious and the occupational in this view of Lattimer:

The 18 [sic] miners who fell under the firing of hate-mongers left a job for [other miners] to finish. They had died so that others would have unionism. The next wave of Slavs went out with the rest of the mine workers under the banner of John Mitchell and the U. M. W. A. and achieved it. That Unionism still flourishes as strongly as the *gospel* the miners' *patron saint* spread from one end of the hard coal country to the other: "The coal you dig is not Slavish coal, or Polish coal, or Irish coal. It is coal."⁴⁴

Good and evil took on definite occupational labels: "scabs" and their families were reviled (and to this day remembered); mine owners and their agents were called "blood-suckers" and the coal-and-iron police "cossacks." Mitchell himself told young women: "Ladies, never marry a scab."

After World War I, however, the line between right and wrong in the coal fields was no longer so dramatically or clearly defined. Ethnic initiative joined with industrial enterprise when the Pennsylvania Coal Company engaged contractors from among the new immigrants. Contracting was not a new American practice nor was it new, for example, to local Sicilians who had seen many contractors each employ a few laborers in the sulphur mines near Montedoro. So among the first contractors were these same Sicilians who got their compatriots and kin to work for them: "What you did for your *paesani*, you didn't do for others," was the expression. But Italians from another region, Umbria, especially those from its capital, Perugia, formed what a surviving member refers to as a "Perugini clique" to oppose the contractor system. Within three years, an Umbrian, ably advised by a Scottish-American, was elected President of the union local and was able to have the U. M. W. negotiate against contracting which, in effect, had established separate pay scales and working conditions. The Perugino leader became a local hero battling special interests and also risking assassination. Informants remember guarding him with pistols drawn as he journeyed from hall to hall making speeches, whether in the basement of a Pittston Catholic Church or a cooperative union hall in Plains Township. By 1928 he would grow disenchanted with local union politics and step down from the union presidency, but in the 1930s, he together with others, formed a rebel

union, the United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania which finally lost its bid for legitimacy, its leader's charisma notwithstanding.⁴⁵

Early ethnic endeavor was characterized by other special relationships between patron-like leaders and loyal followers. The first leaders were not Puritan divines with extraordinary abilities of physician-priests, inspiring the legends of a Cotton Mather. But their role was similar: leading their flocks, consulting with other leaders, seeking New World answers and thereby revealing how tradition was preserved and revised. This was an ongoing intra- and inter-group experience. A Slovak priest, Joseph Murgas, settled in Wilkes-Barre in 1896, not only to found a parish and a school but also to conduct radio experiments, paint religious and landscape subjects, and after the War, champion the effort to form a free Czechoslovakia. His role in co-founding the Slovak League of America, in training youth in the Sokols, in revitalizing American and Slovak belief in liberation ran the gamut from technology and art to politics and religion. He was so successful with his tone system of overland radio communication that he received two U. S. patents in 1904. Later, when he became preoccupied with Slovak independence, he hadn't the resources or inclination to contest the Marconi and Fessenden rivalry over the tone system. In 1916 the U. S. District Court (Southern District of New York) denied Fessenden's suit against Marconi because Murgas had the tone patents prior to both contestants. Today, Murgas is remembered by a local radio club which bears his name and by parishioners and others who remember him in stories that are all too brief.

There were also Polish leaders like Father Ignatz Gramliewicz, one of the most influential Polish clerics in America during his long tenure (from 1877-1925) as pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Nanticoke and consultant to the Scranton diocese. He organized Polish parishes and sought suitable clergy in other towns, secured the services of the Bernardine Sisters, published a Polish-American newspaper, and founded several societies including a Temperance one (1892-1900). Mention has been made previously of the Irish-American priest, J. J. Curran, who also had his congregation join temperance societies, and who is best remembered for his role in settling the 1902 strike, as well as for his subsequent friendship with Theodore Roosevelt. Throughout this same period Father Alexis G. Toth was able to convert immigrants from Eastern Europe to the Russian Orthodox fold. When Father Toth was in Minneapolis, Roman Catholic Archbishop John Ireland did not accept his credentials evidently because Toth was a Uniate and a widower, both of which Ireland, an Americanist, found divisive to his American and Catholic values. Toth, who had contemplated his own conversion to Orthodoxy, obtained



This experimental radio tower designed by Fr. Joseph Murgas carried the first successful overland radio signals and brought national attention to a public test held in 1905.

permission from the Orthodox Archbishop to set up a congregation in Minneapolis. In 1892, he was assigned to a parish of Wilkes-Barre Uniates desiring conversion to Orthodoxy in order to obtain a pastor acceptable to them in a diocese with an Irish-American bishop who gave them no support. These are but a few instances of how tradition was both preserved and revised in America.

Running throughout the religious life of diverse Wyoming ethnic groups was the tension between ethnicity and religion. Since the Scranton Diocese, unlike that of Chicago, for example, hadn't quite the large concentrated congregations wherein national and territorial boundaries could overlap, there was bound to be some friction between a group of immigrants and their fellow parishioners and priest of a different ethnic-American background. Even when, as was the case in Scranton in 1896, a group was able to finance and establish their own church, they were not always able to obtain a pastor of their own background. A Polish congregation, seeking a larger role in parish matters confronted their German-American pastor and refused him entrance into the church. Francis Hodur, a Catholic priest from Nanticoke, eventually with the congregation formed the Polish National Catholic Church. In those early days of religious fervor, heated debates about church dogma took place between Nationals and Romans. The debates were quite popular with the local parishes and were covered in the press.

Indeed, Wilkes-Barre - Scranton was active religiously in those days. Mention of just a few nation-wide conventions that took place in Wilkes-Barre gives some idea of early ethnoreligious life: In 1892, the Greek Catholic Union of Rusin Brotherhoods organized to spread unity among Rusin people, provide insurance, educate through aid to schools and churches, start a newspaper, and have clerical and lay supervision; in 1901, the Lithuanian Alliance could not contain the conflict between church and ethnic identity so the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Alliance of America was formed; in 1906, the Slovak National Catholic Congress met and there was a threatened move to form a National church, but instead differences were settled and the Slovak League of America was founded. In each instance lay and clerical leadership moved to unify, if not form separate organizations, establish newspapers, strengthen existing schools and parishes, set up credit unions, fortify American citizenship, and do what was felt needed to sponsor independence of their old homeland. This dialectic between ethnic American identity and universal freedom was worked out era by era in America. By the 1930s, these and other organizations responded to economic realities by assuming, through these credit union structures, the loans many churches had with local banks, thereby bringing a "measure of financial salvation to the Diocese of Scranton" and by 1938, breaking "the monopoly once enjoyed by the

area's banks."⁴⁶

Before World War I, the Eastern Europeans were many peoples—Lithuanians, Poles, Slovaks, Czechs, Ukrainians—but not nations, and so were preoccupied with nationhood. Other groups, like the Italians, were a nation but remained many separate *paesani*; they did not form large ethnic organizations, nor were they so concerned with national ethnoreligious identity. Instead they formed many more small organizations—from religious sodalities to men's clubs and food cooperatives—named for virtually every Italian town or regional origin or patron saint represented in the Valley. Yet the Italians also strived for universality by trying to form all-encompassing Italian-American organizations and, in the late 1920s, by forming a Foreign League made up of many ethnic groups. Meanwhile, the Irish, Welsh, and Germans retained their groups and organizations, and the English seemed content with their membership in the local Masonic Lodge.

Although each group had its heroes and saints, its patrons and petitioners, there were distinctions. The more established groups like the English revolved activity around economic and social favoritism: thus, if one wanted to get ahead, one was expected if Catholic to become Protestant and, if possible, join the Masons. If Irish Catholic, one joined the Ancient Order of Hibernians, or the Knights of Columbus, and later it was possible also to join the Masons. Patronage was an affair of the visible world for the region's elite and would-be elite.

Patrons for Catholic immigrants did not mainly occupy social positions. To be of a family and part of a religious group defined a timeless duality, both human and blessed: The particular earthly family reflected the universal holy family, the order of the church calendar, the schedule of the week. This world extended vertically to one's betters and benefactors in the community and, in the invisible world, upwards to a pantheon of saints each with special powers of intercession. Indeed, a saint or variant of the Blessed Mother had helped the ethnic group in the Old World and thereby sanctified its regional, linguistic, and cultural worth. Saints Cyril and Methodius are especially honored by the Slovaks because those saints spoke the Old Slovak vernacular to spread Christianity throughout Slovakia in the 9th century. St. Stanislaus of Cracow is the patron of Poland, and St. Casimir of both Poland and Lithuania. The variants of the Blessed Mother who worked miracles throughout Europe were—and are—well remembered by her beneficiaries who emigrated to the Wyoming Valley and established churches in her name.

One might see such a world view as hopelessly backward, but as was the case with ethnic leaders and organizations, tradition was a seed having diverse, often unpredictable fruit. While in a pluralistic culture labeling and stereotyping become habitual—the Polish

joke for example—it is comforting for a would-be elite to deal with surfaces. (For those stereotyped to consciously or unconsciously accept the stereotype is, as so much black literature shows, as tragic as it is ironic.) For whatever the current view of ethnic women's liberation, in the past they were very active. With their men often absent, either serving in wars for foreign powers or seeking work elsewhere, the women of Eastern Europe gained a measure of independence that was greater than those from other areas. It was the women who often taunted the scabs in the 1902 strike, and in the awful summer of 1897, they were the ones who insulted the state militia called out to keep the peace. And in 1896, it was the women who faced the police who came to clear away the protestors against the Scranton bishop. It was also the women—Slovaks, Poles, Lithuanians—who, on their own or with their men, formed the ethnic organizations which are still vital insurance and credit unions. The women leaders also assume responsibility for the Luzerne County Folk Festival held annually in the Valley. But all that might be expected in a tradition honoring the Virgin; in a society, as Henry Adams pointed out, that idolized other symbols of power. As the dynamo, or coal mining in the Wyoming region, forced adjustment, immigrants were able to transfer religious commitment to secular realities: whether in loyalty to the union and Johnny Mitchell, its patron saint; or to the Sokol and credit union with its lay or clerical benefactors; or to the parish and ethnic organization with its array of religious, educational, and communal activities.

More than any other group, the local Jewish business, professional and religious leaders reflected that New World dialectic between ethnicity and universality. Over 90 per cent of the entire local Jewish community was affected by the Agnes flood of 1972. They responded locally and nationally, bringing in foodstuffs and financial assistance and an array of experts in disaster relief from around the country. Grants and interest-free loans were made available, counseling was provided to families, and the budgets of local Jewish religious and community institutions were guaranteed for a three-year period. The result of this help from the National Jewish Community was an immediate rebuilding. Very few families moved away; homes and businesses were restored or rebuilt and the community renewed.

Other groups aided one another until federal help arrived. Everyone told the stories (previously related) as a new—yet old—set of interpretations surrounded the invisible patrons in the form of statues and holy books protecting one's home. Visible helpers, in the shape of Mennonites, arrived and worked "giving all, asking nothing," right beside the flood victims. That paradoxical interplay of the ethnic and the universal has had many parallels in Wyoming history and folk-life, seen in a human, regional context that is neither

very abstract nor very individual. Foreign and American regional life has served individual but especially *group* liberation and perfectibility, those Old World dreams pursued in America. As the early ethno-religious fervor has faded so has the dream, perhaps; or, as is more likely, it has assumed newer shapes, further vistas. That future road can curve like an Einsteinian universe or a Jungian psyche back upon its past in ways foreseen in legend.

Indian artist George Catlin (1796-1872) grew up in the Wyoming Valley. His father Putnam, who had emigrated from Connecticut, fought the Seneca at the Battle of Wyoming and managed to escape. When George's mother, Polly Sutton, was a girl of seven, she and her mother were captured by Indians and later released. George Catlin grew up amid a live tradition: "My young imagination closely traced the savage to his deep retreats, and gazed upon him with dreadful horror, till pity pleaded and imagination worked a charm."¹⁴

ENDNOTES

¹A comparative study of the early immigration of the Wilkes-Barre Area can be found in Edward G. Hartmann, *Americans from Wales* (Boston: Christopher, 1967), in which he also discusses the large Welsh settlement in the Valley. However, most immigrants saw themselves as residents of a European region, city, or village; their specific origins, which I have surveyed, appear in the local Naturalization papers, 1890-1920, Clerk of Courts Office, Luzerne County Courthouse, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

²*Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969) IX; *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969) VIII; *Man and His Symbols* (New York: Dell, 1968).

³Campbell (London: Longman, 1809), p. 5. According to George Peck, *Wyoming* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1868), p. 11, Wyoming derives from the Delaware *Maughwau-wame*, meaning large plains, which German missionaries wrote *M'chweuwami*, and which the early settlers, finding difficult to pronounce, said *Wau-waumie*, *Wiawumie*, *Wiomic*, and, finally, Wyoming.

⁴Albert B. Friedman, "The Usable Myth: The Legends of Modern Mythmakers" in *American Folk Legend*, Wayland D. Hand ed. (Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1971), p. 42. Friedman would reconcile the different ways historians and sociologists on the one hand and anthropologists and folklorists on the other deal with myth by viewing mythologies as "covert systems of assumptions, values, beliefs, personal wishes socialized and social wishes internalized, which reveal themselves only in the images and metaphors in which they get expressed, in syntactical relationships, in the articulation of incidents, in the fleshing out of archetypal personae and situations" (p. 43). In such ritual and legend can be found traces of myth operating in a complex culture like that of the Wyoming Valley. As may become clearer in the final section, an attempt was made to study legend "in relation to the stratigraphy of the cultures that produced and used it" (p. 181). See Don Yoder, "The Saint's Legend in the Pennsylvania German Folk-Culture," in *American Folk Legend*, pp. 157-83.

⁵Quoted in Oscar J. Harvey and Ernest G. Smith, *A History of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County Pennsylvania and the Wyoming Valley*, II (Wilkes-Barre, Pa.: Smith-Bennett, 1929), p. 1061. See also Charles Miner, *History of Wyoming* (Philadelphia: J. Crissy, 1845). Further accounts of early and corrected versions can be found in Andrew M. Davis, "The Indians and Border Warfare of the Revolution," in *The American Revolution*, Justin Winsor, ed. (New York: Sons' of Liberty, 1972), ch. viii, pp. 634-36, 662-63. Ex-

aggerated accounts persist even in contemporary histories like Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence* (New York: MacMillan, 1971), p. 325, which puts it as "Butler's 1000 redskins and Tories" whereas the actual figure was more like 700.

⁶Miner, *Wyoming*, p. 226. For a contemporary history acknowledging that "folklore has been hard at work on the Battle of Wyoming and has produced a number of distortions that should be corrected" see Paul A. W. Wallace, *Indians in Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1975), pp. 157-64. Wallace offers several corrections as well as his view that Queen Esther "may have been confused with Catharine Montour (wife of a Seneca chief), who, it is commonly thought, was her sister." But Queen Esther who reportedly was of gentle character may have been "inflamed to avenge the death of her son, who had been killed by American scouts the day before the battle" (p. 162).

⁷By all accounts, from Campbell's poetry to recent histories, Wyoming illustrated Indian brutality which as awful as it was did not go beyond what the Tory Butler and the Indians themselves regarded as warranted. See Butler's comment to his superior Colonel Mason Boulton, 17 Nov. 1778 in *Documents of the American Revolution 1770 - 1783*. XV (Dublin: Irish Univ. Press, 1976), p. 262. Butler referring to battles after Wyoming, said he "could not restrain the Indians . . . the rebels having falsely accused the Indians of cruelty at Wyoming. This has much exasperated them . . ."

⁸*The Book of the Sesqui-Centennial Celebration of the Battle of Wyoming*, Wilbur A. Myers, ed. (Wilkes-Barre, Pa.: Smith - Bennett, 1928), p. 25. Subsequent descriptions of the naming and of the Centennial are given in the booklet.

⁹Quoted from Mrs. Robert Roe in "The 200th Anniversary and One Hundredth Annual Commemorative Service of the Battle and Massacre of Wyoming" Program Booklet, 1978, n. p., n. pag.

¹⁰Wise's remarks are printed in "The 1971 Proceedings of the Wyoming Commemorative Association," July 3rd, 1971, n. p., n. pag.

¹¹The psychoanalytical account, an etiological myth perhaps, is reminiscent of Freud's, *Totem and Taboo*, (1913; rpt. New York: W. W. Norton, 1950). Other works discussing theoretical connections among myth, ritual, and folklore (especially superstition and magic) include: Joseph Fontenrose, *The Ritual Theory of Myth* (Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1971); James G. Frazer, *Psyche's Task* (1913; rpt. London: Dawsons, 1968); Carl Jung's works cited above, and *Psychology and Religion*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969) II; Bronislaw Malinowski, *Magic, Science, and Religion* (1948; rpt. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1954); Arnold Van Gennip, *The Rites of Passage* (1908; rep. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1960). Each of these give evidence of the universality of myth and also by implication the limitations of Freud's interpretation. See also, William A. Lessa, "On the Symbolism of Oedipus" in *The Study of Folklore*, Alan Dundes, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1965), pp. 114-25.

¹²Wayne Broehl, *The Molly Maguires* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1964), p. 171. See also Eliot Jones, *The Anthracite Coal Combination in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1914).

¹³See Victor Greene, *The Slavic Community on Strike* (South Bend, Ind.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1968).

¹⁴Michael Novak's account is the most definitive, *The Guns of Lattimer* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), p. 127. Although Novak does not consider the folkloric elements, he does emphasize what he calls man's "sacramental" nature, and he writes that "moral advances cost blood" and "at Lattimer on September 10, the deputies arranged themselves for ritual slaying." (p. 245).

¹⁵*Wilkes-Barre Record*, 8 March 1898, p. 6.

¹⁶Novak, *Guns of Lattimer*, speaks of the local "amnesia" about an event most wanted to separate themselves from and move on to other things: "Many of the victims did not leave a family, and of those who did, most families . . . have by this generation erased the trauma—and the stigma—from memory. Very few are

the live oral traditions a researcher is able to tap" (p. xii). However, a "Hazleton Area Center for Slavic Studies" has recently sponsored a talk on Lattimer by Bloomsburg College historian George Turner; his work includes "The Lattimer Tragedy of 1897," *Pennsylvania Heritage* 3 (1977), pp. 11-13; "The Lattimer Massacre and Its Sources," *Slovakia* 27 (1977), pp. 9-43.

¹⁷10 March 1898, p. 4. Lenahan's remarks are quoted in the March 8, edition. Nativist misconceptions about "new" immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe are examined carefully by Oscar Handlin in *Race and Nationality in American Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1957), ch. v.

¹⁸For instance, a local Slovak priest, Joseph Murgas (whose work will be discussed in the conclusion) helped raise close to a million dollars in behalf of Slovak independence after World War I. (An interpretation of a "dialectic" between ethnicity and universality is also contained in the final section.)

¹⁹See, for instance, Stefan Kieniewicz, *The Emancipation of the Polish Peasantry* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1969); and Launcelot A. Owen, *The Russian Peasant Movement, 1906 - 1917* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963).

²⁰Quoted in *The Welsh in America: Letters from the Immigrants*, Alan Conway ed. (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota, 1961), p. 205. For other groups see Caroline Golab, "The Polish Experience in Philadelphia," in *The Ethnic Experience in Pennsylvania*, John Bodnar ed. (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell Univ. Press, 1973), p. 50, and Victor Von Borosini, "Home Going Italians" in *The Italians*, F. Cordasco and E. Buchioni, eds. (Clifton, N. J.: Kelley, 1975), p. 113.

²¹See, for example, Joseph Barton, *Peasants and Strangers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1975). John W. Briggs, *An Italian Passage* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1978). According to these studies (and local naturalization records) the immigrants had a remarkably diverse European work experience.

²²George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (1938; rpt. Hatboro, Pa.: Folklore Associates, 1964), p. 234-35.

²³Before World War I the Coal Commission found that the family had to make up more than 30 per cent of the needed income. Throughout the pre- and post-war periods at least 40 per cent of the families had boarders. See Anne Bezanson "Earnings of the Coal Miners," and Marie L. Obenauer, "Living Conditions Among Coal Mine Workers of the U. S." *Annals ACPSS*, 111 (1924) *passim*, and Edward Eyre Hunt, F. G. Tryon and J. H. Willets, *What the Coal Commission Found* (Baltimore, Md.: William C. Wilkins, 1925).

²⁴For a study of Pennsylvania production see Caroline Golab, "The Industrial Experience and the Immigrant Family," in *Immigrants in Industrial America, 1850 - 1920*, Richard L. Ehrlich, ed. (Charlottesville, Va.: Univ. of Virginia Press, 1977), pp. 1-32. She points to anthracite mining as having the worst state record of total number of days in operation (e.g. 232 in 1915, 240 in 1918, 205 in 1919). "Foreigners, primarily Poles, Slovaks, 'Magyars,' and Italians, constitute the majority of workers in the mines with such constant and extreme fluctuations, prolonged periods of unemployment, low wages, horrid working conditions, and high accident potential it is remarkable that any communities were able to form at all" (p. 26). She attributes their success to the family and to women working which was probably true. It should be added that New World similarity to Old World conditions prompted families to adopt similar survival strategies.

²⁵Rowland Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America 1790 - 1950* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1953), p. 274.

²⁶One of the earliest of the recent studies concerning European origins of American ethnic volunteerism is Timothy L. Smith, "Lay Initiative in the Religious Life of American Immigrants, 1880 - 1950," in *Anonymous Americans*, Tamara K. Hareven, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1971), pp. 214-49. Smith discusses Wyoming Valley initiative especially the forming of National churches in opposition to the Catholic church. But even the traditional Catholic groups formed their own committees and built their churches

before asking the bishop's blessing (as we'll discuss later on). Also local groups like the Italians set up some 14 food cooperatives, beginning in 1911, with the Perugia co-op, spreading throughout the region, and lasting until 1963, when the sole survivor closed. The cooperatives had sets of by-laws and specific requirements about scheduling, buying, selling (a few cents below store prices), counter time, amount of each share, favored status of a widow, etc.

²⁷Sources are identified generally in the text. Material was gathered by myself and local students, often from their families, to whom I am indebted. Names are usually withheld because informants wanted it that way, perhaps owing to the local preoccupation with family and group reputation and also because the information about superstition was to many very sensitive.

²⁸Jung, *Man and His Symbols*, p. 92.

²⁹*A History of Wilkes-Barre*, IV, p. 1857.

³⁰Rev. John P. Gallagher, *A Century of History: The Diocese of Scranton: 1868 - 1968* (Scranton, Pa.: Diocese of Scranton, 1968), p. 300.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 156.

³²Timothy Smith, "Lay Initiative . . ." p. 230. For a very local version, Robert Janowski, ed. *The Birth and Growth of The Polish National Catholic Church* (Scranton, Pa.: Straz, 1965).

³³Charles McCarthy, *The Great Molly Maguire Hoax* (Wyoming, Pa.: Cro-Woods, 1969), *passim*.

³⁴Rosan A. Jordan, "Ethnic Identity and the Lore of the Supernatural," *Journal of American Folklore*, 88 (1975), pp. 370-82.

³⁵*Man and His Symbols*, p. 35. If Jung is at all correct, then superstition in filling basic emotional needs can reveal particular clues about universal feelings. Interplay between particular beliefs and the universal unconscious takes place on a regional, multicultural, and national stage. An unintentional condescension towards ethnic and other minority expression may itself be derived from that old myth of American perfectibility, the Wyoming variant of which we have already encountered. The problem, however, comes with seeing how folk belief and superstition connect with religion and culture. Jungian discussions (as in *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* which points to the limitations of an academic *Weltanschauung*, p. 365) are brilliant but difficult to systematize. Moreover, modern psychological studies of superstition using questionnaires about commonplace folk beliefs seem removed from a definable cultural context; for example, Candida Peterson, "Locus of Control and Belief in Self-oriented Superstitions," *Journal of Social Psychology*, 105 (1978), pp. 305-6; Stuart Blum and Lucille Blum, "Do's and Don'ts: An Informal Study of Some Prevailing Superstitions," *Psychological Rept.*, 35 (1974), pp. 567-71.

³⁶Clearly "superstition has always flourished best where the mental horizon of man is low and his reasoning powers limited" according to Wayland D. Hand, "The Fear of the Gods: Superstition and Popular Belief," in *Our Living Traditions*, Tristram P. Coffin, ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1968), p. 215. Sorting out superstition and folklore from racism in advanced technological societies is also difficult, when the state cynically uses folklore for harmful purposes. See Christa Kamenetsky, "Folklore and Ideology in the Third Reich," *Journal of American Folklore*, 90 (1977), pp. 168-78. Sir James Frazer puts the superstition - religion question in intellectual terms: "The reason why the higher forms of superstition or religion (for the religion of one generation is apt to become the superstition of the next) are less permanent than the lower is simply that the higher beliefs, being a creation of superior intelligence, have little hold on the minds of the vulgar . . ." *Psyche's Task*, pp. 170-71. Frazer would study "savagery" "to trace the early history of human thought and institutions"; Freud to gain insight into neurotic behavior; Jung to follow the shape of archetypes. Superstition, while worthy of study in and for itself, has been put to many theoretical uses. In the Wyoming region it has had its practical applications, representing a transference from religious to secular realms.

³⁷At the common ground of both folklore and the "unconscious

mind" are "such matters as the preservation of health, the warding off of danger and death, the hopes of fortune, and the desire for happy marriage and the blessing of children," and in both "blood relatives" are usually the only personae recognized. Ernest Jones, "Psychoanalysis and Folklore," in *The Study of Folklore*, Alan Dundes, ed. (London, 1930: rpt. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 97-98.

³⁸Quoted in Tony Tanner's, *The Reign of Wonder* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 6.

³⁹*Times Leader Evening News*, 13 July 1972, p. 18; 18 July 1972, p. 18.

⁴⁰Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, p. 50.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁴²The term has been amply defined by Don Yoder in "Folklore Studies in American Scholarship" in *American Folklife*, Don Yoder, ed. (Austin, Tex.: Univ. of Texas Press, 1976), pp. 3-18: "Folklore studies . . . is a newer holistic approach that analyzes traditional cultural elements in a complex society—whether these elements are defined as folk, ethnic, regional, rural, urban, or sectarian—viewing them in the context of that larger unifying society and culture of which all subgroups and traditions are functioning parts." (p. 13).

⁴³Timothy L. Smith, "Religion and Ethnicity in America," *American Historical Review*, 83 (1978), p. 1158. Subsequent discussion also relies in part upon Smith, "Lay Initiatives . . ."; Barton, *Peasants and Strangers*; Briggs, *An Italian Passage*; Golab, "The Industrial Experience"; Nathan Glazer, "Ethnic Groups in America," in *Freedoms and Control in Modern Society*, eds. Morroe Berger et al. (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1954), pp. 158-63. Cynthia Enloe, *Ethnic Conflict and Political Development* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973); Victor Greene, *For God and Country: The Rise of Polish and Lithuania Consciousness in America* (Madison, Wis.: State Hist. Soc. of Wis., 1975); *Ethnic Heritage Studies* (Wilkes-Barre, Pa.: King's College Press, 1975); Ralph Gommer, "Causes for the Decline in Anthracite Mining," Diss. Amer. Univ., 1955; Walter C. Warzeski, "The Rusin Community in Pennsylvania" in *The Ethnic Experience in Pennsylvania*, pp. 175-216; Stephen J. Palickar, *Slovakian Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Hampshire Press, 1954); Palickar, *Rev. Joseph Murgas* (Sunland, Calif.: C. L. Anderson, 1950); Keith S. Russin, "Father Alexis G. Toth and the Wilkes-Barre Litigations" *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 3 (1972), pp. 128-49. It should be noted that multicultural dimensions of folklife are much more complex than can be dealt with in this summary section. For instance, recent studies lead one to wonder about a possible subconscious link between Wyoming and Lattimer that may have existed in the minds of the Protestant posse (there was one Catholic member). Did there exist a secular Pennsylvania version of an earlier Puritan, Massachusetts "concept [as interpreted by Richard Slotkin] of the city on the hill . . . based on the principle of resistance to the forces of superstition, paganism, passion, nature, and unreason symbolized by Catholicism and tribalism"? *Regeneration Through Violence*, (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1973), p. 121. That concept by the 1890s may have had a causal impetus upon and a supportive effect from Darwinian notions about racial superiority. In "popularized form, Darwinism provided a pseudoscientific rationale for dominance and hierarchy in society." Stephen Steinberg, *The Ethnic Myth* (New York: Atheneum, 1981), p. 77.

⁴⁴Edward Pinkowski, *Lattimer Massacre* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Sunshine Press, 1950), p. 39, italics added.

⁴⁵This early instance of labor folklife is based upon accounts from informants (now about 80 years old) and from the *New York Times* 2 Sept. 1920, p. 1; 3 Sept. 1920, p. 1; 5 Sept. 1920, p. 2; *Wilkes-Barre Record*, 17 July 1920, p. 1; 22 May 1935, p. 1; 3 Dec. 1936, p. 2; *United Mine Workers Journal*, 31 (Sept. Oct. 1920), *passim*; 46 (April, May 1935), *passim*.

⁴⁶Gallagher, *Scranton Diocese*, p. 333.

⁴⁷Quoted in James Thomas Flexner, *That Wilder Image* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, 1962), p. 79.

ORDINARY ARCHITECTURE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS: THE TURNPIKE HOUSES

by Yvonne J. Milspaw

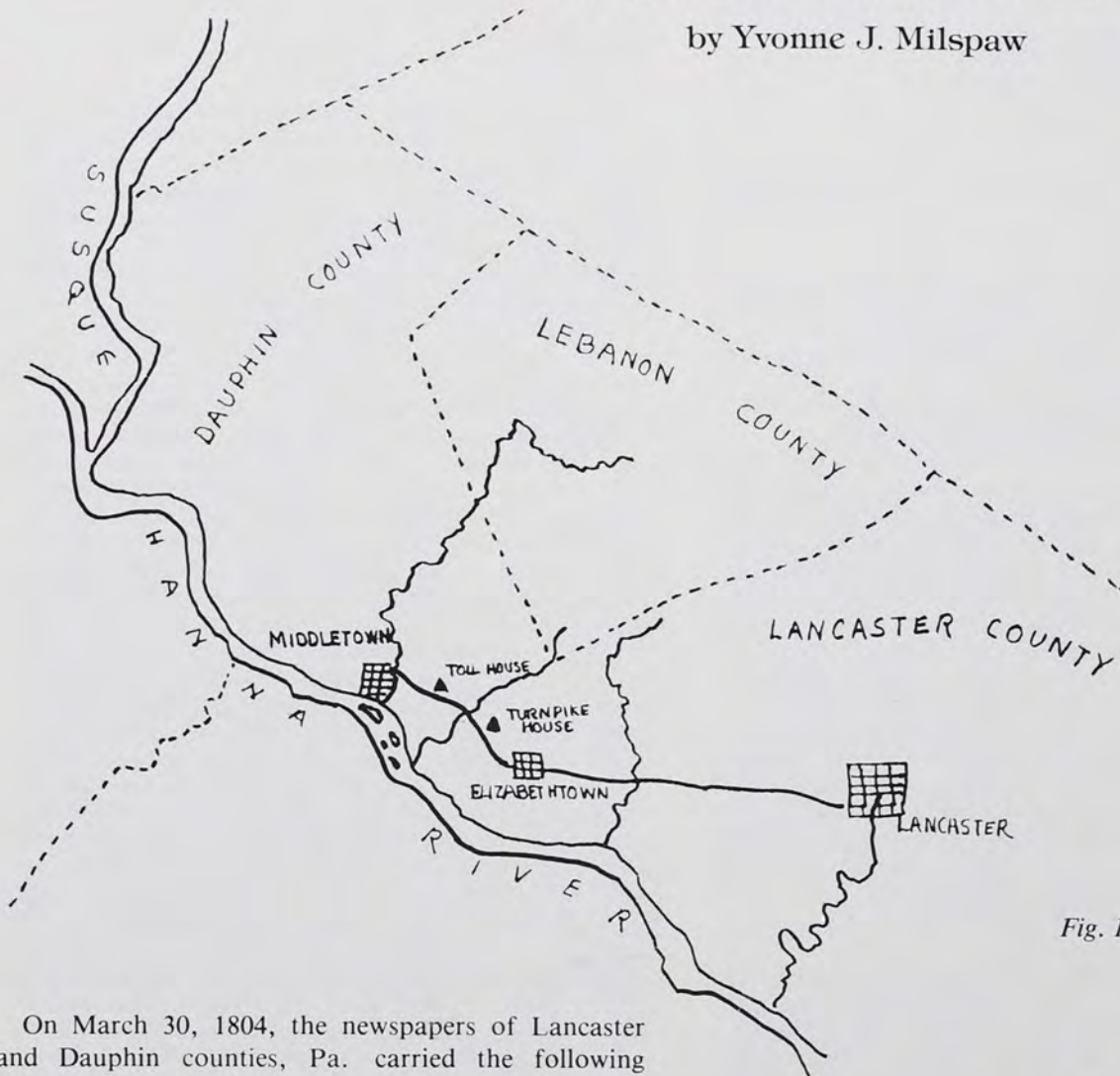


Fig. 1

On March 30, 1804, the newspapers of Lancaster and Dauphin counties, Pa. carried the following announcement:

Notice is Hereby Given That in pursuance of an act of the General Assembly of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, entitled 'An act to enable the Governor of this commonwealth to incorporate a company, for making an artificial turnpike or road, by the best and nearest route from the borough of Lancaster, through Elizabethtown to Middletown,' books will be opened in the borough of Lancaster, at the house of Adam Weber; at Elizabethtown, at the house of George Redsecker; at Middletown, at the house of William Crabb, on Monday the 14th of May next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, and be kept open until 5 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, and every succeeding day, for three days, for the purpose of receiving subscriptions for making the same road; each share of stock being one hundred dollars, 10 dollars of which to be paid on each share at the time of subscribing.¹

Middletown was then a bustling industrial town located above the shallow, unnavigable falls of the Susquehanna

River (Fig. 1). By improving the old road around the river's barrier, citizens hoped to gain access to the hungry markets of Philadelphia and Baltimore.

The eight miles of road between Elizabethtown and Middletown are crossed by two trap ridges of volcanic basalt² and several streams, making travel rather difficult. The short trip from one town to the next must have taken half a day even under the best conditions. The road was laid out by 1736, and was at first a mud pike. After 1790 it was greatly improved. An edict of 1792 declared that the road was to be fifty feet wide, twenty-one feet of it bedded with wood, stone, gravel or well compacted logs.³ Freight traffic to and from the west was heavy, and a toll was to be charged for the use of the road.

In 1804, the residents of Lancaster, Elizabethtown, and Middletown undertook the renovation of the twenty-six miles of road that connected them; however, the road and economics were rocky. In November, 1808, an announcement in the Middletown paper declared: “. . . Stockholders of the Lancaster, Elizabethtown and Middletown turnpike Company were notified to pay up their arrearages to finish the road, otherwise ‘their names will appear in the papers’.”⁴

In spite of the improved road, the trip was still difficult. An early nineteenth century traveler described the journey from Elizabethtown to Middletown:

January 30th, 1807. —After resting about an hour (at Elizabethtown) and not feeling at all fatigued, at half past four I proceeded for Middletown, eight miles farther, first loading one of the barrels of my gun with a running ball, as I had to pass near where one Eshelman was robbed and murdered last fall. The road over the Conewago Hills was bad, and by the time I arrived at the bridge over Conewago creek, three miles from Elizabethtown, my left foot began to pain me so that I was forced to slacken my pace, which made it dark before I arrived at Swatara creek; when the pain had much increased, which was occasioned by my stepping through the ice up to my knees in a run which crossed the road, which in the darkness prevented my seeing.

The boat was at the other side of the creek.

In about half an hour, which appeared to me an age, the boat returned, and I gladly crossed the creek in a canoe hauled over by a rope extended from bank to bank, seventy yards, and in a few minutes after I found myself in Mrs. Wentz’s excellent inn, the sign of General Washington, in Middletown.⁵

Even on today’s improved road, travel is not always easy. A small, springfed trough was maintained at the top of one Swatara Hill as late as 1940 for travelers whose automobiles overheated on the long uphill haul.

The townships (Mt. Joy, Lancaster County, and

Londonderry, Dauphin County) through which the road passes between Elizabethtown and Middletown were settled by the eighteenth century. Elizabethtown was officially founded in 1746; Middletown in 1755. Early settlers were Scots-Irish and English, but they were soon joined by large numbers of German settlers. In 1758-59, only 36% of the entire population (numbering 1,263 persons) of the two townships were of German background. By 1782, 54% (of 1,865 persons) were German. By 1800, the German population was more than 70% of the total.⁶

These people made their marks on the landscape, for all along the road there are fascinating remnants of their history. Particularly intriguing are the small, Continental-style log houses, unpretentious, modest, backed up against the woods, or nudging the road. The countryside is full of them; they exist where there is no apparent reason for them to exist. They chide us with their endurance.

The Continental floor plan house has been described in exquisite detail,⁷ but careful descriptions of the small, ordinary house are sadly lacking. By looking closely at some of these little log houses along the pike, it is hoped that some aspects of ordinary German-American architecture in the early nineteenth century will become more apparent.

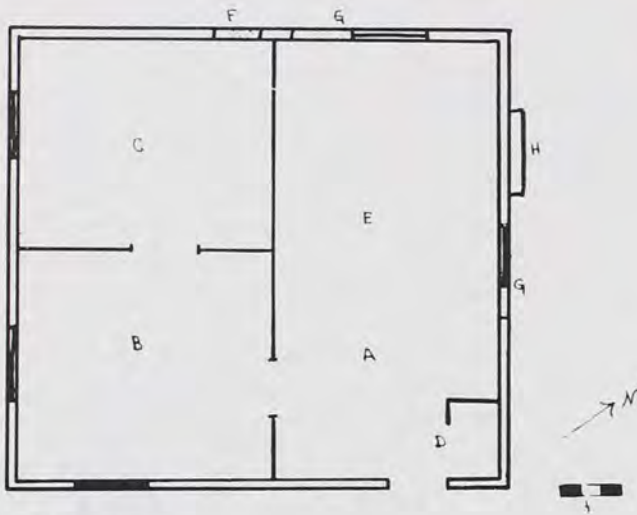
One such log house, half-demolished, was located on the Conewago Hills, about two miles west of Elizabethtown, Lancaster County. The house itself was built about 1780, and extensively remodeled about 1840.⁸ It was located on the north side of the highway, facing



Turnpike House-West side. The plaster patch just right of center is the Seelenfenster. Note the disturbance in the framing of the window.



Turnpike House-Eastside. The old road is just beyond to the South.



TURNPIKE HOUSE
2 MI. W. ELIZABETHTOWN

- A KUCHE B STUBE C KAMMER D STAIRWAY
E SUMMER BEAM F SEELENFENSTER G WINDOW DISTURBANCE
H CELLAR WAY

Fig. 2

east, toward the town. Several outbuildings once nestled up to the house, and about fifty feet to the north there was a low rubble wall, behind which the land went into a gentle downward slope covered with second growth hardwood timber and basalt or diabase outcrops. About eighty yards beyond the wall there is a spring which drains to the east. The house's garbage dump was located between the house and the stone wall, but contained only tin cans, bottles, and broken crockery of a fairly late date. No remains of a barn or other farm building could be located, nor was there any indication of extensive agriculture.

The house had a typical Continental three room floor plan (Fig. 2), and was constructed of V-notched oak logs. The logs were not of particularly impressive size (5" x 6") but were carefully hewn and well fitted. A heavier summer beam (7" x 7") was readily apparent. The house was nearly square (22' x 24')⁹ with the internal divisions on the main floor arranged in the usual Germanic fashion. One entered the *Kuche*, a long room (11' x 22') which contained the staircase to the upper floor, and served as the family living area and kitchen. A doorway led into a smaller chamber (13' x 12') on the east side of the house which likely functioned as the *Stube*, the parlor or workroom. This in turn led to a slightly smaller *Kammer* (13' x 10"), usually a bedroom in the southwest corner of the structure. The interior log walls were originally white-washed; after 1840 they were covered with lath and plaster. Externally, the logs also had been originally whitewashed, and after the extensive renovations of

1840 had also been covered with lath and clapboards.

The south (road side) and east (doorway) facades of the house each had two piercings; the north and west sides had one each, an ideal arrangement in an area where most of the unpleasant weather—extremes of both heat and cold—come from the north and west. By all indications, the placement and size of the windows were also altered after 1840. While the presence of pit sawed lumber and hand forged nails helped to establish the earlier 1780 date, the sawed board and cut nails used in the standard size window frames indicate a later change. The piercings on both the north and west sides of the house show severe disturbance in the original walls, suggesting a change in the window shape and placement. This renovation is further suggested by the door frame; a heavy (3" x 6") hewn frame was covered by very thin circle sawed lumber of a much later date.

In the west wall there was a small extra piercing (about 24" x 10"), between two logs. It is not readily apparent from the outside where it appears as just another patch on the wall, but it was easily discovered from the inside where the lath had been ripped out. It was filled by a warped, pit sawed plank, and held in place with a hand forged nail. It opens into the smallest chamber, the *Kammer*, the room traditionally used as a bedroom. Small windows of this sort are occasionally found in German houses in America, and are generally interpreted as *Seelenfensters*¹⁰ (soul windows; Fig. 3). These are windows opened only to allow the soul of a dying person to leave the house, a window quickly boarded over again so the soul could not find its way back. This interpretation may suffer

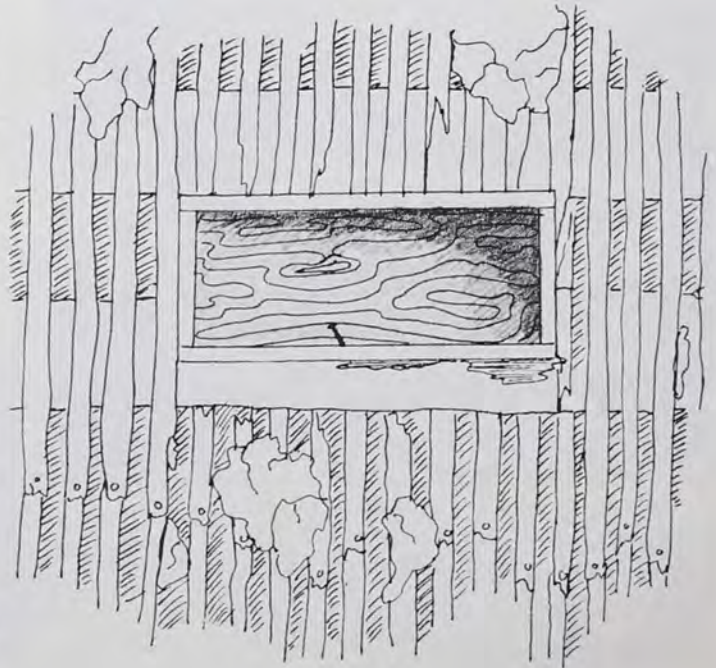


Fig. 3

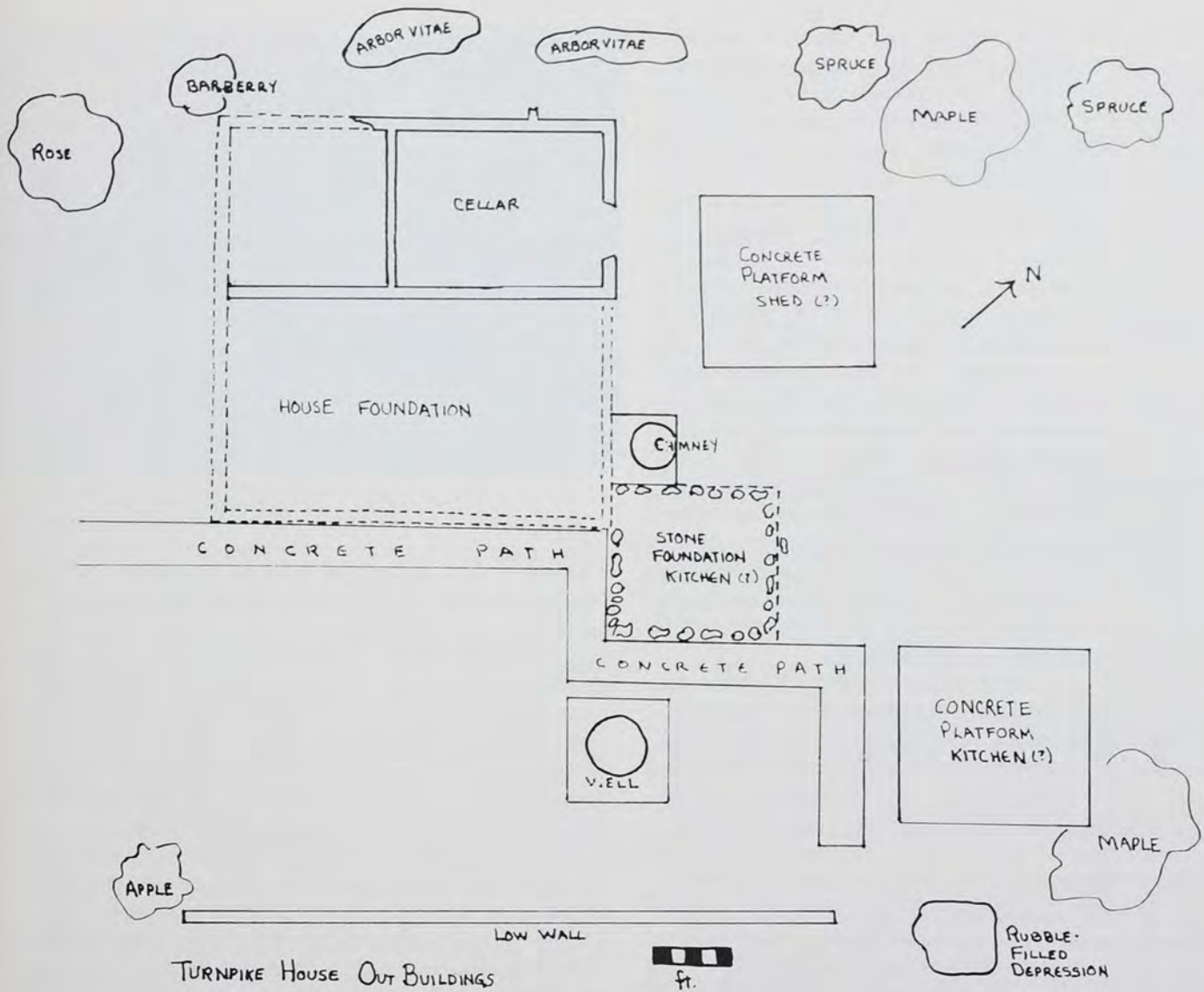


Fig. 4

from a tendency to romanticize, but the belief was so widespread in German Pennsylvania as well as in Europe,¹¹ that it may in fact be a rare example of belief affecting architecture. It is a not uncommon practice in the area to open the window in a room where a person has died.¹²

In the northeast corner of the house, just inside the door, there was a boxed in stairway leading to the second floor. The house was demolished to this point, so that on the second floor one could stand on an open platform of floor boards. The outlines of three small rooms in the same typically Germanic arrangement were apparent. For a house demolished to the second floor, there were surprisingly few logs dumped in the yard. It raises the possibility that the entire second floor was not in the original house plan but was added as part of a later renovation. A few cantilevered logs across the east side of the house indicate the presence of a roofed porch, a *Vorhof*. A half cellar, cemented as part of even more renovation, extended under the

west side of the house.¹³ It was reached through an outside entryway on the north side.

Interestingly enough, there was no fireplace or chimney in the house. A few red clay bricks were located along the long dividing wall on the ground floor which may have indicated the placement of a small chimney, but it is more likely that the chimney rested on the attic floor, fed by lengths of stovepipe. By the late 18th century nearby iron foundries had made six-plate stoves readily available in the area, and many German people opted to use them for heating in lieu of the less efficient fireplace. The closeness of the platforms for three outbuildings, one with indications of a fireplace and chimney, further suggest the likelihood of no original internal fireplace.

The proximity of the small outbuildings, all joined by a concrete path, indicate that the several buildings were treated as a single dwelling unit (Fig. 4). Two platforms and a stone foundation on the north side, each about ten feet square, indicate the position of what were most

likely storage sheds and an out-kitchen or summer house. One, located just off the entrance to the cellar, may have served as the former, while the others, located a few feet from the kitchen and main door, probably served as the latter. Although smaller than the average summerhouse,¹⁴ their location close to the kitchen, and well as their careful connection to the house by means of concreted paths, suggests this function. A smaller structure (41" x 41") located against the north wall of the house contains fire bricks and the indications of a chimney. It was probably a later addition to accommodate modern heating devices.

A concrete platform (63" x 82") surrounded the hand dug well. There is no indication that the area was covered by a roof or well house, although this was not an uncommon practice in the area.¹⁵ The pump has disappeared. There is also a small rubble filled depression about 20 feet off the northeast corner of the house which may indicate the site of the privy. About 100 yards north of the site, through a very marshy section of land, there is a spring with a two story Victorian springhouse (7½' x 5').¹⁶ The ruins of a 1949 Oldsmobile complete the landscape.

Although they differ rather significantly from the classic Continental house described in the literature, other houses from the same era, along the same road strongly suggest the typicalness of our house. They are small, square log buildings, often two stories, though, as suggested in the case of our house, these additions may have been of a later date. They clearly retain a three (or occasionally four) room floor plan which rarely deviates significantly from eighteenth century forms and usage. Functional outbuildings flock around these tiny houses like chicks around a mother hen.

One particularly provocative house, locally called the Toll House, may provide clues to the actual original appearance of some of these houses. The Toll House is located about four miles west of our house on Swatara Hill, up against the north side of the road. It is a late eighteenth century log house, a typical three room plan, arranged in a left handed version of our house. The Toll House retains its typically Germanic central chimney and steeply pitched roof which ends in an overhang across the house's front. Its outbuildings cluster tightly about it.

The suggestion is that this is the form of most of the turnpike houses—and possibly was the typical Germanic house of the early nineteenth century—until spate after spate of renovations changed them to suit the exigencies of more and more modern living. The central fireplace—if indeed there ever was one (after about 1780 they become increasingly uncommon)—is replaced by a centrally placed chimney into which small wood burning or coal stoves and, eventually, oil burners are vented. The steeply pitched roof gives way to a second story and more modern shallowly pitched roof. The tiny



Toll House. Near Middletown, Pa.

overhang which shelters the front door and the *Vorhof* becomes a porch roof. Outbuildings—kitchens, storage sheds, well and pump houses—are added in regular and predictable ways. This is certainly the case with the Toll House, for rather than building upward, as most renovators seem to have done, the owners of the Toll House built outward. The dependencies have become an integral part of the house structure itself, and in doing so, may have retained the real form of the early Pennsylvania German common house.

The houses raise some interesting problems while at the same time providing us with some insights into the attitudes of early 19th century "Dutch" common folk. The first house faces east, the usual early arrangement of both houses and barns. Even though it was located not far from the road—and it was the *only* real road in the wilderness at that time—it is nonetheless positioned on the land without regard for the road. The Toll House on the other hand, unabashedly faces the road, rubbing its very shoulders. If it served as a toll house (and for this I could locate no historical confirmation) its placement is explained; if it did not, and the explanation arose after the fact, we have the suggestion of an innovative builder acknowledging the only important economic commodity of the area: the presence of the road.

The absence of barns with any of the houses is puzzling. The houses were built during an era when German settlers were differentiated from others by the presence of their barns. In 1789 Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia "enumerate [d] a few particulars, in which they [Germans] differ from most of the other farmers of Pennsylvania . . . In settling a tract of land, they always provide large and suitable accommodations for their horses and cattle, before they lay out much money in building a house for themselves."¹⁷ W.J. Hoffman voiced the same thought in 1888; when writing about

the folklore of the Pennsylvania Germans he reported that their barns were "always larger and frequently more comfortable than the house."¹⁸

But kinds of buildings in these complexes present some problems: they indicate a rural, typically Germanic, but non-agricultural life style. It is an unusual pattern for early 19th century Lancaster County, Pa. Both houses, however, are on unusually poor farming land. The area between Middletown and Elizabethtown marks the dividing line between the rich farmlands of the Piedmont (largely Triassic shale and sandstone) and the Great Valley (with a limestone base and karst landscape). Crossing the line of the road are two trap ridges, knobs of volcanic basalt or diabase. The soil is of the Montalto and Watchung series, extremely rich, as are most soils of volcanic origin, but very stony and with extremely poor drainage.¹⁹ Hence, most remains in timber; what little is farmed is used for corn, hay, or pasture. Some farmers raise a few sheep, but most operations are still on a small scale.

Mid-18th century tax records from Lancaster County indicate that 60-65% of the population were farmers, 15% were laborers, and 20% were artisans. The latter tended to cluster in the towns.²⁰ But status lay in the ownership of land, and even artisans occasionally bought and settled small pieces of land. Johann Schoepf, traveling through Pennsylvania in 1783, noticed "the sorry looking artisans' cabins along the roads";²¹ perhaps this is the reason for a good house on poor land. Along a major, but difficult, highway a blacksmith, a weaver, or a tavernkeeper could easily make a living. He could plant a small garden, raise just enough animals to feed a family, and sit back to watch what happened along the Great Conestoga Road.

The Toll House still stands, but our other little house is gone now, and the clearing where it stood is overgrown with non-native vegetation—arbor vitae, spruce and apple trees, barberry, and roses gone wild. On close inspection one can find rotting logs, cracking cement foundations, and rocks painted to resemble flagstones. Along with the vegetation, they are the only indications that anyone ever lived here; they are all that remain to mark the living space of generations.



Turnpike Marker—about 1 mile west of Turnpike House. It reads; 20 miles to Lancaster, 6 miles to Middletown. On original turnpike these markers were located every 2-3 miles. About half of them remain.

ENDNOTES

¹C.H. Hutchinson. *The Chronicles of Middletown* (1906) (Middletown, Pa., 1977), pp. 135-136.

²Keith B. Allan. *A Brief geographic survey of Pennsylvania* (Shippensburg, Pa., 1963), p. 2-3; G.G. Stoctay *Dauphin County: Elements toward a Twentieth Century Pictorial History* (Harrisburg, 1971), p. 18. United States Department of Agriculture. *Soil Survey: Lancaster County* (Washington, D.C., 1959), sheet 14.

³John T. Faris. *Old Trails and Roads in Penn's Land* (New York, 1927, 1969), p. 96.

⁴Hutchinson, p. 134.

⁵Cummings, *Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country* (m.d.), quoted in Hutchinson, p. 78.

⁶James T. Lemon. *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, 1972; New York, 1976), p. 80.

⁷W.J. Hoffman. "Folk-lore of the Pennsylvania Germans" *Journal of American Folklore* 1 (1888), 128, mentions typical houses as being "two rooms, sometimes three, chimney and oven on the inside." A few good studies of Pennsylvania German houses are available. See Robert Bakarat "The Herr and Zeller Houses" *Pennsylvania Folklife* 21:4 (1972), 2-22; Robert Bucher, "The Cultural Background of our Pennsylvania Homesteads" *Historical Society of Montgomery County Bulletin* 15:3 (1966), 22-26; Henry Glassie "A Central Chimney Continental Log House" *Pennsylvania Folklife* 18:2 (1968-69), 32-39; Donald Millar "An Eighteenth Century German House in Pennsylvania" *Architectural Record* 62:2 (1928), 161-168; Irwin Richman *Pennsylvania's Architecture*. Pennsylvania Historical Studies 10. (University Park, Pa., 1969).

⁸For help in establishing these dates I am indebted to Henry Glassie.

⁹On method and measurement in Pennsylvania German building see Arthur Lawton "The Ground Rules of Folk Architecture" *Pennsylvania Folklife* 23:1 (1973), 13-19; and Lawton, "The Pre-Metric Foot and its use in Pennsylvania German Architecture," *Pennsylvania Folklife* 19:1 (1969), 37-45.

¹⁰The *Seelenfenster* is recorded in Swiss as well as German and American folk architecture. See Lawton, "Pre-Metric Foot," pp. 41-43.

¹¹Edwin Miller Fogel. *Beliefs and Superstitions of the Pennsylvania Germans*. American Germanica Society (Philadelphia, 1915), p. 134. "Mer muss es fenschter ufmache wann ens schtaerbt so as die sel naus kann" (Open the windows in the death chamber immediately after death so the soul can get out). Fogel reports this belief from six counties in this region. He also notes variants from Germany, including its report by Jakob Grimm in *Deutsche Mythologie*. Sean O'Sullebhain reports in *Nosanna agus Pieseoga na nGael* [*Irish Folk Custom and Belief*] (Hatboro, Pa., n.d.) p. 49 "When a person was dying every effort of the relatives seems to have been intended . . . to ease the passage of the soul . . . and make the parting easier. Doors and windows were opened in some countries, including Ireland, a special hole was formerly made in the wall or thatched roof to allow the spirit to escape."

¹²"When my grandfather died last year, he died at home. My mother and aunt opened the windows in the room. Then they left him for awhile." Collected from E.M., Middletown, PA, January 1976.

¹³This cellar form is typical of the Pennsylvania German building; see Amos Long, Jr. *The Pennsylvania German Family Farm*. Publications of the Pennsylvania German Society, Vol. VI (Breinigsville, Pa., 1972), pp. 100-101; Glassie, pp. 35-36.

¹⁴Long, p. 125.

¹⁵Long, pp. 258-283.

¹⁶Long, pp. 106-121.

¹⁷Benjamin Rush. "An Account of the Manners of the German Inhabitants of Pennsylvania." *Columbian Magazine or Monthly Miscellany*, 3 (August, 1789). Reprinted by Institute of Pennsylvania Dutch Studies, #1 (Collegeville, Pa., 1974), p. 4.

¹⁸Hoffman, p. 129.

¹⁹United States Department of Agriculture. *Soil Survey: Lancaster County*, pp. 58-59.

²⁰Lemon, p. 96.

²¹Johann David Schoepf. *Travels in the Confederation 1783-1784*, ed. and trans. Alfred J. Morrison (Philadelphia, 1911), 2:9. Quoted in Lemon, p. 115.

Auf öffentlicher Vendu
Zu Verlehenen,

Freytags den 28ten December,

An dem Wirtshaus von Joseph Ulrich, in Carl Zumbach,



Ein
Stück Land

Enthaltend
14 Acker, mehr oder weniger,

Gelien in Localis Tausch, an dem Dammstauer, Eprattner und Herrschburger Zierpfeil, etwa 1 und eine halbe Weile von Eprata, gränzt an Land von Benjamin Gorak, John Groß und andere; Darauf befindet sich ein Wohnhaus und Stall, ein laufender Brunnen nahe dem Hause, und ein Springhaus.

Das gewisse Eigentum von dem verstorbenen William Hotdunson.

Das Stück soll im 14ten oder 15ten Juli des nächsten Jahres, 14 Juli der nächsten Woche, öffentlich verkauft werden.

William Amweg, Executor.

Den 12ten 1767.

Joseph Bauman, Drucker bey Eprata.

“SET THY HOUSE IN ORDER”: INHERITANCE PATTERNS OF THE COLONIAL PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS

by Sara Matthews

In 1696 yet another clarification followed with an enactment which guaranteed to the widow no less than one-third of both real and personal estate “except where due and equivalent provision hath been made elsewhere.”³ The wills evidence this distinction between “immoveables” and “moveables” or real and personal estate. The following individual gave this summary of his movable estate:

And all the Mouveables in the House and out the Dor. Brass Pewter Iron Wooden and Earthen Things Waggon both Greath and Smal Plows and Irons belonging to Iron Stoves all the Household good further the creatures Horses Mares Colts Cows and all the Cattles old and Young Sheeps, old and Young, Swines and all the Guears belonging to Horses and Waggon . . .⁴

Restrictions were sometimes placed on the immovable property, i.e. the land and the improvements thereon, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

But if my House Wife should not be willing to stand by this Testament which I have ordered to be drawn up in writing She shall be at liberty to take the Thirds of all the moveables after the Debts are first paid. And as to the Immoveables She shall have no Demand.⁵

The law, therefore, appears to have allowed a relatively free hand to the testator providing that, as stipulated, “due and equivalent provision” had been made.

As is implied by the wording of inheritance law, the vast majority of the wills were composed by male heads of households. A married woman’s identity merged with that of her husband so she could not bequeath real estate or dispose of her chattels without the consent of her husband.⁶ It is not surprising then, in consideration of this legal principle, that this study revealed no wills written by married women. Some few, however, were written by widows and unmarried men.

The wills begin with paragraphs in which spiritual debts were first dispensed with before consideration of the temporal. There was usually a declaration as to the soundness of mind (necessitated by law),⁷ if not body, and the observation that all men are mortal. A request for Christian burial was sometimes included in this introductory paragraph but equally often designated as the first item of the will:

In the Name of God Amen. I Peter Asshelman of Commer Township in Lancaster County In Ye Province of Pennsylvania being weak in Body but of perfect Mind and Sound Memory Thanks be given unto God therefore But calling into Mind the Mortality of my Body and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to Die do make and ordain this my last will and Testament . . .⁸

* * *

In the Name of God Amen. Whereas it hath Pleas'd the Almighty God to lay me upon a heavy Sickbed and not knowing when he will call me to eternity and being as yet in Good and Sound Memory and perfect understanding I thought it fit to

When William Penn extended to Germans in the war-ravaged and famine-ridden Lower Rhine region an invitation to settle in his new colony, many accepted. The first settlement, in 1683, was in Germantown, outside of Philadelphia, but gradually, as the tide of immigration grew, the new settlers spread north following the Schuylkill River until they occupied a large portion of the gentle, rolling hills of southeastern Pennsylvania. Eventually over one hundred thousand German-speaking settlers emigrated to Pennsylvania and came to represent one-third of the colonial population.

This paper represents an ethnographic study of these eighteenth century Pennsylvania Germans or “Pennsylvania Dutch” as they came to be called, chiefly employing such information as was contained in 120 wills recorded in Will Book Volume 1 in the Berks County Court House in Reading, PA. Contained in this volume were 161 wills dating from 1752, when Berks County was incorporated, to 1765. For those wills which were originally recorded in German, translations are recorded in Will Book Z. Those selected as primary sources for this study were judged to be of Pennsylvania German origin by virtue of this use of the German language or through surname analysis.

The right to hand down private property was among the rights guaranteed to the individual by the first Provincial Council of Pennsylvania in 1682.¹ In 1683 the Second Assembly of Pennsylvania further clarified inheritance law. Through this new enactment it was provided that:

whatsoever estate any person hath in the province and territories thereof at the time of his death, unless it appear that an equal division be made elsewhere shall be thus disposed of. That is to say, One third to the wife of the party deceased, One third to the Children equally, and the other third as he pleaseth, And in case his wife be Deceased before him, two thirds shall go to the children equally and the other third disposed of, as he shall think fit . . .²

make and order the following my last Will and Testament. First of all I give and commend my soul unto him who gave it. My body I desire after my death to be decently buried.⁹

* * *

Whereas I Michael Reed of Reading in Berks County having taken to Heart how that all Men are once to die but the Hour of Death uncertain and besides that being very weak in Body, but yet of Sound Mind and Memory thanks be to God . . . I will that when the Immortal Spirit has left my Body that they shall bury me in a Christian like and Decent Manner.¹⁰

The individual had a certain amount of freedom in the wording.¹¹ Assured of an audience, some took the opportunity to express personal beliefs and opinions:

Whereas in the World all things are transitory, but especially since the Fall Death also was ordained for all the Children of Men, and indeed whether one is young or old, God the Lord has appointed to everyone his Hour and Term, in consideration of which I propose to make this my last Will and Testament on this present paper . . . therefore God himself will have that Man should make his Disposition and Regulation to wit in the 38 Chapter of the Prophet Isaiah and in the 2 Book of the Kings God the Lord speaks by this Prophet to Hezekiah, Set Thy House in Order, for thou Shalt Die.¹²

After the introductory paragraph and a request for burial, an item stipulating the payment of all debts was inserted. This request sometimes specifically includes debts arising from the funeral and burial of the deceased. This was dictated by law in that all debts of the deceased, including funeral and burial expenses, need be paid first before dispersal of the estate.¹³ Having satisfied the legal requirements and acknowledged impending death, the balance of the will was devoted to the legacies themselves.

Attempts to generalize as to inheritance patterns are rendered difficult by the many inconsistencies of the documents and by the various family situations which appeared to control how the bequests were made—particularly the age, sex, and number of children. The wills variously stipulated the legal coming of age as 14, 18, or 21 years. In the cases where all of the children were judged to be of sufficient age, two general patterns emerge. First, the immovables or real estate, which in the majority of cases was the family farm, was legated to the eldest son. He was then obligated to pay equal sums of money to his brothers and sisters and to care for his mother until her death:

I Give and Bequeath to my son . . . My Plantation whereon I now live and all my Real and Immoveable Estate . . . and upon the condition that he my said son . . . shall pay the sum of Two hundred and fifty Pounds Currant Money of Pensilvania in manner and Form following that is to say Forty pounds part thereof for my Son Johan Heinrich Zeller Junior within four months after my Decease. Forty pounds for my son Johan David Zeller also within four months after my Decease.¹⁴

* * *

My eldest Son shall have the Place and shall pay to each of the other Children their shares and shall let his Mother have a Seat for to live as long as it pleaseth God to Spare her life.¹⁵

As frequently as the above pattern is found, instructions are given for the sale of the entire estate and the monies derived from this sale are to be divided among

the wife and children:

. . . all my Improvement and Moveables and Goods after my decease all Shall be sold, namely, Improvement Moveables and all my Debts shall be paid that shall be demanded, and what remaining after my Debts are paid Shall be divided into three equal Shares and my Wife Shall have one Third thereof and the Children Shall have two Thirds thereof.¹⁶

* * *

My wife shall have proper right to my Real Estate or Plantation with all my stock off and on the Premises together with all the tools and Implements belonging thereunto which I have valued at 300 Pounds and of the above mentioned 300 Pounds my wife shall have 100 of the same for her maintenance and the said 100 pounds shall be paid to her in the space of four weeks after my Decease, let the Plantation be sold to whome it will, be it a Stranger or one of the Heirs, and the 200 Pounds remaining shall and may be divided among my children into equal Shares.¹⁷

Where all or some of the children were thought under age, the wife is usually the chief beneficiary. This status is at best temporary for it is further stipulated that when either the eldest son reaches legal age or when all of the children reach a stipulated age, the estate is re-legated. Again the immovables not infrequently become the property of the eldest son. In these instances, however, he must also assume responsibility for his younger brothers and sisters as well as his mother:

My Son Shall Keep his Brothers and Sisters and Mother at his Table and maintain them both in dyet and Clothing as their father used to keep them until each of them is come to the age of fourteen years.¹⁸

* * *

I do Bequeath and give unto my Eldest Son all my Whole and entire Estate . . . My son shall have the plantation with the following Clause and Condition That the said (son) . . . shall be bound to Maintain his Mother as my Legal Well beloved Wife and his Sister during their Natural Life with Necessary Viduals and Cloaths . . .¹⁹

The average size of a Pennsylvania farm was between 150 and 200 acres. It was difficult to wrest a living from smaller acreage and when the farm was legated intact it was perhaps to the best interest of all. Initially Pennsylvania law allowed the oldest son a double share if the children's share of the property were divided equally.²⁰ Although this was no longer true by 1752, when Berks County was incorporated, the custom of primogeniture or increasing the legacy of the eldest son lingered on:

Further I will and give him Twenty Shillings in Consideration of his Right as Eldest Son, and in Consideration of his Birth Right he shall make no further Demand.²¹

* * *

I give and Bequeath unto my son for his first childs-Right Five Pounds Ready money beforehand . . .²²
. . . allowing my son thirty shillings for his first Birth Right over and above his equal share . . .²³

* * *

I give unto my Son the sum of five Shilling Starling fahr his Elder right . . .²⁴

Further, a father sometimes decreased a legacy in response to various family situations. The will represented the last means by which to discipline erring

children. For whatever infraction, they might forfeit their share of the inheritance:

As my son is now in Such a Condition, that it is not necessary for him to take Care about my little Estate, as he has received so much that he may be content and I was not obliged to do so much for him, as he has behaved to me with So much Disobedience and given me So much Trouble and left me and did not conform himself to my Will as it is the Duty of an Obedient Son to his Father, so I order and bequeath to him, for his Portion, One Shilling Sterling, to receive of my Estate and that he Shall be Content, making no Trouble or Pretension further.²⁵

Or if a will so specified, the wayward son or daughter could again be recognized by the fulfillment of certain conditions. In the case below, a son has apparently accepted Catholicism, angering his Protestant German father:

It is my last Will, that my Son shall inherit nothing because he behaved himself as an undutiful Son and Backslid towards me his Father, therefore, . . . he Shall have one Shilling Sterling, but if he shall behave himself as a Child towards his Mother, and love his Brothers and Sisters, and confess the Evangelical Religion and (forswear) the Roman as it is against the Word of God, and our good king, he shall have his Share with the Rest of the children and no more.²⁶

Daughters were usually provided with money by the heir of the farm in lieu of their share in the plantation. Only rarely was any land or the farm ever legated to a daughter. A woman was, however, expected to bring with her into her marriage certain necessary household items to facilitate a young couple setting up a new household. The unmarried daughter who would have faithfully helped her mother and contributed much to household maintenance was often provided with a dowry of this nature by the terms of the will:

When the above mentioned Daughter marries furnish her with the Same things and Household Goods as the rest of her Sisters has been furnished with.²⁷

* * *

The daughter which is not married shall have a portion when she is married as the other daughter when she was married.²⁸

* * *

My said daughter Elizabeth shall have one Cow and bed and bedstead and one Chest and one iron pot.²⁹

Provisions in the will could also help to insure that his daughters would not marry without parental consent:

I desire if any of my Daughters Marry Contrary to their Mothers Mind that they Meaning my Daughters them nor their Heirs shall have power to Demand any further sum.³⁰

* * *

I bequeath unto my Daughter Elizabeth the sum of Five Hundred Pounds Legal Money of Pennsylvania. One Hundred Pounds thereof to be paid unto her when she is lawfully married immediately Upon Demand. The other four after the birth of her Third Child if she Marries Agreeable to her Mothers Mind. But if my Daughter Marry Contrary to the desire of her Mother and Take a Scandalous ill Natured man to husband than shall my said Daughter have but fifty pound Pennsylvania Currancy.³¹

Several notable provisions provided for children who could not care for themselves and whose welfare may well have been in question upon the death of the head of the household. This Pennsylvania German farmer

thoughtfully provided for his disabled sons:

. . . if my Son will keep and Maintain his said Brethern during their Life Time (they being Simple) in Vicheals and Drink washing and Lodging handsomly and to the Satisfaction of their Guardian herein mentioned, he shall not be obliged to pay anything for their own use as long as he keeps them . . . Be it remembered that I do appoint the aforesaid to be Guardians over my said sons who being not able to take care of themselves because for their simplicity.³²

And the child yet unborn was not forgotten by the father. Life expectancy was low and yet the child-bearing years were long so mention was frequently made in the wills of an expected child or the possibility of the birth of a child after the head of the household's death:

My estate to be equally divided between my Children four which are born and one which is not yet born . . .³³

* * *

But in case she my Wife shall be by the Will of God Delivered with a Son wherewith she is a going now he shall have one pound ten Shilling more then the other Children.³⁴

* * *

. . . and if she now should be great with Child, and after my Decease bring forth a child, it shall have the same as the others.³⁵

A father could also give consideration to the proper education, secular or religious, of his children. Not surprisingly, in a rural agrarian culture education was for the most part confined to the basics:

. . . shall cause my Children to be well Instructed and the Sons in English Reading and writing to be well learned.³⁶

* * *

. . . to keep them at Church and School til they have attained to their 14th Year, in which they shall be able themselves to earn their Bread and Cloathes.³⁷

* * *

And Lastly I will and do order that my younger Children shall be Taught or Caused to be Taught to Read and Write.³⁸

In addition to the children, the wife was the most frequent benefactor. However, in many cases, all legacies to the wife were contingent upon the stipulation that she remain unmarried:

But in Case she should marry again, contrary to expectation, I revoke all that which I have bequeathed to her.³⁹

* * *

In case she should Marie again then the above Wheatt Rie and everything Mentioned Shall Cease and be omitted and if she Marries before my Son George comes to his lawful Age that then she is to Acquit the Place Intirely.⁴⁰

If the estate had been sold, the wife was given one-third of the monies derived from this sale and was expected to maintain herself for the duration of her life upon this sum.⁴¹ If, however, the eldest son had been legated the farm, he was obligated by the terms of the will to provide and care for his mother. Since a woman's value in a rural culture was in her contribution to the household, she would have had little means by which to make a living upon the death of her spouse. Perhaps realizing this, her husband took painstaking care to insure her wellbeing. Further, this may well have satisfied the law's demand for "due and equal provision" when the widow was not legated a third

share of the real estate. The wills are filled with lengthy instructions as to the exact nature of the eldest son's obligation to his mother. The following excerpts are representative as they detail the provision of housing, food, clothing, transportation, and monetary needs:

But as for her Maintenance and Livelihood during her Widowhood She is to have a free Seat and Dwelling in the New House Which together with the Cellar under it must be finished for her only use With a Fire Wall with a brick Stone Chimney and a Stove in the Room for Three Pound and a Shelf in ye Kitchen and other most Necessaries Yearly fifteen Bushels Wheat and five Bushels Rye Which Grain must be fetched in the Mill and the Meal therefrom at ye Mill for her use without any Expence. Fifty Pound Fresh Beef and 50 Pound fresh pork Twentyfive Pound Flax or hamp hackled and twentyfive Pound Tow. Five Pound Wool the Benefit of a Milk Cow and Sufficient Fodder for her eight Apple Trees and eight peache Trees to her own Choice four paches in the Garden besides some Land to plant one hundred Cabish plants and Cut Firewood shall be fetched to her dwelling as much as she has occasion for all this for her Maintenance and Livelihood is to be understood as long as she remains a Widow and no longer.⁴²

* * *

. . . my wife shall have her Choice of the two Stove Rooms in my Dwelling house to live in so long as she continues unmarried further I bequeath unto her Yearly Twenty Bushels of Wheat, one hundred weight of Pork fifty Weight of Beef Two Pounds in Money twenty Pounds weight in Clean Flax and as much firewood as is necessary together with one hoghead of Sider and the Grazing of a Cow and a Pacing Mare.⁴³

* * *

. . . the Mother shall her Seat in the House have so long as she lives but if she cannot do with them so shall the Two Mentioned brothers build her another House over the Spring that she can live in it and a room to be made in to and an oven in it and a Fireplace so that she can boil but they must deliver her the wood in the house and shall give her yearly twelve bushels of Grain, eight bushels of wheat and four bushels of Rye but when she Desires it they must get it Ground and Delivered her in the house and shall give her yearly seventy-five pounds of Hogg's Meat and twentyfive pounds Of Beef and five Pounds of Wool every year and Each Year one quarter of Flax one Quarter of Indian Corn where they plant theirs and a third in the Planted Garden where she will have it . . . and the Mother Shall have Yearly one Gallon of Rum one Quarter pound of Peper one Quarter Pound Ginger One Quarter pound Allspice and Eight Shillings in Money Yearly.⁴⁴

* * *

To my wife I give . . . free Dwelling upon my Land and House with free Firewood and also my son shall give her yearly ten Bushels of Wheat and ten Bushels of Rye and also let her my wife have the milk of one Cow . . . my Son shall give her yearly unto my wife fifteen pounds of hatcheld flax and twenty pounds of good Tow and four pounds of Wool and shall give her a fat Swine of no less than one hundred pounds as also a Spott of Garden Sufficient to plant Kitchen herbs for her as also a pair of Shoes . . .⁴⁵

There is reference throughout the wills to items brought by the wife into the marriage. These, as with everything she owned, became the property of her husband. These items did not revert to her upon the death of her husband unless specified. Many thoughtful husbands did provide for their return and frequently mention is made of what appears to be the dower chest of Pennsylvania fame:

. . . four pewter Plates four Pewter Dishes two Iron pots *her Walnut Chest* Spinning Wheel and the Side Sadle . . .⁴⁶

* * *

All the Bedding which is in the House and all the Linnen, *together*

with her Chest, also a Copper Kettle, Two Iron Potts, and all the Pewter Ware also the large and small Spinning Wheels Shall remain her own Property.⁴⁷

* * *

I give and bequeath unto my Wife the Money Bonds Notes and Book Debts *also her Chest* with the Linnen Bedding and Spinning Utensils.⁴⁸

* * *

I give to my Wife, a Dresser with all that is thereon that is Pewter Dishes, Basons, Plates, Spoons, and a Tankard, *and her own Chest* with all the Hemp and Flax which I now have for her own use.⁴⁹

Legacies outside the immediate family were not prevalent. Occasionally, if a child has preceded the father in death, the children of the deceased child would be remembered in the will as in the following case:

. . . and further that my Son Shall give one Cow and Calf unto my deceased Daughter's Child and that when she is married.⁵⁰

The bulk of the estate was comprised of the land, buildings, livestock, farming and household utensils. Cash in a rural economy was scarce and was usually only obtained through the sale of the estate. Not surprisingly, then, only three wills stipulate cash legacies outside of the immediate family and these were given to religious institutions. One of these was a very nominal sum and the other was made only with the stipulation that certain debts would be collected:

I give and bequeath Twenty Shillings to ye Poor of ye above mentioned township and Twenty Shillings to ye Poor of ye township of Maxetawny, ten Shillings give to ye Church upon ye hill . . .⁵¹

* * *

. . . if the sum of one hundred and thirty Pounds which my Son owes me can be recovered of him by my Executors or if he pay it Voluntarily to them my Will is and I do hereby give and bequeath out of the residue of my Estate above mentioned the sum of Twenty Pounds Lawful Money of Pennsylvania to the Society of Germans commonly called first day or Sunday Dunkers to be by them distributed to such Poor Persons of all Denominations in Religion and in such Proportions as they think suitable.⁵²

It is not surprising that religious institutions appear to be the only legatee outside the family. The Pennsylvania Germans were a religious people deeply committed to the teaching of Protestant Christianity. A church was usually quickly constructed after settlement. The wills reflect this commitment as in the following words of hope which bespeak their assurance of salvation and a life hereafter:

. . . to rest till the day of the Resurrection to which I hope and believe to be a Partaker . . .⁵³

* * *

. . . I die hoping for the resurrection on the latter day to enjoy eternal bliss and happiness.⁵⁴

* * *

. . . not doubting but that I shall receive (my body) again at the Day of Judgement when the Trumpet of God shall sound.⁵⁵

In summary, then, it may be said that the thought of death produced a document which reflects the nature of 18th century Pennsylvania German life. For although the variety of information yielded renders it difficult to draw definite conclusions, certain patterns can be

recognized. It is obvious, for example, that these German settlers continued to work the land in this country as they had for centuries prior in their European homeland. The wills give evidence of a rural people—most of whom were farmers—with a strong commitment to Protestant Christianity. Home and land were the major possessions; subsistence farming in the wilderness allowed for few of the amenities of life. The wills also demonstrate a strong orientation to the nuclear family. The inheritance patterns reflect both a desire to legate the family farm intact to the eldest son, and a desire to insure fair compensation to all other family members. As the Pennsylvania German emigrants had hoped for a better life in a new land, so they strived to give to those they left behind all that they had acquired in this new land.

ENDNOTES

¹Staughton George, ed. (et al.), *Charter to William Penn and Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, 1879), p. 119.

²Ibid., p. 141.

³Ibid., p. 265.

⁴Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 8.

⁵Berks County Will Book Z, p. 5.

⁶Roger Thompson, *Women in Stuart England and America* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974).

⁷George, p. 119.

⁸Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 11.

⁹Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁰Berks County Will Book Z, p. 7.

¹¹George, pp. 119, 131.

¹²Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 22.

¹³George, p. 119.

¹⁴Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 31.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁶Berks County Will Book Z, p. 30.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁹Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 76.

²⁰George, pp. 119, 231, 265.

²¹Berks County Will Book Z, p. 7.

²²Ibid., p. 39.

²³Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 120.

²⁴Ibid., p. 143.

²⁵Berks County Will Book Z, p. 15.

²⁶Ibid., p. 31.

²⁷Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 112.

²⁸Berks County Will Book Z, p. 3.

²⁹Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 28.

³⁰Ibid., p. 53.

³¹Ibid., p. 52.

³²Ibid., p. 31.

³³Ibid., p. 18.

³⁴Ibid., p. 92.

³⁵Berks County Will Book Z, p. 49.

³⁶Ibid., p. 20.

³⁷Ibid., p. 49.

³⁸Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 97.

³⁹Berks County Will Book Z, p. 44.

⁴⁰Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 112.

⁴¹Marylynn Salmon, "Equality or Submersion? Feme Covert Status in Early Pennsylvania," in *Women of America*, Carol Berkin and Mary Beth Norton (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979).

⁴²Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 40.

⁴³Berks County Will Book Z, p. 2.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 16.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 12.

⁴⁶Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 9.

⁴⁷Berks County Will Book Z, p. 18.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 32.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 4.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 16.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 26.

⁵²Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 33.

⁵³Berks County Will Book Z, p. 7.

⁵⁴Berks County Will Book Volume 1, p. 40.

⁵⁵Berks County Will Book Z, p. 44.

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THE LITERATURE ON FENCES, WALLS AND HEDGES AS CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FEATURES

by Allen G. Noble and Jean M. Danis

Fences are an integral element in the cultural and settlement patterns of North America (Kelley [34]). Emigrants from Europe brought with them an understanding of the need for fencing as well as, in many cases, their own terminology and types of fence construction. Possibly an even stronger determinant than cultural heritage on fence construction was the material available in each area for building such barriers. Much of the regional nature of fence distribution is a result of topography and available vegetative and other resources (Bogue [4]). Thus, the stone fence is frequent in New England and other parts of North America where glacial deposition left fields strewn with boulders, and various wooden and rail fences have lasted longest in Appalachia and other remote regions.

A scarcity of materials and the increasingly high cost of fencing were major obstacles encountered in settling the Midwest and the Great Plains beyond. Much of the literature on fencing during the second half of the nineteenth century is devoted to discussion of the problem and many of the agricultural journals contain suggestions for a variety of alternative fencing materials (Dunlop [13], Capron [6]). The problem has been carefully discussed by Danhof [11].

The introduction of barbed wire fencing provided the desired effective, cheap, and easily maintained material required for occupation and settlement of the vast Plains land (Hayter [20, 21], Carmichael [7], Haley [18], Holt [26], Hubert [30], Hunter [31], MacIntosh [43], McCallum and McCallum [45], McClure [46], and Webb [63]). Barbed wire also effected changes in social and economic life, as seen in the conflicts between cattlemen and farmers competing for the land (Gard [15], Holt [25, 27, 28] and Webb [62]).

The early literature on fences, hedges, and walls as cultural features largely consists of independent observations of fencing practices by particularly acute observers; for example, the accounts of Peter Kalm (Larsen [37]). Emigrant handbooks such as Peck's [49] were designed to give basic information on construction, cost, and utility of fences. Many personal reminiscences and diaries of early pioneer settlers contain information on fences. Duffield [12], one of the best of such sources, is cited in this bibliography as a representative of this type, but many others exist. All are potentially valuable indicators of how widespread certain fence types were, and of the materials which were used or deemed desirable. Hewes [23], Zelinsky [66], and



*Limestone Fence.
Door Co., Wisc.
Oct. 1980*



*Stake and Rider Fence.
Antietam, Maryland.
Feb. 1979*

Hewes and Jung [24] have demonstrated how these and contemporary local and state government documents, together with newspaper accounts, can be utilized to reconstruct the geographical patterns of early fencing. One important group of source materials not yet fully explored is the large number of county and state atlases (such as Andreas' [1]) which provide many illustrations of local fence types.

From mid-century through the 1880s, journal articles and government reports (mainly from the Department of Agriculture) clearly show one major dilemma of contemporary farmers—how to obtain large amounts of fence material at an affordable price. The problem persisted up to World War I (Humphrey [32]). The high cost of building and maintaining fences is a repeated complaint, and the Osage orange hedge in the Midwest and Plains regions is often urged as a solution to the problem (Warder [61], U.S. Commissioner of Agriculture [58]). Hedges were employed more frequently in these regions than elsewhere, but they were never totally successful. Government reports, particularly one in 1871 (U.S. Commissioner of Agriculture [59]), give statistics on what materials were used and their respective costs. Also appearing during this period are a number of discussions of fence laws and the legal aspects of fencing (Thornton [56], Tyler [57]).

During the early twentieth century, the literature changes from comments on the current fencing situation to that of viewing fences as historical and cultural artifacts. Anticipating this development was a fine survey article in *Scribner's Monthly* (Anonymous, [2]) which seems to have been overlooked by most subsequent researchers. There are a few early monographs and articles limited to the architectural aspects of New England fences (Kilham [36], Hopkins [29], Litchfield [40], Northend [48]), as well as some later works which

are mostly collections of sketches and photographs (Schmidt [54], Symons [55]).

In the late 1920s, a few historians began to take an interest in fencing (Gross [17], Kiebach [35], Gard [15], Haley [18], Holt [25-28], Rice [53]). Particularly significant was the work of Walter P. Webb [63] who saw the importance of barbed wire fencing in permitting the settlement of the American prairies. After World War II, geographers and folklorists discovered the fence as a landscape element, with a series of excellent surveys designed to differentiate fence types, discover their geographic distribution, and relate this information to cultural and environmental factors (Raup [52], Leechman [38], Mather and Hart [44], Glassie [16], Hart and Mather [19], Pocius [50]).

Also at this time, studies limited to a particular fence type or to one region began to appear, although their quality varies considerably (Long [42], Via [60], Buie [5], Fife [14], Henning [22], Rafferty [51], Winberry [64], Conger [10], Clemson [9]). Additionally, other works place an emphasis on techniques of construction, on terminology, and on the nomenclature of fences (Carter [8], Withers [65], Kiebach [35]). Particularly significant is the detailed work of Mamie Meredith [47] which established a comprehensive terminology for the study of fences. Recently, attention has been increasingly focused upon fences as components of particular cultural landscapes (Long [41], Lessard and Marquis [39], Jett and Spencer [33]), even including urban ones (Arreola [3]).

The studies listed below are the major works of North American fences, hedges and walls. A few entries are listed because they are representative of a much larger number of similar works. In these instances the annotation indicates this.



Post and Rail Fence. Stork Co., Ohio May, 1982

1. Andreas, Alfred T., *Historical Atlas of Iowa, 1875*. Chicago: Andreas Atlas Co., 1875. Contains drawings of fence types in various locations in Iowa. Typical of a very large number of state and county atlases of the period which often contain important clues to local fencing.
2. Anonymous, "New England Fences," *Scribner's Monthly* (February 1880) 502-511. A lyrical view of fencing, but at the same time a surprisingly accurate and informative account.
3. Arreola, Daniel D., "Fences as Landscape Taste: Tucson's Barrios," *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 2:1 (Fall/Winter 1981) 96-105. One of the very few, recent articles on urban fencing.
4. Bogue, Allen G., *From Prairie to Corn Belt, Farming on the Illinois and Iowa Prairies in the Nineteenth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963. 73-83. Excerpt from longer text; short narrative of fencing practices from sod fences to barbed wire. General information.
5. Buie, T. S., "Rail Fences," *American Forests*. 70 (October, 1964) 44-46. General overview of fencing in early eastern U.S. The example of South Carolina is used to illustrate problems of fencing costs and early legal requirements for fencing.
6. Capron, Horace, "Wire Fences," *Illinois State Agricultural Society Transactions*. 2(1856-57) 425-432. Mid-nineteenth century instructions on how to put up a "good, strong" wire fence. Advantages of wire fences over hedge fences emphasized.
7. Carmichael, Joe M., "Thorny Fence," *The Cattle-*



Board Fence with Limestone Fence in background near Paris, Ky. Oct. 1976

- man* (January, 1949) 21-24, 52. Focuses upon the early patents and inventors important to the development of barbed wire. Also discusses the impact of barbed wire on the plains.
8. Carter, Jane, "Old Rail Fences," *American Forests*. 54(December, 1948) 548-569. Folksy account of old methods of construction of rail fences. Some background of fencing practices and customs in Europe. Traces origins of such words as "fence", "post", "rail".
 9. Clemson, Donovan, *Living With Logs: Log Buildings and Rail Fences*. Saanichton, British Columbia: Hancock House Publishers, 1974, 49-59. A frothy discussion of fences in British Columbia. Fine photographs and a bit of useful information on the Russell fence type.
 10. Conger, Roger N., "Fencing in McLennan County, Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 54 (October 1955) 215-221. The emphasis is on barbed wire types in this localized study. Has description of how barbed wire was tightened.
 11. Danhof, Clarence H., "The Fencing Problem in the Eighteen Fifties," *Agricultural History*. 18 (1944) 168-186. Fencing problems related to cost and materials prior to widespread use of wire fencing.

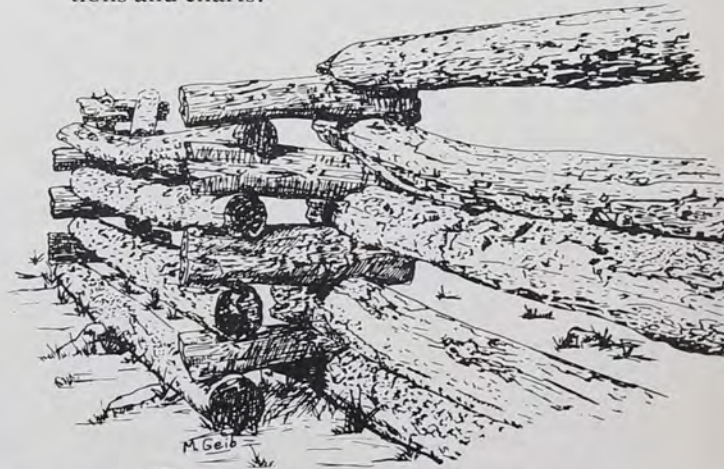


Rubber Strip Fence near Holland, Mich. Oct. 1981



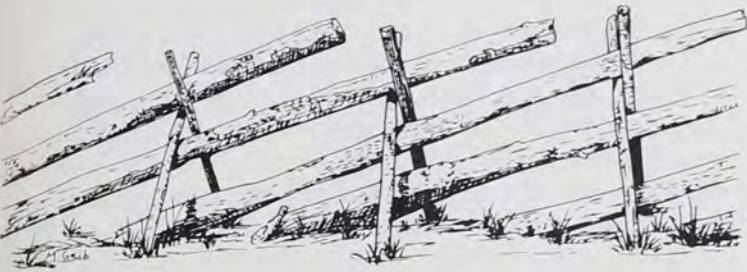
*Stake and Rider Fence.
Cades Cove, Tenn.
Aug. 1978*

12. Duffield, George C., *Memories of Frontier Iowa related by George C. Duffield for the Annals of Iowa*. Des Moines: Richard Brothers Printing, 1906. 41-50. Personal narrative of early fencing in Iowa. Sorts out fencing terms used by pioneer settlers on the Plains.
13. Dunlop, Hon. H. L., "On Fencing, etc." *Illinois Agricultural Society Quarterly Journal and Transactions*. 5 (1859-1860) 686-689. Brief discussion of hedges and timber belts.
14. Fife, Austin E., "Jack Fences of the Intermountain West." in D. K. Wilgus, ed. *Folklore International*. Hatboro, Pennsylvania: Folklore Associates, 1967, 51-54. Focuses on a particular fence type and its occurrence in western U.S. Describes current uses.
15. Gard, Wayne, "The Fence-Cutters," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 51:1 (July 1947) 1-15. Places the problem of fence cutting in its social, political and economic setting, with particular emphasis on Texas.
16. Glassie, Henry, *Pattern in the Material Culture of Eastern United States*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968. Scattered and brief mentions of fences in early, eastern U.S. Contains map of extant snake fences in eastern U.S.
17. Gross, Henry, "Old Fences in Bucks County," *Journal of the Bucks County Historical Society*. 5 (1926) 429-432. Marginally written account of early tools and fencing practices and construction of split rail fences in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.
18. Haley, Evetts J., "And then came barbed wire to change history's course," *The Cattleman*, (March 1927), 78-83. A sort of general treatise on the introduction of barbed wire in Texas.
19. Hart, John Fraser and E. Cotton Mather, "The American Fence," *Landscape*. 6 (1957) 4-9. Basic information on history of American fencing and on regional nature of certain fence types. Good summary discussion of fencing.
20. Hayter, Earl W., "Barbed Wire Fencing-A Prairie Invention: Its Rise and Influence in the Western States." *Agricultural History*. 13 (1939) 189-207. Concentrates on the agricultural, legal, social and political changes which occurred in the latter half of the nineteenth century with the introduction of barbed wire.
21. Hayter, Earl W., "The Fencing of Western Railways," *Agricultural History*. 19 (1945) 163-167. Relates railroad efforts to fence right of ways in order to keep tracks clear of livestock and domestic animals on the Plains. Includes types of fences, costs, and advantages and disadvantages of each.
22. Henning, Darrell, "Common Farm Fences of Long Island," *Bulletin. Friends of Nassau County Historical Museum*. 2 (Spring, 1967) 6-13. Deals mainly with wooden fences from rail fence through wooden picket fencing. Pictures and drawings of fences and some early fencing tools.
23. Hewes, Leslie, "Early Fencing on the Western Margin of the Prairie," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 71: 4 (December, 1981) 499-526. Early fencing practices in Nebraska and Kansas set in their settlement context. Maps and diagrams of fence distribution and timber resources.
24. Hewes, Leslie and Christian L. Jung, "Early Fencing on the Middle Western Prairie," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 71: 2 (June, 1981) 177-201. Traces developments of fencing in Illinois, Missouri and Iowa from settlement of Plains to the introduction of barbed wire. Contemporary accounts with good illustrations and charts.



Chock and Log Fence

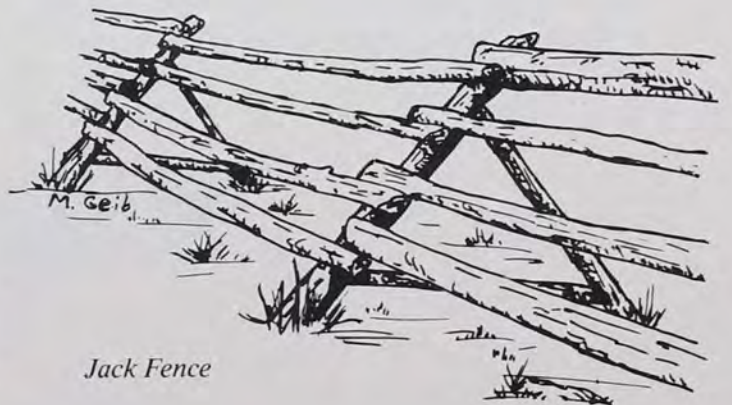
All line drawings by M. Margaret Geib, Dept. of Geography, University of Akron.



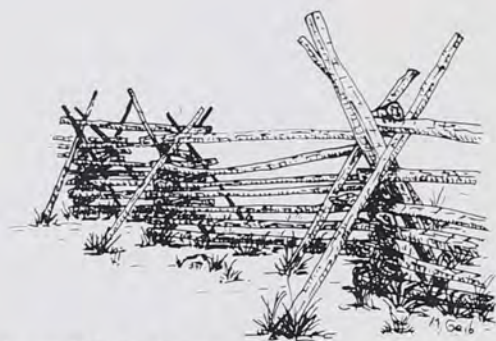
Irish or Shanghai Fence

25. Holt, R.D., "Barbed Wire," *Texas Monthly*. 4 (Sept., 1929) 174-185. Effect of wire fencing on settlement patterns and the cattle industry in Texas. Essentially a popularly written version of entry no. 27.
26. Holt, R.D., "Barbed Wire Drift Fences," *The Cattleman* (March 1935) 17-21. Fascinating account of early barbed wire fences built to keep cattle from drifting southward during severe winter storms on the Texas plains.
27. Holt, R.D., "The Introduction of Barbed Wire Into Texas and the Fence Cutting War," *West Texas Historical Association Yearbook*. 6 (June, 1930) 70-79. Considerable discussion of reasons behind the practice of fence cutting.
28. Holt, R.D., "The Saga of Barbed Wire in the Tom Green Country," *West Texas Historical Association Year Book*. 4 (June 1928) 32-49. Carefully documented study of the introduction of barbed wire fences in one part of Texas. Also has lengthy section on fence cutting.
29. Hopkins, Alfred, *Fences and Fence Posts of Colonial Times*. New York: Marchbanks Press, 1922. Short monograph on architectural unity of colonial homes with their picket fences. Suggests studying fences for architectural history.
30. Hubert, Harry, "First Barbed Wire in Coleman County," *Frontier Times* (July/September 1953) 313-314. Reprint of a 1924 article in the *Dallas Semi-Weekly Farm News*. Of local interest primarily. See Hunter entry.
31. Hunter, J. Marvin, Sr., "When Barbed Wire Came to Coleman County," *Frontier Times* (August 1951) 321-322. This is virtually a word-for-word copy of Hubert's article.
32. Humphrey, N.N., *Cost of Fencing Farms in the North Central States*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916, (USDA Bulletin, no. 321). Focuses mainly on wire fencing, its cost and method of construction. Distribution maps of fence types in North Central States, together with interesting information not found elsewhere.

33. Jett, Stephen and Virginia Spencer, *Navajo Architecture*. Tucson: University of Arizona, 1981. 158-165. Origins and types of fences and corrals employed by Navajo Indians up to the present. Includes some modern rarities such as the auto-body fence and the tire fence.
34. Kelley, M.A.R., *Farm Fences*, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940. (USDA Farmers Bulletin, no. 1832). Comprehensive survey of fence types, construction, cost and maintenance, as well as various uses. Includes information on fence gates and tools; deals primarily with contemporary fencing.
35. Kiebach, Raymond E., "Fences in Pennsylvania German Land," *Historical Review of Berks County*. 14 (October, 1948) 12-14. Includes references to European practices and descriptions of fence types, materials, construction and German fence nomenclature.
36. Kilham, Walter H., "Colonial Gateways and Fences In New England," *House and Garden*. 7 (April, 1905) 225-232. Pompous discussion of garden fences and gates, mainly from New England.
37. Larsen, Esther Louise, "Pehr Kalm's Observations on the Fences of North America," *Agricultural History*. 21 (1947) 75-78. Translation of those portions of Kalm's famous work which deal with fences and fencing.
38. Leechman, Douglas, "Good Fences Make Good Neighbors," *Canadian Geographical Journal*. 47 (December, 1953) 218-235. Fence types in the U.S. and Canada, and the advantages and disadvantages, particularly of the electric fence. Contains the origin of the word "fence". Excellent illustrations of types which are elusive.
39. Lessard, Michel and Huguette Marquis, *Encyclopedie de la Maison Quebecoise*. Montreal: Les Editions de l'Homme, 1972. 653-657. Short descriptions of wood fences and construction used in Quebec by the French settlers.



Jack Fence



Stake and Rider Fence

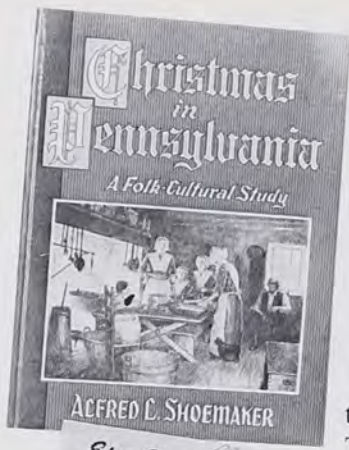
40. Litchfield, Electus, "Colonial Fences," *Country Life*. 31 (March, 1917) 61-64. Articles concerning design and aesthetic elements of fences of colonial homes in New England towns.
41. Long, Amos, Jr., "Fences in Rural Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Folklife*. 12 (Summer, 1961) 30-35. Detailed information on fence types, materials, methods of construction, and original German nomenclature for fences in Pennsylvania. Includes references to domestic as well as farm fences.
42. Long, Amos, Jr., *The Pennsylvania German Family Farm*. Breiningsville, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania German Society, 1972. 57-72. Includes much of the same material as in above article, with inclusion of some folklore.
43. MacIntosh, P.J.R., "Barbed Wire in Texas," *Texas Weekly*. (May 23, 1936) 8-9. Popularly written article emphasizing the impact of barbed wire on western settlement.
44. Mather, Eugene Cotton and John Fraser Hart, "Fences and Farms," *Geographical Review*. 15 (April, 1954) 201-223. Shows relationship of fencing to physical landscape and land uses. Suggests regional nature of certain fence types; contains two north-south traverses of eastern U.S.
45. McCallum, Henry D. and Frances T. McCallum, *The Wire That Fenced the West*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965. All you ever wanted to know about barbed wire, but were afraid to ask.
46. McClure, C. Boone, "History of the Manufacture of Barbed Wire," *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, 31 (1958) 1-114. Fifty pages of historical text, followed by sixty-five pages of line drawings of examples of barbed wire. Also contains extensive list of U.S. patents issued for barbed wire.
47. Meredith, Mamie, "The Nomenclature of American Pioneer Fences," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*. 15:2 (June, 1951) 109-151. Fence types and terms used in connection with fencing in various locations in America are described in detail. Draws upon folk terminology as well as technical and legal descriptions.
48. Northend, Mary, "Old Fences in Salem and Newburyport," *American Home and Garden*. 11 (February, 1914) 48-52. Colonial fences are briefly discussed; influence of shipcarvers' craft on the decorative wooden fences in these two seaport towns is noted.
49. Peck, J.M., *New Guide for Emigrants to the West Containing Sketches of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas with the Territory of Wisconsin and the Adjacent Parts*. Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, 1837. 2nd Edition. Representative of a large number of emigrant guides published to assist pioneer settlers; contains instructions and cost estimates for basic wooden fences.
50. Pocius, Gerald L., "Walls and Fences in Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Folklife*. 26 (Spring, 1977) 9-20. Integrates material from earlier studies. Illustrates usefulness of oral tradition. Particularly good discussion of stone wall building techniques.
51. Rafferty, Milton D., "The Limestone Fenceposts of The Smokey Hill Region of Kansas," *Pioneer America*. 6 (January, 1974) 40-45. Describes form, construction and history, as well as geographical distribution, of limestone fenceposts in central Kansas. Also notes other construction uses of "fencepost" limestone.
52. Raup, H.F., "The Fence in the Cultural Landscape," *Western Folklore*. 6 (1947) 1-7. General



Board Fence

- description of fence types, materials and distribution in the U.S. Also deals briefly with social aspects and origins of fencing as a cultural feature.
53. Rice, Mary Louise, "The Role of the Osage Orange Hedge in the Occupation of the Great Plains." Urbana: University of Illinois, 1973. (Unpublished Thesis). Covers the brief but important part the Osage orange hedge played in the settlement of the Midwest and the Plains before the introduction of the barbed wire fence. Often cited in related literature.
 54. Schmidt, Carl F., *Fences, Gates and Garden Houses*. Rochester: Privately Printed, 1963. Early domestic fences, mostly picket, are described in a brief manner; mainly photographs and scale drawings.
 55. Symons, Harry, *Fences*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1958. Brief history of fencing in Canada followed by a 150 page section of nice line drawings together with a little descriptive text.
 56. Thornton, W.W., *The Law of Railroad Fences and Private Crossings*. Indianapolis: 1892. 194-200. Expands on particular aspects of railroads and legal requirements for fencing.
 57. Tyler, Ransom J., *A Treatise on the Law of Boundaries and Fences*. Albany: William Gould and Son, 1876. All you ever wanted to know about the legal aspects of fences and fencing practices. Explains the functions and responsibilities of fence-viewers.
 58. U. S. Commissioner of Agriculture, "Osage Hedges," *Annual Report*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868, 245-259. Comprehensive instructions for planting, training, trimming and maintaining Osage hedges. Illustrations of planting methods and tools; information on early introduction of the plant to the Midwest.
 59. U. S. Commissioner of Agriculture, "Statistics of Fences in the United States," *Annual Report*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872. 497-512. Frequently cited source of information on types and construction of fences; distribution of fences; costs of fence building and repair. Includes questionnaire used to collect data.
 60. Via, Vera V., "The Old Rail Fence," *Virginia Cavalcade*. 12:1 (1962) 33-40. Traces the origin of rail fences in colonial Virginia and describes various modifications of the basic type.
 61. Warder, John A., *Hedges and Evergreens*. New York: Orange Judd, 1858. Basic monograph devoted to the history, cultivation and advantages of "live" fencing—primarily hedging. Also contains chapter on state legal requirements for fencing.
 62. Webb, Walter Prescott, "From Split Rails to Barbed Wire," *True West*. (July-August 1960), 28-29, 38, 40-41. Emphasizes introduction of barbed wire. Excellent description of how barbed wire fences were strung.
 63. Webb, Walter Prescott, *The Great Plains*. New York: Ginn and Company, 1931, 280-318. Brief history of U.S. fencing and its opposition by ranchers. Describes fencing types from timber, hedges and barbed wire. Includes Department of Agriculture statistics on fencing costs.
 64. Winberry, John J., "The Osage Orange, Botanical Artifact," *Pioneer America*. 11 (August, 1979) 134-141. Approaches the Osage orange as a landscape element. Describes its use as a hedge, windbreak and source of fence posts and other items.
 65. Withers, Robert S., "The Stake and Rider Fence," *Missouri Historical Review*. 44 (April 1950) 225-231. A first-hand account of how rail fences were built.
 66. Zelinsky, Wilbur, "Walls and Fences," *Landscape*. 8 (Spring, 1959) 14-18. Reviews the history of American fence types as given in travellers' accounts and other historical reference documents.





Altes un Neues



BOOKS AVAILABLE

In response to many requests (and just in time for holiday gift giving), we offer for sale three books that have been extremely popular with folklife society members in the past. The first is Alfred L. Shoemaker's *Christmas in Pennsylvania*. One of the original founders of the Pennsylvania Folklife Society, Dr. Shoemaker published this folk-cultural study in 1959; its purpose, as explained by Dr. Don Yoder (another founding member of the Society) in the introduction, was threefold:

(1) to describe the folk-cultural background of Pennsylvania as it related to Christmas (2) to describe the many colorful folk-practices at Christmas time in the Commonwealth and (3) to show how these Christmas folk-practices fared in the acculturation process.

Topics dealt with include: "The Christmas Tree in Pennsylvania"; "Belsnickling"; "Of Pyramids and Putzes"; "Chris-Kindel to Kriss Kringle"; and many others. The book is in hard cover and the price is \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling.

The remaining two books now being offered for sale are paperback editions of Edna Eby Heller's *Dutch Cookbook*, Vol. I, and *Dutch Cookbook*, Vol. II. Edna Eby Heller was food editor of *Pennsylvania Folklife* for many years, and Volume I of her cookbook (which offers recipes for such famous Pennsylvania Dutch dishes as scrapple, *Schnitz un Gnepp*, rivvel soup, and shoo-fly pie) is now in its twenty-third printing. Volume II (*Boova Shenkel*, funeral pie, *Snitz pie*, *Gschmelzte Nudle*) is in its eighteenth printing. Each cookbook is \$2.50 plus .50 postage and handling. Orders for all three books will be filled as received until supplies are exhausted. Checks should be made payable to the Pennsylvania Folklife Society, and mailed to: Book Offer, Pennsylvania Folklife Society, P.O. Box 92, Collegeville, PA 19426.



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The following topical lists, compiled from *The Twenty-Five Year Index to PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE* are offered free of charge; simply send a self-addressed stamped envelope and a note of the numbers desired (no more than four lists to each envelope, please) to: Free List Offer, Pennsylvania Folklife Society, P.O. Box 92, Collegeville, PA 19426.

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- # 2 Migration, arranged by Author
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- # 15 Dialect & Dialect Writers
- # 16 Holidays and Feast Days
- # 17 Edna Eby Heller articles as found in *Pa Dutchman* & *Pa Folklife*
- # 18 Moravians & Schwenkfelders
- # 19 Travels and Travel Accounts / Taverns
- # 20 Folklore & Folklife Questionnaires

Ursinus College

Collegeville, Pennsylvania

presents a

Colloquium Commemorating Zacharias Ursinus

Controversy and Conciliation:

The Reformation and the Palatinate, 1559-1583

Saturday, November 5, 1983

9:00 Registration

9:45 **Welcome:** **Richard P. Richter**, President of Ursinus College, and **John Shetler**, Conference Minister, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Morning Session

Zacharias Ursinus and the Age of Confessionalism

10:00 **Derk Visser**, Ursinus College
Historical and Theological Context of the Palatinate Reformation

10:30 **Robert Kolb**, Concordia College,
Luther, Augsburg, and the Late Reformation Concept of Confession

11:00 **John Patrick Donnelly, S.J.**, Marquette University, *Immortality and Method in Ursinus' Theological Ambiance*

11:30 **Jill Raitt**, University of Missouri,
The Elector John Casimir, Queen Elizabeth and the Protestant League

12:00 **Fritz Büsser**, University of Zurich,
Comments

or *Practicum for Clergy*

Assembly for Professional Development

Luncheon Session

1:00 Lunch, Wismer Hall

1:45 **Fritz Büsser**, University of Zurich,
Bullinger and 1566

Afternoon Session

2:30 Concurrent Sessions

A. Ursinus and The Heidelberg Catechism

Robert Kolb, chair and commentator

Lyle D. Bierma, Reformed Bible College,
Lutheran-Reformed Polemics in the Late Reformation: Olevian's "Proposal"

Fred H. Klooster, Calvin Theological Seminary,
Ursinus' Primacy in the Composition of the Heidelberg Catechism

Manfred P. Fleischer, University of California, Davis,
The Success of Ursinus: A Triumph of Intellectual Friendship

B. Palatinate Theology

John Patrick Donnelly, chair and commentator
Allen O. Miller, Eden Theological Seminary,
The Theology of the Heidelberg Catechism: Then and Now

Eugene Osterhaven, Western Theological Seminary,
The Experientialism of the Heidelberg Catechism and Orthodoxy

Paul Fries, New Brunswick Theological Seminary,
The Heidelberg Catechism and Modern Reformed Theology - The Case of O. Noordmans

C. The Palatinate and Other Reformed Churches

Jill Raitt, chair and commentator

Lowell H. Zuck, Eden Theological Seminary,
Melanchthonism and Reformed Theology in the late 16th Century

Bodo Nischan, East Carolina University,
The Palatinate and Brandenburg's "Second Reformation"

Oliver K. Olson, Marquette University,
Lutheran-Reformed Confrontation and the Revolt of the Netherlands

Closing Session

4:15 **Howard Hageman**, New Brunswick Theological Seminary,
The Lasting Significance of Ursinus

4:45 **President Richter**
Closing comments

For More Information Call:

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35th Annual

Pennsylvania Dutch

KUTZTOWN

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