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Charles L. Blockson

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Autumn 1994

PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE



**AFRICAN
AMERICANS**

Rich Allen

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AUTUMN 1994, VOL. 44, NO. 1

CONTENTS

- 2 "A Missing Link": The History of African Americans in Pennsylvania
CHARLES L. BLOCKSON
- 17 The Twin City Elks Lodge, A Unifying Force in Farrell's African American Community
ROLAND C. BARKSDALE-HALL
- 27 The Greening of Philadelphia
JERRILYN MCGREGORY
- 36 The "Saddlebag" House Type and Pennsylvania Extended
TERRY G. JORDAN

CONTRIBUTORS

(Inside front cover)

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COVER:

"The founders of the African American church in Pennsylvania had been made to feel uncomfortable in the predominately white churches, so they started their own. Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the mother of all the churches of that great denomination, was founded by Richard Allen, who withdrew from St. George's Methodist Church in 1787, and became the first African Methodist Episcopal bishop."

“A MISSING LINK”: The History of African Americans in Pennsylvania

by Charles L. Blockson

Editor's Note: This article is taken from the Introduction and first three chapters of *African Americans in Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1994. 199pp. \$14.95). The book is the result of Mr. Blockson's "unquenchable desire to record the history" of his people, especially in Pennsylvania, and, as he says, "that history was a missing link" in the history of the commonwealth. Subtitled *A History and Guide*, the book is a comprehensive look at the state's African American community, covering such topics as Black men and women of letters; early Philadelphia entrepreneurs; Black inventors and scientists; African Americans in medicine, in the media, and in the performing arts; and Black artists and athletes. There is also a guide to historical places (broken down by region) that covers every area of Pennsylvania; and a seven-page bibliography with almost one hundred listings—an invaluable resource for anyone with an interest in the subject.

Pennsylvania has a long and interesting history of Blacks, or Guineas, as they were sometimes called. This term applied to slaves taken from the Guinea Coast of Africa. Until this day, the names of Guineatown, Guinea Hill, and Guinea Run still can be found throughout Pennsylvania.

Africans were present among the earliest settlers, some of whom were here as early as 1639. They were enslaved by the Swedes, Dutch and Finns. Early Quakers were the main slaveholders. In 1684, just three years after they arrived in Pennsylvania, 154 slaves arrived on the *Isabella* and docked in Philadelphia. Many of early Pennsylvania's most prominent merchants and political figures were slaveholders. The majority of the slaves in Pennsylvania came directly from the West Indies, where they underwent a "seasoning" process. The wealth that was accumulated in this trade added to the prosperity of the early colonists. Other merchants accumulated their wealth from the West Indies from importing rum and sugar for the exchange of slaves. Beyond Philadelphia, some entrepreneurs and landowners held slaves as taxable property along with animals.

The Philadelphia firm of Charles Willings and Robert Morris was one of Pennsylvania's most persistent participants in the commerce of slaves. It brought hundreds of slaves from Africa from 1754 to 1766. In 1761, the firm advertised for sale 170 Blacks who had just arrived from the Guinea Coast of Africa. Robert Morris, known as the "Financier of the Revolution," staked his personal fortune to the cause of freedom.

In the counties of York, Lancaster, and Dauphin, the prominent Revolutionary family of Captain Archibald McAllister owned more slaves than any other in the central Pennsylvania counties. Edward R. Turner, an early Pennsylvania historian, estimated the number of slaves to be 1,000 in 1700; 2,500 in 1725; and 6,000 in 1750, when the "peculiar institution" reached its peak in this colony.

As strange as it may seem, slaves were sold from an auction block that once stood on Water Street in the City of Brotherly Love. Throughout colonial Pennsylvania, African Americans were often viewed as subhuman, mankind's lowest "species." Early on, whites thought slavery was a shame and an outrage and attempted to do something about it. As early as 1688, Francis Daniel Pastorius, a Quaker lawyer and religious leader, drafted his famous "Protest Against Slavery" for the Friends Monthly Meeting in Germantown, a village not far from Philadelphia. The "Germantown Protest" was the first of a number of voices raised in Pennsylvania. It was followed by the writings of George Keith, John Woolman, Benjamin Lay, Anthony Benezet, George Sandiford, Thomas Paine, and others. Slavery did not gain a foothold in the southwestern region of the state until much later. That area, made up of Westmoreland, Washington, Fayette, and Green counties, was claimed by Virginia until the boundary was settled in 1785.

The Declaration of Independence had noble words on equality for all men, but neither it nor the American Revolution was designed to bring freedom to African Americans. It was just at the beginning of this Revolution that the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, and for Improving the African Race was founded in 1775 at Philadelphia. Later to become known as the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, it continues to spend the largest part of its income on education.

In the midst of these protests on their behalf, individual Blacks, both slave and free, endured their private lives. Some were employed as domestics; a few went to work on the docks, in iron furnaces, and on the farms. Many worked as craftspersons, while others explored the interior of the colony with their white friends and masters to level the forests and build churches and homes. In the Perkiomen Valley area of Montgomery County, and in some areas of Berks County, Blacks were conversing with whites in German.

Born to slave parents in Philadelphia in 1686, Alice of Dunk's Ferry was moved to that site on the Delaware River (seventeen miles above the city) when she was ten; she collected tolls on the bridge there. Living to be 116 years old, she became a well-respected oral historian.



Some Pennsylvanians had voluntarily freed their slaves as early as 1700. Owners often claimed responsibility for the religious well-being of their slaves. Three of Henry Pawling's slaves in 1745 were baptized as Lutherans by the Reverend Henry Muhlenberg in Trappe, Pennsylvania. By 1775, members of the Plymouth and Gwynedd Meetings owned a combined total of seventeen slaves even while they hotly debated the evil of slave owning. When the Plymouth Society charged Whitemarsh landowner Thomas Lancaster with owning slaves in 1759, he argued that he "was not aware of the harm he was doing" and promised never again to purchase any. However, he kept Pompey, Caesar, Scipio, Prince, Guinea, Cuff, Jupiter, and six women known as Silvia, Jude, Flora, Phill, Sook, and Stall to continue working on his two hundred acres.

AFRICAN RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY

Slaves never waited to be led out of slavery. Cases involving runaways frequently appeared as advertisements in many colonial newspapers throughout the commonwealth:

Ran way from Austin Pris of Philadelphia, Founder, on 22 day of this instant, a Negro boy called Bedford or Ducko, aged about sixteen or seventeen years; speaks very good English, wears a dark brown colored coat and jacket, pair of white Fustiona Breeches, a gray mill'd Cap with red Border, a pair of new York Stocking, with a Pair of Brown worsted under them, or in his pockets. Whoever brings him to his said master, or informs him of him so that he may be secured, shall be satisfied for their Pains, by me, Austin Paris.

*The America Weekly Mercury (Philadelphia)
January 31, 1721*

Though Pennsylvania's slave masters made laws to provide for the apprehension and return of runaways, its citizens were gradually growing hostile to slavery. Many began to assist fugitives in their quest for freedom. On April 14, 1775, Quakers and other abolitionists organized the Pennsylvania Abolition Society to assist fugitives who were fleeing masters. This assistance continued well into the nineteenth century, even after Pennsylvania passed the Act of Gradual Abolition in 1780. This law allowed any slave born in Pennsylvania after March 1, 1780, to be freed at the end of twenty-eight years. Emancipation could occur sooner if the slave master so chose.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Pennsylvania was regarded as a land of freedom for slaves who risked escape. Concerned whites joined Blacks in a secret fugitive slave network to assist runaways either to remain in Pennsylvania or continue north to Canada.

Enslaved Africans developed codes, riddles, passwords, handshakes, and rituals to help each other learn the ways of the Underground Railroad. Slave owners told the world that slaves were contented with their existence. "A happy slave who sings is a loyal slave," they said. But slaves used the songs as a medium of communication. The coded spirituals conveyed every hidden signal imaginable.

Enslaved Africans maintained a vocabulary and means of expression preserved from the African tradition that was completely foreign to whites. Songs became cries for help and pleas for escape. For example, "Steal Away to Jesus" used Jesus as an open invitation for the slave to steal away to freedom. Harriet Tubman composed original spirituals such as "Dark and Thorny is the Path" to alert slaves that she was in the area. "Let Us Break Bread Together" told the slaves to plan to meet before sunrise on the east side of the slave quarters. "Wade in the Water Children" warned slaves to avoid the slave hunters and keep the bloodhounds

STEAL AWAY TO JESUS

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus!¹
Steal away, steal away home, I ain't got long to stay
here!²

My Lord calls me,³ He call me by the thunder,⁴
The trumpet⁵ sounds within a my soul,⁶ I ain't got long
to stay here!

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home, I ain't got long to stay
here!

Green trees are bending,⁸ Poor sinner⁹ stands a
trembling;¹⁰
The trumpet sounds with in a my soul, I ain't got
long to stay here.

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home, I ain't got long to stay
here!

Tomb stones are bursting,¹¹ Poor sinner stands a
trembling,
The trumpet sounds with in a my soul, I ain't got
long to stay here.

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home, I ain't got long to stay
here!

My Lord calls me,¹² He calls¹³ me by the lightning,¹⁴
The trumpet sounds with in a my soul, I ain't got long
to stay here.

* * *

¹Prepare to escape.

²It won't be long before we are going to escape.

³Conductor on the underground railroad.

⁴The "thunder" means it is important to go.

⁵The call to escape is loud.

⁶Can't take bondage anymore.

⁷Alerting relatives and others around you that you are
going to go.

⁸Freedom of nature calls the slave to freedom.

⁹"Sinner" represents the slave.

¹⁰Slave who will run away is afraid. He or she will
be leaving behind children, spouse, and
other relatives.

¹¹Living death of slavery cannot hold the slave any
longer.

¹²The conductor on the underground railroad calls
the slave to escape.

¹³Sends a message about the escape.

¹⁴Message is sent during a storm or during the
night. Lightning also suggest visions.

Slaves used songs as a medium of communication, and coded spirituals conveyed every hidden signal imaginable. "Steal Away to Jesus" was an open invitation for slaves to steal away to freedom.

from picking up the scent. "Follow the Drinking Gourd" was a code word for the North Star, which was found in the Big Dipper constellation—a fact that most slaves knew. Frederick Douglass once said, "A keen observer might have detected [Canada] in our repeated singing of: 'O Canaan, sweet Canaan, I am bound for the land of Canaan.'"

Two of the most effective coded spirituals were: "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, coming for to carry me home" and "Go Down Moses! Way down in Egypt Land! And tell old Pharaoh to let my people go."

Runaways were sometimes told to look for weather vanes pointed in a certain direction. Conductors would sometimes use code words for passengers such as boxes, bales of black wood, and parcels. Small parcels were children, and large parcels were adults.

Underground Railroad workers used various riddles and passwords, and devised handgrips and rituals for identification when delivering runaways.

"You travel late, neighbor. It's a dark night.

Shall I bring a lantern?"

"Don't bother, the North Star is bright."

The stationmaster and the runaway understood each other; the password had been asked and given.

Sometimes when delivering a runaway to another station, the stationmaster would ask the agent and the conductor when they knocked on the door, "Who's there?" The conductor would whisper, "A friend with friends." The stationmaster would let them in.

Hundreds of fugitive slaves and free Black Underground Railroad workers were familiar with a secret organization known as the African Mysteries, which was based on Masonic symbols and rituals that were organized by William Lambert, a free Black Underground agent from Detroit, Michigan. The following dialogue is an example of a test given by members of this organization to identify impostors:

Agent: Have you ever been on the railroad?

Runaway: I have been a short distance.

Agent: Where did you start from?

Runaway: The depot.

Agent: Where did you stop?

Runaway: At a place called safety.

Agent: Have you a brother there? I think I know him.

Runaway: I know you now. You traveled on the road.

During the period of 1830 through 1860 the Mysteries organization had hundreds of Black members, including fugitive and free Black operators throughout the United States and Canada.

Philadelphia skippers risked taking on slaves for extra help to constantly pump water from boats carrying cargo into New Jersey and other northeastern states. Fugitives were placed on large boats and small sloops that carried a blue light above a yellow light for identification during the night on the Delaware Bay. Then they were transported to other boats from New Jersey, which were lit the same way. Boats were also operated by Underground Railroad sympathizers who ferried the fugitives to New York City.

In *Negro History 1553-1903*, Philadelphia scholar Edwin Wolf captured the essence of the fugitive slave network when he wrote that the Underground Railroad is filled "with tales of crated escapees, murdered agents, soft knocks on side doors, and a network as clandestine and complicated as anything dreamed up by James Bond." There were ingenious escapes. Henry "Box" Brown, a "model slave" from Richmond, Virginia, had himself nailed in a box with a bladder of water and a few biscuits and shipped to the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee. Though he traveled upside down part of the way, he arrived safely. But the white Virginian who helped him, Samuel A. Smith, was sentenced to prison for a subsequent attempt to freight slaves to freedom.

In 1848, a slave from Macon, Georgia, named William Craft, dressed his young wife Ellen, who was light complexioned, in a top hat and well-cut suit of a planter. They contrived a bandage for a "toothache" and a sling for a "broken arm" to conceal her beardlessness and inability to write. Disguised as a master and slave, the two travelled northward, with Ellen sleeping in first-class accommodations in southern cities along the way, until they reached Philadelphia and relative safety. Most slaves simply walked to freedom, "guided by the North Star alone," wrote the great rescuer William Still, "penniless, braving the perils of land and sea, eluding the keen scent of the blood-hound as well as the more dangerous pursuit of the savage slave hunter, enduring indescribable suffering from hunger and other privations, making their way to freedom."

One of the popular versions of how the Underground Railroad got its name comes from Pennsylvania. Although he concedes that it is unverified, historian Robert C. Smedley relates it in his work, *the History of the Underground Railroad in Chester County and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania*:

In the early part of the Underground Railroad, slaves were hunted and tracked as far as Columbia, Lancaster County. There, pursuers lost all trace of them. The most scrutinizing inquiries, the most vigorous search, failed to educe any knowledge of them. These pursuers seemed to have reached an abyss, beyond which they could not see, the depths of which they could not fathom, and in their bewilderment and discomfiture they declared that "there must be an underground railroad somewhere." This gave origin to the term by which this secret passage was designated ever after.

Although there was a relatively substantial abolitionist segment in the Pennsylvania population, many of the state's whites were as agitated by free Blacks and slaves as were southern racists. The majority of white Pennsylvanians were simply apathetic about the plight of Blacks. Much Railroad activity went on in full view of whites who weren't supporters, but they didn't care enough to notify the authorities.

Even within the Underground Railroad, racism was a problem. Fugitives were frequently banned from entering the homes of conductors, or were forced to eat in a designated area. Shackles were sometimes put on slaves to control them while they were in conductors' homes, and spies of both races would sometimes sell off escaped slaves.

White churches, on the whole, did not participate in helping slaves to escape. Indeed, they were often hostile to runaways. Most Black churches, on the other hand, offered extensive assistance. Thus, one cannot make the generalization that Pennsylvania was "friendly to the Negro." The immense burden of antislavery work and fugitive aid was carried out by a relatively small contingent of citizens.

The Quakers have long enjoyed the reputation of having been the most active in the Underground Railroad. Various sources, however, belie this image. Only a small minority of this religious community raised their voices against slavery and participated in the struggles to transport slaves to freedom. The Reverend Samuel Ringgold Ward, a former fugitive slave, said, "They will give us good advice, they will aid in giving partial education—but never a Quaker school, beside their own children. Whatever they do for us savors of pity, and is done at arm's length."

In fact, the Quaker majority was extremely uncomfortable with members who were active in the antislavery movement, and took both official and unofficial measures against activists. The Hicksites, a splinter group that named itself after Elijah Hicks, left the Society of Friends over this issue. However, even Quakers who deplored the Underground Railroad activities of their members did not betray fugitive slaves who sought their assistance.

Overemphasis of the Quaker role has also led to ignorance about the participation of other religious groups. Wesleyan Methodists, Jews, Dunkers, Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters), Roman Catholics, Mennonites, Amish, and Schwenkfelders, among others, probably had as legitimate a claim to consistent Railroad activity as the Quakers.

Antebellum Pennsylvania was a hub of the nationwide escape routes for several geographic and historical reasons. Unlike other states immediately north of the Mason-Dixon line, Pennsylvania had an international port at Philadelphia that was a natural meeting place for boats traveling north from Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware. At the busy Philadelphia port, there was a constant traffic of foreigners as well as indigenous Blacks and whites. Thus, fugitives and their helpers could blend into this cosmopolitan atmosphere with relative ease. Also, the Blue Mountains

traverse south central Pennsylvania. Once runaways crossed this hazardous and unfamiliar terrain, the mountains proved to be a natural fortress that protected them from slave catchers.

Since much of the early work for fugitives was unorganized, private homes served as "stations" or places of hiding where fugitives could be sheltered for a short time before being taken to the next stopping place. Places of refuge could be hotels, residences of people whose standing in the community was secure, or even the humble abodes of Black people. Much of the legend of the Underground Railroad revolves around the trapdoors, secret rooms, barns and elaborate codes used to conceal fugitives in these places of refuge.

The homeowner most often took fugitives to the next home on their path to freedom, using information gathered from his work in antislavery offices, from the network of gossip and information known only in the Black community, or from the Black churches. (In Pittsburgh, the predominantly Black sections of Arthursville and Hayti were well known for aiding runaways.)

At many stations in Montgomery County, when a runaway appeared he was hidden until it could be determined whether he immediately was being followed and by whom. Professional bounty hunters were much more skillful and ruthless in finding and returning slaves than their masters. After serious consideration, the station master, who was in charge of the hiding place, would make a decision as to the most expedient course of action. In some situations, slaves would be hurried on into neighboring Bucks and Berks Counties. If the bounty hunters were close on the trail, the runaways hid until the hunters had been convinced they had lost their slaves.

Smaller than Philadelphia, yet rich in churches and self-help institutions, were the free Black communities of such cities as Lancaster, Carlisle, Meadville, and Pittsburgh. In western Pennsylvania, the Monongahela River was a main waterway from the South to Pittsburgh. In northwestern Pennsylvania, Erie was a focal point for travel into Canada, either across the lake or up the shore to Niagara.

It took nearly sixty years from the foundation of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society in 1775 to begin organized Underground activity. The onset of antislavery activity and fugitive aid in 1833 coincided with the beginning of educational and social self-improvement movements in the Black community in Pennsylvania. The leadership of the associated reform organizations was invariably composed of Black abolitionists.

In 1837 the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society was organized to coordinate the establishment of juvenile and adult antislavery societies in all parts of Pennsylvania. This society emphasized agitation against slavery to the neglect of fugitive aid, which irritated Black abolitionists. By December, 1840, the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, dominated by white abolitionists, had appointed a committee "to inquire into the cause of the diminution of interest



Born in Columbia, Pa., Stephen Smith was said to be the wealthiest Black in the country in his time. A Philadelphia lumber merchant, fuel supplier, and real estate dealer, he was active in the Underground Railroad.

among the colored people in respect to association with us."

Black communities in Pennsylvania, especially in southeastern Pennsylvania, outstripped all others in the United States in fostering Black improvement. Nearly half of the adult Black population of Lancaster, York, West Chester, Harrisburg, Columbia, Gettysburg, Chester and Philadelphia, for example, held membership in mutual aid and self-help organizations during the 1840's. Philadelphia was the "antebellum capital" of America's northern free Black population.

Philadelphia's Black community, as early as 1787, formed the Free African Society, which is an organization for mutual aid. Out of this society grew two important churches: the African Methodist Episcopal Church, or "Mother Bethel," and the African Church of St. Thomas. These two churches became the centers of spiritual and political life in the antebellum Black community of Philadelphia.

The churches' pastors, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, were steadfast friends of the Underground Railroad. Allen's church, Mother Bethel, hid hundreds of slaves. Bishop Allen and his wife, Sarah, received fugitive slaves in their home, provided them with the necessary assistance, and rescued them from slave hunters.

By the 1830's many members of the Black clergy in Philadelphia permitted abolitionists and fugitive aid meet-



Of English, African, and Jewish extraction, Robert Purvis devoted his life to the liberation of Blacks.

ings and activities in their buildings, and even joined these efforts themselves. For example, on April 16, 1838, the Zoar A.M.E. Church in Northern Liberties held a public meeting to solicit contributions and increase membership for the Vigilant (Fugitive Aid) Association and Committee. The Reverend Walter Proctor, an agent on the Underground Railroad and pastor of Mother Bethel Church, belonged to the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee. The Reverends Stephen H. Gloucester of the Central Presbyterian Church of Color, Daniel Scott of the Union Baptist Church, William Douglass and Charles L. Gardiner all had an Underground connection in the city. Campbell African Methodist Church also established a reputation for helping escaped slaves. The Reverend John T. Moore, who was the pastor of the Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Church, offered his church as a temporary headquarters for fugitives. Pastor Moore was born a slave, and his freedom was procured through the courageous efforts of his mother, who ran away from her owner and carried her son with her. Ministers were also instrumental in helping to organize the Free Produce Movement. This movement involved citizens throughout the North who refrained from using the products of slave labor.

In general, Black churchmen realized that organized assistance to fugitives and the overthrow of slavery directly challenged the prevailing religious dogmas of many white churches that a truly religious person was one who was patient, even with slaveholders. Robert Purvis's inclination to join the crusade for slave freedom was confirmed in 1830 while attending Amherst College, where he met

William Lloyd Garrison. The two men formed a warm and close friendship that lasted throughout their lives.

In 1833, Purvis became a charter member of the American Anti-Slavery Society and later served as president and vice president of both the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee and the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, organized in Harrisburg. For decades, Purvis was the only Black member of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.

In the home of their mother, Harriet Judah Purvis, at Ninth and Lombard Streets, Purvis and his brother, Joseph, sheltered numerous fugitive slaves. When the two brothers inherited a large sum of money, they moved their families to a sprawling farm in Byberry, Bucks County, some fifteen miles from the city, where they used their large home and barn as a temporary shelter for fugitive slaves. Robert Purvis was president of the Philadelphia Underground Railroad.

Underground Railroad lore provides modern readers with a vast amount of information on Robert Purvis; however, little is said of his brother, Joseph, who died at an early age. He also married one of James Forten's daughters, Sarah Louise, who was known for her literary talents and antislavery commitment. A short but revealing account of his Underground activities has been transmitted to us by the Black agent William Whipper, as recorded by William Still, the Secretary of the Vigilance Committee and Purvis's friend, in *Underground Railroad Records*:

The history of this brave and noble effort of Purvis, in rescuing a fellow being from the jaws of slavery, has been handed down, in Columbia, to a generation that was born since that event has transpired. He always exhibited the same devotion and manly daring in the cause of the flying bondman that inspired his youthful ardor in behalf of freedom. The youngest of a family distinguished for devotion to freedom, he was without superiors in the trying hour of battle. Like John Brown, he often discarded theories, but was eminently practical.

Robert Purvis said that he destroyed many of his records of the Vigilance Association of Philadelphia, because he feared that its members might be prosecuted or those whom the committee assisted might be recaptured. Although Purvis's large home was demolished many years ago, his barn still offers evidence of its Underground Railroad history.

William Still wisely hid the committee's papers in the loft of a building that stood on the grounds of the Lebanon Cemetery. He later declared that he kept the records to help him reunite relatives and friends. According to Still's journal, the committee assisted approximately 495 runaway slaves between December 1852 and February 1857. When he published his classic book covering eight years of assistance, he recorded accounts of approximately eight hundred escaped slaves, including sixty children, who had received aid from the committee.

As a deterrent against infiltration, Still and his coworkers in the Anti-Slavery Office rigidly questioned all escaped slaves and strangers who came to them for assistance. The Underground Railroad had to be protected from spies and impostors who would expose its secret operation for fame or money.

In August 1835, the more militant Black and white abolitionists created the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee "to fund aid to colored persons in distress." The Association elected three Black officers at its initial meeting: James McCrummell, president; Jacob C. White, secretary; and James Needham, treasurer. A few weeks later, it chose Charles Atkins, also Black, as the authorized agent to solicit funds for the association. Philadelphia's Black community figured prominently in the formation and activities of the association. It is recorded that a secret room with a trapdoor was used by association members to hide fugitive slaves.

Jacob C. Whites's minute books of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee records its meetings and operations for the period from 1839 to 1854. For example, one record of cases includes:

- No. 10, July 17th, Man from Eastern Shore of Myd. Sent to P-S, Willow G[rove] expense 50 cts reported by Healy . . .
- No. 15, Woman from Del. reported J.G. Bias, sent to N.Y.

The Philadelphia Vigilance Committee assisted destitute fugitives by providing board and room, clothing, medicine, and money. It informed fugitives of their legal rights, gave them legal protection from kidnappers and frequently prosecuted individuals who attempted to abduct, sell, or violate the legal rights of free Blacks. Moreover, it helped runaways set up permanent homes or gave them temporary employment before their departure to Canada. It sent fugitives to the North via other contacts with its ally, the Vigilance Committee of New York.

At every juncture of its history, a majority of the officers of the Vigilance Committee was Black. In 1839, for example, nine of the sixteen members of the Vigilance Committee were Black, including James McCrummell, Jacob C. White, James Needham, James Gibbons, Daniel Colly, J.J.G. Bias, Shepherd Shay, and Stephen H. Gloucester. John Burr, the African American son of Aaron Burr, was a major conductor of the Underground Railroad. (Aaron Burr was the vice president of the United States who assassinated Alexander Hamilton.) Other Blacks included William Still, Robert Purvis, Charles H. Bustill, Charles Reason and Joseph C. Ware. From 1840 on, the Vigilance Committee was composed almost entirely of Blacks and reflected the critical stance of Philadelphia's Black community.

Sixty concerned Black and white women organized the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society on December 9, 1833, under the leadership of Lucretia Mott. Among the

Black members were three daughters of James Forten, Sarah, Harriet, and Margaretta; his wife, Charlotte; Grace and Sarah Douglass; Hetty Burr; and Lydia White. The Forten's granddaughter, Charlotte, was the society's youngest member. The society's influence was so profound that similar societies were organized all along the northeastern seaboard and throughout the Midwest.

From 1835 to 1861, the women sponsored anti-slavery fairs, held in the city usually the week before Christmas, to replenish the continually exhausted treasury of the society. One year the fair raised \$35,000. The fairs were occasions to publicize the antislavery cause and honor its heroes, who were invited to speak. In 1859, Robert Purvis and William Wells Brown, a well-known orator and author, were among the guest lecturers. Antislavery poet Frances Ellen Watkins Harper was another distinguished speaker, who in addition to her frequent appearances at antislavery bazaars in Pennsylvania and other areas, provided aid to fugitive slaves in her home.

The efforts of the city's antislavery movement were also enhanced by singer Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield, called the "Black Swan," who supported the movement by giving benefit concerts. On November 9, 1855, she gave a concert at the Shiloh Church to raise money for Mary Ann Shadd Cary's newspaper, *The Provincial Freedman*.

Knowledge of Mary Meyers' Underground Railroad activities was common among the Black students who attended the Lombard Street School and frequently purchased cakes from her cake shop. On one occasion a fugitive slave woman was delivered to her shop in a box. After a conference with J. Miller McKim and William Still, a decision was reached to hide the woman in the store until arrangements could be made for her journey to Canada.

Henrietta Bowers Duterte was also active in the slave-hiding network. In 1858, she became the first Black woman undertaker in the city, and on several occasions she cleverly concealed fugitives in caskets. She was also known to have included them in funeral processions until their safety was assured.

Joseph C. Bustill, while teaching school in Harrisburg, served as an important conductor on the Underground Railroad. His brothers, Charles and James, were active members of the Philadelphia Underground. Charles H. Bustill and his wife, Emily, were members of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee. Their daughter, Maria Luisa, married William Drew Robeson, an escaped slave from North Carolina, who within a few years had educated himself in the finest classical tradition and graduated from Lincoln University School of Divinity. Their illustrious son, Paul LeRoy Robeson, stood as a monument to the Bustill family's stability.

Joseph C. Bustill frequently wrote to his friend and fellow agent, William Still, and a number of his letters were published in Still's *Underground Railroad*. Here's an example:

Harrisburg, May 26 '56

Friend Still:

I embrace the opportunity presented by the will of our friend, John F. Williams, to drop you a few lines in relation to our future operations. The Lightning Train was put on the Road on last Monday, and as travelling season has commenced and this the Southern route for Niagara Falls, I have concluded not to send by the way of Auburn, except in cases of great danger; but here after we will use the Lightning Train, which leaves here at one thirty and arrives at your city at five o'clock in the afternoon, so it may reach you before you close. These four are the only ones left. The woman has been here some time waiting for her child and her beau, which she expects here about the first of June. If possible, please keep a knowledge of her whereabouts to enable me to inform him if he comes.

Yours as ever,
Jos. C. Bustill

Lancaster City, Columbia, and Christiana were sites of militant resistance to slave hunters and kidnapers, which resulted in armed conflicts and the deaths of whites and Blacks alike. These places possessed strong and active Black communities, led by such famous Underground Railroad workers as William Whipper and Stephen Smith. For a time, Senator Thaddeus Stevens resided in York, Gettysburg, and Lancaster and assisted the Underground

Railroad in various ways, chiefly as an attorney, representing fugitive slaves in court and employing fugitives at his ironworks at Caledonia.

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW OF 1850

If the Underground Railroad had a charter apart from securing freedom and the urging of conscience, it was the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which greatly strengthened an earlier law dating from 1793 by giving slaveholders the right to organize a posse at any point in the United States to aid in recapturing runaway slaves. Court and law enforcers everywhere in the United States were obligated to assist them.

The *Anti-Slavery Standard* of October 10, 1850, stated that a group of New York free Blacks asked Senator Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania to explain the constitutionality of the law. Stevens declared that he had little hope that the measure would be upheld by the federal courts. The measure became law, and Blacks were doomed. They were not safe anywhere in the nation. Thousands of Blacks joined the fugitive slaves, seeking safety in Canada.

Historian Benjamin Quarles wrote that two hundred Pittsburgh Blacks left for Canada a few days before the signing of the law, and that the city lost another eight hundred Blacks. Many vowed that they would die before being taken back into slavery. Columbia and Lancaster Counties lost 487 of their 943 Blacks during the five-year period of the law. The residents of the all-Black settlement Sandy Lake, in Mercer County, left en masse.

Blacks in northern cities organized groups armed with weapons to protect their families and friends due to an alarming amount of kidnapping. Hundreds of free Blacks were shackled and dragged off in slave coffles to be sold into slavery.

The Christiana Rebellion, September 11, 1851. When Maryland farmer Edward Gorsuch discovered his runaway slaves in the Christiana (Lancaster County) home of fugitive William Parker, shots were exchanged and Gorsuch was killed and his son wounded. Tried with thirty others for treason but acquitted, Parker—then the object of a nationwide manhunt—escaped to Canada disguised as a Quaker woman.



The gentle-mannered Robert Purvis declared at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society held at West Chester on October 17, 1850, "Should any wretch enter my dwelling, any pale-faced spectre among ye to execute this law on me or mine, I'll seek his life, I'll shed his blood."

There was growing unity on why the law of 1850 was unconstitutional—more unity than there had ever been in the North on any aspect of the slavery question. Northern whites who previously failed to help runaways became angry when Southern slaveholders and pretenders roamed their properties seeking fugitives and terrorized their communities.

BLACK ENFRANCHISEMENT

African Americans who were slaves were easy to handle politically. They could not vote and they had no chance of voting. However, free African Americans, and there were a significant number during the antebellum period, were much harder to handle. They met the same qualifications for voting as their white neighbors, except having white skin. They were landholders and paid taxes, and, early in the new nation, they voted.

In Pennsylvania, Black males lost the right to vote in the nineteenth century before the Civil War, when the state constitution limited voting to white males. It was not until the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution that their birthright was restored. Once regained, the right to vote was not taken lightly by Pennsylvania's African Americans. They turned out to vote, organized pressure groups, tried a number of political experiments, wrote petitions, organized protest rallies and ran for office, always aware of the need for organization towards real goals.

The first free African-American political convention was convened in 1830 by Reverend Richard Allen and held in what is now known as Mother Bethel Church in Philadelphia. The convention met annually for the next five years, paving the way for state conventions held by Blacks shortly after the Civil War. A convention held in 1848 urged Blacks to abandon the word "colored" and especially the words "Africa" and "Africans." Philadelphia leaders recommended the phrase "Oppressed Americans." However, the more pressing political task was to win back the right of suffrage, which had been lost in 1838.

Disenfranchisement came easily. John B. Sterigere, a Norristown state representative, had the word "white" inserted in a state constitutional paragraph concerning the right to vote. Robert Purvis of Philadelphia authored the "Appeal of 40,000 Citizens Threatened with Disenfranchisement" in the same year. To the same end, political organizations from Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Lancaster and other cities across the state organized the Equal Rights League, led by seasoned Black leaders such as Jonathan Jasper Wright of Wilkes-Barre, William Nesbit of Altoona, Thomas Morris Chester from Harrisburg, and Samuel Williams from Johnstown. Another member of the

league, John Peck of Pittsburgh, called on the legislature of the state of Pennsylvania to return to free Blacks the right to vote in 1865 on behalf of a convention of Black citizens. This sentiment continued the post-Civil War spirit that led to the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, which are important liberal amendments to the nation's Constitution that abolished slavery and granted voting and citizenship rights to Blacks.

Octavius V. Catto, a brilliant teacher in the Institute for Colored Youth and a leader of the Equal Rights League, declared, "The Black man knows on which side of the line to vote." Black Pennsylvanians' efforts were finally rewarded in 1870 when the federal government guaranteed suffrage in the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, seven years after the Emancipation Proclamation. Catto himself was tragically assassinated in Philadelphia by an irate Irishman during the fall election of 1871 as he persuaded Blacks to register to vote.

The right to vote buoyed the hope of Black citizens across the state. In Norristown, John Harding was Montgomery County's first Black juror and was selected to sit on the grand jury in 1877. However, there was no "forty acres and a mule." If political recognition was an important component of African Americans' hopes for a new future, jobs and the chance to gain political power were just as crucial. Once they were reenfranchised, Pennsylvania Blacks were able to see the United States Constitution as a document that equally applied to them. The Republican party began as an antislavery party and continued for quite a while after the Civil War to work for the needs of African Americans.

African Americans could count on the support of the Republican party in elections for more than two generations. Pennsylvania Blacks began receiving minor political jobs such as clerkships and magistrate positions. A few were employed as recorders of deeds. The concentration of African Americans and their increasing numbers had one great advantage: they afforded a measure of political power. Henry W. Bass, a Philadelphia attorney, became the first African American ever elected to the state legislature in 1910. Bass would be followed by another Philadelphian in 1938: Crystal Bird Fauset, the first African American woman ever elected to a state legislature in America. Slowly, an increasing awareness of Blacks' political potential as a voting bloc led to increasing independence from old ties. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected in 1932, Black politicians took advantage of the social reforms put through by his administration. Many Black leaders, including Robert L. Vann, publisher of the nationally influential *Pittsburgh Courier*, were ready to bargain with the Democrats for a new type of political power.

During the decades between 1940 and the present, Black political leaders have obviously made significant advances as elected officials. Susie Monroe, Sarah Anderson, and Frances E. Jones followed Crystal Bird Fauset to the Pennsylvania legislature. In 1938, E. Washington Rhodes,

publisher of the *Philadelphia Tribune*, and attorney Scholley Pace Alexander each served one term. Hobson Reynolds, Reverend Marshall L. Shepard, Reverend Dennis Hoggard, and Samuel D. Holmes also represented Philadelphia in the state's government. In Pittsburgh, Daisy Lampkin, a prominent member of the commonwealth's Black community, was a gifted political leader.

Also, in the western section of the state, Homer S. Brown, who had served as a legislator, became the first Black judge in Allegheny County. Herbert Miller, a Lancaster County native, became the first Philadelphia municipal court judge. The first African American elected as a judge to a Common Pleas Court was Raymond Pace Alexander of Philadelphia. His wife, Sadie Alexander, also an attorney, was the first African American to be awarded a doctorate in economics from the University of Pennsylvania. She was also the first Black woman to graduate from the university's law school. Judge Juanita Kidd Stout of Philadelphia was the first Black female judge in Pennsylvania. She also became the first Black woman to serve on the Commonwealth's Supreme Court.

From the early days, there were high-level Black pacesetters in the legal profession. Mifflin T. Gibbs of Philadelphia was elected a municipal court judge, the first in the United States, in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1872. Joseph E. Lee, born also in Philadelphia, was elected a Republican municipal court judge in Duval, Florida, in 1890. John H. Smythe, John W. Cromwell, Henry R. Ballard, and Joseph Rainey were other Pennsylvania African Americans who played a prominent role in the Reconstruction period. Richard T. Greener, a native of the City of Brotherly Love, graduated from Harvard, became dean of Howard University Law School in 1879, and was appointed by the State Department as consul at Bombay, India. Thomas Morris Chester, who distinguished himself as a writer and lecturer, became the first Black admitted to practice law before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in 1881.

Whenever Black voters united on an issue or a candidate, victory was predictable: Congressman Robert N.C. Nix broke through as the first Black United States congressman from Pennsylvania. His son, Robert N.C. Nix, Jr., became the first Black Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice. William H. Hastie, a federal judge of the Third Circuit Court, was the first African American to receive such an appointment. He was also the first Black governor of the Virgin Islands. His younger colleague, A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., was appointed United States district judge for the eastern region of Pennsylvania. Black mayors have been elected in several communities throughout the commonwealth. However, Wilson P. Goode was the first Black mayor in the city of Philadelphia's 300-year history.

A steady stream of African American men and women followed, who represented Pennsylvania's communities in positions of power and influence. Dr. Leonora Fulani, a

native of Chester County, has run for the United States presidency.

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH

For the enslaved African Americans, newly arrived and huddled in fright in a strange land, religion and each other were all they had to hang on to. The hope of a better world beyond made their lives in the present world bearable. As time went on, they added parts of what they found in the white man's rituals to what they could recall of African or Islamic rituals, and this was the slave religion. Once slaves were free, Pennsylvania's whites expected them to drop their African parts and become traditional churchgoing Christians. The large number of African Americans at the time of the Revolution in Pennsylvania worshiped together with whites in a great many churches, for there were Black Lutherans, Dunkers, Hebrews, Catholics, Moravians, Mennonites, Quakers, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Unitarians. After much wrestling with their intellect and self-interests, Pennsylvania slave owners finally decided that Christianity did not necessarily make a person free, and so it was decided that religion could be encouraged or at least permitted among the African Americans.

The church fulfilled many needs for African Americans. It provided comfort during a long history of sorrow and leadership in the struggle for freedom and equal opportunities. The church was also the center of social and cultural life when nothing else was available in a segregated community.

Enslaved and free African Americans generally worshipped in a segregated section of the white church. At first, benevolent Quakers restricted their African American fellow Friends to a part of the meetinghouse where benches were painted black. With the ever-increasing number of African Americans entering some congregations, trouble arose.

The founders of the African American church in Pennsylvania had been made to feel uncomfortable in the predominantly white churches, so they started their own. Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the mother of all the churches of that great denomination, was founded by Richard Allen, who withdrew from St. George's Methodist Church in 1787, and became the first African Methodist Episcopal bishop. Allen established churches throughout Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Reverend Absalom Jones, also of Philadelphia, founded St. Thomas African Episcopal Church, and along with Allen and others called for the formation of the Free African Society in 1787. This society contributed to the cost of providing adequate housing for local citizens and fugitive slaves. The society also provided social services, such as caring for widows and burying the dead.

Allen and Jones were also instrumental in organizing the first Black Masonic African lodge in Philadelphia in

Souvenir Historical Chart.



FIRST PLACE OF MEETING.



FIRST BRICK CHURCH.

Pastors of Bethel Church, Phila.,
from 1816 to 1899.

RICHARD ALLEN,
RICHARD WILLIAMS,
JACOB TAPSCIO,
WILLIAM CORNISH,
MORRIS BROWN,
JOSEPH COX,
WILLIAM MOORE,
JOHN CORNISH,
WILLIS NAZERY,
HENRY J. YOUNG,
HENRY DAVIS,
RICHARD ROBINSON,
JOHN CORNISH,
W. D. W. SCHUREMAN,
JOSHUA WOODLAND,
J. P. CAMPBELL,
WILLIAM MOORE.

* Served two terms.



Richard Allen

First Bishop.

Born Feb. 14, 1760. Died Mar. 26, 1831.

Successors:

2. MORRIS BROWN,
3. EDWARD WATERS,
4. WM. PAUL QUINN,
5. WILLIS NAZERY,
6. D. A. PAYNE,
7. A. W. WAYMAN,
8. J. P. CAMPBELL,
9. J. A. SHORTER,
10. T. M. D. WARD,
11. J. M. BROWN,
12. H. M. TURNER,
13. W. F. DICKERSON,
14. R. H. CAIN,
15. R. R. DISNEY,
16. W. J. GAINES,
17. B. W. ARNETT,
18. B. T. TANNER,
19. A. GRANT,
20. B. F. LEE,
21. M. B. SALTER,
22. J. A. HANDY,
23. W. B. DERRICK,
24. J. H. ARMSTRONG,
25. J. C. EMBRY.

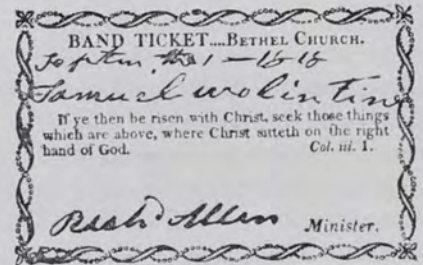
Pastors of Bethel Church, Phila.,
from 1816 to 1899.

JAMES HOLLEN,
D. DORRELL,
J. M. WILLIAMS,
HENRY J. YOUNG,
THEODORE GOULD,
R. F. WAYMAN,
G. C. WHITFIELD,
L. J. COPPIN,
J. S. THOMPSON,
C. C. FELTS,
J. S. THOMPSON,
J. W. BECKETT,
C. T. SHAFFER,
W. H. HEARD,
W. D. COOK,
T. GOULD,
L. J. COPPIN.

* Served two terms.



THE PRESENT CHURCH.



FAC SIMILE OF FIRST LOVE FEAST TICKET.

Observe the Landmarks.

Christian Recorder Print, 617 Pine St., Phila., Pa.

Commemorating the history of Philadelphia's Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church,
the mother of all the churches of that great denomination.



The Reverend Richard Allen, founder of Mother Bethel, assisted escaped slaves and became a proponent of the self-help philosophy.



Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (419 South Sixth St., Philadelphia) occupies the oldest piece of ground in the United States continuously owned by African Americans.

1797. This lodge was under charter of the Reverend Prince Hall, the first African American to be made a Freemason in the New World. Richard Allen was also a pioneer in women's rights. In 1817, he permitted Mrs. Jarena Lee to preach. Upon becoming the first African American woman preacher, the Reverend Lee in one year traveled 2,325 miles and preached 178 sermons under the most adverse conditions.

African American ministers worked with the various anti-slavery groups in the Underground Railroad movement. The African Methodist Episcopal churches that were spread across Pennsylvania formed a vital function in the network of stations that was established for the protection of escaping slaves. Circuit riders, who were preachers who traveled from one church to another, served as agents, communicating information about secret Underground activities. For example, the Reverend Abraham Lewis carried messages from Harrisburg, Lewistown, and Johnstown to Pittsburgh. African American evangelist Amanda Berry Smith, who had lived in Strausburg, sometimes called Shrewsbury, recalled her parents' involvement with the Underground Railroad when she was thirteen, and how the circuit riders would stop at camp meetings bearing news of escaped slaves.

Black Catholics were present in most Catholic settlements on the North American continent. Catholicism was not established without opposition in Pennsylvania, despite William Penn's legacy of tolerance, although on the eve of the Revolution, Pennsylvania was the only colony where mass could be celebrated publicly. African American Catholics first attended services during the early days of the 1800's at the little Catholic church at Conowingo in Maryland, traveling along the Susquehanna River from the York, Pennsylvania area. Father John Neumann started the first school exclusively for Black Catholic children at Old St. Joseph parish in 1858. In 1867, the first African American from Philadelphia to become a priest or nun was Sister Mary Brown.

Until 1886, the African American Catholic community worshiped at St. Joseph's, St. Mary's, and St. Augustine's. On July 7 of that year, a mass was reserved for them at Holy Trinity Church at Sixth and Spruce Streets. A society of African American parishioners was formed, and in 1890 they purchased a Presbyterian church at Twelfth and Lombard Streets for African American Catholics to use. This church was dedicated in 1892 as St. Peter Claver's Roman Catholic Church. In May of 1992, a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania historical marker was placed in front of the church honoring its 100th anniversary.

Black Catholic men as well as women became religious leaders. Three men, two brothers and one priest, were part of the racially integrated Benedictine Monastery in Latrobe, Pennsylvania in the 1880's. The first African American priest to actually say mass in Philadelphia was Father Augustine Tolton, at Saint Peter Claver's Church in 1893.

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Overbrook, just west of Philadelphia, has a long tradition of training African American priests. Besides Philadelphia's, other prominent African American Catholic centers in Pennsylvania are the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament at Cornwells Heights and St. Benedict the Moor in Pittsburgh. St. Benedict is generally recognized for the beauty and significance of the rendering of its colorful stained glass windows.

In the 1980's, African American Catholics voiced their concerns to the hierarchy in Rome about a stronger representation of African American culture within the church. To counter indifference and racism, as well as to encourage parishioners to worship in his Imani temples in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., Father George Stallings has departed from the European tradition by incorporating drums and other African musical instruments into the church service.

The city of Philadelphia can lay claim to one of the most important African American ministers that Pennsylvania has produced. Archdeacon Henry L. Phillips, who was born in Jamaica in 1847, was baptized a Roman

Catholic, reared and confirmed a Moravian, and ordained an Episcopal priest in Philadelphia. In 1899, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois described Archdeacon Phillips as "a man of sincerity and culture and of peculiar energy." As pastor of the Church of the Crucifixion at Eighth and Bainbridge Streets, he attracted wealthy whites as well as members of his own race to his church. He made his church the center of African American cultural life. Because of his ability to draw men and women, Black and white, it became one of the leading churches in the nation. The American Negro Historical Society was founded there in 1897. A highly intellectual scholar, Archdeacon Phillips lived to be 100 years old. Similarly prominent representatives of the African Methodist Episcopal Church who were leaders in the political, social, and cultural lives of their communities were Bishop Richard R. Wright, also of Philadelphia, and Bishop Benjamin T. Tanner of Pittsburgh.

During the first half of this century, the rise of a different type of African American religious leader prompted Dr. Ira Reid, a nationally known sociologist and former professor of Haverford College to write in 1940 that "there are indications that a new church is arising among Negroes, a militant church, one that is concerning itself with problems of the masses." Father Divine, whose personal power was a spiritual phenomenon during his time, amassed a great fortune and used it to help the poor and people of all races. During the turbulent days of the 1960's, Father Paul Washington, an Episcopal priest, opened the doors of the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia to African American militants, who held the Second National Black Power Conference on its premises. The militants and others who attended this historic conference wanted to shake racism from within America.

A number of noted African American clergymen emerged from Pennsylvania's Black ranks during this period. The Reverend Leon Sullivan, the Reverend William Gray, Sr., and the Reverend Marshall Shepard were all from Philadelphia. The Reverend Frank Patrick used Bethesda Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh as a center for public protest about integration of housing and public facilities such as swimming pools during the civil rights era, and the Reverend J. Pisces Barbour, one of Dr. Martin Luther King's early mentors, opened his Baptist church in Chester for civil rights protestors.

The years since the 1960's have seen many changes in the church, the nation, and the commonwealth. Today, many women occupy highly visible leadership positions in the African American churches. The Reverend Barbara Harris, fifty-eight, was elected as the first woman bishop in the 2,000-year tradition of the Episcopal Church. Her appointment in Philadelphia became official in February 1989. Even today, as changing conditions call for changing methods, the African American church continues to grow. Migration from the Caribbean islands, Africa, and South America by people of African descent has had a profound

influence on religion in Pennsylvania as new religious customs are introduced within the African American community. These groups have developed their own religious institutions that parallel those already in the community. However, diversity among Black religions continues to be a source of strength.

PROGRESS THROUGH EDUCATION

Even before the arrival of William Penn, with his forward-looking ideas about public education, two schools had existed in Pennsylvania. The first, taught by Christopher Taylor, was opened by Swedish settlers at Tinicum in the early 1640's. Some years later, in 1657, the children of Dutch families who had come into the community were given an opportunity to attend a school taught by Evert Pieterse. Upon his arrival in 1682, Penn put into his Frame of Government a provision of education for all children. A century and a half later, one of the earliest institutional concerns of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society was to see that freed African Americans had schooling. The African Americans did not have to be told that it was important, for they took advantage of every chance offered. Whether in separate schools or in classrooms with white children, they and their parents got all they could throughout the state. The story of African American progress is very closely tied to quality education, and, indeed, it is the major source of hope for progress in the future.

Quakers made the most conscientious efforts to educate freed African Americans, permitting them to attend Quaker meetings in face of great opposition. After teaching African Americans in his Philadelphia home for twenty years, Quaker Anthony Benezet opened a free school for them. Upon Benezet's death, the money he left was used to continue the school, known thereafter as the Benezet House. The Quakers, always progressive in their attitude toward education, established several other schools in Philadelphia and elsewhere. In 1832, the Association of Friends for Free Instruction for Adult Colored Persons was founded in Philadelphia. Its aim was to provide such instruction to the scholars "as would enable them to become teachers themselves." The Moravians were also activists: they bought slaves out of slavery, freed them, employed, and educated them in their schools. Eleanor Harris, a former slave who died in 1797, is recorded as being Philadelphia's first African American school teacher.

During the mid-nineteenth century, the demand for universal education became insistent. Thaddeus Stevens, one of the best white friends that African Americans have ever had, tirelessly worked for Black freedom and education. While a member of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, Stevens made impassioned speeches against the foes of public education. He is often called the "Father of Public Education." When Stevens was a part of the Pennsylvania State Constitutional Convention in 1838, he refused to sign the final constitution document, because it eliminated voting rights for African Americans. He was

instrumental in enabling Daniel Alexander Payne, who became a bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, to attend Gettysburg Theological Seminary (now Gettysburg College), with the help of the school's president, Samuel S. Schmucker. Payne, who was only the second African American to attend a predominantly Lutheran seminary in the United States, went on to found and become the first president of Wilberforce University in Ohio.

In Pennsylvania, still other institutions of higher learning were established in the pre-Civil War years. Cheyney University was originally established in Philadelphia in 1837 as the Institute for Colored Youth and was set up exclusively to train African American teachers. Charles L. Reason, a nationally known African American educator and lecturer, served as principal of the institute from 1852 to 1856. Ebenezer D. Bassett followed him in that position and remained with the institute for fifteen years. The school prospered under the leadership of Fanny Jackson Coppin, one of the first African American women college graduates, from 1869 to 1901, and it was eventually moved to its current site in Chester County. Lincoln University, also in Chester County, was founded as the Ashmun Institute in 1854, and is considered the oldest college in America established for the purpose of providing a liberal arts education for African American students. Sarah Mapps Douglass, Grace M. Mapps, and Martha Farbeaux, the institute's first woman graduate, were all teachers there and were active in the abolition movement.

Although Pennsylvania's first trade school was the Manual Labor Academy of Germantown, created under private auspices in 1829, industrial education emerged as a legitimate subject for schools after the Civil War. By the 1890's, industrial schools such as the Berean School in Philadelphia, the Downingtown School in Chester County, and the Avery Institute in Pittsburgh had begun to prepare African Americans to join the ranks of industrial workers. In line with the trend toward vocational education, Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School was founded in 1905 by the Reverend Dr. William A. Credit.

In 1881, a significant Pennsylvania court case in Crawford County had a profound influence upon education. When Elias H. Allen, a Black man, applied to have his children admitted to an elementary school in Meadville, the application was denied. Allen appealed to the county court for a *writ of mandamus* directing the school board to admit his children. The court ruled in favor of Allen on the basis of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Meanwhile, in Norristown, Montgomery County, the Reverend Amos Wilson led a group of eighty African American parents and confronted the school board until segregation was discontinued. From that time until the present, African American children in Pennsylvania have attended integrated schools.

With the official end of segregation by legislation, a few Black professionals began to emerge from prestigious

white colleges. One of the most famous of graduates was Sadie Alexander, the first Black woman to be awarded a Ph.D. in this country. Her husband, attorney Raymond Pace Alexander, opened a legal challenge that resulted in one of the longest cases in Philadelphia legal history, the integration of Girard College. Initiated in the 1930's, the case was finally won by Cecil B. Moore, another prominent Black attorney, in the 1960's, when the United States Supreme Court decided against the legality of Stephen Girard's will. Upon Girard's death in 1831, he had bequeathed a large sum of money toward the establishment of a college for "poor white orphan boys only," specifying that "a high wall be built around it."

Attorney Moore's skillful argument before the Supreme Court in 1968 ensured that African Americans in Pennsylvania were legally entitled to admission to public schools on equal terms with other children. Institutions for their higher education have flourished.

A climate more open to African American education has developed after years of agitation, primarily by African Americans, but also by sympathetic whites. One African American, Floyd L. Logan of Philadelphia, as early as 1932 founded the Educational Equality League, whose goal was to place qualified African American teachers in predominantly white schools. Also in Philadelphia, Samuel L. Evans founded the American Foundation for Negro Affairs, whose purpose was to prepare talented high school students with an early education in the fields of law and medicine. In Harrisburg, veteran legislator K. LeRoy Irvis sponsored a resolution for the establishment of a community college system within the Commonwealth during the 1960's. In the wake of the civic and educational rebellions in the 60's, African American educators gathered to organize the state-wide conference known as COBBE, or Conference on Basic Black Education.

Since the nineteenth century, there has been an ongoing debate in the field of education as to the most practical and well-rounded curriculum for students. In the past several years, this debate among educators about Afrocentric curricula has intensified. Independent, community-based schools such as the Islamic schools, Black nationalist schools and cultural nationalist schools, have reemerged in response to the need for more diverse and multicultural curriculum needs. This trend has forced many educators and scholars to begin to propose changes in school and college curricula.

THE QUESTION OF EMIGRATION OR MIGRATION

Separation was the central theme of the pre-Civil War colored convention movement. Sites such as Canada, Haiti, South America, and Africa were proposed. As the political climate changed, leaders with new visions arose. Outside forces, such as the backing of the presidency, intervened. The vigorous argument at various conventions over emigration to Africa, Haiti, and South America proves that



Nicholas Biddle of Pottsville (Schuylkill County) was struck in the face by a brickbat when marching in the Union Army through Baltimore on April 18, 1861; tradition says his was the first blood shed in the Civil War.



Martin R. Delany, of Pittsburgh, the father of Black nationalism.

the debate over separation raised in the Black Power era of the 1960's was a reaffirmation of pioneer African American thought.

In 1830, African American emigration to Canada was encouraged at the Convention of the American Society of Persons of Color. At the second Convention of Colored People held in Philadelphia in 1832, the idea of Canadian colonization met with objections. However, the pace of migration of southern African Americans to Pennsylvania and other northern communities was especially swift during the years of the Underground Railroad. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, numerous African Americans decided that the only way to protect their freedom was to emigrate, and many chose to move to Canada.

At the convention of 1854, it was resolved that a commission be established for the purpose of exploring the possibility of settlement in a suitable area in Africa. Both Martin R. Delany of Pittsburgh and William Nesbit of Altoona were involved in the National Emigration Convention of Colored People, which met in Pittsburgh that year. The original exploring party was to have consisted of Martin R. Delany, Robert Douglass, the Philadelphia portrait artist, and Robert Campbell, a chemist and teacher at the Institute for Colored Youth. Two other men, Dr. Amos Array, a surgeon, and James W. Purner, a businessman, were added to the party because of their special qualifications. Of the five, only Delany and Campbell actually set sail for Africa, departing separately. Their plans were thwarted at every step, according to Delany, by "white meddlers." Both men prepared an independent account of their travels and observations. Delany published his *Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party* in 1861. Robert Campbell published his own account, *A Pilgrimage to My Motherland*, in the same year. William Nesbit traveled to Liberia, but quickly became disillusioned with the colonization movement. One of his companions, Samuel Williams of Johnstown, stayed for a longer period and had a more favorable impression. Their conflicting analyses of the emigration experience were published in the classic *Two Views of Liberia* in 1857.

In Mifflin County, on February 18, 1861, African Ameri-

cans in Lewistown held a meeting at the home of John L. Griffith to consider emigrating to the Caribbean island of Haiti. As a result, several people left Lewistown along with a small group from Bellefonte. In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln asked Congress to give him \$100,000 to colonize the African Americans who had been freed in the District of Columbia outside the United States. Later, he requested \$500,000 to ship out still others. Several shiploads of freed African Americans were transported to the desolate, fever-ridden Île de Vache off the coast of Haiti. Bitten by poisonous insects and suffering great privation, the people begged to be taken back to the United States. Of the original 431, only 378 returned alive, many of them seriously ill. Lincoln's emigration plan was a total failure.

The period between World War I and World War II was also characterized by great migration by people of African descent, both from the South to the North and from other countries to the United States. The northward exodus was so pronounced and of such long duration that it is called by historians the Great Migration.

Growth in actual numbers has been even more impressive in the decades since the 1960's because of the immigration of Blacks from the Caribbean, Africa, and South America. African and Caribbean culture appeals to many African Americans today. As a consequence, various social and political associations and churches have proudly adopted their customs, which include food, clothing and music.

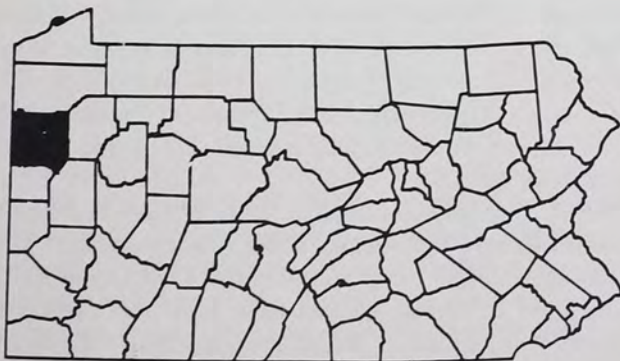
Yet, despite these intercultural advances, conditions are still very far from encouraging for many of Pennsylvania's African Americans. Racism and discrimination still lurk beneath the surface in some communities. Poverty and joblessness remain all too prevalent. Today in Pennsylvania, there is a lack of understanding that breeds fear, suspicion, hate, insecurity, inferiority—all the evils that deter a person from being a civilized being. Some people of African descent may have gained opportunity, but all too many remain in inner city schools and slums. Thus, what the twenty-first century may hold is open to great speculation.

THE TWIN CITY ELKS LODGE, A Unifying Force in Farrell's African American Community

by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall



A postcard of the Twin City Elks Bugle and Drum Corps. Edward Smith (upper right), an exalted ruler in the 1920s, and Mr. Hyatt (upper left) were band directors. (Courtesy of S. Malloy)



Mercer County, Pa.; the Shenango Valley is in the southwest corner of the county, adjacent to Ohio.

Organized in 1914, the Twin City Elks Lodge of Farrell was recognized for almost twenty years as the largest Independent Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World (IBPOEW) lodge in Pennsylvania.¹ Reaching a cross section of African Americans in Farrell,² an industrial town, it was a major unifying force in the community. The authors of a study of Pittsburgh's African American community from 1900 to 1960, note the lack of a unifying institutional element there;³ this essay explores the positive role played by the Twin City Lodge in African American life in the Farrell area in the years between 1909 and 1944. In addition to Farrell, that area includes Sharon, the Neck District, and the smaller, neighboring Pennsylvania communities of Sharpsville, Wheatland, and West Middlesex; and Brookfield, Ohio. These communities form what is commonly known as the Shenango Valley.

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ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The unusual availability of steady work and good-paying, semi-skilled jobs in local mills contributed to the success of the Twin City Elks Lodge. From 1916 to 1930, during the course of the Great Migration (a period characterized by factional strife), over one million African Americans fled the Southern states for economic opportunities in the North.⁴ Between 1909 and 1923 there were two waves of African American migration to Farrell. During the first wave, the American Sheet and Tin Plate Company (AMSTP) exploited racial antipathies in an attempt to break the union: When the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steelworkers called a strike in 1909, local company officials employed African Americans as skilled, non-union workers.

At that time few African Americans in western Pennsylvania held semi-skilled and skilled positions in the hot mills, but early in the 1909 strike, the African American employees of American Sheet and Tin Plate experienced what appeared to be a brief period of upward mobility, as was common throughout the nation during strikes. One who benefited was James E. Matthews, a native of Homestead and a six-year veteran at the company's South Sharon Works. Already denied promotion twice because of "white



James E. Matthews in 1908. A shearman at American Sheet and Tin Plate's South Sharon Works, Matthews invented a shear guide recognized as "the work of a genius."

union men's protests,"⁵ he was now "offered a job as a shear forman [*sic*]."⁶ Given the union's record of discrimination, the twenty-three-year-old Matthews accepted management's offer, but due to a lack of shearing experience requested a shearman's job, which he held for over eight years. During that time Matthews invented a shear guide which was recognized as "the work of a genius."⁷ Another six-year veteran of the South Sharon plant, twenty-three-year-old African American Arthelia Jones, a native of West Virginia, also profited from the strike, moving up from laborer to catcher.⁸ After the 1909 strike, a twenty-one-year-old African American, Joseph W. Young, born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, assumed the highly skilled position of roller.⁹

Racial antipathies existed in other northern industrial milltowns where the Amalgamated Association operated, and local American Sheet and Tin Plate Company officials also moved to further exploit these breaches.¹⁰ Brothers Marshall and H. Russell Wayne, who worked as "tin men" in "Little" Washington, were offered "good jobs" at the South Sharon Works. There, thirty-year-old Marshall held the semi-skilled position of heater, while his younger brother worked as a rougher "for one dollar and seventy-five cents a day."¹¹ In 1919, H. Russell Wayne worked his way up



The Wilson and Rillis Steverson family in Lithia Springs, Georgia, circa 1910. During the Great Migration, Wilson Steverson (second from left, front row), Mary S. McClendon (second from right), and Nathaniel Steverson (third from right) left the South and moved to Farrell, Pa.

Coal miner Joseph S. McClendon was employed by the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company in Ensley, Ala., before emigrating to Farrell, where, by 1921, he found unskilled work. A burner helper on the blast furnaces, McClendon worked for more than 25 years in the Farrell Mill of the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation. (Courtesy of Brenda Gibbs-Hubbard)

to the position of roller, the highest classified job in the AMSTP mill. As a chief roller, Wayne had “six whites who worked under him,”¹² an exceptional circumstance for an African American worker in western Pennsylvania.

Another African American, twenty-two-year-old, Ohio-born Ernest Fields, had distinguished himself as a roller in the South Sharon plant as early as 1910. Eight years later, Pennsylvania-born African American Bussell Long, thirty, was working there as a doubler, a job “which required much skill and adaptability.”¹³ Such attainments were remarkable in a time when African American workers typically were relegated to unskilled positions in the steel industry.¹⁴ In fact, the upward occupational mobility of these African American newcomers made South Sharon an unusual community. Most African American newcomers to the area came from Pittsburgh and Little Washington (twenty-five miles southwest of Pittsburgh, and so-called to distinguish it from the nation’s capital), Pennsylvania, and from Ohio, although they traced their family’s roots to Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Alabama, and a few other border states in the upper South.

Prior to 1916, African Americans found varying degrees of upward mobility at other mills in the Shenango Valley as well. Although the American Steel and Wire Company (ASW) employed fewer of them than did American Sheet and Tin Plate’s South Sharon Works, the wages of those who did work as wire drawers were considered “high.”¹⁵ Typically, these workers transferred to the Valley from ASW mills in Cleveland and Lisbon, Ohio; they too were natives of the upper South and border states.¹⁶ At the Driggs-Seabury Gun Works in Sharon, a few African American machinists, considered to be “the most independent, skillful, [and] reliable”¹⁷ workmen there, also received good wages. In contrast, African Americans were generally excluded from good-paying industrial jobs at National Malleable in Sharon.¹⁸ (Mills in Sharon generally employed fewer African Americans in skilled positions than did those in South Sharon.) It is worth noting again, however, that the relatively high number of African Americans who were employed in semi-skilled jobs in the Shenango Valley distinguished this community from many other mill towns in western Pennsylvania.¹⁹

African American recruiters used promises of good-paying jobs to attract Southerners to the North, and within a few years of the first (1909) migration, the mass migration of African Americans to the region began. In 1912, South Sharon changed its name to Farrell, and four years later, Frank Wilson, a native of Cheraw, South Carolina, arrived in the town and found employment at the Sharon Steel Hoop. Through his activities in the Hoop mill, this African American “helped [other South Carolina natives] to get up”²⁰ to Pennsylvania, earning himself the reputation of a “big man”²¹ in the process. In 1917, M.S. Lennon came to Farrell “to acquire a first-hand knowledge of the wages paid to colored people”²² who had recently arrived there from South Carolina. A native of North Carolina and a graduate of Shaw University, Lennon was hired as the African American welfare official at the Farrell Carnegie Steel Works. One of his major responsibilities “involved the recruitment of African American laborers . . . and he personally selected”²³ African American men from his home state.

During a 1919 strike, southern migrants were heavily recruited.²⁴ Most came from the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama, with others migrating from Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Between 1916 and 1930, the majority of these southern migrants to the Shenango Valley were hired as unskilled workers, as they were throughout western Pennsylvania. Still, the prevailing wage rate of “64 cents an hour for unskilled workers in the Northern steel mills”²⁵ vastly exceeded average earnings possibilities in the South, so such work was viewed by African Americans as a “definite opportunity”²⁶ for economic advancement. Moreover, although most migrants were hired for unskilled jobs, in Farrell it was ability—not race or prior place of residence—that was considered the determining factor in upward occupational mobility. In 1918, American Sheet and Tin’s Farrell Works employed a remarkable “187 skilled and semi-skilled colored workers.”²⁷ Among their ranks were migrants from different regions of the South who worked as doublers, heaters, roughers, shearmen, and catchers.²⁸ They earned “more money than the average Negro”²⁹ in the Shenango Valley.

SOCIAL DISCORD

For African American migrants adjustment to life in the North was not always smooth. Prior to 1908, the Shenango Valley’s small African American population worshipped at the AME Zion Church of Sharon, at the First Baptist Church of South Sharon, and at South Sharon’s Triumph Church of the New Age. But Southern migrants found some African American churches “inhospitable.”³⁰ (Earlier migrants from Little Washington organized Farrell’s African Methodist Episcopal Church in order to provide proper “moral instruction”³¹ for “untrained and irresponsible”³² Southern newcomers.) Between 1908 and 1944, African American newcomers to the Shenango Valley organized ten Baptist churches; three holiness churches; and



A native of Coraopolis, Pa., Ethel Brown Lewis completed beautician training before migrating, around 1915, to the Shenango Valley where she opened a shop that served an exclusive white clientele. A member of the female auxiliary of the Masons and Elks, self-employment placed her among the ranks of the elite in the African American community during a time when employment for African American women was limited to domestic work. (Courtesy of Sara D. Austin)

a Catholic, a Colored Methodist Episcopal, and an African Methodist Episcopal church. Factors in the selection of a church included class, unfamiliar worship styles, and the desire for autonomy.³³ As might be expected, this proliferation of churches, rather than minimizing factional strife, actually contributed to the fragmentation of the community.³⁴

The existence of two local civil rights organizations further discouraged unity within the African American community. In western Pennsylvania, competition existed between Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), even as it did throughout the nation. Given the relatively small attendance at Mercer County NAACP meetings, and the lapse of its charter during the 1920s, it probably held a more tenuous position in the community than did the local UNIA branch, which was early under the capable direction of Michael S. Askerneese, a southern migrant.³⁵ African American millworkers typically found Garvey’s social and economic platform more in line with their concerns,³⁶ and his organization had “greater mass appeal among black steelworkers”³⁷ in western Pennsylvania than did the NAACP.

During the prosperous 1920s, elitist fraternal groups also worked against African American unity by promoting classism. With “more money and more property”³⁸ than any of its competitors, the African American Knights of Pythias Lodge was not only the richest fraternal group, it was also recognized as one of “the best organizations in the nation.”³⁹ In Farrell, however, the Knights’ Golden Rule Lodge and its female auxiliary, the Lily of the Valley, Court of Calanthe, lacked mass appeal; membership in the latter never exceeded forty.⁴⁰ Their rich endowment did attract semi-skilled African American workers, but their



These Church of God camp meetings in West Middlesex gave southern migrants an opportunity to maintain a rural tradition. (Courtesy of the National Association of the Church of God)



The choir of Valley Baptist Church in Wheatland, circa 1944. Under the leadership of a southern migrant, the Reverend Delane (center front), church membership grew during the Great Migration. (Courtesy of Dorothy S. Malloy)



Shown here with his wife and children (circa 1920), Odell B. Matthews held a prominent position in the Knights of Pythias in the 1920s, and was also a member of the Masons and Elks. Bessie Matthews belonged to the female auxiliaries. (Courtesy of Helen Matthews)

exorbitant fees and exclusionary practices, along with accusations of “financial mismanagement,”⁴¹ worked against them.

In Farrell, Prince Hall Masonry played an important role in the development of “bourgeois values,”⁴² as it did across the nation. Yet during the 1920s, it was no less susceptible to factional strife than other African American organizations. Calumet Lodge, organized in 1917, became a stronghold of Farrell’s black intelligentsia: in 1920 its forty-one members reflected the middle class African American community there. Among its ranks were four chefs, three clergymen, two barbers, two proprietors, two chauffeurs, two teamsters, a postal employee, a policeman, a mechanic, and a messenger. Three years later there was a challenge to the status quo when a group of African American men moved to establish another Masonic Lodge in Farrell. Appeals for unity thwarted this drive, yet a rift among the wives of those involved meant that two female auxiliaries operated until 1929, when attrition forced a merger.⁴³

Bessie Matthews’ financial card book of the Lily of the Valley No. 143, Order of Calanthe, 1927-1929, shows a record of dues, taxes, and endowment payments made. The endowment of the Knights of Pythias and its female auxiliary provided substantial death benefits. (Courtesy of Bessie J. Martin; photography by Curtis Reaves)



Members of Calumet Lodge 25 Free and Accepted Masons, Prince Hall Affiliation in Erie, Pa., circa 1922. A steward at National Malleable, Harry S. Molson (standing, second from left); an inspector at the Farrell nail plant, Thomas Dillard (standing, second from right); and a tinner, Edward B. Hodge, were worshipful masters in Sharon. (Courtesy of Sara D. Austin)



THE TWIN CITY ELKS LODGE

Organized in 1914, and remaining intact in an era marked by disunity, Farrell's Twin City Elks Lodge gave African American steelworkers an opportunity to participate in their own institutions. Unlike other fraternal groups, the Elks accepted people into membership regardless of family background, socioeconomic status, or moral character; a policy which contributed to its popularity among southern migrants throughout western Pennsylvania.⁴⁴ But not all Elks lodges there escaped factional strife: Organized in 1916, Donora's Monongahela Lodge experienced problems a few years later, when members who lived in neighboring Monessen separated and organized the Oaky Lodge.⁴⁵

In contrast, the Twin City Lodge—with members from Sharon and Farrell—flourished. Membership (which included unskilled southern workers as well as the elite of the community and everyone in between) peaked at over seven hundred, and all managed to coexist peacefully—



A ladies social club gathering at the home of Odell (standing) and Bessie (seated) Matthews, circa 1944. All pictured were members of the Twin City Elks and its female affiliate, Zylphia Temple. (Courtesy of Helen Matthews)

The Twin City Elks softball team, circa 1955; Clyde Steverson (standing, second from left) was the pitcher. (Courtesy of Dorothy S. Malloy)





The last Twin City Elks basketball team (1962) was under the direction of coach Bobby Rapper (front, left) and assistant coach and financial officer Samuel "Bo" Satterwhite (back, left). The lodge produced outstanding basketball players. (Courtesy of Ruth Satterwhite)



Lewis Henry "Duke" Greene, Sr. a member of the Twin City Elks basketball team in 1929. Greene later coached the team for a year and served as exalted ruler. (Courtesy of Sara D. Austin)

a remarkable circumstance. As already noted, it was recognized as the largest IBPOEW lodge for almost twenty years. During these peak years, the membership of its female auxiliary, Zylphia Temple, reached three hundred. Zylphia Temple's organizer, Lettie Bryant, was a former member of Western Star Temple in Little Washington. By 1944, the Twin City Lodge owned a meeting facility and a bus, and had won the National Elks Basketball Championship in New York. (The Elks national commissioner of athletics, Cum Posey, organized twenty-eight lodges and temples into the IPBOEW Athletic Committee of Western Pennsylvania, and sponsored the National Basketball Tournament in 1942.) The completion of a \$75,000 gymnasium eight years later was considered a great advancement and equated with "racial pride."⁴⁶

The Twin City Lodge also sponsored "beneficial" activities for young people, and these included basketball, roller skating, a drum and bugle corps, majorettes, a marching band, and a youth council. During the Christmas season, the Elks provided treats for children and spent two to three hundred dollars on charitable works in the African American community. They also sponsored a softball team for adults; arranged field trips to Pittsburgh and Cleveland; and held raffles, picnics, and cabarets. The Lodge's club held floor shows that attracted such celebrities as Duke Ellington, Ray Charles, Peg Leg Bates, and Jesse Owens. The availability of "steady work and decent wages"⁴⁷ enabled

the community to support these Elks-sponsored activities. A national lodge dignitary, the dynamic J. Finley Wilson, traveled across the country "telling people, 'If you want to see somebody with money, go to Farrell, Pennsylvania.'"⁴⁸

* * *

A product of the 20th century with no history to haunt it, Farrell was an unusual community in that it had no significant WASP presence, a circumstance that contributed to good race relations in the borough. A study of Steelton, Pennsylvania, revealed that white Anglo-Saxon Protestant leaders there "perpetuated ethnic distinctions, . . . [and] kept immigrants and blacks from playing any influential role in the borough's affairs."⁴⁹ Before World War II, African American families in Farrell lived in mixed neighborhoods where neither they, nor any of the borough's numerous white ethnic populations, were able to maintain a majority. Under these circumstances a degree of social mixing took place, and African American migrants as well as European immigrants participated in local politics.

In his examination of the black middle class, E. Franklin Frazier observed that "both white and Negro politicians regard the Elks as a strategic approach to the Negro community."⁵⁰ In the aftermath of the Great Migration it was the only national secret society to increase its membership. Between 1922 and 1946, under the leadership of grand exalted ruler J. Finley Wilson, the organization grew



One of several private orchestras that often performed at public events in Farrell in the early part of this century, this

picture of Miller's Band was taken at the Knights of Pythias memorial service in 1927. (Courtesy of Helen Matthews)

from 32,000 to 500,000 members in 1,000 lodges.⁵¹ The phenomenal growth of the Twin City Lodge reflected this national trend, making it (and many other Elks lodges throughout the country) a “good means of influencing Negro voters.”⁵² Small wonder then, that in addition to Finley himself, special guests at the 1926 Elks burning-of-the-mortgage ceremony and banquet included Sharon mayor Frank Gilbert and Farrell burgess J. H. Moody.⁵³

In Farrell—and across the country—African American professionals “undertook to reconcile their personal interests with those of the working-class”⁵⁴ through participation in Elks activities. Dr. Harry A. Whyte, for example, migrated to Farrell from Little Washington in 1918.⁵⁵ Nine years later he was treasurer of the Twin City Elks and president of a local colored political-action committee. That same year he ran for a seat on the Farrell council, losing by a mere thirteen votes; his strong showing reflected the support of working-class lodge members.⁵⁶ Between 1927 and 1935 he became exalted ruler and was recognized as a political boss; white and Negro politicians sought his endorsement.⁵⁷ Another doctor with political ambitions was John H. Ingram. In 1927, Dr. Ingram was chaplain of the Twin City Lodge and a member of the board of trustees. Two years later he ran an unsuccessful campaign for Farrell tax collector.

Despite these two defeats, members of the Twin City Lodge did play an influential role in borough affairs. The first two African American office holders elected in Farrell were Elks: In 1928 Charles S. Butler and John Edmunds served as register assessor and constable, respectively.⁵⁸ Butler, a native of Canonsburg, joined the Twin City Lodge in 1920 because of its “many social activities.”⁵⁹ (Its May Ball, which was the “biggest event among the colored people,”⁶⁰ attracted his attention.) A doubler at American Steel and Tin Plate’s Farrell Works, Butler joined the Elks

band, and by 1924 was exalted ruler. During his administration, the Lodge held vigorous membership campaigns. Butler was also active in the Masons, but Edmunds belonged only to the Twin City Lodge.⁶¹ A native of South Carolina, Edmunds also worked at AMSTP in Farrell; later he was hired as “the Shenango Valley’s first Negro insurance agent.”⁶²

In 1930, a charter member of Twin City Lodge, Joseph Young, succeeded Butler as the elected register assessor. Young had served as the Lodge’s treasurer from 1921 to 1926, and his wife, Cora, was a past daughter ruler, and treasurer of the Elks’ female auxiliary;⁶³ in fraternal groups such family ties were common. Farrell’s first elected African American councilman, James Renshaw, a native of Alabama, served a term concurrent with Young’s. While little is known about Renshaw, family members were active in the local Elks. (A sister-in-law, Minnie Renshaw, was also a past daughter ruler, Zylphia Temple’s highest officer.⁶⁴)

The fact that three out of four of these African Americans elected to major public offices in Farrell were Elks, is proof of the organization’s high visibility in the borough. But even though ethnic whites saw African American Elks as leaders, it was their position in the larger community that determined their electability. As early as 1915, political meetings were being held by “ethnic club committees of the Italian, Jewish, Colored and Croatian”⁶⁵ communities for the purpose of endorsing candidates. Thirteen years later, elements from among the Croatian community encouraged John Edmunds to run for office and supported his candidacy. Similarly, James Renshaw received support from African American Elks, and also from Italian and Jewish voters. Since African Americans represented less than twelve percent of Farrell’s total population in 1930, coalitions with ethnic whites were necessary in order to elect them to public office.⁶⁶



Members of Golden Valley Lodge 89 of the Knights of Pythias at their memorial service in 1927. (Courtesy of Helen Matthews)

This period of judicious mixing soon ended, the result, in 1931, of plans by white ethnic businessmen to reclassify Farrell from a borough to a third class city. Since African Americans in Farrell had not developed enterprises comparable to those of ethnic whites, their political influence diminished during the change. Joseph Franek, a Slovak businessman, was the first mayor of the new city, and prominent businessmen Joseph Franek, a Slovak, and Louis Levine, a Jew, were elected to city council,⁶⁷ now under the control of white ethnic business interests, with no representation from the African American community.

The change from district to city-wide elections in Farrell did favor those with broad-based community connections, so Twin City Lodge's exalted ruler became an influential person because of the organization's large membership. Between 1938 and 1951 it was exalted ruler Charles Vactor who "worked with the mayor"⁶⁸ since he was spokesman for Farrell's largest community-based African American organization. Nevertheless, African Americans were left as odd man out, as the Americanization of second-generation ethnic whites further encouraged conformity. Then, too, as the different ethnic groups began to marry within their communities they formed even stronger voting blocks. As a result, by the end of World War II, African American Elks were dismayed by the deterioration in race relations and subsequently turned inward, to strengthen their own institutions.

* * *

Charles Vactor, circa 1950 (Courtesy of Lucille Parker; photography by Curtis Reaves)



Current site of Twin City Elks Lodge at 301 Staunton St., Farrell; the building to the left is the gymnasium (1993).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank Dr. Joseph Rishel for his guidance during the writing of this essay; he is a faculty member in the history department at Duquesne University. I also am profoundly grateful to the people of the

Shenango Valley; without their patience and assistance this work could not have been completed, for among the primary sources used in this study were twenty-one interviews. Twelve of those interviews were taped, and those tapes (in the possession of the author) constitute the recorded oral history. Most people interviewed were either migrants or their children, and all their families lived through the events discussed.

The print sources included several newspapers. One of the chief journals in the community, the *Sharon Herald*, surveyed from 1901 to 1935, provided background on African-American life. Other relevant newspapers, which included the *New York Age* and the *Pittsburgh Courier*, provided background on social life within the African American community of the Shenango Valley.

Primary sources included the private papers of African American community leaders, which were rich in social history. This work also uses federal population manuscript census schedules and local directories to trace occupational mobility among African American millworkers between 1891 and 1939. For material on race relations the Minute Book of the Mercer County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1918–31, and the records of the Fair Employment Commission, Region III, 1943–45 were valuable resources.

The staffs and resources of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, D.C.; the Archives of Industrial Society, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.; the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pa.; the Stey Nevant Library, Farrell, Pa.; the Buhl-Henderson Community Library, Sharon, Pa.; and the National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C., were consulted. The Necrology Files of the Mercer County Genealogical Society, which provided background on migrants and social affiliations, were also a valuable resource.

ENDNOTES

- ¹Archives of Twin City Elks Lodge No. 187, Farrell, Pa.
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- ³John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900–1960* (Chicago, Illinois, University of Illinois Press, 1982), pp. 77–79.
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- ⁶*Ibid.* ⁷*Ibid.*
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- ¹¹George Ray, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Sharon, Pa., Sept. 2, 1991. Albert Wayne, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Farrell, Pa., Sept. 11, 1989. 1916 and 1919 Sharon City Directory. 1913 Farrell Borough Directory.
- ¹²*Ibid.*
- ¹³1910 Federal Population Schedule, South Sharon Borough, Mercer County, Pa. *New York Age*, February 8, 1917.
- ¹⁴Dickerson, *Out of the Crucible*, pp. 20–26.
- ¹⁵Silas Askerneese, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Sharon, Pa., Nov. 19, 1990. Charles S. Butler, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Wheatland, Pa. Feb. 19, 1989.
- ¹⁶*Ibid.* ¹⁷*New York Age*, February 8, 1917.
- ¹⁸Edward Boarders, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Farrell, Pa., Nov. 5, 1983.
- ¹⁹Dickerson, *Out of the Crucible*, pp. 20, 51.
- ²⁰Dewey Brooks, interviewed, Aug. 23, 1991. Samuel Malloy, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Farrell, Pa., Aug. 12, 1991.
- ²¹*Ibid.*
- ²²Dickerson, *Out of the Crucible*, pp. 106–108. *Sharon Herald*, July 21, 1917.
- ²³*Ibid.* ²⁴Dickerson, pp. 88–89.
- ²⁵Dickerson, *Out of the Crucible*, pp. 27, 50, 88–89. Charles S. Butler, interviewed, Feb. 19, 1989.
- ²⁶*Ibid.*
- ²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 51. 1920 Federal Population Schedules, Farrell and Sharon, Mercer County, Pa.
- ²⁸*Ibid.*
- ²⁹Dickerson, pp. 27, 50, 88–89. Charles S. Butler, interviewed Feb. 19, 1989.
- ³⁰*Sharon Herald*, Dec. 6, 1917. ³¹*Ibid.* ³²*Ibid.*
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- ³⁴*Ibid.* Bodnar, Simon, and Weber in their study of Pittsburgh's African-American community found that its "multiplicity of religions" did not contribute to the creation of unified black neighborhoods. John Bodner, *Steeltown: Immigration and Industrialization, 1870–1940* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), p. 108.
- ³⁵*Sharon Herald*, Jan. 4, 1927.
- ³⁶Minute Book of the Mercer County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1918–1931. James M. Matthews, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Farrell, Pa., Dec. 17, 1990. Samuel Malloy, interviewed, Aug. 12, 1991. Sara D. Austin, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Sharon, Pa., Sept. 1, 1991. Louise Ponder, interviewed Aug. 16, 1991. Silas Askerneese, interviewed Nov. 19, 1990. Ethel Pollard, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, West Middlesex, Pa., Aug. 17, 1991. R.V. Hailstock, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Nov. 18, 1991. Marvin Gibbs, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Sharon, Pa., Nov. 18, 1991. Dewey Brooks, interviewed, Aug. 23, 1991.
- ³⁷Dickerson, *Out of the Crucible*, p. 79.
- ³⁸Charles S. Butler, interviewed, Feb. 19, 1989.
- ³⁹*Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰Leola R. Williams, interviewed by Roland C. Barksdale-Hall, Farrell, Pa. Feb. 28, 1989.
- ⁴¹E.A. Williams, *History and Manual Colored Knights of Pythias* (Nashville, Tennessee, National Baptist Publishing Board, 1917), pp. 589, 802, 832. During the Depression, the mismanagement of funds by the Pennsylvania Grand Lodge officers reportedly led to the group's demise.
- ⁴²William Alan Muraskin, *Black Masons: The Role of Fraternal Orders in the Creation of a Middle-Class Black Community* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California-Berkeley), pp. 6–7. Muraskin found bourgeois "behavior" reinforced by "economic and occupational" differences as criteria for induction into Prince Hall Masonry in his study of the middle class black community.
- ⁴³Sara D. Austin, interviewed, Sept. 1, 1991. *History of Deborah Grand Chapter, Order of Eastern Star, Prince Hall Affiliation, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1901–1981*, pp. 122–123. A history of Calumet Lodge No. 25 Free and Accepted Masons, written by Thomas Henry Dillard, circa. 1920.
- ⁴⁴Dewey Brooks, interviewed, Aug. 23, 1991.
- ⁴⁵Dickerson, *Out of the Crucible*, p. 73.
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- ⁴⁷*Ibid.* ⁴⁸*Ibid.*
- ⁴⁹Bodnar, *Steeltown*, p. 102.
- ⁵⁰E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie: the Rise of a New Middle Class* (New York, the Free Press), pp. 93–94.
- ⁵¹*Ibid.*, pp. 92–93 ⁵²*Ibid.*, pp. 93–94 ⁵³*Sharon Herald*, Jan. 15, 1926.
- ⁵⁴*Sharon Herald*, April 8, 1927. Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*, pp. 93–94.
- ⁵⁵Charles S. Butler, interviewed, Feb. 18, 1989.
- ⁵⁶*Sharon Herald*, April 8, 1927; July 1, 1927; Sept. 21, 1927.
- ⁵⁷Sara D. Austin, interviewed, Sept. 1, 1991. Edward Boarders, interviewed, Nov. 5, 1983.
- ⁵⁸*Sharon Herald*, Sept. 22, 1927. *Sharon Herald*, Nov. 9, 1927.
- ⁵⁹Charles S. Butler, interviewed, Feb. 19, 1989.
- ⁶⁰*Ibid.* ⁶¹*Ibid.*
- ⁶²*Sharon Herald*, Feb. 21, 1972.
- ⁶³*Sharon Herald*, Jan. 11, 1921; Jan. 14, 1922; April 7, 1926; April 7, 1926; April 6, 1921; March 18, 1930; Nov. 6, 1929.
- ⁶⁴*Sharon Herald*, Nov. 6, 1929, April 8, 1924.
- ⁶⁵*Sharon Herald*, Aug. 23, 1915.
- ⁶⁶Dewey Brooks, interviewed, Aug. 23, 1991.
- ⁶⁷*Sharon Herald*, Sept. 16, 1931.
- ⁶⁸50th Annual Convention Pennsylvania State Association IBPOEW, May 1973, Hosts Twin City Lodge No. 187 and Zylphia Temple No. 66, p. 5. Vactor became a member of Twin City Lodge in 1918.

THE GREENING OF PHILADELPHIA

by Jerrilyn McGregory



The entrance to Aspen Farms (All photographs by the author)

Philadelphia is the center of one of the largest urban gardening initiatives in the United States. Over the past twenty years, the resurgence and wide distribution of urban gardens there evolved as a multifarious response to city life, as gardeners transformed innumerable vacant lots into green space. Indeed, not since the victory gardens of World War II—considered an important part of the war effort—have urban gardens gained such significance. The effort harkens back to William Penn's dictum that one acre of trees be left for every five acres of land settled, so that his new city would remain what he called a "fine Greene Countrie Towne."

THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

A community garden is more likely to come about as part of an individual's reaction to surrounding conditions, than as the result of concerted efforts by residents of an entire community. Philadelphia, like many northeastern cities, is characterized by rowhouses, with virtually every block and neighborhood following the same design pattern. Consequently, whenever a housing unit is razed by fire or abandoned (common occurrences in economically depressed areas), the result is a glaring hole; a conspicuous break in the landscape. The most immediate response of some city dwellers to this situation is to cultivate the newly available parcel of land. In this way an individual often galvanizes others to action, and the result is the establishment of an organized community garden.

Social scientists have ninety-five ways to define "community," with most of their definitions relying on interpretations centering on people and territory. For African

Americans in an urban American context, however, the sense of community seldom adheres to conterminous city blocks. Instead, as Melvin Williams confirms, community can be defined as "patterned interactions among a delineated group of individuals who seek security, support, identity, and significance from their group."¹ Therefore, routine social interactions become another basis for defining community. For example, many African Americans could—and do—cultivate crops in their own backyards, but the shared community garden means more to them, and some travel considerable distances in order to have a share in one.

Each participant in a community garden brings a unique personal agenda to the project, but the resulting social interactions help restore communal ties. There is also a conscious realization by those involved of the contribution they are making to their quality of life by revitalizing the neighborhood. Many have described the urban environment as an asphalt jungle, but community gardens are a visible refutation of this stark symbolism.

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Because of economic limitations, many African Americans in Philadelphia would be unable to establish gardens without some assistance. Two organizations providing this help are the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society with its Philadelphia Green Project, and Penn State through its Urban Gardening Program. With their outreach programs for neighborhood groups interested in changing their surroundings, these organizations were in the forefront of the community greening movement.



Philadelphia Green staff member Mark Teller signing for a payload of soil for the new sitting garden in Blanche Epps' neighborhood.

Started in 1974, Philadelphia Green (which bills itself as "the largest comprehensive greening program in the nation") has probably greened more than 650 city blocks, and cleaned and planted over seventy-five acres of city lots. In addition, through its model project, the Greene Countrie Towne, Philadelphia Green has helped to transform the West Hagert, Point Breeze, West Shore, Francisville, Susquehanna, Strawberry Mansion, and Norris Square neighborhoods. Hundreds of flower, vegetable, and sitting gardens have been established in these communities, most started with soil, seeds, plants, tools, and fencing received from Philadelphia Green.

Introduced in 1977, by 1987 the Urban Gardening Program included more than five hundred gardens. The Program encourages individuals to grow their own food by offering technical assistance and numerous garden management workshops; leaders in neighborhood gardening projects spend many Saturdays in the off-season exchanging ideas and receiving gardening tips under its auspices. In conjunction with Philadelphia Green, the Urban Gardening Project cosponsors the annual City Gardens Contest and the Harvest Show.

There are some negatives to these programs, however, as they sometimes recommend procedures and practices in conflict with the community gardeners' traditional values and world view. For example, while the professionals tout the use of a white substance called perlite to keep the soil loose, vernacular gardeners prefer plain dirt aerated by earthworms. Indeed, master community gardener Blanche Epps often explains how she "makes her own soil" by natural means alone, using compost and fresh manure.

Like Blanche Epps, many community gardeners are quite adept at staving off or sidestepping suggestions and recommendations in conflict with their own beliefs, and, despite the negatives, they are immensely grateful that Philadelphia Green and the Urban Gardening Program exist. For many, they permit a reinterpretation of their



A sign posted in Aspen Farms announces that judging will begin soon in the City Gardens Contest.

cultural past in light of their recent experiences, and offer a way to expand the opportunities open to them. Without the programs, gardeners on fixed incomes would lack the means to sustain their individual visions, and would not be able to deal with various bureaucracies. Most important, community gardeners do have a voice in the programs, since they serve as advisory board and committee members. Philadelphia Green and the Urban Gardening Program demonstrate that the most effective urban programs build on the life experiences of those they aim to help.

* * *

An important part of the community gardening experience is the opportunity it gives a core group of participants to interact with an extensive multicultural support network composed of Asian, Latino, and African American gardeners. Individuals from these groups are brought together through the competitions, workshops, and other activities sponsored by Philadelphia Green and the Urban Gardening Program. One of the most enduring relationships developed through these contacts exists between the Latino Community of Norris Square and African American gardeners throughout the city. For example, before the Lapina Family moved back to the Philippines, they used to visit there annually, always bringing back seeds to plant. They grew a perennial onion which they pickled, but whose genus was unknown since it just "followed them home from their vacation." In Philadelphia this variety of onion eventually followed other gardeners home as well, and the new owners subsequently found uses for it within their own culinary traditions.

In such exchanges, gardeners delight in being able to recognize agricultural products such as the *name* (yam) and *grandules* (pidgeon peas) by sight, if not by name. Participants find that while names and cooking methods may vary, the shared experiences of gardening help to bridge notions about cultural differences. In fact, Blanche Epps



A view of Aspen Farms and part of the surrounding rowhouse community.



Doris Stahl (l.) enjoying a visit with Esther Williams, long-time president of Aspen Farms.

recently won an apprenticeship grant awarded by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council to teach a Vietnamese gardener, Chien Dinh, how to better adapt his native gardening traditions to Philadelphia's growing conditions.

CASE STUDIES

The Great Migration—the historic movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North—brought many to Philadelphia, predominately, it appears, from the Carolinas. Most of these migrants tend to prefer vegetable gardens with similar rows of corn, cabbages, and collard greens. Nevertheless, each community garden has a character of its own, reflecting the tastes and aesthetics of the group cultivating it. In fact, case studies of several community gardens show that they are the creations of many different personalities, and that far from the homogeneity one might expect, they each have a set of unique characteristics. The four urban garden sites studied typify the Philadelphia gardening scene, and are located in three different sections of the city: Aspen Farms, a prize-winning garden, and the Garden of Gethsemane, a tutorial garden, are in West Philadelphia; Glenwood Green Acres, a “dressed” garden, is in North Philadelphia; and Point Breeze Greene Countrie Towne, a pleasure garden, is in South Philadelphia.

ASPEN FARMS

Positioned along a meticulously manicured street that bears part of its name, and covering approximately three-quarters of an acre over a submerged creek bed, Aspen Farms offers a considerable contrast to the grit that typifies a nearby avenue. Judged a prize-winning garden from its inception in this moderate-income neighborhood twenty years ago, its organizers work closely with the local Mill Creek Civic Association. It also has the distinction of having been designed by students from the University of Pennsylvania's landscape architecture department as part

of a three-year West Philadelphia Greening Project. According to an old press release, those involved “feel the garden improves the neighborhood, and is a source of pride, pleasure, and good food.”²²

A magnificent redwood gazebo at the entrance to the garden is an emphatic reminder of the quality of life toward which these gardeners aspire. A woodchip walkway as wide as some Philadelphia alleys paves the way to it, and along that way are city park benches, raised flower beds, and ornamental trellises. Most of these improvements are the result of grants, attesting to the organizational skills of long-time president Esther Williams, originally from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

At least forty gardeners work their designated plots religiously, many beginning before 7 a.m. in the summer months to escape the heat of the day. Mostly retired people, the average age is about seventy, with one centenarian and another approaching that age. Of course there is always some dissension when any elaborate project is undertaken, and Aspen Farms is no exception. One gardener recently expressed disbelief about the money spent for the gazebo, saying, “I was really shocked when the guy told me its cost. . . . It was enough to build a house. . . . I can't see it.”²³ Most of the gardeners, however, have not lost sight of their main objective—to grow good things to eat—and do not dwell on peripheral issues such as the cost of some of the non-essential improvements.

At least one gardener, though, has a different motivation, which he describes as his “competitive juices.” Hayward Ford, president of Philadelphia Green's advisory board, says: “My thing is that I don't want so much the garden. It's not so much the vegetables. It's the overall thing. I like to stick my tongue out and say ‘I beat you.’ I give everything away. It's only me and my son. How much can I eat?”²⁴

But Ford is not at cross-purposes with his cohorts apparently, since Aspen Farms has won top honors in



Philadelphia's Anti-Graffiti Network encourages the talents of young, would-be artists by creating murals like this one at Aspen Farms.

competition in every year but one. According to Ford, they declined to compete that year because their competitors felt it was useless to participate, saying, "Why bother? They'll win."⁵ In addition to local honors, Aspen Farms has also won the American Community Garden Association's Glad National Gardening Contest. These showings speak well for the time and energy these gardeners expend toward their collective goal.

Aspen Farms touts itself as a combination flower and vegetable garden, but many African Americans cynically eschew growing the former because flowers are not edible. According to one scholar who conducted research in the South, "In each study area there were some yards that contained few if any flowers." [Accordingly,] "there was a clear distinction made between plants for ornament and plants for eating. They were rarely mixed."⁶ Nonetheless, in order to be competitive some African American urban gardeners succumb to an outside aesthetic. In the City Gardens Contest, the judging centers on "maintenance and horticultural practices, the variety, color and suitability of the plantings, their design and total visual effect—with extra points awarded for imagination and ingenuity."⁷ Judges at the harvest show, who come primarily from affluent suburban backgrounds, may also have a different aesthetic. For the African American vernacular gardener the size of garden produce is of monumental significance, while for the suburbanite, symmetry may count the most. (Interestingly, gardeners at Brown Street Farm, one block away, reject organized gardening programs for this very reason. They refuse to lose their autonomy by succumbing to the values and norms of outsiders.) Still, the real success of the Aspen Farms gardeners has been in creating a balance. Although operating within a field of western aesthetics, they have not lost sight of gardening as a functional activity: The produce they grow is pleasing to the palate as well as to the eye.⁸

GLENWOOD GREEN ACRES

Started in 1984 by James Taylor of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, Glenwood Green Acres is the largest



The butterfly garden at Aspen Farms.



Glenwood Green Acres is the largest community garden in Philadelphia.

community garden in the city. With ninety-eight sites located within the boundaries of Susquehanna Greene Countrie Towne, Glenwood Green Acres could be a "Towne" by itself; among urban gardeners, its size alone makes it legendary. Since it sits beside Amtrak's rail lines, many believe it is cultivated by retired railroad workers, a belief reinforced by a caboose which is part of the site.

The true story of the beginnings of the garden and the acquisition of the caboose—donated by city officials—is told by Taylor: "So I asked them [the officials], 'Why are you giving me this?' [One of them replied,] 'We're giving you this because you don't know how much money you've saved us. Supposing you didn't take this site? If you had not, it would be trash on top of trash. We would be coming out every other month or every couple of months hauling trash out. Think of the money you have saved us. . . . We feel like we owe you something.' 'Well, you really don't owe me nothing,' I said, 'Because it's something I wanted to do. I look at it this way. I live here and I didn't want to open my door and look at trash and rats running across the street. So I did something about it, so [that] everybody will admire it, and so [that] when I open the door I'll see neighbors, trees, flowers, and all this stuff. . . . What I want to do is just like a man going fishing or playing golf. If a man likes what he's doing he'll support his habit. I like this so I support it. It's as simple as that.'"⁹

The gardening organization at Glenwood Green Acres also functions as somewhat of a social club. Parties are held in the garden regularly, and they have also sponsored fundraising trips to Atlantic City. Intended to be a cohesive force in the neighborhood, Mr. Taylor insists the participants become an extended family. "I try to bring people together. . . [I believe] that's your sister, that's your brother," he says.¹⁰



One of many kinds of fencing used at Green Acres.



A caboose is a prominent part of the site at Green Acres, which is located beside Amtrak's rail lines.



This playful display on James Taylor's garden site has changed little over the years.



These "houses" line the rear of the garden at Green Acres; James Taylor's is the second from the left.

Located in one of the most economically depressed areas of the city, Glenwood Green Acres, unlike other community gardens (which are padlocked), is always open, a tribute to the hard-won respect felt for it in the neighborhood. The only locks in the garden are on the utility sheds—called “houses” by the gardeners—where tools and other supplies are stored. Mr. Taylor explains that when the subject of storage first came up, “Everybody wanted to put their tools in one house. . . I went home and slept on it that night. [Then] I said, ‘No, that’s not going to work because somebody’s going to put a tool in that’s broken. And the first thing you know they’ll say, “My tool was all right when I put it in here. It was this. It was that”’”¹¹ He subsequently ruled that those who wished to could build and secure their own structures. His is a stucco house, built to endure. (“We did ours right.”¹²)

With so many working in the garden, there is a natural inclination to delimit one’s own space, and, separated by carpeted walkways, several types of fencing enclose in-

dividual plots. These fences not only make for easier identification (they are certainly not intended to keep anyone out), they also speak to the inventiveness of their owners, many of whom have found ingenious ways to mark off their spaces. Other found objects also abound across the four-acre site, and contribute to the ambiance of the garden. To ward off pests, especially birds, there are scarecrows, noisemakers such as plastic bags which are inflated by the wind and which fly from poles, and highly visible aluminum pie plates. Many of the plots have toys, stuffed animals, or dolls instead of conventional scarecrows. Establishing a playful tone and bringing much pleasure to all who see them, these found objects have become synonymous with community gardening. Ephemeral in every other way, gardens gain a sense of permanence and continuity from objects that remain unchanged from season to season.

These displays are the reason Glenwood Green Acres is called a “dressed” garden. Definitely a means of artistic

communication, such displays are “not mere surface decorating,”¹³ but a way of “transforming the functions and meanings of objects and the whole site.”¹⁴ Green Acres’ gardeners are able to innovate spontaneously as a complete aesthetic community. Conscious of their garden’s location next to a mass transit system, they seek attention and admiration from those who pass. Although they live in a low-income neighborhood, these gardeners demonstrate that they are able to transcend the constraints that neighborhood imposes. It is the reason Glenwood Green Acres has achieved international acclaim.

* * *

James Taylor attributes the flower garden at Green Acres to his wife, Ruth, now deceased. Told, as a youngster, “you will have something to eat all your life as long as you learn how to grow something,”¹⁵ gardening was Ruth Taylor’s forte. She felt that Green Acres was “the greatest thing that could ever happen to this community.”¹⁶ Although she had a debilitating heart condition when she spoke those words, she continued to garden literally until the day she died. Speaking of death, it takes on more than a symbolic role in the life cycle of a garden. It becomes the subject of countless narratives, especially among the elderly. Perhaps it becomes a means of reconciling oneself to this life. African American gardeners commonly erect memorials, particularly trees, for “trees, fields, rocks, and other features of the landscape become invested with the life courses of the individuals.”¹⁷ James Taylor recently purchased two headstones—one for his wife’s grave site, and the other to dress the hillside garden that she loved.

POINT BREEZE GREENE COUNTRIE TOWNE

The African American presence in South Philadelphia dates back to colonial times, and eventually extended into Point Breeze, now one of the oldest African American neighborhoods in the city. By the 1920s, Point Breeze had its own major shopping district, and African Americans who migrated to Philadelphia later found an infrastructure already in place. In consequence, the area became densely populated, and urban blight began to take its toll. In the 1960s, the Point Breeze Federation, a non-profit, community-based organization, was formed to meet the challenge of revitalizing the community. As part of its beautification drive, Point Breeze developed into “a neighborhood with more flowers per capita than perhaps any other neighborhood in the Northeast.”¹⁸

Spearheaded by a committee of twelve women, the entire community underwent a transformation, as forty-eight trash-strewn lots were cleaned and then planted with flowers and vegetables. Haroldine Trower, chair of the beautification committee, described the process: “So, what happened, see, like you start with one street like here, and then this little street, that little street, another little street, then the next block, another street, another block, and everybody they just want it. Lots of times you’ll see people that don’t maybe even seem to care; but if they have a



A friendly game of pinochle beside a corner vegetable garden typifies life in Point Breeze.

little beauty in their lives, it begins to wake them up.”¹⁹

The Point Breeze Federation offered a suitable umbrella organization to operate as a conduit for gardening projects, so the area became Philadelphia Green’s second Greene Countrie Towne. The community also has the distinction of working closely with the Brandywine Workshop, founded in 1972 as a visual arts organization to develop a general audience for minority artists. Wanting to portray artists as an integral part of the community rather than as alienated beings, the Workshop created the Philly Panache Program, designed (like the Anti-Graffiti Network) to take a proactive stance against graffiti artists. As its specialty, Brandywine decorated many abandoned buildings, using a *trompe l’oeil* technique to create the illusion of occupancy. Buttressing many garden sites as an effective adjunct to the overall scheme in the Point Breeze Greene Country Towne, these murals are a visual statement that someone cares, for it is generally known that murals cannot be painted without community involvement.

Of the locales discussed herein, only Point Breeze represents a community in the conventional sense. Although prone to all the major problems of urban life, Point Breeze is a close-knit community where neighbors know neighbors. (Practically anyone can tell you who holds the key to a particular garden.) It is a place where residents set up tables on the sidewalk to play games such as pinochle or checkers, and the many garden sites provide a natural back-drop for these activities. Sitting—or pleasure—gardens outnumber vegetable gardens by more than two to one in Point Breeze, and they project a safe and wholesome environment while requiring the least amount of care.

A Philadelphia Green pamphlet called *Welcome to Point Breeze* explains that “the return to the gardening tradition is an important facet of this [beautification] effort, and



Estelle Brown standing next to the garden she was instrumental in starting.



Without benefit of a cyclone fence and with graffiti, this space has nonetheless been unofficially claimed for a garden.

community 'farms' and pleasure gardens can be found once again thriving here."²⁰ In the context of urban gardening, the pleasure garden requires a singular commitment to a relatively invisible aesthetic community, since "much of the aesthetic satisfaction is derived from actually working in it, enjoying the fruits of hard labor, and even anticipating future projects."²¹ But laboring for the common good of the community, often without anything tangible to take home, may make gardeners apathetic. Realizing this, the beautification committee from its inception equated the presence of flowers with behavior modification: "People are coming together, and that's one thing about the flowers."²² No one questioned whether, over time, this would be motivation enough.

Apparently it has not been, and today too many garden sites are neglected or have been abandoned. Even the much extolled Garden of the Cities, with its weathered Victorian gazebo, has deteriorated. On the other hand, the concert garden, with its stage and ornate lattice, appears ready for use. Other fenced-in sites with murals have evolved into fancy parking lots for local residents. This is perhaps not surprising, since "Point Breeze residents are probably not much different than most others. They're not chomping at the bit to do community work. They have their own lives to live, their own problems, and their own fatigue, just like everyone else."²³

J. Blaine Bonham, Jr., director of Philadelphia Green, points out in a published case study that "a well-maintained garden is a sign of the value placed on it by everyone in the block."²⁴ He goes on to cite the tendency toward "benevolent monarchy" in the African American community as an area for concern: "Philadelphia Green's vision of good leadership and management in some cases differed

substantially from the community's goals. Our goals are sociological and physical. As a result, gardeners often resist the efforts of staff to install a more organized 'democratic' structure, especially in large gardens."²⁵

One does need a level of multicultural awareness to understand this propensity. In the case of African Americans, family reunion groups, social clubs, and civic organizations have all traditionally operated using an organizational leadership model based on many African American churches. As far as leadership is concerned, the operative maxim is "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Therefore, a good leader rarely steps down; there is usually a democratic vote of confidence annually, with the same outcome every year. In Point Breeze, the fact that the sites are smaller and more scattered than elsewhere may be the main factor contributing to eroding gardening conditions. It takes more "benevolent monarchies" to coordinate the work, and with each site requiring, on average, three or four gardeners, age and attrition have added to their loss. The real loss is to the residents who daily absorb visual messages that convey failure. In an attempt to counteract the erosion, the Point Breeze Federation is hiring adult lead gardeners and summer interns.

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

The Garden of Gethsemane had an ominous beginning. Long-time coordinator Blanche Epps says that the only thing not found in the six truckloads of trash removed from her plot was a dead human being: "We had couches, refrigerators, sinks, a half a hog, a couple of cats and dogs. Whatever had died, or they couldn't find what to do with, they threw it on here."²⁶ An outsider in the neighborhood,



Water lilies, horsetails, basket rush, cattails, bamboo, water irises, and water hyacinths all grow in this pond in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Epps faces close scrutiny from her nearest neighbors, who use any pretext to raise objections to the garden. But it has been the gremlins—as all gardeners call vandals—who plague her the most. Her practical solution has been to grow prickly vines such as raspberries across the back fence, the main point of entry.

The Garden of Gethsemane has changed radically over the years, as has Blanche Epps; the only thing static in her life is the gardening tradition she upholds. Born in Kershaw, South Carolina, Epps is a gardener with a vision. Originally she and fifteen other gardeners were content with her personal mission which was to grow all the trees, vegetables, and fruits mentioned in the Bible. The garden's walkways featured automobile tires exploding with flowers and herbs used for medicinal purposes. Many urban gardeners grow sorghum, cotton, and tobacco for symbolic purposes, but Epps has always had functional uses for everything she cultivates. Today, her original coworkers are gone, and Blanche Epps now has multiple roles—community-garden advocate, lecturer, and teacher.

Epps has long delighted in instructing others in her art at schools, workshops, and festivals. Awarded an apprenticeship grant (the first in this category) by the Philadelphia Humanities Council in 1989 to teach young, inexperienced African American women the art of gardening, she continues to do so on an informal basis, without outside support. Her present students include Kai (one of the first), Omotayo, Sahara, and Atiya Ola. As their names indicate, these women live an Afrocentric lifestyle, and that encompasses philosophy, hairdress, and a vegetarian dietary regimen.

These young apprentices express different reasons for wanting to undertake the grueling demands of gardening. Kai says she does not want to be dependent on chemicalized



Blanche Epps' apprentices (l. to r.) Kai, Omotayo, and Sahara (Atiya Ola was away when the picture was taken).

food; Sahara cites a spiritual reason, a love of the earth; and Omotayo expresses a true yearning to know the art: "I always wanted to learn to grow my own food. . . . Ever since I was a little girl, I imagined that I could just read a book and do it. And I tried unsuccessfully for three years. I was able to grow cucumbers, tomatoes, and okra. And I mean I planted my whole backyard. I must have had fifty [different] things back there, and those were the only things that came up. And I kept trying, and trying, and trying, and finally I met up with Ms. Blanche. Now, maybe I can grow some things on my own."²⁷ Having found each other, theirs appears to be a marriage made in heaven: these women want to learn organic gardening, and Blanche Epps loves to teach it.

It is Epps' newest official apprentice, however, who is responsible for the greatest changes in the Garden of Gethsemane. Chien Dinh and his family came to the city from Vietnam in the late 1970s. The family farmer (it is a family tradition to have one member grow food for all), Chien has the sole responsibility for raising enough vegetables to feed fifty-two people. Of course Philadelphia's climate and terrain are quite different than Vietnam's, so it is Epps' role to help Chien find ways to make his garden of traditional vegetables and herbs more productive. Among other staples she will help him with are kale, bitter melons, daikon, and luffa, considered an ornamental sponge here, but a vegetable in Asian diets.

Many of these crops, traditional sources of vitamins in the Vietnamese diet, differ markedly from those preferred by African American gardeners. Nonetheless, Epps is eminently qualified to help Chien, for she has shown great expertise at growing plants from around the world as she acquired them from multiethnic friends. She has even had experience with rice cultivation: since legal entanglements



Omotayo works in her garden; Chien Dinh's plot appears in the background.



Blanche Epps (l.) talking to Omotayo during a regularly scheduled rest period.

prevent her from using a large body of water to grow it the traditional way, she grows it in a container (such as children's wading pool) instead.

According to Blanche Epps, the evolution from a conventional to a tutorial garden has meant a change in the meaning of the garden's name as well. "I got the name Gethsemane because," she says, "when I first started gardening in here, and I was using the pick and hoe, my hands started bleeding. And I said, 'Lord Jesus, I feel like you when you prayed so hard that you sweated blood.' And I said that you were in the Garden of Gethsemane, and this is where the name came from."²⁸ Now, using the same passage of Scripture, she relates the name to Christ's discipleship and the way in which he extended his mission to others.

Unlike many other community gardeners who are content to remain within the traditions of their southern, agrarian past, Blanche Epps is an innovator. A grape arbor is all that remains of the original garden, but rather than face defeat she has adapted to new realities, and is now attempting to meet the needs of an essentially urban population that includes new ideologies as well as new immigrants. As part of her advocacy work, Epps insists that, if the art of urban gardening is to survive, more stratification needs to take place in order to address the current desires of potential participants.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper is based on fieldwork conducted in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from 1987-1990. The research grew out of an effort by the Philadelphia Folklore Project to document folklife resources in Philadelphia. A recent field visit was made to photograph and update information.

ENDNOTES

¹This definition by Melvin Williams in *Community in a Black Pentecostal Church* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1974) supplies the baseline for an alternative perspective of African American culture, class, and community within the context of urban gardening.

²Press release distributed for the garden tour during the National meeting of the ACGA.

³Conversation in Aspen Farms in Philadelphia, Pa., on July 5, 1994.

⁴Conversation with Hayward Ford in Philadelphia on July 5, 1994.

⁵Hayward Ford.

⁶This is according to research by Richard Westmacott, *African-American Gardens and Yards*, (Knoxville: U of Tenn, 1992), p. 38. Despite the role African Americans played in southern agriculture, Westmacott's book is the first extensive survey of African American gardening traditions in the rural South.

⁷Quote taken from a brochure announcing the City Gardens Contest published by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

⁸On matters of gardening as a work of art, see Mara Miller, *The Garden As an Art* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993).

⁹Interview with James Taylor in Philadelphia on July 12, 1988.

¹⁰Taylor interview. ¹¹Taylor interview. ¹²Taylor interview.

¹³Although his discussion focuses on yards, certain aspects of Grey Gundaker's article "Tradition and Innovation in African-American Yards," *African Arts*, 26(1993): pp. 58-96, has application to urban gardens. Also, much that you find in Green Acres appears comparable to the gardens that the homeless build, showcased in *Transitory Gardens, Uprooted Lives* by Diane Balmori and Margaret Morton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). Yet, unlike the truly ephemeral nature of the gardens by the homeless, having a land grant gives these Philadelphia sites permanence. Green Acres may be highly idiosyncratic, but it provides a sense of stability to its neighborhood.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵Statement made by Ruth Taylor during the James Taylor interview.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷Grey Gundaker, p. 61.

¹⁸A book by Bill Berkowitz, *Local Heroes* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987) is an important text because it uses the narrative voice of unassuming community leaders.

¹⁹Berkowitz, p. 251.

²⁰Quote taken from a pamphlet, "Welcome to Point Breeze," published by Philadelphia Green Project sponsored by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

²¹Westmacott, p. 111.

²²Berkowitz, p. 253.

²³Berkowitz, p. 250.

²⁴The case study written by J. Blaine Bonham, Jr., director, "Philadelphia Green's Greene Countrie Towne Model As an Agent for Community Development," in *The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-Being and Social Development* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1992) does take a hard look at some important issues facing greening projects. However, although conceptualizing these problems sociologically, he fails to speak in terms of the cultural dynamic that shapes many of the issues raised.

²⁵Bonham, p. 69.

²⁶Blanche Epps interview with Kathryn Morgan, evaluator of the early apprenticeship program, in Philadelphia on July 23, 1990.

²⁷Conversation with Omotayo in Philadelphia on July 6, 1994.

²⁸Epps interview with Kathryn Morgan.

THE "SADDLEBAG" HOUSE TYPE AND PENNSYLVANIA EXTENDED

by Terry G. Jordan



Fig. 1: Knowles-Townsend saddlebag log house, ca. 1845, Gonzales County, Tex., now in the Gonzales Pioneer Village.

The logs are square notched. For plan, see Fig. 2H (Photo by T.G.J., 1989)

Many facets of traditional American culture, including folk architecture, reflect Pennsylvania's influence, which touched the greater part of the continental United States. The so-called "Midland" subculture, derived from the colonial Delaware Valley and perhaps better called "Pennsylvania Extended," finds expression in diverse ways, including a distinctive method of notched-log carpentry, several easily recognizable barn plans, and a number of folk house types.¹ For example, the Pennsylvania connections of the double-pen, open-passage log house, commonly called the "dogtrot," have earlier been demonstrated, and a definitive study of the famous "Pennsylvania barn" with projecting forebay recently appeared.²

The culture history of another Midland folk structure, the so-called "saddlebag" house, has received scant attention and remains somewhat obscure (Fig. 1).³ Indeed, its very Pennsylvanian connections are uncertain. This house plan, also referred to in the Midland folk dialect as "saddle back," consists of two full-sized rooms, or "pens," side-by-side, sharing a common chimney stack, positioned between them, and covered by a single roof span.⁴ The basic house, then, is one room deep, though rear additions are common. The term "saddlebag" apparently derives from the resemblance of this double-pen house to a saddle with loaded bags on each side.⁵

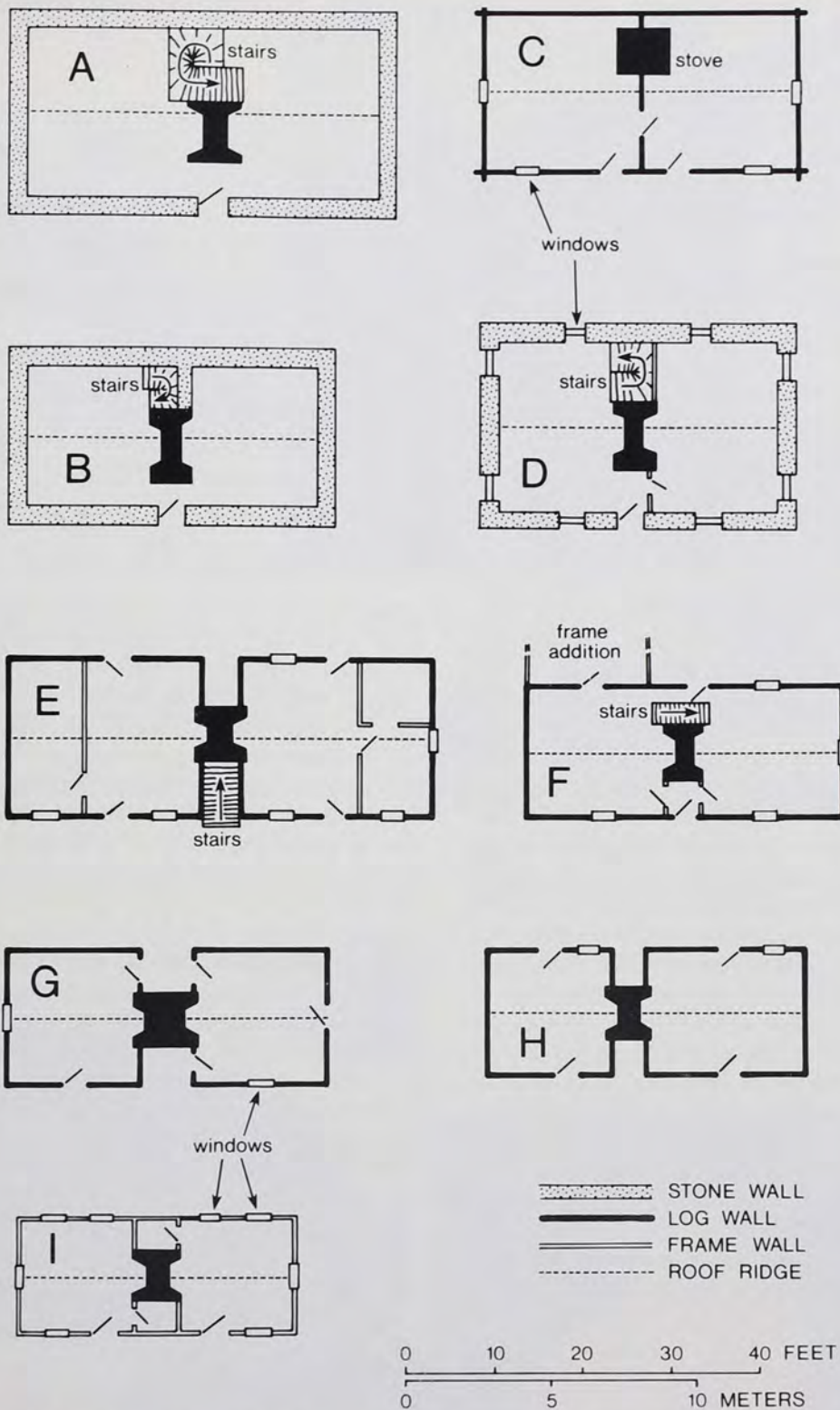


Fig. 2: Representative floorplans of saddlebag houses in Europe and North America. Porches have been omitted. A = County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 1615, 1 1/2-story, windows not shown (after Gailey, p. 175; see endnote 40); B = Penrhos, Monmouthshire, Wales, 1600s, 1 1/2-story, windows not shown (after Fox and Raglan, Part III, p. 132, see endnote 40); C = Ramberg parish, Västmanland, Sweden, 1674, 1-story now at Vallby open-air museum, Västerås; D = Sadsbury, Lancaster Co., Pa., ca. 1740, 1 1/2-story (after B. Herman in Michel, p. 57; see endnote 34); E = Lawrence Co., Ky., ca. 1839, 1 1/2-story, half-dovetailed (Ronald C. Carlisle and Andrea

Ferenci, An Architectural Study of Some Log Structures in the Area of the Yatesville Lake Dam . . ., Huntingdon, W. Va.: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1978, pp. 136-137; F = Lafayette Co., Mo., ca. 1830, 1 1/2-story, square notched, now the Log House Museum on Broadway St., Lexington, Mo.; G = Cooper officer quarters, Ft. Washita, Bryan Co., Okla., ca. 1868, 1-story, half-dovetailed; H = Knowles-Townsend house (see caption for Fig. 1); I = servants' duplex quarters, Richmond, Tex., ca. 1880, 1-story without loft, original unmodified floorplan shown, now at George Ranch Historical Park, Ft. Bend Co., Tex.



Fig. 3: Log House Museum, Lexington, Mo. (see Fig. 2F), a saddlebag with one front door and a single span of logs across the long dimension.

SADDLEBAG SUBTYPES

The saddlebag house appears in several diverse forms, all of which retain enough in common to be considered a single type (Fig. 2). Normally, the central chimney served two separate fireplaces, one in each room, but some saddlebag houses have only one hearth. Likewise, most can be entered by two separate front doors (Fig. 1), but some have a single front entrance, positioned between the pens and directly in front of the chimney stack (Fig. 3).⁶ Saddlebags could be built in stages or all at once. The spaces in front of and behind the chimney stack variously served as entry halls, closets, passageways between the pens, and stairwells, though some such spaces were left in the open air (Fig. 4). Quite a few have only one dividing wall in the middle, so that the spaces adjacent to the chimney are part of one or the other pen. Not all saddlebags had internal connections between the pens, including those built as duplexes.⁷ Saddlebags appear in both a symmetrical form, with pens of equal size, or in varying degrees of asymmetry. A few even combine one-story and two-story units, with a resultant awkward offset in the roof ridge line (Fig. 5).⁸

The majority of saddlebag houses are of one-story, or more commonly story-and-a-half height, but enlargement

upward to two full stories producing a saddlebag "I" house, is not unusual (Fig 6).⁹ In Pennsylvania Extended, nearly all older saddlebags are built of logs, employing typical Midland notches such as the half-dovetail, square or V. The type also appears outside the Midland culture area, and these specimens are normally of frame construction, as is also the case for Midland saddlebags built later than about 1860. Often only the second room is frame, built onto an earlier log pen (Fig. 7). In many later saddlebags, the chimney is absent, its central place taken by a stove and flue (Fig. 8).¹⁰

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The saddlebag house achieved a widespread distribution in the eastern half of the United States (Fig. 9), though almost never as the locally dominant dwelling type. It is not exclusively linked to the Pennsylvanian-derived Midland subculture, appearing also in the nucleus of the New England Yankee culture area and in the plantation districts of the South Atlantic and Gulf coastal plain. In other words, the saddlebag plan is not diagnostic of Midland cultural influence, at least not in the littoral.

The Yankee saddlebag, usually called a "hall-and-parlor" house (though not all dwellings bearing this name have

Fig. 4: Unused space in front of the chimney, Knowles-Townsend house, Gonzales, Tex. See also Figs. 1 and 2H. (Photo by T.G.J., 1989)





Fig. 5: Asymmetrical saddlebag house, with broken roof ridge line, combining 1 1/2- and 2-story pens, Botetourt Co., Va., now at the Museum of American Frontier Culture, Staunton, Va. Logs are V-notched. (Photo by T.G.J., 1991)



Fig. 6: Saddlebag I-house of frame construction, Rich Fountain, Osage Co., Mo. (Photo by T.G.J., 1990)



Fig. 7: Saddlebag consisting of log and frame pens, Boone Co., Mo. Logs are V-notched. (Photo by T.G.J., 1990)



Fig. 8: Frame saddlebag with stove and flue instead of hearth and chimney. This house is in the lowland southern tradition and stands in the African American neighborhood of Nacogdoches, Tex. (Photo by T.G.J., 1991)

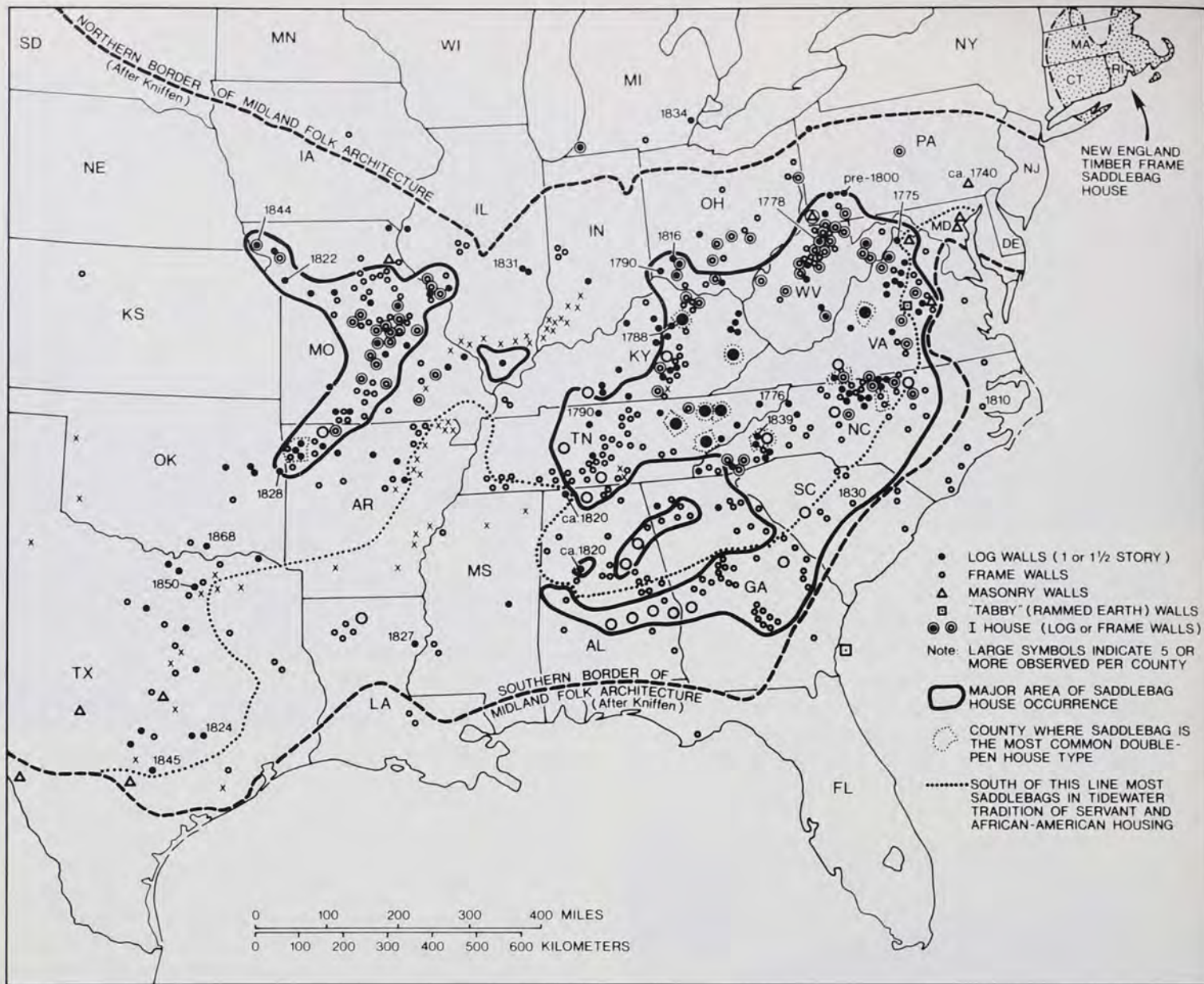


Fig. 9: The map is based largely upon field observations, some of which were kindly provided by Lynn Morrow of Jefferson City, Mo., as well as upon sources cited in the endnotes and the following additional sources: A.R. Hogue, *History of Fentress County, Tennessee* (Nashville: Williams Printing Co., 1916), facing p. 16; M. A. Hitch, "Life in a Blue Ridge Hollow," *Journal of Geography*, 30 (1931), p. 313; Clay Lancaster, *Antebellum Architecture of Kentucky* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), pp. 18-19; Carlisle and Ferenci, *Yatesville* (see Fig. 2 caption), pp. 103-104, 132-145; Ronald L. Michael and Ronald C. Carlisle, *Historical and Architectural Study of Buildings and Artifacts Associated with the Bulltown Historic Area . . . , Braxton County, West Virginia* (Huntington, W. Va.: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1979), pp. 64-72; James C. Thomas, "The Log Houses of Kentucky," *Antiques*, 105 (1974), p. 793; Ava D. Rogers, *The Housing of Oglethorpe County, Georgia, 1790-1860* (Tallahassee, Fla.: Florida State University Press, 1971), p. 33; Ruth Little-Stokes, *An Inventory of Historic Architecture* (N.p.: Caswell Co. Historical Assoc. and N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources,

1979), pp. 15-16; Roger Minick et al., *Hills of Home: The Rural Ozarks* (New York, N.Y.: Ballantine Books, 1975), p. 36; Michael A. Williams and Carl Dockery, *Marble and Log: The History and Architecture of Cherokee County, North Carolina* (Murphy, N.C.: Cherokee County Historical Museum, 1984), pp. 38, 109; Doug Swaim, ed., *Carolina Dwelling* (Raleigh, N.C.: North Carolina State University School of Design, 1978), pp. 142, 246; Betty I. Madden, *Arts, Crafts, and Architecture in Early Illinois* (Urbana, Ill.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1974), p. 66; M.B. Newton and L. Pulliam-Di Napoli, "Log Houses as Public Occasions," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 67 (1977), pp. 369-370; Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Norwalk, O.: Laning, 1902), vol. 2, pp. 171, 570; Gwynne S. Taylor, *From Frontier to Factory* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources, 1981), p. 88; Charles R. Goins and John W. Morris, *Oklahoma Homes* (Norman, Okla.: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1980); and David Sutherland, "Folk Housing in the Woodburn Quadrangle," *Pioneer America*, 4:2 (1972), pp. 22, 24.



Fig. 10: The prototypical one-and-one-half story Yankee timber-frame saddlebag, or “hall-and-parlor,” house of colonial New England. This is the original Wells-Thorn house, built in 1717 and located in Old Deerfield, Mass. It was later demoted to the status of kitchen, when the house was enlarged. (Photo by T.G.J., 1992)

Fig. 11: The widespread Yankee colonial two-story timber-frame saddlebag I house. This is the second Wells-Thorn house in Old Deerfield, Mass., and dates to 1725. It has two full-sized rooms on each floor. Note the placement of the chimney largely behind the roof ridge. (Photo by T.G.J., 1992)



a central chimney), represents a common early New England type, and some surviving specimens date to the 1600s (Fig. 2, 10). In common with the Midland type, the Yankee hall-and-parlor often developed as a somewhat asymmetrical enlargement of a one-room house. The oldest Yankee saddlebags are usually one-and-a-half stories (Fig. 10), but by the middle 1700s most were “I” houses, with full two-story height (Fig. 11). The New England hall-and-parlor saddlebags are distinguished by (1) timber-frame rather than notched log construction, (2) placement of the chimney stack slightly behind the roof ridge, (3) invariably, a single front door, (4) dominance of the “I” house subtype, and (5) absence of the folk term “saddlebag.” Colonial New England dwellings evolved toward still larger, double-pile forms, with the result that the hall-and-parlor plan, even in its “I” house enlargement, became archaic. Few Yankee saddlebags were built after about 1825, and the type largely failed to accompany the westward migration of New Englanders into upstate New York and the upper Midwest.¹¹

The lowland southern plantation saddlebag, also usually

of frame construction, appears from the Chesapeake to Texas (Fig. 12). A duplex servant quarters, it almost invariably has two front doors and usually lacks rear entrances or an internal connection between the rooms. The plantation saddlebag often lacks a fireplace backwall, in order that the same hearth could serve both dwelling units. In zones of Midland/Plantation culture contact or overlap, the “inland slave house” of the saddlebag type was sometimes built of notched logs, not only in the Virginia inner coastal plain and Piedmont, but also on certain plantations of the Kentucky Bluegrass Basin. After the Civil War and emancipation, the plantation saddlebag made the transition to become an African-American freedman sharecropper house type and even accompanied blacks into the urban South, especially in eastern areas such as the Black Belt of Alabama (where it remains “one of the dominant frame folk house types”), the inner coastal plain of North Carolina, and middle Georgia.¹² In most of the coastal South, however, the saddlebag was less common than the “shotgun” as a postbellum African-American house type.

While not diagnostic of the Midland culture, or Penn-

Fig. 12: Servants' duplex quarters at the George Ranch, Ft. Bend County, Tex., dating from about 1880. It formerly stood in nearby Richmond and represents a postbellum continuity of the plantation slave duplex. (Photo by T.G.J., 1993)



Fig. 13: Ft. Washita officer's quarters, Bryan County, Okla. (see Fig. 2G). (Photo by T.G.J., 1981)

sylvania Extended, the saddlebag is most closely associated with that region. In its Midland prototypical log construction, the saddlebag type survives today from southwestern Pennsylvania to central Texas and from northern Georgia to Missouri, though its geographical distribution within the Midland culture area is rather uneven (Fig. 9). That part of the Midland known as the Upland South contains the greatest saddlebag concentrations. That is, the type is not characteristic of the Pennsylvania hearth or the lower Midwest, but instead of the lands south of the Ohio River and Mason-Dixon line. Saddlebags are presently rare within Pennsylvania proper, and we can only hope for the eventual preservation of some of the rare, derelict specimens in the southwestern part of the Keystone State, such as the beleaguered one standing directly on Highway 21 in Paisley, on the heights above the Monongahela in Greene County. The concentration of log saddlebags in southwestern Pennsylvania¹³ would seem to link that area most closely to the Upland South, suggesting that its cultural shaping came most immediately from the valley of Virginia. The Pennsylvanian culture arrived second hand in the counties south of Pittsburgh.

Even within the Upland South, saddlebags are very unevenly distributed. The greatest concentration lies in a large contiguous area encompassing the central Appalachian Plateau (mainly the Cumberland sector), much of the Ridge and Valley of the Appalachians, the Blue Ridge, and the greater part of the Piedmont, from Virginia to Georgia (Fig. 9). Folk architecture scholars have mentioned West Virginia, Kentucky, interior Virginia, back-country North Carolina, East Tennessee, and Georgia as having noteworthy saddlebag concentrations.¹⁴ For example, the saddlebag is reputedly the "prevalent" and the "most common type" of double-pen house in southwestern North Carolina, and "common" throughout the state; more numerous than the open-passage "dogtrot" double-pen house in North Carolina's Alamance County, Virginia's Rockbridge County and Kentucky's Bourbon County; "many" in number in back-country Georgia; "especially common" in south-central Kentucky; "numerous" in Shenandoah National Park; and very abundant in "Southside" Virginia's Patrick County.¹⁵ John Morgan found log saddlebags more frequently than any other double-pen type in a four-county region in East Tennessee.¹⁶ To the west, in a broken belt,



Fig. 14: A rare juxtaposition of a saddlebag house and Pennsylvania Dutch forebay barn, in Clarke Co., Va. The house, built of stone, was likely a servants' quarters, since a larger dwelling stood nearby. (Photo by T.G.J., 1991)



Fig. 15: The log saddlebag house, or stuga av celltyp, of central Sweden, at the Vallby open-air museum (see Fig. 2C). (Photo courtesy Nordiska Museet, Stockholm, no. 190.B.ak.)

smaller saddlebag concentrations appear in the Shawnee Hills of southern Illinois, where they were “observed frequently,” and in both the Ozarks and Missouri River Valley (Fig. 9).¹⁷

Just as noteworthy are states and districts within the Upland South and the Midland culture area at large where saddlebag houses are uncommon or even absent. In Ohio, Donald Hutslar found the saddlebag “not as common as . . . in the eastern and southeastern states,” while in adjacent southern Indiana, the type is “relatively uncommon,” accounting for only three of the 294 log houses surveyed by Warren Roberts.¹⁸ In Kentucky, otherwise noted as a saddlebag concentration area, the type is said to be “rare” in the Bluegrass, “few” in number in Pulaski County, and far less common than the dogtrot in Warren County. None were found in a detailed field survey in Coffee County, Middle Tennessee, in the southern Cumberland Plateau.¹⁹ In Alabama, “log examples are rare” and were “never common,” with only three recorded for the entire state.²⁰

In much of the western Upland South, beyond the Mississippi, the saddlebag is also poorly represented. It accounts for only two-and-one-half percent of all traditional houses in Independence County, Arkansas, and no log saddlebags could be found in adjacent White County or in the nearby Courtois Hills, part of the Missouri Ozarks.²¹ In Anglo northern Louisiana, only three percent of the surviving double-pen folk houses are saddlebags, as contrasted to seventy percent for the dogtrot and its derivatives, while in Texas only four percent of log double-pen houses have the saddlebag plan.²² Nor did the saddlebag gain a significant foothold in those parts of the West settled by Pennsylvania’s children, though some few can be found in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, Mormon Utah, and a few other areas.²³ The Mormon saddlebags could just as well derive from their Yankee New England roots as from the sojourn in Missouri and Illinois.

In sum, the geographical pattern of the Midland saddlebag house is puzzling and intriguing. It answers fewer questions than it raises. Did the house type derive from

the hearth area of the Midland culture in southeastern Pennsylvania, and if so, why is it so poorly represented there? What might explain the contrast between West Virginia and Ohio, as well as similar spatial disjunctures? To seek the answers, we need to know more about the social context, ecological/adaptive attributes, and early culture history of the saddlebag house. Where did it originate? Who inhabited these dwellings? What prompted a builder to select or reject the central-chimney plan?

SOCIAL CONTEXT AND ADAPTIVE ADVANTAGES

Americans of diverse socio-economic backgrounds inhabited saddlebag houses, including plantation slaves, Puritan Yankee gentry, and Appalachian backwoods folk. Even within the Midland subculture, or Pennsylvania Extended, the variety among saddlebag dwellers was impressive. A central Texas pioneer recalled the saddlebag log house as prestigious, suited to "vain" people, and in early Oklahoma a saddlebag house served as home to the Cherokee leader Sequoyah and to officers at several military posts (Fig. 13).²⁴ Thomas Lincoln, the father of the president, resided in such a house.²⁵ Ordinary folk, such as some of the "Black Irish" pioneers of the Ozarks—presumably dark-complected Scotch-Irish—built saddlebags.²⁶ Later, in frame construction, this house type would become a common tenant-farmer dwelling in the South, and a typical coal miner residence in West Virginia.²⁷ In states as far-flung as North Carolina, Georgia, and Michigan, the log saddlebag served as a roadside tavern and inn.²⁸

The adoption of the saddlebag plan by such a wide array of people and the diversity of functions it served can be explained by certain inherent adaptive advantages. The pioneer Midland saddlebag house, together with the "dog-trot" plan, represented the simplest and most labor-efficient way to produce a double-pen structure. It is tedious and time-consuming to splice log walls, particularly if the first pen was constructed earlier, and a second unit of four walls is far easier to build. Moreover, if the second pen is separated by some space from the first, the "skids" normally employed to hoist logs into place in the upper wall can be used. Once constructed, the saddlebag offered additional adaptive advantages. Its central hearth retained heat in the house, an attribute surely appreciated in areas experiencing cold winters, and a single hearth minimized the labor needed to heat a two-room house, both in terms of masonry work and woodcutting. The two pens could function more or less independently and privately, adding versatility to the saddlebag plan and facilitating its use as a dwelling/office, school/teacherage, chapel/parsonage, tavern/inn, courthouse/records office, and multi-generational duplex.

Countering these advantages was a social stigma. Perhaps due to the role of the saddlebag as servant or slave quarters in the lowland South, many people in Pennsylvania Extended came to regard the type as lower-class housing. While this sentiment was far from universal, it

may help explain the uneven distribution of the saddlebag plan in the Upland South.²⁹

ORIGINS

The origin of the saddlebag house type is disputed and most likely multiple. Some feel that it represents an Americanism, in some measure at least. Very often the practice has been for experts on a particular state's folk architecture to point to some other state and suggest the saddlebag came from there. For example, one Ozarks writer calls it the "Tennessee type" of house and several other experts regard the Watauga area of far northeast Tennessee as pivotal in the evolution of the Midland saddlebag. Certain specialists on Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolina, instead say the plan derived "from Virginia" or the early Chesapeake Tidewater, while yet another labels it "a Pennsylvania house type."³⁰

Henry Glassie implied an American origin when he distinguished between "formative" and "standardized" saddlebags in the southern Appalachians. The former, characterized by various asymmetries such as differing pen sizes, roof-line offsets, and one-sided hearths, as well as by multiple front doors, supposedly represents early experimentation with enlargement of single-pen dwellings. Standardized saddlebags display symmetry and presumably belong to a later generation of houses, achieved, according to Glassie, in the Watauga settlements.³¹

Fred Kniffen and many of his followers feel, instead, that the Midland log saddlebag "emerged" in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia about 1725. Kniffen implied that the Tidewater slave plantation saddlebag duplex made the transition there to a single-family log dwelling of the Midland common folk, and Glassie also acknowledges the influence of the Tidewater slave saddlebag on the Appalachian type.³²

If Kniffen is correct, then the Pennsylvania Germans in their Appalachian diaspora probably played a role. Accustomed in Europe and southeastern Pennsylvania to the squarish, subdivided single-pen, central-hearth "continental" house, the Germans abandoned this traditional ethnic plan at about the latitude of the Shenandoah Valley as they diffused southwestward down the ridge-and-valley sector of the Appalachians and became more acculturated. In other words, the "continental" house died out almost precisely where the saddlebag reputedly rose to importance in the Midland folk culture. It would seem plausible that the Pennsylvania Germans retained their preference for a central hearth by accepting the double-pen house most like the discarded continental plan. Glassie explicitly argued for Pennsylvania German influence on the saddlebag I-house.³³

I find no evidence that the scattering Pennsylvania Germans in the Appalachians and westward preferred the saddlebag plan. Their strongest cultural imprint lies in the Midwestern states, especially Ohio, where they successfully implanted their great two-level forebay barn. Indeed, this barn is the single best landscape indicator of Pennsylvania German influence and its distribution scarcely

overlaps that of the saddlebag house (Fig. 14). Ohio, Indiana, and central Illinois have abundant forebay barns and very few saddlebag houses, while the converse is true of the mountain South. Moreover, I have never once found a log saddlebag house whose builders bore a Pennsylvania German surname. We may define the Upland South as that section of Pennsylvania Extended bearing the weakest German influence, and the Midland saddlebag belongs unquestionably to the Upland South.

Those who favor an American origin of the saddlebag are confounded by the widespread and early appearance of this house plan in New England and the Chesapeake. Even within the Midland/Pennsylvanian culture area, saddlebags appeared early in many places, though no specimens survive in the Delaware Valley hearth (Fig. 9). Indeed, the oldest extant Pennsylvania saddlebag appears to be a mortared stone house in Lancaster County dating only to about 1740 and described as "unusual" (Fig. 2).³⁴ If early colonial southeastern Pennsylvania ever had log saddlebag houses, all have perished. By the 1770s Midland saddlebags are documented for northeast Tennessee, the Shenandoah Valley, and the Allegheny Plateau of West Virginia, the latter a standardized saddlebag I-house built by a settler from New Jersey.³⁵ A decade later, log saddlebags were being built in the Bluegrass Basin of Kentucky and the Cumberland Plateau of Middle Tennessee.³⁶ One of the oldest surviving Anglo-American log houses in central Texas is a saddlebag (Fig. 1).³⁷ Given these and other early dates for Midland saddlebags, I find odd the repeated claims that the type is "late" or "recent" in the folk architecture of the Upland South.³⁸

EUROPEAN ANTECEDENTS

While the saddlebag unquestionably underwent development and adaptation in North America, it is by origin a European folk house (Fig. 2). The closest genetic links tie the American saddlebag to the British Isles and most particularly to England.³⁹ Central-chimney houses of two-room width and single-room depth occur widely in England, especially in East Anglia, as well as in southern Wales and eastern Ireland. In England, where British forms essentially identical to those in the eastern United States appear, one finds both a central-chimney variant of the "hall-and-parlor" or "lobby-entry" house (a single-family dwelling) and pair-cottage, central-chimney duplexes for farm laborers. Almost all of the other basic variations found in American saddlebags occur in the British Isles, including formative and standardized; single and double fireplaces; chimneys both on or to the rear of the roof-ridge; one-story, one-and-a-half-story, and I-house height; rear shed rooms; and single or multiple front entrances. Some British central-hearth houses have one or both main rooms partitioned, as is also sometimes the case in America, and many have a byre or barn attached at one gable end, forming a "long house." Irish examples usually have hipped rather than gabled roofs.⁴⁰ The saddlebag of early New England and the Tidewater South should be regarded as

largely unaltered introductions from England.

The Midland/Pennsylvanian saddlebag may also have had continental European roots, through the colony of New Sweden on the Delaware. All across central and southern Sweden, from the Baltic island of Öland to the western border provinces of Dalsland, Bohus, Värmland, and Dalarna, one finds the so-called "cell-type" house (*stuga av celltyp*), in which two log rooms share a fireplace positioned between them (Figs. 2, 15). Two front doors are usually present, but no rear entrance. The hearth and chimney are normally positioned behind the roof-ridge, as in Britain. Most cell-type dwellings are cottages of one-story height, but some have an upper half-story. Nearly all have an interior connecting door between the two log pens.⁴¹ I have no evidence that a cell-type house was ever built by the New Sweden colonists, and I am inclined to doubt that the Midland saddlebag is genetically linked to the Swedish type. At the same time, few if any houses, regardless of description, survive from Swedish colonial times. Perhaps some Scandinavian cell-type cabins once stood along the banks of the Delaware, in the hearth area of the Midland/Pennsylvanian culture, only to disappear completely with the passage of time in the manner of the Swedish-derived "diamond" notch, which can today only be found in parts of Pennsylvania Extended.⁴² We should never assume that the present geographical distribution of relict forms is an accurate indicator of former occurrence.

A more persuasive case for Scandinavian influence can be made by revealing the genetic link between the log saddlebag plan and another common Midland/Pennsylvanian type, the "dogtrot" house. Both consist of two separate pens spaced apart and covered by a single roof. In the dogtrot plan, the space between the pens remains open as a breezeway, and chimneys at each gable end replace the central hearth. In other words, the position of chimney and fireplace is the only essential difference between the two house types. The Midland folk recognized this structural/genetic similarity, as is revealed by their use of the vernacular term "saddlebag" to describe dogtrot houses in areas as far-flung as New Jersey, Texas, and the Pacific Northwest.⁴³

The genetic link between dogtrot and saddlebag becomes even clearer if we inspect the plan of the prototypical American dogtrot. The oldest surviving specimen of such a log dwelling is the John Morton birthplace at Prospect Park, Pennsylvania, dating at least to the 1740s and probably patterned after an earlier house on the site (Fig. 16). Derived from the Finns of the New Sweden colony, this prototypical American dogtrot had two corner fireplaces and chimneys positioned adjacent to the central breezeway rather than on the gable ends, a plan even closer to the saddlebag arrangement. Under British influence along the Delaware after about 1670, possibly derived from the New Englander colony at Salem, New Jersey, the two hearths of the Finnish double-pen were likely joined to a single, large chimney between the pens. The Quakers might also have played a role in this syncretic exercise. Some

Fig. 16: Mortonson house, Prospect Park, Pa., built in the 1740s by a family of Finnish ancestry rooted in the old colony of New Sweden. Originally the passage between the two log pens was open, as a "dogtrot." The Fenno-Scandian custom of placing two fireplaces adjacent to the passageway strongly suggests a genetic link between dogtrot and saddlebag plans. (Photo by T.G.J., 1980)



Fig. 17: Double-pen log house displaying traits of both the dogtrot and saddlebag plans, located in the outdoor museum at Stephenville, Erath County, Tex. In common with the Mortonson house (Fig. 16), this structure suggests the kinship of the two plans. (Photo by T.G.J., 1992)

few surviving houses in Pennsylvania Extended suggest this evolution from log dogtrot to saddlebag. They have a chimney that serves only one pen and does not completely block the breezeway (Fig. 17).⁴⁴

I suggest that the Finnish-derived log dogtrot, introduced decades earlier than the saddlebag in the Delaware Valley, preadapted the Midland backwoods pioneers to adopt the British-inspired central-hearth floorplan. We can never know precisely where that happened, though I feel Kniffen's suggestion is at least a hundred miles too far southwest and a generation or so too late. I believe the dogtrot and saddlebag co-existed as closely related subtypes of the same basic Pennsylvania frontier double-pen house as early as 1690 or 1700 on the margins of settlement in southeastern Pennsylvania. In other words, the Midland log saddlebag house likely emanated from early Pennsylvania, along with all other key elements of the American backwoods forest colonization culture.⁴⁵

DIFFUSION

If we accept the notion that the log saddlebag house was a part of the Pennsylvania pioneer adaptive "package" prior to the great surge southwestward down the Great Valley, then the diffusion of this dwelling type becomes nothing more than an element in the Midland frontier dispersal. In that case, the saddlebag was known from the first as one of several double-pen options by all of Pennsylvania's "children," wherever they went, a part of their small repertoire of house plans, to be employed or

not employed, as they pleased. The map of Midland saddlebag distribution (Fig. 9) suggests as much, though there is little or nothing on that map inconsistent with diffusion from Kniffen's Shenandoah Valley. Again, I can point to no material evidence to dispute his claim, and the rarity of the saddlebag north of the Ohio River might well be construed as evidence favoring Shenandoah Valley emergence.

Along some routes of Midland migration, the saddlebag enjoyed greater popularity than on others. The Great Valley-Cumberland Plateau-Ozark diffusionary route proved to be the most fruitful for the saddlebag. We are told, for example, that the Vaughan and Harp families "left a string of such houses," blazing the trail of migration from Middle Tennessee into the Ozarks.⁴⁶

To the south, the saddlebag faltered as Midlanders entered a humid subtropical climate and encountered the lowland notion that the plan represented lower class housing. Its heat-retaining central hearth and social stigma became disadvantages there, awarding the dogtrot a virtual monopoly. Texas, though the child of Tennessee, acquired few saddlebags, in spite of early examples. The rarity of saddlebags in the lower Midwest and its virtual absence in the even colder mountain West are more difficult to comprehend. Why should Pennsylvania's children have largely rejected their most heat-efficient double-pen plan in the coldest parts of the Midland culture area? Perhaps they didn't. The impress of the frontier on the landscape of the lower Midwest is much fainter today than in the

Upland South. Again, relicts are poor indicators of former distributions.

In sum, I see the Midland saddlebag house as a European type that early became part of the beautifully adapted, syncretic Pennsylvanian frontier culture, though not diagnostic of it. The log saddlebag possessed certain adaptive advantages that assured its place in the backwoods colonization system, and it was a type known in at least proximate form to the Finns, Swedes, English, Welsh, and Scotch-Irish who settled the early Delaware Valley, preadapting many in the frontier population to accept it.

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FOLKLIFE MEETING

The PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE SOCIETY,

The SOCIETY FOR PENNSYLVANIA CULTURE STUDIES, and
(Formerly The Pennsylvania Folklore Society)

The MIDDLE ATLANTIC FOLKLIFE ASSOCIATION,

are jointly holding a folklife meeting, April 21 & 22, 1995, on the campus of Ursinus College. The theme of this meeting will be

WORK/OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLORE

The details for our meeting are still in the planning stages; however, we are hoping to arrange a tour of part of the Schuylkill River Heritage Park for the evening of Friday, April 21. If all goes as planned, this tour will be followed with a presentation on the Schuylkill River Heritage Park on Saturday morning. This presentation will focus on a variety of topics such as the planning that goes into such a project, the interpretation of sites, the relationship of the project to its surrounding communities both current and historical, cultural diversity issues, and the role of folklorists and other specialists in the success of such an endeavor. A second morning session will involve papers exploring general issues of occupational folklore, and an afternoon session will be devoted to works in progress.

Pennsylvania Folklife is intending to publish some of the presentations coming out of this conference. We hope to include an introduction to the issues surrounding occupational folklore through several long papers. We also hope to show the diversity of projects that folklorists are involved in through a series of short reports of works in progress.

Coinciding with our meeting will be an exhibit at the Berman Museum of Art on the Ursinus Campus. This exhibit will include some of the Pennsylvania German artifacts that are part of the Berman Museum's permanent collection, as well as some material borrowed for the occasion.

Many people are working very hard on the preparations for this conference. We are hoping that you and many other members of MAFA will join us in what should be exciting and productive meetings.

For further information, contact:

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



FOR THE FOLK FESTIVAL BROCHURE WRITE TO:

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

