

A Tour of
Independence
Village

by
Norma Buxton Haddon

Courtesy of Fort Vance Historical Society

A TOUR OF INDEPENDENCE VILLAGE

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I was born in June of 1934 down Robison Hollow, which is now Indian Camp Road, at my Grandmother Robison's home. My father was James Buxton and my mother was Florence Isabell Robison Buxton.



I remember many things about Independence:

The street lights being put in and taxes would pay for them according to the light on the frontage of your property. When paid for, there would be no more extra taxes for lights. HA. HA. (This happened in approximately 1947.)

The old two-room schoolhouse with six grades. It closed up and we were sent to Avella, when I was in the fourth grade. I used to get to ring the school bell. I hated for it to be torn down.

The sledriding down the alleys to the road from Rt. 50 to Rt. 844, not many cars then. We always had a lookout, in case, and turned into the church.

Down the alley by DePetro's, waiting for the kids to get their work done.

The bobsled rides of the adults down the back road to 844 and up the hill to Lucachko's. I was allowed to go once.

Ice skating and swimming at the Campground and kick the can in front of our house with all the kids!

Walks down Coal Hollow, with my Dad, to the remains of the old houses.

Dad turning over things watching for copperhead snakes.

Walking to Myers for ice cream cones.

Riding in the rumbleseat of a car with Jim Gunion and Uncle George.

Going to Pep Plummer's shoe shop and watching him work.

The many fires in this small town and the many deaths. The wonderful people and the closeness of all of them. The younger ones moving away. The town was special because of the people and, as most of my family had lived here, their stories of friends.

Walking Robison Hollow with my Dad to visit Grandma Robison. On Sundays, walking up with her to church, me walking in the red dog that was pushed up to the middle of the road. Sitting on the old bridge. Using the old telephone that you clicked and telling the Operator I wanted Bertha Burns. The radio run by battery because there was no electricity. A washing machine with a gas motor. Carrying water from the spring. The electric was put in much later down the hollow.

The many ball games at Perrin's field out the back road, also the church picnics, since I was a little girl, in fact, a baby.

The post office being moved from Nina Andrew's to other places until it came to mail boxes along the road.

The tornado that went through the fields back of the house, the damage it had done and the deaths it caused. Us trying to find out if all my mother's family was okay. Sitting on Gist's porch looking at their garage that the tornado blew down and missing their house (Brook Hills property now). The tornado happened in app. 1944.

After I was a little older, we played ball in the old schoolyard. There was a Tennis court built by the edge next to the hollow. We all kept it very busy waiting our turns to play. Then, they got rid of it. Later, Aunt Mary made one at her place and we all enjoyed this very much.

We used to wash dishes for the people who owned the hotel at the Campground. I remember Kirk's, but some of names at the moment elude me. I babysat for some of the Scotts at their cabin. The older Scott family had a large home there. There were many parties on the other side that we washed dishes for. I think we might have made 50 cents.

Now, I'll get to what I started about homes in Independence, starting with the road to West Virginia from the Campground.

At one time, my Great Grandpap and Great Grandma Adams lived in a house at the corner. He was caretaker of the grounds. They told me how he used to go around lighting all the streetlights.

Cunninghams lived in the house up the road a little ways. Leslie Cunningham and daughter live there now.

In the field was a small house where Gist's farmhand lived.

In what was the Wilbur and Mary Gist Farm, where they moved after their house burnt down, I think it is owned now by Bowns, my Grandpap and Grandma Buxton lived there when the coal mines had a strike and a sheriff was killed. Grandma was scared when all the people went running through their yard.

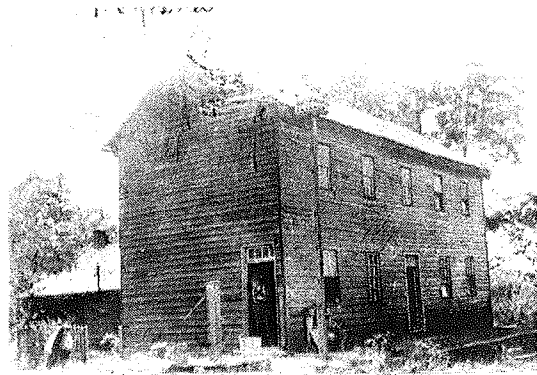
Across from that, on the hill which is now DePetro's, lived Jim and Nancy Plummer Meneely. We crossed the fence many times going through the field to visit.

The next house to that field was White's, later Halls - Jesse, Helen and family. It was torn down and they have a double-wide in there now. I didn't know the Whites very well, but I knew Fred, Alvin and Matt.

Across the road is the Presbyterian Church. Then, what was once the Ephraim Johnson Tavern, was Neal and Preston (Pep) Plummer's home.



Lower Buffalo Presbyterian Church



Johnson Tavern - Independence, PA - July 1928

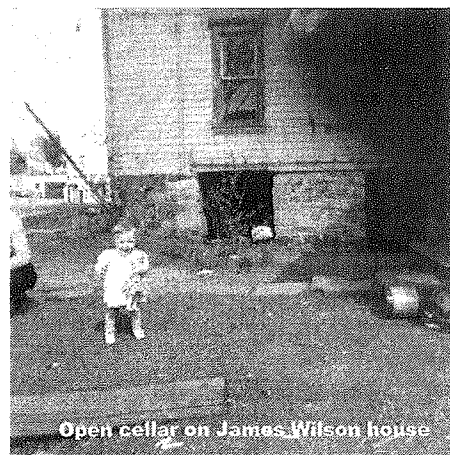
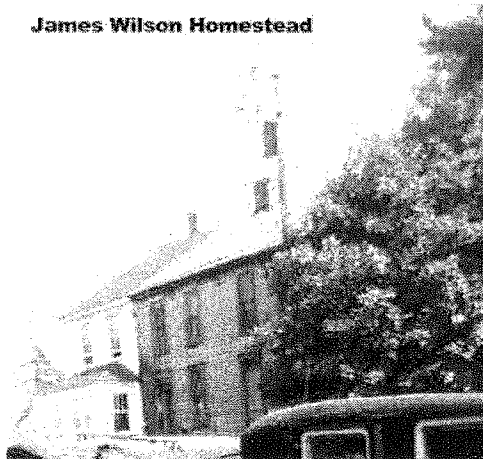
It was a dark house, inside and out, very large! At the end, towards 844, was their shoe shop and an outdoor pump. I heard there was once a hat shop there. I used to visit a lot. They gave me a gallon jar of marbles and I was so proud of it. It was torn down and all that was left was the pump and the platform.

Across the Campground Road again was a large house with a big front porch. My Great Grandmother Pittman lived there. Aunt Po said everyone called my Great Grandfather Pittman "Grandpa." Mr. Dole bought the house and tore it down. Aunt (Det) Willetta Pittman and Aunt Po and Frank lived there before the Doles.

The next house was close. Aunt Lena Cunningham lived there. At one time we played in the yard a lot. Mr. and Mrs. Dole and family lived there for a while. We lived there after the fire, until we all got places. Kenny and I lived there for a while. It was like coming home. Several families lived there after that and then it was torn down. Albert and Retha Dole built a new home there. When they moved to Tennessee, it was sold to Cookes.

Across the alley was the old Wilson home bought by Clyde Griffith.

James Wilson Homestead



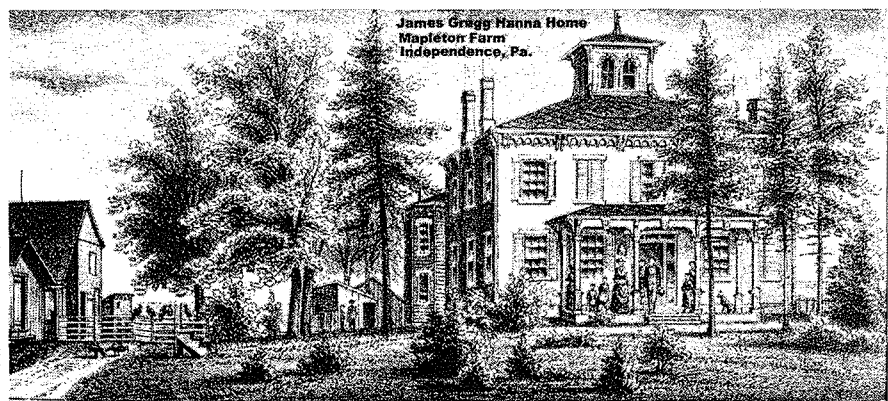
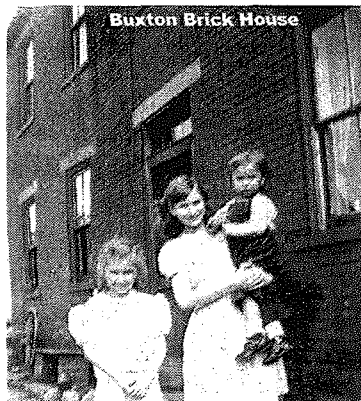
Open cellar on James Wilson house

Aunt Willetta (Det) and Uncle Harry Pittman lived there at one time. For a short time, Uncle Frank and Aunt Florence (Po) Ertle lived there. The house was divided into two sections with a door between the downstairs and a door between the upstairs. Nat Andrews, Earl Moore and Elwood McDougan lived in the one side and Gladys Spencer, her daughter, Madalyn, and Gladys' mother, Aunt Lena Cunningham, in the other. Gladys remarried and they lived there for several years. There was a large back porch, with a coal cellar underneath. On this end, were two open coal cellars. Pep Plummer lived here for a while as did several families. There was a large back yard with a hogpen and outside toilets. This house had four large rooms upstairs and four downstairs. At one end of the porch was a small room, closed in. We spent many hours playing under the large porch when it rained. I believe that later Gene Georgetti bought it and it is now torn down.

Adjoining this house was a small house with a sun porch. There were about four rooms. A lady named Martha Moore lived there. We didn't know her very well. One time, she shook an ax at us and scared us kids. Hallie, Faye and Bob Findling lived there when the house burnt down (our house). Elwood and Pauline McDougan lived there at one time. Also, Carl Spencer and his wife and several other families. A cousin, Annabell Buxton Castle and her husband bought it and later Gene Georgetti owned it. It is now torn down.

Adjoining this was a small home with several windows in the front. Rev. Steinstraw and his family lived there. His son died of a disease and couldn't be shown so his body was put in front of the windows so people could pay their respects. Bill Shepherd and wife, Alice Baker Shepherd, and sons, Alvin and Hardin, lived there. Liggetts lived there and then moved away. I think Mary Ann and Shirley still live in West Middletown. Alvin Shepherd was killed and Alice died of blood poisoning. Hardin Shepherd and family lived there until our house burnt down and destroyed theirs, also. There was a row of sheds in the back for chickens and storage and a small garden area. Annabell and Castle also bought that and cleared it off. I believe that Gene Georgetti bought that, also.

Next was our house, a very large brick house bought by my Dad, James Buxton, when I was small.



Dad and Mom (Isabell), my sister, Lois, and my brother, Wayne, lived on the

first floor on the end adjoining Shepherds. We had three rooms downstairs and one room upstairs with steps up from our kitchen. My Grandpap and Grandma Buxton and Aunt Mary had two large rooms on the other end downstairs and two rooms upstairs, above us. A very large upstairs hall. My Uncle George Buxton and wife, Elsie, and daughter, Janie, had two large rooms upstairs on the other end. The front of the house had a very large entrance hall with a door that went to a very large back porch. There was one large cellar and two small ones. One living room had a cupboard for about 8 to 10 feet, the wood was beautiful. In one kitchen was a corner cupboard from floor to ceiling. We had A large back yard where Grandpap had a garden and there was a large grape arbor where I spent a lot of time reading. As did everyone's yard, a toilet and clotheslines were there. A lot was behind that, where Grandpap planted a garden. It belonged to Liggetts at one time. A fire completely destroyed it. A cousin, Annabell Buxton Castle, and her husband bought the property and, then, I believe that Gene Georgetti bought it. A trailer is on the property now. There was an alley on the next section which was where we parked our car. At the end was an old barn with a hoop on it for basketball where many played! It bordered Hanna property where a gate blocked the road that went up through the then fields up through town and to the Hanna Mansion. It was beautiful, a dream for us young girls. Mary Hanna Gist and her husband, Wilbur, lived there until it burnt down and they moved to the other farm. My Dad worked on the farm at one time. As our house bordered the property, he would go through the field. Mary and Wilbur had a daughter, Virginia, whom we would see at times. She was also very stylish, like her mother. They also had a son, who was very sick and needed blood a lot. Dad and Uncle George donated a lot of times. I don't know when he passed away. Aunt Mary used to clean for her and take Mrs. Hanna out for walks. They owned the land to the hollow and what was known as Kline's Thicket. When Wilbur died, Mary moved to Washington. DePetro's have a barn in the area of the mansion and a daughter has a house at the end of that property.

The house across the alley from Buxtons was the old Maggie Moore home; a larger house with an added section on the back with a door on both sides. Behind that was a small shed. At one time, my Grandparents, George and Mary Buxton and family, lived there. Aunt Florence (Po) was the postmaster for several years. When I was a girl, Alex and Roxie Liggett and family lived there. They also had a daughter named Norma, who came over often as Grandma was a great cookie baker. Ann Luchacko Shidock, her husband, John, and family also lived there. Jim Meneely and Jim Dunkle and wives lived there. They married sisters, Martha and Mary. Meneely's had a young son, Jimmy. It was later bought by Sue and Henry Georgetti and torn down. I often wondered if the added part (or what looked to be added) was where the doctor once had his office.

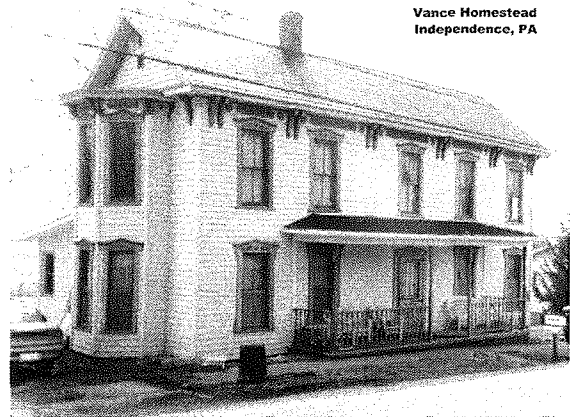
The next small house was owned by Lizzie McCarty. I just remember her as sitting in a rocking chair, on a small porch in front, with an afgan over her knees. Aunt Mary Buxton cleaned for her and did chores, made 50 cents a week. Sue Luchacko Georgetti and Henry and family bought it and fixed it up. It, at one time, had been a stable, owned by Wiley Richey, and moved up there for Lizzie. They

have remodeled until it is a beautiful home. Sue still lives there.

Lizzy McCarty Home



**Vance Homestead
Independence, PA**



When I was small, there was a dark building next and a Mr. Shaler sitting in front of it. It was a very spooky looking place. I guess Wiley Richey had a blacksmith shop and later a store there. Aunt Florence (Po) and Dad bought sleds there for 75 cents. Aunt Po's only sled and probably, Dad's, too. The building was torn down.

There was a small cottage behind it which I thought belonged to Shaler's but I can't remember too much about it, as we stayed away from it. Dorothy Orisko Lerby and husband, Lenn, lived there. Henry and Sue Georgetti bought this property later and tore it down, including the previous part.

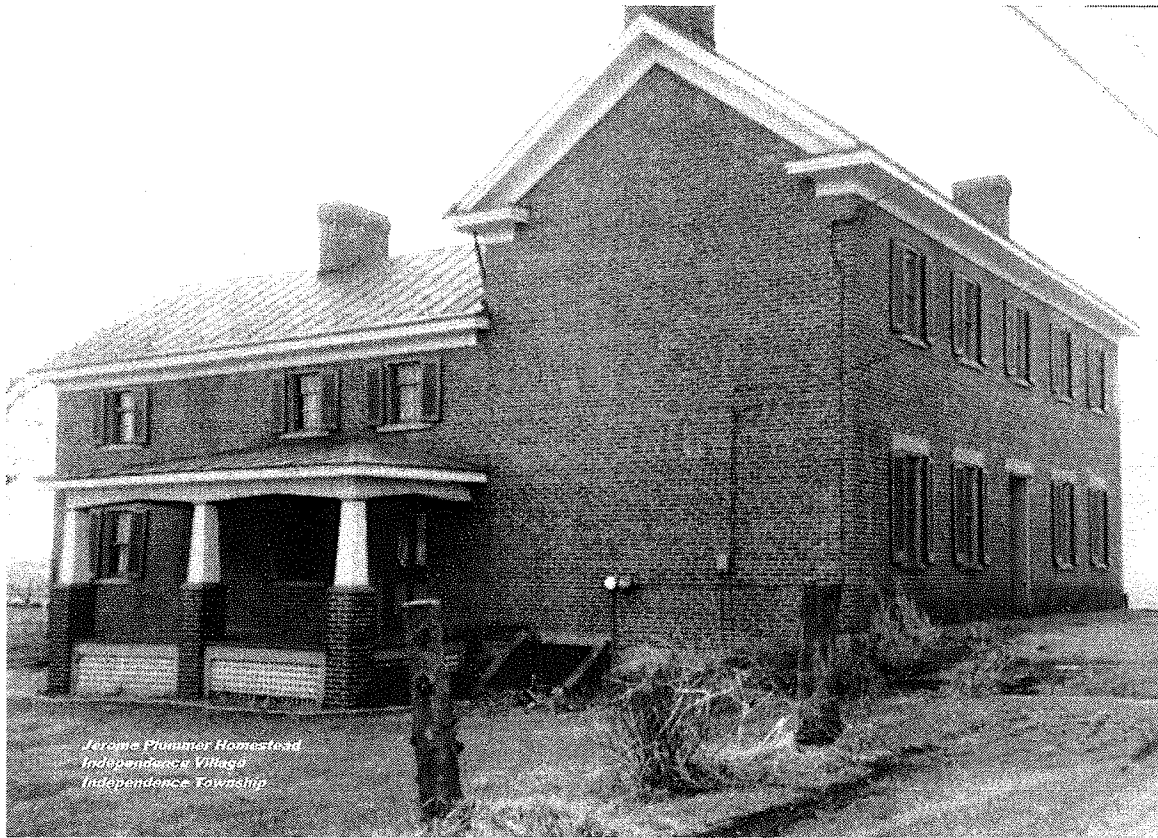
I think the large house next was Richey's then, I think, Shalers must have lived here. Aunt Po told me that they lived at the Pruwitt Place and Shalers had a house past the forks in the road with a big porch all screened in with screen wire. A big table with a white tablecloth and chairs like a dining room; it was so beautiful that the kids used to walk up and look at it through the windows. Oscar Hunt and family lived there. Emile Lerby bought it and then, later, Gene Grimm and family bought it. My husband, Kenny, and I and the kids lived there for a while. Sue and Henry Georgetti bought that also and tore it down.

The next house was large. I'm not sure but there was an elderly lady lived there, I think her name was Mrs. Vance. My mother used to send me up with a broom to sweep her front porch after Halloween and see if she needed soap washed off her windows. It used to be a doctor's office. My Grandma Buxton's sister, Inez Adams, was married to Dr. Simpson. They had two children, Leah and Billy. Vance (Slim) Hammond and wife, Minnie, lived there. She also had the post office there. Slim was sick in bed for a long time. I used to go over and give him his medicine sometimes. The house was very nice -- a lot of old furniture in it which was great. I believe the Gagich family own it now. There was an alley on the other end but it had been blocked off by a garage.

On the next property, which was owned by Clarence and Wanetta Meneely and family, was what looked like a small house alongside the alley. Their house was small, but nice, and kids were always welcome. Cutlips live there now and their garage is in the area of the building. In between, John Ryniawec, wife,

Dorothy, and son also lived here and, in addition, a nice family named Whipkys.

Next is the old Plummer home, which belongs to the DePetro family. We used to buy milk from them. Mr. DePetro worked hard on his farm, then later bought the Hanna farm. Mr. and Mrs. DePetro have passed away and their son, Joe, lives there now. The lane next to it now leads to the barn.



*Jerome Plummer Homestead
Independence Village
Independence Township*

The home of Dr. Stewart was next.



Doctor Stewart Home

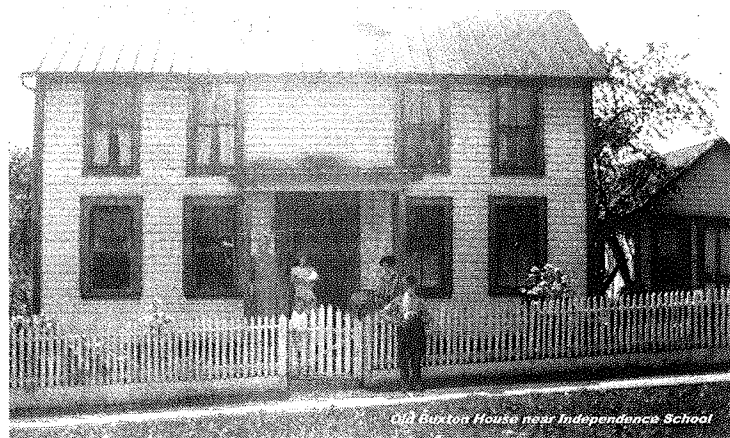
I didn't know him but I heard about "Ole Doc Stewart" a lot. Lillie Meneely lived there. I heard the doctor's office was in the front on the end. It was a small room with a door and a lot of windows. It was rented out at times. I had a school teacher, Mrs. Smith, who lived there. Lillie married Mr. Fry and his family moved in. Dorothy, a very nice girl, becoming a friend of mine. Wayne and Mary Klages bought and remodeled it and raised their family there and they still live there.

There was a spooky old garage next to them which people rented spaces in. Painters owned it at one time, I am not sure who owns it now.

My Aunt and Uncle owned the next houses: Ralph and Wilma Brautigam Pittman and family: Gene, Ron and Gary. Ralph, Wilma, Gene and Ron have all passed away. Gary lived there for a while, then Gene's daughter. Theresa Kelly Klem, her husband and family live there. I spent many a day there with Gene. My Great Grandfather, James Buxton, lived there at one time. It was only two rooms and a pump in the front yard and a spring in the basement, where he kept his butter and things.

Next was the home of the Brierly family. Mrs. Brierly was the daughter of Patrick Gass. Patrick Gass was a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. This could have been the parents of my Great Uncle's wife, he is John Clark Buxton, my Grandpap's brother; she was Sallie Brierly Buxton. I remember my Great Uncle Harry and Aunt Willetta Baker Pittman (Aunt Det) living here. He passed away and later she was in a home. Harold and Daisy Smith Lowe bought this house and raised a family there. They moved away and there have been several families in there since. John and Ruby Miller Gubanish and family lived there, when I was little.

The next home is a large house with about six rooms. At one time, it belonged to my Great Great Uncle John and Nancy McCoulough Buxton (Aunt Nan). John died first and, when Nan died, she left the house to the Methodist Church. They rented it out. My Uncle Glenn and Aunt Katherine Romeo Buxton lived there for a while. Kenny and Wilma Oram Spencer, and, later, also, Joseph and Betty Westlake Fry and family lived here. Annabell Buxton Castle and husband also lived here. They owned the house but had lived in Detroit. Several families have lived here since.



There was an alley leading to the old road, but Dunkles had blocked it with a garage, which caused many fights about that. The large house was owned by Don and Minnie Dunkle and family. Don and Minnie have passed away and so has a daughter, who lived with them. Janet Dunkle Wiley and her son, Ed Wiley, also lived there but he married my niece and they moved away. I'm not sure about the rest. Carol Pittman lives there and has for a long time.

A smaller house next belonged to Great Uncle John Clark and Aunt Sallie Briley Buxton and family. Darwin, who was unmarried lived there until his death. Then, it belonged to Westlakes but I believe it now belongs to Carol Pittman.

Then, there was the two-room schoolhouse.



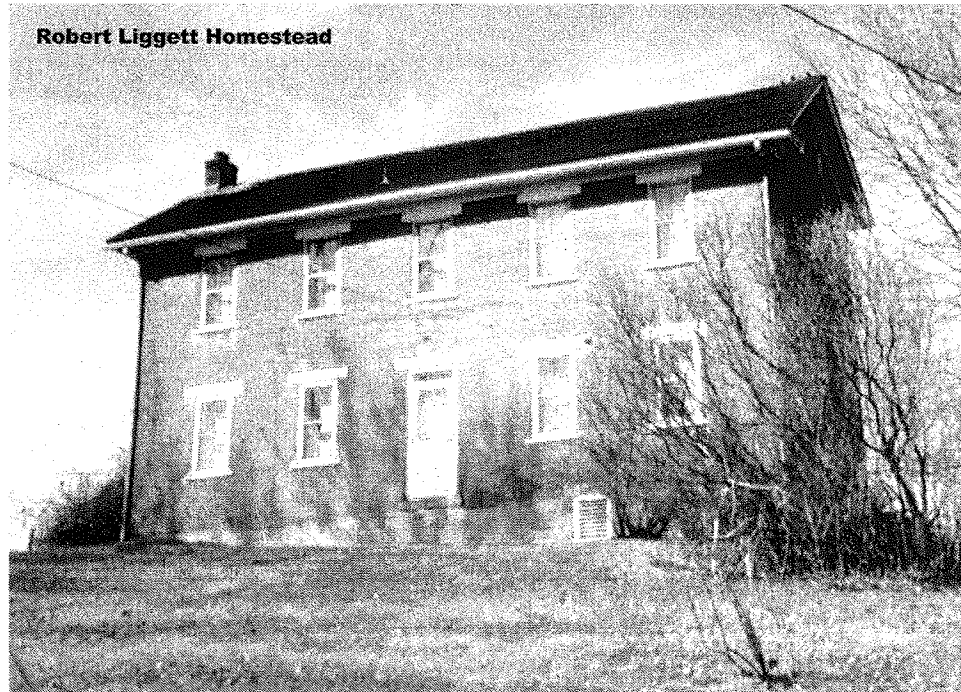
I went there for three years, then they closed it. When I went, we only used one room. A lot of my family had gone there. The Grange met there for many years. There were a lot of different parties there. It was torn down and a road equipment building was built there. Also, we, at one time, had a tennis court, which was always packed with people.

Across the road was property owned by Dunkles. I just remember Bill and his mother. My aunt, Bertha Robison, married Bill late in life. He passed away and Bertha sold all of it to Lyndon and Dorothy Andrews, except for the corner where, along with her sister Violet, they built a new home. Larry and Susan Hunt Stimpson and family live there, since the sisters died.

Down Indian Camp Road (Robison Hollow), the Dunkle property was my Grandparents farm, Bill and Eva Pittman Robison. After Grandma died, Uncle Harry (Punk) Robison lived there until his death. I believe the Andrews bought that, also.

Further down, past Kline's Thicket, was the home of Bill and Bertha Burns and family. On the other side, back up the hill, was the Orlando and Freda Adams farm. They have died, but many of their children still live in that area.

Back to the main road was the Lucas Farm and Myers Service Station and home. Across the road is the Independence Cemetary and, then, the Liggett Farm, owned by Robert and Dorothy Lucas Liggett.



Going back to the West Virginia line, I'll start with Eddie and Hilma Painter Myers. They had an ice cream shop and we walked out there often. Aunt Po and her friends also walked out for cones for many years before I did.

Across the road was the old Myers home, earlier Dr. Parkinson.



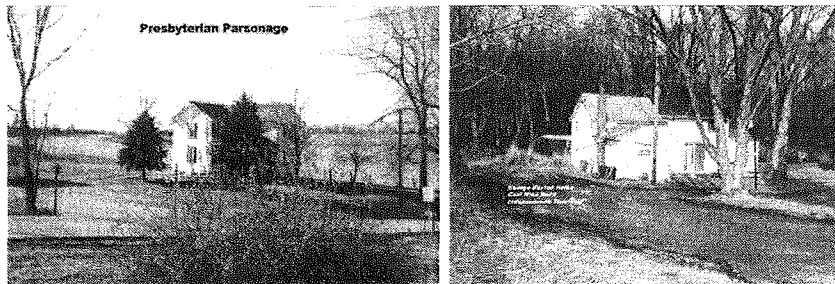
Eddie and Hilma and Mrs. Myers lived there. Mrs. Myers was ill and Hilma was a nurse and took care of her until she died. The house was a beautiful, large

place. It now belongs to Dr. Joe DePetro and his wife. It is very run down and unoccupied. Painter's had it after Myers death.

Back across the road, on Myers property, was the McGuire Graveyard. I don't know if it is still there. Then, there is a small house and garage. A family named Crow lived there. A daughter and her boyfriend drowned down in Coal Hollow. Kenny and I lived there for a few years. Myers sold all the property on that side to the golf course and everything was torn down. The McGuires were Indian fighters. The story was that Mr. McGuire was tied to a tree down in Coal Hollow by the Indians. When they came back for him, he had gotten away.

Next was Mike Luchacko, wife and family. They were farmers. Also living with them were grandchildren. They had the farmhouse and the barn was up by the road and was full of hay. It caught fire and you could see it for a long ways. It smoldered for days. Grandsons, Ed and Howard Shidock, ran the farm after Mr. Luchacko died. They tore the old house down, after building a new one in front of it. After Mrs. Luchacko died, the children got the farm and sold it and the grandsons had to find a new place. Mr. and Mrs. Briggs and family live there now with a very nice farm and more land across the road.

The Presbyterian Parsonage is next.



Many different preachers have lived there in addition to Minnie and Slim Hammond. There used to be six rooms in it. Tim Dennis and family rent it now.

On the opposite side of the road, next to the Coal Hollow, was property owned by W. C. Liggett and, after that, Shepherds. My Uncle George Buxton and Alexandria (Elsie) Koterbo Buxton bought it and remodeled the barn, moving in as soon as possible after our house burnt down. They raised Bill and Janie there. On this same property, Bill and Roseanne Lucas Buxton had a trailer.

Uncle George passed away and Elsie lived in the house until Bill and Roseanne moved, then she lived in the trailer until her death. It was then rented out and also the house. The trailer has been sold but the house now is rented to my niece, Judy Mozingo Brownlee and her family. Bill Shepherd sold it to Uncle George Buxton.

On a part of this property, my Dad, Jim Buxton, bought a section after the fire and built a basement there. Jim and Isabell and family lived there: Lois, Wayne, and I, Norma. Later my husband, Kenny, and I and our family built a block home where we still live. Several years later, my Dad and Mother, Jim and Isabell Buxton, had a trailer in front of the basement. This is where they lived when they

both passed away. Isabell passed away first. It is now cleared off and I own it.

Uncle George Buxton gave a piece of property of this section to his mother, my Grandmother, Mary Emily Buxton, and his sister, Mary Buxton. There, Aunt Mary built a home for her mother and herself after the fire. My Grandpap, George Buxton, passed away shortly after the fire at Mr. Dole's house where we were living. Grandma Buxton passed away several years after from this home and, then, Aunt Mary. The house is still standing, but empty. I now own it.

Earlier, a section of the Shepherd farm and orchard were sold to my Aunt Florence (Po) Buxton Ertle and her husband Frank. The small house had a pig pen, chicken coop, coal shed and a storage building behind the house. They added another larger building as a chicken coop, and then used for storage. They owned to the lane of Griffiths, now Owings, except for the small section where the honor roll is. Back to Moore's, (Griffith's) now Owings, Frank passed away and Florence died twenty years later. The house is empty and falling down and now belongs to me.

Behind the Buxton and Ertle property were Moore's orchards, then belonging to Nannie Moore Griffith and daughter, Gladys. I'll come back to the back road later, I'm going to work up the other way on 844.



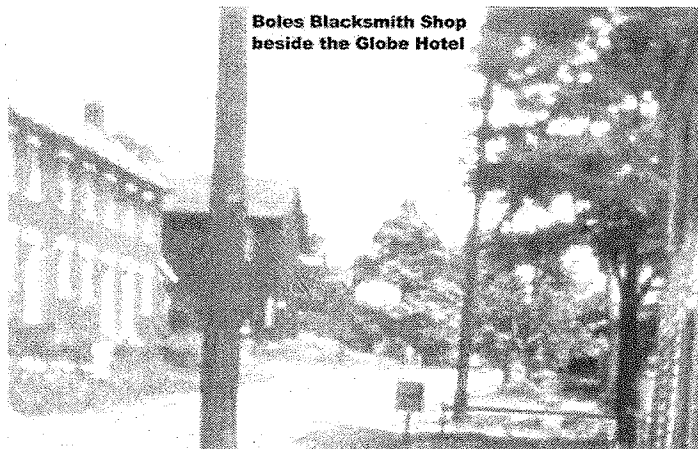
The store at the intersection was once run by my Grandfather, George Buxton, Sr. I heard at one time there was a Byers co-partner with some others. My Grandmother Buxton's grandparents were Byers, but I'm not sure were relatives. Lerby's had the store once, Lenharts and Mr and Mrs. James Roadman. It was rebuilt and made a lot smaller and improved. It was later bought by Ron and Carol Pittman. Ron passed away but I believe some of his children still live there. When my grandparents moved from the store, it was into the brick house that burnt down. There has not been a store here, now, for several years.



The Old Globe Hotel was next. I understand that, at one time, Carmens owned it, to whom we are related somehow. I remember Minnie and Slim Hammond living in the front part and James and Grace Kline living there, also. In the back, I remember Halls and Fred and Alma White being there. There were at least eight rooms in the front part and a hall where you went upstairs. I don't remember at all the rooms in the back part; it was smaller. The rooms were very large with doors between every room. Upstairs, the doors were four sections that folded between some of the rooms. It was beautiful. When I was a young girl, we would go upstairs and pretend. There was a garage out back and another building very old, even then. On the front porch was a siren used for air raids, fires and emergencies. A large pump was on a platform in front of the porch and many people carried water from this pump. It has been torn down.

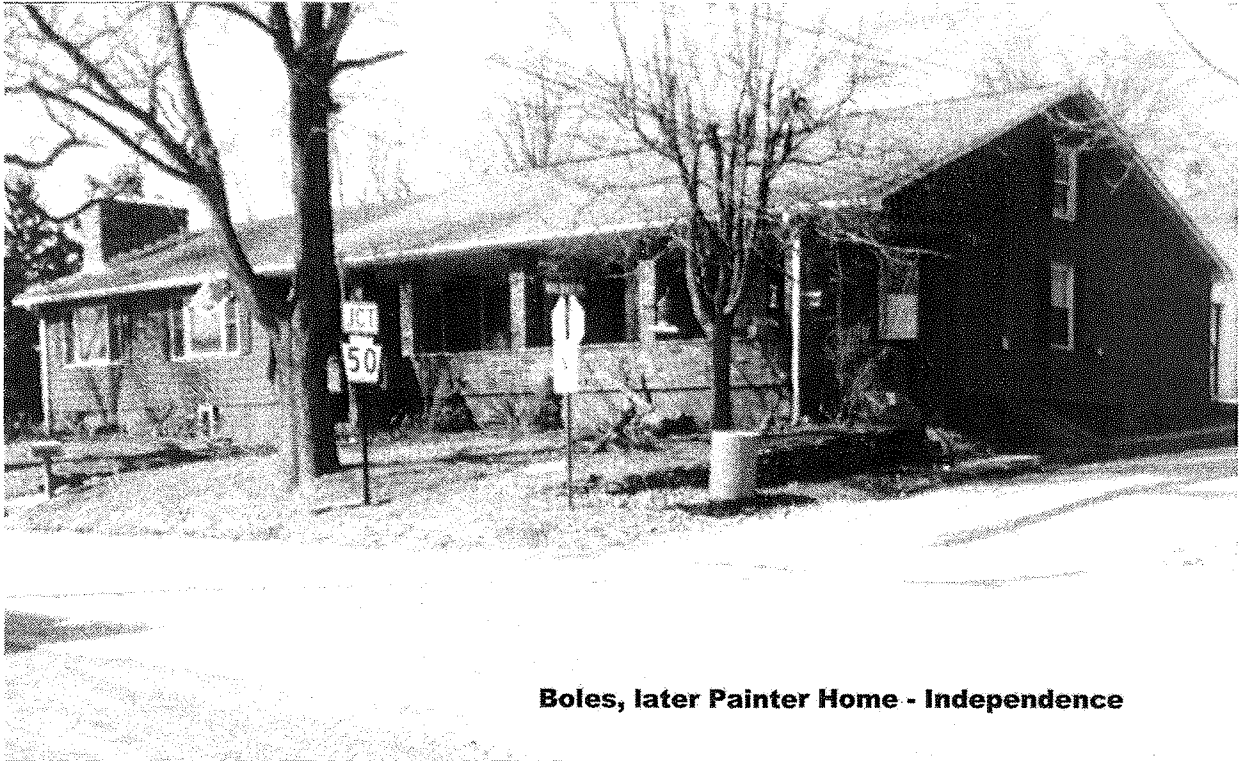
Next to this was a small building. I don't know what it was for but Clarence Meneely and George Buxton, Jr., had a little store in it with ice cream, coffee and I don't know what all.

Then there was an old black, barn type building that had two stories.



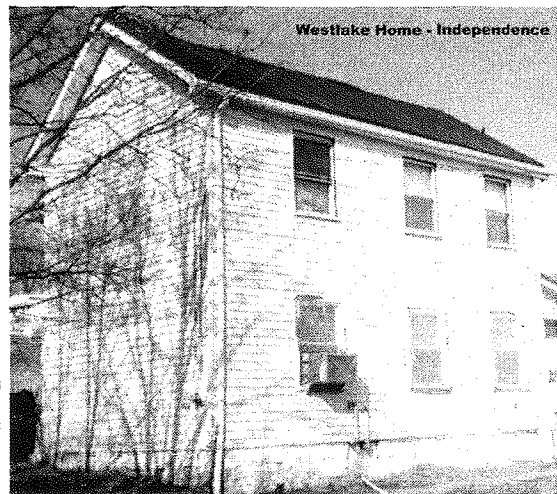
We always were afraid that it would fall on us. It finally fell down. It had belonged to Chester and Mamie Bailey Painter. It had been a blacksmith shop

and still had a lot of things in it. Robert DePetro bought it along with the house.



Robert and his wife, Laura Jean Patterson DePetro, and family lived there. Their son and family still live there. It has had a lot of improvement, since I used to live there. The Painters both passed away while living there.

The alley to the back road was next. Our sled riding spot and where the school bus let the kids off. There is a large house next.



It had belonged to a Mrs. Perrin, earlier Boyd. I used to pull a wagon of clothes my grandmother had washed for her and she gave me a penny. A great apple tree but only once in a while were we allowed to get an apple from the ground. Eugene and Shirley Painter and family lived there for a long time. Then, Joe DePetro, Jr., bought it and he and his wife raised their family there. Joe's son was living there but his dad had moved across to the family home.

At one time, the next home belonged to the Westlakes, a shoe maker and a carpet weaver. It is a large house and was well kept. Jo Hanna had owned it later and lived there. The small building on the back was falling down and was removed. When Miss Hanna died, Earl and Barbara Lunger bought it and lived there with their family and after they moved away, the Nelson family lived there and I think that now the Penrod family lives there.

Next was Mrs. Nina Andrews and son, Lyndon, (Dutch). Her home, at one time, was a Millinery and Ladies Wear Store, when Independence was booming, none of which do I remember. At the far end was a section that Nina used as a post office.

I still remember box numbers but have forgotten the combinations: Grandparents - box #2; Aunt Po - box #14 and ours was #18. The post office was a very busy place.

Lyndon married Dorothy Brownlee and they lived there also raising their family. Nina passed away and later Lyndon. Dorothy moved to Washington and Linda married and moved. Cheryl Andrews Strobe and husband, Bill, and family are there now. Behind the house is a very large garage.

Next was an alley that went up between, two homes to join the next alley behind Joe DePetro, Jr., coming out there to that road and out behind Westlakes to the alley by the Methodist Church. It no longer is used to go through. Strobes use it now.

The small house next had three small rooms. Nat Andrews lived there once. Elwood and Pauline McDougan lived there when they got married. We serenaded them there. Many of you know nothing about this, but, when you were first married, your friends went to your home and made a lot of noise with pans and things till the newly married couple came out and passed out candy or something, then be taken for a ride with the horn blowing (if possible). Elwood and Pauline McDougan had a serenade for Kenny and me when we got married and then took us for a ride in their truck. This was a fun time, when we were kids, which is now a thing of the past. My Aunt Violet Robison lived there at one time. There were many families there after that. Aunt Po Ertle said that at one time it belonged to the Westlakes. Frank Ertle bought it from Reeds. The house was destroyed by fire, the shed in the back is gone and even the old pump that was there is gone. After Aunt Po's death, it belongs to me.

Next was what once was the old high school. It was sold to Fletcher Westlake. It was owned by Bill Shepherd when it burnt down. I remember sitting on the two old cement steps. Later George Pollock bought the lot.

George and Dora Pollock owned the next house. It was moved from up on the hill where it had been the W. F. Kline's up on the Kline property. I believe that at one time Earl and Clara Smith lived there. I used to visit with Dora a lot when I was a little girl and even when I was older. George and Dora both died and the house was

sold. A Mr. Jeffers had it and had improved it a lot. Again, another house in Independence burnt down.. The lot now belongs to the Methodist Church. The Methodist Church, being a very old church, is next.



My opinion is that it is beautiful. I might be thinking that because I was raised in this church, my family had been going there for many years: my dad's family, the Buxtons, and my mother's family, the Robisons.

After you cross the alley by the church, there is a large field which was used by a lot of kids as a ballfield. At the far back corner was a house. When I was young, it was a shack. Many years ago, my Grandmother and Grandfather Buxton lived there and it has since been torn down. It belonged to Darwin Buxton and, after his death, to Wendell and Lucille Buxton Westlake. The family who owns Wendell's house, also owns the field.

Next was the home of Charles and Mary Brautigam Robison and family. I spent a lot of time here. They built a new home above them on that lot. After Charlie died, the kids all being gone, Mary moved to one of her daughters and the house was sold.

Then, was the home of John and Nora Buxton Smith and family. It had a garage by the driveway, a nice smaller home. After the children were gone, John and Nora lived there until their deaths. Keith Klages lives there now, buying it from the children.

There was an old shack across the road from Smiths, but its been long gone. I heard of a Mr. Stocks, who was able to do all his own work when very old, lived there.

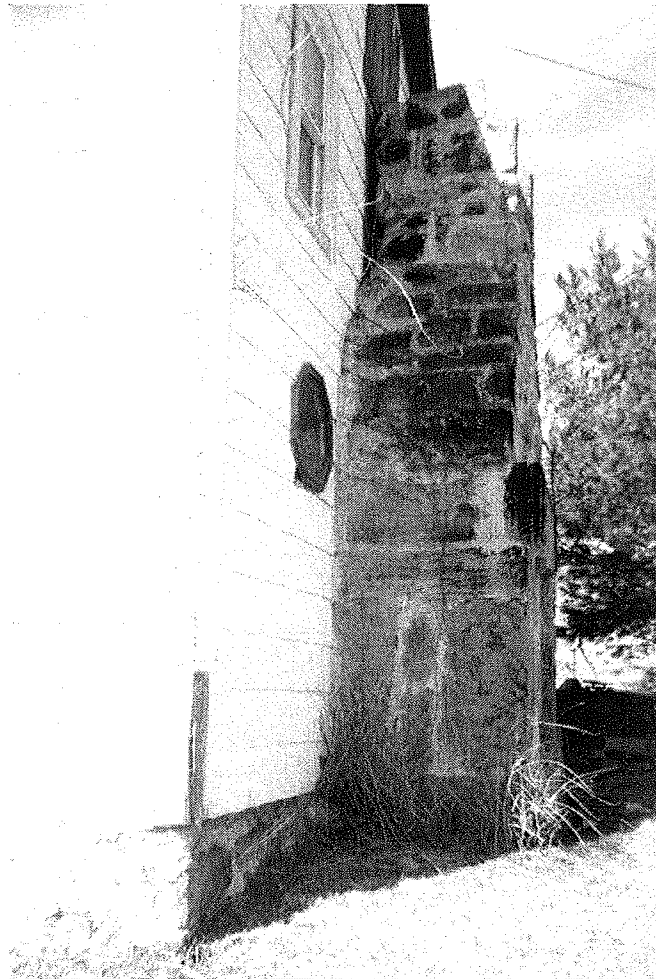
Now back to the alley by the church. As we go up the hill was the home of Earl and Lizzie Yates Miller. The old house had been removed and this one built. Lizzie's father lived across the alley. Earl passed away, but Lizzie continued to live

there with some of her family. After Lizzie passed away, her son, Boyd Miller, who lived in Washington, rented the house out and then, I believe, sold it.

Above it was an alley where there were remains of an old house where Bakers used to live. I still keep in touch with one of the Bakers. Any sign of the house has been gone for some time.

The house behind the church is a large home owned at one time by Mr. Yates' family. Being old and by himself, he moved in with his daughter and her husband, Earl and Clara Yates Smith, in West Virginia. The house was bought by Wendell and Lucille Buxton Westlake and very much improved. They sold it and moved away.

I'm going back to the back road now, or Route 50, which was a brick road when I was younger. The store, we already talked about, so next is a small house next to it. It had belonged to George and John Westlake.



George's daughter, Viola Westlake, lived there. Later in life, she married Bill Spencer and they continued to live there. Bill died and later, Viola. The house was left to Marguerite Westlake Nulty. She rented it out and then sold it to the Woodburns. The chimney of stone is the same one Amos Buxton built so many years ago and it still stands. There was a nice small building by the house which was used

as a wash shed; a larger building by the alley and a garage by the road. The house was always kept up very nice. It was on fire not too long ago, but has been fixed up.

The house across the alley was once the Methodist Parsonage, which was rented out a lot. My uncle, Glenn Buxton and family were once renters. I don't remember too much about it until Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Rea moved in with George Davis, who owned the house. Living with them were their granddaughters, Maxine and Marlene Clemens. At one time, the kitchen was in the back and the walls were of stone. It has been remodeled and is occupied.

The next house was once occupied by Crawfords. Then Mr. And Mrs. Robert Malone and son, Sam, lived there. Sam used to come to our house a lot. To me, he seemed like a VERY tall man. They have all passed away and a family named McGloughlin lived there. The girls eyeing up the boys and wishing we were all as pretty as the one daughter. I hadn't seen any of them for years, then, I found out that a man that worked with Kenny had married one of the daughters. I also got to meet again a few more of the family. It was rented out a lot. Aunt Violet Robison, at one time, was going to buy it, but the deed wasn't cleared so she could not buy it. It is still there and is occupied.

There was a large lot next to this which had a garage by the road and a very nice house belonging to Mr. and Mrs. James Gunion. A driveway went in front of the house from the back road, Route 50, to the alley beside it. Mr. James Gunion was killed by a car up by Brigg's, what was then Luchacko's farm. He was a road worker and was, I believe, ashing the road. At that time, ashing the road was done with a shovel. Piles of ashes were put in spots and the men walked throwing ashes from shovels. Young Jim spent a lot of time at our house. He and Uncle George used to take me for ice cream a lot and in the rumble seat of the car. He was killed in the service. Elton disappeared and was never heard from. Mrs. Gunion died and the house was bought by the Ronald Penrod family. Ray Adams and family also lived there. When Alvin Shepherd was young, he came around the turn there, went through the garage and over the bank and out the alley and home, but he didn't get hurt. There is a trailer there now and the house burnt down.

Across the alley is a large home which used to be a store.



Joseph Adams, father of John C. Adams bought it. He was a painter. Ruth Adams, daughter of John C., lived there with her husband, Guy Westlake, and family. My Grandmother Buxton was an Adams. Ruth was her cousin. After their deaths, Marguerite Westlake Nulty and Richard Westlake remained at the home. Richard passed away and Marguerite still lives there.

I spent many a day and night there with Betty, and Wendell and Paul spent a lot of time at our house. Paul eating many a mustard sandwich and Wendell (Windy) going to town for us. It was a beautiful home with eight rooms and a built-in porch at back. I believe they were probably the first ones to have a built-in bathroom.

Back in the alley, past Westlakes, was the Clyde Virgin property. There were garages where they worked on cars and whatever and fixed flat tires. I went up there often with Dad, walking down between the two garages to the house behind, for cookies. The house and garages are gone and so are most of the family.

Joe and Betty Westlake Fry built a new home there behind the family home. Joe passed away but Betty still lives there.

On out the alley was a large home and a very large building. Skip and Helen Wright lived there. The children, Shirley, Esther and Harlan growing up and leaving. Helen and Skip separated and Helen moved away. Harlan (Popeye) and wife, Rosalie, also lived there with Skip. Skip passed away, then Rosalie. Helen also passed away a short time ago. Harlan still lives there. Skip drove school bus for many years when I was a girl and for some of my kids, the big building being used for the bus garage.

The next property had been Frank Marshall's home, then, W. F. Kline, who moved the old house down by the Methodist Church and built a new home. James and Grace Allen Kline lived there until the house burnt down. After years, there was a new home built. Grace had died and James moved into the old building below it.

Matthew and Mildred Painter Morrow and son bought the property. The houses are occupied at this time.

Between Westlakes and Klines, there is now a trailer belonging to Georges, the last I knew. Matthew and Mildred died, leaving the property to their son, Gordon, who sold it.

Next was the Perrin Farm going down to Grandson Clyde Perrin and Family. Mary Alice Perrin married Ernest Robison, my uncle, and they lived there for many years, after living in Avella, which became a part of my summer vacation. They sold the property, moving across the road to a new home on the Perrin property. The girls are married, Ernie has died, but Mary Alice still lives in the new home and many improvements have been made by the new owners.

The Independence ballfield was Perrin property and, before he died, he offered to give it to the Village of Independence as there were church picnics on the property every year, but the village couldn't keep it up and thanked him anyway.

The home next to Ryniawecs is fairly new and belongs to the Magon family. Coming back this way still, is the home of John Ryniawec, Sr. and Gladys Burns Spencer Ryniawec, daughter of Lena Cunningham. More relatives, John and Gladys and family, including Aunt Lena, lived there. Lena and Gladys have both

passed away but Johnny still lives there. He also has a large garage there. This also used to be Perrin property.

Years ago, the next property belonged to maiden ladies who took in Mr. McAdoo when he was 15 months old and both parents had died. Mr. and Mrs. McAdoo lived there. I just remember them, slightly, sitting outside. There was an old barn and then the house. When McAdoo's died, the property went to Monsell Brautigam's wife, Joanna. The family lived there for a while and, when Joanna died, it was occupied by several families. It belongs to John Ryniawec and his son, John, now lives there. On this property of John's is a double wide home now belonging to John's other son, Duane, and wife, Ruth Ann.

Next was a house lived in by many families, including my Grandparents Buxton and family in about 1912. The house caught on fire and Grandpap was scared to live there again with the kids, so he moved back to the store. The house wasn't damaged very badly. They had a bucket brigade carrying water to put it out. Pearl Spencer and family lived there for years. I used to visit with my cousin, Madalyn, who was a granddaughter. The house was up a driveway (the driveway was on the side next to Ryniawecs) to a side porch. After Spencers were gone, Bud and Grace Meneely and son, Leroy, lived there. Bud and Grace passed away, and Leroy had married and moved to West Virginia, and it was sold. It is occupied.

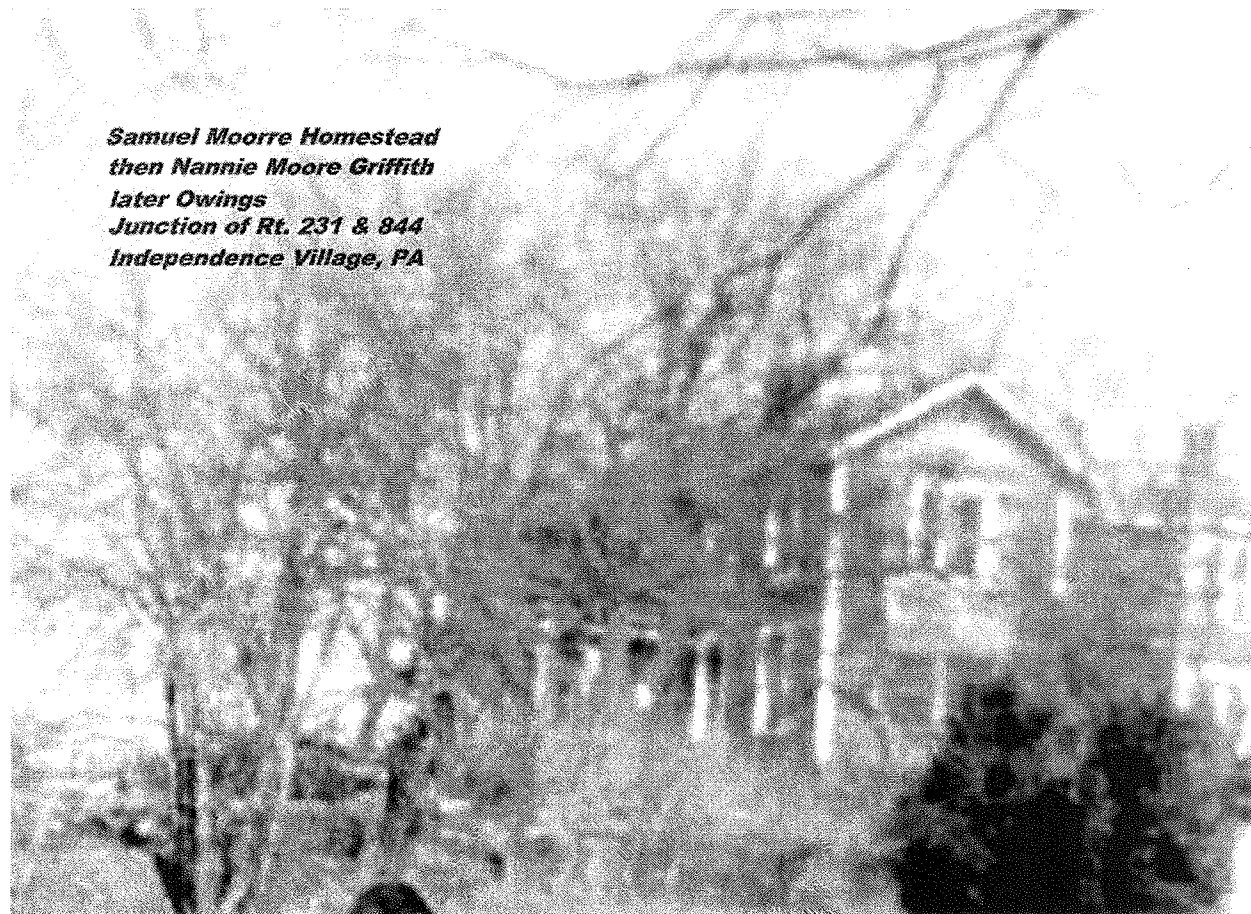
The next property was bought by my uncle, Samuel Robison, and wife, Emma, and family. It was like a storybook cottage.



Flowers were everywhere and a very long grape arbor between the garage and house. The garage once had gas pumps, and, when I was growing up, it had a pay phone inside for many years. Uncle Sam used to grow herbs and roots. He made us all goldenrod cough syrup and other medicines. Sam died and, later, Emma moved

to Florida with Fred and Wanetta Robison, her son and daughter in tow. She also passed away. Grandson, Donald, and Harriet Sella and family live there. After they moved away, her daughter and family lived there. They moved and it has since been unoccupied. It was one of the older homes and its in bad shape. At one time, part of this house was used as a shop for cabinet making by Samuel Byers, Sr. My grandmother Buxton's parents were Byers. Maybe an ancestor. Aunt Po said the young people had many parties there.

The last house was built by, or for, the Samuel Moore family, after tearing the old one down.



*Samuel Moorre Homestead
then Nannie Moore Griffith
later Owings
Junction of Rt. 231 & 844
Independence Village, PA*

All I remember is it being the Clyde and Nannie Moore Griffith and daughter, Gladys', home. I remember a wall by the road which we walked and sat on, steps going up to this big house. As you went around the side to the kitchen entrance hall, there was a long row of buildings or, perhaps, they were small ones close together, a walk between them and the house. The house inside was beautiful. Large rooms, very high ceilings, wood from the floor up the walls so far. I'm not sure how many rooms, but at least three downstairs. The upstairs had large doors also like the ones going into the living room and the one to the other part of the house. Gladys used to take us upstairs and get in old trunks and dress up in beautiful old clothes for the church Halloween party. Nannie had a flock of geese. I used to get the mail for her

and sometimes go to the store. When she wasn't home, she left cookies for me in the cupboard. But the geese were mean. I would have to go part way up the front steps, wait for the geese to go by and then run behind them to the back door. When I left, I would have to wait till they went by and then run for the steps. Richard (Dick) Pees and Gladys Griffith Pees and daughter lived there. After Clyde and Nannie died, Gladys sold the place. As you went up the driveway at the side of the house was a big barn. Henry and Sue Georgetti had it at one time unoccupied. It now belongs to the Owings family and has had a lot of improvements made.

Just a few other thoughts:

Aunt Po told me about how honest Viola Westlake Spencer was. She worked at the A&P in Avella. During the war, they were told to overcharge everyone a penny. She wouldn't do it.

When I wrote about the Dole house, there was also a garage with a chicken coop, a small wash shed, a building down between it and Halls. And, naturally, in everyone's backyard was a toilet.

At Halloween, on trick or treat, we got a lot of homemade things and fruit, but we couldn't wait to go to Guy and Ruth Westlake's house where she had candy bars (Clark Bars!) cut in pieces and we got one piece.

The air raids (or rather drills). The siren would go off and the lights had to go out. We had one room where we had black paper taped to the windows and a very small light. The wardens had helmets and whistles and a flashlight. They patrolled the streets until the siren went off again saying it was all clear. If you left your lights on, there was supposed to be a fine. I hated them.

The rationing of shoes, foods, gas and such, eating popcorn with lard on it because you had no butter.

My mother and other ladies going to the Presbyterian Church and cutting and rolling bandages for the war.

And I can't forget the earache medicine: warm skunk oil! I refused, when I knew what it was.

Also, on the hill by the state line, on what was Myers' property, was a trailer of Dutch and Eleanor Smith Jones and son. It burnt down also. There is another trailer there now.

I was asked to write this. This is my tour of Independence. I've forgotten a lot and there are things I will probably remember later. At my age, I will probably forget some of this.

In a paper by W. P. Wilson in 1965, he said that, at that time, Independence was 162 years old -- 1803 - 1999 makes it now 196 years old. Some of my ancestors being here probably that long.

End of Tour of Independence Village by Norma Buxton Hadden



Construction of the Washington Pike through Independence Village

