

# Steamboat 'Round the Bend



## A Collection of Articles by James F. Mullooly

By JIM MULLOOLY

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By JIM MULLOOLY

n along Main Street in ngton are two buildings ave a close alliance; the Bradford House of ey Rebellion days, and the l - fronted state liquor They stand side by side. he fiery David Bradford skey tax opposition w e back today to ce; he wo' an. The v: ture of rum and raw coun- s next door Casks of it stood in every coun- the store's try store and tavern, someimes or of the listing h a di The most attractive

Like Hoo... of a number... Roxy, the Penn had its... service staff, or corp of... Uniformed in black touts... and red jackets, the boys were... and off with the traditional im-... g collar, and black tie... their flashlights wa... part of the "lo... of the Penn... Or was it... The decor was... The listing... that some M... rum and loaf-sugar... of water. Scotchm, a n... Pike a whiskey This wa... ing wat... After all, of... this gaudy, d b... and lovely world... and they thoroughly enj... spoiled by indulgent entr... s. Ladies from cold-w... uld drop in at the... after a tough d... basements... to commar... were... of Madam... none booth... hair, Mama c... she'd be a li... the stew boil... Mama, another... the soli... the ma... the ros... ed out tickets, usse... hotoplay, and buffed h... without interrupting h... conversation. Heaven on... what exotic promise wait...

JOHN G. Patterson, of administration ever... financial services a Cave, so... remains on the s... overlooking the cree... and wild ros... round the... here, long... system. Th... toric edifice, lumber yard... market Street... the complicated... erate America's... Wetzels... ad, you... had to be... ago have covered up their... bullet scars, but they... tell, had they the... speak, many a vivid and... Beautiful parks id... Beautiful mansions grace... and polished... the

# **Steamboat 'Round the Bend**

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by James F. Mullooly**

*Thank you so  
much for the wonderful  
kindness shown to  
our family by this  
publication.*

*James F. Mullooly*  
2/16/87

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*James F. Mullooly  
1914-1979*

James Mullooly was born in McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, but moved to Noblestown as a small child. He lived and worked most of his life in the Noblestown and McDonald area. He enlisted in the Navy after Pearl Harbor and served from 1942 - 1945. Jim and I were married in Newport, Rhode Island in 1944 and became the parents of two sons and two daughters.

As a young boy, Jim dug up a fragment of what was thought to be a sword from either the Revolutionary or French and Indian War. It stirred within him a love of history in "our own backyard" and these are the stories he loved to tell. In the newspaper articles, he wrote of old landmarks, graveyards, creeks and rivers of the area. He told the stories of the settlers of the Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia locale.

His other love was the old riverboats like the Delta Queen. He never got to "steam" down the Mississippi to Mark Twain country, but would have loved to have been on a raft with Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn or have been a companion to Mike Fink. That's why he named his columns "Steamboat 'Round the Bend." That love of history led us to Meadowcroft Village in 1966, where we lived and worked for eleven years. The restored pioneer village furthered his interest in local lore.

I know that somewhere Jim is very grateful as we all are to the Fort Vance Historical Society for preserving his work - he would love it!

Therefore, on behalf of myself, my children and grandchildren, I thank you.

Harryette Mullooly

## *From His Family*

We would like to thank the Fort Vance Historical Society and all of the people who were instrumental in assembling our father's columns in a book. We don't have many of his writings as he gave most of them away. He was always anxious that everyone know about the local history. However, we do have wonderful memories of the times he researched his columns. We all agree that we learned our alphabet and numbers from the tombstones in numerous old cemeteries. Even today, when we pass the places he wrote about, we remember family picnics and the stories he told us.

He often took us to the top of the hill in Noblestown to the cemetery and pointed out all of the old houses and the site of the old hotel and told us of the days when Noblestown was to be the county seat instead of Pittsburgh. We searched for the graves of the Noble family on another hill.

One of the things we enjoyed the most was an outing past Candor to dig in the old Indian Mound or to West Middletown where he described the "underground railroad" of the past. We know that we had a very special childhood.

We are truly grateful to the people who suggested and made this book possible. It is a chance to have the unique experience of reliving those days. We thank you.

James F. Mullooly Jr.  
Kathleen Mullooly  
Rebecca Denova  
Charles H. Mullooly

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***Part I***

***Steamboat  
'Round  
The  
Bend***

# Aetna Chemical Explosion At Oakdale Recalled

On a sunny May morning in 1918, the residents of the Robinson Run Valley were, for the most part, engaged in the usual activities of a civilian population of a nation at war - thoughts of loved ones away from home; an easier tightening of belts now that the spring planting time was here; perhaps an early end to the war, since during the month of March, Russia had signed the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and Germany, from all indications, had launched her last great offensive of the world conflict.

Below the town of Oakdale, workers in the sprawling acres of the Aetna Chemical Co. also felt the hope generated by the spring season. A year before, at Halifax, Nova Scotia, a French munitions ship had exploded in the harbor. The explosion wrecked a large portion of the city and killed more than 2,000 persons. Perhaps with the early end of the war, the men who manned the plant would be able to relieve themselves of the tension that accompanied them daily in their civilian contribution to the war effort. This contribution was the manufacture of TNT - Trinitrotoulene - one of the world's most powerful explosives up to that time. Even today, in the age of the atomic bomb, TNT is used as a yardstick to describe the force of the nuclear blast.

At the time of the disaster, the Oakdale plant was engaged in the operation of a pilot, or experimental project, called Dynol. This product was the result of further improvements of the explosive, TNT, much the same as the advances made in fission explosives following Hiroshima.

To the best of the writer's knowledge, after talking with numerous survivors of the series of blasts that made up the Oakdale horror, it was in the Dynol Pilot Plant that the trigger was pulled to set off the detonations which resulted in the loss of 89 or more lives this noontime of May 18, 1918.

The age of electronics had not yet dawned and complete temperature control of steam-heated vessels was yet to come. Steam, with its variances of condensate and transfer of heat, was used to dry batches of TNT. This was timed by watch or other measuring device. Today, instrumentation, such as is available, would insure a more stable pilot operation. This is, of course, only the writer's conjecture, and there were and still are, many who felt that sabotage was the answer to the mystery that still cloaks the origin of the Valley's largest wartime explosion.

At 11:58 on this May morning of 1918, like the muzzle of a cannon, the narrow throat of the converged sides of the Robinson Run Valley below Oakdale poured fourth a volume of sound that was heard for many miles around, and one that was to be remembered by many for years to come.

However, before further conjecture, let's turn to the Pages of the Pittsburgh Post of Monday morning, May 20, 1918, and read a full account of the incident after the smoking ruins had abated enough for a complete summary:

"If heroism calls for heroics, this is not a story of heroes. It is just a tale of many men who did not fear death; who accepted it as a matter of course, as men face it in the trenches.

"They were volunteers. No order drove them forward. They hadn't an even break. They had nothing to gain by going in. But they went. And few came out alive.

"These were the rescuers of Oakdale's hell; men who were unafraid.

"Piecemeal the story comes; snatches here and there. One in 50 is injured. One is merely scratched. There were few witnesses. Perhaps a dozen are dead. Dozens lie in hospitals. How many were there? Nobody knows.

"Eleven fifty-eight, on the word of men who know, 'the first blast at the Aetna works tore off the roof of the Dynol building and smashed the nearby plants. Five or ten minutes later a greater shock crashed, banged and slammed through the works, sending steel missiles a mile and a half. Most of the men on the Saturday payroll were at work. Some had fled with the first explosion. Others ran after the second. Most of them call these two the 'first explosion', so close did they come.

"Then began the work of rescue, and the added toll of death. Sixty men, perhaps more, went in. Acids were everywhere. Flames were spreading like the wind. Tanks filled with chemicals for 1,000 shells were getting hotter and hotter. Flames, fumes, and acids made the plant an inferno. The heat was killing.

"Into this furnace the rescuers charged. Sanderson, superintendent, was one of the first saved. Repeatedly they went back. Men were dragged from under buildings and beams. Bodies were hauled to a nearby hill. A score were dead, but scores were saved. A building had been blown up from its foundations and had crumpled across the bridge toward Oakdale. The rescuers plunged into the stream, crossed, and penetrated the plant.

"At 12:30 the earth rose and fell again, and victims and rescuers were buried. Heroes died in that upheaval. It was the third explosion. But those who lived went back.

"For an hour they struggled, fell, rose again, stumbled, staggered into the plant and out of the plant, bringing men, parts of men - those that were left. The third blast had reduced the rescuers by half. The others, undaunted, kept on.

"It was the 2:00 o'clock explosion - 1:50, some say - that took terrific toll. In this eruption, greatest of them all, the official staff of the Aetna Company, leading the rescue work, was practically wiped out. Superintendents, heads of departments, foremen, office men, laborers - faces to the front, fearless of fear, they passed into peace.

"Diehl died in this explosion. He was the superintendent at Heidelberg. he had been superintendent at Oakdale. The boys loved him. In their hour of suffering he came, racing from Heidelberg and safety to help in the rescue work.

"With the blast he disappeared. Several officials were working in a group. How the blast caught them, there is none to tell. Nine, they say, out of 14, died. Hospital and morgue lists have not been checked with the payroll. Some, therefore, are only missing. But most of the dead are known.

"J.J. Hutchinson was superintendent of the acid concentrator plant. he escaped unscathed from the first two blasts. Then he went back - and died. With him were Diehl, N.M. Eberle, chief electrician; C.E. Brillinger, chief chemist. All were killed.

"John Dolan, superintendent of the TNT building, is in a hospital critically injured. H. Leider, blacksmith, was taken out alive, but died yesterday (May 19, 1918). George Ross, foreman of the nitric acid plant; William Richards, assistant timekeeper; Melvin Dodson, storekeeper; George Messler, assistant foreman of the power house, are among the rescuers who were hurt and may not live.

"W. Hoffman, timekeeper and chief payroll clerk, was another who went back. W.P. Malarkey, first aid director and lieutenant of the guard, was another. Both escaped, two of the few. Malarkey miraculously escaped injury, though one of the tragic little groups who went into their death. He had just taken a body from the debris of the first explosion, and stood on the opposite bank of the creek when the greater blast broke. He was not scratched. All around him men were killed and maimed. Yesterday he was still helping with the work of rescue.

"Hoffman's story is a story of duty well-performed. He was the timekeeper, custodian of the records and rolls. With cuts over his eye and across his chin, a bandage binding his ribs, and a light watering to his walk, he told his story yesterday while helping straighten out the lists.

"Ordinarily," he said, "I lunched about 12:00. Saturday I was anxious to get the payroll cleaned up so it could go up to New York. I was knocked flat by the blast. I got up, and was checking over the payroll sheets to see if any were missing when the second shock came. It couldn't have been ten minutes. That one blew me through the door into the paymaster's office and smashed the building. I grabbed all the payroll sheets in sight and ran. Somebody put me into an automobile and sent me home to McDonald.

"When I got home I again checked over the payroll and found one sheet missing - Sheet No. 1. So I hailed a passing automobile and went back.

"I finally found the first sheet, all crumpled up, stuffed it into my pocket, carried the employment cards out to the roadside, and went back to see what else I could get. I was in the office when the next one came. It was the worst. Things flew through the windows. I was buried under brick and timbers. I could see only a little patch of light. Toward that I crawled and finally got out.

"There was a roar and hissing. At first I thought things were still flying through the air. Then I figured it was the acids. They were burning. This time they wouldn't let me go back. But I saved the payroll. I was thinking what it would mean to the boys to lose their money."

To Hoffman's heroism, officials, relatives and friends owe the lists of the missing.

Mr. Hoffman is still alive and kicking and is a prominent figure about McDonald.

## Ah, Those Were The Days

It's been many a moon since Burgettstown residents were awakened in the middle of the night by a wailing steam engine whistle, heralding the approach of a westward-bound passenger train; with lighted windows of coaches and pullmans giving rise to thoughts of far-off places like St. Louis and Cincinnati.

The "fast-line" whipped through town like a flash, and flaunted its shining disc of the observation car to those who peered out trackside house windows. Remember?

'Way back in 1879, river and railroad traffic competed for the favors of those traveling in and about the Tri-State. And the greatest contender for passengers was the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis, which operated as high as twelve or more trains a day to accommodate commuters between Pittsburgh and Steubenville, Ohio.

The line was known locally as the "Panhandle Division," and in later years became part of the old Pennsylvania system.

Here is a list of the stops made by the old P.C. and St. Louis in those days of ornate travel in the "steam cars." Some of the depots named are long gone, or have acquired other designations.

First off, going west from Pittsburgh, you left the main terminal at the head of Liberty Avenue. Then came 4th Avenue Station, and across the river, Birmingham. Then a short distance down the track, a stop was made at Point Bridge, then on to Temperanceville, now the West End. This was followed by a stop at Nimick, just before entering Sheridan.

Emerging from the tunnel, Ingram, Crafton, Idlewood and Jacobus brought the passenger into North Mansfield, who what is now Rosslyn Heights, then the junction point at the main station in Mansfield, or the center of the town of Carnegie. Here, one could change coaches for a trip to Washington, PA, passing through such villages as Leesdale, Woodville, Bridgeville, Hastings, Boyce, Hill's, Greer's, Van Emmk's, Morganza, Canonsburg, Houston, Ewing Mills, Cook's and finally Washington.

If the passenger decided to continue on the Steubenville from the Mansfield, or Carnegie Junction, his eye would catch such station names as Fort Pitt, Walker's Mills, Hays, Gregg's Oakdale, Noblestown, Willow Grove (now Sturgeon), McDonald's (a small cluster of homes at the time), Primrose, Midway, Bulger, Raccoon, Burgettstown, Dinsmore, Hanlin's Paris Road, Colliers, Holliday's Cove, Wheeling Junction, and finally Steubenville.

If you decided to continue on to Wheeling, you would pass through such towns as Middle Ferry, Lower Ferry, Cross Creek, Wellsburg, Beech Bottom, Short Creek, Glenn's Run, Top Mill and then into Wheeling.

During this year of 1879, trains between the above mentioned points were named as follows: "Fast Line No. 6," "Pacific Express No. 10," "Local Fr't. No. 16," "Mail No. 44," "Washington Accom. No. 34," "Church Train No. 46 (this ran on Sunday only)," "Mansfield Accom. No. 40," "Cincinnati and Wheeling Express No. 2," "Washington Accom. No. 38," "Burgettstown Accom. No. 32," "Church Train No. 48," and a second Mansfield Accommodation No. 42, which left Pittsburgh at 11:12 PM.

And what were the rates of fare in those days of the Iron Horse going West?

Well, to be graphic about it, the cost of parking in the city of Pittsburgh for a full day would take a passenger from Pittsburgh to Steubenville, one way...exactly \$1.50. A round-trip ticket between both cities amounted to \$2.75. And if you decided to go to Wheeling in order to visit the Fair...50 cents more took you one way. Cost of a round-trip to Wheeling amounted to \$3.75.

Hey, Ma, what's a "depot?"

That's a railway station, son. And as scarce as hen's teeth these days.

## Books on Flying Saucers Don't Tell Much

Not long ago, a news item on the front page of the Daily Times told of a citizen of Brooke County sighting a flying saucer. The incident was reminiscent of the several paper volumes that have deluged the Tri-State during the past year. These pocket editions have only been surpassed in interest by the much publicized Manchester story, both in and out of print, concerning the untimely death of the late John F. Kennedy.

For twenty years now, the enigma of the flying discs has baffled the curious. Not many newspapers will dwell at great length on the subject, and the US Air Force seems unwilling to offer any, if such is available, explanation of the mystery.

Of the three most popular books written on the discs, the one by Mrs. Coral Lorenzen is the most interesting. She manages to somehow incorporate a meeting of a young Brazilian farmer and a female member of the saucer species in one or two paragraphs. While not exactly Peyton Place, the encounter puts a more "earthly" touch to the overwhelmingly alien aspect of all flying saucer narratives.

The two other books are by Frank Edwards and John G. Fuller. Edwards, a somewhat roving commentator and author, at one time had been an announcer at Pittsburgh's pioneer radio station, KDKA. John G. Fuller, of course, is a well known columnist for the equally well-known Saturday Review.

Mr. Edwards' story has quite a deal of punch - although repetitious in the matter of rehashing old sightings and coming up with the usual blockage or blank wall - no physical evidence of the sky rovers.

Nothing you can reach out and touch, or see at rest.

Mr. Fuller, of the literary view, dwells on the setting and atmosphere of a New England town, Exeter, NH, at great length. Here, a flurry of sightings had residents visiting the designated spot nightly, much in the manner of attending the late drive-in movie. The celestial visitors were that regular.

Fuller, too, becomes monotonous in his stressing: "that the objects (they are always referred to as 'objects.')

 invariably appear over power lines." Or going into great and unneeded detail on people and New England interiors, rather than the silvery ships that the reader is waiting to hear about.

From all information gleaned in perusal of the above-mentioned volumes, one can assume the following - if you want to buy a "pig in a poke." Without seeing the contents, of course.

- That the planet earth has been under surveillance for some time by outer space beings.
- That they (the discs) have changed their design to avoid detection and capture.
- They have added "running" lights, similar to our own red, green and white colors of plane identification, in order to still further avoid contact.
- They have made no attempt to contact (so far as we know, or as far as Mr. Edwards, Mr. Fuller and Mrs. Lorenzen know) us as mutual members of the Universe. This is aside from Coral Lorenzen's account of the incident in South America...which was purely biological, other than diplomatic. If true.
- They have a propulsion device "that is out of this world." And both this country and Russia would give their eye-teeth to have it.



- And it's fun to have a mystery. When the news gets dull and your up to your eyebrows in war talk, stock market fluctuations, Congressional hearings and a baffling tax return to fill out - it's a welcome change.

Why? Your ego has been knocked down. We might not be as unique a creation as we think we are. Or as alone in the scheme of things galactic. After all, we have had 19 centuries in which to learn how to live with one another - and we blew the project. We're still quarreling. Maybe it would be a good incentive toward world unity, if we were to discover that we are not alone in God's universe.

We have shamefully misused the "Good Earth" in many ways.

## Burgess Minas Dayton Giffin

Back in the year 1894, McDonald was not only a growing young hamlet but also approved of youth in the matter of town officials.

Like Minas Dayton Giffin. Just before the above-mentioned year, Giffin had been elected burgess of McDonald for a period of three years by a large majority. He first saw the light of day in Dallas County, Iowa, May 16, 1868; and was, in the year of his election, about 26 years of age probably the youngest burgess in the State at that time. His father, James Giffin, had gone to Iowa from Cecil Township, and had died when Minas was a small boy. Hi mother was Elizabeth, daughter of "Stone-house" David McConnell, and a sister of Mrs. J.R. Gladden. She afterwards married Francis Collins of Boyce Station, and in this family was one child, Miss Lida. Mrs. Collins died some years prior to Minas Giffin's entry into McDonald politics. Minas, along with two brothers, B.A., a mill-wright at Six-Mile Ferry, and Justus F., of Cecil, a sister, Sadie, who married Dr. Rutherford of Bishop, and a younger brother, James, a McDonald harness-maker, were all raised and schooled in nearby Cecil.

Burgess Giffin, who had seen quite a bit of country before coming to McDonald, had spent nearly three years as an apprentice in the harness shop of a Mr. Yates at Mansfield (Carnegie), and then went to Montana. In 1890 he came to McDonald. He was married in 1893 to Miss Maggie Gilmore, of Helena, Montana. In 1890, he came to McDonald. He was married in 1893 to Miss Maggie Gilmore, of Helena, Montana, and soon was ready to move into one of Miss Maggie Lindsey's houses on Barr Street. He took part in the saddle and harness business along with his brother, James, on the old "Smith Corner," and also in the undertaking business with Councilman John Rogers.

Minas Giffin was a Democrat, a United Presbyterian, a successful mechanic and businessman, and was respected by all who knew him.

## Capt. Jack Kept His Word About "Demon Rum"

Back in the year 1894, area folk were much concerned about the abuses of alcohol. "Demon Rum" it was called and much effort was made to keep addicts away from those "swingin' doors."

In those days Alcoholics Anonymous and Hickory's Serenity Farms had not yet come into being; but the spoken word of the temperance lecturer and the swinging hatchet of Carrie Nation did the job. Or so it was hoped.

Recently we ran across a news story printed in a Waynesburg newspaper during the above mentioned year of 1894. It told of the great willpower and toast-making qualities of one Capt. Jack Crawford, temperance lecturer and a dead-ringer, according to the print that accompanied the piece, for a youngish William F. Cody, or "Buffalo Bill."

Here then, is the word picture of this man and his talents, as given to the citizens of Greene County in the Gay 90's:

"One of the most interesting lectures heard by a Waynesburg audience in recent years was that delivered in Alumni Hall, on Thursday evening, by Capt. Jack Crawford, the 'Poet Scout.'

"At the opening of his lecture, he told of the inspiration it was to come back to his native state, as he was born at the town of Minersville, Schuylkill County.

He never attended public school a day and, at the age of 17, he was enrolled with the 48th Regiment, Penna. Volunteers, and entered the Civil War.

He was twice wounded, once at Spotsylvania, and again at Petersburg.

While lying in a hospital, his nurse - a Sister of Charity - taught him to write. After the war was over he went to the frontier as a government scout and his record for bravery during the Indian Wars and in the settlement of the far west placed him at the head of the few daring men who did this noble service.

"While he was a boy his mother exacted a promise from him that he would never permit a drop of liquor to pass his lips. This promise he faithfully kept, though border ruffians held revolvers at his breast and demanded that he drink with them. In response to such demands, he invariably replied:

"'You may shoot me, but you cannot compel me to break my promise to my mother.'

"Capt. Crawford closed his lecture with an incident which, he said, was the most trying temptation of his life. While attending a banquet in Boston, two or three years ago, he had turned down his wine glasses. Near the close of the banquet, a wealthy young lady, whose acquaintance he had made, offered him a glass of wine with the request that he drink a toast to woman. He was embarrassed, as he would not violate his pledge, and felt by refusing he might incur the enmity of the other guests.

"Arising, however, with trembling voice he said: 'Miss, this is a difficult task you have given me, but a soldier's duty is first to obey orders - and I shall try to drink a toast to Woman - not in that however, which may bring her husband reeling home to abuse where he should love and cherish - send her sons to a drunkards grave and perhaps her daughters to lives of shame. No, not in that, but rather in God's life-giving water, pure as her chastity, clear as her intuitions, bright as her smile, sparkling as the laughter

of her eyes, strong and sustaining as her love. In the crystal water I will drink to her, that she remain queen regent in the empire she has already won, grounded as the universe in love, built up and enthroned in the homes and hearts of the world!"

Well, Capt. Jack weathered the storm on this one - facing up to a Go-Go girl with grand adjectives in party-mad Boston of the Gay 90's. After all, Spotsylvania, the Indian Wars and the border bad men had not fazed him - why should a slick chick from New England spoil his fame as the 'Poet Scout?'

So Capt. Crawford reeled it off in fancy style. But don't try that old gag about being made to drink at the point of a gun when you come in late from the club next week. The little woman has heard this one before, even though she never read Capt. Jack Crawford's story!

## Chartiers Creek Historic Stream Named for Indian Trader

Anyone with the desire to view some of the finest countryside in Americana, even a person with a limited budget and an old car, should take a trip to the depths of Washington County. No matter if you do run over the edge into Greene County - this is fine, as your trip will be all the more entertaining.

This writer recalls his first sight of the Little Wheeling Creek and its larger counterpart further down stream, Big Wheeling Creek. It is on a jaunt to the Jacktown Fair not too long ago, that we became lost in the area of Ackley Bridge and finally wound up in the depths of West Virginia. But the unscheduled side trip and the uncertainty of direction were well worth the time involved.

Here we viewed for the first time Old Concord, Prosperity Niniveh and many other nostalgic portions of the southwestern edge of Washington and Greene Counties. On viewing the blue green waters of Wheeling Creek, the writer was given over to humming to himself the then newly-written "Moon River" - a product of the pen of Henry Mancini, a local song writer who certainly must have had this particular section of Western Pennsylvania in mind when he wrote the above tune. It conjured up the scenic portions of the trip many times later.

And we repeat - for those with a flair for the many historical facets of Washington County, and with perhaps an eye for those things which have made America great, then look beneath your feet for the items that more affluent people travel miles to see...a real cross section of Americana that exists here in this portion of the Keystone State.

Get lost on a country road in any portion of Washington County and you will find that Pennsylvania has as much and more to offer as any of the highly vaunted New England States. No Springfield, Illinois, no Tombstone, Arizona nor the Alamo of Texas can equal the many exciting things that make up the past of our own native section. And we are certain, that somewhere in far off California, a Mr. Earle R. Forrest will nod his head and agree that the above is correct...for he too, for many years loved the colorful history and back country of Washington County.

Thus, with this in mind, we bring you the story of Chartiers Creek...a stream that today is looked upon with disfavor because of its flood potential. But few people are aware of its mark in the pages of history. Salvation is somewhere in the offing for the Chartiers with the much talked of flood control program. However, this will come later. Now to the tale of the waterway that has its roots deep in the heart of Washington County.

Chartiers Creek has long meant many things to many people. Last spring, a home builder in Bridgeville unearthed the evidence of early Indian life on the top-most brow of Gould City Hill. This was a culture that had flourished at the time of the Prophet Mohammed.

Even in the era of 600 AD, the inhabitants of the Chartiers banks lived and depended on the good things brought to them by the stream of water that today is such a controversial topic. In nearby Arlene Manor, also in the Bridgeville section of the stream, a skeleton was revealed several years ago by an excavation for a drainage system...this one-time denizen of the Chartiers waterway had fished its depths in the year 1400.

Such streamside residents were followed by the early pioneers of the Western Pennsylvania frontier - men who were to use the stream to ship the potable product of the Chartiers Valley's lush crops in the form of whiskey to a ready market in the Louisiana Territory.

It was due to a tax on this product that brought about the famous Whiskey Rebellion of 1794 - the first real test of the new country to govern itself under its own laws. Much of the controversy centered around the people and the stills that bordered the Chartiers.

A few years later, a man from the Robinson Run tributary was to become famous as the "King Of The Keelboatmen" - Mike Fink, long thought to be a native of the Pittsburgh Point section, but in reality a resident of the Chartiers area and the Noblestown section, and was to use the stream at floodtime in the early spring to launch his colorful career. Such are a few of the highlights of the creek's past - as we continue we will tell you more of the "Wine and Roses" days of the controversial Chartiers, a stream that today, like a mighty Samson shorn of its locks of virgin forests, lies weak and helpless to control the run off of spring rains, thawing snow and flash floods.

The creek derives its name from Peter Chartiers, a trader who went among the Indians on the Ohio and tributary streams to deal for peltries. He was an influential Indian interpreter, and joined the French Indians on the Ohio, to the injury of Pennsylvania. Chartiers had a trading station on or near the mouth of the creek at what is now McKees Rocks.

Governor Thomas, in 1745, said that the perfidious blood of the Shawnees partly ran in his veins. In contempt for the unpopular Peter Chartiers, old deeds often refer to the name as "Shirtee" or "Shurtee".

The stream rises southwest of Washington and flows into the Ohio at McKees Rocks as stated previously. It flows a north-north-east course of thirty-five or forty miles and empties into the Ohio five miles below Pittsburgh. Its tributaries, among many, are Catfish Run, Braddocks Run, Weirich's Run, Leet's Run, north branch of Chartiers, Quail's Run, Little Chartiers and its tributaries, Vance's, Little's, Pollock's, McCorkle's, Kenny's and Brush Runs on the east and west side. Miller's Run rises in Mount Pleasant Township and empties into Little Chartiers Creek. Robinson Run rises about two miles north of Candor and empties into Chartiers. This creek flows through the townships of Robinson, Cecil, Mount Pleasant, Chartiers, Canton, North and South Strabane, Somerset, Amwell and Morris. Such are the tentacles of the Chartiers as it was recorded in the year 1870.

The importance of the stream at the time when this section of the country was first settled may be inferred from the fact that an Act of Congress was passed, about 1808, declaring it navigable and a public highway forever. This occurred after a group of hardy men had taken a flotilla of flour down the creek from a mill in Canonsburg, and successfully initiated a new route for the frontiersman to reach a market in Louisiana.

## Chartiers Creek Declared Public Waterway 170 Years Ago

Today, in the Chartiers Valley, if any industrial concern were to seek a sure-fire method of obtaining publicity for its product, all it need to is re-enact the historic trip of the 1790's which featured the initial use of the creek as a public waterway. This was the event that saw the transporting of a load of flour from David Bradford's Mill in Canonsburg, down the turbulent Chartiers at flood time, and hence into the Ohio at McKees Rocks, eventually to arrive in New Orleans.

Impossible? Not at all - the creek, of course was at spring flood stage when the above occurred - a much milder and easily controlled period of high water than that which visits the Valley in current times. This was due to the vast amount of creek side underbrush and virgin forest that acted as a huge safety valve and allowed the rise to be slow and gradual. Of course, there might have been a few mill dams to encounter, but the height of the water allowed safe passage. Bridges, too, were virtually unknown and all it took was a little daring and skill with the steering oar to insure a successful trip.

For a factual account of the voyage, we quote the Pittsburgh Gazette of May 15, 1790, which deals mainly with the navigation of Chartiers Creek: "About five or six days since a number of men to the amount of thirteen left Canonsburg, on Chartiers Creek, and with the advantage of a rising flood, conducted two boats from thence in about twelve hours into the Ohio River. One was large and heavy, built for the purpose of carrying flour to New Orleans, forty-seven feet in length and twelve in breadth: a small part of the cargo to the amount of forty barrels on board. The other, a barge twenty-five feet in length, built for the genteel reception of passengers.

"The amazing facility with which these boats passed down the creek to the mouth, their safe crossing of two mill dams, one of which was about twelve feet high with the rudeness of the creek in its natural state, especially at the falls, sufficiently show what immense advantage might arise to thousands of people in the County of Washington were the legislature to attend to the improvement of its navigation. From Canonsburg and nearer Washington the charge of carriage to Pittsburgh, on account of hills and deep roads, is not less than three shillings and nine pence per barrel for flour; yet were attention paid to the cultivation of this excellent stream of water, one boat of the aforementioned size would, in all probability, carry two hundred barrels to the Ohio without detriment thereto or a farthing of expense."

Such was the newspaper account of the incident in the year 1790. There can be no doubt of the truthfulness of these facts, because, in addition to the evidence, there was legislative action on the subject, wherein, on April 18, 1793, Chartiers Creek from its mouth to David Bradford's Mill was declared to be a public waterway for boats and rafts, and all natural and artificial obstructions were required to be removed.

Bridgeville, too, was part of the event, when one of the pioneer Lesnett family, Fredrick by name, elected to go along on the voyage. For details on this, reference is made to Daniel M. Bennett's "Family History of Christian Lesnett".

Mr. Bennett, a native of Bridgeville, had this to say on the subject:

"In early times, a number of men started down Chartiers Creek from Canonsburg with a boatload of flour, en route to New Orleans. Fredrick (Fredrick Lesnett) was one of the number, and while polling down the Ohio River, at a bend near Wellsburg they saw some wild turkey along the bank. He and another man got out and started after them, and while thus engaged, they heard the danger signal from the boat, warning them of Indians. They turned their canoe and were part way back to the boat when the

Indians opened fire, one of the bullets penetrated the canoe and struck Fredrick in the calf of the leg, pressing the buckskin legging into the flesh, making a painful and dangerous wound; none of the rest were hurt.

"When they reached Wheeling they took him ashore; he soon recovered and returned home afoot. The others continued down the river with the boat, but they never returned as they were murdered by the Spaniards. Some years later, when the Louisiana Territory was bought by the United States, a bounty for the load of flour and the lives of the men were paid to their survivors."

Fredrick Lesnett, lone survivor of the trip, is buried in Bethany Cemetery at the mouth of Miller's Run.

From this account, we learn that the glowing picture painted by the Gazette did not mention that getting down the creek was one thing, but getting back again was another. Nor did it tell of the uncertain trip back up north by way of the famous bandit-ridden Natchez Trace - it took a strong man with plenty of nerve to breast the flood Chartiers, and a stronger one to "bring home the bacon" on a round trip ticket to the depths of the Mississippi.

Thus it would appear that Chartiers Creek was worthy of record even in frontier times - and if there are some who wonder about flood control measures - it's not new. The creek was considered to be of national importance even in 1793, when it was declared to be a public waterway.

It is interesting to note that the historic trip mentioned above was accomplished only when the stream was at flood stage, not its normal level. Ironically enough the very flood conditions that brought the creek into prominence in 1790, now in 1963 again put the waterway into the public eye.



## Chartiers Creek Had Part in Whiskey Rebellion

To tell the story of the Whiskey Rebellion is to tell the tale of a land-locked Eden, a Garden of Paradise of fertile ground that yielded bumper crops of grain...grain that could be turned into cold cash by condensing it to a portable product. That product was whiskey for the means of transportation to a ready grain market via overland carriage was meager on the Western frontier. Even with the bulky rye transformed into spirits, the return was not so large as to make any of the early Chartiers Valley settlers wealthy men.

There was only one egress from the area that was not impossible to sue and yet make money enough to live on...this was the network of waterways that led into the Chartiers and eventually the Ohio and Mississippi Basin...Miller's Run, Robinson's Run and the Little Chartiers.

The spark that kindled the flame of the whiskey fracas was the decision of the first Congress in January, 1791, on the report of Alexander Hamilton, then Secretary to the Treasury, to pass an excise law imposing a tax of from 10 to 25 cents payable upon every gallon of domestic distilled liquor. He calculated this would yield \$826,000 to meet the charges resulting out of the assumption of state debts, and in connection therewith, placed a tax upon stills, according to their capacity.

The people of Western Pennsylvania felt that this law was unjust and an encroachment on their rights and privileges, and all agreed upon the principles enunciated by the Congress of 1774, that an excise tax law "was the horror of all free states." They felt, too, this law would operate peculiarly severe upon the inhabitants of Western Pennsylvania from the fact that they had no direct communication with the east, except by transporting their products in the form of distilled liquor upon the packhorses and the various streams, and that the blow would, if carried out, prostrate their trade, their business, and their future prospects. And they boldly contended that the fact need not be disguised or concealed, that nowhere in the United States could a population be found where there were as many stills, and consequently as much liquor distilled as in Western Pennsylvania.

But the reason was self-evident. There were neither large distilling places nor commission warehouses to purchase grain. Hence in every neighborhood some farmer became a distiller from necessity, and he manufactured not only his own grain into whiskey, but that of five or six of his immediate neighbors. Upon a fair calculation, therefore, every sixth man became a distiller, but all equally bound to resist the excise law, which would fall heavily upon every farmer.

This precipitated a great crisis...as great as the recent Cuban one...as the new country, like a newborn babe, threatened to strangle on its umbilical cord, without the aid of a trained midwife.

One of the older motion pictures, is the drama entitled, "The Unconquered". This is a story of the early days of Fort Pitt and the surrounding area. At one point in the picture there is the scene of a falls, in what is presumably one of the local rivers.

However, we know of no such break in the local streams near the Point, but it very easily could have been the falls or rapids that existed in the lower portions of Chartiers Creek at one time. This may have been what the researcher on the movie meant to convey.

Many colorful individuals made their mark in this era. Characters such as Tom the Tinker, a cloak and dagger, private-eye sort of fellow; David Bradford, the adventurous lawyer who gave up his legal tomes in the pursuit of more concrete action; Major James McFarlane, the ex-GI of the Revolutionary War -

who fell as a casualty at nearby Bower Hill in the assault on the home of Gen. John Neville, and whose epitaph on his tombstone at Mingo Creek Cemetery near Finleyville reads "He served during the War with undaunted courage in defense of American Independence, against the lawlessness and despotic encroachment of Great Britain. He fell at last by the hand of an unprincipled villain, in the support of what he supposed to be the rights of his country, much lamented by a numerous and respectable circle of acquaintances."

Then there was the above-mentioned John Neville, who at one time had commanded Fort Pitt, a truly colorful and versatile man of his time; Judge Alexander Addison of Washington, who had given way to fine oratory and letters on the subject that were only to be matched in later years by Daniel Webster...as for action, there certainly was plenty of it.

The burning of Neville's house in the Bower Hill section of Chartiers; the fatal shooting of Major McFarlane; the tar and feathering of the hated agents of the tax law, all this and a United States mail robbery too, adds up to great suspense and finally climaxed by the entry of the great General George Washington himself, to quell the rebellious elements of the Western Frontier.

Today's school textbooks devote but a few scant lines to the famous Whiskey Insurrection, but if you were to peruse some of the many histories and other volumes pertaining to the incident, you would appreciate the calibre of the men who frequented the shores of Chartiers Creek and who had contributed so much to the development of the Western Pennsylvania country.

One man who stood up to the rebels at the risk of his life and having his home burned was George Vallandigham of Noblestown. Vallandigham, one of the first commissioners of Washington County, was in favor of complying with the law and was a man of high principle and determination.

His grandson, Clement Laird Vallandigham, in later years distinguished himself as the only man to oppose Lincoln openly on the question of continuing the Civil War. A native of Ohio at the time, Clement Vallandigham nearly succeeded in getting himself elected, and perhaps doing just what he had proposed - a quick end to the war between the states. Of such indomitable spirit were the men of the Chartiers and its tributaries.

Currently, the Whiskey Rebellion is listed in a popular reference book as follows: "In the summer of 1794, the federal government ordered the arrest of certain Pennsylvania ringleaders who refused to pay the whiskey tax. The result was a series of bitter fights between the United States marshals and the rebel farmers. Several persons were killed or wounded.

"President George Washington then sent in troops to stop the rebellion. Two rebel leaders were convicted of treason, but Washington later pardoned them. One charge was for arson in connection with the burning of Gen. Neville's house, the other incident was the robbing of the mail during the Rebellion. The Whiskey Rebellion was an early testing ground for the exercise of federal power to enforce a federal law within the individual states."

This, then is what the average reader will find in present day writings on the subject. Actually, it was Little Rock, Arkansas, and Oxford, Mississippi, all over again. It seems then, that the first test of "states rights" versus federal intervention occurred right here on our own shores of "Old Devil Flood"...Chartiers Creek.

The next article will deal with a highlight of the insurrection with the attack on Gen. Neville's house across the creek from the present Wrenshall House on Washington Road below Bridgeville.

It will also quote a portion of the proclamation given out by Washington, when confronted by the same problem as that which faced President Kennedy and ex-President Eisenhower on the decision to use troops in the integration flare-ups of the past several years.

## Chartiers Creek Threat of Troops Quells Whiskey Rebellion

The incident at Neville's home, mentioned in the previous article, was the high point of the famous Whiskey Insurrection of 1794. It centered around the lower portion of the creek in what is known as Bower Hill section, just below Bridgeville. This was the encounter between the rebels and the forces representing the tax collectors, and is one in which the end result was the death of a popular hero of the Revolutionary War.

On the 17th of July, 1794, the incensed and angry opponents of the hated tax law, under the leadership of Major James McFarland, a veteran of the War for Independence, halted when they came within a mile and a half of Gen. Neville's house. Those who had arms advanced and demanded the surrender of Gen. Neville. They were informed by Major Abraham Kirkpatrick (also a veteran of the above conflict, but now on the side of the tax enforcers) that Gen. Neville had left the house and that he, Kirkpatrick, was there with a detachment of United States soldiers to defend it. Gen. Neville's commission papers were demanded by McFarland's men, but they were refused.

Women and children were notified to leave the house under a white flag, which they accordingly did. After a continuous battle of one hour, the house (estimated to be worth \$10,000...a considerable sum in those days) was set ablaze and reduced to ashes, Major Kirkpatrick and his soldiers surrendered and were permitted to leave uninjured, while the marshal was required to promise not to serve another writ concerning the tax under penalty of death from the attackers.

During the attack on the dwelling, Major McFarland was killed and several wounded, but the insurgents temporarily triumphed and the popular frenzy was at its height. Before them lay their leader in the repose of death, who fell battling for their rights. But what had been gained?

It was proposed a meeting should take place at Mingo Creek Meeting House in nearby Finleyville. There the death of Major McFarland would speak in behalf of encouraging those who were hesitant to revolt, while tears of sorrow and sympathy would flow at his funeral. Thus the death of McFarland was used to inflame the rebels to greater resistance against the odious tax law.

Soon after the above incident, on the 26th of July, the United States mail was robbed of letters which contained the names of those in Washington who were unfavorable to the uprising. This scheme had been plotted at the Black Horse Tavern in Canonsburg, and the sack of mail opened and perused at this place. The letters they found, addressed to prominent men of Pittsburgh, frightened as well as angered leaders of the opposition.

On August 7 of that same year, George Washington issued a proclamation asking the rebels to "disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes." This was not complied with, so on the 25th of September, he issued the following, which we quote in part: "Whereas, from a hope that the combination against the constitution and laws of the United States in certain of the western counties of Pennsylvania would yield to time and reflection, I thought it sufficient, in the first instance, rather to take measures for calling forth the militia, than immediately to embody them, but the moment has come when the overtures of forgiveness, with no other condition than a submission to law, have been only partially accepted...when, therefore, government is set at defiance, the contest being whether a small portion of the United States shall dictate to the whole Union, and, at the expense of those who desire peace, indulge a desperate ambition."

In October, 1794, the troops were under way. When the people found so powerful a force marching against them, they submitted to the inevitable, and the flame of the rebellion sputtered out with little struggle. Amnesty was given to all involved, and peace came once more to the Chartiers Valley.

The victory of Wayne over the Indians, which had occurred during these troubles, completely changed the face of things in the West. It threw open the navigation of the Ohio and Mississippi more completely, enabling the western residents to find a market for their produce; it caused the surrender of the western forts, and gave security from a savage enemy.

A new element was on the way to visit the Chartiers in the form of the "Paul Bunyon of the Keelboatmen" - Mike Fink, the man who called himself "half-horse, half-alligator and half-snapping turtle." The next article deals with the hectic days of Mike and how he carved out a career from his knowledge of boating on the Chartiers.

## Chartiers Creek and Mike Fink

During the recent flooding of the Chartiers, Mike Fink could have piloted the "Queen Mary" down its waters to the mouth at McKees Rocks, and with plenty of room to navigate, the water was that high. But who was Mike Fink? Mike was the man whom Pittsburgh claims as its own Paul Bunyon of the rivers, but in reality was the product of the Robinson Run section of the Chartiers waterway and a man intrigued by the early adventurous life of the keelboatman.

He heard the call of far-away places from his home at Sturgeon, and found his magic carpet of travel to be the creation of Henry Noble's grist mill - flour to be shipped to New Orleans.

The hectic life of Mike Fink is a story that has several variations in both Evert's and Warner's Histories of Allegheny County. These volumes, being published in the late 1800's, are not as satisfactory on the subject as one would like them to be...much research is still being conducted on Fink's life.

Let's begin with the current data on Mike, as written by Howard R. Lamar in the World Book Encyclopedia. A Bettman Archive woodcut or engraving accompanies the text, and shows the mighty Mike shooting a tin cup of whiskey from the head of a friend.

The World Book version is as follows: MIKE FINK (1770-1832). An American frontiersman and boatman, he is the subject of many folk tales. He first won fame as an expert shot while serving as an Indian scout near his boyhood home of Fort Pitt (now Pittsburgh). Legend has it that he never lost a shooting contest with his rifle "Bang-All".

He was big and strong, and boastful. Fink described himself as "half-alligator and half-snapping turtle". Davey Crockett is said to have challenged him to a shooting match once, but the two men proved evenly matched at driving nails, snuffing out candles, and shooting flies from a cow's horn. Finally, Mike shot half a comb from Mrs. Fink's head. Crockett refused the shot and admitted he was beaten.

Fink worked on keelboats on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers in the early 1800's. He was a good boatman, and he loved to fight. Many stories were circulated about his rough deeds and great strength.

When the steamboat began to replace the keelboat, Fink joined the Rocky Mountain Fur Company as a boatman and trapper. One of his companions killed him on his first expedition.

Many stories have been told about how he met death. One is that Fink shot a lifelong friend named Carpenter in a rifle contest. Carpenter, in shooting a can from Fink's head, grazed his scalp. Fink became so enraged that when his turn came, he shot his friend through the forehead. Later, one of the dead man's friends murdered Fink. Such is the fame of Mike Fink as it appears today in a popular publication.

When Henry Noble's grist mill was erected at Noblestown around the year 1800, it was similar to the arrival of a huge modern steel mill. It meant progress, jobs, and the assurance that the site selected would provide the hub of activity that would draw in people to the mill center from many miles distant. This it did accomplish. The scope of Noblestown's influence ran from the village of Candor to the west, Herriotsville or Bridgeville to the east, Canonsburg to the south and north to the mouth of Chartiers Creek on the Ohio.

Not too many years before that time, the previously-mentioned Whiskey Rebellion had shown the need for a faster and cheaper means of getting the products of the valley to the markets of the Louisiana

Territory. In the background hovered the prospect of craft being built in the area and used to open up a whole new field of adventure for the sharp-shooting and fearless Mike - keelboating!! Here was a job for a man with "devil may care" action - a man to pole a flimsy craft down the turbulent flood-swollen waters of Robinson Run and Chartiers Creek, and be catapulted into the Ohio at Alexander McKee's, now known as McKees Rocks.

This was the exciting atmosphere that surrounded Mike Fink, as he out-boasted, out-shot and out-drunk his companions in the village of Noblestown and surrounding environs during the first few months of Henry Noble's new business venture.

Eventually two flatboats were built at the mouth of Robinson Run (in the area of the L.B. Foster Co., Carnegie) and named the "William" and the "Mathilda." Mike, meanwhile, was disporting himself with the heady wine of future adventure, and perhaps the most material product of the area - Monongahela Rye whiskey, the best in the country. The next article will tell how Mike fought a neighbor and bit off his nose in a frontier version of modern-day wrestling.

## Mike Fink's Only Love - His Rifle

In this issue, local historian James Mullooly completes his series of articles on troublesome Chartiers Creek - now just a flood nuisance, but once an important waterway for early frontiersmen. His account here deals with the legendary Mike Fink's prowess with his rifle. He also goes into what the future may hold for the Valley.

As for Mike Fink's prowess with his rifle, "Bang-All", we asked Harry Hampson, a local gun buff and resident of McDonald, just how much of Fink's ability with the muzzle-loader was boasting and how much as fact. Mr. Hampson, an authority on guns of every vintage for a number of years, had this to say on the shooting events of Mike's career:

"As to the tin-cup incident, this was very possible. Frontiersmen were very close to their rifles and knew them intimately. After years of handling the same gun, it became an extra-sensory extension of the owner.

"In regard to the pig tail item, this is hard to believe. Extremely good vision would have enabled Mike to do such a thing, but more than likely, it was three beavers or perhaps three raccoons that were involved. An animal with a more visible appendage than a porker."

John Vail, one-time resident of the area above Carnegie, had made the initial trip down the Chartiers with Mike Fink.

"John Vail, with his brother, was on the first boat or keelboat that took flour to New Orleans from Noblestown, PA. The Vail boat was washed ashore in one Southern State, and followed by Indians. My father said that they were given gifts of whiskey to get rid of them. The boat often got stuck on the shore and had to be freed with great effort.

"After arriving in New Orleans, unloading and selling the flour and being paid, the Vail boys brought new suits of clothes. While thus attired, some tough chap picked a fight with John's brother. He seemed to be getting the worst of it because of this tight suit which didn't allow much freedom for frontier swinging. So John Vail slipped up behind his brother and ran his sharp knife up under this coat, splitting it wide open. Given the extra arm action, the unencumbered brother now was able to beat his attacker to a pulp."

In examining any one of the old muzzle-loaders, and upon reflecting on its age and the care taken of it by its original owner, it is only too apparent that the pioneer placed great dependency on such a weapon. Such was Mike's rifle, "Bang-All." It was not only his means of protection, but often his sustenance as well. It is easily understood that such great respect for an old firearm is well-founded. For what marvelous tales the piece could tell of its past. Roaring with defiance at an enemy, or quietly lifting to deal a death blow to a bit of sorely-needed game. Indoors it had its accustomed place above or alongside the hearth, where, warm and dry, ready for instant action, it saw the grief, the joy, and the fears of the pioneer family it guarded.

Such, perhaps, was Mike Fink's only love, the firearm that brought him fame and a place in history - "Bang-All."



## Chartiers Creek's District Bully

To continue the story of Mike Fink and his days on the controversial Chartiers and its tributary, Robinson's Run: It was at the juncture of Robinson's Run and Chartiers Creek that Mike began his famous career as keelboatman and man of legend. But first we must go back up stream to Noblestown, a town of considerable age and one that is closely interwoven into the past of the Western Pennsylvania frontier.

Henry Noble's mill was of some importance in the year 1800 for Mike Fink, one of the early celebrities of Fayette Township, made his first trip to New Orleans with a cargo of flour from there. Robinson's Run was then high, and Mike ran the flour down to the mouth of Chartiers Creek, and thence to the depths of the Mississippi.

Mike's parents were German and had arrived in the Pittsburgh area in 1789. In 1790 they bought a tract of land in what is now North Fayette (a section lying out from Sturgeon on the present Fink's Run Road; it now stands just above the pump station of the Waverly Oil Company on a knoll to the right).

There Mike grew up to be one of the most brutal toughs any border county had ever produced. His only happiness was found in fighting and low amusements, and his name became a byword from Pittsburgh to New Orleans. He could drink a quart of whiskey and not even feel it, and was a giant in strength and endurance. He was a wonderful marksman, and used to display his skill by shooting a cup of whiskey from the head of his friend, Carpenter, at a distance of 70 yards.

After a time, Carpenter and Fink lost confidence in each other, and became enemies. A reconciliation was brought about; Mike claimed to be friendly again, and to prove his confidence Carpenter allowed him to make another trial of his skill, but instead of firing at the whiskey, he shot his friend through the head. For this he was afterward killed by the friend of the murdered man.

Mike was styled the "last of the keelboatmen." He used to amuse himself while going downriver by shooting at various objects on the shore. It was a well-authenticated fact (according to an 1887 history) that he successfully shot the tails from three pigs, at a distance of about 60 yards, without inflicting any other injury upon them. But his career of fun was brought to a close by shooting the heel of a Negro who was watching him from the shore one day. For this trick, he was arrested and made to suffer the penalty of the law.

Noblestown and vicinity was the scene of his revelries. A family by the name of McKillip lived near there (the site of the farmhouse just above Paladin's Tavern in the western end of Oakdale).

A perpetual feud existed between the McKillips and the Finks. The fights between Mike Fink and Sam McKillip are treasured to this day by those old-timers who were fortunate enough to have the tales passed down from generation to generation. Mike was generally victorious, but Sam always came back for more whenever they met, whether at the store, tavern, or low dance.

This practice continued for many years until in one of their knockdowns Mike bit off Sam's nose - an act so dishonorable and opposed to pugilistic rules that Sam would never again condescend to fight with him.

The tavern in which this noted bully obtained his whiskey, caroused and made the night hideous with his drunken orgies, was still standing in the year 1876, but at present has long been gone from the Noblestown scene. However, Mike was killed while on an expedition up the Missouri River, and thus ends the story of Mike's activities in Noblestown.

Like the white snows of winter, the traces of Mike Fink's activity are melted away - the tavern mentioned may have been one operated by a John Brown, on the southeast side of Robinson's Run, but today there seems to be no such building outline, or foundation in that area. Traces of the mill race of the old grist plant were found some years back when a new utility pole was put into place near the railroad crossing. Workmen broke into the brick-lined passage that at one time had brought the waters of Robinson Run down with considerable force to turn the "buhrs" of Henry Noble's mill. A sawmill adjoined the log building, and no doubt added to the construction of the "William" and the "Mathilda".

Historians tell us the keelboats were made at them mouth of Robinson's Run, and that Fink took the flour down to this point on a smaller, lighter craft. Possibly, the materials for the boats reached the embarkation area in the same manner. If, in the future excavation is ever made at the mill site, remnants of the old building will probably turn up.

The next article will have more on the subject of Mike and his prowess with "Bang-All", his rifle; and what one gun buff thinks of the story of Mike and the pig tails.

## Chartiers Creek Can Yet Be Salvaged As An Asset

As for Mike Fink's prowess with his rifle, "Bang-All", Harry Hampson, a local gun buff and resident of McDonald, was asked just how much of Fink's ability with the muzzle loader was boating and how much was fact. Mr. Hampson, an authority on guns of every vintage for a number of years, had this to say on the shooting events of Mike's career:

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Was there any evidence of romance in Mike's hectic career? A reader recently sent in a letter telling the writer of having heard Mike was married to a woman named Peg...but nothing is mentioned in the various local histories of such a woman, other than the incident of Mike shooting a comb from his wife's head.

The reader, a Mrs. Nellie Hays Schall of Pittsburgh, mentions that her ancestor, a John Vail, and one-time resident of the area above Carnegie, had made the trip down the Chartiers with Mike Fink. here is her account of the incident:

"John Vail, with his brother, was on the first boat or keelboat that took flour to New Orleans from Noblestown. The Vail boat was washed ashore in one Southern state, and followed by Indians. My father said that they were given gifts of whiskey to get rid of them. The boat often got stuck on the shore and had to be freed with great effort.

"After arriving in New Orleans, unloading and selling the flour and being paid, the Vail boys bought new suits of clothes. While thus attired, some tough chap picked a fight with John's brother. He seemed to be getting the worst of it because of his tight suit which didn't allow much freedom for frontier swinging. So John Vail slipped up behind his brother and ran his sharp knife up under his coat, splitting it wide open. Given the extra action, the unencumbered brother now was able to beat his attacker to a pulp."

In examining any one of the old muzzle-loaders, and upon reflecting on its age and the care taken of it by its original owner, it is only too apparent that the pioneer placed great dependency on such a weapon. Such was Mike Fink's rifle, "Bank-All". It was not only his means of protection, but often his sustenance as well. . It is easily understood that such great respect for an old firearm is well founded.

What marvelous tales the piece could tell of its past! Roaring with defiance at an enemy, or quietly lifting to deal a death blow to a bit of sorely needed game. Indoors it had its accustomed place above or alongside the hearth, where, warm and dry, ready for instant action, it saw the grief, the joy, and the fears of the pioneer family it guarded.

Such, perhaps, was Mike Fink's only love, the firearm that brought him fame and a place in history - "Bank-All".

And what of the future of Chartiers Creek? As mentioned at the start o the story of the Chartiers, in Mike Fink's day, the creek's banks were adorned with lush foliage and virgin forests - forests that held back the excess run-off and allowed a gradual and controlled subsiding of the flood waters. Today, alas,

the situation is not the same. Each home roof, each open field, each paved street that borders the stream adds its fast water discharge to the torrent - the Chartiers has become a vast sewage pipe that must be enlarged and straightened to insure a fast dispersal of its contents to the Ohio.

If the Chartiers Valley is to survive industrial-wise, then flood control is a must. Today, the valley suffers from other ailments that afflict its health as an employment center. And like a patient that has a 50-50 chance to recover, the item of continued flood damage may be the factor to finally bring about its total demise. The flood menace is certainly not an attraction for new industries. The people of the Chartiers Valley are not so affluent in these difficult times as to survive a continuous clean-up every year. It is hoped this series of articles on the historic past of the creek has sparked a bit of interest in the salvage of a fine section of Western Pennsylvania countryside. If the lower portion of the stream can be controlled, then there is much promise in the upper portion in the way of stream purification.

This has led to the appearance of minnows in the Miller's Run tributary as far down as the Desmet Lumber Company in the Miler's Run section. Young Izaak Waltons have found catfish near Bridgeville.

At the Koppers plant, formerly American Cyanamid Company's property, a newly installed device purifies all waste water coming from the plant before it has a chance to enter the stream. This is a large step toward stream cleanup.

Perhaps in a few years there may be water pure enough, and with a low enough PH content to be used in industries that line the banks of the Chartiers. This indeed, would be a prime attraction for new developers.

The future of the Chartiers can be as bright or as attractive as it once was to the early frontiersmen who utilized its potential in 1790 - a deeply-dredged channel, an all-out effort on stream clean-up, the use of the water for industry - perhaps the return of fish, all these add up to make the Chartiers an asset, instead of a liability for new tenants of the Chartiers Valley.

## Church Envelopes! They Make 'Em in Hancock

Up in the Northern Panhandle of Western Virginia is a firm that manufactures that good old pillar of many churches of all denominations - the Sunday collection envelope.

The concern is called the National Church Supply Company, with offices in the Epply Building at the corner of Carolina and Fifth Street, Chester, Hancock County. The main plant housing printing equipment is just one and one-half mile east of town, on Route 30.

The business was incorporated December, 1915, by Cyril Taylor, George W. Merschrod, Robert Parker and Kurt Bergner. It observed its 50th anniversary in 1965.

The big item at present is the manufacture and printing of church offering envelopes for churches all over the United States and many foreign countries. Future plans of the company are for an expanded market in all church needs; bulletins, communion sets, flags, altar sets, choir robes and many other items.

One of the most attractive features of the National Church envelope is the church picture imprinted on each envelope. The artwork was done by Cyril Taylor, firm founder, and was an added attraction to church envelopes later copied by other folks in the business. Today, his son, Charles D. Taylor, President of National Church, works closely with his men to get the many orders filled. Key men here are William R. Mackall, vice-president, who heads the sales department; Jack L. Allison, treasurer; R.G. May, executive vice-president. Vern W. Jones acts as assistant secretary-treasurer and office manager.

All of which adds up to the fact that the Mountain State not only produced beer, coal, iron and steel; but adds its bit to the serious business of keeping churches financially sound - the Church envelope.

Approximately one-half billion envelopes are turned out each year by the Hancock County plant.

We thought you might like to know.

And you thought the country was "back-slidin'!"

## Churches, Societies and Lodges in McDonald

The Rev. J.H. Tarnedde of McKees Rocks has for the past eight years (1910) been pastor of the German Lutheran Congregation of McDonald, which now numbers 142 members.

St. Alphonsus Catholic Church was organized in 1888. The first church building was erected soon after. It was located on Station street and was burned down. The present building, a handsome yellow brick structure, was erected in 1900 at the cost of \$30,000. At present the church embraces 125 families. The present pastor is the Rev. Joseph Burgoon.

The Christian Missionary Alliance has been holding meetings in McDonald for about ten years (since 1900). The present pastor (1910) is the Rev. H.N. Harvey.

The Baptist Church - The Baptists organized about 15 years ago (1895). The present pastor is the Rev. G.E. Sallie. They moved into the old First U.P. Church building after the new U.P. church building was erected in 1896.

### Societies and Lodges:

Solidarite Association, Frank Bayens, president; L'Alliance Lodge No. 683, I.O.O.F., Alexander Poskin, N.G.; Lieut. S.M. Adams Post No. 330, G.A.R., Com. Charles Briceland; Order of Independent Americans Counselor W.S. Campbell; McDonald Lodge N. 30, Loyal Order Moose, P.D., E.L. Chambon; McDonald Local Option Club, president, Prof. N.G. Parke; C.M. - B.A. of McDonald, president, William Campbell.

Ancient Order of Hibernians No. 1 of McDonald, president, M. McGrady; McDonald Lodge No. 605, I.O.O.F., N.G., W.A.E. Oakes; Eureka Encampment No. 95 of McDonald; Loyal Orange Lodge No. 185, W.M. James Galway; McDonald Hive No. 67, Ladies of the Maccabees, Past Commander, Mrs. B. Kelly.

Waverly Lodge No. 145, K. of P., C.C., E.J. Madgwick; Independent Order of Heptasophs, E.L. Dillon, archon; McDonald Tent No. 89, K.O.T.M., P.C., F.O. Densmore, Comd.; Council No. 1652, Royal Arcanum of Pennsylvania.

About 1885 a Carnegie office printed a sheet occasionally and called it the McDonald Budget. In reality, however, the credit for the first newspaper enterprise in McDonald belongs to J.S. Johnston, who brought the first printing material to McDonald about the year 1886 or '87, and printed a newspaper called the "Argus."

In 1888 Fulton Phillips bought Johnston out and changed the name to the "Outlook." in 1889 Mrs. S. S. Johns, acting as banker for the Outlook, built a home for it next door south of the present Outlook office (1910). In 1892 the present Outlook office was erected. The present owners are D.L. and W., D. Williams, W.S. Lockhart, W.H. Young, and Bert H. McCartney. The paper is published every Saturday by Edward L. Means. Those who were highly entertained and influenced for good by the interesting articles from the ready pen of writer Fulton Phillips.

The McDonald "Record" was established by the Record Publishing Co. about 16 years ago. It is published every Thursday by G.C. Kuehnert, editor and proprietor.

These two papers have done as much or more to advance McDonald than any other influence, and they have always been conducted as clean family weekly newspapers.

The McDonald Savings and Trust Co. - The People's National Bank of McDonald was established in 1897 with a \$50,000 capitalization, and first opened business in the Cook building, where they remained until completion of their own building in the fall of that year. The McDonald Savings and Trust Co. was organized in 1904. These banks have consolidated and are now known as the McDonald Savings and Trust Co. At the end of 1908 the capital was \$125,000, and the president was Mr. A.C. Ore.

The First National Bank of McDonald was established in 1892 with a capital stock of \$50,000. It paid \$4,000 dividends in 1903, and had up to that date paid a total of \$24,000 in dividends. Its president was Edward McDonald.

William Johnston, the man who built the first house in the village about 1865, started there a hotel. The original farm house of this family can be discovered yet hidden back of the East End Hotel. (This was in 1910).

This borough has the only saloon-licensed hotel in the county outside the eastern river section. The saloons came with the excitement over oil and they are therefore considered a necessary part of the hotel equipment.

## Civil War Poem Copied from Old Scrapbook

Back in the gay 90's, people were somewhat more sentimental than nowadays. They relished the written word and anything that tugged at the heart strings was certain to wind up in the family scrapbook.

Like bits of poetry, timely sayings, well-tried recipes and hints and kinks to make life a bit easier in an age before electric light and television.

Aye, the good folks of the turn of the century received much enjoyment out of their God-given imagination, such as the following poem which appeared in an 1890 family medical almanac.

The Civil War years still clung in the memories of those who had lost a son or a father; an unnamed author sat down and penned the famous ode - "The Blue and The Gray," here it is:

"Oh, Mother, what do they mean by blue?  
And what do they mean by gray?"  
Was heard from the lips of a little child  
As she bounded in from play

The mother's eyes filled up with tears:  
She turned to the darling fair  
And soothed away from the sunny brow  
Its treasure of golden hair.

"Why, mother's eyes are blue, my sweet,  
And Grandpa's hair is gray,  
And the love we bear our darling child  
Grows stronger every day."

"But what did they mean" persisted the child;  
For I saw two cripples today,  
And one of them said he fought for the blue;  
The other, he fought for the gray.

"Now, he of the blue had lost a leg,  
And the other had but one arm.  
And both seemed worn and weary and sad,  
Yet their greeting was kind and warm.

They told of battles in days gone by,  
Till it made my young blood thrill;  
The leg was lost in the Wilderness fight,  
And the arm on Malvern Hill.

"They sat on the stone by the farmyard gate  
And talked for an hour or more.  
Till their eyes grew bright and their hearts seemed warm  
With fighting their battles o'er



And parting at last with a friendly grasp,  
In a kindly, brotherly way,  
Each calling to God to speed the time  
Uniting the Blue and the Gray."

Then the mother thought of the other days -  
Two stalwart boys from her riven:  
How they knelt at her side and lispig prayed  
"Our Father who art in Heaven;"

How one wore the gray and the other the blue;  
How they passed away from sight,  
And had gone to the land where gray and blue  
Merged in colors of light.

And she answered her darling with golden hair  
While her heart was sadly wrung  
With the thoughts awakened in that sad hour  
By her innocent prattling tongue;

"The blue and the gray are the colors of God;  
They are seen in the sky at even,  
And many a noble, gallant soul,  
Has found them passports to Heaven."

And amidst the hectic days of decision during the War Between The States, it could have happened in what is now Western Virginia - many families may have seen brothers taking up arms with either the North or South; opinions were divided and even General Lee himself was torn by a choice of loyalty for a period before the opening of hostilities.

The Northern Panhandle comprising Brooke and Hancock Counties entered period of the Civil War as a southern state and emerged at its conclusion as a new star in the United State flag.

## Construction of Wabash Paralleled Movie Thrillers

In the year 1905, one year after the opening of the Wabash, Harry Davis of McKeesport rented a vacant storeroom and opened the first nickelodeon in the country. The first projected film to march across his silent screen, to a piano accompaniment, was the "Great Train Robbery", a tale of fast action involving a railroad background.

This was to be followed by many more cinematic dramas with the iron horse as the basis for screen action, along with the early westerns. A combination of both subjects usually wound up with the horsemen, the Indians, and an early wester railroad engine with huge stack and high drive wheels.

Many of the nation's early movie houses were to feature fair heroines tied to a single railroad track, while a mustached villain in the background awaited the arrival of old No. 97. usually, the hero arrived in the nick of time on a construction champ handcar and saved the distressed damsel. On such props as these was Pearl White dependent, as she eluded the wiles of many a screen desperado.

The formative days of the Wabash were filled with factual examples of the scenes depicted by the movie makers of the early 1900's - rock falls, tunnel cave-ins, construction trouble, and a great payroll robbery in 1903 - complete with a dynamiting and a hair-raising international chase for the culprits. Truly, only the driving of the Golden Spike at Promontory, Utah, in 1869, outdid the thrills of the initial days of the Wabash, now the P&WV.

This week we bring you the story of the event that plagued the builders of the road 60-odd years ago - one of many that the line took in its stride to overcome a monstrous jinx, one that eventually turned into a benevolent genie, that in 1956 had paid \$2 dividends for the previous five years on stock that sold at that time for about \$30. But now to the tale of the little-known event that is so aptly described by Earl R. Forrest in the anniversary edition of The Washington Reporter of August 15, 1958. We quote Mr. Forrest:

"early in 1903 engineers surveyed a line for the Wabash Railroad, from Pittsburgh through Washington County by way of Bishop, and through Cecil, Mt. Pleasant, Cross Creek, and Jefferson Townships to the West Virginia line. This road was to develop the coal lands along Miller's Run and through the townships mentioned.

"The line passed within a mile of West Middletown, where a station was established, and through Avella. Work was started on the heels of the surveyor, and rushed through to completion in July, 1904. The old pick and shovel and cart method of building railroad grades had long been supplanted by the steam shovel and track laying had been modernized. Samuel Ferguson, the contractor, pushed the work and no other railroad in Washington County was constructed at such high speed. In July, 1904, the first through train was run from Pittsburgh.

"In connection with the construction of the Wabash, one of the most fiendish murders in the history of Western Pennsylvania was committed when Samuel T. Ferguson, the Wabash contractor, was killed by a dynamite mine placed in the road near West Middletown. The object was robbery of the company payroll.

"On the morning of September 25, 1903, Mr. Ferguson and his bookkeeper, Charles T. Martin, drove from the construction camp to Washington. They obtained money at the First National Bank for the payroll, and started back to the camp. As they drove over a small stone culvert at the foot of Seminary

Hill, one mile north of West Middletown, near their journey's end, a heavy charge of dynamite was exploded. Ferguson was instantly killed, and Martin was so badly injured that he lay between life and death for a long time. A hole ten feet long and four feet deep was torn in the road, and stones were hurled hundreds of feet.

"Lewis Liggett, a farmer working in a nearby field, heard the explosion, and when he went to investigate he met a man leaving the scene with a satchel. The man hastily made his scape and when Liggett found the murdered Ferguson and Martin badly injured, he spread the alarm. Within a short time hundreds of people were at the scene and searching parties scoured the countryside. A copper wire was discovered leading from the scene of the explosion to a tree, where a battery and an old shotgun were found. These later proved to be valuable clues. Although searching parties did their best, the murderer had made good his escape. The news was telegraphed to all nearby towns and cities, but no trace was found of the man Liggett had seen with the satchel. The search was spurred to fever heat by rewards of \$1,000 offered by the county commissioners, and an additional \$5,000 by the Ferguson Construction Co. But every clue reached a deadend and it looked for a time as if the murderer would not be apprehended."

## County Fairs, Weddings Big Events of Era

What did people really concern themselves with back in the so-called "good old days" in Brooke and Hancock Counties?

Well, for one thing, they placed great store on the annual county or State Fair. Here, a young lady might meet the man she would eventually marry, or a young gentleman might pick up an attractive girl's dainty hanky and thus have the privilege of escorting her home.

Secondly, they loved to attend weddings. These early affairs entailed much preparation and gave considerable time to dancing. They oftentimes danced for two straight days in the inevitable adjacent barn, then off on the third day to the chores of farm work brush-clearing and logging.

Third, they delighted in several or more picnics a year. These were usually held in a friend or relative's spacious grove adjoining the homestead, and a local orchestra, such as Lazear's, did the latest airs from Johann Strauss, mixed with current folk music.

Then, let's open a page of history in the past of the Northern Panhandle, to the date of July 8, 1865, and see just what one young lady of old Fairview (Pughtown) wrote to her enamoured, describing a wedding and picnic in the above-mentioned year. Names will be changed, but the contents will remain gospel as far as authenticity is concerned.

Note the peculiarities of speech, and the various terms that accompany the body of the missive:

Fairview, WV  
July 8, 1865

"Dear Cousin Clint:

"I received your very welcome missive on June 30. I was somewhat disappointed when I saw that you couldn't attend the picnic, but being used to such things, disappointments, I mean, I knew pretty well how to take them. The picnic was very good considering the hot day. We had a very nice dinner. Then, we had a very good speech from a Wellsville gentleman. Then we left the grove and went to a barn that was nearby, which was prepared for to dance in. There was only room for four sets at a time, but you better believe they did not lose any time, for just as soon as one floor full was called to seats, their places was filled up by others.

"There was people there from all directions. There was a good many from Brooke County. There was a cousin of yours there, or at least he told me he was. His name is Overton, if I understood it right. Sam Vance introduced him to me and told me he was a cousin of Coe Holbert's and that he had come from there that morning. That gave us a pretty good start and we sat down and had quite a chit chat.

"Then we went and had a dance, then I introduced him to the rest of my sisters that was there, and he seemed to rather fancy Amanda. He came home with her, at least. Well, I believe that is enough on that subject, but I wish you had been there, for everybody was in a good humor and enjoyed themselves the best kind.

"Well, Cousin Clint, now I will tell you about the wedding. We had a rather nice time. The groom did not get tight. Four of us girls, and George and Luke, Cousin Hector and a Mr. Dolson, went up to the

place of destination. Cousin Hector was my pardner and he was riding the pony - don't you think we cut a swell! The pony went about as well as he did the day we went to Steubenville. George told me before we started that he didn't want any of us to look down in the lip, for if we did, he was afraid he could not stand the ceremony - and so we commenced our nonsense and fun when we left home and kept it up throughout the whole affair.

"I never saw Cousin Hector in a better humour. They was married about 2 o'clock, then we had dinner. After that, we all took a walk up on a high hill, then returned and commenced dancing about sundown and kept it up till the small hours in the morning. Then some of the company went to bed, and some did as Miss Brown says, only the reverse - the boys talked to the girls. We come down home about twelve o'clock the next day, took dinner and went to dancing again. They danced till sundown, then nearly all the company went home, being up all night before, and most all of the men had to go into the harvest fields the next day, they thought it would be proper to go home that evening for everybody was tired."

So went the news from a wedding party and picnic in the vicinity of Fairview in the year 1865. No mention of the recent war, and we must believe that Mark Twain certainly did catch the dialect of the times in his many writings - "down in the lip," "a pretty good start," and "don't you think we cut a swell!" and "enjoyed themselves, the best kind."

All this amid a term we think originated in the Roaring Twenties of Prohibition - "The groom did not get tight!" The adjective is still with us today, to describe the act of over-imbibing. It was old hat in the days of the mid-1860's.

So it was that the youth of that era, who now sleep eternally in the various grave yards of both Pughtown and St. Johns cemetery, out along the Eldersville Road, had its delightful moment of "chit chat" and dreaming.

We wonder what can be seen from that hill today? Has the scene changed much - as much as the times of Cousin Clint, the dancing feet, and Cousin Hector, riding the pony and "cutting a swell!"

## Crosby, Lombardo and Vallee

As the holiday season approaches, we find ourselves still reeling from the passing of Bing Crosby and Guy Lombardo. Both contributed much to a musical picture of Christmas and New Year's Eve.

I recall, and perhaps readers do too, when Bing Crosby snag on a spot close to the Amos and Andy one-quarter hour (7 to 7:15)... "Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day." In the same era (it was strictly a sky and moon era) Kate Smith was holding forth with "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain," and Morton Downey was helping "Carolina Moon" make it over the Great Smokies.

All of it on the new Majestic console radio in the "front room." That's were everyone gathered to hear these fabulous vocalists. And the Majestic had that new-fangled "dynamic speaker" to give the 'ole superheterodyne sound added bass boost... somewhere between 1928 and 1932.

Earlier we had played a 78 record of Bing's on the "wind-up" phono. It was titled "Mississippi Mud." Remember?

Crosby went far back in entertainment media history. Is Rudy Vallee older in time? Perhaps, as he used the old-fashioned megaphone to amplify his voice on the bandstand.

Like Vallee, Bing saw bandstands, records, radio, sound pictures, and finally television. He knew them all.

And such musing moves us to say that they don't just make those kind of show folks anymore. TV is not producing such greats as Jolson, Marx, Cantor, Ziegfeld, Belasco and Billy Rose.

Moving into the wings on the great stage of life are Hope, Durante, Gleason, Skelton, Welk, and many others. Song-writers, too, are not what they used to be.

Where are the Irving Berlins, the George M. Cohans, and other greats of musical show business? Or perhaps a Jerome Kern to give us another lilting "Showboat" score? Vaudeville and burlesque gave us many talented show folk from 1900 to 1940. Not so with television. It may be due to the advertising business. Ah! There's no business like the advertising business.

Or it may be that people do not remember an act or song on TV as they used to do in the days of the theatre (live, that is). Too fleeting on the "tube." And too much crammed into an evening. Like a calorie-loaded, too-rich chocolate cake, TV is letting us gorge ourselves into a dull reaction to any real long-lived talent that might be shown.

Earlier we had mentioned orchestra leader Guy Lombardo. Guy was of an era long gone with the years. When the last "piece" played by the band before the dance was ended for the evening was "Good Night, Sweetheart." Remember? Just before it was played you looked over the "wall-flower" section of the dance floor; picked out the gal you wanted to squire home and "bunny-hugged" a dreamy close-contact to "Good Night Sweetheart."

Ah! Those were the days...when a romance was not watched on a TV screen, but was played out in real-life on a spring evening after a dance, "...walking my baby back home!"; which was also the name of a catchy tune of the times.

# Cruising Down the River

An immensely popular new family sport is rising rapidly all over the nation and along the shores of the Monongahela. Small and not-so-small boats of all types and descriptions, full of smiling, waving people, are dotting the waters wherever the depths are beyond wading level. The American family has taken to boating in a big way!

Outboard cruising is a great sport for the entire family. It gives mom and dad, and the children too, a luxurious feeling at costs the average family can afford. And it's fun whether the boat is alone or in a group of two or twenty.

Cruising isn't confined to the larger boats - even open runabouts can take part by carefully planning short trips. And outboards can explore little creeks, lakes and coves where larger craft could never go.

The secret is planning. Don't attempt cruising beyond the shallow physical capacity of your craft, and do not go into dangerous or extremely shallow waters. Boat handling and safe cruising techniques are taught in free piloting classes by the United States Power Squadrons, a national organization interested in safety and pleasure with small boats.

In describing the immeasurable fun of boating and a bit of life on the river, we must quote one of the many "relaxing" passages from Mark Twain's immortal "Huckleberry Finn." In the following segment, Huck and Jim, the runaway slave, have freed themselves from the fetters of mid-1800 civilization and are enjoying the river's benevolence of peace aboard their free-wheeling raft:

"This second night we run between seven and eight hours, with a current that was making over four miles an hour. We caught fish and talked, and we took a swim now and then to keep off sleepiness. It was kind of solemn, drifting down the big, still river - laying on our backs and looking up at the stars, and we didn't even feel like talking loud and it warn't that we laughed, only a little kind of low chuckle. We had mighty good weather as a general thing and nothing ever happened to us at all - that night, nor the next, nor the next.

"Every night we passed towns, some of them away up on black hillsides. Nothing but just a shiny bed of lights; not a house could you see. The fifth night we passed St. Louis and it was like the whole world lit up. In St. Petersburg they used to say there was twenty or thirty thousand people in St. Louis, but I never believed it till I see that wonderful spread of lights at two o'clock that still night. There warn't a sound there; everybody was asleep."

Such was Twain's reminiscence of his own boyhood and river experiences. At least we like to think they were his - the tranquil picture painted by the one-time river pilot is a very attractive one and might well be the outcome of a small-boater's first trip.

However, there are many things every skipper should know in order to safely enjoy the sport of boating and perhaps the Utopian hours of Huck Finn and his companion Jim. Before he leaves the dock for the first time he should check to see if he has the equipment required by law. Such as a knowledge of marlinespike seamanship, anchoring and a general sprinkling of common-sense items as certain lights, fire extinguishing equipment, life preservers and flame arresters on inboard gasoline engines.

Don't forget to carry certain spare parts and tools. Mechanics are hard to find offshore and out of sight of land (or at least uninhabited land). Spark plugs, coils, condensers, distributor points, extra lines, flashlights, and for many outboards, extra shear pins are needed items.

Also a small hand bilge pump or a good-sized bailing can will make bailing easier if you spring a leak or ship water from a passing towboat's wave.

Flares are helpful in emergencies, and a small first aid kit, with a good manual, can be a life-saver. If you carry a small stove aboard, make certain it is a "bolt-down" type. Do not use a gasoline stove or a portable unit on a boat. Check your food locker before leaving to make sure you have everything needed for a happy day afloat, and that you have plenty of drinking water.

No doubt by this time you are ready to head for the nearest lumberyard and build a raft, a la Huck Finn - it seems much less complicated. But don't be discouraged - you learn to enjoy America's newest method of relaxing without much effort - and it's all in the backyard of Tri-State area residents, along the beautiful and storied Ohio, the Monongahela and the Allegheny!



## "Daring" Travel Literature of 1896

What was travel literature like back in the days of the busy, ornate steam cars of the 1896 expanding railroad empire!

Well, for instance, there was the booklet put out by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in 1896, describing one Miss Lucette Lorne's "Trip to Atlantic City." Profusely illustrated with scenes from the Boardwalk City, the pamphlet told how easily a young unmarried woman might do the unheard of venture of traveling alone to the nation's greatest summer playground. On the perfectly safe railroad of course.

We quote passages from Miss Lorne's 1896 account of the trip:

"At intervals, since leaving Philadelphia, I thought I, a woman, had done a rather bold thing in aspiring to travel alone from Pittsburgh to the seashore and for the first time. It is true that a woman can safely journey from one end of the United States to the other, and that Americans pride themselves on the fact. But it was with some apprehension that I took advantage of a popular excursion, and got aboard the train at the Baltimore and Ohio Depot in Pittsburgh, one morning, to spend ten days away from home.

"The excursion ticket is ten dollars, which takes you from Pittsburgh to Atlantic City and gives you the privilege of stopping off at Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington on the return. I wanted to see these delightful places as well as Atlantic City, but first of all I was anxious to get to the invigorating atmosphere of the ocean, and to rest my vision on the long rollers that are ever beating the golden sands of the beautiful New Jersey seacoast. So, when I took a seat in the train at eight o'clock, I settled myself for a long ride on what is most fittingly described as the 'Picturesque B. and O.'

"Away we went, around the base of pine-clad mountains, through the Valley of the Cumberland, and along the peaceful shore of the Potomac, hardly knowing that we were moving."

Such was the thrilling start of Lucette Lorne's trip...let's see how she fared at the beach:

"It is the bathing hour, and the beautiful slope of sand is dotted with men, women and children, enjoying the morning 'dop', and laughing as they cast a wary eye on the rollers and dodge them by a little spring that everyone learns...I see familiar faces under broad straw hats tied under the chin, and belles of Pittsburgh mingle with those of Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington and hundreds of smaller places within a radius of many miles...

"It was with a feeling of independence and exhilaration that I could not feel in the city, that I strolled upon the tremendous boardwalk, whose fans spread from Maine to California, as the greatest in the world - twenty-five feet wide and five miles long. As I walk along the smooth planks, with the ocean surging and murmuring at my feet, I am pleasantly greeted by friends and acquaintances from Pittsburgh, and I find myself as much at home as if I were out for an afternoon's shopping in my own city.

"And then I am told that there is to be a 'hop' at the hotel, and I am invited to go to it. I have not brought many clothes with me, but I have a pretty evening dress that can be freshened up with ribbon bows and laces, and I feel perfectly comfortable as I take my position in the large hall and watch the whirling couples. I notice that there are plenty of elaborate costumes, and diamonds and other jewelry are in evidence in many toilets...I had felt tired and jaded when I left Pittsburgh, but the air and surroundings of Atlantic City soon cured that, and when I amused myself one morning - after being there several days - by stepping on a weighing machine, I found I had a record of five pounds increase since leaving home!

"At last came the morning when I must make my way home, by easy stages, I had been at Atlantic City seven days, and had spent 20 of the twenty-five dollars I had allowed myself for the trip. I had my ticket and five dollars, and with that I intended to see Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. I had enjoyed an excellent table, for my seven dollars a week, and was in good health and spirits when I started for home, except for my feeling of regret over leaving Atlantic City."

Finally, Miss Lorne, the female Lowell Thomas of the Gay 90's, arrives back in the Smoky City of Andrew Carnegie's time...her counterpart in the feminine figure of Charles Dana Gibson was to arrive four years later on the daring vacation scene The Gibson Girl!

But let Lucette Lorne continue:

"As I walked away from the handsome depot of the B. and O. in Pittsburgh, I looked into my purse, and found that I had thirty cents left of the twenty-five dollars I had spent for my ten day trip. For that twenty-five dollars I had seen three big cities, and spent a week at the loveliest seashore resort on this continent, never stinting myself in anything I needed, living well, and proving to my satisfaction, that a woman may take advantage of the B. and O. on any one but herself."

So ends the account of our traveling sales-lady of the B. and O. of 1896. Her booklet was the forerunner of today's elaborate and colorful travel brochure. But the cost...Twenty-Five Dollars. You couldn't do it today. And what did she do with the thirty cents left over?

Probably took a horse-car to the nearest corner drugstore fountain and blew it all on an ice cream soda or two.

What the heck - she had gained five pounds on the trip, anyway!

## Darkest Day in West Middletown

September is a month of golden haze, golden dreams and rejoicing over the deliverance of a bounteous harvest at summer's end; man's home is indeed a happy one at this festive season.

Such was the atmosphere that prevailed in West Middletown, Friday, September 25, 1903.

On this day, West Middletown citizens were busy with the talk of progress on the Pittsburgh, Carnegie and Western railroad, later to be known as the "Wabash," and in recent years, the Norfolk and Western. The new railroad passed through the western end of Washington county just below the village and in another year it would be completed.

Cyrus Wells of Iowa was visiting in town for a spell and Miss Ada Blakely had just returned home to Freeport after a week's stay at the home of Dr. A.M. Rea.

Mr. and Mrs. John Perrine, along with daughter, Dorothea, had buggied east from nearby Independence to spend a few hours in town with some neighborly talk on how the new railroad would effect both communities.

Church-goers in town were anxiously waiting to hear Bethany's Prof. Kirchner preach this coming Sunday at one of the local houses of worship, and the Rev. W.W. Hunter had filled in the previous Sunday for the vacationing Rev. Moore of the Grove U.P. Church.

Patriarch John D. France, hotel operator and Civil War veteran, was also looking forward to the opening of the Wabash and weighed its help in the up-coming reunion of the Pennsylvania Roundheads in 1806, three years hence. The Roundheads formally known as the 100th Pennsylvania Volunteers, were considered the most colorful survivors of the Civil War and drew members from every corner of western Pennsylvania.

But before this day was ended, a terrible tragedy was to overtake the dreams and plans of West Middletown.

The previous evening, Thursday, Sept. 24, Samuel T. Ferguson, partner in the Pittsburgh firm of Ferguson Construction Co. and overseer of the construction work at the railroad camp just a short distance from town, had gone to Pittsburgh to see about some company business and to meet the bookkeeper and assistant, Charles L. Martin. Martin had been visiting his folks in Cincinnati and Ferguson hoped to kill two birds with one stone; meet Martin, then stop in Washington on the way home and pickup the monthly payroll money for his camp workers.

In Washington, Sam Ferguson spoke briefly with teller A.T. Ritchie of the First National Bank. Sam was well known here, having been a patron of the bank for several years while the Middletown work was in progress.

Ritchie was filled with "railroad" talk this morning.

"Sam, I hear that work is going to begin soon on the new Greene County Railroad. Think you might be going out that way for a spell?"

Sam Ferguson's face lit up with the query. His life work was in railroad construction and he was always eager to conquer new fields in transportation.

"Might just do that, Mr. Ritchie, now that the West Middletown section is just about finished. I hear that Supt. Gross out there is going to give a genuine English sovereign to the lady who can use Jim Iam's big team to plow up the first furrow on the ground-breakin'."

The Iam farm was part of the new road's right-of-way.

Women's lib was many decades away and Ritchie found this hard to believe.

"Why, Sam, that's foolish talk! No woman ever did a lick a' work on a railroad yet, and you know it!"

Ritchie was definitely of the old school where women were concerned.

Sam pondered this a moment, then replied: "I dunno', some of those 'hoboes' I have working for me best leave off the liquor and not lose so much time. At least the women don't show the drinkin' as much."

Time was moving along and Ferguson and Martin had a pay-roll to deliver. A satchel full of coins and bills was placed in the buggy; it was 11 AM.

The ride to West Middletown consumed the best part of two hours, even with Sam Ferguson's fine team, one of the most admired in Washington County. At 1 PM, both men had dinner in West Middletown, fed the horses, then spoke with Dwight Johnson, also a bookkeeper for the Ferguson firm. On hearing of their destination, Johnson said he would follow the pair down to the camp to help with the payroll distribution.

"Won't be but only a few minutes behind you, Mr. Ferguson."

Then, with a final wave of hands, Ferguson and Martin headed west to the turn-off on Seminary Hill Road and the construction camp in the valley below.

Seminary Hill is a scenic one in the month of September and spans the area between Routes 844 and 50 in a south to north line.

Named for a long-ago school for female students in the 1850's, the road in this year of 1976 still retains a whisper of those times; along the still rural roadway, traces of neglected flower gardens meet the eye and gnarled old trees still stand as a picture framework of its beauty as it might have been on the afternoon Ferguson and Martin traversed its length.

At the foot of Seminary Hill there is a small culvert spanning a woodland stream. As Ferguson and Martin approached the culvert, all seemed serene; the satchel of money was on the buggy floor between them and firearms were handy in event they were needed.

But on such an idyllic day, who would need them?

Then, just as the team crossed the culvert and the buggy seat hung above the stream, a tremendous explosion rent the quiet air of the valley. Both men and horses were hurled some distance away from the culvert. When the dust had settled, the site resembled the interior of a charnel house.

Sam Ferguson lay about 30 feet away, instantly killed, while Charley Martin lay nearby, still conscious and moaning piteously. Both horses were thrown 60 feet and blown to fragments. One horse had its hindquarters blown away, with entrails thrown into a nearby field. The other animal had its head nearly severed, while the buggy was completely shattered.

At the moment of the explosion, which was later attributed to a heavy charge of dynamite, a nearby farmer, Lewis Liggett, was working in his cornfield behind a bluff just above the blast area. Although he could not see the road, he heard the terrific sound and was showered with debris from the up-torn roadbed.

When Liggett came down from the bluff to investigate, he saw a man running north with the satchel of payroll money with a drawn revolver in his hand. As Liggett, stunned and shaking, paused to survey the carnage and ascertain what had happened, Dwight Johnson, true to his word in following the men down from West Middletown, arrived on the scene.

After being certain that Ferguson was beyond help, Johnson turned his attention to still-living Charley Martin. Martin's right leg and left arm were broken. His left leg was cut deeply to the bone in several places and his face was torn and scratched in a terrible manner.

But he lived.

Johnson immediately galloped his horse back up to West Middletown and summoned Dr. David Bemis. Both returned in great haste and Martin was lifted into the Bemis buggy and taken to his rooms in the village, where he was given all possible care. By this time a large and angry crowd of citizens had gathered at the scene, many of them from West Middletown where both men had been held in high esteem. "Hangin'" was in the offing, had the culprits who set off the dynamite been found in those early hours after the tragedy.

When an investigation of the blast site was made, some startling discoveries came to light. Concealed beneath a bush, well off the road, was an electric battery used to touch off the dynamite. A loaded shotgun lay nearby. Presumably, the gun was to have been used in the event the explosive proved ineffective. Copper wire led from the spot to the now gaping hole in the roadway; four feet deep, seven feet wide and 12 feet long. As one of the investigators remarked: "Big enough to bury a house in!" the estimated charge of dynamite placed under the culvert was put at 25 pounds or six "sticks."

As to who had done the dastardly deed, conjecture had it that there had been two men. One to stand guard, the other to push the button on the detonator.

Martin, despite his injuries, was able to talk a little in describing the blast:

"Mr. Ferguson and myself were driving almost at a walk along the road to the camp at about 2:30 PM. We had with us between \$3,500 and \$4,000 but anticipated no trouble. We had carried a much larger amount on past pay days. As we reached a little culvert which goes underneath the road in the lowest part of the valley after coming off Seminary Hill, I was startled by an awful explosion directly beneath me. Simultaneously, I felt myself given an awful jump and carried through the air at what seemed like lightning speed."

"After regaining my senses, I saw Mr. Ferguson lying on the ground a short distance away and the remains of our buggy on the side of the road. I then realized that something terrible had happened, but in too much pain to care much for anything or anybody but myself."

It was a heartbreaking scene at the France Hotel where Sam Ferguson had been staying during his several years in West Middletown. Here his wife, blind and ailing, had to be told of her husband's violent demise. Ferguson's teen-age daughter, Mary also at the hotel, was in great shock. When she saw here father's blood-stained jacket, she screamed and uttered: "That is my father's blood!" and refused to touch the garment.

The murderers had made no attempt to empty the pockets of Ferguson's jacket; one contained \$320 in cash, another held an expensive watch. Evidently the culprits never went near his body to search for loot. Irony, too lay in the condition of the bodies of both men; Martin's was filled with many external and some internal injuries, while Ferguson's body bore no mark other than a deep gash above the left eye.

By late evening of the eventful day, two men were put down as possible suspects. These were Frank Francis and Joseph Huston. Both had been employed on the railroad at various times and had been discharged on several occasions due to drinking. Both Francis and Huston deny any part in the crime and were later cleared.

The previous night the tool house at the camp had been broken into and a quantity of dynamite removed, along with copper wire and the shotgun found at the side of the road.

Francis and Huston had spent the night of the robbery in the McClay School House, about four miles northwest of West Middletown, and this helped establish their innocence. Lewis Liggett stated that they did not tally with his description of the man leaving the blast scene with the satchel in his hand.

"Walking Boss" Isaac Smith, of the Ferguson Construction Company, had an idea that one or both of the men who might have been responsible for the deed, were "holed" up in an abandoned coal mine on the farm of John Patterson, about a quarter of a mile northeast of where the blast had taken place. Fresh tracks at the mine entrance gave rise to a "stake-out" by a posse of farmers and men from both the railroad camp and West Middletown.

But to no avail. Those who touched off the dynamite blast seemed to have vanished with the smoke of the explosion.

Sam Ferguson was buried at a northerly point in the West Middletown Cemetery. His wife had picked out the spot as one that overlooked his work; the panoramic, sloping hills to the north embracing the single track ribbon of steel known as "The Wabash."

As time went on, leads were followed up and found empty of a solution to the crime. Then one day two men were discovered spending quite a bit of money for the times on the South Side of Pittsburgh. These were identified as Milovar Kovovick and Milovar Pattrovvick, native of Croatia, a crown province of Austria. They had purchased clothing and a draft for \$2,000 on a town on Croatia. It was later learned that Kovovick had worked for the Ferguson Construction Co. during the previous summer and had been in charge of the materials used in exploding dynamite in the building of the Wabash.

Both men took off for New York before officials could apprehend them. Here they took ship for England, but an alert Pittsburgh detective, Thomas McQuaide, one of the many interested out-of-county lawmen who had been working on the case for some time, foiled their attempt to land at England's Southampton. They were brought back to Washington, trial was held February 15, 1904, and at its conclusion, Milovar Kovovick, was sentenced to hang by Judge J.F. Taylor. His partner, Pattrovvick, escaped the death penalty by the confession of Kovovick stating that Pattrovvick had nothing to do with

the dynamite blast. Three other men who had been actively involved in the blast planning, had earlier escaped to Europe; leaving Kovovick to pay with his life for the crime. Milovar Pattrovick was given a 20-year jail sentence by Judge Taylor, but only served 15 years of the term, due to parole.

Milovar Kovovick was hanged in the rotund of the county jail, September 8, 1904.

Time heals all wounds and by 1906, happier days once more filled the lives of West Middletown folks.

John D. France saw the reunion of his beloved Roundheads climax to a full and long-remembered day of celebration this year of 1906. It too, was a September day; a Thursday, the sixth day of the month. The new railroad had helped bring in many visitors; while hold soldiers in faded blue gathered at the Grove U.P. Church, displayed their medals and sadly recounted the loss of comrades in the Civil War.

Perhaps their thoughts turned to another soldier; not clad in uniform, but one who had nevertheless lost his life in his chosen line of duty; helping as they did, to bring unity, via rail, to America.

Samuel T. Ferguson, soldier of transportation.

# "Double Chloride of Gold"

## Kicking the Habit, Ca. 1880

Around and about the Tri-State in the year 1880, there were many evils to beset the young and old male, ranging from river-boat gambling to demon rum.

Many publications and newspapers, including the forerunner of this newspaper during the 1890's, carried the famous Keeley Institute for Drunkenness advertisement. It was the original effort to cure the alcoholic before the advent of the famous "AA'S."

It was an interesting cure, if not a certain one.

In 1880, one Dr. L.E. Keeley of Dwight, IL, made a remarkable discovery concerning the age-old problem of the "swinging doors." This was his renowned "Double Chloride of Gold for the Cure of Drunkenness," or so he wrote in a pamphlet describing his product.

The cure was sold only in pairs, the cost being \$9 for the two bottles; the whole being somewhat like the present-day purchase of epoxy glue - two bottles were needed to make the bond. We shall see how it worked as we read the directions given with each purchase of the Keeley remedy:

"No. 1. It is indispensably necessary that the medicine be taken in teaspoonful doses in half a glass of water, six times a day at least, and oftener if the desire to drink is intense. The first dose must be taken immediately on getting out of bed in the morning, the last dose just before getting into bed at night, and the other four (doses) before meals and between meals.

If the medicine makes the patient sick at the stomach the first day or two, he must reduce the dose to half a teaspoonful till the sickness passes off; then gradually increase the dose to a teaspoonful as soon as possible.

"No. 2. A bath ought to be taken every third night - through the first nine days of treatment, and the body well-rubbed down with a hard crash towel after each bath. This will be found necessary as the patient will generally have night sweats during the early part of the treatment.

"No. 3. Underwear should be changed every fourth or fifth day during the treatment.

"No. 4. It will be better, if the patient can do it, to go to bed at an early hour, so as to get all the rest possible.

"No. 5. It is also essentially necessary that the patient take his meals at regular hours for three weeks after commencing the Gold Cure; and during the first nine days eat between meals if the stomach will tolerate food, but regular times for eating must be observed.

"No. 6. Outdoor exercise is recommended in all cases as far as practicable.

"No. 7. The bowels must be kept well open, compound cathartic pills may be used if necessary.



"If these rules are faithfully observed they will facilitate a cure. I (Dr. Keeley) put no restraint upon the patient while he is taking my Gold Cure, but would request him not to take liquor when he can do without.

Dr. Keeley then followed with a heading in his copy called "General Results":

"After the third day the patient usually finds liquor distasteful to him, and after the fourth day he frequently refuses it altogether. His appetite will be improved and he will sleep as soundly as a healthy child. He must continue with the medicine in the usual doses, however, till the first bottle is exhausted; It takes two bottles to effect a cure."

Well, it takes "two to tango," doesn't it.

We continue with the good doctor's interpretation of his cure:

"The principle is that the Double Chloride of Gold acts much the same as that of vaccination, viz: it eliminates from the system an element which has an affinity for the poison of alcohol. Vaccine virus, it is well known, eliminates an element from the system which has an affinity for the poison variola or smallpox. When the patient, by frequent graduated doses, accumulates sufficient of the Gold in his system to make it antipathic to the poison of alcohol, the cure is made."

Further discourse on the use of the Gold Cure, shows Dr. Keeley to have been a student of social problems, as well as what the reader may now accept as quackery:

"The Gold Cure is a medical and not a moral agent; and whereas it will take away a man's appetite for alcoholic drinks, yet it will not break up the social relations which so often lead to the drinking habit, for these reasons dealers must exercise great care in selling the Gold Cure to unmarried men under the age of 35. Married men under 35 usually have influences thrown around them which will prompt them to seek a cure; and when cured they will rightly estimate the value they have gained and guard it with jealous care. When the Gold Cure is sold to either class, the friends of the patient must see to it that the medicine is taken implicitly according to directions, so that a cure may be obtained in every case. If left to the patient, he may evade the directions, and so bring discredit upon this valuable remedy."

Like the great Gold Strikes of California and the Ukon, Dr. Keeley's Gold Cure, no doubt, uncovered a mother lode of mail orders from all over the country...but as Rule No. 4 says: "It will be better, if the patient can do it, to go to bed at an early hour, so as to get all the rest possible." Keep out of trouble that way.

And keep away from those swinging doors! The Gold Cure could put a worse strain on a man's constitution than Carrie Nation's flying hatchet!

## Drake Well Memorial Park May Interest Area Folk

The far-flung petroleum empire of today was cradled at what is now Drake Well Memorial Park near Titusville on the "Pennsylvania Trail of History." In a scenic little valley along the banks of Oil Creek, Edwin L. Drake, on August 27, 1859, completed the world's first successful oil well.

For Washington Countians, there is felt a sense of romance and nostalgia when they visit Drake Well Park; for Washington County also knew the wave of "oil" excitement that emanated southward from the nation's first oil center some 30 years following the Drake strike.

Such "excitement" was the big oil boom at McDonald, in the early 1890's.

But long before the McDonald field, operators had begun to search for oil in Washington County as early as 1861. The Eureka Oil Company, a local drilling outfit, sank a well in Amity. It went down to 900 feet but was a dry hole. Later other companies put down wells at Prosperity, Lone Pine, and South Strabane Township. No luck. Wells put down at nearby Georgetown, Beaver County, had been good producers and caused all the flurry of drilling in Washington County.

In the mid-1880's, another try was made on the Gantz lot at Washington and struck oil at a depth of 2,191 feet. This set off a spark of drilling and pumping that was soon to give the area a national name in oil. This first well gave the name "Gantz Sand" to the industry, from the deep strata which gave up the oil.

As the Washington field progressed, hotels and many men from the "upper oil country," veterans of the original Pennsylvania field at Titusville.

When the McDonald oil field opened up in 1890, it was called "the greatest white sand pool" ever discovered. Here the famous Matthews and McVey wells set new records in oil production.

The McDonald Field lay in Both Allegheny and Washington counties, and covered almost 12,000 acres. In less than three years (1890-1893), the forest of oil derricks in and about McDonald had yielded over 22,000,000 barrels with the drilling of 1,266 wells. 121 of them had been non-producers. On the first day of September, 1891, the McDonald pool production was 13,000 barrels a day. By November 1st, it had risen to 77,000 barrels, and on November 5, had jumped to the high-water mark of the field: 84,300 barrels a day.

# Drilling of New Well Recalls History of Local Oil Boom

"And so it was, God created the great sea monsters, all kinds of living, swimming creatures with which the waters abound and all kinds of winged birds. God saw that it was good and God blessed them, saying - 'be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas.'" - Genesis 1:20

The above may have been an apt description of that hectic middle of the week of Creation when the Devonian period of the earth's convulsive birth occurred. At this time the seas had progressed and receded, leaving vast and eccentric beach areas that were to be known - 320,000,000 years later - as the oil sands of Western Pennsylvania.

The Devonian age was called the "age of the fishes" - all manner of crustacean and marine life inhabited the seas that composed a great portion of the globe in this era. To better understand the references to the various "sands" that lie under the McDonald Oil Field, we might liken the depths to contain ancient gravel, or sandy beaches made by these shallow waters of eons ago.

It is as though we were seated atop a huge Dagwoodian sandwich - with Miami Beach on the bottom, Virginia Beach on top of it, and several other beaches - like Coney Island, etc., making up the layers of the sandwich - with, of course, various sedimentary rocks, etc., between each layer.

Now, then, when a well is drilled, the bit or tool, penetrates to one of these ancient "beaches or sands" and the mineral wealth entrapped in the porosity of the "sand" is brought to the surface by pumping or internal pressure.

The photos above show the new oil well being drilled by the Quaker State Oil Co. of Noblestown. This well will endeavor to reach the "Fifth Sand", or the "Miami Beach" mentioned previously. The site of the new drilling operation is just a scant 500 yards or more from the venerable producer of the oil boom of 1891 - the great Matthews No. 1. The writer will endeavor to follow the progress of the well each week until the Fifth Sand is reached.

This was the sand in which many of the fabulous McDonald Field strikes were made - and gained for the McDonald Field the title of the world's greatest producer in the years 1891-92-93.

By following the course of the new Quaker State well many of the younger and newer residents of the McDonald area will become acquainted with the terminology used in drilling, and will better understand the great oil boom of early McDonald history.

Last week, while on a visit to the Quaker State Oil plant, north of Noblestown, to obtain some data on the Matthews No. 1 well, I happened to converse with Charles Collins, a resident of Noblestown and long-time employee of the old Jennings Works, now the Quaker State. When my attention was drawn to a strange looking rig on the hill above the plant, Mr. Collins told me that Quaker State had started drilling operations on that site.

This would provide an opportunity to follow the drilling operation and at the same time, allow some of the interesting history of the McDonald Field to be written in conjunction with the day-by-day progress of the new well.

The next step was to see the field foreman, Harry Brinkman, and arrange to visit the well daily until the operation was completed. Mr. Brinkman proved to be very cooperative and pleased with the idea of publishing a day-by-day account of the new well, and gave his hearty approval to the project.

Mr. Brinkman was born in Hickory and has been connected with the oil business for a period of 21 years. He resides in R.D. 1, Oakdale, is married, and the father of three boys and a girl. Energetic and optimistic about the petroleum industry in general, he filled in on many details of the new venture - "we're going down to the Fifth Sand," he said, and then added- "This will be a producing well - we hope!!"

The well had already been underway for a period of five or six weeks, and outside of minor delays, had managed to progress to the top of the slate covering the salt sand. I began to follow the course of the drilling on Tuesday, March 7.

The new well is in the Piazza farm, above the Quaker State Plant - the newcomer will be known as the Matthews No. 10, or the J.J. Matthews No. 10.

Before proceeding to the well, let's have a look at the chart below which illustrates the various strata the bit will pass through on its way to the Fifth Sand. The chart was prepared by George Meehan of McDonald.

At the time of the writer's first visit to the well, it had already reached a depth of 900 feet and the next entry will be into the salt sand, or gas sand. I had been told that only two men worked each 12-hour shift, a tool dresser, and a driller. As I entered the rig, I saw two extremely young men, instead of the grizzled veterans of the oil field that I had expected.

Making my business known, the boys responded with much enthusiasm over the project. The driller on this shift was Alfred Jones, age 25, of Pennsboro, WV. He had been in oil work the past five years. This was his first major role as driller. The tool dresser was Herb Thomas, Jr., of Metz, WV. He was a fledgling, 24 years of age, with only a year's service. At this time, the well was still above the salt sand. Since the boys had just run the tools down, I left to return that evening.

March 7, 1961.

On this shift as driller and tool dresser are Fred Ramsey and Glenn Kennedy. Much older than the younger men of the morning shift, they also have a great many more years of drilling experience.

Fred Ramsey, an amiable fellow from Farmington, WV, had been in oil work for 26 years - and had worked wells in Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and now Pennsylvania.

Glenn Kennedy, who hails from Gladden Heights, McDonald, also has many years' experience in the oil field.

I had brought my tow boys along - Jimmy, age 14, and Charles, age 7. To them this was better than television - it was the real McCoy - no Clark Gable oil movie had as much interest as watching the string of tools rise and seeing the veteran Ramsey handle the cable as the work progressed.

Like the old-time river-boat pilots of the Mississippi steamers, he can place his hand on the moving cable as it works up and down and interpret the message telegraphed back from the depths - like a pilot feeling his way through shoal water. He can tell when the bit is in trouble - every quiver, every erratic tug of the cable means something to the experienced driller.

While here on the evening visit, the tools were brought to the surface and the drillers explained how the "bailer" works. The bailer, or clean-out device, is 32 feet long and seven inches in diameter. On the bottom is a trap which permits water and tailing to enter. It is then brought to the surface and emptied. The bailer holds about one and one-half barrels of fluid and two trips down are usually enough to bail before resuming drilling. Samples of shale and sand are taken from the bailer when needed.

Discussion of the salt sand and its possible gas with Mr. Kennedy, gave rise to the question of what happened when gas was encountered. I asked about the story of the Cook Well, a spectacular fire of the 1891 era. Mr. Kennedy said that his father, the late Charles Kennedy, Sr., of McDonald, for many years a rig builder, had often told the story of the conflagration.

Here is what occurred: The well was on the Cook Lot, near the McDonald Railroad Station. On August 14, the Wheeling Gas Co. made a strike, and the well began to flow at the rate of 15 barrels an hour. By evening this had increased to 200 barrels an hour, and for a week it continued to pour out a golden flood. Then, on August 21, the oil was ignited by a spark from a train or from the boilers. The fire quickly spread, and in a very short time the derrick and four tanks were destroyed, and the geyser of oil spouting from the hole 2,000 feet deep, sent a great column of fire high into the heavens. For days the fire burned in spite of all efforts to extinguish it. Such a terrifying but beautiful spectacle had never been seen before in the Pennsylvania oil country and its like will never be seen again in this region.

Fire Chief Fisher of Oil City was sent for and he rigged up some kind of device for capping the well. But just when it was ready to drop a thimble over the hole, the scaffold broke and the whole affair was smashed. Then Glenn T. Broden of Washington, superintendent of the National Transit Co., took a hand, and went to Oil City, where he had a special capping device of his own design made, and this was successful.

The fire was extinguished, after having burned for six days and two hours. Estimates were made that more than 30,000 barrels had gone up in smoke. On the evening of August 27, after the flames were extinguished, the well was still pouring out oil at the rate of 85 barrels an hour.

Such was the incident of the Cook Well Fire, as told by Earle R. Forrest, in the anniversary edition of the Washington Reporter, August 15, 1958. Since the fire had raged for six days, perhaps some resident of the town has a photo of the fire, or perhaps a drawing.

Wednesday Morning, March 8.

Last night at 10:30, the tools dropped in the well. On going up to the rig today, I was told by Mr. Brinkman, "A big blonde walked by last night and the boys were distracted!" Even in the face of big trouble, Mr. Brinkman was jovial.

Although a big blonde, or small one either, had not walked by the rig, a big "gremlin" had done its work. Losing the tools is not new in the oil industry. And if a man could devise a sure-fire method to retrieve any and all such dropped items, he would be as rich from his patent as any Texas oil millionaire, without ever having to drill a well.

The bit was down to 1,031 feet, and still atop the salt sand. A fracture of a weld on the end of the tool had caused the delay, and Mr. Ramsey said they may have to bring in a milling-machine to ream off the end of the bit, in order to allow a socket to slip over and grasp the broken end.

Mr. Brinkman has described the sliver on the broken tool as being "like a spur on a fightin' chicken!" The top had bent over and must be cut off. This job is known as a "fishing job" and is a distinct and important part of the business. There are at least a hundred and one different types of tools - all tailored for a particular job.

Thursday, March 9.

Still fishing. This problem will be licked. People at Cape Canaveral were undergoing difficulties putting objects in space - we are having trouble going into the bowels of the earth. It would be easier to recover that bit than a satellite - and less expensive. 70 years of tool recovery experience were behind these men, and I had confidence that the tool would be recovered.

Friday, March 10.

Still fishing for the broken tool. A veteran "fisherman" has been brought in. Leonard Runyan, a specialist for Quaker State, will try his hand at getting the reluctant metal back to the surface. Leonard has brought with him a milling machine and this device will taper the end of the "catch and allow a grappling tool to take hold - we hope."

Although the 1961 well has been temporarily halted, the history of the McDonald Oil Field will roll on.

## Empty Buggies in the Old Camp Ground Or Where Do We Ride Tonight?

Not long ago, a reader of HILLBILLY, one W.H. Merryman of Vero Beach, Florida, had written in to ask us to tell of the old days of the Bellview Camp Meeting, once held nearby the West Virginia state line at Independence, Pennsylvania. The Camp Grounds did an annual show during the month of August each year, from about the early 1870's until 1927. Many of those who have left the Northern Panhandle these many years may enjoy my story.

In requesting this item, Mr. Merryman touched on a fine old memory; a recall of the halcyon days of out-door religious gatherings. The Bellview meetings were attended by many folks from Bethany, Wheeling, Wellsburg and Steubenville, along with those from nearby Washington, PA, and the city of Pittsburgh. Unfortunately we were not able to secure any photos of the old days at Bellview; perhaps a reader or two might have such and send them along.

Next to the annual county fair, Bellview Camp Meeting time was a highlight of the late summer calendar for turn-of-the-century folk. Here, in what was then an extremely rural setting, composed of dusty roads and the all-important horse and buggy, capacity crowds of as high as 5,000 or more gathered in a yearly session of preachin' and fun-making during the two week period of the meet.

Accounts in old Wellsburg Herald newspapers of the mid-1880's told of camp-meeting tickets to the number of 3,000 being sold at the gates on a Sunday, while the estimated number of regular season ticket holders brought the total sales to the above-mentioned 5,000. This was in the year 1886, and certainly must have created a tremendous "buggy" parking problem; present-day parking lot engineers being unheard of then. The "dust cloud" created by the many whirling buggy wheels could be seen for miles.

So it was a big, big show when "camp-meeting" time rolled around each summer.

Let's glance at a "Programme" of the Bellview Camp Meeting Association's show of August 10 to 18, 1918. This was during wartime and the usual two-week session had been shortened this year to one week.

On an inside page of the well-composed booklet appeared a fine description of the ground's location. "...To be held in their beautiful grove near Independence, PA, seven miles east of Wellsburg, WV, and sixteen miles west of Washington, PA, about four miles south of Avella, the nearest station on the Wabash RR (now Norfolk and Wester), and the same distance from Bethany, WV, and the terminus of the WB and W Trolley Line." (This was the old traction line that ran from Wellsburg to Bethany.)

Overnight accommodations were to be had at the excellent hotel located on the grounds, and managed by Wm. D. Campbell and Charles S. Smith, who: "Furnished the best meal at the lowest possible prices. Good and comfortable rooms at reasonable rates."

This year of 1918 promised readings by Helen Virginia Nesbit, music by the Criterion Male Quartet, and with the entire entertainment program in the capable hands of Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Kincheloe.

Saturday of this gala week at the Bellview Grounds, saw a fine Home Talent Minstrel Show. Sunday, the closing day, was blessed with a rousing address by the Hon. Henry Willson Temple, Member of Congress from the 24th District of Pennsylvania.

This World War I gathering of the faithful at camp-meeting was billed as the "46th Annual Session" and gives one an idea of how many years the Association had been operating.

Space does not permit the countless stories of the old days at Bellview to be told in their entirety. For many years there was an auditorium on the grounds which echoed with the dramatic efforts of many groups during those wonderful summers of long ago. The auditorium is gone now, but part of the hotel remains, as well as many of the cottages used by patrons during the two-weeks stay on the grounds. Venerable oaks that saw much of the grounds hey-day still stand untouched by the years. Oldsters in the area who recall the Bellview meetings still refer to the grounds as "Dear Old Bellview."

Earlier we had mentioned "funmaking" in describing the sessions at Bellview. Camp-meeting in those days was not all pomp and circumstance, and young lovers found the wooded acres of Bellview ideal for romance. In this era, matches were made in Heaven and at Bellview Camp Ground. Which was alright, as Bellview was a Shangri-La of scenic beauty and atmosphere that aided and abetted such things. And as there were no "drive-ins," or motion picture balconies to hold hands in; "camp-meeting" was the conglomerate of all such daring pleasures.

Ask any old-timer in the Ohio Valley or neighboring Washington County, PA, about Bellview Camp Meeting, and you will be surprised at how good the "good old days" really were. And if you questions him further he will long for a time-machine to take him back again to those time-gilded days when he was 25 years old, with a straw hat (flat, of course), striped blazer and celluloid collar, a fast buggy, and the world his oyster.

Like a rare old wine, a week or two at Bellview had a mellow bouquet to it; a dash of deviltry, a smidgin of stolen kisses and a crowning finish of Gospel that was only akin to the swelling chorus of the exquisite music of Gounod's "Faust," as the beautiful Marguerite ascends to heaven amid the chant of a heavenly choir.

They were great days, all of them.



## Expo '67 Had A Rival in Chicago in 1893

With summer just around the corner, and vacation time along with it, everyone is talking about Montreal, Canada's "Expo 67." A really big, big show if there ever was one. And there was.

Entitled the "Great White City," or "The Columbian Exposition of 1893," this sparkling finale to the closing years of the past century, gave the nation's visitors to Chicago, a grand thrill of visual ecstasy.

Carriages, trains and steamers brought a converging multitude of spectators into the midwest city, and though, like other fairs, the Columbian Exposition did not make a great deal of money, it did provide many fun-filled hours of pleasure.

Back in those days, electricity, the magic genie and slave of such men as Thomas A. Edison and Michael Faraday, was just getting underway as a means of lightening the tasks of mankind. "Dynamo" and "Rheostat" were as strange a pair of terms to that era, as "launch-pad" and "orbital velocity" were to be nearly three-quarters of a century later.

Here in the "Electric Building," a vast array of strange, humming devices enthralled the farm boy from Indiana, along with the straw-hatted dandy from New York's Broadway. The secrets of the telephone were revealed; methods of heating and cooking by electricity were shown, and it had an impact that left fair-goers talking for months after they had returned home.

The prime purpose of the overall Exhibition was to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America. The Santa Maria, a replica of the flagship on whose quarterdeck Columbus had trod as Admiral, had been built by the Spanish Government. It was an authentic piece of work, and lay at a wharf, just east of the Agricultural Building, and her decks were constantly black with visitors.

Daring exhibition ventures too, were apparent at every turn in the vast fair complex. Next to electricity, the showing of nude paintings was to set a trend that carried well into the 1920's. The Palace of Fine Arts showed clearly the end of one era and the birth of the next. "Realistic" art was also a category that shocked many visitors; critics lamented the gesture toward depicting the ugly and vulgar aspects of life - such as Millet's "Man With The Hoe," Martinetti's "Malaria," and Koehler's "The Strike."

Biggest individual name at the fair of 1893, was that of George Washington Gale Ferris. His famous "ferris Wheel" stood 264 feet in the air, and carried 36 cars, each with a capacity of sixty persons. At fifty cents a head, the device earned back its \$380,000 cost, plus \$25,000 on its first royalty. Today, no fair, large or small, is complete without one.

The Midway Plaisance was a distinctive part of the Exposition. It was a vast side-show to end all sideshows, and covered everything from a Beauty Pageant to the sinuous act of "Little Egypt," the bellydancer. Besides the "Streets of Cairo," where Miss Egypt held forth, the Midway Plaisance displayed such attractions as The German Village, the South Sea Islands Exhibit, The Irish Village, The Chinese Show, and the panorama of Kilauea, the great volcano of the Hawaiian Islands.

Today the glory and bustle of the old Columbian Exposition is preserved in ancient stereo views, colorful photo albums and countless news stories in old publications of the Gay 90's.

## Georgetown Rich in History for River Experts

Georgetown, Pennsylvania, in nearby Beaver County, is a village of much history. Located along the historic Ohio, it still retains a whisper of the days of the Poes, Calhouns, Kinseys, Mackalls and others who helped carve out the rich transportation heritage of steamboat days in the Tri-State.

One man who lived and died in Georgetown, was Capt. Adam Poe, Sr., who, in 1887, wrote of his days on the river. Capt. Poe was a descendant of the famed Indian fighters, Adam and Andrew Poe.

North of our area, lies the river borough of Georgetown, PA. It is just over the boundary of the Washington county line, in nearby Beaver County. As a borough, it's not large, but it holds a wealth of interesting historical studies, especially for "river buffs."

Many years ago, during the War of 1812, Georgetown was the site of an important ferry to the northern bank of the Ohio and was a starting-out point for Washington and Burgettstown volunteers headed north to engage the British. The ferry is long gone; and anew bridge near Shippingport does the honors.

Today the tiny borough retains a nostalgic quality; neatly painted homes, well-tended gardens and even some of the green setting that existed in the early days of steamboating on the Ohio. Georgetown was "home" for many captains, mates and pilots of the "rafters," side-wheelers and later stern-wheelers, from 1816 to the turn of the century.

One man who saw much of Georgetown in his lifetime, was Adam Poe, Sr., a grandson of famed Indian fighter, Adam Poe. He was a riverman and made a great many trips out of Georgetown on both the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. In 1887, Adam Poe, Sr. wrote the story of his life as a riverman; the copy appearing some time ago in the 1951 issue of the "Wellsville (O.) Echoes," a publication of the Wellsville Historical Society, that city.

Georgetown is a peaceful village these hectic days of the 1970's. If one were to set up one of the new electronic gadgets used to measure the noise level pollution of 1972; the dial would register a solid zero for Georgetown's din. There just isn't any discordant sounds in town.

We visited the cemetery at Georgetown this Memorial Day. An apropos time. Here, on the hillside above the flat bottom that holds Georgetown, we found the fine marker over Capt. Poe's grave. His years spanned the gap between 1816 and 1895.

Samuel Clemens, or Mark Twain, had his Hannibal, Missouri and his beloved Mississippi; Adam Poe, Sr., had his Georgetown and the exciting Ohio of his time.

Here then, is Capt. Adam Poe's recollection of his days, from childhood up, on the Tri-State's historic Ohio. It is a graphic word account of who it all happened "going west", via a watery highway:

"I was born in the village of New Lisbon, Columbiana County, Ohio, November 20, 1816. When about five years old I recollect being put on a horse to ride behind my grandfather, Adam Poe, to Wayne County, Ohio, but have no recollection of the journey, and I have no doubt but that I was well taken care of. I have been told by parties that I was the idol among my father's family. I can remember a few happenings of the year I lived with him before my father moved out to the same place where the town of Congress now stands, in Wayne Co., Ohio. Father built a house for his family out of small logs and split floorings called puncheons and hewed them so as to level the floor. When the heat of the summer set in,

we all took the flu. I was taken home, and mother being a good nurse, well posted on the medicinal qualities of herbs growing in the woods, she brought us all through safely.

"The following winter father hired a man to bring his family and household goods to Georgetown, which consisted of five children. Later the family increased to ten children, five boys and five girls. At this writing (1887) two of each party are on the shores of time waiting until our change comes.

"The following spring father and the eldest brother got work with the farmers in the neighborhood. There was not one dollar of money in sight - they were paid in the products of the farm, which kept the inner and outer man on terra firma and always able for allowances.

"When moving back from Wayne Co. I was left near by birthplace, at my grandfather's on mother's side of the house. Father came for me the following June and took me with him to lay a night line that he was going to bait with worms. Fishing with a night line was different to what it is now. You put the hooks on the line, dropped the staging over the side of the canoe, using a gourd for a buoy, and lifted the line every time you checked it.

"So while father was getting his line ready in the canoe, he told me to go to a tree he selected standing under the bank, where there was dry sand and sand the worms. he wished dry sand put in the vessel containing the worms, but I took them up to the place he showed me, scratched a hole in the sand and buried the worms. He crossed the river for his line and asked me for the worms. I told him they were on the other side of the river. He was quite angry as he had to make two crossings for the worms.

"About two years later, father agreed to go to Wheeling with his canoe from our place, a distance of fifty-six miles. The pay for the trip was to be the sum of one dollar. Nothing occurred that I can remember except a heavy rain and wind storm at the foot of Brown's Island. We housed in a fisherman's shanty till the storm passed over - that was six miles above Steubenville.

"Our diet consisted chiefly of Johnny cake and meat, as that was the kind of bread the inhabitants of Georgetown lived on, and it was really good when gotten up right. It was baked by a wood fire on an oak board. I think if the rising generation lived a little more to that style there would be less doctor bills to pay and the people would live longer. My mother was an artist in the way of getting it up right, but her earthly career ended some years since, and she is now, I trust, reaping her reward for her many good deeds done on earth. I feel rejoiced to know she lived to see prosperity in her family and could have had an easy life had she wished. She raised five sons and five daughters to man and womanhood. We arrived in Wheeling the second day and lodged at Crowley's Tavern, near the river, at the upper end of the city wharf. One instance fresh in my memory was of a small boy about two years old coming to the river to look at father's craft with the old innkeeper. He was a little cross-eyed and would take the Saviour of the world's name in vain when coaxing his father to purchase our craft. I will stop and think if Abe Crowley is still alive. He was schooled in a very bad element. Keel boatmen and the rough element did a great deal of drinking at Crowley's Inn. A good story was told on Captain Stone's going up through Merriman's Ripple, where the channel runs close to the shore. Stone said to his passengers, 'There is a lame man going our way,' and called out to him, 'Will you come on board if I stop for you?' 'Oh no,' replied the man, 'I am in a hurry!'

"The last remembrance I have of our canoe trip was the first night out of Wheeling. I got so sleepy I lay down in the bow of the canoe and went to sleep. On arriving at the upper end of Wellsburg, father landed and carried me out to a flat lying on the shore to get sleeping quarters for the night.

"The reader must remember that this was a trip occupying nearly four days with a man and boy, who could not pay many hotel bills with one dollar, and that they were not paid until the trip was performed. The next trip I remember was on a small raft of logs father had gathered up to take to Mr. Murray's sawmill at Steubenville, where they were beginning to build small steamboat hulls.

"The recollection I have of the trip is of father's running on the Virginia (WV) side of Baker's Island, about one mile below Wellsville, Ohio. Before the government built the dam at the head of the island the shallow water was near the foot of the island and very swift. The raft was built of logs in the river. Some of the logs were large and some small and they rolled under the small all were round. When the large logs began to come in contact with the bottom of the river one. It was a lively time for father I to keep from getting between the logs and getting crushed or drowned, as David Crockett said of the wagon getting away from the driver or getting out of his control. Going down the Allegheny mountains he was a passenger in the wagon, it being loaded with flour. He said a rat could hardly live, let alone a man. I tell you a fish would have done some good dodging had it been mixed up with father's logs. I have no more remembrance of the trip, only I supposed we rafted over and took then to Steubenville.

"The next boating was on a raft of hoop poles. I was about nine years old. We took it to Moundsville, WV. One incident I will never forget, and was one when father walked home and I trotted home after him. When we arrived at the head of the narrows above Kate's Rock, father stopped and said to me: 'I will find the place where Capt. Foreman with his 21 men were buried, after having been waylaid and murdered by the Indians. There was a large quantity of beads found in the path, and was supposed by the parties who buried them, to belong to the Indians.

"Grandfather was a Captain of the fort below the mouth of Big Yellow Creek. He was called to help bury the dead. It was a long distance to go to a funeral, but grandfather had a commission from the government and had to go when called upon. The distance from Yellow Creek is 56 miles. I remember nothing more of that trip.

"About 1824 or 1825 there was a pair of French Creek flat boats that landed at our village (Georgetown), size to the locks 80 feet long by 16 feet wide, made large at that time for transporting coal to the south. My father, Thomas Poe, Sr., hired as a hand to go to Cincinnati at 50 cents per day, there being a sudden rise in the river, boats floated to Cincinnati in four days and nights, so father had two dollars wages coming to him with four dollars back pay. Steamboat passage was scarce at that time. If he had struck a boat it would have cost him about \$6.00 and he would have been ordered around like a dog.

"At that date boats only burned wood, and it had to be carried often a great distance. Father was well posted on the nearest directions across the state of Ohio, as he had been employed as pack horse boy for John Beaver and Joseph Larwill in laying out the state or the eastern part of the state. Father was a good woodsman and could tell the direction he wanted to go by the moss on the trees, as moss grows on the north side. He arrived home in about ten days without having spent very much money out of the big pile he left Cincinnati with.

"In those days it was the custom in our neighborhood to get your wheat ground and ship it on one of the keel boats that ran in that trade. Most of the farmers were good 'poling' hands.

"On my first trip I was not big enough to cook, and before starting, procured a broken pole and got it rigged up for service, concluding to be a 'pole hand' I could reach as low as the old hands, and had no trouble until going up the smooth rock chute at Montgomery's Island, six miles below Beaver. Here my pole would not reach, and in getting down on it the pole slipped and sent me diving to the bottom. An old farmer next to me caught me in time to keep the turtles from eating me."

## Days on Riverboat Recalled by Adam Poe

Georgetown, the former home of Adam Poe, Sr., is worth a visit these early summer days.

To reach it from Washington, you take Route 18 north to Frankfort Springs, then in town, turn left to Route 168. Drive on until you reach Laughlin's Crossroads. Here you cross Route 30 and continue to Hookstown, famed for its annual fair. At Hookstown, another left turn puts you on a long, sloping grade into Georgetown. It is the only paved road entering the town, and one must return on it when leaving.

One of the first items to catch your eye is the old two-story schoolhouse, which now operates as the borough building. Built in 1902, the frame structure sits in the center of an attractive green and seems to give a touch of New England to this portion of our Tri-State.

The fine atmosphere of the old river days still lingers among its fine old homes and stately shade trees.

But to continue with the story of Adam Poe and his time on the river:

"In the fall of 1834, father was in Pittsburgh, the river being very low. One of the Beaver County farmers brought an old boat, hired another and loaded the boats for Wheeling and intermediate landings. The farmer was sharp enough to collect most of the freight bills and left the boats to the care of father, so father bought an old horse to tow up the empty boats, came to our boat at Warren, Ohio, and found it lying at the bottom of the river.

I said to father: 'better leave the old boat and go on with two,' but father became offended at my words. He was feeling rich at the time, and handed me \$3 in silver. I dashed them on the floor, and some of the hired hands present gathered them up and forced them on me, or I would have gone on with nothing.

I saw a steamboat coming up the river and hailed her at Warren, but she would not stop. I was determined to board her, and with the purpose in mind, chased her to Beech Bottom, where she came close enough to send a yawl for me. I got home the next morning.

Mother was sorry I had left father, as she knew I was an important help to him. My two older brothers came the next day from Pittsburgh with their boats loaded for Zanesville. Mother coaxed them to take me along. When I got home, father had yielded enough to let mother coax me back to help him. I helped him part of the winter and also bought one of his boats.

He laid up for the winter at Steubenville. About January, there came an open river, and I took a crew of hands from our place (Georgetown) and borrowed five dollars from my two older brothers to provision the boat for the trip.

"James means furnished me with two hundred barrels of flour for my first load. I got up as far as Georgetown where I found the river frozen. I hired a sled and hauled my goods to a warehouse. "When spring came, I loaded up again. I painted the boat over and named her Victory, as I started out to gain a victory or die in the attempt.

"My first freight trip netted me \$50.25. There came a strong west wind, and we sailed almost all the way to Pittsburgh. I paid my hired help 50 cents per day. Five days were required for the whole trip. Arriving at the city, I paid off all but one hand and the cook. I got a load of salt or blooms for the iron mill above Wheeling and then went to Wellsburg, WV. Here I called on Farr and Curran, who shipped a great deal of flour to Pittsburgh, and when they learned my name I certainly was their boy.

Farr and Curran gave me three loads in succession. When I returned they seemed to take a great interest in my welfare because of my grandfather's history in fighting Indians. Phillip Doddridge, who penned the first history of the area, was a Wellsburg man. I ran the Victory that season. I sold my boat to some trading parties to load for the South. I found the only chance for me was to hire out on a steamboat and learn something that would pay me.

"I hired on the first steamer called the Beaver. It was built by Charles Stone to tow freight and carry daylight passengers from Beaver Falls to Pittsburgh. The boat was about worn out, and George M. Horton took command of her and extended her trips to Wellsville, Ohio. He was running on the south side of the river 16 miles below Pittsburgh when the boat picked up a snag. It broke through the hull and ended up through the forecastle. The boat sank in less than three minutes and had gone down as far as the hurricane deck. The owners then wrecked her.

"The owners of the Beaver No. 2 put her in the Allegheny river trade. As time passed, the Beaver and Pittsburgh trade played out. They put Jacob Poe on her as captain and at that date there was but two Allegheny steamboat pilots.

The steamer New Castle was about the first boat to make a trade in the Allegheny river from Pittsburgh to Franklin. Brother Jacob Poe acted as an assistant until we got as far as Kittaning. We heard of a raft pilot there and got him on board. Going up the river he knew little more than ourselves, particularly at night, but was well posted downstream as he had only floated rafts from the head of navigation to the city of Pittsburgh.

After a few trips, James Dougherty was drinking so much he became a nuisance on the boat. Brother paid him off and discharged him. We were going along smoothly when an accident happened. The boat, which was supplied by cylinder boilers, 30 feet long, by 18 inches in diameter, five doors about midship of the boat, had chimneys forward the same as a flue boiler. Near Montgomery Falls, the engineer, Robert Watterson, turned a throttle valve on the boat and lost sight of the water in the boilers. He set the fireman to removing a pile of coal alongside the boilers to find the check valve.

"I was off duty at the time, not sleeping very sound on account of the boat. I was immediately over the boilers when I heard a noise like packing blowing out of a cylinder and heard three men scream violently. The boilers had become about dry and were red hot, the steam had burst a hole in the bottom of the boiler and escaped downward, badly scalding the three firemen. Had there been much water in the boilers, the firemen would have all been killed at once.

"Robert Watterson was employed by the same company, and followed the river until he saved money enough to purchase a good farm in Beaver County. The owners of the Beaver No. 2 repaired her after getting her towed to the city and loaded her and her two keel boats (Did Adam Poe, Sr., mean 'keel' boats?) for Zanesville with Captain John May, an old veteran steamboat man in command.

Below the locks at Duncan Falls, the boat got tangled in the ferry rope and the captain had to cut it. The boat could not pass through the locks, their being too short, so the freight was taken off and loaded on

the two keel boats. Captain May sent brother Jacob and myself along, we being experienced keelboatmen, to take the boats up to Zanesville, a distance of 90 miles.

The keel boats were loaded so deep we were forced to load the boat's yawl and tow it along the dam at Taylorville locks. The locks were 12 feet high, but there was a considerable break in them. We concluded not to lock the empty boat out as we were afraid the ferryman might capture it for cutting his rope. So we decided to jump the dam. I guess if we could have stopped when we neared the dam we would have risked the locks. It was the merriest jump I ever took, and all hands sat down and held onto something.

"About 1834, I shipped on the Steubenville packet boat. She had three small keel boats, and left one at Steubenville and one at Pittsburgh. This boat was built at East Liverpool, Ohio. She was open from forecastle to transom, had five cylinder boilers 20 feet long and 18 inches in diameter, fired at the midship of the boat and was very hot. Her master was Captain Dick Huston. Afterwards, the Steubenville owners put Joseph Filson in charge. She did not have enough power to comply with the trade and was sold.

"I shipped on the steamer New Lisbon, running between Wellsville, Ohio and Pittsburgh, carrying daylight passengers and towing keel boats all the time, leaving one at Pittsburgh and one at Wellsville.

It was the custom for the deckhands on those small packet boats to dine in the cabin, but Capt. Hamilton Smith began to feel rather round and had a board for the two deck hands. I did not answer the call and, of course, got no dinner.

Captain Smith came to me for an excuse, and I told him I did not wish to break the rules, as he could get plenty of men to dine below, as I was only staging in short trade on account of the fare and I wished my money as I was going to quit the boat at Georgetown.

I had loaned the boat some money to start out, and had some wages coming to me, and the boat did not have enough cash on hand to pay me until she would return from Wellsville. I ate in the cabin the balance of the trip back to the city.

## Rich in Historical Background

George Jacob Poe, the initial member of the Poe family in American, from whom descended Adam and Andrew Poe, the famed duo who engaged in the "big Indian fight" at the mouth of Tomlinson Run, WV, came to the United States from Germany in 1746.

It was 30 years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence. His grandmother was said to be Irish. One of his descendants was Thomas Poe, who in 1820, was wont to make trips to Wheeling in a canoe for the sum of \$1. Later he was paid 50 cents a day for work on flatboats. Many of the Poe family settled in Georgetown.

Tom Poe had four sons that grew to manhood with ties in Georgetown. They were Adam, Jacob, Andrew and George. They became riverboat pilots and traveled up and down the Ohio regularly.

Adam, the author of our story, lived to be 80 years of age. He was married in 1844 to Miss Lucy Smith and they became the parents of a large family. Adam had been an exceedingly energetic man in his youth; as his story will attest. He had the stimulus of hard work which his own father had performed in his pioneer days and with very little pay.

We continue with Adam Poe, Sr.'s account of Old Ohio river days:

"When I got to Pittsburgh I found a steamer called the Coquette loading for LaFayette, about the head of navigation on the Wabash river. The boat was owned by Aaron Hart and in after years he became one of my best river friends.

He was a good man. I shall never forget him. I shipped as a deck hand on the Coquette. At that time it was thought that a party coming off the ocean or lakes was better fitted to command or mate a steamer on the Ohio. Capt. Hart put a captain on the coquette, a fellow by the name of Fennel, and he hailed from Lake Erie and had his own mate along from the same place.

After going to work on the boat, the mate told me to go back to the after-scuttle and get a selvage. I went back to the little hatch, but I did not wish to lose my standing as a boatman, so I told him I couldn't find it. The selvage was made of tarred rope or spun yarn, and was used to loop over the head of the spar to push the boat away from the wharf. A selvage would not answer the purpose at a wharf in the city, as the wharf was crowded with large heavy boats and we had to use large spars and blocks and for a selvage we used a strong sea grass rope to fasten the block to the head of a spar.

"The boat left Pittsburgh with John D. Mackall and William Casey as pilots, as they were old keel boatmen and knew the river better by day than at night. Mackall had no confidence in himself and would send for me to look out for the heads of islands, as he was from our village and well acquainted with me.

That trip was one of the hardest trials of suffering of my life. The boat was narrow, and having some deck load, it was hard to keep her fair on her bottom, as it was stormy March weather. The boat had about 1000 pounds of chain on a four-wheeled truck, which my partner and I had to stand by and haul to the high side of the boat.

We were not allowed to go to the dire doors to warm. The captain took one of the boat's leads and drove a spike through the line into the jack staff as high up as he could reach to serve as a plumb line and gave us orders to stand by and keep the boat trim by it.



"Nothing unusual happened until arriving at Louisville. Mackall, at the wheel, rounded the boat into the mouth of Bear Grass Creek. I suppose he was scared, as it was night and we never stopped the engines until the boat lifted herself nearly dry in the mud at the mouth of the creek and came very near running into a produce boat. The mate set a spar and put all the strain on it that the guards of the boat would stand. It was customary at the time for boats to carry very large hawsers, put out at the hawser hole at the stern of the boat. The mate took it to the shaft and twisted the boat off, leaving the spar sticking in the mud.

"Nothing more out of the usual order of steamboating happened until we reached the mouth of the Wabash river, except hard work for us deck hands.

"In due time we arrived at LaFayette and got all our freight out. The captain got a few hundred barrels of flour back. All of us deck hands were entirely worn out and we told the captain we were not able to work any more. He showed some humanity by telling us that he would get some laborers to put it on the boat, which he did, and we stowed it away.

Nothing out of the regular order happened on the return trip until one night as the boat was making a very short turn, the chain wagon took a start from the high side of the boat and run under the old-fashioned rail, which was almost 18 inches high, and went overboard as the chain was passed out of the hawser hole and back to the anchor. But the chain was safe. We got it to the capstan and hoisted it aboard. We laughed, but our laughing was turned to sorrow, for we had to use a two-wheeled truck the balance of the trip, which was very hard work.

"After getting the chain on board, the boat landed and we had to carry wood from off the bank all night and put it in the hold. The pilots did not wish to run. Wood was cheap on the Wabash and it only kept us deck hands in steady work to bring it up to the fireman. Now I am nearing a point where I saw the brute in full force.

"Early Sunday morning we took a wood boat in tow, with about a dozen darkies on board. At Caseyville, KY, when the boat came up near the town and was in the act of letting the wood boat loose, one of the colored men asked the mate if he was going to land and he said yes, and the darkie jumped aboard. The boat started to cross over to the Indiana shore and the colored man began to cry and was in great distress, as the boat kept going up the river.

"Henry Sutton, a pilot that we got at Louisville, came down on the forecastle and took a rope end and whipped him unmercifully. Then Capt. Fennel exhausted his strength on him and tied his hands behind his back and tied him to the capstan and there he stood until evening, when the boat landed at Brandenburg, where they put him in jail.

I stood up for him like a man, although I was only a boy, and contended the mate told him before he jumped out of the wood boat that he was going to land at the town. I think this trip ended Captain Fennel's boating on the Ohio river. I suppose he went back to Lake Erie, where he could play sailor on a small scale.

"I afterwards made a trip on a pair of coal boats from Pittsburgh to Louisville late in the fall. Mackall was pilot, and I was a hand. We took passage at Louisville to return home on the deck of the steamer Ontario. We got up the river as far as Letant Falls, about midway between Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, and on account of considerable floating ice the boat could not stem the falls.

On Monday morning, we left the boat at Graham's Station, 200 miles from our homes, and started out to try the red limestone mud. It froze and thawed most of the time during the trip and we struck the Ohio river again at the foot of Blennerhassett Island and followed the river the balance of our journey, going through Belpre settlement.

Here I was taken with a pain in my right hip joint. I wanted Mackall to go on and leave me, but he would not and instead would urge me to stand up to the work. Mackall was a very good traveling companion. We averaged about 35 miles per day.

"I arrived home Saturday evening, having made the trip in six days. I afterwards made a trip from Pittsburgh to Louisville on the steamer Norfolk. Nothing out of the usual order happened on this trip, except hard work, as boats in those days had to be washed and scrubbed every morning from hurricane deck to forecastle and the water had to be drawn from the river in buckets. William Leonard was pilot - he afterward piloted boats from St. Louis to New Orleans.

"My next trip as deck hand was from Pittsburgh to St. Louis, on the teamer Dolphin, commanded by Captain Carmack, who was a perfect gentleman. William McDonald was the mate, and a very clever man he was, holding that every man should be at his post. McDonald soon after became a pilot in the Cincinnati and Pittsburgh trade.

"At the falls there was only about six feet of water, and as the boat drew more than that she began to roll and tumble over the rocks long before she came to the worst part of the channel. Looking forward we could see the waves running high. I thought she could not go over without sinking.

I was born with gift of taking danger coolly, and to take the best plan for the preservation of my own life. I was standing near the mate on the forecastle, and at every roll of the boat he would swear a big oath and as I watched his face I could see that he was alarmed. SO I spoke to my partner, Thomas Madden, that there was danger. A log of gang planks were lying by the guards, and I got Thomas to take one end of a plank and I took the other, thinking that if the boat did sink that the plank would carry us ashore. When the boat got over, the mate found the braces that held the cabin up over the boilers, all removed from their places. At that time there were timbers across the boilers and short posts were used to hold the cabin off the boilers.

"Nothing more occurred until one night another party came on board, and one that was not recorded among the boat's list or passengers. It was mixed up among a large family that was going west and was taken care of by a daughter and son-in-law, and everything went fine until the boat arrived at St. Louis. The new-born babe did well.

"At that date, it was common for boats to carry pine lumber to St. Louis. There was a large pile on the forecastle about 15 feet high. As soon as the boat was fastened to the wharf the mate told us to carry the lumber ashore. It was raining hard, but there was no chance to get out of it.

"Reader, think of a man going to his bed when he only had a pine board to lay on, with scarcely any covering, and the water dripping from the clothes he had on, with no fire and nothing to dry them except the heat from his body - such were the trials of river boatmen at that time.

"In 1836 keel boating was good, and I got a boat built. I called her the Brazil No. 4 and ran her in the Wheeling trade. The last low water trip in the fall, I got good prices and got all the dry goods I could carry in the boat. The tonnage of boats then was about 50 tons.

"I could not get a crew of hands sufficient to handle the boat and at Raccoon Bar, below Beaver, she got badly aground. Early in the morning, myself and one man waded ashore and at Two Mile Ferry we hired a lighter. It took nearly all day to get the boat afloat. It rained hard most of the time, and we started out near evening. The wind commenced to blow from the west and it began to get cold. We best against the wind until we came to small house at the head of Montgomery Island, where we stopped for shelter, and to get our clothing dry. I had stood at the helm until I was chilled to the heart. They had a large wood fire where we warmed ourselves, and it seemed to be the happiest moment of my life. It is necessary for one to suffer to appreciate real comfort.

"The next trouble we had was at the foot of Babbs Island, just above East Liverpool. There came a snow storm which drove the boat out of the channel, and she struck badly on a rock, but the hands got into the river with the old steamer Beaver, as she was a light towboat, he hired my boat. I cleared \$200 on my trip. I kept by boat under charter until winter, and then closed her out.

"About 1837, my brother and myself had a keel boat for low water in the Wheeling trade. In the latter part of the summer, I purchased a quarter section of land in Missouri. My brother said he would take care of our interests in the boat, so I started out to find my land. I could think of no better way, so I hired out on one of the large keel boats that carried dry goods to Louisville. At Louisville, I fell in with some Kentuckians who were also going west to look for some land.

The boat was crowded, both in the cabin and on deck, with passengers. John Day was captain and Alexander Forsyth, his old keelboat clerk, was mate. Forsyth afterward pushed a deck hand overboard into the canal at Louisville. The man was drowned and Forsyth went up to his room, put on a board-brimmed hat and escaped to Pittsburgh. He was never punished for his crime. He afterward married and bought a few acres of land in Beaver County, at the head of Crow's Island. Forsyth was Captain Day's right hand man, as Day could not read, and would have to ask the name of boats that were passing.

"At St. Louis, I found a small boat bound for the Missouri river, commanded by Capt. Keyser, an old veteran captain on that river who had a boat called the Shawnee. The water was too low for her and the chartered a lighter boat called the Izora. I took deck passage on this boat. As usual, the boat laid up every night to clean the boilers, as mud valves were not used then.

"My destination was Glasgow, Missouri. I showed my patent for the land and was directed to go seven miles back in the country and call on Esq. Bradford, who could give me all the information about my land, as he was an old surveyor. I stayed with him that night and found that the land almost joined his, and also that it had been sold for taxes. Next day I went to Keysville, the county seat, but got no information as to who owned the tax title to my land. I arrived back at Esq. Bradford's the same evening. The squire had no wife, lived in a log cabin, and had an old colored woman keeping house for him. He had plenty of bacon and honey and she made corn bread. Next day the squire surveyed my land, got two men to carry chain, and another old man came down to see it done, and in talking to me, said: 'the squire was a good man, and if it were not for the family of quarter blood children, that he was raisin' by a yellow woman on his farm in another house, he would be elected to any office in the country!'"

## Lillian Poe Wagner

Last winter, death claimed a very good and interesting friend.

This was Mrs. Lillian Poe Wagner, whose father, Charlie Poe, had operated a livery stable in Georgetown for many years. Mrs. Wagner was a storehouse of Poe lore and with her own Poe "talent," had given piano lessons for many years to residents of Georgetown and surrounding communities. She had been a lifelong resident of the village.

In her late seventies, Lillian Poe Wagner never failed to entertain visitors with her fine use of the piano keyboard. In the front room of the quaint old Poe home she lived in, she had two pianos. A "grand," and an "upright." On one instrument she would play "Humoresque" with one hand, while on the other side would do "Swanee River" with the remaining hand.

We often teased her with the statement that "she would be on the Lawrence Welk show with such talent!"

Her stories of Georgetown and the Poes were legend.

Mrs. Wagner's passing leaves a deep void in the teller of the story of Georgetown; but others, like Mrs. Helen Finley, Mrs. John Mackall and Mrs. Welborn, will carry the torch for future researchers.

In our last installment, Adam Poe, Sr., had traveled to Missouri to look at some land. On the way back to Georgetown, he had some high adventures; we continue:

"I had to go back to Jefferson City to find out who owned the tax title to my land. I walked to Glasgow and took a stage that ran from Glasgow to Fulton, the latter place being about 20 miles from Jefferson City, which distance I had to walk, as there was no conveyance. I had to cross Howard and Boone counties. A gentleman pointed out to me the place where Daniel Boone lived and died.

"About nightfall, I came to a farm house, where a man and his wife and hired man were the only occupants. They took me in and treated me kindly. I was still seven miles from Jefferson City, which I reached the next day. I got my business done and got ready for the next steamer that came down, which was the Zora. I took a deck passage to St. Louis.

"Soon after leaving Jefferson City, the boat ran up on a sand bar. The mate took the boat across the river, and while at dinner, the sand washed out from under the boat and everyman was then at his point. Then the pilot discovered that the channel had gone over to the west side of the river, and while running down a small channel, the pilot saw a pile of logs ahead and stopped the engines.

"The boat got cross-wise in the channel and ran upon the pile of logs until the pipes that took water for the boilers came out of the water, so no water could be got into the boilers. The only way the boat could be got off was to run a hawser ashore although it was very dangerous in the yawl. I thought it best to get as far away from the boilers as possible, so I volunteered to help take the hawser ashore. They soon pulled the boat off and we got to St. Louis alright. At St. Louis I hired out as deckhand on a steamboat called the Maine, bound for Cincinnati. All went well until the boat got to Flint Island, where the craft got aground.

"In the summer of 1840, I shipped as mate of the steamboat Orleans. She ran between Pittsburgh and Louisville. R.S. Langham was captain, Hart Darragh was clerk, Monroe and Wm. Hart as engineers and Charles Rankin and Ben Wilson were pilots. The boat did not answer her helm very well, and the pilots

missed the channel often, and when the boat got aground, I had to spar her off with an old-fashioned hand capstan.

"The Orleans was the first boat that a pump called 'the doctor' was used on. It was used for supplying the boilers with water when the engines were not running on side-wheel boats. Stern-wheel boats were better off, as they could uncouple the engines and pump water to the boilers whenever it was necessary to do so. The 'doctor' was an oscillating cylinder with a flywheel about four feet in diameter and would very often stop of its own accord and we would have to lift it over the center.

"About the same day the Vicksburg was so perfectly blown away, the Orleans was nearing the Kentucky shore at the head of 12 Mile Island above Louisville, KY. She headed for the Indiana shore and as the boat was light, she listed until the upper guards were under water. The pilot did not stop the engines until she ran against the bank and forced herself between two trees so tight that we had to cut one of them down to get the boat loose. The storm that blew the Vicksburg away, almost took another victim in the form of the Orleans. We were lucky.

"The same fall, my brother and myself bought a small keel boat and loaded with goods for the Forkadeer River. As a pilot I was the only one who had been as far down the Ohio as Cairo. We bought a book called 'The Western Pilot,' ran by it as well as we could, got near where the Forkadeer empties into the Mississippi. We landed on the Arkansas side, and made inquiry as to how far it was to Hales Point, but had hard work getting up Forkadeer River. The first three days saw no person on the shore, and the first landing was made at the widow Ferral's ferry five miles from Dyersburgh. Here some trading was done with Dyersburgh merchants. We went up the river to Chestnut bluff, where we put our goods in a house and sold our keel boat for \$100, to a noted gambler. After he gave us a \$50 note, my brother and Potts started home.

"When we got to Louisville the note was pronounced counterfeit and he returned it to me by mail. I allowed him to take the boat down to the widow's ferry and he promised again a certain time to pay the other \$50, so when the counterfeit note came to hand, I started for the ferry in haste. I walked ten miles in two hours and a half, but the boat of the gambler and widow and family were out of my reach. Some parties thought they had gone to White River, AR, got some colored men to hew me out some gun wales and I had saved some pine boards out of the keel and I built a small flat to carry our household goods to the Mississippi River, then got passage on the Helen Kirkman, bound for Nashville. I had to get off Smithland, and took passage on the Sciota bound for Louisville, took passage to Cincinnati on the mail boat Ben Franklin, and at Cincinnati took passage once more; this time on the Richmond and stopped at East Liverpool and walked home to Georgetown.

"The same spring my three brothers and myself bought the old tow boat Falston had. Two keel boats that we had used for freight furnished the cabin for passengers. The fall following we built engines for her. Three years after I built the steamer Financier for the purpose of carrying freight and passengers in low water between Pittsburgh and Cincinnati. Afterwards we sold her to Capt. Wm. Kountz.

"I ran the Cinderella four months and clear eight thousand dollars. I then sold my half of the boat and quite the river, tried farming and found it an up-hill business. I then built the Financier No. 2 and ran her three years, built the Royal Arch and sold her and built the steamer Ella.

"The railroads had spoiled the low water business between Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, but rates were high for freight and passengers from Cincinnati to St. Louis. I left Pittsburgh without any freight to run between Cincinnati and St. Louis. I got down as far as Coxe's Ripple near Wellsburg, WV, got aground and gave it up for a month. Then there came a heavy rain that raised the river at that point and floated

the boat off the bar. I gathered up part of a crew and started down the river. The boat rubbed the river bottom through every ripple until we came to Blennerhasset Island, and there was so much sand washed upon the bar at the foot of the island that there was six inches less water than the boat drew. I hired a man with oxen and scrapped and dug a channel through the bar and got to Cincinnati all right, and got plenty of freight and passengers for St. Louis at high prices.

"We took on all the freight that we could carry on the water. Nothing out of usual order of boating in low water occurred until we arrived at Paducah where took on board six southern gentlemen who bore the title of doctor and whose destination was New York. They had got off a heavy boat on account of low water. They had to return by way of St. Louis, their business was to negotiate for the building of a railroad through the south, having in view the transportation of soldiers, should the country be assailed.

The first night after passing Paducah another passenger came on board and the passengers told Mr. Wilder and his wife that they must name him after the captain. So the little stranger who was not on the passenger list at the start of the trip, was named Adam Poe Wilder. All went well and we landed Adam and his mother eight miles below St. Louis, and I have never seen nor heard from Adam since.

The next spring I took a load of freight and passengers on the Ella for the upper Missouri, Destination Galena and Dubuque. At Evansville we took a tramp aboard who had but \$1.50. The clerk let him help the cooks for the balance of his passage. Having no cargo to put out at St. Louis, we landed at the upper end of the wharf, and as the river was bank-full, the current was running pretty strong. While taking on our pilots and stores, a lady let her infant child fall from her arms into the river. The brave old tramp jumped into the water and caught the child before it sank. I heard the racket in time to see him make the wharf some ten feet above two barges that were moored below our boat where he and the child were pulled out of the river all right.

Nothing else out of the usual order occurred until we arrived at Keokuck, where we had to take out some 200 tons of freight to lighten our boat so that we could get her over the rapids. Mr. Hines furnished lighter boats and towed them over the rapids with his light bow boat. At Montrose I was told that the tramp and other deck passenger had died while crossing the rapids. While at Montrose, we applied for permission to bury them, but the authorities would not allow it, thinking that they had died of cholera. Laborers would not help us reload our cargo from the lighters; and even the thieves for which Montrose was noted, did not make their appearance. The carpenters made two rough boxes and we put them in and took them over to a low island and buried them. In overhauling the tramp's baggage, it was found that he was on his way to visit his sister at Comanche, IA, to which point his baggage was sent together with an account of his death.

I then built the Belfast No. 2 and ran her one year on the Wabash River and to Galena and Dubuque. She was a success. Sold her and build the Neptune - ran her about two years, but she had many misfortunes and drawbacks and was not a success. Sold her at the breaking out of the Rebellion, then followed piloting while the war lasted.

After the war, I bought the stern-wheeled steamer America and lost money on her, ran her one year and sold her, laid still for a while, then built a light boat and called her after the great Wyandotte chief, Bigfoot. A party from Florida wanted to buy one-half. I took his notes for \$5,000 which proved to be only worth the paper on which they were written. We loaded the boat for New Orleans, arrived there and discharged our cargo and fitted our boat to stand the storms of the gulf by having a pair of large braces put under the cabin floor and six pairs of rope twisters hawsered around the hull and roof chimneys cut off at the top of the boat, and boilers twisted down to the hull.

It was about eighty miles from the mouth of the Mississippi to the Chandeliers Island. We left the Mississippi early in the morning and about three o'clock the pilot said there was a storm approaching and told us to get up all the steam we could or we would be caught where we could not get anchorage. I had three barrels of oil on board for the boat's use. I drew oil in a bucket and oiled the coal to help her make steam. When we reached the mouth of what is called Mississippi Sound, about seven miles from the Chandeliers, the old pilot came downstairs and said we are all safe now, and dropped the lead over and found five fathoms of water, not over five minutes after the storm struck us, we had hired a very large anchor at New Orleans, so we bent on the hawser that the boat drifted so fast that it was with great difficulty that we got a turn on the bits. We also cast the boat's anchor and took comforts from the beds and wrapped the hawsers for fear they would get chafed rubbing the bulwarks. We lay there 60 hours, if the cables had parted the boat would not have lived five minutes. The old pilot, the engineer and the pilot's son had our large yawl boat provisioned and an axe in it, the axe to be used, no doubt, in keeping others out. They had the Irish chambermaid seated on the floor of the cabin all of the first night. It was almost impossible to keep on your feet. I was forced to see out at a loss of about \$10,000. Went home in very low spirits. I am still living (May 2, 1887) and feel satisfied, but like General Grant when he saw the child in the river, I wish to see the outcome of my history.

"The last trip I made on the river was on the steamer Annie Roberts, Captain Alaback, commanding. He had landed his boat at Georgetown while I was at the river repairing a skiff. The captain was not feeling very well and wanted someone to assist him at the wheel. When we reached Louisville, KY, a number of my old acquaintances came on board. I did not do the captain much good on our up-ward trip, having taken a felon on my thumb."

So ends Captain Adam Poe's account of his hectic days on the river.

On his last trip, he couldn't help out much on the "wheel," due to the sore thumb...

And what's in a name on a headstone in a tiny country cemetery?

A great deal, when it concerns a man called Adam Poe. His was a full and exciting life, and when you visit Georgetown, go up to the cemetery above town and look up to the headstone. Gaze out over it at the still intriguing Ohio and dream a bit on those days he so glowingly described above.

# George Vallandigham First Commissioner

## Little-Known Frontier Figure Active in Early County History

(Editor's Note: This is the first of five articles about George Vallandigham, who lived in the Noblestown area and had much to do with the early history of Washington County. Although there are few records available about the man who was instrumental in developing the area, he was Washington County's first County Commissioner, an Indian fighter, surveyor and magistrate).

A great many Washingtonians may or may not be acquainted with the hamlet of Noblestown, just over the county line below McDonald. This small village at one time was the home and base of operations for one of the foremost and most individualistic of Washington County's early sons, George Vallandigham.

Vallandigham, of whom some readers may have heard through his famous grandson's determined efforts to end the Civil War in opposition to President Lincoln, was one of Washington County's first commissioners...If you wonder why a resident of Allegheny County happened to be such, remember that Washington County prior to 1788 compassed the present Allegheny County section. As the tale of George Vallandigham unfolds, the same fiery determination and strong will that characterized his noted descendant, Clement Laird Vallandigham, may be noted.

Not too long ago, the writer received a letter from A.D. White, of Hickory, telling of both men's connection with the early days of Jefferson College, now Washington and Jefferson College. In his letter Mr. White quotes the following on the subject of our subject, George Vallandigham: "He, Vallandigham, opposed the Whiskey Insurrection, prepared and circulated petitions asking for a repeal of the excise tax and made himself so obnoxious to the popular sentiment of that day (the cause of the Rebels) that he was threatened with a coat of tar and feathers. Becoming a candidate for Congress some years alter, he was defeated principally because of his course on the whiskey question. He was a staunch Presbyterian, a strict observer of the Sabbath, and one of the earliest supporters and earnest patrons of Jefferson College.

Another portion of Mr. White's account has this to say concerning George's grandson, Clement Laird Vallandigham: "In the Fall of 1837, Clement L. Vallandigham became a student at Jefferson College, having entered the Junior Class. After the first year, he left to teach in an Academy at Snow Hill, Maryland. At the opening of the session in the fall of 1840, he returned to college and was chosen debater by his Franklin Literary Society for the spring content of 1841, his opponent being the Hon. Ulysses Mercur, later a member of Congress from Pennsylvania. The contest was one of the most spirited and exciting in the history of college, but Val was defeated, the Hon. Wilson McCandless of Pittsburgh being one of the judges.

Not long afterward, Val had a quarrel with old Dr. Brown on constitutional law and he left the college without graduating. Afterward Dr. Brown "cooled off" and wrote Val offering to confer the diploma on condition that Val would apply for it. But he utterly refused and so never received the diploma."

Mr. White also mentions that he has a copy of a resolution passed by the Democratic Society of Cross Creek, dated June 4, 1863, protesting the action of the government in banishing C.L. Vallandigham for his part in opposing the Union. Thus, there is a link between the village of Noblestown, Washington and Jefferson College, and one of the first public servants of Washington County...George Vallandigham.



When an old house is razed anywhere in the area, it does not attract too much attention. But when the old structure happens to be in the tiny cluster town, the very foundations of Robinson Run history are shaken by the event.

Such was the case several months ago when workmen of North Fayette Township removed the old McClelland home, just west of the Noblestown Methodist Church.

For a number of years a great many people who were interested in the past of Noblestown had felt that this was the house in which George Vallandigham had died in the year 1810.

George Vallandigham is the man who had much to do with the early settlement of the Robinson Run Valley and who was very much interwoven into the early history of Fort Pitt, and who at one time had served as one of the first County Commissioners of Washington County, and had also served as a prime magistrate for the then West August (Virginia) area some years before.

At that time, prior to 1781, the state of Virginia had claimed the Robinson Run section. Vallandigham had rubbed elbows with the top men at the Point, which was at one time during his era called Fort Dunmore. He is mentioned in the Virginia Court records profusely, along with such notables of the time as George Croghan, Thomas Smallman, Edward Ward, John Canon, and Dorsey Pentecost.

How a man of such stature could have become lost in the labyrinth of the past is hard to understand. Pittsburgh newspaper writers are baffled by the lack of recorded facts of the early days of Noblestown, a village that was, according to some, destined to become the county seat for the then-newly-formed Allegheny County in the year 1788.

In this narrative George Vallandigham will be mentioned as being active in both Allegheny and Washington Counties. This is due to his being here before the division of Washington County into Allegheny in the above year. Previously Washington County had extended from Bethany, WV, to the Ohio River.

Vallandigham, of course, made Noblestown the center of his operations as surveyor and magistrate and, in general, emanated to his various points of business from the tiny spot which today bears the name of his father-in-law, Col. Noble. He also maintained an office for surveying work at Wellsburg, WV. The next article will tell more of this little know figure of early Western frontier history, and how he played a major role in the intrigue and confusion of the Point section of early day Pittsburgh..

## George Vallandigham

Residents of the Robinson Run Valley have always believed that the French and Belgian populace were newcomers with the opening of the coal fields. But the first and foremost settler in the area was a Belgian surveyor named George Vallandigham, who had arrived on the scene a great many years ahead of his countrymen's influx into the northern portion of Washington County.

It has been mentioned that not too much is known of the early days of the Noblestown community. One person who might have given much light on the subject of Vallandigham was Miss Elizabeth McClean, or "Lizzie" as she was affectionately known by those close to her in Noblestown, acted as the family historian for the Glenn, Noble, and Vallandigham descendants. Unfortunately, no evidence of her records or facts on the families' past, other than the McClelland Bible remain today. This Bible, in the possession of one Joseph Chapman of Brackenridge, PA, is the only current source of information on the family history of the Nobles.

Part of the story of George Vallandigham may have been tied up in the old log cabin that once sat on the property of Peter Linden, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. William Souffrant of Noblestown. The Cabin was torn down some years back, and was one in which George Washington had visited and spent the night on his way to visit Col. Canon of Canonsburg to inquire about his lands in the Venice and Miller's Run portion of Washington County.

In investigating the Vallandigham's story, I have come to the conclusion that there is a basis of fact in the story of Washington's visit. His reason for stopping at Noblestown was to visit his old friend and fellow surveyor, George Vallandigham.

The Wade family of Noblestown have in their possession the blanket which Washington used on the evening of his visit. It is made of homespun linen.

No one knows for certain where George Vallandigham is buried, and there is no evidence that his homesite is completely lost. It may yet be still standing in Noblestown. Research on the cabin site may point to its being the one where Vallandigham lived and died. Some sources say that the home was at the top of the present Duffy's Lane and was later removed to the site now occupied by the Souffrant family. But no one is certain.

The most certain assumption is that if Washington did stop in Noblestown, it was at the home of Col. Vallandigham. Both were of about the same age (about four years apart). They were both Virginia Partisans; both were surveyors of the early forays sent out by Gov. Dinwiddie and Lord Dunmore; both had received their Lieutenant Colonel titles from the French and Indian wars. And when the property controversy of Washington's arose, it was only natural that he seek out the best legal man who held to his own views...Col. George Vallandigham. Conjecture? Why not?

The field of research into Vallandigham is virtually untouched. One other party in the year 1929 wrote of the life of George Vallandigham. He was a descendent of our subject, one Dr. Edward Noble Vallandigham. Dr. Vallandigham, of whom little is known at present, was perhaps able to marshal many of the lost facts of his ancestor's career. At any rate, he wrote near to the time of Miss McClean's passing and may have gotten much of his material from her records.

Here then is the only factual story of Robinson Run's most prominent frontier figure, a man who, at the time of the Whiskey Insurrection of 1794, was able to attend a meeting of the rebels and denounce the entire proceeding, and yet return home unscathed.

One must remember that Vallandigham was very close to Col. Canon of Canonsburg, an active figure in the Rebellion, and also Hugh Brackenridge, his neighbor to the south, below the present town of Oakdale. Somehow, at the moment of the Insurrection, they disagreed. This, too, might point to a tie of friendship and accord with George Washington.

The next article deals with the 1929 story of Lieutenant Colonel George Vallandigham, as written by one bearing the family name. The writer is indebted to Paul Coudere, McDonald Borough Engineer, for the use of maps of areas mentioned, the excellent research help of Minnie M. Duffield of McDonald and the family notes provided by Mrs. Robert Beaumont of Oakdale.

# George Vallandigham

In continuing the story of George Vallandigham, and before going into the writings of Dr. Edward Noble Vallandigham on the subject, it is best to picture the times and politics of Vallandigham's era.

The Point, or Fort Dunmore, was the center of a no-man's land that involved a four-way pull between the Indians, the French, the Virginians, and the Pennsylvanians.

Of the lot, the Indian was the easiest to comprehend. At least you knew what his ultimate aim was. Not so with the white men who were land-happy and willing to change allegiances overnight to further their ends. This hodge podge of political intrigue was not ended until the settlement of the Mason and Dixon line controversy.

In the midst of this lived George Vallandigham. Apparently, he was a man of principle and not given to the style of his political colleagues. As an early surveyor, he could have placed himself in an advantageous position during the uncertain ownership of the Southwestern Pennsylvania tract, and established himself a vast land empire the like of which George Washington had in mind. This he did not do.

One historian of Washington County mentioned a meeting at Pittsburgh that included Washington, George Crogham, Alexander Mckee, and various others. At the time Washington was 36 years of age and had just returned via the old Mingo Trail from a trip into Ohio. What did they talk about? Did they talk about "wimmen" or of fine times down the river in the New Orleans section? No, they talked about land - vast parcels that would make a man rich.

Crogham boasted of holding all the land from the Ohio to the present Raccoon State Park area. Washington told of having seen some "fine level tracts of land West of the Chartiers." Such was the topic of conversation at the time - land, land and more land.

In 1784, Washington set out from Mt. Vernon with a single horse to traverse the 680 or more odd miles to view his lands in Washington County. These lands had been surveyed by his agent, Col. William Crawford, who had met his death by burning at the stake near Sandusky, Ohio, in 1782.

How this great general, without the aid of a retinue of traveling companions, managed to cover such ground in 30 days is hard to understand. At any rate, we have the picture of this lone Don Quixote, riding a tired Rosinante, entering the Venice area, ready to engage the 13 staunch windmills of settlers who opposed his claim to the land.

On his arrival here, according to his diary, he decided not to see the settlers immediately due to its being the Sabbath. Instead, he made a trip to Dr. Johnson's to inquire about Col. Crawford's surveying records. Thus, Washington did not have any proof of his ownership other than which might be in Col. Crawford's records. He had instructed Crawford some years before to "look him up some land in Washington County" and had never seen the property until now. He expressed great disappointment at not finding Dr. Johnson at home, and the next day concluded his business, fruitless as it was, with the settlers of the Venice area.

Such were the times of Vallandigham's period, and now to the story of the man, as written by Dr. Edward Noble Vallandigham, in the year 1929:

"Lieutenant Colonel George Vallandigham is a long forgotten colonial and early national soldier of Pennsylvania's Western Frontier, long more than locally known as a skilled and daring leader in the Indian Wars that for 20 years hindered the settlement and civilization of the hither west. He was descended, probably in the third generation, from Michael VanLandegham, a Protestant from French Flanders, who fled from persecution doubtless in the local district of Belgium that still bears his name, about the middle of the 17th century, and arrived in Virginia after tarrying 15 years in England and Wales.

"Many of the name still live in Belgium, and one of them, a businessman of Antwerp, recalls that his great-grandfather is said to have insisted that he had kinsmen in America, doubtless the immigrant Michael and his family.

"Efforts to trace the family back to the knight of the name who commanded a body of knights under the Lion of Flanders at the Battle of the Golden Spurs, the victory of the Flemish burghers over the French chivalry at Courtrai in 1302, have failed, though many of the name in simple and humble occupations were found by the investigator - a not unusual experience of Americans in the search for traditional ancestors of medieval fame.

Michael ValLandegham or Landiegham, as it is sometimes written, must have reached Virginia not later than 1668, for he was one of the many aliens naturalized in 1673 under a law of the old dominion passed in 1668 and authorizing naturalization for persons five years resident.

"The immigrant Fleming became a lessee of land included in the huge tract granted for 31 years to the vicious Lord Culpepper, afterward the discredited governor of Virginia. Perhaps Michael VanLandiegham lacked funds to buy a landed estate, or Culpepper, under the terms of his grant, could not alienate any of the land, though he managed somehow to leave to his heirs a huge landed estate in Virginia, which came in due time to Lord Thomas Fairfax, neighbor and patron of the precocious young, George Washington, when he lived with his half-brother at Mt. Vernon. Fairfax made George at 16, the surveyor of his vast holdings, and paid him handsomely for his services".

(At this point in the story, the name changes from Vanlandiegham to Vallandigham).

The next article tells of Vallandigham as a neighbor of Washington's and his initial trip to the Robinson Run section of Washington County.

# George Vallandigham

This article continues the narrative on George Vallandigham's life as written by his descendant, Dr. Edward Noble Vallandigham. It was noted that the name had been changed from VanLandiegham to the present spelling of this Flemish name.

"George Vallandigham was born in 1737 or 1738 in Fairfax County, not far from Alexandria. He was probably the great-grandson of the previously-mentioned immigrant, for his father, Michael Vallandigham, was born in 1706, and was almost certainly the son of one of the first Michael's sons. No doubt the grandfather of George Vallandigham had changed the name to a form less patently foreign because foreign names were disadvantageous in colonial Virginia.

"The Virginians, after a custom inherited from English ancestors, who were and are prone to modify difficult names, pronounced the anglicized form of the name VanLandiegham as Flannagan. All over Virginia the name is still pronounced, as in much of the South and Southwest to which men of the blood have penetrated, but the whole tribe in whichever of half a dozen spellings they use steadily refuse to call themselves Flannagan. They Virginians took a like liberty with the Italian name, Tagliaferro (iron-cutter), and it is usually pronounced Tolliver.

"Perhaps George Vallandigham, although his father, as merely a respected and prosperous farmer hardly had frequented the Washington - Fairfax circle, had heard that the strapping young of 16 at Mt. Vernon earned \$20 dollars a day as Lord Fairfax's surveyor. At any rate, after obtaining the best general education that Virginia then provided for the sons of farmers, eh studied surveying, and doubtless practiced the art, one much in demand and well paid. But we hear more of his occupation as a teacher in the high schools of Virginia and Maryland. (Dr. Vallandigham, no doubt meant academies - high school is a recent term.) He taught in a high school of Prince George County, Maryland, in 1768, and about 1771 married Elizabeth, daughter of Col. Joseph Noble, of Charles County, doubtless an officer of the Palatinate Militia.

"Possibly matters were not going quite well at the Noble Plantation. There is a tradition that two of the family connection grew rich out of the slave trade, and withdrew with their ill-gotten gains to England. Maryland had been settled and civilized for nearly a century and a half, and good land was no doubt scarce and high. At any rate George Vallandigham and his brother-in-law, Richard Noble, toiled far across Maryland and through the mountainous wilderness to a region that they supposed permanent territory of Virginia, though it was eventually included within Pennsylvania.

"Here in what is now North and South Fayette Townships, Allegheny County, they bought 1,000 acres of land, a dozen or more miles from Fort Pitt, and here they built a rude cabin, doubtless of logs, and gave at least a year and possibly considerably more to bringing part of their land under the plow, and making the new home habitable for those whom they had left behind in comfortable Maryland.

"Returning to Maryland, probably before 1773, they connected to the frontier Col. Noble and his wife, the many slaves of the Nobles, and the wife of George Vallandigham, with whatever children there may have been, and probably the wife and children of Richard Noble. The newcomers were sheltered after some more or less crude fashion not to the liking of Col. Noble, for when asked, on his journey back to Maryland to visit his brother, where he lived, he answered "I don't live at all - I breath on Robinson's Run."

The little settlement was Noblestown. It is now a village of about 600 inhabitants (1929).

The frontier plantation was a scene of hardship and terror during a considerable part of Col. Noble's residence there, and probably up to his death in 1780, aged 65, at the home of his brother in Charles County. When the two young men built their cabin the Indians of the region were mainly peaceful, under the influence of that friend of the whites, Chief John Logan. In 1770 he had removed beyond the Ohio, and was then or sometime thereafter chosen chief of the Mingo tribe. Even this honor, and Logan's growing fondness for the white man's firewater, did not alter his friendship to the settlers. But in April, 1774, some whites led by one Greathouse, a whiskey seller, murdered kinfolk of Logan's on Yellow Creek. Logan, wild with rage, brought together his warriors and began a succession of hideous outrages, thus bringing on "Dunmore's War."

Lord Dunmore, the last royal governor of Virginia, promptly recruited about 3,000 militia, and sending his second in command, that brilliant Scotch Irishman, Brigadier General Andrew Lewis, born in George Washington's year of 1732, with 1,300 men to watch for the savages, went himself to Fort Pitt with a strong detachment to reenforce Lewis at need. Under a change of orders from Dunmore, Lewis encountered the savages unexpectedly at Point Pleasant, on the Ohio, about twenty-five miles from Noblestown, and defeated them after one of the most bitterly contested battles in the history of the frontier.

It is not certainly known whether or not George Vallandigham took part in the battle of Point Pleasant, but it seems more probable that he was with Dunmore, for Dunmore is believed to have conferred upon him his military rank and title. Years afterward he was commissioned by the Governor of Pennsylvania to raise and command a body of troops for use against the Indians, and in this official order was addressed by his title.

There was a rather short respite after the defeat of Logan in the Spring of 1774, for with the coming of the War for Independence, the Indians became the allies of the British; and now began George Vallandigham's long service as a local soldier in the ruthless struggle between red barbarism and white civilization. This service ended only with Wayne's victory over the Indians in August, 1794.

The final article will tell of Vallandigham's service as an Indian fighter and a terrible massacre that occurred at a Noblestown settler's farm.

## George Vallandigham

The previous article told of George Vallandigham's prowess as a legal man, settler, surveyor and early political figure. This final chapter tells of his duties as a sub-lieutenant of Washington County, a position that empowered him to call out the militia of the time to help stave off Indian attacks.

In the minutes of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania of the year 1781, Vallandigham was installed as one of the heads of such militia groups in the county.

The Indian attack mentioned in the ensuing portion of Dr. Edward Vallandigham's account occurred well within the Robinson's Run Valley area, and included the famous Poe brothers, who had been active as Indian fighters in the Fort Cherry portion of that section.

The account continues: "Throughout the Revolutionary War and long after, the little settlement at Noblestown was harried again and again by the Indians, so that the settlers were in almost constant dread. The Vallandighams, Nobles and their neighbors had to be ready for the fray at almost any moment. They sowed and reaped their crops with armed sentinels on watch, while those not thus on the post of danger worked in the fields. Sentinels were sometimes shot on post, and that all might share the danger, as also the labor of the fields, these two duties were subject to frequent shifts. In the midst of these perils and labors, five children were born to George Vallandigham, between September, 1772, and June 1789. During part of his career as soldier and farmer he practiced law at Pittsburgh, served as a justice of the peace, and was active in politics. One of his sons, George, became an officer of the Ohio militia in the War of 1812, and another was the Rev. Clement Vallandigham, for thirty-two years pastor of the Presbyterian Church at New Lisbon (now Lisbon) in Columbiana County, Ohio.

"Milton McClelland, a lawyer of Pittsburgh, grandson of George Vallandigham, writing to his first cousin, Clement Laird Vallandigham of Ohio, in March, 1849, gives interesting and minute details of their grandfather's career, person, and character, evidently learned from a contemporary of Col. Vallandigham, for he lived at the homestead until 1810 by that time doubtless the sons and daughters, except the youngest of the latter, were living elsewhere; but their youngest daughter, Milton McClelland's mother, Elizabeth Vallandigham, was born in 1789 and she was living at sixty when his letter was written. He describes his grandfather as rather more than six feet in height, with light brown hair, blue eyes, and aquiline nose. He was a skilled mathematician, and acquainted with navigation, and with the physical sciences as then taught in the colleges. Tradition described him as graceful, fond of dancing, of singularly gracious manners.

"In 1779, George Vallandigham accompanied Col. Daniel Brodhead or Broadhead on the punitive expedition up the Allegheny River, set out to burn the Indian towns in that region, whence the savages issued forth to ravage the settlements. He was again with Broadhead in 1781, when he attacked the Delaware Indians of the Muskingum River region in Eastern Ohio. Such expeditions involved long marches in rough country with the constant danger of ambush. From one such he returned home after an absence of many weeks so worn with hardship and ill from rheumatism, that he was confined to his bed for some months.

"It was the custom of the settlement about Noblestown that the women and children of the somewhat widely scattered families take refuge at one or another's house that seemed likely to guarantee their safety. Conditions became so menacing at one time that the women and children of the Vallandighams and Nobles were sent for a year and a half to a settlement twenty miles or more south of Noblestown. No summer passed without Indian forays. There were times when the family deserting the house at dead



of night, scattering in various directions, and hiding singly, or in couples, in the thickets, did not come home until broad daylight. An infant son of six months was saved by a sister who hid with him all night in the thicket.

"These times of terror were such a strain upon the nerves of the settlers that even so steady a man as George Vallandigham seems to have superstitiously accepted as a premonition of peril a dream in which he saw a turkey cock suddenly spring into the air with outstretched neck and loud cries, seeking safety in flight. Next day he was extremely careful to watch for indications of an early attack. This was in the Summer of 1782. Others were uneasy, and on that morning Henry Potter's daughter Isabella was invited to tarry at the Vallandigham's house; but she declined because she had stayed there at the time of the last Indian foray.

So she went to the house of a neighbor, Lewis Clock. When Mrs. Clock, who had been preparing dinner, went out at midday to call the men from the fields, she saw a band of Indians rapidly approaching. As a matter of fact the Indians, hearing the sound of the axe from a piece of woodland where the men of the household were at work, fell upon them, killed and scalped them. On nearing the house the savages killed six of the Clock children at play in the yard. They entered the house, whence Phoebe Clock and Isabella Potter had fled, bringing with them Isabella whom they had captured. They then tied the women and ate the dinner prepared for the men. Being in haste, as usual the savages, whose raids were seldom more than affairs of half an hour or less, they fled, with the women as prisoners. Mrs. Clock took with her a babe at the breast, but the Indians, apparently fearing that its cry would guide those in pursuit, dashed its brains out against a tree.

"Col. Vallandigham, Major Adam and Andrew, rallied all the men that would be spared safely from the settlement, and set out in pursuit of the savages. The chase took them to Georgetown, on the east bank of the Ohio; but realizing that their force was not strong enough to justify their entering the Indian country across the river, they returned home, stopping to bury the dead body of Mrs. Clock's infant. Such a massacre was an unusual horror at Noblestown, but the settlers were in constant fear of rifle, torch and the scalping knife.

"When the 'Whiskey Insurrection' threatened, Lt. Col. Vallandigham found himself in opposition to this two sons, George, of eighteen years, and Clement of sixteen. These precocious youths were heartily, and almost violently, for the insurrection. The father, with the conservation of age, but without its undue caution, was promptly outspoken in opposition to the armed resistance of the excise tax law that seemed inevitable. The insurgents threatened to burn his house, as they had burned that of an exciseman not far away (Gen. Neville's home). He was warned that if he appeared and spoke at a meeting in opposition to the insurrection he should risk his life. He went to the meeting, spoke his mind freely, and came home unscathed.

Doubtless his conduct upon that occasion prevented his election to Congress, though it was also conjectured that he owed his defeat to his refusal to furnish the customary barrel of whiskey to the electors.

"Col. Vallandigham's last fifteen years of life or more seem to have been peaceful. He continued his practice of law, no doubt, at Pittsburgh and in at least one other county town. Before his death at seventy-two or three he saw his sons and daughters married and well-settled in life, except perhaps one of the daughters who seems to have been living at the homestead when he died, though she must have married soon after. None of the name now live at the little village of Noblestown, but a few of the blood are still there, though the homestead has vanished or cannot be identified."

Such is the tale of George Vallandigham, as told by one of his descendants. Perhaps in the future some more facts of his life may turn up. Who knows, maybe in some garret or attic in an old house in Noblestown, there may be the key that will unlock the secret of where Vallandigham actually lived...If so, it will throw more needed light on the past of Noblestown and also more on the life of one of Washington County's most individual citizens - George Vallandigham, Magistrate, Indian fighter, Pioneer and outspoken opponent of armed violence.

## Ginger Hill And The Whisky Rebellion

In 1794 there occurred in the valley of the Monongahela River, and the region contiguous to it, a series of unlawful and violent acts to which was applied the term "Whisky Rebellion."

These illegal acts were done in the then four southern counties of Pennsylvania - Washington, Allegheny, Fayette and Westmoreland. Of the four, Washington as the chief factor.

There is an interesting story regarding the village of Ginger Hill in Washington County, and the part it played in the famous rebellion against a tax on home-made spirits.

In this hamlet on the night of November 14, 1794, Robert Johnson, excise collector for Washington and Allegheny Counties, seized the still of Squire David Hamilton, who lived near the site of old Ginger Chapel. The squire was a shrewd Scotsman, and pretended to be in no way upset over the action of the government officials.

It was a dark, disagreeable night, and the road to Parkinson's Ferry, now Monongahela City, being none of the smoothest, the officers were easily prevailed upon to remain under the hospitable roof of Hamilton.

Around the glowing logs of the backwoods fire, Hamilton and his guests discussed the excise law, the conversation being enlivened by oft-repeated draughts from "Black Betty," the term for the ever-handly jug of whisky.

This jug had been "doctored" previously by Hamilton with a liberal quantity of Jamaica ginger. One by one the officials dropped from their chairs in the deep sleep of intoxication. Hamilton, observing the advantage of the moment, speedily gathered in his neighbors, and taking the still and whisky, carried them many miles across the country to a place of safety.

This action, which would in these times be considered a serious matter of destroying or concealing evidence, was then registered as a joke, and the place became know thereafter as "Ginger Hill."

Years later, during the hectic days of Prohibition, those engaged in bootleg activities often used a "Mickey Finn" or "knock-out" drops, to spike an enemy's drink.

Thus Squire Hamilton not only gave the town its name, but also had the distinction of concocting one of the most famous "Mickey's" in the nation's history.

Today, tri-state visitors to Washington can browse through the restored Bradford House, the home of one of the chief figures in the Whisky Rebellion.

This was David Bradford, lawyer, businessman and deputy attorney general of Washington County when the house was completed in 1788. It is located at 173 South Main Street.

The house was one of the first buildings constructed in Washington, and local tradition has it that Bradford leaped from a rear window of the house to a waiting horse and fled down the river to escape capture when the Rebellion was put down.

The restored home with this period furnishing of the Rebellion era, is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission with H. Frank Ward Jr. the caretaker. Visiting hours are from 9 AM to noon and 1 to 4:30 PM weekdays, except Monday. Sunday hours are from 1 to 4:30 PM.

Those who visit the Bradford House, if it be during the week, should also stop at the LeMoyne House, not too far away at 49 East Maiden Street. It is the home of the Washington County Historical Society and has oodles of artifacts.

## Golden Era Passes Along With Nelson Eddy

"Theaters' 'Peanut Heaven' will never be the same."

He gave the Royal Canadian Mounted Police more glamour than the French Foreign Legion.

He and Jeanette McDonald were like two fragile animated dolls - and when they spoke their lines, it was in perfect keeping with an operetta atmosphere.

Never a polished actor, he did not need to be. He sang. He made the movie-goers of the Depression era forget their pinch of hunger and useless job-seeking, with lofty lyrics and Graustarkian romance.

IT WAS a grand wedding of the "talking picture," technicolor and the deluxe interior of the big "Roxy" type movie palace of 30 years ago.

Drive-In theatres had not yet come into being - lovers and prospective marriage couples held hands in a darkened balcony and made plans for their future, hoping to capture a tuneful world of marital bliss.

It was Nelson Eddy at the peak of his baritone success.

The show opened for Eddy in Providence, Rhode Island, as a boy soprano. It closed for him last week during a performance in a Florida night club.

NELSON EDDY had become best known as a concert singer and a performer on radio and in motion pictures. When his voice changed during those earlier years in Providence, he took on the more mature and glamorous sting of singing with a Gilbert and Sullivan opera troupe and later went with the Philadelphia Civic Opera Company. Eddy paid for his early music studies by working as a newspaper reporter.

A street in Providence, Rhode Island, carries his name - Eddy Street.

He and Miss McDonald, the co-star who passed away not too long ago, represented a sharp contrast to the present-day format of musical entertainment.

With all the noise, there is little time for the type of romance put forth by the magnetic vocal duo. Most youngsters today steer away from such "sticky" antics. If it doesn't play a guitar with an overloaded amplifier - it doesn't register.

But then, the hard times of the 1930's were different. It did things to people and gave them a more sensible degree of values.

Like the old song says: "Take your girlie to the movies, if you can't make love at home!"

Most of us did. Along with a bag of peanuts and a tip for the balcony usher.

## Grandma Was a Fink

Up in the Northern Panhandle, in the village of Colliers, Brooke county, there resides a man with blood ties to the great keelboatman, Mike Fink. This is Harold Hanlin, retired Weirton Steel employee, and devotee of the past history of the area.

When queried about Mike and his exploits, Harold has quite a story to tell.

"Not too much is actually known about the history of Mike Fink, legendary keelboatman of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Several prominent scholars have spent years of research on Mike Fink, but all have ended up with almost the same account.

"Probably the most accurate of all such accounts was written by one Charles McKnight in his book, 'Our Western Border.' This was published in 1875. Therefore, it is closest to the time of Mike's sojourn on the frontier. Franklin J. Meine and Walter Blair of the University of Chicago combined their efforts of twenty years delving into Fink history, in a book entitled 'Half-Horse and Half-Alligator - The Growth of the Mike Fink Legend.' but this book did not add any additional facts about Mike's life.

"Morgan Neville, esteemed writer of old Pittsburgh, also wrote about Mike Fink, but most the same incidents. Some of these writers were of the opinion that Mike was of German descent, but from my own family history I can assure you that Mike was definitely an Irishman. My grandmother, a full cousin of Mike Fink, was Sara Jane Fink, daughter of Abram and Sara Fink who lived near Cross Creek Village, Washington County, Pennsylvania, and where Mike's parents originally lived at one time. This is not far from Colliers, just over the state line. I don't know definitely, but from stories told by my father and grandparents, I always believed that Mike was raised in the area of Chartier's Creek, not too far from Carnegie, PA. This was more than likely the Noblestown section of Allegheny County, that state. Mike's mother later moved to Pittsburgh, which may have given rise to the story that Mike was from 'The Point.'

"Mike's exploits were frowned upon by his relatives. His drinking, fighting and carousing were a blemish on the family name and my grandmother, when teased about her relative, would respond with the worlds: 'Mike was a scoundrel and a scallywag!' Later, she would relent her words and give forth with such information as she recalled.

"Mike had several brothers in and around Pittsburgh, and one was named Abram, the same as my grandmother's father.

"According to government records, Mike was shot and killed by a man named Talbot while on a trapping expedition in the Yellowstone country in 1822. Or it could have been 1823. This shooting followed the admission by Fink that he had shot a man named Carpenter, a third member of the trapping party. Later on in this narrative, I will tell you how this happened.

"Mike was a fair specimen of his breed. Many curious anecdotes are related of him. When the Ohio was too low for navigation, Mike spent his leisure time at shooting matches in and around the Pittsburgh area, and soon became famous as the best shot in the country. On this account he was called 'Bang-All,' and was excluded from many matches as being over-qualified. Later on, the name 'Bang-All' was applied to his trusty rifle. For not being able to enter a match, Mike was given the fifth quarter of the prize. The 'prize' was a beef, but Mike's free portion, or fifth, was the hide and tallow. He would then sell this fifth quarter to a tavern-keeper for what corresponded to an old-fashioned 'fifth' of whiskey, treating

everybody in the house and doing fairly well by himself. It was said that Mike could down a gallon of the stuff in twenty-four hours without batting an eye.

"Many folks believe that Mike was a big man. Like his legends. Not so. He weighed about one hundred and eighty pounds (sober); was about five feet nine inches tall; countenance open, skin tanned by sun and rain; form broad and very muscular and a man devoted to great activity. He fancied himself a wit and usually forced his backwoods jokes on his audience. If anyone refused to laugh at the end of the punch line, Mike gave the dead-pan a good drubbing. As a result, he always had a crew of chosen shills to laugh at the right moment. Mike's form of speech was at one time copied by Mark Twain in his stories of the Mississippi. Such bits of braggadocio as 'I'm a Salt River Roarer! I'm chock-full of fight, and I love the wimmen!, etc.' all can be found in Twain's dialect of the river raftsmen. All of which was true, especially the 'wimmen' part; Mike had a sweetheart in every river port.

"Mike first visited St. Louis in the role of a keelboatman about 1814 or 1815. Among his most renowned shooting feats, was the following: In ascending the Mississippi, at a point above the Ohio, he once saw a sow with a couple of young ones. They were about one hundred feet away, on the bank. He then declared, in boatman jargon, that he wanted a pig, and took up his rifle, 'Bank-All,' to shoot one. At this juncture, he was told not to do so. But Mike was not one to be put aside. He would do something to satisfy his ego. He laid his rifle to his face, and as the boat glided along, he successively shot off the tail of each of the porkers, close to the rump, without doing them; any harm.

"In 1822, Mike Fink, along with two friends, Carpenter and Talbot, left St. Louis to go up the Missouri River in the role of boatmen, trappers and hunters. Before they embarked, they were joined by a man named Henry and one Ashley. It was a trip that eventually was to be the undoing of Mike. The Missouri was a big and wild river at the time. It's still a mammoth stream. The first year a company of about sixty had managed to ascend as high as the mouth of the Yellowstone River, where they built a fort for the purpose of trade and security. From this place, Mike and his company foraged out into the countryside and found themselves a cave in the bluff bank of the river, in which to pass the winter. It was here that Mike and his friend Carpenter had a deadly quarrel. It was supposed over the hand of an Indian squaw. It was a bad case of what the frontiersmen called 'cabin fever,' although Mike and his party lived in a cave. Same thing. When spring finally broke, the party returned to the fort, where Mike and Carpenter, over a cup of whiskey, revived the old quarrel about the squaw. They made what was seemingly a treaty of peace, and solemnized it by their usual trail of shooting a cup of whiskey off each other's heads.

"To determine who should have the first shot, Mike suggested that they 'Sky a copper,' or toss a coin. This resulted in Mike's getting the first try at shooting the cup of whiskey from Carpenter's head. Carpenter seemed a little uneasy, but did not flinch from the contest. Perhaps he had a foreboding of what was about to transpire.

"Mike loaded, picked his flint, and leveled his rifle at the head of Carpenter, at a distance of sixty yards. Carpenter held the cup of spirits steady atop his noggin. They had done it many times before, and Mike had never failed to hit the cup square. Mike suddenly put the rifle down.

"'Hold your noodle steady, Carpenter! Don't spill the whiskey - I shall want some presently.' Mike was in his usual bantering form this day and nothing seemed amiss. He again raised his rifle, cocked it, and in an instant, Carpenter fell and expired without a sound.

"Mike's shot had penetrated precisely through the center of Carpenter's forehead.

"Later Mike claimed it was an accident. He cursed the gun, the powder, the bullet and finally himself.

"This incident, in a country where law could not be depended upon for justice, was accepted as a bona fide 'accident.' Or so it seemed.

"But Talbot determined to revenge the death of Carpenter. Some months later, Mike, in a spell of drunken boating, said that he had purposely killed Carpenter, and was glad of it. At this remark, Talbot drew a pistol, one that had been bequeathed to him at the death of his friend, and shot Mike through the heart. Mike Fink fell as dead as Carpenter. Talbot went unpunished, as had Mike. Later on, Talbot met a watery end in attempting to swim a wilderness river."



## Grand Theatre in McDonald

Not too long ago, while in McDonald on a short visit, we mentioned in conversation to several friends, the new-closed Grand Theatre.

We could have danced all night on this subject; for the old Grand held many memories for us. Today, McDonald has no indoor movie house. Drive-Ins, TV, and radio talk shows seem to have killed what was once the small town's center of visual entertainment. Great days, through, all of them.

As a kid in McDonald, we were fascinated with the art of film projection. We used to have a small toy projector, and delved through the waste cans in the rear of the town's theatres for scraps of film cut from a feature during repairs. Got a lot of famous screen mugs this way; like Monte Blue, Lon Chaney, Sr., Jason Robards, Sr., William S. Hart, and many others.

Just before going into high school, about 1926, we took the evening job of ticket-taker at the Grand. Silent films were still being shown at the Grand. No "talkies" yet. We vividly recall the day the news of Rudy Valentino's death reached McDonald. The manager of the Grand at that time, was, I believe, a man named Sherman. The regular evening booking was canceled and a print of Valentino's latest film brought in. Dolores Costello was in it, and all afternoon before opening, the town was scoured for a pit orchestra to dress up the show. "Sippy" Dumas and his violin helped out here and by show time the place looked like Carnegie Music Hall. Really a big, big show.

Valentino was big too, as the screen's most popular lover of the 1920's. For theatre billing he had shortened his name. The real moniker was Rudolpho D'Antolguolla.

There were two "opposition" houses in town in those days. The Dreamland and the Orpheum. At the Dreamland, Harold Lloyd was often featured, making the wearing of horn-rimmed glasses popular. Harold shuffled off this mortal coil recently; and with his passing he leaves us with only Charlie Chaplin as the last of the red-hot silent film comedians. On the female side, Clara Bow, the "It" girl, was the daring siren of the 1920 screen.

At the Orpheum, the "Cohens and Kellys" series was always big. We believe the big starts here were Charlie Murray and a George Sydney. Somewhere out in Hollywood, a silent screen producer had gotten the idea that the Jewish and Irish groups did not mix. He couldn't have been further from the truth; it was a wonderful wedding of chicken soup and Irish stew. And who can forget "Abie's Irish Rose?"

In those days, the "operator," high up in the projection booth in the rear of the balcony, was an important man in the eyes of children and laymen who filled auditorium seats. The manager of the theatre could have been Billy Rose and still not have carried the prestige of the "operator." The "Wizard of Oz" who controlled the world of make-believe on the silver screen.

Down the street, at the Orpheum, Clarence Scott was the man behind the lens; at the Grand, "Red" Vezie, Carl Lohman and Lorenzo (Fabe) Rumbaugh were operators. There may have been others. Over at the Dreamland Tony Vincenti was king of all he surveyed; and didn't miss an encore or bow when the kids all gave him a hand as he entered the booth in the balcony before show time.

Both the Grand and Dreamland used the "live" piano player. A versatile keyboard tickler who had to know all the tempos and have wide angle vision so close-up to the screen.

When Harry Saix, a former resident of McDonald, passed away recently, he brought back memories of the trade of theatre piano playing for silent pictures. Theme music for the print was gotten from the film exchange, and we well remember seeing "Wings" at the Dreamland, with Mrs. Violet Keenan of Oak Ridge providing "Jeanine, I Dream of Lilac Time" for the film concerning World War I aviation. The Orpheum had a mechanical piano that used rolls (old-time player piano type) and gave out with a great many thumps and drum rolls. Drum rolls were always good for cowboys, Indians, and Hoot Gibson chasing a fire engine.

But we digress from the old Grand.

Two big changes came over the Grand not long after we started there as doorman. Guy Ida came to town and sound movies, or "talkies," came to the Grand. This opened up a whole new area of show business, and later was to bring with it "bank nights" and "grocery nights" as a means of overcoming the lean business of the Depression Thirties.

When Guy Ida first arrived in McDonald he had with him, a pair of white socks, a checked suite, and a Model "A" Ford. Or so it seem to our young eyes at the time. Later on he was to steer the Grand through difficult times and give the town some of its best years of movie going.

The first sound equipment in any movie house consisted of a record turntable attached to the head of the projector. Electric amplification was still new, and the walls of the theatre putting in sound had to be padded to absorb reverberation. So the Grand came in for an interior face-lifting, with cloth panels put on the walls of the auditorium. It was a big job, but the night we opened with our first musical "short" was really a wonderful one. It was a film of George Jessel singing "My Mother's Eyes." Later on, we met Mr. Jessel at Sardi's in New York during the war years, and brought it to hi s mind.

Over at the Dreamland at this time, Guy Tornabene and Bill Meredith were the "ticket takers." A glamorous job, and both boys featured a snappy bow tie. It was the wonderful world of the cinema, and Florenz Ziegfeld couldn't have enjoyed the theatre more.

At the old Grand, help included Oscar Wells and Jim "Dynamite" Latini. Although McDonald didn't have a New York Sardi's in which to review previous evening shows, Bob Giles' Barber Shop next door to the Grand did the honors. Remember?

Many years after leaving the Grand and the days of early sound movies and a stint or two in the projection booth of the Grand, we were privileged to help the operator of Loew's State Theatre, just off Times Square, New York, run a new spot-light on a stage show. A long way from the Grand "show," and the week we had Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell in "Sunny Side Up," one of our first musical features at the Grand.

In between times at the Grand, Charley Lederstein and I spent a great deal of time at the McDonald Library. Nothing much else to do.

Just about every night the Library was open. I think I read every book on the shelves. Or close to it.

All of which added up to a sophomoric article on the days of the old Grand.

Hope you enjoyed the recall.

# Hannastown

The old geography text-book was yellow with age.

It was of the year 1793, and contained a map of early-day Pennsylvania. On this map of ancient vintage were four major towns in the south-western portion of the state: Pittsburgh, Hannastown, Bedford and Berlin. Berlin, Bedford and Pittsburgh remain; but alas, Hannastown is no more. It was burned by the Seneca Indians, aided and abetted by the British, on July 13, 1782. The raid on the town was led by Chief Guyasota. Although still carried on the map of 1793, Hannastown, located in present Westmoreland County, had already been destroyed at the time of the text-book's printing. The burning was the last principal hostile act of the Revolutionary War and one of the Indian atrocities of 1782 which forced Sir Guy Carlton, newly appointed Commander of the King's forces in America, to stop all Indian forays.

Today, Hannastown, located just a few miles northeast of Greensburg, is being restored through the efforts of the Westmoreland County Historical Society and Westmoreland County Commissioners.

In this day of increased interest in the America of early days, the Hannastown project is the most exciting venture in the state.

On September 23, 1969, the Westmoreland County Historical Society and County Commissioners purchased the Hannastown Courthouse Farm containing the site of Old Hannastown. It was formerly the property of the Steele family, prominent in the area for many years.

On the day of the deed's being recorded, Jacob L. Grimm and a crew of archaeologists were already at work at Hannastown beginning an excavation which has continued ever since, to determine where the buildings once stood and to collect artifacts that might tell a story of how it all was in the Hannastown of the 1700's.

Along with Mr. Grimm in his work, have been Mr. and Mrs. Kirke C. Wilson of Plum Borough, officers of the Allegheny Chapter of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Smith of Jeanette, PA., Mrs. Charles Fields of Plum Borough, and Mrs. Helen Smith of Murraysville, PA. Many others have and are helping in this "dig" which is under the supervision of Mr. Grimm, who is past President of the Archaeological Society of Pennsylvania and renowned in archaeological circles of the Nation. Identified with the Hannastown archaeology are Dr. M. Graham Netting, Director, and Dr. James L. Swauger, associate director of Carnegie Museum who have been consultants and valuable in the interpretation of many of the artifacts being daily brought to the surface at Hannastown. They are now associated with the project. Arrangements have been made with the Smithsonian Institution to identify, evaluate and interpret artifacts.

Due to the result of an application to the Allegheny Foundation by Carnegie Museum, through Dr. Netting and Dr. Swauger, in the latter part of January, 1971, a grant of \$25,000 was approved for the old Hannastown archaeology "dig" for the next three years. Mr. Grimm is Research Associate for the Section of Man of Carnegie Museum.

In the summer of 1970, some nineteen students from the Department of Anthropology of the University of Pittsburgh took part in the "dig" for credits for a period of six weeks under the supervision of Mr. James D. Richardson III, Assistance Professor of Archaeology and a veteran of many excavations elsewhere. These students, with others, who are not earning credits, were at the site five days a week at

no cost to the County or the Society excepting incidental items. Wally Bandura, Westmoreland County Parks, has been more than helpful on the project.

Since operations began in September, 1969, more than 100,000 artifacts have been found including pieces of Delft ware, salt ware, lead bullets, rings, buttons, English and Spanish coins including pieces of eight, several coins dated in the 1600's; all from 300 square feet of test pits in seven areas of occupation. The site of the town is traversed by the Forbes Road, now Legislative Route 64038, originally constructed as a military road by General Forbes in his campaign to take French held Fort Duquesne upon the site of which destroyed Fort Pitt, was built, thereby initiating present-day Pittsburgh.

Hannastown or Hanna's Town, as it is sometimes written, is not only historically significant locally, but also nationally. It was the first county seat of Westmoreland County, which then encompassed most of Southwestern Pennsylvania, from the time the county was established on February 26, 1773, until Greensburg became the county seat in 1787. Along with Pittsburgh, Hannastown was the most important town in the area. It had 30 log cabins and houses in the 1770's, together with a log courthouse, stockaded fort with blockhouse insider, a jail, and two taverns, one of which was Robert Hanna's, founder of the town. Pittsburgh in the 1770's had only 30 houses in addition to Fort Pitt. Hannastown was where the local militia met, the fort being garrisoned at times during the Revolution. Hannastown is also well-known for the Hannastown Resolves, sometimes called Westmoreland's Little Declaration of Independence, which were signed and Promulgated by the citizens of the County on May 16, 1775, more than a year before the Liberty Bell at Philadelphia proclaimed "Liberty throughout the world and all the inhabitants thereof." Arthur St. Clair, an early justice at Hannastown, had a conspicuous part in these Resolves.

It is planned by the Westmoreland County Historical Society and the Commissioners to have some evidence of concrete reconstruction by 1976 to celebrate the birth of the Nation. The first building to be reconstructed will likely be the stockade fort, the exact place and dimensions having been determined by the archaeologists on July 13, 1971, the anniversary of the burning. The size of this fort was substantially the same as Fort Duquesne. The Society has engaged Charles M. Stotts of Pittsburgh, renowned architect for frontier and colonial reconstructions, and Carl Schultz, renowned for this type available. Next to the rebuilt will be the log house of Robert Hanna which was used as the first Courthouse. This will be followed by rebuilding Foreman's Tavern and the five log houses on sites already uncovered by the archaeologists. The others will follow as sites are found. The headquarters of the Westmoreland County Historical Society will be at Hannastown and a historical museum to exhibit the archaeological artifacts and items pertaining to the history of Westmoreland County.

The work at Hannastown is a National Geographic picture store brought to life.

However, it must not be construed as a "treasure hunt," and those sincerely interest in a visit should do so with a sense of reverence and awe.

A tiny, but effective museum is set up at the "dig," in a nearby fruit cellar, where visitors may see some of the artifacts. The bulk of the items turned up by archaeologists are further displayed in the Museum of Art Building in nearby Greensburg.

The day this writer visited the site, several school buses of children were viewing the project and listening with more than usual attention to the several workers acting as "guides." It was a field trip of acute visual value.

We are indebted to Mr. Calvin E. Pollins, President, Westmoreland County Historical Society for the above facts on the restoration of Old Hanna's Town. For those interested in more information on the "dig," write the Westmoreland County Historical Society, Museum of Art Building, 221 North Main Street, Greensburg, PA 15601.

## Hempfield RR Adorning New Towels, Bedspreads

The November issue of the magazine, "House and Garden," carried an advertisement of the Fieldcrest Mills people of New York. Their product is a line of bedspreads and bath towels.

And in keeping with the upcoming 200th celebration of the nation's birth, the Fieldcrest folks went down to Washington, DC's Smithsonian Institute and originated some apropos designs from the museum's collection of Americana.

What makes the story of the product interest for Washington Countians, is the bedspread and towel put out by the firm, showing a railroad locomotive of the 1850's and dedicated to the old days of the Hempfield Railroad, once a part of the Washington county scene.

In 1851 a weaver in nearby Wheeling, VA (now WV) made a coverlet to commemorate the building of the "Hempfield" railroad. Fieldcrest copied his locomotive design - and incidentally misspelled the Hempfield name - in towels and bedspreads. Attached to each item is a small brochure telling of the American Treasures Collection, as the Fieldcrest firm calls its newest product.

One portion of the brochure mentions: "The Hempfield Railroad played a central role in linking isolated towns and villages to cities, thereby helping America grow. The Fieldcrest design is adapted from a jacquard coverlet, woven circa 1850, to commemorate the building of the Hempfield RD from what is now Wheeling to Washington. The border design depicts the wood burning locomotive and wooden cars of the period, while the corner profile shows the railroads first president, Mr. T. McKennon."

As for the Hempfield Railroad itself, few, if any of the younger generation are familiar with the name.

The Hempfield Railroad Company was organized on May 15, 1850. The borough of Washington and that of Monongahela City were authorized to subscribe for stock in the company. It was originally intended to extend the road to Greensburg, Westmoreland County, but it was never completed. The proposed routes were laid out by Washington surveyor, Jonathan Knight, who later became chief engineer of the company. Later the road became part of the still operating Baltimore and Ohio. Trains ran regularly over the route from Wheeling to Washington in the fall of 1857 and the old National Pike between both cities suffered quite a loss of traffic due to this new up-start in transportation.

Thus, a part of Washington County history becomes nationally known with the sale of the new Fieldcrest product.

## Henry Miller Shreve - Steamboat Pilot

Ever hear of Henry Miller Shreve?

Perhaps not, because even folks in his home town of nearby Brownsville, Fayette County, give you a blank stare when you inquire about the name. Mention keelboatman Mike Fink or Robert Fulton, inventor of the steamboat, and a light of recognition comes into their eyes.

Although Henry Miller Shreve's time was that of both Fink and Fulton, he has never locally entered their realm of historical fame. It was all in the early 1800's when the Mon River was the spawning ground for that new and exciting adventure of transportation - steamboating! And Henry Miller Shreve was a prime factor in opening up the western rivers to navigation.

This writer's attention was drawn to Brownsville and Capt. Shreve by the recent purchase of a book entitled, "The Steamboaters," written by Harry Sinclair Drago and published in 1967 by Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., New York.

"The Steamboaters" covers all vessels of river history from the famed "New Orleans," first steamboat down the Ohio and Mississippi, to the currently operating "Delta Queen," deluxe excursion steamer out of Cincinnati, Ohio.

In his book, Mr. Drago tells of the many accomplishments of Captain Shreve; two of the highlights therein being the breaking of a steamboat monopoly of navigation of the Ohio and Mississippi, held by inventor Robert Fulton and Chancellor Robert Livingston, negotiator of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803.

Among other feats, Capt. Shreve was the first man to bring a steamboat BACK up a downriver course and the first man to break down the Great Raft of the southwestern Red River; opening that stream to steamboat traffic.

The "Great Raft" in the Red River was a collection of close-clinging debris such as trees, vines, roots and flood water flotsam of all sorts. It could have been labeled the inland "Saragasso Sea." Capt. Shreve was also one of the first operators of a "snag boat," a device used to clear early-day rivers of sunked impediments to traffic.

This is how all started.

In the year 1788, or thereabouts, when the subject of our sketch was but three years old, the Shreve family came to Brownsville, or Old Redstone, from Burlington County, NJ.

Young Shreve's father, Israel, had been a colonel in the Revolutionary War and sought his future after the war in the westward stretches of the new country. After the usual youth in a frontier village, the heady tales and sometimes lies told by "keelboatmen" and "rafters" touched Henry's imagination and he decided to become a river man.

Numerous trips down-river via keelboat, piroque and barge made him more determined to follow a river life. His successful fur trading expedition, by barge, to St. Louis in 1807, started that trade between the southern city and Philadelphia, taking a northern route through Pittsburgh.

When the "New Orleans," the first steamboat to go downriver, was launched from the banks of the Monongahela at Pittsburgh, March 17, 1811, it fired Henry Miller Shreve with the ambition to be part of the new navigation scene.

Shreve was determined to best Fulton's type of boat, which resembled a deep sea vessel. His experience as a keelboatman and barge pilot told him the steamboat of the future would have to be designed to weather the vagaries and caprices of the rivers he knew. She must have a shallow draft and be able to "un-strand" herself from the clutch of a sand-bar.

Shreve immediately became a stockholder in the Brownsville built vessel, the "Enterprise," an eighty-foot craft designed to patents of Daniel French.

In this vessel, laden with supplies for Jackson's army, he went from Pittsburgh to New Orleans in December of 1814. Shreve gave valuable service to Gen. Jackson with this vessel, running the British batteries with supplies for Fort St. Philip and later being sent to the Gulf to exchange prisoners with the British fleet. He also helped man a gun, a twenty-four pounder, in the battle of New Orleans.

In May of 1815, Capt. Shreve entered into the first attempt of a steamboat to come back upriver under its own power. The initial "New Orleans" had failed leaving the way open for a better-designed boat. The role was to fall to the "Enterprise." It came up-stream as far as Louisville.

Encouraged by this feat, Shreve immediately set out to build a steamboat of his own design and accordingly his famous "Washington" was built at Wheeling under his direction. It differed from its predecessors in that it had a flat, shallow hull and a high pressure engine which it carried on the main deck instead of the hold (the "New Orleans" machinery had been below deck, like an ocean-going vessel); it was also the first of the river boats to have a second deck.

With the "Washington," Capt. Shreve was able to make the voyage from Pittsburgh to New Orleans and back to Louisville in 1816. In 1817, he made the round trip between Louisville and New Orleans in the record time of forty-one days.

The die was cast. From this time on, boats modeled on the lines of the "Washington" would increase on the western rivers.

Capt. Shreve's success as a steamboat builder and operator brought him into an interesting conflict with the Fulton-Livingston interests, to which monopoly of steam navigation of its waters had been granted in 1811 by the Territory of New Orleans.

In regard to the breaking of the Fulton-Livingston monopoly by Shreve, author Harry Sinclair Drago had this to say in his "Steamboaters:"

"To say only that the 'New Orleans' was the first boat to steam down the Ohio and Mississippi and let it go at that would be to ignore the fact that with her appearance began the controversy that was to affect steamboating on our Western rivers for many years.

She was a Fulton "monopoly" boat, the first of five that were built, in this order: the "New Orleans," "Vesuvius," "Aetna," "Buffalo" and a second "New Orleans," each having some improvement in structural design and motive power over its predecessors...The prospect of becoming entangled in expensive litigation was a threat that held back steamboat navigation for years.



The Fulton forces received a rude awakening just when they seemed to be in complete command, for they had reckoned without Captain Henry Shreve, a man of modest means but a dauntless fighter for justice, who refused to be awed by the monopolists. In open defiance, he steamed into New Orleans and put up bail for his boat even before it was attached."

Thus, it was that Henry Miller Shreve, by his defiance and determination, opened up the lower rivers to free enterprise and ushered in the grand era of steamboating as it is still told in story and legend.

Later, as superintendent of western river improvements, by appointment of the president, from January 2, 1827, until his retirement in 1841, Shreve designed the first steam snag boat by means of which he drew from the river the sunken trees, usually called "snags," "sawyers," or "planters." These obstructions had long plagued river craft of all types.

In the beginning, Shreve's snag boat was often referred to as "Uncle Sam's tooth puller." But it did the job and was as important in its day as the machine, which many years later, was to lay down the "macadam" surface of Pennsylvania's early highways. It made the going less rough.

In the 1830's, Capt. Shreve succeeded in removing the previously mentioned "Great Raft," an obstruction which had encumbered the Red River of the southwest for many years and had prevented the development of North Louisiana.

His camp of operations, established at Bennett's Bluff during the progress of the work, had grown so by 1853 that it was incorporated under the name of Shreveport in honor of the Brownsville boy who had contributed so much to the success of river navigation. After his retirement, Henry Miller Shreve spent the rest of his life on a plantation in St. Louis County, MO. He passed from the river scene in the city of St. Louis, March 6, 1851.

As a final quote from Mr. Drago's book we would like to add:

"Shreve was a riverman, first and last, and almost singlehandedly worked out the structural and mechanical innovations without which the steamboat would have been relatively useless. What he created must have been good, for other builders, down through the era of the grand packets, continued to incorporate his ideas in their boats, until there were no more steamboats to be built, and the barges, and scrubby towboats that pushed and pulled them, had the big rivers to themselves.

"Ask anyone about Mark Twain and he'll know the name and be able to tell you something about the man. Not one a hundred has ever heard of Henry Miller Shreve."

If you visit Brownsville this fall, stop a moment or two and gaze down-river to the far off Crescent City of Louisiana and dream a little of the days of Henry Miller Shreve. Or look up at some of the older buildings still remaining in Brownsville and envision the time when this near-neighbor of Washington County was the mother-lode from which many adventures of steamboating had their beginning.

The "Steamboaters" by Harry Sinclair Drago, is a must, reading-wise, for both Brownsville and Washington County residents.

If there are those in the Brownsville area who might like to pursue the past of Capt. Shreve more deeply, they might be interested to know that in 1811 he married a Mary Blair of that area. After the death of his first wife, he again married. His second wife was Lydia Rogers.

Perhaps there are descendants in Brownsville or outlying districts who might throw additional light on the subject.

Author Drago has queried us on the existence of portraits of Capt. Shreve and lists Captain E.W. Gould's "Fifty Years on the Mississippi" as his major source of information.

In our opinion, Capt. Henry Miller Shreve was as much an adjunct to the transportation field of his time as those actions of the late Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker and the still living Charles A.L. Lindbergh. All three could "fly by the seat of their pants" and make a trip with nothing more than bailing wire and second-hand parts.

# Historic Railroad Station Restored

Most folks know that this decade of the 1970's has been one of nostalgic savings of old ready-to-be-phased out structured; or to put it more bluntly, saved from the "head-ache" ball of the razing firms.

Such a "saved" building is the renovated Wheeling passenger station of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Co., now a part of the Chessie system. The historic edifice, located at 1704 Market Street, was at one time the third largest station operated by the B&O. The face-lifted structure was purchased in October, 1977, by the West Virginia Northern Community College. Northern offers three primary instructional areas: pre-baccalaureate programs, career education programs, and community service education.

It will also offer students of transportation history a close look at how it used to be in the colorful days of steam railroading, as the college transforms a room on the first floor into a Baltimore and Ohio Rail Museum.

John G. Patterson, director of administration and financial services at the college, is heading a group of local experts in setting up the rail museum.

The four-story brick and block building was opened as a passenger station in 1908; the last B&O passenger train pulling out from the Wheeling stop in 1962. But the operation of the B&O had been a Wheeling land-mark since the hectic days of competitive travel via the old National Pike in 1853.

The arrival of the B&O at Wheeling in 1853 brought together all modes of transportation then in existence, running the gamut from pack horse to "iron horse" with flatboat, steamboat and canal boat related.

Among possibilities for the project is a lay-out of a miniature B&O train; a request to the Baltimore and Ohio Transportation Museum at Baltimore for a loaned exhibit or exhibits; exhibits of such paraphernalia as uniforms, dishes, tickets, etc.: presentation of old photographs; cooperation with a railway club in development of displays and or model exhibits.

## History of Jacob Nessly

Jacob Nessly was a man of many functions. He had to be, in order to help hew out of a wilderness a foundation that we know today as Hancock County.

"Grandfather Nessly was a farmer, nurseryman, fruit grower and distiller. His was a busy life. The clearing of land and the planting of orchards on his immense holdings, also the building of the stone house at the mouth of Big Yellow Creek in Ohio. If there are any who lament the fact that he was a distiller of spirits, let them bear in mind that it was the fault of the age rather than of the man.

"Stillhouses then, were more common here than school houses. Three or four might have been counted in this neighborhood at that time, within a radius of that many miles. Judging from his character, we can have at least this comforting assurance that he made honest whisky. A story comes in here pertinently, showing that he had some tact in evading a disagreeable dilemma.

"At the time of the Whisky Insurrection in Western Pennsylvania, during Washington's administration, the insurgents made a regulation requiring all distillers to join them, on penalty of being burned out in case of refusal. He was loyal to the government, so on hearing that an agent of the insurgents was coming to visit him, and not wishing to take open sides one way or the other, he made it a point to be conveniently absent. He was up to the trick of the average Congressman who does not want his vote recorded - he knew how to dodge.

"Nessly was a man of firm purpose, and somewhat given to have his own way, yet in matters of serious import, in the moral domain, he was willing to consult others, and be governed by their advice. It is an interesting fact in his history, that at one time he considered and talked of the matter of buying slaves. However, before doing so, he thought best to go and see his Mennonite friends in Lancaster County. He did so, and they, like the Quakers, being intensely hostile to slavery, advised against the purchase. He never afterward said anything about buying a slave.

"When Nessly came to Virginia (now the Northern Panhandle), it is believed that he was what is called a Mennonite. However, B. Ezra Herr, in a letter of recent date, says that at that time he was not a professor of religion. Afterwards he and Mrs. Nessly both became Episcopal Methodists, thoroughly experimental as such. He wrote out his experiences, and it is said to have been a very clear statement and full of the real life of religion, as Methodists professed and enjoyed it in those primitive times of better days of Methodism. Everyone of his children was a Methodist, and some of them a most marked type of rich experience.

"Sometime between 1806 and 1810 he furnished coin silver to a silversmith and had two communion cups made, for sacramental occasions. But not far from that time the authorities of the M.E. Church dropped his name from their membership without trial, he always said, or ever assigning any reason therefore. It is believed that Mrs. Nessly never was attached to any other than the Episcopal Methodist Church.

"Sometime in 1826 or 1827 he planned and had built the Stone Church, or Nessly Chapel. He did not then intend it for any denomination in particular, but for general religious uses. He gave also the cemetery attached. Some of his granddaughters say that the Stone Church, or Chapel, was built through the benevolent solicitude of Mrs. Nessly; and it is inscribed upon her tomb that she was the principal founder of it. It is due that this statement should be made.

"In 1828 the division of the M.E. Church took place through this section. After that, Rev. Jeremiah Browning, a reformer, preached in the Stone Chapel; Rev. George Brown, an active reformer, kept preaching up; we think a society was formed soon after Mrs. Nessly died, which was on August 6, 1829, in her 73rd year. Then Mr. Nessly broke up housekeeping, and as his grandson, Jacob DeSellem, had been living with him and taking care of him, Grandfather left Virginia and went to reside in Ohio, with his daughter, Lucy DeSellem.

"A gentleman by the name of Jesse Sisson was farming the homestead farm. He was a very zealous reformer, and he and some more of the friends arranged with Grandfather that he should deed the Stone Church to the Methodist Protestants. A deed was drawn up, and Mr. Sisson and Richard Brown, who was then a justice of the peace in Virginia, went over the river, and John L. DeSellem took Mr. Nessly on a sled, sitting in his large chair, and they went down to the river, and we think drove into the water, so as to be in the jurisdiction of Virginia, and there he signed the deed.

"It is said that this is the oldest recorded Methodist Protestant Church in the world. The silver cups have always gone with this church.

"He lived in this section first 21 years at the old homestead, then 15 years on the farm on which McCoy Station now stands (1885), then again eight years on the old homestead, and the last three years of his life with daughter Lucy DeSellem, at what is known now as Port Homer, Ohio. He died November 3, 1832, in his 80th year. Mr. and Mrs. Nessly are both buried in the cemetery connected with Nessly Chapel."

## "Hoopies" And A Lost Industry

Occasionally we refer to natives of neighboring West Virginia as "hoopies." This is especially true among the younger folks. It is not a disparaging term, as is shown in this item, but rather an historical off-shoot of early days along the Ohio river in that upright vermiform appendage of the Mountain State called the "Northern Panhandle."

At one time we had talked to Harold Hanlin of nearby Colliers, WV, concerning his connection with the famed keelboatman, Mike Fink. Harold had a score of fine stories at hand and one of them was on the origin of the term "hoopie." Hanlin, a part of the Hanlin family that gave name to Hanlin Station in this country, told this tale:

"This is a story about the Ohio River valley, a lost occupation, a lost industry and a fast vanishing breed of people.

"About 150 years ago and on into the early years of the 20th century, most of the major towns and cities bordering the Ohio had a cooper shop, where barrels, hogsheads, etc., were manufactured. These cheap barrels were much in demand in those days for shipping such items as salt, sugar, fruit, pottery and glassware. This type of barrel did not have a metal hoop around it, but used hoops of wood made from saplings (small trees), cut the proper length to go around the barrel with the ends lapping.

"Sometimes the saplings were split in half, making half-round hoops and larger saplings were split several times, making flat hoops. Where did the hoops come from?

"The poles or saplings were abundant on both sides of the river, so farmers took advantage of the demand and turned their wooded land into extra cash. They cut the hoop poles and bundled them, then hauled them to the river and shipped them by flat-boat or packet to the cooper shops. The river boatmen gave the people who cut the hoop poles a nickname which is all that is left of an occupation and an industry.

"The nickname was 'hoopie' and the name has survived the years, even to the present generation, although I doubt very much if many of our young folks know the origin of the name. In some areas the name is frowned upon and considered belittling and in others the name is applied to all living in the section. But I am sure if the so-called 'hoopie' fully realized that the name was part of Ohio River history that is long gone, he would be very proud of his ancestors.

"The last cooper shop I recall was on Ross Street in Steubenville, and if a curious small boy or girl would promise to 'go away' and not bother the workman, the foreman of the shop would give you a 'hoop' for rolling. Which action, by the way is another lost art, similar to cooperage."  
So that's how it was when the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia helped coin the term "hoopie".

Further up-river at New Cumberland, folks had this to add to Harold's explanation of the term: - It seems that when work got slack downriver, men would come up-stream via the old Ben Hur and Kanawha steamboats to work in the New Cumberland brick yards. When this work got slack, they would be asked what they could do, other than wheel brick - "Well, we can do hoop poling, if that's what you need," would be the answer.

Thus we have still another origin for the name. "Hoop-polers," shortened to "hoopie." So who's a hoopie? So's your old man!

## Hostetter's Stomach Bitters Was Big Business

Back in the opening years of the Civil War, the city of Pittsburgh produced a great many things other than providing some of the finest cannon used by the northern forces.

This was the manufacture of a product known as Hostetter's Celebrated Stomach Bitters, and every day of the period saw thousands of bottles going to the wharf and loading dock of steamboats, bound for the far ports of the nation.

Located in a large building of three stories on Water Street, the firm utilized all floors in the preparation, bottling and storing of the concoction. Competent chemists were employed to give analysis of every article used before manufacture. Great pains were taken to insure that the selection of spirits used in the process, namely the pure Essence of Rye, was of the best in the country after all, this was the stimulating principle of this celebrated tonic.

No liquor was used until its qualities had been twice tested. Or so said the copy in the interesting 1861 Almanac put out by Hostetter and Smith, of No. 58 Water Street, Pittsburgh, the full name and address of the firm.

MESSRS. HOSTETTER and Smith's product was good for a number of ailments. First off, there was Cholera Morbus, or a kind of violent flux or diarrhoea, then there was Dysentery, a disease of the larger and lower intestines, along with Yellow Fever, the igue, Dyspepsia, and that blanket medical term of the times, which covered a multitude of ills - General Debility. All supposed to be eradicated by Hostetter's Famous Bitters.

Of course, the rye helped too; and the three floors of the establishment were kept humming, as they turned out 250 dozen bottles per day during the summer season. Constant employment was given to between 25 and 30 hands. One glass house was kept busy supplying bottles, while the printing of labels involved an expense of from \$1,000 to \$1,200 a month.

During the year 1860, some \$10,000 was expended in handsomely printed and framed cards of different styles, and given to customers for display.

The third floor of the business structure was occupied as a laboratory, and in it were six tanks, of a capacity of 4,500 gallons each, all connected by means of a pipe, through which the liquor passed into filters, and thence to a receiving tank, capable of holding 9,000 gallons. The second floor was set apart for the washing of bottles, and for filling, labeling and packing, every department being arranged in the most complete manner. After the bottles were thoroughly washed by an ingenious device, they were filled, three at a time, from the receiving tank, through copper tubes, on the syphon principle, corked by a machine, then passed into the hands of the cappers and labelers, and after being set aside for a day, were then ready for packing.

THE GROUND or first floor, was used for shipping and receiving of raw materials. A total of 25,000 gallons of liquid was always kept on hand as a reserve.

The business of the firm, in a period of eight years before the Civil War, had increased from \$30,000 to \$200,000 yearly - each succeeding year being an increase of about 50 percent.

In 1850, 36,000 bottles were turned out of which 7,000 dozen bottles were shipped to California, and eventually many wound up in such a far-off place as the Sandwich Islands.

Every steamboat that left the Pittsburgh wharf for New Orleans took out a large invoice, the orders comprising from 100 - 500 dozen bottles. Large sales were also made in St. Louis, Memphis and all the principal ports of the Ohio, upper and lower Mississippi, as well as in Central and South America.



## Interesting Notes From 1884 Newspaper

Looking over old copies of the Hancock County Courier is always a pleasant and oftentimes surprising pastime. Many of the recorded incidents are sometimes missed the first time around, and a second reading turns up a new and informative story.

Like the following gems which were not mentioned in a past column's story of the Great Flood of February, 1884. This particular issue of the Courier devoted much space to news of the deluge and its aftermath, both tragic and otherwise, in Brooke and Hancock Counties.

"At one point on the river above Parkersburg, there is a place where a whole colony of houses has settled. There are mills, stores, blacksmith shops, lumber yards, in fact, everything that is necessary for a town except the inhabitants."

"Two engines placed on the OR Railroad, at Parkersburg, to hold the trestle work down, went under and upset. This is a great loss as they were brand new."

"The Wheeling Journal estimates that not less than 200 pianos were ruined within a radius of five miles from the Capital. Nearly everyone one in Wellsburg was destroyed."

"The wreck of Aber's large warehouse, from Industry, was towed ashore by Capt. Prince at Wheeling Island. A planing mill that floated from Freedom, now lies on a farm at Portland, 55 miles from its home. The Beaver County bridge, a huge wooden concern that spanned the Beaver River near Rochester, was found in a wrecked condition, in a large field near the railroad at Industry."

"A flood sufferer who applied at the Cathedral for relief, said he lost all he had and wanted everything obtainable. 'Then I'll first provide you with a wife,' said the good-humored matron to whom he applied, and instantly a chorus of voices called out from the busy throng of workers, 'Here, take me!' The man got out of it by saying there was no occasion for adding to his present misery."

"Charles Devinney of Steubenville had between 3,500 and 4,000 bushels of wheat in his ware room at Cross Creek Station, WV. It was all soaked with water and will be almost a total loss."

So went the news in the month of February, 1884.

And it was not all flood news in this particular issue of the Hancock County Courier - for instance, this item concerned the eternal triangle:

"A scandal in which some very unusual incidents appear is reported from Baltimore. It seems that during the early part of last week Henry Clark, a conductor on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, who had left home with the expectation of making the run to Martinsburg, WV, was obliged to return on account of the breaking down of the locomotive the same night. It being quite a late hour when he reached his house, he at once retired, his wife having already done so.

"Soon afterward, the wife complained of cramps, and asked her husband to go to a drug store. His surprise may be imagined, when, on looking down while waiting for the medicines, he found that his trousers were several inches TOO SHORT. He felt something in one of his pockets, and putting his hand therein, drew from it a roll of bills amounting to \$350.

"He then concluded that his presence at home was far more urgent than his wife's necessity for the medicine, and hastened there, but the man who had invaded his home, and with whom he had unwittingly changed clothing, had beaten a hasty retreat. The trousers which the latter took away belonged to the husband, and contained only a few dollars.

"As the wife was not able to explain matters with satisfaction, the husband ordered her to leave the house, also with which request she complied. Papers for a divorce were filed Monday."

Well, there it is - a peek at the good old days in and around the Northern Panhandle in the days of the Hancock County Courier - mayhap there is a moral in the above story written by J.H. Plattenburg; or maybe Henry's pants shrunk up during the flood and he imagined it all.

At least he was ahead \$350.

## Loew's Penn

How many Robinson Run folk recall the lush movie-going days of the Penn Theatre, Pittsburgh, at the corner of Penn Avenue and Sixth Street?

We call them "lush days," because the Penn, or Loew's Penn to properly label it, was at one time the Roxy of the Tri-State.

And like Sam Rothafel's famed New York palace of deep carpets, soft lights, and ornate trappings, the Penn Theatre is about to undergo a change. Not as drastic as the razing of the Roxy in 1960, but nevertheless a departure from what theatre-goers of four decades ago loved so well.

The interior of the theatre will be remodeled and made into a permanent home for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

Fortunately, it will escape the "head-ache" ball of so-called progress.

Built in 1927 at a cost of \$850,00, the Penn Theatre recalls such permanent entertainers as Teddy Joyce, Ed Lowry, and that wonderful master of the Wurlitzer, Dick Leibert. The first two named were known as "The Master of Ceremonies," and had a long-term contract with the house.

Those were tough years, the late 1920's and early '30's, but the jaded housewife and struggling worker could escape the reality of the times for the price of 35 cents and sink deep in a red velour chair and be transported into a San Simeon realm of make-believe opulence. It was great therapy for the ushering-in of the "depression."

We quote Ben Hall's wonderful description of the Roxy before its demise. This gem appeared in the October, 1961, issue of American Heritage. It could be easily applied to the Penn during its halycon days as a combination movie and vaudeville house:

"Movie-goers loved it. After all, it was for them that this gaudy, outrageous, and lovely world existed, and they thoroughly enjoyed being spoiled by indulgent entrepreneurs. Ladies from cold-water flats could drop in at the movie palace after a tough day in the bargain basements and become queens to command. Budgets and bunions were forgotten as noses were powdered in "boites de poudre" worthy of Madam Pompadour. From a telephone booth disguised as a sedan chair, Mama could call home to say she'd be a little late and don't let the stew boil over.

"For Mama, another world lay beyond the solid bronze box office where the marcelled blond sat (beside the rose in the bud vase) and zipped out tickets, made change, ready Photoplay, and buffed her nails - without interrupting her telephone conversation. Heaven only knew what exotic promise waited behind the velvet ropes in the lobby, what ecstasy was to be tasted in the perfumed half-darkness of the loges."

The huge light-studded marquee outside on Sixth street told of a bill composed of a "live" vaudeville show, plus the last film feature out of Hollywood, which usually ran an hour; filled in with "shorts," such as Walt Disney's "3 Little Pigs" and a newsreel. With the advance trailers for the next week's show taking up about ten minutes.

The above format ran for a week. From Friday to Friday.

One of the biggest weeks of business here was that which featured the personal appearance of Amos and Andy, or Charles Correl and Freeman Gosden. Folks came from as far away as Indiana and Kentucky. The next biggest week was during the showing of the original "Mutiny on the Bounty," with the late Charles Laughton as Captain Bligh.

Then there was the "pit orchestra," lifted up before the eyes of theatre-goers by a hidden mechanism, similar to that which brought Dick Leibert up into a burning head-spot on the Wurlitzer console. A song-fest would be in order and the audience gave forth with the latest in lyrics. Like Hoagy Carmichel's "Star Dust," or a number called "I'm Yours."

Like the Roxy, the Penn had its shining service staff, or corp of ushers. Uniformed in black trousers and red jackets, the boys were topped off with the traditional immaculate paper "dickey," or shirt-front, wing collar, and black tie. The staff with their flashlights were an important part of the "lobby" show.

The interior of the Penn was in sort of a French period. Maybe Louis XIV. Or was it XVI? little matter, the decor was grand and the 35 center was king for a day. Or queen, if you happened to be a housewife, in town for some shopping at nearby Rosenbaum's Department Store.

The nation's top entertainers appeared at the Penn back in those "tight thirties." Eddie Cantor, Ted Lewis (how is he these days, anyhow?), Cab Calloway, dressed in over-all white tie and tails, singing of "Minnie the Moocher," and a youngish Ray Bolger doing his slow-burn tap dance. Was he "still in love with Aimee." Ah! And there was the act of Pat Rooney, Senior and Junior, hoofers supreme, cavorting to the music of "The Daughter of Rosie O'Grady." Pat Rooney, Sr., used to do a tremendous heel-clicking bit here, while high in the air.

Bring back memories? Sure does.

## Lydia Boggs: Three Wars, Three Men

A new star has appeared on the historical novel horizon, and one that has a special interest for devotees of the famed National Road.

This is the extremely factual biography of Lydia Boggs Shepherd Cruger, frontier centenarian, and written by former Wheeling resident Virginia Jones Harper. The title of the book is "Time Steals Softly," and the name may already be a familiar one to Washington county readers. "Time Steals Softly" is an engrossing story of early days at Fort Henry and the building of the western terminus of the National Road to Wheeling.

Lydia Boggs (she was the daughter of pioneer Capt. John Boggs) was a strong-willed woman and exhibited the first touch of "woman's lib" on the frontier. No shrinking violet, Lydia shocked many of her neighbors with her disdain of convention in dress and manners. Her longevity of 102 years saw three wars: Revolutionary, 1812, and the Civil War. Names and places in the book are familiar ones to Washington City and County residents. Her life more than rivaled that of Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind," with its headstrong heroine, Scarlett O'Hara. Where Miss Mitchell's work was pure romance and fiction, other than its war-time background, "Time Steals Softly" lies somewhere between glamorous fiction and hard, sometimes unattractive fact; a middle-of-the-road realism view to devotees of historical research. This cold wind of realism seems to thread its way throughout all of the biography; a wind heretofore unfelt in describing an ancient event.

Billed on the inside jacket as a fictionized biography, the term "fictionized" must be held in small print. The work is actually the alignment of recorded historical happenings into a smooth flowing narrative of Ohio Valley years between 1766 and 1876.

Heroine Lydia Boggs not only weathered three wars, but three men as well: Moses Shepherd, Daniel Cruger and flitting in and out of the story like a political will 'o the wisp, was statesman Henry Clay. Clay's role was helpful in bringing the National Pike down past Lydia's door at Shepherd Hall, the huge stone frontier mansion built by Moses Shepherd at what is now Elm Grove, WV.

The mistress of Shepherd Hall (which in this year of 1976 still stands as the home of the Shrine folk of Wheeling) could have been called the Pearl Mesta of her day; her frequent trips to the nation's capital, via stagecoach on the National Road, and her gay parties for visiting dignitaries in both Washington and at Shepherd Hall, keep her constantly in the forefront of social news.

She loved grand times and grand names.

Then too, in "Time Steals Softly," Mrs. Harper captures the many fallacies of both men and women caught up in the whirlwind of social and transportation change. Her words in describing the inevitable decay of Shepherd Hall in later years strikes close to home for all of us. Time is inexorable and the path of glory leads but to the grave.

Even the glory of helping shape the course of a National Road and "rubbing elbows" with many of America's great statesmen.

Whether by design or coincidence, "Time Steals Softly" is more than apropos reading material in this 200th year of the nation's life. It carries the authority of a well-written textbook, yet still retains the easy-to-read quality of a popular novel.

"Time Steals Softly" is published by Vantage Press, Inc., New York.

# McGuffey's Philosophy Still Popular in Today's World

William Holmes McGuffey, author of the famed McGuffey Readers, was a native of the Tri-State who gave much to the world of his time in the form of proper education. Reader-wise, that is, and what else is so important to gaining knowledge in any field? Without complete absorption, of what use is any textbook?

McGuffey was born September 23, 1800 in Washington County, PA. He was graduated from Washington College, and became a Presbyterian minister in 1829. From 1836 to 1857, he published illustrated readers for the first six, and most formative grades, of elementary schools. His eclectic series on the art of scanning the written word sold over 120 million copies. They did much to bring forth the splendid harvest of mature men and women of the late 1800's.

In the realm of morals and literary taste, there was no better mold than that of McGuffey's teachings.

The 1843 edition of McGuffey's Third Reader carried the below gem of prose contained in Lesson No. 69. Entitled "The Difference Between Man and the Inferior Animals", the text is one that still carries an impact today:

"The chief difference between man and the other animals, consists in this: that the former had reason, whereas the latter have only instinct; but in order to understand what we mean by the terms reason and instinct, it will be necessary to mention three things, in which the difference very distinctly appears.

"Let us first, to bring the parties as nearly on a level as possible, consider man in a savage state, wholly occupied, like the beasts of the field, in providing for the wants of his animal nature; and here, the first distinction that appears between them, is, the use of implements. When the savage provides himself with a hut, or a wigwam, for shelter, or that he may store up his provisions, he does no more than is done by the rabbits, the beaver, the bee, and the birds of every species.

"But man cannot make any progress in this work without tools; he must provide himself with an axe even before he can cut down a tree for its timber; whereas these animals form their burrows, their cells, or their nests, with no other tools than those with which nature has provided them. Man can do nothing without a spade or a plow; nor can he reap what he has sown, till he has shaped an implement with which to cut down his harvests. But the inferior animals provide for themselves and their young without any of these things.

"Now for the second distinction. Man, in all his operations, makes mistakes; animals make none. Did you ever hear of such a thing as a bird sitting on a twig, lamenting over her half-finished nest, and puzzling her little poll to know how to complete it? Or did you ever see the cells of a bee-hive in clumsy, irregular shapes, or observe anything like a discussion in the little community, as if there was a difference of opinion among the architects?

"Man undertakes nothing in which he is not more or less puzzled; and must try numberless experiments, before he can bring his undertakings to anything like perfection; even the simplest operations of domestic life are not well-performed without some experience; and the term of man's life is half-wasted, before he has done with his mistakes, and begins to profit by his lessons.

"The third distinction is, that animals make no improvements; while the knowledge, and skill, and the success of man are perpetually on the increase. Animals, in all their operations, follow the first impulse of

nature, or that instinct which God has implanted in them. In all they do undertake, therefore, their works are more perfect and regular than those of man.

"But man, having been endowed with the faculty of thinking or reasoning about what he does, is enabled, by patience and industry, to correct the mistakes into which he at first falls, and to go on constantly improving. A bird's nest is, indeed, a perfect structure; yet the nest of a swallow of the nineteenth century, is not at all more commodious or elegant than those that were built amid the rafters of Noah's Ark. But if we compare the wigwam of the savage with the temples and palaces of ancient Greece and Rome, we then shall see to what man's mistakes, rectified and improved upon, conduct him."

Such is an example of William Holmes McGuffey's editorship. And to it may be added the fact that man is the only creature of God's handi-work possessing the ability to change his environment - oftentimes to his own detriment.

The problem of a polluted atmosphere is only one. There may be others as man continues his ascendancy over the Animal Kingdom.



# McGugin Gas Well Fire Lasted For 2 Years

J.H. Plattenburg, the sage of Fairview and publisher of the old Hancock County Courier, made a rather curious statement in the November 16th, 1883 issue of his newspaper:

"Sportsmen in the region of the McGugin Gas Well are having rare sport of dark nights shooting wild ducks. The birds are there in large flocks, being attracted by the great light. They fly around in a circle and are easily shot down."

Far from being humorous, Plattenburg's comment was not without foundation, for the McGugin Gas Well fire of 1882-83 was the biggest show of pyrotechnics ever seen by Tri-State residents in the two years that it burned.

Not only was it the largest and most spectacular gas well ever struck in this region, it provided generations to follow with a wealth of fabulous and romantic stories of the event.

During the early months of the year 1882, the well was initially drilled by the Morgan Oil Company, made up of C.D. Robbins and others, on the old Alex McGugin farm, located about one and a half miles southwest of Hickory, Washington County, Pennsylvania.

Many old-timers and gas experts felt that the McGugin was the world's greatest gas well, and the owner of the farm never dreamed that such national publicity would touch upon his land. The McGugin Well's flame swept across the Tri-State during those two years, as a close second to famed Halley's Comet.

In March of 1882, first gas was struck in large quantities at about 2,200 feet. Instantly, the tools were blown through the top of the derrick, and the whole country-side resounded "Great McGugin." The large amount of escaping gas caused many to fear that the entire atmosphere might become one vast pocket of potential explosive; ready to ignite with a Doomsday flash.

The roar of the venting gas could be heard for miles, and when all efforts to cap the well off had failed, it took fire by some still unknown method and burned with a great light for twenty-four months. The glow could be seen at night for a tremendous distance, and thousands flocked into the northern portion of Washington County to witness the marvel; and even today, up in a small ravine just off the old Hickory-Woodrow road, one can see traces of the gravel that was coloured red by the terrific heat of the monstrous gas-jet.

Efforts to bring the well under control were finally successful, and for two or more years following, the vast energy of the Mighty McGugin was piped over hills and valleys to be put to work in the growing industrial complex of Pittsburgh.

For four years, the roar of the great well was heard; many, fearing that the hold would collapse and still the flow forever. Then on December 28, 1885, another drill bored its way into the earth 100 feet away from the mouth of the McGugin. On February 25, 1886, this well touched down to a depth of 2,238 feet - but nothing occurred. At an additional twelve more feet, a strong flow of gas was encountered, and the decline of the monstrous well began. A bypass had been found to tame the giant.

Today, many a graying youngster of the time, harks back to those two hectic years of the biggest Fourth of July display in their young lives - The McGugin Gas Well Fire.

# Meadowcroft Village

Albert and Delvin Miller dipped into the past century to bring alive Meadowcroft Village. Anchored in the rugged Pennsylvania Hills, not far from Meadow Lands, Meadowcroft Village is a restoration project of great historical value and of a magnitude seldom undertaken by non-governmental sources.

Harness horsemen are in for a pleasant surprise the day they visit Meadowcroft Village, the rolling 100 or more acres devoted to resurrecting the Golden Age of the 1860's. Owned and developed by Albert and Delvin Miller, and located just outside the one-time coal mining hamlet of Avella, Pennsylvania, the complex of country stores, log houses and other memorabilia of the past, gives the visitor an insight into just what went on in those storied days of the great Hambletonian and Dan Patch. Folks from all walks of life, including harness horsemen, have marveled at the display this past summer of 1967.

Named for a combination of the Meadowlands title of Del's present spread at Meadowlands, PA, and Bancroft Farms, the name of original Miller holdings, the brothers came up with the combined word "Meadowcroft." And having a dispersed rural village of the 19th Century in mind, the end result was Meadowcroft Village.

Meadowcroft Village is in the confines of Washington County, and about 20 miles distant from the Meadows track. At Avella, you turn west and traverse a two-mile scenic, winding road to reach the site. Or better yet, just ask any of the citizens of Avella where Meadowcroft is, and they will proudly point out the way; for they too, feel that they have an interest in promoting what many of them refer to as: "a miniature Greenfield Village of Western Pennsylvania."

Tentatively scheduled to open up May 1, 1968, to schools and May 31, 1968 to the public, probably on group reservations on the first summer, the Village is the talk of Washington County, and the western end of the state in general. The land that encompasses Meadowcroft Village has a long and interesting history; some of it touching upon early-day education, some on railroading, and of course, the field of standardbred breeding and racing.

Back in 1795, pioneer George Miller moved into the area, liked the rugged hills and fertile land bordering the wilderness stream of Cross Creek, decided to make this part of the country the home base of several generations that were to make their mark in the annals of Cross Creek and Jefferson townships. The original farm goes back at least 173 years, and the complete Village and perhaps later installation of an old type farm will show the mode of life led by the Miller family and their activities in farm work during those many years. The highest point on the Village acreage allows the visitor a three-state view of Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

In the mid-1800's, George Miller, Jr., was active as chairman of the then Miller School district of Cross Creek Township, Washington County, PA, and the tiny one-room schoolhouse that stood near the Miller property line, was given the name of the family - Miller School. Built about 1834, the Miller School was known far and wide as a fine seat of learning in those rather sketchy days of rural education. And as an official of the school administration, great-grandfather Miller was instrumental in keeping the small school abreast of the times.

For many years, until recently, it sat, like John Greenleaf Whittier's fabled New England counterpart: "A ragged beggar sleeping" on its original site on the Bancroft Farm. Today, the refurbished and completely intact schoolhouse is a highlight of Meadowcroft Village. In 1964, Albert and Delvin began the task of disassembling and re-erecting the structure in the confines of the Village. After two years of dedicated

work, the quaint one-room school was ready for the fulfillment of the Miller brother's dream of many years - the first Miller School reunion. Then too, the fact that three generations of Miller folk had learned their readin', ritin' and 'rithmetic under its roof, gave added incentive to the project.

Thus it was, on August 20, 1966, that the long-awaited school reunion and rededication came about. And what a day it was for the oldsters and their still older teachers! Albert and Delvin had both attended the last years of the school's operation in the early 1920's; the school had officially closed in 1921, and it was an afternoon of handshaking and reminiscing all around. It took a lot of effort, time and funds - but the gratified look on the faces of the elderly students and veteran teachers was more than enough recompense for the job. The schoolhouse will be open as a "walk-through" museum, where those who recall the days of the "bashful bare-foot boy, with cheeks of tan," can refresh their memory of a similar day perhaps an incident of wearing the "dunce-cap" that sits atop the stool in one corner of the Miller Schoolhouse.

In the early 1890's, T. Albert Miller, the grandfather of Albert and Delvin, had put in his own harness training track on the rolling farmland. It was quite an engineering job, and the old hill-hugging oval may still be seen today. Another earlier, and even more unique track was devised by the elder Miller, and built on a contour nearly a mile long and ending at a neighboring farmer's fence.

T. Albert, as he was known to most of the harness world of his time, covered the Tri-State area of Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania quite thoroughly, along with trips to New York state and other nationally known harness racing centers. Every fair, county or state, sat up and took notice when the Miller name appeared on the program as either a trainer, breeder, or driver. Fairs in those days were extremely colorful events and families lived in anticipation of the annual get-together at the Fair. Here a young lady would usually meet her future husband, or a shy maiden might drop her handkerchief: a gallant swain would pick it up and have the privilege of escorting her home. It was a time for romance and a chance for the local printers to outdo themselves in the matter of elaborate poster material. And one of these grandiose examples of the printer's art can be seen today on the wall of one of the Village Stores. It is of 1886 vintage and tells of the zenith days of the old Burgettstown Fair, whose grounds were not too far removed from the Miller homestead. This was where T. Albert Miller and his descendants first tasted the heady wine of competition, crowds and cheering track-side fans, at the conclusion of a victorious sprint; like show business, it sort of got into the blood. On the day that saw the demise of Alden Miller as the result of a track accident at the Burgettstown Fair of 1936, nephew and fledgling driver Delvin, carried on the tradition, with Margaret Henely ahead of him, to a world's record of 2408 on the 1/3 mile dirt oval. Del Miller drove his first race on this track in 1929.

Grandfather Miller had raced in Grand Circuit in 1884 at South Buffalo and Rochester, NY. Little did he know then, that portions of his farm acreage would some day simulate the times and scenes familiar to him in those hectic formative days of the Major League of Harness Racing.

In the early 1900's, still another of the Miller clan was to add a bit of color and adventure to the family history. This was Earl Miller, the father of Albert, Delvin, Margaret and Orin. Orin, deceased, was a service casualty of World War II.

An Indiana newspaperman, John Soule, in 1851, had once coined a phrase - "Go west, young man." Horace Greely picked it up and word of it must have reached the Miller Farm, for Earl, about the year 1909, and perhaps stimulated by the building of new railroad nearby, left the home farm and headed west. He had attended Iron City Business College at Pittsburgh, and had also studied telegraphy. Thus armed, he made his way as far west as Iroquois, SD, where he met Amy Grannis shortly after getting his first job on a railroad. It wasn't long until they were married and a better job on a California railroad beckoned. Here, in the tiny town of Boca, California, in the heart of the Sierra's, Albert, the first child, was born. At

that time, living quarters for railroaders were hard to come by - so Albert found himself celebrating his first birthday in a box-car, improved as a temporary home.

Two years later, living quarters had again become a problem, and this time the upstairs portion of a trackside depot served as a home. Thus, while the folks in the Woodland, California railroad station waited for the arrival of the late express, upstairs above the waiting room, Amy Miller awaited the birth of her second son - Delvin!

So if you visit Meadowcroft and happen to overhear Albert or Delvin giving forth with a bit of Lucius Beebe conversation as concerns railroad stations, cabooses and telegraph keys as part of future exhibits...you will know the reason why; both men are interested in a portion of the Iron Horse's past, too. And with good reason.

After all this hectic action, Earl returned to the home farm in Western Pennsylvania in 1916, armed with plenty of telegraph experience and with the family brood increased to five and took a position as "brass pounder" and station-agent with the newly opened Pittsburgh and West Virginia Railroad, or what was known locally as the "Wabash." This trackage ran close to the Miller farm. A new name had been given to the station not far from the Miller farmhouse, and it was called Penowa, derived from a combination of the names of the three states covered by the new road: Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. It sounded exciting, and working at the Penowa Station would give Earl plenty of time to engage in his favorite off-duty pleasure -horseback riding. Friends of the family have often recounted stories attesting to Earl's ability to ride. He was a natural horseman, liked the animals, and would show no fear at mounting a steed of even uncertain temperament.

As you continue to read more of the background of the Miller family, Bancroft Farm and the present Meadowcroft Village, you will find that no TV or movie script can touch the factual story of the birth of this quaint and nostalgic repository for items of history and conservation of wild life and the flora and fauna of the Tri-State.

Besides the one-room school, there is the Meadowcroft General Store. Here an apropos caption, written across the square facade of the store, catches the visitor's eye. It reads: "Pills, Petticoats and Plows." The words were selected by Albert Miller and are quite in keeping with the country village atmosphere.

This typical country store of the mid-1800's, with its hitching rail, delightful colors of gold and brown trim, is constructed in its interior with counters and shelves designed in the year 1850. Portions of the shelves are filled with items that once comprised the stock of the old Fowler Store and Post-Office, which stood in the wing of a spacious red-brick farmhouse inn, a few miles west along the old Washington to Wellsburg Turnpike. This particular portion of the Turnpike, now West Virginia Route 27, was known as Fowlerstown or Fowler's. Many of the items in the old Post Office show the transition of the state of Virginia into West Virginia in the year 1863.

By some strange quirk of temperature and humidity, many of the store articles have weathered the passage of time and are in an excellent state of preservation, despite the span of decades from 1865 to the early 1900's, the period covered by the shelves' contents. Much of it reaches back into the opening year of the store.

Shoes of Civil War patterns, an old, but still intact, homesewn Confederate Flag; its owner a devout Southerner, and one who did not give up his sentiments easily in the year that West Virginia became a state, is part of the Fowler Post-Office equipment. Old political flyers, ballots and business letters of the period, all tell of those days of decision out along the old Turnpike.

Fowler's was a stop on this crude highway for cattle drovers and stage coach passengers en route to the depths of Ohio and points west in the period mentioned above. Seeing the interior is a delight for the visitor who enjoys an authentic show of what folks wore, ate and thought about during the early days. The women-folk, took, will be interested in the selves full of "yard-goods" of the 1870's, and in one corner is a life-size dress-makers form used in conjunction with the dress goods stock of the store.

Here in this store, it is planned to sell such items as "penny candies," along with a picture post-card or two depicting a scene in Meadowcroft Village, which may be dropped into the original mail-drop of Fowler's Post-Office and later sent on its way to friends and relatives out-of-town. And a special item will be the original hand-made craft products produced by craftsmen working in the various buildings. Americana type books will also be for sale.

High on a knoll above the spacious meadow that lies between it and the Meadowcroft General Store, is another merchandise center of yesteryear. This is the Sugar Loaf Country Store, and had its origin in the vicinity of Chester, Orange County, New York. This was one of the first ventures by Albert and Delvin toward the formation of the Village. This building, with its red-barn colored exterior and inevitable hitching rail, was the outcome of a visit to Bancroft Farm in 1962, by the then Mayor of Chester, Mrs. Russ Carpenter. Russ, the breeder of Adios Butler, had purchased all the contents of the old Conklin Store of nearby Sugar Loaf, and had stored the material in his barn. Sugar Loaf, NY, had gained fame as the foaling site of Hambletonian 10, and the barn Russ used for storage once sheltered the mares bred to this stallion.

Originally, Carpenter had come down to Bancroft Farm to inquire after the well-being of Adios Butler and other get of Debby Hanover, these youngsters spending a session at Bancroft as yearlings. While here, Russ became aware of what the Miller brothers had in mind, and suggested that Albert and Delvin accept his stock of Sugar Loaf items for their first country store.

So here it stands today - "pretty as a picture post-card," and visitors will find this an excellent place to browse through and recall the days of high-button shoes and high-wheeled sulkies. For this store carries a multitude of items that were popular in the Gay 90's - buggy whips, buggy and early-day car heaters, sulphur matches, candles and even corn planters, which hang from the ceiling and evoke many questions as to their identity.

Then, higher up in the village, is the simulated Block House built by Albert to show the early frontier problems of survival along the western Pennsylvania border. It provides a look-out in the upper portion for those who care for a panoramic view of the Village lay-out. Nearby is the corn-crib and shed that shelters the eight-wheeled logging wagon recently donated by Driver Tom Wilburn. The vehicles was used to haul logs in the vicinity of Philadelphia, Mississippi. The device was hitched to a pair of oxen and saw service about the year 1900.

And speaking of oxen, Meadowcroft was the recipient of a fine pair of the animals by Driver Billy Haughton. These had been secured by Haughton from the Armstrong brothers of Canada. The benign, but sturdy examples of early-day motive power graze peacefully these days in a pasture adjacent to the Village. In a nearby barn sits the ox-cart.

A more recent acquisition was a high-wheeled sulky donated by a veterinarian of Morgantown, WV. The good doctor had seen Albert being interviewed on a local TV program dealing with Meadowcroft, and lost no time in taking advantage of seeing that it found a good home and a chance of exposure to future generations. Since then, other high-wheeled sulkies have been added to the Village collection.

Since it is the desire of Albert and Delvin to have the Village perpetuate the memory of the Miller family, the decision of the veterinarian was also a wise one. As a non-profit foundation and educational center, with proceeds being plowed back into it, the items will be assured of good care and of great value to educate future generations in studying the past.

Meadowcroft Village was enriched by the gift of a roll-top desk, one that had been used for many years by harnessdom's late beloved Starting Judge, Joseph McGraw. It had been sent over from Washington, PA, by his daughter, Betty, and today it graces a front corner of the Sugar Loaf Store.

Then there is that wonderful world of viewing for all horsemen - The Hindman Blacksmith Shop. Let even a "city-feller" look in here, and wild horses couldn't drag him out.

This building was erected by Albert to show the various trades that were encompassed in the blacksmith's art. Thomas Hindman had operated a shop in nearby Cross Creek for about 50 years, and many of his original tools are in the shop. Later, following the opening of the Village, a blacksmith will be employed on heavy traffic days to show visitors the actual work of the village smithy. The old wood and leather bellows and forge with it, is considered one unit. Both are massive and duplicate the setting as it might have been in Washington's time.

Strange and long-unheard of terms adorn many of the shop's exhibits. "Hardies" or anvil-working protuberances, "Calk" wrenches used to put on a removable point, or cleat, and the calks themselves, made in all shapes and sizes to do a specific job in the days before the automobile. Rasps, hoof-nippers and "picks" allow the old-time to make quite a game out of asking the uninformed youngster or city visitor what he thinks they are.

The anvil that occupies a prominent place in the shop was also the result of a visitor seeing the use of Meadowcroft as a heaven for a family keepsake.

Frank Chapman, who resides a few miles away along the Washington to Wellsburg Pike, had a special sentiment in regard to the anvil. As a small boy, interested in the action going on in his father's blacksmith shop, Frank picked up a hammer, struck the iron surface of the anvil in the manner in which he had often seen his father do...and a small sliver of steel was sheared off and entered his eye. Within a year or so, Frank knew that the sight of both eyes would be gone. He did lose his sight, but applied himself diligently in the world of darkness, and today, despite his handicap, Frank is one of the most successful businessmen in neighboring Brooke County, WV. And to make it more of a story in connection with the donation of the anvil to Meadowcroft, Frank is a several times removed great-nephew of the famous "Johnny Appleseed," or John Chapman. The anvil goes back several generations in the Chapman family.

Just above the Hindman Blacksmith Shop stands the old Miller Log House. This structure was formerly situated on the original Bancroft Farm, and could have been the original Miller family structure in 1795.

The two-story log house has an interior filled with all those bits of frontier lore that made existence possible in those days. A huge fireplace spans one complete end of the first floor, while in a corner of the room, a flax wheel and a wool wheel attest to the industrious work of the women of the time. Walls are hung with peg-boards for clothing, and a portion of the west wall is open to show the methods used in "chinking" the aperture between the logs. This ranged from short pieces of timber, to the classic mud and straw or mud and hair mixture. Also is shown how bits of wood and field stone were used to fill the gap. It is a graphic illustration for those who might be puzzled as to how the openings were sealed.

Three hand-made, or primitive period utensils are ranged alongside the east wall of the lower room. One is a wood sausage stuffer, a lard press, and a sturdy wood bench. A sausage cutting or grinding device is also seen.

The Miller Log House furniture is of a period of 1785. Before that there were log cabins. It is hoped that later on a pioneer clearing of the western Pennsylvania frontier can be portrayed. This will show how the scene looked to the first settlers, many of whom were killed and tomahawked by the Indians.

A recent addition to the village is the Beall Carriage Barn. It was brought here from a neighboring portion of Brooke County, WV, and will combine as a shelter for old carriages and as a horse museum. It contains two old-fashioned standing tie stalls. Its major attraction will be the seven carriages donated by Mrs. David Dows of Aiken, SC. Also will be on display such nostalgic items as several high-wheeled sulkeys and a sleigh that brings to mind a Hall Mark post-card of a winter scene.

At present plans are to have school groups from a three-county area come in for viewing. Village developers will work with Administration and Curriculum Specialists. Such groups will be given tours and a close insight into the workings of Nature Study, Wild Life, etc. The project is also closely aligned with the Washington County Industrial Development Authority and the Tourist Promotion Agency of the county. Both these groups are convinced that Meadowcroft Village will be one of the area's great tourist attractions. Also interested is the Resources Development Agent, under the Penn State University Extension.

The Village area is rich in outdoor flora and fauna. The Ecology and Conservation examples are also of great interest to the school administrators, who desire to have children into study natural resources as part of their everyday learning.

Closely associated with the setting of natural wild-life and flora and fauna, is the Trapper's cabin. Albert says he regrets that he did not save an old Outdoor publication of around 1900, in which the late driving great, Septimus Palin has written an article describing the experiences of operating his "trap line." This trapper's magazine was found in the Miller attic. (Albert's father and uncle had subscribed to the publication). Uncle Alden had taught Albert the fundamentals of trapping, which Albert says really wet his feet with a love of the outdoors, and plant and animal life.

# Miller School

"I've wandered to the village, Tom,  
I've sat beneath the tree,  
Upon the school-house playground,  
that sheltered you and me;  
But none were left to greet me, Tom;  
and few were left to know,  
Who played with us upon the green,  
some twenty years ago."

- Anonymous

Although area schools are idle for the summer months, one schoolhouse is looking forward to Saturday, August 20, 1966, as a day of reunion for those who attended the old-fashioned "one-room" seat of learning.

This is the Miller School No. 1, active in both the Cross Creek and Jefferson Township districts since about 1834. The spring of 1926 saw the end of its role as an operating institution.

The school house, formerly situated some distance from its present location in the heart of Meadowcroft, the nostalgic haven for history and wildlife erected by Albert and Delvin Miller, just outside the village of Avella, has been restored and refurbished to its original early-day grandeur.

Or should we say "magnificent simplicity?"

Here, on August 20, all those who attended the many sessions of the school, plus those teachers who may still be able to attend, will once more congregate to reminisce on past precious moments of childhood learning.

While going through the many records of the tiny structure, the writer came across an interesting poem, written in a childish hand in the days of the Miller School house operation. It had no date, nor a name - perhaps a reader might recognize it as the work of a prominent poet of the time. Entitled, "Was Washington Like Other Boys", the piece was written to commemorate Washington's birthday and seemingly meant to make the Father of his Country appear to have more human frailties than given in histories of the time:

The talk is about George Washington now,  
His birthday and his age.  
The schools are closed and flags are out  
It seems to be the rage.  
We hear of this being a wonderful man,  
And our hearts beat fast with joy,  
When we think so great a general,  
Was once like us, a boy.  
They tell only the things that are good,  
And leave out all the bad,  
And I can't help asking in my mind,  
Was he not like most any lad?  
Did he not love sport like we?



Did summer come or winter go,  
Without a plunge in the river cool,  
Or throw balls of the damp, white snow?  
Did he ever relish a piece of pie,  
Held tight by a dirty hand?  
Or with bread well-spread with sugar or jell,  
Feel like a monarch of the land?  
Were his little trousers graced by a patch  
Of a different color and kind.  
Were the elbows out and his jacket torn,  
Yet he never seemed to mind?  
Did he ever attend a district school,  
And set on the dunce's seat?  
And get out of a flogging, sure and neat?  
Did he tie cans to a little dog's tail,  
To see him howl and run,  
Or duck a girl in a cold snow-drift,  
Because it was lots of fun?  
O, these are the joys of the common boy,  
And royal boys are they,  
They'd toil a week for a day of pleasure,  
And ask no other pay.  
If Washington knew no days like these,  
He missed a deal of joy.  
And I know not one who'd trade for his rank,  
The life of a common boy!

Such was the curious question of boyhood in the halcyon days of the old Miller School house., And if you would like to help ring the school bell of by-gone years to help summon those who may have lost contact with the structure - and you know of anyone who might have attended, have them write or drop a line to Miller School House Reunion, c/o Bancroft Farm, RD 2, Avella.

## Mon River Traffic

All sorts of water traffic passed by the city of Wellsburg in the old days of the Ohio's prime as a vital artery in opening up the frontier to the West. Scows, Keelboats, Flatboats, stately steamers and even the lowly "dug-out" and raft created a colorful scene in the river bend just below the foot of Main Street.

The Monongahela River saw much of the early craft too, and in later years was to become the busiest river highway of coal traffic in the history of an inland stream.

The slope of the Monongahela for nearly 70 miles above Pittsburgh is not more than 3 1/2 inches per mile. In its 90 miles within the limits of Pennsylvania, it has no islands or bars dividing the channel. Thus it was always easy for navigation, with ample width for steamboats with or without barges to pass one another in utmost safety.

The Mon River is 128.5 miles in length. It is formed by the junction of the Tygarts Valley and West Fork Rivers in West Virginia, and flows in a northerly direction to Pittsburgh.

Early settlers along the Mon made dugouts hews of logs to resemble a birch canoe. Large ones were poled up-stream and some were moved by tow-line.

About the year 1772, Benjamin Parkinson, early settler of the upper river, built the first river mill in the area. From then on, the river was virtually alive with keelboats, flatboats and dug-outs, all carrying down-stream, the products of the first industry along the river short - the grist mill!

The keelboat carried a regular crew, including a captain.

Mon River history mentions one Captain Caleb Harvey, who ran a keelboat called the Reporter, from Pittsburgh to Brownsville, making excellent time for the era. On board were a select crew, expert at the art of "poling." As several men on each side set their poles and ran the boat forward at the same instant, like an old-time Roman galley, it was necessary to act in concert.

The unskilled man who made a misstep was often thrown overboard by the pole in his hand being struck by the boat.

Steamboats on the Mon made their debut in 1814, when the good ship Enterprise was built at Brownsville, PA. It left that place under the captaincy of Henry M. Shreve, and passed down the Monongahela, Ohio and Mississippi to New Orleans. This was the first boat to make the trip to the Crescent City and return.

And since that time the development of navigation on the three rivers has assumed mammoth proportions.

The success of the Enterprise stimulated boat-building all along the upper waterways. Towns like Elizabeth, Monongahela, Belle Vernon, California and West Brownsville became centers of shipbuilding for the new-found highways of water.

Passengers steamers too, were built by these boat yards and many fine packets saw the light of day along the valley.

## Newell and Chester

Back in the 1920's, many large cities in the United States had a section known as "Chinatown." Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Boston were especially noted for their Oriental quarters.

When an out-of-towner visited any of the above, he was taken on a tour of the section. Better than a trip to far-off Cathay.

Upon the Northern Panhandle of the Mountain State, there are still two active "Chinatowns." These are Newell and Chester, both in Hancock County. Here the world-famed Homer Laughlin China Company and the Taylor, Smith and Taylor Company works hold sway, and although you won't find too many Chinese around, you will discover that West Virginia not only leads in the making of iron and steel and the production of coal, but does an excellent job of being known internationally in the fine art of china and pottery production. Both plants encourage tours by out-of-towners.

At Newell, the most imposing building in town is the Homer Laughlin works. It has a touch of the old world architecture and covers a great length of the river bank, west of Route 2.

Homer Laughlin China had its beginning back in 1871, when Homer Laughlin and brothers Shakespeare Laughlin built their first two-kiln pottery in East Liverpool, Ohio. Brother Shakespeare 1879 and from that year until 1896 Homer Laughlin carried on the business as an individual enterprise. The Laughlin Pottery was one of the first whiteware plants in the country. As early as 1879 Laughlin ware received the highest award at the Centennial Exposition held in Philadelphia that year.

In 1889 William Edwin Wells came to East Liverpool to work with Homer Laughlin. Homer Laughlin incorporated his business at the end of 1896 and shortly thereafter sold his entire holdings to Mrs. Wells and a Pittsburgh group headed by Mr. Marcus Aaron.

The new management, with Mr. Aaron as President and Mr. Wells as Secretary-Treasurer and General Manager, soon abandoned the small River Road plant and expanded with two new and much larger plants at Laughlin Station, Ohio, three miles east of East Liverpool. They also purchased a third plant located close to the new ones and which had formerly been operated by another company. All of these plants were in operation by 1903.

By 1905 it was again necessary to expand. The great site at Newell, WV, was purchased, and the then largest single pottery unit in the world was erected, consisting of thirty kilns under one roof. To reach this plant it was necessary to construct a suspension bridge across the Ohio River, and to build a street car line from East Liverpool to Newell. This work was done largely by the men interested in The Homer Laughlin China Company. These men at the same time developed the town site of Newell and constructed all public utilities.

The business continued to grow rapidly, and in 1914 Plant No. 5, consisting of sixteen kilns, was built at Newell, bringing the total capacity up to seventy-eight kilns.

The increasing demand for Homer Laughlin ware necessitated further expansion in 1923, when the continuous tunnel kiln unit, Plant No. 6, was erected. This huge addition was a complete innovation in ceramic plant design. The scientist and engineer had cooperated with the practical potter to an extent which aroused the interest and admiration of the industry in this and other countries. The new plant more than justified itself, and in 1927 a new unit was added, Plant No. 7. In 1929, a supposedly bad year for

any business in America, Plant No. 8 was built. With the completion of Plant No. 8, all operations at East Liverpool were discontinued, and are today (1972) all concentrated in Newell in plants fully equipped with tunnel kilns.

Earlier we had mentioned the old and revered name of Wells in connection with the Homer Laughlin works. Wells folk had given much to the history of the Northern Panhandle and outlying sections. In January, 1930, after more than forty years of magnificent work in the development and expansion of the business from a small riverside pottery in Ohio to the five great factories in West Virginia, and to a position of unquestioned leadership in its field, W.E. Wells retired from active direction of the business and was succeeded by his son, Joseph Mahan Wells. Mr. Aaron became Chairman of the Board and his son, M.L. Aaron, succeeded him as President. Under the leadership of the younger Mr. Aaron and Mr. Wells, the company continued to manufacture popular wares and turned in addition to the creation of a series of new developments, which have radically altered the type of domestic dinnerware in the American home.

First of these developments was the Wells Art Glaze line: Matt Green, Peach, and Rust and later Melon Yellow. Then followed the exquisite smooth texture, deep ivory glaze, known as Vellum, equally effective in undecorated ware and as a base for decorative treatments. The next outstanding step was in the field of cooking ware for table use - Ovenserve and Kitchen Kraft. From these most successful utilitarian wares, Homer Laughlin proceeded next to the creation of the outstanding colored glaze lines of modern times, and in that field produced Fiesta, Harlequin and Rhythm - wares which have become almost synonymous for colored glazes and have brought new cheer and warmth to millions of Americans. A correlative development in thin, light and graceful decorated ware became known as the Homer Laughlin Eggshell Line, a strong challenge to European and Asian craftsmen. In 1959, the company started production of fine translucent table china, as well as a vitreous line for hotels and institutions. Joseph M. Wells became Chairman of the Board and his son, Joseph M. Wells, Jr., assumed the position of Executive Vice President on January 1, 1960.

From the original two kiln plant, employing about sixty people and producing about five hundred dozen pieces of dinnerware per day, the company grew to the employment of 2,500 people, the use of 1,500,000 square feet of production area, and the production of thirty thousand dozens of pieces of dinnerware per day.

During the past ten years, however, production and employment have substantially decreased, due to the ever-increasing importations of both vitreous and semi-vitreous china from Japan where wage rates are only a fraction of those at the Homer Laughlin China Company.

In 1971, approximately 1,600 employees produced over 94 million pieces of dinnerware with modern methods and equipment.

An interesting story in connection with the pottery industry in the Northern Panhandle is contained in Mrs. C. Donald Vogel's "Early History of Chester and Newell." It goes as follows: "The origin of the term 'hoopie', heard frequently in Chester and Newell, has several versions. This one seems most authentic. Around the Marietta area, there grew a fast-growing, straight sapling which was cut and split to make hoops for the barrels used at the potteries. These saplings were commonly called hoop-poles. People from that area worked on boats which brought the hoop-poles here. Soon the term 'hoop-poles' was used to describe the people themselves. Many of them decided to stay and work in the potteries. Their families and friends followed. By this time, the longer term 'hoop-poles' was shortened to 'hoopie.'

"A good story concerns advice supposedly sent back by 'hoopies' to their friends coming to work in the potteries: 'When you come up the river (to Newell and Chester) you'll know where to get off the boat. When you see the big stack by the river with the letters 'H.L.C.,' get off there. That means 'Hoopies Last Chance!'" Of course, the initials were for the Homer Laughlin China Company.

Up at Chester, in the very tip of the Northern Panhandle, and just a short distance above Newell, is the Taylor, Smith and Taylor Co., makers of fine dinnerware. Here 600 men and women make table settings for all over the world. The Taylor, Smith and Taylor firm had its beginning also in East Liverpool. It was built in 1898 by Col. John Taylor, president of the Taylor, Knowles Company of East Liverpool, along with Joseph G. Lee, Homer Taylor, W.L. Smith and his brother, C.A. Smith. Like the Homer Laughlin folk, the builders provided Chester with a building base for the town. Needed items like gas lines, water lines and sewers were helped along by the new plant. In 1907, the firm's employee list was about 300; since then it has grown into the 600 or more figure. The Taylor, Smith and Taylor retail outlet at the plant is a popular Mecca for tourists visiting the area, and the firm advertises in leading women's journals.

When you are up in the Northern Panhandle, be sure to stop in at the Homer Laughlin plant and the Taylor, Smith and Taylor retail outlet store. Tours can be arranged ahead of time at Homer Laughlin; while Taylor, Smith and Taylor at Chester has tours through June, July and August, 10 AM and 1 PM daily. Their winter months' schedule is open by appointment.

They say that the mid-west is the bread-basket of the nation.

That may be so; but that bread and fixin's has been consumed by a great Americans from dinner plates made in the Mountain State's Newell and Chester, Hancock County.

Or did you know?

## Nostalgic Poem Cited From "Good Old Days"

A fine poem once appeared in the old Hancock County Courier, printed at Fairview, Hancock County, West Virginia in the year 1884.

The Courier was a weekly and often gave space on its front page to current bit of poetry to ease the tension of its readers. Fairview is now called New Manchester, and the paper still continues publishing in New Cumberland, the county seat.

To those readers who have raised their children and have seen them leave the home nest, the poem is particularly attractive. Or perhaps you have just had a "garage sale" and have gotten rid of some old chairs that cluttered up the attic for many years. If so, then you are in for a tear or two while reading the following:

Three Little Chairs  
(Author Unknown)

They sat alone by the bright wood fire,  
The gray-haired dame and the aged sire,  
Dreaming of days gone by;  
The tear-drops fell on each wrinkled cheek,  
They both had thoughts they could not speak,  
And each hear uttered a sign.  
For their sad and tearful eyes described  
Three little chairs placed side by side  
Against the sitting room wall;  
Old fashioned enough as there they stood,  
Their seats of flag and their frames of wood,  
With their backs so straight and tall.

And the sire shook his silvery head,  
And with trembling voice he gently said:  
"Mother, these empty chairs!  
They bring us such sad thought tonight,  
We'll put them forever out of sight,  
In the small dark room upstairs."

But she answered: "Father, no not yet  
For I look at them and I forget  
That the children are away;  
The boys come back, and our Mary, too,  
With her apron on of checkered blue,  
And sit there every day."

"Johnny still whittles a ship's tall masts.  
And Willie his leaden bullets casts,  
While Mary her patch-work sews;  
At evening the three childish prayers  
Go up to God from these little chairs

So softly that no one knows."  
"Johnny comes back from the billowy deep;  
Willie wakes from the battlefield sleep,  
To say good-night to me;  
Mary's a wife and mother no more,  
But a tired child whose playtime is o'er,  
And comes to rest at my knee.

"So let them stand there, though empty now,  
And every time when alone we bow  
At the Father's throne to pray,  
We'll ask to meet the children above,  
In our Savior's home of rest and love,  
Where no child goeth away."

And that's the way it was in the nearby Northern Panhandle of West Virginia in the year 1884. Folks still took time out to read a good poem that tugged at the heart string memories of the Civil War.

## "Olde Church" Still Stands

History in nearby Brooke and Hancock Counties, WV, is not all Weirton Steel or the old days of Rocks Springs Park. Rocks Springs is gone now, vanished to make way for a new bridge over the Ohio at Chester.

But there is one seemingly eternal landmark that many Pennsylvanians may have noted while driving westward from Burgettstown to cross the state line above Follansbee; it is along Eldersville Road, west, and the landmark is old St. John's Episcopal Church and Cemetery.

St. John's was originally built of log in 1793, was later burned by Indians and rebuilt of brick in 1846. It was founded by Joseph Doddridge and was the first Episcopal church west of the Alleghenies. Today it stands as serene and knowing as it ever did in the era before the auto, when the creak of harness leather and the soft plop of the hoof of an impatient tethered horse was the only sound to mar the Sunday morning hush between choir selections.

When you visit old St. John's (the plaque in front of the church uses the spelling "Olde"), you have to dream a little to make it a memorable visit. Quaint headstones of early date, reminiscent of New England's churchyards and recalling the prose of Spoon River Anthology, dot the well-kept burial ground. Names prominent in Northern Panhandle history are etched in the stones: Wells, Baxter, Wiggins, Morrow, Carter, Freshwater and others. The church itself is a picture postcard scene of the "Church In The Wildwood," like the popular hymn says; the contour of the rolling green hills surrounding the church and cemetery much the same as of old.

To reach Old St. John's, take Route 18 north from Washington to Burgettstown; then left to Eldersville Road, rear of Lady of Lourdes R.C. Church. Keep right at Eldersville to continue over state line into Brooke County, WV.



## Old Fowler Mansion Open Again Off Wellsburg Pike

Out along the old Washington to Wellsburg Turnpike in Brooke County, WV, there's an inconspicuous road-sign reading: "Fowlertown, Unincorporated."

Don't hurry by too fast, or you will have to reverse to give it closer scrutiny. The village is that small.

Historically, Fowlerstown is loaded with the traditions and color of old Virginia and the post-war years of the Civil War as West Virginia. At one time in its past, the hamlet boasted of a grist-mill, a post office, general store, and of course the old Fowler Mansion serving as an inn or hotel for travel-weary stage coach passengers and drovers using the Turnpike.

Fowlerstown was named for John Fowler, one of the early settlers of the Northern Panhandle section of what is today Brooke, Hancock and Ohio Counties. Fowler at one time owned 200 acres of land on historic Cross Creek, a stream that wends its scenic way westward to the Ohio from near the state line.

For four generations or more, the land and operations of the old mill along Cross Creek, and post office in the mansion house, were in the hands of the Fowler family.

Back in 1851, when the structure was built of native brick, it took three years to complete the job. But the 16-room mansion is still as sturdy and upright as the day the masons left it.

Every panel in every door or cabinet is perfectly matched and the grain of the wood shows up very well, despite the passage of many decades of a "heap of livin'."

On the south side of the main floor (there are three floors), folding doors swing open to allow a view of a large dining room. Here, during the days of the old Turnpike, visitors gathered, along with family members, for the evening meal and perhaps a bit of the light fantastic in true Virginia fashion.

Just following the erection of the Fowler house, the area teemed with drovers, who walked their livestock across the country to the depths of Ohio. They put up overnight at Fowler's Inn, where pens were maintained for the animals. In front of the mansion, still to be seen today, is a two-story log house that served as an "overflow" quarters for the drovers when the "Big House" was full.

As time went on and the country recovered from the War Between the States, the Post Office Department decided to open a postal station at Fowler's, as the town was called at the time; a carry-over from the old days when it was known as Fowler's, Brooke County, Virginia.

Its first postmaster was Abraham R. Sharp. Later Thomas Baker became postmaster, with William Fowler, son of old John Fowler, serving under him as assistant. At the conclusion of Baker's term, Fowler became postmaster and served in this capacity for a period of 40 years or more. He also operated a general store in conjunction with the postal station. Both were incorporated in the west wing of the lower floor of the mansion.

In April of 1966, the property was purchased by Mrs. Mary Marko, formerly of the Follansbee-Eldersville Road section of Brooke County. She had an avid interest in the past of the old Turnpike and immediately set in to restore the Fowler home to its previous grandeur.

Today, the restored landmark contains a smorgasbord type of restaurant, an antique display and a general open-house tour for those who like to browse in and about the history-laden walls of the old building.

It is a new and interesting stop for tourists. Washington County residents should enjoy this fine attraction, just over the state line beyond Independence.

And they will be thankful for the yeoman work done by Mrs. Marko. It was a job requiring plenty of imagination and dedicated planning. She has added quite a bit to historic preservation and is a charming hostess...all of which is a fine combination to encourage a drive into the flat highland of Brooke County this summer.

## Others Invented Steamboat Before Robert Fulton

An interesting story at any time is that of the birth of the steamboat, the grand, but now nostalgic river vehicle that once graced the waterways of the Tri-State.

Soon after James Watt had patented his discovery of the separate condenser in the steam engine in the year 1769, two Americans, John Fitch and James Rumsey, devised machinery for applying the power of the steam engine to the movement of boats.

Fitch's boat moved by means of a row of paddles arranged along its sides. Rumsey's plan was to take in water through an opening in the bow of his boat, and then drive it out at the stern with so much force as to push the boat forward. In the early mentioned plan.

Both Fitch and Rumsey made steamboats that would travel four or five miles an hour, and both models and descriptions were sent to Watt for approval. These early steamers were never put to practical use; for to neither Fitch nor Rumsey had occurred the thought of propelling his boat by means of a paddle wheel.

A few years after this time, a Scotchman, named William Symington, succeeded in constructing a side-wheel steamboat with a speed of five miles an hour. This steam boat of Symington's, with the improvements made upon it, became the river steamboat of Mark Twain's day.

The two men who were mainly instrumental in improving Symington's steamer, and bringing it into actual use, were Robert Fulton and Robert Livingston, both Americans, and both for many years close students of the whole subject of steam navigation.

About the beginning of the past century, these two men made a series of experiments on the river Seine at Paris, France, Fulton having made a special journey to England to see and examine Symington's boat. In the first of these experiments their boat broke through in the middle and sank when the engines were placed on board; but a later trial was more successful, it was of this boat that Napoleon exclaimed, "It is capable of changing the face of the world!"

Shortly afterwards Fulton returned to this country, and built at New York, the first American side-wheel steamer. In this boat, which was named the "Clermont" (some historians differ on the name), or "Fulton's Folly", as scoffers called her, he made a successful trip up the Hudson River to Albany in the year 1807.

## Pioneer Justice Was Meted Out Harshly

In these days of an expanding population, and the resultant increase in crime, it is apropos to look back and see how pioneer justice was meted out in regard to punishment.

Corporal punishments of various types were inflicted upon criminals, and the major forms were the Pillory, the Stocks, the whipping post, and the ducking stool. All of course, in the last quarter of the 1700's, and in the Tri-State area.

The Pillory was one of the most ancient corporal sentences in England, France, Germany and other countries before the settlement of the New World. As early as 1275, by a statute of Edward I, it was enacted that every stretch-neck or pillory should be made of enough strength, yet weak enough so that the execution of the sentence might be done without peril to the bodies of the offenders.

The device itself, consisted of a wooden frame erected on a stool with openings and folding boards for the admission of the head and hands. The users of the Pillory have not always been the worst class of men, for we find that a man by the name of Leighton, due to a printing offense, was fined heavily, degraded from his post in the ministry, then pilloried, branded, and shipped through the city of London in 1637, besides having an ear cropped and his nostrils slit. The length of time that a man stood in the extremely uncomfortable pillory was, as today, determined by the judge.

The stocks was a simple arrangement for exposing a criminal on a bench, confined by having his ankles made fast in holes under a movable board. Sometimes the stocks and whipping post were connected together, the posts which supported the stocks being made sufficiently high, were furnished near the top with iron clasps to fasten round the wrists of the prisoner and hold him securely during the infliction of the punishment.

As for the whipping post, an incident occurred at the junction of the three rivers in 1775, which involved one Luke Joliff. Joliff was tried for deserting from the militia with a stand of arms and preventing the Indians from returning prisoners held by them. He was given a trial at Fort Dunmore (Pittsburgh), and sentenced to five hundred lashes with a cat-o'-nine tails on his bare back, well laid on, at such hours and in such a manner as not to endanger life and limb.

At a court held in Washington County, PA, June, 1786, Richard Barke was convicted of larceny and sentenced to 17 lashes at the public whipping post well laid on, between 4 and 6 PM and to restore the goods and pay fines and costs.

For the purpose of restraining evil, men suffered in the stocks, pillory and the public degradation of the whipping post, but women took their medicine in ducking stools. This punishment was extensively used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The following description was given by an alert Frenchman in the year 1700. He says this method of punishing and scolding women is funny indeed.

They fasten an armed chair to the end of two strong beams, twelve or fifteen feet long and parallel to each other. The chair hangs upon a sort of axle, on which it plays freely, so as always to remain in the horizontal position.

The scold being well fastened in her chair, the two beams are then placed as near to the center as possible, across a post on the water-side, and being lifted up behind, the chair, of course, drops into the cold element.

The ducking is repeated according to the degree of shrewishness possessed by the patient, and generally has the effect of cooling her immoderate heat, at least for a time.

The ducking stool for old Youghiogeny County was erected at the confluence of the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers on February 22, 1775.

So that's how it was in the old days. And we bet when that "wet hen" came back from the river bank, that a lot of those Daniel Boones' and Davey Crocketts' would much rather have faced an Indian savage any time!

## Pittsburgh Exposition Was Big Event of 1883

A great deal of mention is made these days concerning the much-vaunted Pittsburgh Civic Arena, the newest Circus Maximus to be erected in the Tri-State. Although having many features of eloquence in the way of entertainment, it is somewhat ham-strung by a mass-transit problem.

But at one time, in or near the city of Pittsburgh, was a greater and more easily accessible spread of fun and glamour - The Annual Pittsburgh Exposition Complex; and the year 1883 saw it at its peak and in the seventh year of its operation.

At this time, the management of the Exposition stated that "if time hung heavily on the hands of the sight-seer, and the visitor became weary of the complicated affairs of life, the Exposition Society provided a series of rational and healthful amusements and entertainments suited to the taste of all."

Allegheny and Pittsburgh, the twin cities of the Point, were linked together at this time by numerous bridges. Here, on the banks of the river, easy of access by street, railways, foot and buggy, the Exposition buildings were located.

The office of the Exposition management was situated in the center, or main building, and visitors from abroad could freely obtain any information they desired relative to objects of interest in and about the two cities. Telegraph and telephone offices were situated in the building, as were a railroad headquarters, where representatives were on hand at all times. It had only been a few short years back that the telephone had been an exhibition piece at many of the nation's exposition centers; this year of 1883 saw it in operation as a commonplace thing.

Those who visited the Exposition buildings for the first time feasted their eyes upon many marvelous exhibits which reflected the industry and trade of the progressive community called the Smoky City.

The buildings themselves were the best in the country for exhibition purposes. The main building was 600 feet in length by 150 feet in width, with galleries 45 feet wide extending around the entire building.

Floral Hall was 130 feet in length by 90 feet in width, with an annex 30 feet wide by 130 feet in length. Machinery Hall, an extremely graphic area when loaded up with all the new devices of the time, was 150 feet by 170 feet. A boiler house 40 feet by 50 feet, containing two batteries of boilers, three each, furnished all the steam needed by the exhibitors, besides running the engine belonging to the society. This engine was 90 horse power and ran the shafting, furnishing the power free to all exhibitors requiring it to drive their "gadgets".

The Dining Pavilion was located on the grounds at the East end of the grounds at the East end of the main building, and was of ample dimensions to accommodate all who desired to procure refreshments on the premises.

The interiors of the buildings were handsomely decorated and thoroughly lighted both day and night. An entry fee of five dollars had to accompany each application for floor space, and this entitled the exhibitor to a special ticket, with charge, good for the entire season of the Exposition.

The Board of Managers, in 1883, decided to create a "Relic Department", devoting a large space exclusively to the exhibition of old relics and objects of interest, large and small, associated with the early history of Pittsburgh and surrounding country, and requested that persons interested come forth with a

loan of any relic of this character for exhibition in this new and exciting department. No charge was to be made for this type of exhibit.

The various railroads centering in Pittsburgh and Allegheny generously agreed to return free of charge, all goods that had paid full rates to the Exposition remaining unsold after its close. This was the equivalent of half rates.

They were great days, those of the old Pittsburgh Exposition - fireworks displays, both day and night (they had a Japanese type of show which could be observed in the daylight), horse races, baseball games and many special attractions that out-Barnumed the best traveling show in the country.

At this time, transportation-wise, Pittsburgh had 17 railroads coming into the city, with an arrival of 137 passenger trains daily, also a like number on departure. Twelve lines of street passenger railroads, or street cars, traversed the city in all directions, and five inclined railways ascended the hills which surrounded the site of the old Exposition buildings at the Point.

## Pittsburgh's Point Carries Long, Exciting History

Up in the City of Pittsburgh, the east exit of the Fort Pitt Tunnel sometimes assumes the aspects of a "Mess 'o trouble", traffic-wise, what with the maze of bridges, no-left turn signs and a horde of frantic vehicles.

Well, it was always thus - even back in the days of George Washington himself - as we are about to divulge in the following paragraphs.

The point of land now occupied by the enterprising Gateway Center, together with the surrounding country of asphalt jungle, was in its earlier history a bone of contention over which many a bloody battle was fought. Great Britain, then France, Great Britain again, then Virginia, the United States and finally Pennsylvania successively ruled over it.

The earliest account we have of a visit to the site of the present "Point", is that given by Major George Washington, on Nov. 24, 1753, when on an official mission from Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia, to the French Forts at Venango and French Creek. He was strongly impressed with the point in the forks of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers as desirable for the erection of a military work of defense, and so informed Gov. Dinwiddie, who, as soon as it was known that the French laid claim to this area, sent troops to the Ohio forks, who commenced work on a crude fortification.

On April 17, 1754, a large French and Indian force appeared on the Allegheny, commanded by one Contrecaeur, who summoned Ensign Ward, of the British forces, to surrender, giving him but one hour to retire, which, by virtue of his inferior force, he was compelled to do. This action of the French forces opened hostilities which was the commencement of a war lasting nine years, its influence affecting the peace of the two continents and inflicting upon the frontier settlers very great hardship, distress and bloodshed.

The French then landed and built a fort, calling it "The Assumption of the Holy Virgin," which name was afterward changed to "Fort Duquesne," after Marquis Duquesne, the then, French Governor of Canada.

On July 9, 1755, General Braddock, commanding a British expedition against Fort Duquesne, was defeated by the allied French and Indian forces under the command of the French Captain of Infantry Sieur de Beaujeau, who was killed in this engagement. Defeated and disgraced, William Pitt, then England's Minister of State, resolved to regain for the English Crown, supremacy over the country captured by the French at Braddock's defeat. Therefore, he ordered forward, under command of the Scotch General John Forbes, 6,000 men, comprised of Virginians and Pennsylvanians, including 1,300 highlanders.

A detachment of 800 men from Col. Boquet's command, headed by Capt. Grant, more brave, then wise, advanced under the walls of Fort Duquesne, and were flanked on both sides of the hill, now known as Grant's Hill, by a sally of French and Indians from the fort, and were almost completely destroyed.

The story of sufferings by torture, the tomahawk and burning at the stake of many of these brave men, upon the very ground over which a multitude of 1966 commuters pass daily, cannot be told within the limited space at our command. They are matters of history which those interested may find truthfully detailed therein.



But it is certain that on the spot over which motorists and buses travel 24 hours a day, there transpired one of the most cruel and heartrending events of this savage warfare of the early days before Mason and Dixon ran their famous line.

After Braddock's defeat, the Indians tomahawked, without mercy, many of the prisoners captured, returning to the fort with numerous bloody scalps, grenadiers' caps, British canteens, bayonets, and they themselves decked out in officers' uniforms, gold lace, silken sashes and flourishing a great many string of scalps above their heads.

The firing of small arms and of the great guns of the fort, together with the shouts and yells of the savages, were fearful to listen to. Later on, a small party brought in 12 British soldiers who had been permitted to survive the tomahawk. They were stripped naked and their bodies blackened, an evidence among the Indians that they were condemned to death by burning at the stake. They were taken past the fort to the shores of the Allegheny and conveyed across the river to a spot opposite the fort, which we believe, as the river then ran, to be not far from where the new network of entrance highways cross into the Golden Triangle.

Disgruntled motorists, who have difficulty getting into the right "lane," might then contemplate upon the unfortunate pioneers of this section who died by savage torture upon this spot. Better yet, keep your eyes on the road - we have more to tell you on what occurred under your snowtreads at the "Point".

As Gen. Forbes approached Fort Duquesne, the French Commander, De Lignery, after destroying the buildings and stores, and blowing up the magazine, embarked with his forces, in boats, down the Ohio and up the Allegheny rivers, Gen. Forbes' army reached Turtle Creek Nov. 24, 1758. His supplies were nearly gone and his troops physically exhausted, with himself a helpless invalid, carried upon a litter by his men. A retreat was seriously advised, but the old General would not consent, when the consultation was interrupted by a report caused by the explosion of the magazine at Fort Duquesne. Immediately the little army, but a moment before contemplating a retreat, now imbued with renewed courage, moved forward, followed by Gen. Forbes reclining on a litter.

Reaching the Fort, their eyes rested upon long rows of stakes, each tipped with the head of a highlander killed at Grant's defeat. Maddened by the sight, the Americans pressed forward. The highlanders took it rather hard.

## Public Personalities

Fire, floods, and the great chemical disaster of 1918 did not deter the progress of the Moore Hardware Store in Oakdale. Wesley A. Moore, who along with son John, operate the present business, tells of the days when they were forced by fire to temporarily use the Stewart Warehouse in Oakdale to carry on their service to the people of Oakdale and nearby communities. This was during the dark days of the Aetna Chemical Disaster and Wesley's father was kept busy helping to rebuild the blast-damaged town.

Wesley's father, J.S. Moore, and his brother, R.A. Moore, had opened the establishment in 1906, but were burned-out in 1914. The present building was erected in 1928, and the store was operated until 1946 by J.S. Moore and son, Wesley. The elder Moore passed away in 1945 and Wesley and John have carried on the store's career.

Wesley was born in Oakdale in 1890. He attended the Oakdale schools and worked summers at his grandfather's farm near Gregg Station. Recently, Wesley received a 50-year plaque from the Pennsylvania Atlantic Seaboard Hardware Association for having had the longest membership. His was one out of 16 firms represented that had spent 50 years in the hardware business.

He is married to the former Esther Anna Ross, of West Middletown. They have four children, Mrs. Ruth Ann Nelson of RD 4, McDonald, William S. Moore of Baldwin Borough, Mrs. Margaret Hennemuth of Mt. Prospect, Illinois, and John Ross Moore of Oakdale. There is a total of eight grandchildren.

Not long ago the store interior was remodeled. Wesley has this to say of present business; "I've seen worse and I've seen better - but things are not as bad as the great depression of the '30's. The nearby Master Missile Site and Nike installation has helped us out a lot - they often need emergency hardware items and this is the closest place to deal. They are excellent people to do business with." Wesley and his wife are at home in an apartment above the Oakdale Bank.

# Robinson's Run Church

The past few years innumerable people have asked to have a comprehensive story of the historic days of the Robinson's Run Church given to the public.

However, despite lengthy research and inquiries, the writer was unable to locate any definite record at the local edifice on the corner of Lincoln and Center Avenues. Recently, Mrs. August DeVos of McDonald did provide us with an early history of the church and its past days written by one Rev. J.W. English in the year 1890. Entitled "A History of Robinson's Run Associate Reformed and Now United Presbyterian Congregation", it was read at the centennial of the organization, October 8, 1890.

Painstakingly prepared by the Rev. Mr. English, who may be well remembered by many of the valley's older citizens, the tiny volume is one of a few rare copies available today.

The Rev. Mr. English went to great lengths to insure complete and accurate account of the Robinson's Run installation, but to present-day readers, it may have a marked slowness of pace. Bear with us as some surprising and little-known facts on the past of Robinson's Run Church come to light.

For instance, the knowledge that the fine farmhouse seen today in the lower portion of Noblestown was the one-time home of the Rev. James Grier, D.D., a minister who gave much over a period of 39 years - with a healthy commuters jaunt to the Hill-Top Church, at least a mile or so away in the present cemetery area. His term of office extended from 1839 to 1878, and today the interior of the house is much the same as during the days of the Rev. Mr. Grier's residence. Mrs. Carman, the former Jane McKiver, whose family acquired the Grier home not long after the demise of the pioneer minister, has, with loving care, made certain that time has not dealt too harshly with the structure. Upstairs is the room, or study, where the Rev. Mr. Grier composed many of his notable sermons during the war between the States.

Here then, is the Rev. J.W. English's account of the times and troubles of the early days of the pioneer Robinson's Run organization:

"The Associate Reformed Church of North America, though claiming lineal descent from a noble Presbyterian ancestry in Britain, and though claiming to adhere closely to the doctrines and usages of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and the North of Ireland, had its ecclesiastical origin in the United States. On the 13th of June, 1782, the Associate or Seceder, and the Reformed Presbyterian or Covenanter Churches effected a union at Pequa, PA, and that the very name of the body formed might be thus indicative of its origin, it was called, "The Associate Reformed Church."

"As early as the year 1772, and perhaps even earlier, members belong to these churches east of the mountains moved to Western Pennsylvania, to make for themselves and their children a home. In that year Gabriel Walker built his cabin near what is now (1890) Hay's Crossing on the Panhandle Railroad, and his brother, Isaac, built near the present site of Walker's Mills. In the year 1785 Matthew McConnell settled on the farm on which his grandson, J.P. McConnell, now lives, and these two farms mark very nearly the boundary lines of the territory afterward covered by the congregation of Robinson's Run (The present site of the Matthew McConnell holdings lies just between Hendersonville, and the village of Cecil). About the same time another family by the name of Walker settled near the place now called North Star, and we learn from the lately-published History of Allegheny County, that some of the first members of the congregation lived near Woodville, as early as 1785, and these places were both well within the limits of the congregation.

"The congregation is so named from the stream which traverses the valley just northwest of the church, and we learn that it took the name of Robinson's Run from the fact that a man named Robinson entered a large tract of land lying up on the hills north of the stream, just opposite Willow Grove Station.

"These early settlers were of that good, old Scotch-Irish stock that had made Western Pennsylvania noted in the rise and progress of the country. And their courage was put to as great a test here as was that of their fathers across the sea. Let us remember that the Indian war whoop had not ceased to resound up and down these valleys."

## Robinson's Run Church

In this week's installment of the Robinson's Run history, as compiled by the Rev. J.W. English, we will tell of the first-known pastorate of the pioneer church - that of the Rev. John Riddell, D.D.

These were not all days of wine and roses in the Robinson's Run Valley...men like Mike Fink and his quarrelsome partner, Sam McKillip, gave the citizens of the Noblestown area much concern with their drinking and wrestling matches. In one of them, Mike, who was later to achieve fame as a mighty riverman, bit off a portion of McKillip's face in a so-called "friendly bout." These antics and the growing use of "Monongahela Rye" at the time of the Whiskey Rebellion, gave the early ministers of Robinson's Run congregation much sermon material.

At this hectic time, then, the Rev. Mr. Riddell made his appearance on the banks of the Robinson's Run. Now let the Rev. Mr. English tell just how it came about:

"Nothing definite is known concerning the amount of preaching which the congregation enjoyed until after the organization of the Second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania on June 24, 1793, but from this time onward, we have the records of this Presbytery, which are quite full. On October 14th of the above year, Presbytery met at Brush Creek, now Bethel, Westmoreland Presbytery, and in the minutes of that meeting we find the following: 'Heard a petition from the united congregations of Robinson's Run and Pittsburg desiring a supply of preaching.' Whether the place called 'Pittsburg' was what is now called Union, we have no means of knowing. In answer to this petition, the Rev. Robert Warwick was appointed to 'Robinson's Run the third Sabbath of November.' Again, on February 5, 1794, when Presbytery met at 'Yough Meeting House', the minutes read, 'Heard a verbal petition for a supply of preaching from Robinson's Run congregation, by Mr. Isaac Walker.' This is the Walker mentioned as having built his cabin near the present site of Walker's Mills, and he afterward became one of the first Ruling Elders in the congregation of Union at its organization. The petition was granted, and Mr. Henderson was 'appointed Sabbath week'. Two months later, when Presbytery met at the same place, Robinson's Run asked for a supply of 'preaching and the administration of the Sacrament of the Supper'. Mr. James McKnight who was licensed at this same meeting of Presbytery, was 'appointed to this service the third Sabbath of April.'

"At the meeting of Presbytery, held October 28, 1793, 'Mr. Jamison was appointed to write to Messrs. Riddell and Edgar, of Ireland, giving them a fair statement of the great need of faithful ministers of the Gospel in America.' Doubtless, the Rev. John Jamison performed the duty assigned him, but it was not necessary, for Mr. Riddell must have been on his way to America at that time. For, at this meeting of Presbytery held May 15, 1794, six and one-half months later, we find this record: 'The Rev. John Riddell appeared and produced his credentials, of which the following is a copy:

Armagh, July 22nd, 1793.

"The Presbytery of Monaghan or Monaghan being informed that the Rev. John Riddell intends to go to America, do hereby testify that he was regularly educated for the holy ministry, that he received a Degree of Master of Arts at the University of Glasgow, that he is an ordained minister of the Gospel, free of publick scandal or ground of church censure known to us, and that he may be received by any congregation or Presbytery where God in his Providence orders his lot, being in full communion with the Presbytery of Monaghan at his departure.

Andrew Caldwell, Mod'r.

'John Rodgers, Cl'k, Pro Tem N.B.

He is married to Margaret Arnold who is also a regular member, and I do also certify that frequent applications made to our Presbytery from America for preachers, and the Associate Synod of Ireland ordered their Presbyteries to give a Berre dieizuit to any preacher who chooses to go.'

John Rodgers, Clerk of Associate Synod."

"You will notice that his credentials bear a date three and one-half months before Mr. Jamison was directed to write. Presbytery accepted his recommendation, added his name to the roll of Presbytery and 'invited him to a seat, which he accordingly took.' At the same meeting we find Robinson's Run and Steep Hollow, praying Presbytery to settle the Rev. John Riddell among them as their pastor, with all possible expedition. The petition was sustained as a Gospel Call, presented to the candidate and by him accepted. Presbytery met a month later at 'George's Creek Meeting house,' and appointed the Sacrament of the Supper to be administered at Robinson's Run, the third Sabbath of August, and then adjourned to meet at the Robinsons Run tent, on the 15th of August, for the installation of Mr. Riddell, Mr. Henderson to preside and Mr. Jamison to assist."

Thus, the first active minister became a native of the Robinson's Run section. For a period of 35 years he was to minister to the people of the Valley. His stay here saw many changes...a raw wilderness beset by the Whiskey Rebellion of Washington's time to the Jacksonian era of "Old Hickory."

Next week the Rev. Mr. English will continue with more details of the Rev. John Riddell's pastorate during the years from 1794 to 1829.

## Robinson's Run Church

Last week, we began the interesting pastorate of the Rev. John Riddell, D.D., pioneer guardian of the Robinson's Run flock. The Rev. Mr. Riddell, newly-arrived from Ireland, had taken up an abode just south of the present village of Oakdale and was not far from the lands of the famous Hugh M. Brackenridge, Sr., of Whiskey Rebellion fame.

We continue with the Rev. Mr. English's account of the Rev. Mr. Riddell's early days:

"When Presbytery met, according to adjournment, immediately after the reading of the minutes of the last session, we find the following record: 'Appointed a messenger to go immediately to the Tent and read a certification to the people of this congregation now assembled, that the Presbytery is now constituted, and as Mr. Riddell's Edict has been formerly served, If any person, or persons, have objections to his installment to come forward and show reason why Presbytery should not proceed, or otherwise, his installment will take place immediately after the forenoon sermon. No person appearing to object, Presbytery proceeded to the tent, and after a sermon by Mr. Henderson from I. Peter v.2 'feed the Flock of God', the congregation signified their continued adherence to the call. Mr. Riddell was called forward, answered the usual questions, and was by supplication and prayer, set apart to the pastoral charge of the united congregations of Robinson's Run and Steep Hollow.'

"Here we find the congregation entering on a period of great prosperity. There were, perhaps, 20 families at the time of Mr. Riddell's settlement. In 1804, ten years later, we find the first 'Statistical Table' of the Presbytery. Mr. Riddell was the chairman of the committee which prepared this report of Synod, and he says it is not complete, 'but much so as could be procured.' This report gives '125 families' and '260 adults' for the two congregations. Supposing them to be of equal strengths, we have 62 families belonging to Robinson's Run. In 1814 he reported 410 members, and in 1815, 429 members, but the two congregations were still counted together.

But these pioneer fathers and mothers had many difficulties with which to contend. A hint at a few is all that time and space will allow. All their merchandise had to be carried on packhorses or hauled in 'Pennsylvania Wagons' a distance of 250 or 300 miles to find a market, and it required over a month to make the round trip. Every bushel of salt had to be brought over the mountains. Here is an incident which illustrates two things - the straits to which they were driven, and the tenacity with which they held the forms of their religion. When the Rev. Matthew Lind entered on his pastorate at Forks-Of-Yough, it was decided to hold their communions a month later, but it was found there was no wine in all the congregation. The people assembled and resolved that 'Thomas Drennen be sent down over the mountains for two and three quarters gallons of wine, and that he be paid \$12.00 for his trouble, together with his bill of expenses.' We learn that the cost of that communion was nearly 40 pounds.

"From sheer necessity their homes had but few comforts and no luxuries. Their dwellings were log cabins, with clapboard roof and an earthen floor, or perhaps a floor made of 'puncheons'. But these privations were only obstacles to be overcome. About 1780 the section of the country west of the Monongahela River and south of the Ohio, filled up very rapidly with permanent settlers. Land was cheap, and everything that could be raised by the farmer in a new country sold well. We learn that five years before this congregation was organized, pork sold for \$1.00 per pound in Pittsburgh. Of course, it was not long until the tide turned. These hillsides were so rapidly cleared of timber, and cultivated, that five years after it was organized the production was so great that the market was glutted. Flour sold in Pittsburgh for \$1.00 a barrel. The farmers were reduced to actual distress by want of a market for their produce. The lower Mississippi was held by the French, so that they had no outlet by water, and they

could not wagon it over the mountains. What was to be done? The devil, ever ready with temptation in time of need, opened wide a door. If they could not sell their grain, they could turn it into whiskey, an article that makes its own market.

"What was the result? Distilleries were planted up and down every valley. At once the Government laid its hand on the 'worm' and taxed its product 'from nine to 25 cents a gallon, according to the strength of the spirit distilled'. This took away the profits of the farmer and brought on the 'Whiskey Rebellion'. One of the battles, if it is worthy of the name, was fought on the southwestern border of the congregation, near Woodville, and the attacking party was gathered from the 'stills' westward to Pigeon Creed, in Washington County. Doubtless they acted up to the best light they then had, but those who have reaped their sowing in bitter tears, have often thought they acted like children. Verily, they knew not what they did.

"But in the face of all these difficulties, both financial and social, both congregations prospered, and so we are not surprised to learn that in the year 1816 they took the following action. Sometime previous to this year, Steep Hollow came to be down as Lower Robinson's Run, or Lower Branch, but just when I could not learn. Also, the name of the Presbytery had changed on December 1, 1802, to 'The Associate Reformed Presbytery of Monongahela.' On September 11, 1816, Presbytery met in Robinson's Run, and at this meeting Mr. Riddell applied for the dissolution of the pastoral relation between himself and the Lower Branch of his charge. His reason was stated in a paper of which the following is a copy: 'As each branch of my congregation has made arrangements whereby they will be enabled to enjoy the entire labors of a stated pastor - to prepare the way for so desirable an event, I hereby request the Presbytery to release me from the pastoral charge of the Lower Branch of my congregation. Signed, John Riddell.' Presbytery's record furnishes the following: 'Agreeably to a contract recently entered into betwixt both parts of the congregation, the Lower Branch consented to relinquish their claim to Mr. Riddell's labors: and the Upper Branch pledges themselves to give him an adequate support for the whole of his time, (the sum proposed and accepted was \$400.00 annually.) Mr. Riddell's request was granted.'

"At the next meeting of Presbytery the lower branch emphasized its separation by changing its name to Union, but after this we occasionally find Mr. Riddell preaching there by the appointment of the Presbytery, once dispensing the sacrament for them, two and a half years later moderating the call for their next pastor, the Rev. Moses Kerr. But from this time onward our history deals only with Robinson's Run."

With this dissolution in the year 1816, we come to the halfway point in the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Riddell. Next week, the Rev. Mr. English continues with his 1890 version of Robinson's Run History with more on the energetic John Riddell, D.D. - pastor and cornerstone of the church's formative days.



## Robinson's Run Church

We continue this week with more on the Rev. John Riddell, D.D., and his days as leader of the pioneer Robinson's Run congregation.

Today one may see his headstone in the cemetery atop the hill, along with those of many others who added to his era and pastorate.

Alexander Borodin's music seems to fit the times of which we speak. Like Mancini's "Moon River", the haunting strains of the 1850 composer seem to have been written for our history. Present-day music buffs may recognize it as "Stranger in Paradise". But back to the Rev. Mr. English and his further account of the Rev. John Riddell:

"Having the undivided labors of their able pastor, beloved and honored, not openly in the congregation, but throughout the whole Synod of the West, of which he was the leading spirit, they seem to have enjoyed a period of peace and prosperity. Their membership increased, and at the successive meetings of Presbytery their pastor was almost invariably the first to report as "paid" the various assessments made upon the congregation to defray the expenses of the delegates attending Synod and the other benevolent work of the Church.

"When Presbytery met here on September 2, 1813, Mr. Riddell moved and Mr. Kerr seconded the following resolution, which was adopted: 'Resolved that unless particular business shall render it necessary, the meetings of this Presbytery shall in future be held alternately at Sinclair and Robinson's Run Churches.'" In 1815, there was a motion made to rescind this action, but it was lost. Again in 1816, a like unsuccessful effort was made. But on October 30, 1822, the resolution was repealed. This was no light burden on the congregation, for sometimes their meetings lasted two and three days, with a night session held at a private house.

"Of course, this act saved the pastor some travel, but yet his work was not without great difficulties. Even after he was released from Union, his territory was about 20 miles long by ten miles broad, and often called for duty beyond these limits by those who were not members, yet it is testified of him that 'he fulfilled the full measure of pastoral duty in his charge.' Some of his later years were very much embittered by the fact that some of his members 'unjustly withheld monies due him.' Besides this, his fearless and independent way of thinking sometimes led him into a course of action not approved by his ministerial brethren. Twice he was called upon to defend himself before the Presbytery. Once for baptizing children in the congregation of Steubenville under circumstances by some not considered constitutional, but when explained, Presbytery sustained him. At another time, he refused to allow the Rev. Mr. Graham to assist him at Communion in his own congregation because - 'He had spoken irreverently of the Scriptures in avowing that some chapters were not fit to be read.' He, Rev. Riddell, 'feared that to admit a man who had made such an avowal to preach in his pulpit would give offense to his congregation.' After considerable discussion in Presbytery, his conduct was approved.

"But his energies were not confined to the limits of his own congregation. He took great interest in the general work of the Church at large. He led in that movement which resulted in the establishment of the Synod of Sciota, and was the master mind in the Synod of the West. To the work carried on by these bodies, he gave much serious thought and unsparing labor. On the 13th of April, 1808, he was elected clerk of the Presbytery of Monongahela, and for 20 years the records are all in his handwriting. As we continue to read these old, timeworn pages, now yellow with age and dim with the deterioration of such years, we find anew hand is holding the pen. We look up and find the date is September 2, 1829. We

inquire why, and we learn that the hand that has held it so long is growing cold in death, and two days later Dr. Riddell rests from his labors. For 35 years, three months and 19 days he had ministered to the people of Robinson's Run.

"He left his home across the sea under full conviction that he was called of God to come to America, and shortly after his ordination he made a home on a piece of land lying between Oakdale and Gregg's Crossing, and from that spot as a center, he traveled on foot and on horseback all over these hills and valleys, preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. He did not seek the comforts of the older settlements, but voluntarily became a 'voice in the wilderness,' preaching to those 'scattered abroad.' His labor was not without its reward. He lived to see a great forest, with here and there a few log cabins in it, changed into a highly fertile and productive region, full of comfortable homes. And he left his own enterprise, activity, grace and moral power so deeply impressed on his people that many generations yet to come shall rise up and call him blessed.

"His last sermon, preached four weeks before his death, was from Phil. III. 17-21: 'Brethren, be ye followers together of me, etc.' And those who heard him testified afterward that he spoke with great feeling and power. And what wonder? He was standing on the threshold of eternal glory, calling back to his beloved children, 'Follow me.' Thirty-one days of fiery trial, then rest. He died November 4, 1829, and two days later his body was hauled to the graveyard on the front carriage of a common road wagon, and buried almost in the very center, where he lies surrounded by a congregation that far outnumbers the living gathered here today, waiting for the trumpet call of God. Will I err very much if I ask you know to drop a tear on the grave of him who went forth weeping as he sowed the seed of our coming back today rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us?"

Thus ends the Rev. Mr. English's narrative concerning the first pastor of Robinson's Run, the Rev. John Riddell, D.D.

Next week, we will tell of the second pastorate of the Hill-Top Congregation, this one being for a period of the year 1834 to 1835, and concerns the Rev. Moses Kerr, Jr.

## Robinson's Run Church

We will tell you of one of the shortest pastorates that marked the early days of the Robinson's Run Church.

This was the second installation and concerned one Rev. Moses Kerr, Jr., and took place in the year covering 1834 to 1835. We continue with the Rev. J.W. English's narrative:

"At the meeting of Presbytery held October 8, 1829, the congregation made application for a 'supply of preaching,' and Revs. Mungo Dick and Jas. McConnell were appointed to administer the Sacrament of the Supper on the second Sabbath of November. From that time until August 4, 1830, by the appointment of Presbytery, they received 18 days preaching, two of which were communion occasions. The following brethren officiated: Revs. James Brown, James Worth, Andrew Stark, Joseph Kerr, George Buchanon, Henry Connelly, John Dickey, and Mungo Dick. On April 27, 1831, Robinson's Run asked for the moderation of a call, and Rev. William Wallace was appointed to perform the duty on May 5th, when he and Mr. Dickey would dispense the Supper.

"A called meeting of Presbytery was held at West Middletown, July 13th, following, 'for the purpose of receiving a call from Robinson's Run, and if it should be sustained, to transfer it to the Second Presbytery of Ohio, in order that it might be presented to Mr. Parks, who is under the direction of that Presbytery, and for whom the call was made out.' The call was sustained and transferred, and the clerk was directed to request said Presbytery to 'have the call presented as soon as possible.' But only two ministers and one ruling elder were present at the above meeting of Presbytery. At the next meeting, held in Pittsburgh, September 14th, a committee of two were appointed to 'report on the subject of the called meeting.' The result was that Presbytery declared 'the proceedings of the aforesaid meeting illegal, and no act of this Presbytery can legalize them.'

"This is the last heard of the call addressed to Mr. Parks, but we conclude that it was declined, for at this meeting the congregation asked for the moderation of a call, and the Rev. John Dickey was appointed for this duty. At the time the call for Mr. Parks was made, the Rev. Alexander McCahan was a candidate and received 13 votes.

"During the next seven months, by the appointment of Presbytery, they received eight days of preaching, by the following brethren: Andrew Stark, A.S. Fulton, J.T. Presley, and George Buchanon dispensed the Supper. This brings us up to April 24, 1832, when they petitions Presbytery for the Rev. John T. Presley's appointment as stated supply for six months. Presbytery resolved that 'he spends his time at Robinson's Run, and elsewhere at his own discretion to the next meeting of the Synod.' How many Sabbaths he preached we do not know, but they paid him \$125.00 for his services. During the next year Presbytery sent them nine days of preaching, and on August 30, 1833, Rev. Moses Kerr was appointed State Supply for half time, but we do not know how long the appointment continued. During the next year, besides Mr. Kerr's half time, they received 14 days preaching.

"September 2, 1834, the congregation presented to Presbytery a call addressed to Rev. Moses Kerr, Jr., which was sustained and immediately presented to the candidate, who asked and obtained the privilege of retaining it for consideration. When Presbytery met that evening, Mr. Kerr 'declared his acceptance of the call.' Arrangements were made for his installation on the 'first Thursday (2d) of October.' Rev. Alexander McCahan was to preach the sermon, Rev. Goerge to give the charges and George Kelso to read the edict. The official record does not state whether this commission performed its duty or not, but we learn from other sources that he was installed according to appointment. Three weeks later

Presbytery received a call from Chambersburg, PA, addressed to Mr. Kerr, but Presbytery refused to present it, 'inasmuch as he had previously received a call from another congregation.'

"When they had enjoyed their new pastor's services but two months, we are surprised to find him asking Presbytery 'to supply the congregation of Robinson's Run, until next meeting,' which was granted. The 'next meeting' was held April 24, 1835, when we find the following record: 'The Rev. Moses Kerr requested Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral connection existing between him and the congregation of Robinson's Run. His request was granted.' A short pastorate. Only six months from his installation until he is released, and only two months active work. During that time he lived in 'Allegheny Town,' riding out on horseback Sabbath morning and returning the same evening.

## Robinson's Run Church

During the narration of the early days of Robinson's Run, the reader must keep in mind the fact that McDonald, PA, as we now know it, was not in existence. Instead, the apex of habitations centered around Noblestown and its far-flung borders of Candor, Walker's Mill, and the village of Canonsburg to the south.

Not until the coming of the railroad in the years following the Civil War, did the McDonald area assume an identity with the term "Haverlock Station".

We continue now with the Rev. J.W. English's account of the third and fourth pastorates of Robinson's Run:

"The same Presbytery that released Mr. Kerr appointed Rev. George Buchanon to moderate a call at the convenience of the parties. By the time Presbytery held its October meeting, the congregation was ready with another call addressed to Mr. William Burnett, and Presbytery decided 'to proceed at once to dispose of the call according to the constitution.' Mr. Burnett had been received by this Presbytery as a student of Theology on August 30, 1833, and afterwards certified him to the First Presbytery of Ohio. He now presented his 'credentials', which were received, and Presbytery resolved to proceed to this ordination and installation at its next meeting, and appointed Dr. Pressley to preach in the congregation the preceding Sabbath and read the edict. In the ordination services, Rev. Samuel Taggart was appointed to preach the sermon, Rev. William Wallace to preside and address the candidate, and Dr. Pressley address the congregation.

"Presbytery met, according to adjournment, on April 12, 1836, and held a three-day session. Three young men, Messrs. Burnett, McInstry, and Osborn, were to give their trials for ordination at this meeting. The first forenoon one sermon was heard from each candidate, when Presbytery resolved to 'dispense with the remaining pieces of trial assigned to Mr. Burnett,' and on 'tomorrow, at the hour of 12:00 o'clock,' proceed with his ordination and installation. Accordingly at high noon, April 13, 1836, after having been vacant for a little more than six and one-half years, they saw a pastor settled among them.

"At a meeting of Presbytery held May 25, 1837, the Second A.R. Congregation of Pittsburgh addressed a call to Mr. Burnett; which was sustained and ordered to lie on the table, and the clerk was directed to cite both congregations to appear at the next meeting to be held in Robinson's Run the fourth Tuesday of June. The meeting was held on the 27th and after the commissioners from both congregations were heard, a motion was made to present the call, which was afterwards withdrawn, and the commissioners from Pittsburgh 'requested that the call be postponed, but their request was not granted.' The motion to present the call was renewed, then amended, when the following was substituted: 'Resolved, that the translation of Mr. Burnett from the congregation of Robinson's Run to the second congregation of Pittsburgh is proper.' The 'vote was then taken and decided in the negative, nemine contradicenti,' Doubtless this was a happy termination of their suspense, for they immediately gave him a vacation to visit his friends in the South, and Presbytery supplied his pulpit part of two months.

"But their relation as pastor and people was destined to be brief. Only 11 months later, April 10, 1838, Mr. Burnett presented to Presbytery a petition asking for the dissolution of the pastoral relation, and also submitted a letter addressed to the congregation. 'The commissioners from Robinson's Run were next heard in relation to this petition.' While this was under consideration, Presbytery took a recess until 7:00 o'clock that evening. But the records of the evening session do not show that any action was taken, but

we presume he was released, for the minutes of the next day show the appointment of Rev. A.S. Fulton to moderate a call at the convenience of the congregation.

"I am able to say little concerning Rev. William Burnett. At the time he accepted the call he lived in Canonsburg, and rode back and forth on horseback. Then he moved into a log house on the farm now owned by William Kelso (1890), of California, and while there bought a part of the farm now (1890) owned by Andrew Shane, and built what is now their kitchen and dining room, but just as it was about finished, his wife died and he left the congregation, after a pastorate of less than two years. Afterwards he was President of Franklin College, 1839-40; pastor of the Fourth A.R. Church, Pittsburgh, 1840-41, and of Mt. Nebo, 1845-51. After this he went to the Presbyterian Church, and died August 20, 1854." So ends the portion concerning the third pastor of Robinson's Run.

And now we come to the fourth player in the drama of the Hill-Top congregation, the Rev. James Grier.

The Rev. Mr. Grier came on the scene during the lush days of the Southern Tara's, and a way of life that was to be soon changed by the War Between the States. Robinson Run Valley, too, was enjoying the height of its glory. The once unbroken forest now yielded a fine crop of staples for the farm folk and sweeping changes to be brought about by the Industrial Revolution had not yet made their appearance. At this point, the Rev. Mr. English informs us:

"Again the congregation was dependent on Presbytery for their supply of preaching, and again their choice fell on a young man. On April 16, 1839, they addressed a call to Mr. James Grier, a licentiate of the Presbytery, who was well-known to most of those who signed the call. When it was presented the candidate asked and obtained time for consideration, and at the evening session accepted the call. To Mr. Grier were assigned the following 'pieces of trial for ordination: For Lecture, Gal iv; 21-31; for Popular Sermon, II Cor. v: 7.' The following preamble and resolution was then adopted by Presbytery: 'Whereas, Mr. James Grier has accepted a call from Robinson's Run, and it is particularly desired by that congregation that his services should be enjoyed as soon as possible. Therefore, resolved, that Mr. Grier be relieved from his obligation to fulfill his Synodical appointments at Portsmouth.' Thus, by direction of Presbytery and as the result of his call, his work began on April 16, 1839. But we learn from a little slip of paper in an old account book that his salary began April 1, 1839. This should be taken into account when we compute the length of his pastorate."

And quite a long pastorate it was to be. Next week we will tell more of the Rev. Mr. Grier and his days as mentor of the Robinson's Run congregation.

Many topics were the subject of his day...the Abolitionist Movement, the new railroad, yet on paper, the trials and problems of a lanky, bearded lawyer named Lincoln, who in later years as President of the United States, was to be opposed by a grandson of a former Robinson's Run native named George Vallandigham.

This grandson, one Clement Laird Vallandigham, may have been well acquainted with the Robinson's Run folk despite the geographical distance separating the Ohioan and his memories of his grandfather's home village of Noblestown.

We continue this week with the Rev. J.W. English's account of long-time pastor Rev. James Grier.

"At the evening session of Presbytery held in the First Church, Pittsburgh, August 13th, Mr. Grier's trials for ordination were heard and sustained, and Presbytery adjourned to meet in Robinson's Run, August 29th, at 10 AM. There was a full meeting at the time appointed and after sermon by Dr. Pressley, Mr.

Grier was ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and installed pastor of the congregation. Rev. Matthew McKinstry delivered the charge to the pastor, and Rev. John Ekin to the people.

"The congregation now entered on a path that was long and comparatively uneventful. They had a man, not only settled among them as their pastor, but settled in an earthly home, on the farm between Oakdale and Noblestown, that still bears his name (1890). With his fostering care and the blessings of God, the congregation grew in numbers and ability. During the first twenty years a large number of Irish immigrants settled in this immediate vicinity, and finding the ordinances of worship, especially the singing of 'the Lord's songs in a foreign land', in harmony with what they had left across the sea, they cast in their lot with the people of Robinson's Run. A steady growth marked their progress up to the year 1850, when the congregation of Venice was organized, taking fifty-two members from the mother church, including one ruling elder, Mr. John Berry. A few others also left shortly after.

"The next important event was the union of the Associate and Associate Reformed bodies in 1859, which gave us a new name, 'United Presbyterian.' Then followed the War of Rebellion, to which the congregation gave of her sons, some to lay down their lives as a sacrifice on the altar of liberty, and some to return the fruits of victory. In the years following some changes took place that were merely local, but they seemed great to those who took part in them. On June 3, 1872, at a congregational meeting, the new version of the Psalms was adopted by a vote of sixty-six to four. June 6, 1874, a custom that had served a good purpose in its time, but had outlived its design, the distribution of 'Communion tokens', was discontinued. In the month of February, 1876, another swarm left the old hive and formed the congregation of McDonald, taking seventeen members including two Ruling Elders, Mark Robb and Samuel H. Cook. Many more living in that region left shortly after.

"But a worse thing was upon them. Their pastor was growing feeble with the waste of years. The occasional rests they gave him did not renew nature's energies, but served as warnings of the coming separation. We do not know what day he announced his intention to resign, but the congregational meeting held February 4, 1878, appointed Joseph Campbell, Sr., and James Sturgeon to 'confer with Mr. Grier and see if he will continue in charge, provided another rest is given.' The next meeting held March 18th, shows that their mission was fruitless, for the commissioners to Presbytery were 'instructed to acquiesce in Mr. Grier's request.' To Presbytery Dr. Grier presented the following: 'To the Presbytery of Monongahela to meet in Noblestown, March 26, 1878:

"Dear Brethren: I respectfully ask you to release me from the pastoral charge of the Robinson's Run congregation: a charge which I have held for thirty-nine years, but which I can no longer retain, as the diversified work which it devolves upon me is too great for my present physical power of endurance. Though the congregation has offered me a vacation, yet that offer does not influence me as it might do if I were fifteen or twenty years younger than I am, or as it might do even as it is, if I were in greater certainty as to what might be the issue of a vacation of any reasonable length.'

(Signed) James Grier."

"The commissioners stated that the 'congregation sorrowfully and reluctantly acquiesced in the request of their pastor.' The release was ordered to take effect April 1st, and a committee was appointed to prepare a minute for record, expressive of the feelings of Presbytery at the dissolution of this long pastorate. No words today could tell so well, nor do justice to the man and his work as the report of that committee, which was adopted by a rising vote.

# Robinson's Run Church

In continuing the story of the early days of Robinson's Run as depicted by the good (and historical-minded) Reverend J.W. English, it is apropos at this time to list the many pastors who have served the congregation, both at the hill-top installation and the McDonald edifice, now at the corner of East Lincoln and Center avenues.

First off, there was the Rev. Mr. Howlitsen, of whom not much is known and whose pastorate was allegedly from 1790 until 1794. At this point, the Rev. John Riddell, D.D., entered the picture until the year 1829. Moses Kerr, Jr., followed in the years 1834 - 1835, William Barnett, 1836 - 1838; James Grier, D.D., 1839 - 1878; J.W. English, 1879 - 1909; J.B. Cavitt, Ph.D., 1910-1918; G.S. Brooks, 1918 - 1921; R.B. Johnson, 1922 - 1923; J.I. Krohn, 1923 - 1928; A.R. Armstrong, 1929 - 1935; R.T. Campbell, D.D., 1935 - 1940; G.M. McKnight, D.D., 1941 - 1945; B.M. Wallace, 1945 - 1947; S.J. Calhoun, 1947 - 1949; L.N. Page, 1950 - 1951; H.C. Thompson, 1952 - 1955; J.L. Latta, 1955 - 1957, and John Shepard, 1958 - 1962.

Following 1962 there was a varied supply from Pittsburgh Seminary and the Rev. Clarence Anderson, a former U.S. Army Chaplain and holder of the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in that branch of service, was installed as pastor this past summer. The other day we stopped by the old Adam Kaufmann home at the top of nearby Reissing Hollow. Originally the abode of George Dixon, an early pioneer and grantee of some 400-odd acres that at one time extended to the shores of Miller's Run, the old stone dwelling saw much of the early days of Robinson's Run.

George Dixon was the forebear of the well-known Dr. William Dickson, now deceased, and one-time physician in McDonald. In later years, the farm saw Adam Kaufmann as resident, and at present the land is owned by William Rigert of R.D. 1, McDonald.

The stone structure, an exact duplicate of the famous Bradford House in Washington, PA, now undergoing a face-lifting and restoration, is in fair condition, considering its age - probably being erected in the year 1790. Two girls of the early Dickson family have the distinction of being among the first interments in the hill-top cemetery of Robinson's Run.

"If these dangers to which they were exposed were not enough to drive them together, their clannish Scottish Blood and their community of faith bound them together as with hooks of steel. Therefore, we are not surprised to learn that when the Rev. John Cuthbertson of Octoraro, PA, made his wonderful journey westward over the mountains in 1779, he found what then might well be called a large number of people, Associate and Reformed, scattered over the counties of Westmoreland and Allegheny, waiting to hear the Gospel from his lips. In 1878, the Rev.'s. A.S. Aiken and J.M. Adair published 'A Biographical Sketch of the Rev. John Cuthbertson, the First Reformed Presbyterian Minister in America.' They obtained their facts principally from 'a faithful copy of the original diary kept by that Godly man. From this work we learn that he preached at the Forks of Yough, now Bethesda, Westmoreland Presbytery, also 'Shirtee' (Chartiers) and Miller's Run. He preached at the house of Matthew McConnell, and baptized two of his children, Francis and John, and also at the house of a Mr. Walker, but which of the families above mentioned we cannot tell, for both were among the first members of the congregation. Let it be marked that Matthew McConnell was one of the four Ruling Elders ordained at the organization of the congregation of Robinson's Run.



# Robinson's Run Church

This week we continue Dr. J.W. English's further account of happenings during the peak days of Robinson's Run Church.

This portion is entitled "Activities" and the first subject is the missionary work of the Hill-Top church.

"At first subordinate organizations within the congregation were not known, nor were they needed. But as the years rolled on methods changed, and this congregation, always noted for its conservatism, slowly developed in this direction also. In 1851, after due announcement from the pulpit, the people formed a society which they called 'The Home Missionary Society of Robinson's Run Congregation.' They adopted a long constitution consisting of nine articles, divided into 17 sections. On August 27th, Dr. Pressley addressed the society on missionary work. Another meeting was held October 12, 1852, when a full set of officers were elected, but they must have adjourned sine die.

"On June 11, 1885, a Ladies' Missionary Society was organized under a constitution in harmony with other like societies in the United Presbyterian Church. It has continued its meetings ever since, and has contributed to the various boards and funds of the church, doing a necessary and efficient work."

## PRAYER MEETING

"Many years ago a prayer meeting was organized in 'Mohawk' school house, which afterward circulated among the houses in that valley, and on the two ridges adjacent. It gradually extended its limits until it has entered the homes of the greater part of the congregation.

## SABBATH SCHOOL

"The first official record we have of its existence is in the following minute of Session, June 29, 1862: 'Whereas, there is over \$2,000 of surplus funds now in the treasury, it was decided to expend it in increasing our Sabbath School library.' But there are those now living who remember its existence at least 20 years earlier. But from the beginning there was the practice of 'Catechizing' from house to house, and who shall say that this method of Bible teaching was not the best in its day? The earlier records are meager, but we have been able to get the following succession of Superintendents: Robert Stewart, for several years preceding 1875; George K. Robb, 1875 - 76; Andrew Shane, 1876 - 79; Samuel Shane, 1883 - 86; J.W. English, 1886 - 87; W.J. Wallace, 1887 - 88; Samuel Shane, since 1888. Until 1879, the school met only about five months in the summer, but since that time the whole year. At first it met at 10:00 AM, but on April 27, 1879, the hour of meeting was changed to 'immediately after the morning service.'

## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

"At a meeting of Session held June 19, 1890, the way was prepared for the organization of 'Our Young People', under the constitution provided for by the Assembly's Committee. The first meeting was held on the evening of June 22, when an organization was effected. It gives promise of doing good work."

## Robinson's Run Church

Long before the famous record of oil and gas strikes and the vast tonnage of coal had made the Robinson's Run Valley known around the world, the virile congregation of the Robinson's Run Hill-Top Church was to reach out and touch many lives in the Panhandle area.

Religion and church life were the main social activities prior to the Reconstruction Days following the Civil War and here in Robinson's Run Valley, the church was well revered as the western end of the State's greatest pillar of spiritual life.

The Rev. J.W. English continues his narrative with more on Mr. Cuthbertson:

"We have no proof that Mr. Cuthbertson organized any congregations, and the probability is that he did not, but other ministers followed soon after. In answer to a petition sent to the Second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania, the Rev. Matthew Lind labored among these societies part of September and October, 1780, and in 1781 the Rev. Alexander Dobbin visited them. We learn also that the societies west of the Monongahela River had one-third of the minister's time, and those on the east side the remaining two thirds.

"The union between the Associate and Reformed Presbyteries in 1782, already mentioned, made it possible for the Rev. Matthew Henderson, Sr., an associate minister who had settled in Chartiers and Buffalo, Washington County, PA., the year before, to minister in congregations which had belonged to the Reformed Presbytery. His son, Matthew, who was ordained and installed pastor in Forks-of-Yough in 1785, also preached for the vacancies west of the Monongahela. (A recent study of an old map of the area in possession of Paul Coudere, discloses that the Rev. Matthew Henderson held property in what is today, either Robinson or North Fayette Township.).

"Col. Henry Noble's Merchant Mill at Noblesburg (now Noblestown), was one of the first in the county. It was a log building, erected in 1788 or 1789, and stood for some months before the buhrs were put in for grinding. In the fall of 1790, the 'Sacrament of the Last, or Lord's Supper' was dispensed in this mill, and at the time there was a fully-organized congregation, with Four Ruling Elders. Children were baptized on Monday, and after services the congregation decided to build the first long church 'near the tent'. The Rev. Mr. Howitson, or Hewlitson, officiated on this occasion, but nothing more is remembered about him except that he was a young man of great learning and a good speaker. There is a tradition that he died soon after, within the bounds of this congregation, and was buried near Canonsburg, but diligent search failed to find his grave.

"These are all the reliable facts which we have been able to glean from many sources concerning the early preaching days of Reformed ministries in this region, and the organization of Robinson's Run. Let it be remembered that formal organization was not essential in that early day. It was not even possible. They were too far from the superior court across the mountains. But their faith in the doctrines which they professed was most intense, and 'for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints' they were ready to contend to the bitter end. For this reason the heritage we have today is a goodly one in purity of doctrine."

Thus ends the Rev. English's history of the Organization of Robinson's Run in the early pioneer days which also saw the start of Henry Noble's grist mill in Noblestown.

## Simon Girty Considered Traitor By Most Early American Pioneers

His name was Simon Girty and in the years of the Revolutionary War and thereafter, he could have been considered Public Enemy No. 1. Or so say historians in writing of area happenings in the late 1700's.

The World Book Encyclopedia gives Simon Girty the title of American pioneer, and being an American Indian by training, sentiment and choice. Girty had deserted the American cause in 1776, and siding with the British at Detroit, led many hostile Indian attacks on white settlements. His activities ranged from Pittsburgh to the far reaches of what was later to become the Tri-State area. He was accused of the most outrageous acts of cruelty to fellow white men during the Indian raids he led.

Fifty or sixty years ago, the same Simon Girty still stood for the irrational and sadistic; today our generation scarcely recognizes the name. If there is left standing a gnarled and venerable oak tree in your vicinity, of about 200 years vintage; then in its youth it had heard the forest resound with the names of Jefferson, Washington - and Simon Girty. Girty's name was one that struck terror into the hearts of pioneer families in his role as "White Renegade."

Simon Girty was born in the year 1741, at a place called Chambers Mill, about five miles above the present site of Harrisburg, and was one of four brothers. At the time of the old French War, Simon, along with brothers Thomas, James and George, was taken prisoner by the Indians. Simon fell into the hands of the Seneca tribe, learning the ways of stealth and hunting. After his capture he was given the Indian name of Katepacomen. While with the Indians, Girty traveled much through the wilderness northwest of the Ohio river. When Colonel Henry Bouquet marched into the Ohio wilds at the close of Pontiac's war, in 1764; for the purpose of punishing the Ohio Indians, Simon was one of his hostages. He later escaped and returned to a life in the forest. When peace was made with the Senecas, Girty came back to the Pittsburgh area, making his home here.

In 1774, Simon Girty took part in Dunmore's War, on the side of Virginia. While in this situation, Girty took the test oath, mentioned in both Creigh's and Crumrine's writings on Washington county history. In part, it ran as follows: "To be faithful and bear true allegiance to his Majesty King George the Third...to defend to the utmost his lawful sovereign against all traitorous conspiracies and attempts whatsoever, etc."

While active in Dunmore's War, Simon Girty became acquainted with frontiersman, Simon Kenton. They became fast friends and later Girty, as a power among the Indians, was to help gain his release from death at the hands of the redmen.

During the time at Pittsburgh, Simon had taken the role of interpreter, as he was well versed in Indian lore. He worked in this capacity for several months under North Strabane's famed Indian agent, Col. George Morgan. he also became intimately acquainted with Col. William Crawford, later to be come the ill-fated star of the expedition to Sandusky, where Crawford met death at the hands of the Indians by being burnt at the stake.

On February 22, 1775, Girty had received a commission as an officer of the militia at Pittsburgh. But what he really wanted was a captain's rating in the regular army. Simon was disappointed in this and it is claimed by many that it was the turning point of his career, causing him to leave Pittsburgh for Detroit

and work under British Lieutenant - Governor Henry Hamilton. Hamilton was also Indian superintendent for the Crown.

General Hand was in charge at Fort Pitt when Girty decided to desert to the British. He did this in company with two other men, both as well acquainted with Indian ways as Girty. These were Alexander McKee and Matthew Elliott. McKee had been Indian agent for the British earlier, and Elliott a well-known trader. Alexander McKee lived down-river from Pittsburgh, at a place known today as "McKees Rocks." There were several others in the desertion party, but history does not mention them with as much vigor as the trio of McKee, Elliott, and Girty.

Although many historians credit Simon Girty's desertion to his dissatisfaction at the army slight, it was McKee who talked him into going with him to Detroit. The pay was more and trinkets were easily gotten for Indian trade. The Crown still had power to attract adventurers.

Then, too, the frontiersman's knowledge of forest trails, Indian dialects, ability to survive the elements, all gave him the advantage over any paunchy government official, colonial or otherwise. The world, especially that of the American frontier, was his oyster. He knew it, and owed allegiance to no man.

Thus, Alexander McKee, Matthew Elliott and Simon Girty left Pittsburgh and "The Point," to join many others in Canada under the title of "loyalists."

The desertion caused quite a stir in Pittsburgh in this year of 1776. Twelve soldiers had left with the trio and it brought up the spectre of a threat to a future peace with the Ohio Indians. The region westward could be galvanized into serious trouble if these three men used their power to talk to the Indians against the fledgling US government.

The spectre did arise, as the trio went straight to the home of the neutral Delawares, near the present site of Coshoctin, Ohio. There they told the redmen that the white people were planning to kill every Indian in sight; that the American army was vanquished by the British; that General Washington was dead. They also added that Congress had been dissolved and that England was now in possession of the land.

But the principal chief of the Delawares was not to be taken in by Girty and his party. He sent word to other tribes that the three white men spoke untruths. His message ran thus: "Some days ago, a flock of birds, that had come from the east, lit at our village, imposing a song of theirs upon us, when song had nigh proved our ruin! If these birds, which, on leaving us took their flight toward Scioto (the home of the Shawanese) to endeavor to impose a song on you likewise, do not listen to them, for they lie."

Girty, chagrined at his failure to find an ear for the scheme to upset the Ohio Indians, now set out for Detroit. Here he was welcomed by Commander Hamilton. He was given a job in the Indian Department and sent back to Sandusky to assist savages in their border warfare. His pay was sixteen York shillings per day. As he lived with the Wyandotts during this period, his influence was soon felt in the Indian Confederacy. When the Shawanese and Wyandotts took the war-path, Simon Girty was usually the leader.

At times it seemed that the rebuff on the army matter at Pittsburgh still rankled within him. His name soon became a household word for terror the entire length of the border from Pittsburgh to the falls of the Ohio. Women and children feared his cruel and fiendlike actions. He billed himself as "Captain Girty," although he had never received such a commission from the British, despite the help he gave them in keeping the savages stirred up against the American settlers. Girty's lack of education may have been

the drawback; he could not write his name. McKee and Elliott fared a little better behind the scenes directing the "hatchet" man, Girty.

Girty, despite his bad reputation, was known to have given help to a fellow white man on several occasions. One such instance was when a friend made in Dunmore's War was sentenced by the Indians to burn at the stake. This occurred in September, 1778, when Simon Kenton had been taken prisoner by the redmen near the site of Zanesfield, Logan County, Ohio. Girty came to see the prisoner and found him painted black, a custom among Indians before burning a prisoner at the stake. At first, Girty did not recognize his old friend. Then following a few words, and recognition being established, Simon Girty threw himself into Kenton's arms, saying: "You are condemned to die, but I will do all I can, use every means in my power to save your life." Girty immediately called for a council and convinced the Indians to release Kenton.

Other occasions were when Simon Girty came upon a "boy" prisoner among the Indians. Thinking, perhaps, of his own experience as a youthful prisoner, Girty would endeavor to see that the youth was on the trail home. He often succeeded.

One of the greatest black marks against Simon Girty, was during the burning at the stake of Col. William Crawford. The incident took place at Sandusky, Ohio. Many of the men with Crawford and his expedition were from Washington and Westmoreland counties. Girty was very much on the scene of the burning, but refused openly to aid Crawford. Earlier, he had spoken to Captain Pipe, one of the Delaware chiefs in charge of the torture; as to Col. Crawford's release. Pipe, infuriated at the request, threatened Girty himself with the stake. So Simon kept discreetly silent, and when on stage at the burning, played well his role of white renegade. When Crawford begged him to shoot him, Girty laughed and said he had no gun. There has always been much controversy on this event, and even today, historians debate as to Girty's part at the burning of Crawford.

The stories of Simon Girty's cruelty and hatred of the westward moving settlers are legion. Some are fact; some fiction. Newton's "History of the Panhandle," summed up Girty's actions as follows:

"No other country or age seems to have produced as depraved and wicked a wretch as Simon Girty. He was sagacious and brave; but his sagacity and bravery only made him a greater monster of cruelty. In the refinements of torture inflicted on helpless prisoners, as compared to the Indian, it was said 'he out-heroed Herod.' In treachery, he stood unrivaled."

Girty had mortal fear of falling into the hands of the American people he had deserted. He asked each prisoner he took what would be in store for him, were he captured. In the summer of 1796, Simon Girty was at Detroit. When the US troops came into sight, Simon plunged his horse into the nearby Detroit river, nearly drowning in the attempt to escape to the Canadian shore. It is said that he "swore like a trooper" all the way across the river.

Later, Simon Girty settled down on a farm in Canada, just below Malden, on the Detroit river. He had received a land grant from the British and sort of a half-pension. He still did odd jobs for the Crown; most of them as interpreter. Here Girty married and raised a family. In the War of 1812, Girty, being nearly blind, was unable to take part in any service. After the capture of the British fleet on Lake Erie, he followed the army on their retreat. He was still the roamer of the wilds, and left his home at Malden to live with the Mohawks, in a village on the banks of the Grand River. Here he remained a while, until things had settled down a bit, then returned to his farm and family.

The village of Amherstburg, Canada, was not far away from Malden, and old Simon used to stop in the local pub for a slow one to refresh his memories of better days. If they could be called such.

His name at that time was a familiar one throughout all the west and when strangers came to Amherstburg and made a stop at the tavern, the barmaid would point out the white-haired blind figure, dreaming over his noggin of rum. She would ask: "Do you know who that is?" "No," the customers would reply. And then the barmaid would say with the most respect, "Well, that's Simon Girty!" The visitors would stare in awe and mutter: "He doesn't look as terrible as they say; not for a man who had the name of being such a great villain."

In February of 1818, Simon made his last trip to the Amherstburg tavern. On his return home he became ill and died within a short time.

His funeral was a large one, and a detachment of red-jacketed soldiers from nearby Fort Malden bore him to his grave. A salute of musketry was discharged by the soldiers. When they left, Simon Girty was at last rooted to one spot; to roam the wilds of the Ohio Indian country no more.

There may have been a greater highlight in Simon Girty's life than that of saving frontiersman Simon Kenton from burning at the stake.

Not too long ago, this past Saturday, September 2, 1972, a commemorative monument was unveiled along Ohio's Route 7, just north of Wellsville, that state. This monument was in honor of the Mingo chief, Logan, whose family had all been killed by whites in 1774. This brought about increased tension and warfare between the Indians and settlers. When peace was made, Logan refused to attend any councils on the matter, and made a high-sounding speech which went down in history as a marvel of eloquence for a frontier savage. Thomas Jefferson was proud of this speech, mentioning it often in his writings on the American Indian. To Jefferson, Logan was the "Shakespeare of the Wilds."

At the Logan event, Simon Girty was the interpreter and may have added to the words of Logan. A Col. Bigson, later to become commandant of Fort Pitt, wrote down Girty's words, as the interpreter could not write his own name. Herein lies one of the great mysteries of the frontier. Were the words actually those of Logan? Or did Girty elaborate in the translation? Did Gibson, who may have been a man of letters, do likewise?

For those who are planning to visit Pittsburgh's Fort Pitt Museum, at Point State Park, this fall, there are two excellent volumes to read beforehand in order to better understand the situation in those uncertain times of the western Pennsylvania frontier. They are "Simon Girty, The White Savage," by Thomas Boyd, published in 1928, by Monton, Balch and Co., and the "History of the Girty's," by Consul Willshire Butterfield, published in 1890, by Robert Clarke Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. Both have many references to Indian forays into Washington County and show the desperation of the settlers from moving west of the Ohio river.

Check with your local library or the Washington and Jefferson College Library for more the above volumes.

## Standardbred Horse Breeding Is Big Business In Washington County

A rebirth of springtime...new chicks, new foals, colts and fillies. The men who work with inanimate billets of steel are not the same sort of men who work with horseflesh...Elmer Taft, farm manager, a slim, taut man in slightly Western dress - part-time veterinarian and mid-wife, purchasing agent and employer. Like the fishermen of Gloucester, MA, the men who breed and raise horses have a deeper sense of values and a closer link with the wonders of Mother Nature. Knights of the Crusades would have given a King's ransom for such an encampment of equestrian opulence. No automation here. Also no erosion of the soil by strip mining. Like people, horses are most content amid pastoral beauty...Such attractive countryside will be preserved by an increase in horse breeding in Western Pennsylvania. Truly a new industry has risen in the back reaches of Washington County.

Such were the writer's thoughts during a visit to the Peter Pan Horse Farm No. I, just west of McDonald, on the Hickory-Primrose Road.

The Peter Pan Farm, which adjoins Fort Cherry High School in Mt. Pleasant Township, is one of three owned and operated in Washington County by Arthur Resnick, of Resnick Enterprises, Inc.

Mr. Resnick carries on a tradition and interest of his late father's the raising of fine harness horses. David Resnick was a lover of fine and spirited animals. Each year during Grand Circuit Harness time at Arden Downs, he presented the Peter Pan trophy to the winner of the three year old filly trot. David Resnick passed away on April 2, 1960.

However, son Arthur has not left the legacy passed on by his father remain idle. Each year under Arthur's care and interest, the farm has gained more fame as a producer of fine animals. And in order to further keep alive the memory of the elder Resnick, each new foal arriving at the Peter Pan Farms bears the last name of "Dares". This is brought about by having the "D" taken from the first letter of David's first name, plus the "A" from the first name of Arthur's mother, Anna, and the remaining "R-E-S" from the first letters of the family name, Resnick.

Arthur was born in Woburn, MA, and moved to the Washington area when just 10 years old. He attended public school in Washington, then attended Massanutten Academy in Woodstock, VA.

And what does Arthur list as his topmost hobby for relaxing from the business duties of operating a large cleaning service? Why, down at the farm, of course...Arthur has inherited his father's fondness for horses and fully appreciates the fine balance of values that such association can bring the devotee of animal husbandry.

His views on the close partnership of man and the harness animal is aptly summed up in a quote from America's greatest naturalist, an artist who knew the ways of wild and tame animals with unparalleled intimacy, Ernest Thompson Seton, when he said: "We and the beasts are kin. Man has nothing that the animals have not at least a vestige of, the animals have nothing that man does not in some degree share. Since, then, the animals are creatures with wants and feelings differing in degree only from our own, they surely have their rights." This fact, now beginning to be recognized by the farm's fine efforts in quality breeding. This is no backwoods farm shed, but an office equal to any in Pittsburgh's Gateway Center. No industrial office is as complete, for this too, is an industry. Where the black diamonds of the coal field have faded, the coal black pelt of the breeding stallion has taken its place.

The farm manager, Elmer Taft, a native of Rochester, IL, had taken a course in equine care through the University of Illinois, then managed a farm at Carmel, IN, for a period off 18 years. Later he was on the faculty of Penn State College as superintendent of the horse department. From there he went to St. Louis, MO, to tend the fabulous Clydesdale horses. He moved to Peter Pan Farms in November of 1960.

During the conversation with Taft, I learned that Pennsylvania has more Standardbred breeding farms than any other state in the union. Also, that the Hanover Shoe Farm, at Hanover, PA, is reputedly the largest Standardbred horse farm in the world. Peter Pan Farms are also standardbred operations.

Among the many horses residing at Peter Pan are Meadow Gene, seen in the photo above, and the son of the famous Adios, with a record of 1.59 2-5...Libby Boy, with a record of 1.58.1-5 second, and Worthy Aristocrat, with 2.03 2-5 seconds. The Peter Pan Farms Nos. 1, 2, and 3 have a total of 100 head of mature horses and 25 foals. The No. 1 Farm is located just below the Fort Cherry School building, the No. 2 Farm at Southview, and No. 3 near Hickory.

With the new harness track in the offing, the prospect of increased horse breeding is very good. No doubt many new farms will go into operation, once the track is established. As mentioned before, the horse pasture will not easily succumb to the strip shovel, and the fine rolling countryside of Washington County will thus remain intact.

In 1951, a museum called the "Hall of Fame of the Trotter" was opened at Goshen, NY. This museum keeps a record of famous events in harness racing. Perhaps in the future it will hold many mementoes of Washington County's contribution to the revival of the trotter and pacer.

The Peter Pan Farms are open these fine spring Sundays to the general public to drop out and see the foals, the fine buildings and the rolling grassland.



## Stills Were Popular in Tri-State

Not too long ago, the Mill Creek Valley Historical Association held a tour that covered interesting spots on the south side of Beaver County, PA. This is a section roughly, that extends north-east from the Weirton Heights and Paris, PA, area of the Tri-State.

Listed on the itinerary were such places as the Judge Reddick grave, the Miles Standish House, the Freshwater House and the Still House at Comettsburg. The newly re-opened Frankfort Mineral Springs also came in for quite a bit of browsing. At one time Frankfort Springs was noted for its famous spa, or health-giving waters.

Of all these the Still House at Comettsburg held most attention, as our section was squarely in the center of the Whisky Rebellion, that historic concern of Alexander Hamilton, then Secretary of the Treasury, over the loss of tax revenue on the home distilled product.

Most early settlers in the western end of the state of Pennsylvania found the making of whisky, an easier item to ship to Eastern markets than the bulky grain, of which they had an abundance. It was the only means of getting ready cash in those days and the popularity of the "home-made" rye caused officials in Washington to look into the possibility of the lucrative tax bite.

Still Houses, such as the one at Comettsburg, at one time dotted the countryside, and perhaps today, there may be a few more still in existence, with the owners of a remote piece of farm property not knowing just what role the old structure played in the first test of the new country to tax and govern itself.

A list of the Still Houses seized during the famous Rebellion carries many names of prominent families bordering both Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

The man who seized and impounded the stills in close proximity to the above-mentioned area was one Benjamin Wells. To him fell the odious and thankless task of acting as agent for the hated task. In the year 1791, just before the outbreak of the rebellion, the total number of stills in operation were 272, and by the year 1869, this had dwindled down to 18 - commercial distilleries having come into being over the years.

Cross Creek Township, in Pennsylvania, had a total of 12 stills operating before the lid was put on; Hanover and Smith Townships, in the general area of the Mill Creek Valley Tour section, had a combined total of 19 stills putting out the product.

Thus, the situation of having a real, above-ground remnant of the Whisky Rebellion in the form of the Still House at Comettsburg, is good news indeed.

Folks engaged in making whisky in those days were substantial, solid citizens of the new frontier. The list of names of those concerned in the making of the product is long and imposing. Lawyers, senators, and vote-conscious politicians engaged themselves in this only means of economic survival, as well as the run-of-the-mill farmer. Just as every farm family today relies on his shipment of milk daily for the monthly check from the dairy, so it was in the days of the Whisky Rebellion - you distilled your grain to make possible the purchases needed to bring comfort to the growing pioneer family.

The end of the rebellion was brought about by President George Washington's proclamation, September 25, 1794, when he asked for troops to aid in its suppression. Troops from Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia, amounting to about 14,000, answered his call. Governor Henry Lee of Virginia had command of the entire group.

Gen. Morgan led the Virginia troops; Gen Smith of Baltimore, the Maryland troops; Gov. Howell, the New Jersey troops, and Gov. Mifflin took charge of the Eastern Pennsylvania division.

The place of rendezvous chosen by the commanders was Carlisle, PA, and when the rebels saw such an awesome force arrayed against them they thought better of their opposition to the tax and gave into the government edict. It was not necessary to fire a single shot - wounds of feeling and pride were patched up and none of the ringleaders were given a severe sentence. Washington, in his wisdom, looked upon as a natural repulsion.

## Story of Famous Riverboat Man Rooted in County

Looking up material for a story on area river history is a most fascinating chore.

It leads one up so many seemingly unexplored tributaries of the past; each stream, creek or bayou holding around a hidden bend, some long-forgotten incident of contribution to America's greatness.

It would seem that man, whether in America or elsewhere, creates best and adds to his own time with humanity, when he has a mountain at his doorstep, his backyard a strip of seashore with the sound of gulls and surf in his ear, or a river nearby to dream on - a flowing, timeless link that fires the imagination.

One such man with a river at his door in Capt. Fred Way, Jr., of Sewickley. In our opinion, Capt. Way is the Tri-State's most valuable adjunct to nostalgia.

Capt. Fred Way, Jr., is known as the nation's top authority on the old days of river transportation and is a familiar name from the headwaters of the Mon to the spreading delta of the Mississippi.

During his lifetime (he is now 72), Fred Way has run the gamut of "steamboat" jobs from "mud-clerk" to captain and owner. Author of the book "The Allegheny," the "Way Directory of Steamboats" and other river writings, he is presently very active as the editor of the S&D Reflector, a river publication put out as a quarterly at Marietta, Ohio.

Marietta is the home of the famed Campus Maritus River Museum.

Capt. Way does all his "writin'" for the Reflector at his home in Sewickley, with the paper being mailed out at Canal Winchester, Ohio. The letters "S&D" stand for "Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen."

In his March, 1973, issue, Capt. Way wrote a fine story on the late Captain Thomas Stevenson Calhoun, a native of Georgetown, Beaver County. He was assisted by material from Dr. John C. Ewing of 410 Sulgrave Road, Pittsburgh. Dr. Ewing is a grandson of the former riverman. We thought you might like to know about this man who added so much to Tri-State history. Here 'tis:

Thomas S. Calhoun was born in Georgetown in the year 1834. His father was drowned at Marietta and his mother died shortly thereafter while Tom was still a teenager. He was brought up by an uncle and aunt, Capt. and Mrs. Robert Calhoun.

On January 5, 1867, Tom Calhoun married a Burgettstown girl named Harriet Amanda Calhoun. The Calhoun folk of Washington County had a name very much similar to Georgetown's famous river family. Thus a Calhoun married a Calhoun...

On March 5, the same year of the marriage, husband Tom departed aboard the new steamer, IDA STOCKDALE, for far-off Fort Benton, on the Missouri River. Tom, at this time was first clerk on the STOCKDALE, and the newly-married couple did not get to see one another until late that fall of 1867.

Earlier, Tom Calhoun had worked on the old side-wheeler, CALDONIA, which later sank at Marietta. He was clerk on the AMELIA POE from Cincinnati, on regular runs to Fort Benton and also the year of his marriage to Harriet Calhoun.

In 1868, he became master of the SALLIE. During the Civil War, he was aboard the HORIZON when she ran the Vicksburg batteries and sank in collision with the MODERATOR at Grand Gulf. He was at one time, part-owner and master of the GLENCOE in the St. Louis - New Orleans trade when the Anchor Line was getting started.

As he progressed in river work, Capt. Tom Calhoon reached the high-water mark of his career when he became half-owner of the KATIE STOCKDALE and master of her as long as she ran on area rivers. This was a period of 13 years.

During the great flood of 1884, Capt. Tom did yeoman work with the KATIE STOCKDALE in bring relief supplies downriver to the stricken residents of the Ohio Valley. Eventually he became vice-president of the famed Pittsburgh and Cincinnati Packet Line, and the commander of the KEYSTONE STATE, the IRON QUEEN and last of all, the colorful packet VIRGINIA.

Capt. Thomas S. Calhoon passed away in 1910.

There may be oldsters in the area who recall the sumptuous passenger packet VIRGINIA. She was the embodiment of all the packet builder's art. Long before the Super Chief and Broadway Limited of railroad travel fame, the VIRGINIA cruise from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati meant a trip of breath-taking elegance and adventure.

According to material furnished by Dr. John C. Ewing of Capt. Way, the old "Virginia" was certainly "deluxe."

The cabin of the VIRGINIA was 190 feet long, with 50 staterooms. She was launched at the Cincinnati Marine Railway Co. yards Tuesday, November 19, 1895.

There was a full-length hallway which was also used as the dining room. Tables could be set for 120 passengers and officers. Each wood panel of the interior was covered with coarse linen cloth, buckram, and to these a patented fanciful design in relief was glued to each, called "Lincrustra Walton." This material was furnished by the Pittsburgh firm of Bassett and Boon, of Wood Street, whose workmen installed it. The bulkheads were tinted light blue, the relief work white, with gold trim.

An upright piano in the ladies cabin was donated by Kappel's Music House at 534 Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh. Each stateroom contained an upper and lower berth. The mattresses, sheets and pillows and such were furnished by Joseph Horne and Co., Penn and Fifth Aves., Pittsburgh. So all around, it seemed the entire city, merchant-wise, was in back of the success of the old VIRGINIA.

When the VIRGINIA got hung up in a cornfield down at Willow Grove, West Virginia, due to high water, it was the Pittsburgh engineering firm of John Eichleay and Sons that got her back on stream.

When the Pittsburgh and Cincinnati Packet Line finally folded due to the inroads of railroad travel, she went through a series of other ownerships and name changes. She became the STEEL CITY, EAST ST. LOUIS, ISLAND BELLE and finally the GREATER NEW ORLEANS. She was dismantled into oblivion at New Orleans.

If you have the opportunity this summer, visit Georgetown in nearby Beaver County. Just above town on a high hillside is the old Grand Heights Cemetery. Both Harriet and Tom Calhoon are buried here, along with many other river folk who made transportation history in another, less hectic age.

If you would like to subscribe to Capt. Fred Way's publication of nostalgia, the S&D Reflector, information may be had by writing to Capt. Frederick Way, Jr., 121 River Avenue, Sewickley, PA, 15143.

And get to know a little-known portion of wonderful American history.

## Sugar Loaf Store Recalls Foaling Site of Hambletonian

"It was a time of high-button shoes and a high-wheeled sulkies, where the golden dust of the country fair gave rise to the golden age of America. It was a time of principle, the era of a tinkling cow-bell Angelus, heard amid the color of unpolluted sunsets over distant purple hills." - JFM

Up at Meadowcroft Village, the quaint repository for things historic and past, there is a delightful building near Avella, called "The Sugar Loaf Country Store." The store and its contents, all reminiscent of the Gay 90's and a little before, had come out of Sugar Loaf, Orange County, New York, and had originally been located not far from the foaling site, or birthplace of the great trotting sire, Hambletonian.

With its red-painted exterior, clap-boards and hitching rail out front, it brings back all the color and high excitement of the old fair days and the high-wheeled sulky.

Hambletonian was the pride and joy of his owner, a German farmhand named William Rysdyk. Rysdyk was in the employ of Jonas Sealy, a farmer of the area, during the year 1846, and legend has it that Rysdyk, while digging a ditch for Sealy one day, happened to glance up at the sky and saw a cloud formation, made in the likeness of a beautiful prancing stallion. Later, he was to become the owner of just such an animal.

Shortly afterwards, Sealy and his hired man traveled to a nearby town to purchase some items for the farm. While thus engaged, they became interested in the purchase of a broken down butcher's mare, used to haul the daily needs of the shop's customers. On the way home, they seemed to regret their action, as the mare limped and did not seem likely to survive much longer.

It was debated whether or not the animal should be done away with mercifully before they reached home. But Rysdyk thought otherwise and the mare was spared. Perhaps it was because she perked up somewhat after the conversation and seemed to lose her limp.

Later she was bred to the great Abdallah, and the resultant colt was called Hambletonian. While taking care of the youngster, Rysdyk became very attached to the animal.

On several occasions, horsemen would stop at Sealy's and argue as to its purchase. None seemed to care for the odd-looking colt. His hips were higher than his shoulders, and as a general run of horse, he was not much to look at. But his eyes betrayed his lineage - a descendent of the famed pioneer horse, Messenger.

On seeing so many horsemen stop in to appraise the animal, Rysdyk became increasingly fearful that his beloved charge might be sold to a stranger. Thereupon he went to Jonas Sealy and offered to buy the colt.

Sealy was agreeable, and thus began what was to be a long and wonderful association of man and beast; never to be equaled until the recent years that saw the partnership of Del Miller and the famed Adios.

Hambletonian never ran in a race, except one instance when William Rysdyk entered him in a speed trial. In this he was successful.

Rysdyk put him into stud service and Hambletonian ran up a fruitful score of 1,335 talented children. Today 99 out of every 100 harness horses engaged in racing can be traced back to Hambletonian.

The \$100,000 Hambletonian Stakes, the sport's most famed event, is named after Hambletonian. The race is held at DuQuoin, Illinois.

## Swashbuckling Pirates Told In Weekly

The old illustrated Weekly of New York City often reached the back country of the Tri-State during the mid-1800's. It was the size of a tabloid, and folded out into one huge sheet. It seemed like you had to stand on your head to read the inside page...and one of its interesting articles in the month of October, 1876, told of a man losing his head at a party - a boarding party, that is in the days when piracy was a common thing.

This was Blackbeard, the pirate, and the man who rivaled Bluebeard in the number of wives.

The career of Blackbeard throws a curious light upon the manner in which the colonies of his Britannic majesty, King George II, were governed. His friend, the governor of North Carolina, made no scruple of convening a court of vice admiralty at Bath Towers, which condemned his captures as lawful prizes, although he had never held a commission in his life.

Blackbeard was a typical pirate, possessed with a mania for getting married. His friend, the Governor, after the manner of the plantations, married him to his fourteenth wife, a young creature of 16, who he treated scandalously.

It is not on record that Blackbeard, like Bluebeard, slew his wives. On the contrary, he had, at the period referred to, about a dozen living in various places. Obviously, he was a man of domestic instincts, modified by a roving life, and liked to have somebody to welcome him home wherever he was.

His cognomen of Blackbeard was derived from that large quantity of hair, which, like a frightful meteor, covered his whole face.

In boarding the pistol was the favorite weapon of the rovers, who always wore two or three braced in a silk sling, hung round the neck rather than over the shoulder. Armed thus, the freebooter was nearly as well off as if he had possessed a revolver. He had to only cock and fire, drop one pistol and seize another already to his hand, without the risk of losing his weapons. This reliance on the pistol was, doubtless, one reason of the success of the rovers in close fighting.

To add terror to his appearance, Blackbeard stuck lighted matches under his hat, which appearing on each side of his face, his eyes naturally looking fierce and wild, made him altogether such a figure that imagination cannot form an idea of a fury from hell to look more frightful."

He was a frolicsome fellow, this Captain Teach, in his grim way. One day, being at sea and a little flushed with drink, he determined to make an inferno "of his own", and to that end when down into the hold with two or three others, and, having filled several pots full of brimstone, set them afire and was very proud of having held out the longest without suffocation.

Another evening, being in a pleasant mood drinking and playing cards with a few choice kindred spirits, he blew out the light, and, crossing his hands under the table, fired his pistols, laming one man for life, and when asked the meaning of this, said: "if he did not now and then kill one of them off, they would forget who he was."

One eerie story of Blackbeard and his crew runs thus: "Once upon a cruise they found out that they had a man on board more than their crew; such a one was seen several days among them, sometimes below and sometimes above, on deck, yet no man on the ship could give an account who he was or from



# The Greatest on the River

An old copy of the Wellsburg Herald, dated January 16, 1891, carried an interesting item on one of the characters who may have often passed by that former Virginia city in the formative days of river transportation. It brought to mind our own acquaintance with the subject.

This was Mike Fink, the so-called "King of the Keelboatmen," and for a long time assumed to be a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, or "The Point."

Mike spent a great deal of his growing-up days in the early western Pennsylvania village of Noblestown. Here he was quite a problem to staid, peace-loving residents...his constant bouts with Monongahela Rye kept most of the folks awake nights; and it was not unusual for Mike to down a bottle at one gulp, or to challenge local stalwarts to an occasional wrestling bout.

One such fracas was with another Noblestown, Sam McKellip, and resulted in Sam getting his nose bit off by Mike. After this, Sam refused to have anything to do with Mike, claiming that he played too rough a game.

Noble's Mill, at Noblestown or Noblesburgh, as it was called in the early 1800's, was the point from which Mike started out on his career as the nation's top keel-boater. It was once the scene of the first communion service of the present day Robinson's Run U.P. Church, now located in the heart of nearby McDonald, PA. The mill was idle for some time after it was built, about 1800, and the church elders took advantage of a fine new building in which to initiate their new organization.

History does not record whether or not Mike was a member of the congregation, but he did spend a great deal of time in and about the mill during its erection. Perhaps here he was fired with the urge to take a boat-load of flour down flood-swollen Chartiers Creek, eventually to the depths of the Louisiana Territory.

In his many journeys downriver to New Orleans, Mike often took potshots at river-bank targets. One such incident involved the tricky action of shooting off porker's tails, as they rooted about a shore farm sty. Here, according to historians, Fink displayed his prowess as a marksman with his trusty rifle, "Bang-All."

Back home in Noblestown, Mike had often entered shooting matches, with a side of beef as a prize; gained by allegedly driving printed cut nails into a tree with uncanny accuracy. Now, James Fenimore Cooper had often spoken of this feat in his many tales of the frontier, much to the disbelief of writer Mark Twain...it seemed far-fetched that early rifles could be so accurate, considering the many variables in the method of loading the "pieces."

Mike had a friend called Carpenter, and the two of them often engaged in a bit of William Tell-like sport which involved the shooting of a tin cup of whiskey from the head of friend Carpenter - Mike, of course, drawing a bead.

This early-day Russian roulette finally ended with the bad aim of Mike and the demise of Carpenter. An accident, or so said Fink.

However, a friend of Carpenter's took a dim view of the matter and dispatched Mike unawares one day not long after. Or so legend has it.

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A few years ago, in the Noblestown area, an ancient oak tree; one used as a surveying point by George Vallandigham, pioneer magistrate and grandfather of famed Clement Laird Vallandigham, was cut down and the exposed growth-rings counted by the writer - it was venerable enough, and somewhere about the year 1800, a faint discoloration told of something having been driven into the tree in that period.

A closer examination and excavation disclosed the remnants of two rusty and bent cut nails, with several pieces of what looked like deteriorated lead among them.

Could it have been possible that Cooper was right or that Mike Fink himself had used the leafy monarch of history as a target?

Several days ago, we ran across another old news item that told of gun-making in Noblestown during the years of Mike's residence.

This was the story of a rifle made by one C.E. Estep, a gunsmith of the village in the year 1800. This gun weighed seventeen pounds, had a 44-inch barrel, and when first made it ran 130 balls to the pound. Afterward it was bored out, and it then ran 90 balls to the pound. There was scarcely such a "shooter" in the country. One New Year's Day, many years ago, it won six out of seven turkeys in a local shooting match.

The gun had been in the McMurray family of Oakdale, Pennsylvania for many years, and a senior member of the McMurray family had killed five quail with just one of its bullets!

The accuracy of this old-time muzzle loader was supposed to have exceeded that of any breech-loader made.

And who knows? Perhaps old C.E. Estep had incorporated the artistry of his work in Mike Fink's own "Bang-All." History had it doing some uncanny feats in the world of markmanship.

## The "New Orleans"

In the year 1811, the famed initial steamboat of Pittsburgh rivers, the "New Orleans," left her launching berth on the Mon side of the old Point and took off on a trip downriver to call at the town of Natchez, MS. Here the boat was to be pressed into service as a packet between that place and New Orleans.

On the way she encountered the terrible earthquake of 1812, which took place in the Central Mississippi Valley, that year. The disturbance shook up the river surface and the "New Orleans" had a difficult time of it for a while.

But the tiny steamer survived and opened the door for a great new transportation media. Later, locks and dams made the problem of "low water" non-existent.

At the time of the "New Orleans" launching at Pittsburgh, Adam Poe was about five years old. He was to see the rise of the steamboat as the ultimate in travel on inland waters and also see its decline when the railroads took over the transportation scene.

We continue with Adam Poe's narrative, penned at the close of a full life in the year 1887:

"When I got to Pittsburgh after the dining room incident, I found a steamer called the 'Coquette' loading for LaFayette, about the head of navigation on the Wabash River. The boat was owned by Aaron Hart and in after years he became one of my river friends. He was a good man. I shall never forget him. I shipped as a deck hand on the coquette. At that time, it was thought that a party coming from ocean service at the Great Lakes was better fitted to command or mate a steamer on the Ohio. Captain Hart put a captain on the Coquette, a fellow by the name of Fennel. He hailed from Lake Erie and had his own mate along from the same place.

"After going to work on the boat the mate told me to go back to the after scuttle and get a selvage. I went back to the little hatch, but I did not wish to lose my standing as a boatman, so I told him I couldn't find it. The selvage was made of tarred rope or spun yarn, and was used to loop over the head of the spar to push the boat away from the wharf. A selvage would not answer the purpose at a city wharf, as the wharf was crowded with large heavy boats, and we had to use large spars and blocks and for a selvage we used a strong sea grass rope to fasten the block to the head of a spar.

"The boat left Pittsburgh with John D. Mackall and William Casey as pilots, as they were old keel boatmen they knew the river better by day than at night. Mackall had no confidence in himself and would send for me to look out for the heads of islands, as he was from Georgetown and well acquainted with me. That trip was one of the hardest trials of my life. The boat was narrow, and having some deck load it was hard to keep her fair on her bottom, as it was stormy March weather. The boat had about 1,000 lbs. of chain on a four-wheeled truck, which my partner and myself had to stand by and haul to the high side of the boat. We were not allowed to go to the fire doors to 'warm.' The Captain took one of the boat's leads and drove a spike through the line into the jack staff as high up as he could reach to serve as a plumb line and gave us orders to stand by and keep the boat trim by it.

"Nothing unusual happened until arriving at Louisville. Mackall at the wheel rounded the boat, into the mouth of Bear Grass Creek. I suppose he was scared, as it was night and he never stopped the engines until the boat lifted herself nearly dry in the mud at the mouth of the creek and came near running into a produce boat. The mate set a spar and put all the strain on it that the guards of the boat would stand. It

was customary at that time for boats to carry very large hawsers, to let out at the hawser hole at the stern of the boat. The mate took it to the shaft and twisted the boat off, leaving the spar sticking in the mud.

"Nothing out of the usual order of steamboating happened until we reached the mouth of the Wabash river except hard work for us deck hands.

"In due time we arrived at LaFayette and got all the freight out. The captain got a few hundred barrels of flour back. All of us deck hands were entirely worn out and we told the captain we were not able to work any more. He showed some humanity by telling us that he would get some laborers to put it on the boat, which he did, and we stowed it away. Nothing out of the regular order happened on the return trip until on night as the boat was making a very short turn, the chain wagon took a start from the high side of the boat and run under the old-fashioned rail, which was almost 18 inches high, and went overboard as the chain was passed out of the hawser hole and back to the anchor. But the chain was safe. We got it to the capstan and hoisted it back on board. We laughed, but our laughing was turned to sorrow, for we had to sue a two-wheeled truck the balance of the trip, which was very hard work. After getting the chain on board, the boat landed and we had to carry wood from off the bank all night and put it in the hold. The pilots did not wish to run, wood was cheap on the Wabash and it only kept us deck hands in steady work to bring it up to the fireman."

## The Poe House

There is something about an old house that speaks eloquently of the past; allowing the viewer to dream a little of what had transpired within over the decades of living that had created the worn doorstep sill, the faded carpet in the ancient hallway and the many scars on the wood-work; the mark of children at play indoors on a long-gone rainy day.

Such a house is the Poe House, situated in Georgetown, Beaver County, Pennsylvania.

Here it was that just a few short years ago, Lillian Poe Wagner, last of the famed line of steamboat operators, had passed away. Her family history went back to frontier days and the legendary story of the great fight between Adam and Andrew Poe and the Indian Big Foot. The tale is well-known in the Tri-State.

Georgetown is best known for its role in the days when the sidewheel steamer was king of river transportation and the earlier scene of a muster of troops at the time of the War of 1812.

No one seems to know the exact date of the building of the house; some say 1880, others put it at 1840. But no matter, the visitor to the Poe House will be intrigued with the charm of the town and the friendly chat with the folks.

Lillian Poe Wagner was well-loved by the citizens of Georgetown. Her kitchen was always the scene of a gathering for school children in the late afternoons, along with numerous neighbors dropping in the borrow a cup of sugar or to have a bit of tea with Lillian. At these sessions she kept alive the story of the Poe Indian fight and the adventures of the men in her family along area rivers.

Two of the men who had lived in the house were well-known to many area folks at the turn-of-the-century. These were Charlie Poe and Capt. George Poe. Charlie Poe, Lillian's father, had operated a livery stable for many years in Georgetown, with in-between trips on the Ohio. Brother Capt. George lived in the home with his niece until he passed away in 1943 at the ripe old age of 99 years. When an old river crony or friend would drop in to pass the time of the day, Capt. George would bring back memories of hectic days on the Ohio. Like this tale he often told: "I got my first license to pilot a steamboat in 1868, right after the Civil War, and made many trips as far as Louisville taking soldiers home after they were mustered out. When I was a boy, I used to stand here on the high river bank and watch the Buckeye State and the Cincinnati as they sped by. Then there were the Alvin Adams, the Thomas Swan and the Crystal Palace. The Grand Republic? Ah! There WAS a grand sight to see on Ohio!"

# The "Virginia"

Recently, a Pittsburgh morning newspaper's editorial page aired a proposal for a mass transit-on-water system. To bring it into focus more clearly, it might be compared to an elongated ferry trip, using area rivers, and much like the vessels offered commuters in the bay waters of New York and San Francisco.

All well and good. But what about a recreation boat trip on the Ohio for summer tourists and others, a la the old days of the Pittsburgh-to-Cincinnati packet, the "Virginia"? Her time was that of the 1890's.

The Virginia was a sumptuous boat, with perhaps a counterpart in today's famed Delta Queen. Her master for many years was Capt. Calhoun or Calhoon, of the Ohio's quaint village of Georgetown, just above Chester, WV. Her fittings for the time were the best money could buy and everyone enjoyed a trip to Cincinnati with the unfolding and heretofore unseen green headlands of the Ohio shoreline coming into view. The Virginia's "staterooms" were the talk of the river passenger service before and during the turn-of-the-century.

It all could be brought back should some marine firm be able to build an over-night "steamboat" (actually with diesel engines), modern, and equipped to run between the historic cities of Wheeling and Pittsburgh.

It would be a "long weekend" trip, with stop-offs at interesting points down-river. At Chester, the old home of the now erased Rock Springs Park; a visit could be made to the internationally known Homer Laughlin China plant; then on down to Weirton to visit its Mill of the Future and the recently-restored historic Tarr Furnace of War of 1812 days.

At Wellsburg, the "boater" would stop for a tour of the Erskine Glass Factory and its famed "Lamplighter Room." Here hand-made and hand-painted lamp "globes" are on display and a much-needed chimney for that old lamp can be made to order.

If running time would make it so, a stop-over could be made at Waterford Park for a matinee race or an evening show.

Finally at Wheeling, such tourist meccas as the Capitol Theatre's Saturday Night Jamboree and the dog races on Wheeling Island would come into play. Many fine eating places are here plus a summer program of outdoor theatre at Oglebay Institutes Amphitheatre.

The return trip to Pittsburgh could bring up Wheeling folk to take a look at the Three Rivers Stadium in exchange for the Jamboree!

But, ah! Where is this fairy godmother to convert a stern-looking tugboat into a golden chariot of river pleasure?

There is one firm in the Tri-State whose vessels and barges are playing the rivers of the world - the Orinoco, the Amazon, Euphrates, and aye, even the fabled Nile.

We speak of the Dravo Corp. of Pittsburgh. Their know-how is made to order to build such a pleasure craft for the beautiful Ohio; all that is needed is an "angel" with the proper cash to take a gamble on the nostalgia of river boat travel.

We believe it would pay off handsomely for the investor.

There is a great serenity in traveling the Ohio and Mississippi via steamer or diesel. As mentioned earlier, the unseen vista of the bosom of the historic Ohio is worth a ton of tranquilizers in this hectic day and age. Social and civilization change may occur, but the earth's rivers are close cousins to Egypt's seemingly timeless Pyramids.

Late stage comedian Joe Penner used to have a line, "Anyone wanna' buy a duck?"

Anyone wanna' build a boat?

### **ADDED THOUGHTS**

In a recent conversation with the Port of Pittsburgh's Carol Schneider (she's promotion director for the Port), Pittsburgh is planning a regatta and steamboat show, with attendant races and participation by stern-wheelers, large and small. Marietta, Ohio, has been staging these river events quite often and the show will be a welcome sight at Pittsburgh's Point in the later part of July, 1978.

Many people not only get the Pittsburgh Sunday newspaper, but also go for the Cleveland Plain Dealer or the New York Times. Our favorite is the 35-cent Sunday Greensburg Tribune-Review. In it, our good friend, Bob Van Atta of the West Penn Power Co., sets up a column on history each Sunday entitled "Vignettes." Bob covers much of both Westmoreland and Fayette Counties in his discussions of the "old days." As public relations man for the power company, he has a pretty busy schedule these days. Bob has high praise for the three "Bennett Boys" of Sturgeon, all of whom were with West Penn in Cabin Hill.

While sitting here waiting for a good lead to come up on the riverboat item, we mused a bit on a new type (or is it old?) of "conversation piece" that I hear quite often and have no use for. This is when a person who likes to appear extremely knowledgeable and well-informed on the English of the academy, speaks thus: "Now, let's say, per se, etc." Now what the h... is "per se"? And of what use is it in story-telling or a gab-fest?

It is the most confounding five letters since Mark Twain spoke of striking out the adjective when in doubt...Have never seen it in any of Twain's writings. Per se, according to our Merriam-Webster dictionary, is billed thus: "by, of, or in itself: as such," and is listed as an adverb.

All the good we can see in it, is that it is a good show-off term when at the local bridge party or cocktail hour. Makes you sound like you have gained some "book larnin'," but by gum, we'll stand by "Semi-colon Sam" Clemens and his "dirt road and river" English, God bless his soul!



## The Wheeling That Author Zane Grey Knew

One of the most pleasurable facets of our tenure at a local tourist attraction was the making of so many friends and the collection of a great many books; many of such volumes having been picked up at various yard and garage sales around the area. One of the books is a well-worn copy of Zane Grey's early "Betty Zane" and was published in 1903 by Grosset and Dunlap of New York. This volume no doubt rubbed jackets with such youthful stalwarts as Tom Swift, The Rover Boys and The Bobbsey Twins.

At the time of the book's publishing, Zane Grey had already written such western novels as "The Heritage of the Desert," "Riders of the Purpose Sage" and "Desert Gold." "Betty Zane is a loving look at Zane's own family history in the Wheeling area.

While Betty Zane, a central figure at the siege of Fort Henry in 1782, comes in for much copy, others such as Lew Wetzel, Simon Girty and Lydia Boggs are mentioned in the book.

In many instances, Grey's writing of those early days in Wheeling resembles that of James Fenimore Cooper; with the tales of Wetzel's prowess with the muzzle loader seeming unreal. And always there is the usual "puff of white smoke arising" after a fatal shot (fatal for the Indian) delivered by Wetzel. Was the smoke of the flintlock rifle really white? Or was that early black powder a "polluter?"

On some occasions, Simon Girty is pictured as a man protecting the Indians' rights against the onslaught of the land-hungry white man of those times.

Now all this is an introduction to tell you about the wonderful finish Zane grey gives the end of the book when he describes Wheeling as he saw it in 1903; savoring its rich past as only a writer could and with a Bruce Catton flair for bringing back details of a past scene.

"Today the beautiful city of Wheeling rises on the banks of the Ohio, where the yells of the Indians once blanched the cheeks of the pioneers. The broad, winding river rolls on as of yore; it alone remains unchanged. What were Indians and pioneers, forts and cities to it? Eons of time before human beings lived it flowed slowly toward the sea, and ages after men and their works are dust, it will roll placidly on with its eternal scheme of nature.

"Upon the island (Wheeling Island) still stand noble beeches, oaks and chestnuts - the trees that long ago have covered up their bullet scars, but they could tell, had they the power to speak, many a vivid and thrilling tale. Beautiful parks and stately mansions grace the island; and polished equipages roll over the ground that once knew naught save the soft tread of the deer and the moccasin.

"McColloch's Rock still juts boldly out over the river as steep and rugged as when the brave Major leaped to everlasting fame. Wetzel's Cave, so named to this day, remains on the side of the bluff overlooking the creek. The grapevines and wild rose bushes still cluster 'round the cavern entrance, where, long ago, the wily savage was wont to lie in wait for the settler, lured there by the false turkey-call. The boys visit the cave on Saturday afternoons and plan 'Injuns.'

"Not long since the writer spent a quiet afternoon there, listening to the musical flow of the brook, and dreaming of those who had lived and loved, fought and died by that stream of hundred and twenty years ago. The city with its long blocks of buildings, its spires and bridges, faded away, leaving the scene as it was."

Such were Zane Grey's thoughts on Wheeling in 1903. "Betty Zane," as ever, still makes good reading in these modern times.

# Thomas Brownfield Searight

Many people in recent years have lamented the passing of the passenger train and the railroad depot.

Auto and air travel have taken over and it's a revolution of transportation. But long before the internal combustion engine, there was a glamorous period of travel known as "going west on the Old National Pike," via stagecoach or wagon. The "Pike" originally ran from Baltimore, Maryland, to Vandalia, Illinois, with Washington, Pennsylvania, and Wheeling, West Virginia, as major stops on the road.

In the early 1890's, one Thomas B. Searight had originated a series of feature articles in a Uniontown, Pennsylvania, newspaper on the subject of the old Pike. Today, we know the road as US Route 40.

Recently Searight's work was edited and rewritten in part by Joseph E. Morse and R. Duff Green; combining their efforts in a highly colorful and comprehensive book of 189 pages, and designed to add an unheard of glamour to the palmy days of the National Road to Wheeling and beyond.

Entitled "The Old Pike, An Illustrated Narrative of ten national Road," it is a volume that should be on the bookshelf of every Washington County resident. It contains over 250 photographs, prints and drawings. It carries a printing date of 1971, by Green Tree Press, of Orange, Virginia.

Thomas Brownfield Searight was raised along the "right of way" of the Pike. Born in 1827, Searight came from a family long connected with the road; both his grandfather and father had owned taverns along its route west.

Tom Searight has studied law at Washington College (Washington and Jefferson) on the National Road at Washington, graduating in 1848. Admitted to the bar in 1850, he served as Clerk of Court in Union town and until the Civil War began, edited a publication called "Genius of Liberty." Eventually, in 1873, he became Surveyor General under President Grant, stationed in the Territory of Colorado.

After his return to Uniontown, Searight began a vigorous campaign throughout the country seeking information and confirmation of persons, places and events connected with the national Road. In 1894 he brought forth the original "Old Pike."

Today, a visitor to the Greater Pittsburgh International Airport marvels at the sights both inside and out the huge terminal. Ah! The wonders of the air age! But when the National Road opened in 1818, it was just as big a show. We quote from the new version of "The Old Pike:"

"Traffic on the National Road, according to eyewitnesses, was from dawn to dusk, a never-ending procession which often sorely taxed maintenance workers. As many as twenty-four house coaches have been counted in line at one time on the road, and large, broad-wheeled wagons, covered with white canvas stretched overbows, laden with merchandise and drawn by six Conestoga horses, were visible all the day at every point, and many times until late in the evening, besides innumerable caravans of horses, mules, cattle, hogs and sheep. It looked more like the leading avenue of a great city than a road through rural districts..."

The Appendix of the book carries letters from that "quiet man" of early American office, Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin. He was the first man, despite the publicity given to Henry Clay, to suggest the Cumberland, or National Road.

One portion of the volume deals with the type of coach, carriage and wagon used on the Old Pike. Another interesting bit of copy tells of how the stone for the roadbed was "sized" with a metal ring, giving a slow uniformity to the material used.

The book is well edited, the type large and as mentioned earlier, generously profuse with illustrations on just about every page.

## 12 Trains Operated Daily Here

Back in 1879, river and railroad traffic competed for the favors of those traveling in and about the Tri-State. And the greatest contender for passengers was the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis, which operated as high as twelve or more trains a day to accommodate commuters between Pittsburgh and Steubenville, Ohio.

Here is a list of the stops made by the P.C. and St. Louis in those days of ornate travel in the "steam cars." Some of the depots named are long gone, or have acquired other designations.

First off, going west, you left Pittsburgh's main terminal, at the head of Liberty Avenue, then came 4th Ave. Station, and across the river, Birmingham. Then a short distance down the track, a stop was made at Point Bridge, then on to Temperanceville, now the West End. This was followed by a stop at Nimick, just before entering Sheridan.

Emerging from the tunnel, Ingram, Crafton, Idlewood and Jacobus brought the passenger into North Mansfield, or what is now Rosslyn Heights. Then the junction point at the main station in Mansfield, or the center of the town of Carnegie. Here, one could change coaches for a trip to Washington, PA, passing through such villages as Leesdale, Woodville, Bridgeville, Hastings, Boyce, Hill's, Greer's, Van Emmk's, Morganza, Canonsburg, Houston, Ewing Mills, Cook's and finally Washington.

If the passenger decided to continue on the Steubenville from the Mansfield, or Carnegie Junction, his eye would catch such station names as Fort Pitt, Walker's Mills, Hays, Gregg's Oakdale, Noblestown, Willow Grove (now Sturgeon), McDonald's (a small cluster of homes at the time), Primrose, Midway, Bulger, Raccoon, Burgettstown, Dinsmore, Hanlin's Paris Road, Colliers, Holliday's Cove, Wheeling Junction, and finally Steubenville.

If you decided to continue on to Wheeling, you would pass through such hamlets and cities as Middle Ferry, Lower Ferry, Cross Creek, Wellsburg, Beech Bottom, Short Creek, Glenn's Run, Top Mill and then into Wheeling.

During this year of 1879, trains between the above mentioned points were named as follows: "Fast Line No. 6," "Pacific Express No. 10," "Local Fr't. No. 16," "Mail No. 44," "Washington Accom. No. 34," "Church Train No. 46 (this ran on Sunday only)," "Mansfield Accom. No. 40," "Cincinnati and Wheeling Express No. 2," "Washington Accom. No. 38," "Burgettstown Accom. No. 32," "Church Train No. 48," and a second Mansfield Accommodation No. 42, which left Pittsburgh at 11:12 PM.

And what were the rates of fare in those days of the Iron Horse going West?

Well, to be graphic about it, the cost of parking in the city of Pittsburgh for a full day would take a passenger from Pittsburgh to Steubenville, one way...exactly \$1.50. And if you decided to go to Wheeling in order to visit the Fair...50 cents more took you one way. Cost of a round-trip to Wheeling amounted to \$3.75.

## Washington's Brothers Helped Develop Ohio Valley

George Washington's birthday always brings forth a rash of stories and antidotes on the Great Man's actions. But not much is heard of his brothers, Lawrence and Augustine Washington.

Both men were part of the first suburban renewal plan of the country, known as the Ohio Company. The prime purpose of this organization was to open up and develop the Ohio River Valley during the years from 1747 to 1797. It went completely out of business in 1832.

There were actually two separate companies formed. The first Ohio Company had its birth in the above-mentioned year of 1747, the second was organized in far off Boston, Massachusetts, in the year 1786. One of the highlights of the second company was the naming of the city of Marietta, Ohio, in honor of Queen Marie Antoinette of France.

The good queen never had the opportunity to view the land of the Ohio, nor the city named for her; shortly afterward in 1793, she followed her unlucky husband to the guillotine, during the frenzy of France's Reign of Terror.

The first Ohio Company was originally called the Ohio Company of Virginia. And its members included quite a number of prominent people of the time. London merchants, wealth Virginians and most anyone with the means for a good investment brought in.

Among the top names in this country were Lawrence and Augustine Washington. A grant was obtained from King George in 1749, and covered some 200,000 acres west of the Alleghenies, including large portions of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and much land on both sides of the river.

Of course, the high adventure connected with such land company brought forth a call of exploration and excitement in a new and uncharted wilderness such as the Ohio country. Those lucky enough to become explorers for the concern found themselves developing trade with the Indians, helping to layout store houses and roads and taking part in establishing the first fort at the forks of the Ohio.

Things were going along well with the group for a time - a founding of a new settlement in 1753 called Gist's Plantation near Mt. Braddock, Pennsylvania, gave the explorers and agents a feeling of sure success in the future.

Then, suddenly, the French took over and destroyed and company's strongholds in the year 1754. To make matters worse, the French and Indian War began and blocked the company's efforts to settle in the west. Both blows weakened the project and Ohio Company No. 1 went out of existence in 1792.

The second Ohio Company fared a little better. It was born at a place called the Bunch of Grapes Tavern in Boston on March 1, 1786. The almost dozen hopefuls who made up the concern, appointed Manasseh Cutler, Rufus Putnam, and Samuel Parsons as a committee of three to see if Congress could be persuaded to sell them a tract of land beyond the Ohio River. The request was a success and off started the second venture in the real estate business to develop the Ohio River Valley.

These members were mostly former veterans of the Revolutionary War, and their main interest in the company was to better their post-war lot, and to collect debts owned them by the government.

One of the agreements made with Congress provided that 214,285 acres were available to those with army warrants, and that 100,000 acres were to be given free to settlers hardy enough to develop them. It was a good move. For many of those who took advantage of the package formed the backbone of the Ohio Valley as we know it today.

The Ohio Company No. 2 had appointed Rufus Putnam as its superintendent. Putnam led a party of 47 surveyors, carpenters, boat-builders, blacksmiths, and others to eventually start a town where the Muskingum and Ohio rivers joined.

On April 7, 1788, the work began, and the first settlement arose around the name Marietta, chosen as previously mentioned, for the ill-fated spouse of Louis Capet. A fort was also erected and called Campus Martius. This was done to protect the fledgling and cluster of dwellings, which today is known as the first settlement in the Northwest Territory.

The Ohio Company finished land operations in 1797, divided its profits and assets among its shareholders, and by the year 1832 had completely passed from the Tri-State scene.

Marietta grew to be a prosperous and colorful city of the Ohio River Valley. Today it has a population of well over 16,500 or better - is the oldest town in Ohio and Rufus Putnam's house is now part of a fine museum.

And of course, Marietta is the county-seat of Washington County - a fitting role for the Queen City of the stories Ohio.

## Wells Reunion Of 1886 Was Big Affair

If you think that current stories concerning the Wells family, a pioneer group figuring in early Brooke County history, are something new and undiscovered, read what Wellsburg publisher, J.G. Jacobs, had to say on their getting together some 82 years ago.

The below item appeared in the Wellsburg Herald, of Friday, August 27, 1886, and was headed: "The Wells Gathering."

"The Wells Family Reunion on Tuesday last, was a very pronounced success. The day was a beautiful one, and brought out everybody and his wife and put them in the best possible humor for enjoying the sociabilities of the occasion. The "Colonel," who is a team and something over on such occasions, was master of ceremonies, and those who know him, know that he kept things all pleasantly and kindly moving.

"The fore part of the day was consumed with hand shaking, renewing old acquaintances, comparing notes, discussing the babies, etc. as one by one the numerous Wells' relations and friends dropped in from all points of the compass, until by the time the 'lay-out' was in order, the crowd had assumed goodly proportions.

"An old time wholesome 'lay-out' followed, in which spring chicken, none of your hotel conglomerations of strings and bones, but the plump and juicy article found at home, predominated, and after that, came the speechifying.

"Uncle Absalom opened up the introductory.

"J.C. Palmer, Esq. by appointment delivered the address of welcome. It was altogether extempore, but the speaker was in high good humor with his subject, and his remarks were in his very best style and appropriate to the occasion - at any rate, and there can be no higher eulogy of a speech, the audience was fairly tickled with it.

"Elder Milton Wells made the solid address of the occasion - occupying a couple of hours and giving a review of family history for four or five generations back. The family, it appears, is of Welsh origin and landed, three brothers of them, in this country, a couple of hundred years ago. The history of one brother it appears is lost. A descendant of one of the others, emigrated shortly after the Revolution, with a good many others, from Maryland and settled in Brooke county, and from him with various admixtures, came the family as it now exists. The original progenitor in this section, Charles by name, was the father of 22 children. This characteristic seems to have been fairly kept up. The present immediate family (1886) consisted of eight brothers and three sisters grown, who with the exception of one sister, Mrs. Schell, still survive, the youngest 43, the oldest 67 years old. Two died in infancy.

"Mr. Wells' address was especially interesting to the family connection, but was listened to patiently and with attention by all. Quite a number of neighbors, old school mates and others were also present and interested in the proceedings.

"Other addresses were made, one by Col. B.F. Lazear, a prominent Brooke County man twenty-five or thirty years ago, for several late years a resident of Missouri, and another by Robert Bonar, son of S.D. Bonar, of West Liberty, all serving to occupy the time and make it pass pleasantly and profitably.



"Mr. Duncan was there with his photograph apparatus, taking pictures of various groups, big and little. The old folks talked, the young folks did as they always do, the band played, and the children giggled, romped and played, and in this miscellaneous and pleasant way one of the pleasantest occasions of a lifetime came at last to a conclusion.

"There were probably four hundred people, most of them family connections, present - among them the entire family of the first degree - eight sons, Absalom, Robert, Bazaleel, Esbai, Milton, Tolbert, Wm. B. and John D., and two daughters, Mrs. M'Coy, of Jackson County, WV, and Mrs. Berry, of Illinois, and some children representing the second and third generation."

Well, what with the "lay-out" and all, the motion picture, "How Green Was My Valley," could not have touched it for real Welsh enjoyment. We wonder if they sang at the gathering - for the Welsh dearly love to raise their voices in a resounding hymn.

And Publisher Jacobs touched somewhat on Samuel Clements too, when he summed up the affair: "The old folks talked, the young folks did as they always do, the band played, and the children giggled."

They still do - times and structures change, but people are pretty much the same at family reunions, God Bless them!

## West Middletown

Early this spring, the writer had the privilege of meeting Elbert Davis, of the Fort Cherry School system. I brought up the subject of Washington County's colorful history and Mr. Davis immediately injected into the conversation the mention of a small village he felt should be another Williamsburg.

At this point I told him he could be thinking only of one particular place - West Middletown. He at once agreed that this was the town and expressed amazement that I had foreseen his thought. Mr. Davis, being an artist, had long ago recognized the merits of this cameo of early Americana.

Thus, we continued on common ground and discussed the nostalgic aspect of the little hamlet that over the years has retained its quality of being a sort of Shangri-La for those souls who had an eye for the appreciation of the Golden Age of Washington County's contribution to the nation and the world.

As for West Middletown's becoming another Williamsburg, this may not ever be an actuality. However, this much is certain...there has been an increased amount of interest in this part of the state as a tourist attraction and such a village as West Middletown has all of the ingredients necessary to put it to the fore as an example of Western Pennsylvania's heretofore untouched potential in this field.

Most residents of the county have passed through the community, a few miles west of Washington on Route 31, with never a second look at the fine brick homes, the site of the Ralston Thresher Shop, the village store that recalls the days of hogheads of flour and the ever-present cracker barrel, the old France Hotel, with its exterior still holding under cover the logs hewn by pioneer residents...nor do they know that here was established the first Seminary For Girls, in an age when women's suffrage was still eons away. Nor do they know that, as a stop on the famous 'underground railway' of abolitionist days, the town's homes were often a refuge for Canadian-bound searchers for a Promised Land - escaped slaves.

These and many other items set in one of the finest pastoral settings in the county, add up to the fact that area residents should take a hard and close look at this gem of retrospect - West Middletown. A name that is strikingly New England in sound, and having as many facets of interests as any village in the northeastern section of the country.

Indeed, this mother lode of fascinating research in some respects outdoes many Down East attractions. And to top it off, the town residents are unique in a world of people who have forgotten how to care...West Middletowners are among the most hospitable and solid group of citizens one could encounter.

Thus, we enter West Middletown to browse around and absorb the essence of an American scene where time has apparently stood still for almost a hundred years - and most fortunately so for those interest in preserving a fast-vanishing portion of country life. Had Charles Dickens visited West Middletown on his ill-fated trip in 1842, perhaps a small portion of American history would have been changed...for here, he may have found his Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim, his Wilkins Micawber or perhaps his Mr. Pickwick.

## Early Settlers

Often the writer, while under the duress of adversity or some such similar perplexity, will visit the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh's Oakland section. Here amid the artifacts and pictured ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum and among the vast assortment of past and fallen civilizations, solace is found to ease a currently troubled world. For in this panorama of the past can be found the urge to conquer new and uncharted seas of the future due to the fact that one outstanding facet is apparent...that man has been able to survive the many failures of former empires and petty ambitions of politics, and rise once more out of the ashes of material failure. This, the indomitable spirit of humanity, cannot be denied. In this respect, the spirit of man is indeed, immortal.

Thus it was on the black Sunday of November 24, following the death of the nation's 35th President, that we visited West Middletown again in search of additional data on its past. Here overlooking the fine rolling hills overlooking the fine rolling hills and solid terra firma of rural America, the Ship of State seemed little disturbed by the wave of chagrin and despair that two days before had shaken the nation.

In the spring of 1959, Bernice Bartley Bushfield of 509 Daniel Street, Toronto, Ohio, had compiled an informative and interesting history of the first settlers of West Middletown and also incorporated some of its historic highlights. This volume was entitled, "The McKeever and Allied Families of West Middletown, Washington County, PA." It was through the fine hospitality and generosity of Phoebe Acheson Murdock, one of the town's foremost and best-loved citizens that we were able to secure and quote the following gems of interest concerning West Middletown.

First, we would like to convey the impression of the village and environs as recorded by Mrs. Bushfield some years back, when she was as privileged to first view the area. To quote from her "Foreword:"

"Some twenty-five years ago I first saw the village of West Middletown Pennsylvania, when I stopped with my husband to visit his father's grave. As we walked through the old Union Cemetery and read the inscriptions on the time-worn stones, my husband spoke of the stories his father had told him of the interwoven relationships of the early settlers and his father's great love for the village and its people and his desire to be buried among his forefathers. I was struck with the beauty of its rolling hills and deep valleys and as through the years we stopped again and again, I felt strangely drawn to the quiet town and more and more curious as to these long-ago ancestors.

"Then, one day we met Phoebe Acheson Murdock, whose grandmother, born in 1825, had remembered the past with wonderful clarity all the days of her ninety-three years and told her interested grandchild what she remembered. The entire McKeever family is indebted to Mrs. Murdock for her efforts to preserve the family past. Her 'Black Notebook' and walnut secretary contains a great accumulation of material regarding not only the McKeever and their kinfolks, but also of the closely connected and intermingled early settlers of the entire community."

Such was Bernice Bartley Bushfield's inspiration to record for interested persons the past of this village which reflected many of the things that have made America great. Not tall sky-scrappers, super-highways or electronic monsters of computation, nor space vehicles, sports car and quiz shows, but the simple formula of the hearth, the church and the flag. For around this trilogy was built the hamlet of West Middletown and today in retrospect one finds much comfort in visiting the village and finding that the residents still live the above formula. Mrs. Bushfield's initial feelings can still be ours today.

But now to the story of the town's first and foremost settler, William McKeever, as described in Mrs. Bushfield's compilation:

"William McKeever, emigrant ancestor of the family in the following pages, came to America from Northern Ireland in 1792, with his wife Mary (McFadden) McKeever and three small children, Alexander, Jane and Sarah McKeever. A brother, Thomas McKeever may have emigrated at the time or possibly earlier."

There is a tradition in the Thomas McKeever family that he came to America as a boy of fourteen in 1772 or 1773 - "when the McKeever home was burned during the religious troubles." The date of his marriage to Margaret Jamison is given in the family records as 1791. As Margaret was born in Cumberland County, PA, in 1775 where her parents, John and Sarah McFadden Gilmore Jamison, were living at that time and later moved to Washington County with them in 1782 it can be presumed that she was married to Thomas McKeever in that county.

"Nothing is known as to the parents or place of birth of the McKeever family. Since Mary McFadden was a daughter of Alexander McFadden and his wife thought to have been a Miss Henry, who lived at Cootehill, County Cavan, Ireland, it seems probable that the McKeever clan were also natives of that county. Mary had two brothers of record who came to America and settled in Washington County. Nothing is known of George McFadden but Robert was a chairmaker in West Middletown, PA, when his son Odadiah Benton McFadden was born in the year 1815. Odadiah McFadden studied law and later removed to the Oregon Territory in 1853 where he was appointed as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory. He was later made Chief Justice in Washington Territory and left descendants in the West."

## Hardships and Tribulations

In continuing the excerpt from Mrs. Bushfield's compilation of West Middletown history, one must tell of the hardships and tribulations that beset the early settlers of the district. To again quote from the author of "The McKeever and Allied Families of West Middletown, Washington County, PA.":

"By the time the McKeever came West, the old Indian trails had been widened and cleared of stumps and logs so that wagons could be used. The roads from the East for the most part followed the old trails except for the changes made for the use of teams. As a rule the roads kept to the ridge where possible thus avoiding the soft, deeply wooded ravines, and valleys. The dangers of ambush had placed the trails on the ridges in earlier days although by 1794 there was little danger from Indians in Pennsylvania. However, the mountains were dangerous from violent thunder storms and wild animals. There were few inns and travelers often camped overnight in the open. For the most part it was the long days of neverending trees and tired muscles that must have been almost unbearable to the pioneer families.

"A pioneer woman in Washington County told of carrying her baby behind the heavily loaded wagon. On the steep slopes someone had to walk behind the wagon in order to 'check' the wheels when the horses had to rest before reaching the summit. She would leave her baby hidden in the brush beside the road at the bottom of the hill, follow her husband to the top, placing a stone or block behind the wheels. She would then return to where her child was hidden and carry it to the top.

"There is no tradition as to how the McKeever traveled but, as there was no stage from the east to Pittsburgh until 1804, it is likely that they brought their household goods by wagon with Mary and the children following on foot. It should not be forgotten that she had three very small children and a babe in arms.

"There were two main roads from the East. One, the southern route or old Braddocks Road, later to become the National Highway or Route 40 which led to Washington, PA. The other or Burd's Road of 1755 started about four miles west of Bedford and came through Somerset and Mt. Pleasant. The traveler could then continue in a westerly direction until he came to the Monongahela River which he could cross at Parkinson's ferry, in the vicinity of Monongahela, PA continuing on to Washington, roughly over what is now Route 31.

"We do not know as to how or why the McKeever chose their future home. Did they have kinfolks in the region or did it look like a good place for William to carry on his trade as a hatter? Had he planned to go into the Ohio Country as soon as it opened up and did he stop over night at Gilbraith Stewart's cabin and was he persuaded to stay? Did Betsy Stewart think of the joy of having another woman as her friend and the companionship for her own small daughter? It is possible that the McKeever had friends in the area as southwestern Pennsylvania had a large proportion of Scots-Irish settlers coming from the counties of Cavan, Armagh and Fermanagh in Northern Ireland, shortly before the Revolution or immediately afterwards.

"Hopewell Township was one of the original townships of Washington County, created March 28, 1781. The Borough of West Middletown lies on parts of two tracts of land patented to Samuel Gill and James Martin, respectively. The Martin tract lying south of the ridge was patented as "St. Martin's" under a Virginia certificate in 1781. This being part of the disputed lands claimed by both Virginia and the Pennsylvania Proprietors. Samuel Gill patented the land to the north in 1790.

"In 1793, Gilbraith Stewart and his wife Betsy purchased land from the Gill tract and established a blacksmith shop there. He was later to erect an inn for travelers and as the traffic increased he built more houses and the settlement. West Middletown began to grow. The McKeevers are thought to have been either the second or third family to settle permanently, the Craigs coming at about the same time. Very soon others settled there, the Denny's McNulties, Lane's, Bushfield's, Burn's, Pentecost, McCall's and many others some of whose descendants have left their mark in all reaches of the nation.

"In 1797 West Middletown as it was called; its location halfway between Washington and the river was made a polling place and in 1805 the first post office was established. Gilbraith Stewart had various industries besides the inn and the blacksmith shop; a corn and flour mill, a large tannery, a cider press and a distillery where he made peach brandy. this was the section of a country where the Whiskey Rebellion took place in 1794 and many of the pioneers of near West Middletown were involved in the insurrection. Since the only cheap way the farmer had of getting his crops to eastern markets was by condensing his crops into whiskey and brandy, the excise tax or license required by the government for a distillery resulted in a show of force and the Federal troops were called out to subdue the offenders.

"No better description of the country surrounding West Middletown can be found than an excerpt from Dr. Robert Richardson's 'Memoirs of Alexander Campbell': 'The country about Middletown has the general character of the uplands of this region. The village is placed upon a high and narrow ridge, along which passes the highway to Washington, forming the only street. Upon the left looking eastward the ridge rapidly declines into a deeper and somewhat narrow valley which stretches away for miles with rich fields and green meadows, through which a bright and gurgling stream wends its way. Upon the right the ridge widens for a short distance then gradually sinks into the valley of Brush Run which toward the southwest presents a charming prospect of wooded hills and cultivated farms, losing itself in the distant gorges of clear and rapid Buffalo Creek westward of the town, the ridge after rising to a lofty and conical hill spreads itself into a gentle undulating country which reaches to the declivity of Cross Creek.'

"The country about West Middletown was sparsely settled in 1794 but the people being primarily Scots-Irish were quick to establish schools and churches. The Presbyterians with their several different divisions, Associates, Covenanters, Seceeders, soon formed congregations at Upper Buffalo, Lower Buffalo, Mt. Hope and West Middletown. The Grove United Presbyterian Church in Middletown was organized in 1810 but held meetings soon after 1802.

"The McKeevers, however, belonged to the Methodist Society. It is thought likely that they were followers of John Wesley before they left Ireland. The nearest Methodist church was Doddridge Chapel built in 1784 by Joseph Doddridge near Independence, PA. The early membership of this church was composed mostly of Marylanders who had settled in Cross Creek.

"William McKeever's children received a good pioneer education, even his daughters in a day when girls were seldom taught more than to read and write. His daughter, Susanne, taught a select school in the old stone house until public schools were common. She then taught in the public schools. The old home must have, at times, been full of children as there are records of grandchildren reared in his home.

He was an ardent abolitionist, as Earle R. Forrest in his "History of Washington County" relates in this incident:

'One of the first abolitionists in Washington County was William McKeever of West Middletown, father of Thomas and Matthew. One day in 1829 several slave leaders passed through Middletown with a number of slaves chained together. They were weary and footsore. As they were passing his house, William McKeever was aroused by the sight and when the owners flogged and cursed the slaves, his

wrath knew no bounds and he denounced the drivers. They paid no attention to him at first but when he followed them out of the village heaping streams of invective interspersed with Biblical quotations, they told him it would be safer for him to return to town. The old abolitionist tore open his shirt and dared them to shoot him through the heart, declaring that this was all that would stop him. They dared not harm him and were forced to listen to him for some distance farther.'

"Other sources say that the neighbors were much alarmed for the gentleman and begged him to return to the village but that he followed the owners to the hill west of the town, calling down all the dangers of the hereafter on the luckless driver. William was said to have been the best Bible student in the county and could quote pages with no hesitancy.

"In the fall of 1838, William McKeever passed away. He had suffered many years from ticdoulouroux of facial neuralgia. He was buried in the Doddridge Cemetery where the following inscription was carved on the stone: 'William McKeever died October 18, 1838, in his 80th year.' This ended the period of the pioneer Scots-Irish emigrant.

The next article will tell of the many activities of the Underground Railway that the McKeever family were familiar with, and of the many incidents that occurred during this period of West Middletown history.

# Underground Railroads

Long before Harriet Beecher Stowe had written her controversial book in 1852 dealing with the slavery question in the South, the citizens of West Middletown had expressed disfavor with the passage of slaves through the town. As Mrs. Bushfield's account is continued, one will see how the past is closely interwoven in this, the outstanding historical question of the mid-1800's.

'In order to complete a history of the McKeever family, a section must be devoted to the part they played in the Abolitionist Movement and the Underground Railroad. Although many of the West Middletown families were active in assisting runaway slaves to freedom, the McKeevers, according to the Centennial Issue of the Washington Reporter of 1900, were the acknowledged leaders in the movement in Southwestern Washington County.

"Where William McKeever acquired his abolitionist sentiments is not known but he is considered the first abolitionist in the county. He was a highly religious man of a kindly disposition and no man in the section excelled him in his knowledge of the Bible and his ability to quote it.

"As early as 1829, he showed his anti-slavery feelings when he became infuriated at the drivers of a coffle of slaves being driven through town and followed them for a mile castigating them bitterly all the while. IT is not surprising that his sons thomas and matthew grew up with a hatred of slavery and when the opportunity came became ardent supporters of the Underground Railroad."

In the years after 1830, the new railroads were an object of interest to everyone and when the name "Underground Railroad" came into use as the name of the system of transportation for runaway slaves from the slave states to Canada and freedom, it was natural that the vocabulary of the railroads should be adopted. Thus we have "cargo" and "shipment" for the slaves themselves and "conductors" who led them to safety. "Stations" were the hiding places and "baggage masters" easily understood.

The "directors" were the men who planned and perhaps knew what little there was to know about this deliberately shapeless organization. At no time or place was there an absolute head to the Underground Railroad, but certain men such as Matthew McKeever gradually assumed leadership and became known as the leaders. Few records if any were ever kept of either the slave's names or his place of origin. If asked, the conductors could truthfully say they did not know. Most of the stationmasters knew no more than the next step in the itinerary and even today little is known of the actual operation.

"It is doubtful if there was ever the number of runaways that Abolitionists and politicians were to claim later, but for many years, in trickles of one and two, the border states passed the fugitives to the lakeports and Canada. Matthew McKeever in a letter written many years later stated that the most he ever had at one time at his station was eight.

The southwestern branch of the Underground in Washington County started from Marshall County, VA, (now West Virginia) in the vicinity of Limestone, Sherrard, and Jacktown on what would now be US Route 250. The route led from Isaac Teagarden's home on West Wheeling Creek to the farm of Joseph Gray, near Graysville in Greene County. The next stop was at West Alexander where Kenneth McCoy was the stationmaster. From McCoy's to West Middletown was a distance of about twelve miles and from there the route led either to Florence or Paris, PA, and thence to Pittsburgh or other northern ports.

It is not to be inferred that the Underground was a fixed and unalterable road. A fixed route would have lost all the advantages that elasticity of itinerary promoted. (Note: The writer, in an articles this past



summer which dealt with the historic LeMoyne House in downtown Washington, PA had mentioned that the slaves concealed in an upstairs room at LeMoyne mansion had taken a northward route to West Middletown. As disclosed by Mrs. Bushfield, the route was a zig-zag affair and the present writer was thrown off the track just as much as the slave owners were in the days of the McKeevers.) That section of the country was a broken, wooded terrain, a network of country roads, farmers lanes, and hunters trails. With every Abolitionist an operator and many who, though disliking the Abolitionist policies, would still help a human being in distress, the routes could be changed at a moment's notice.

Besides the West Middletown route there were two others in Washington County. One led where Major McFarland's house on East Maiden Street was the station. It is said that at one time there were eighteen persons hidden at McFarland's awaiting a chance to escape to Pittsburgh. The second route led through California (PA) on the Monongahela River, and from there to Pittsburgh.

The transportation of the Negroes usually took place at night or early morning. It was customary for the farmers to leave their homes long before daybreak for the city markets and the big covered market wagons loaded with produce occasioned little comment.

In the next article more will be told of the booming days of this unique railroad, and how Middletown became a veritable Grand Central Station in this mode of travel.

## Hiding Places

There was something sombre and Chopin-like about the sound of muffled drums that were heard not so long ago during the ceremonies accompanying the late President Kennedy's funeral. It was such a sound that reflected the nations many tragic moments - moments that recalled the fall of Fort Sumpter, the Alamo and perhaps, too, the sound of the slave chains that had infuriated William McKeever. The sound accompanied Lincoln and the terrible days of Valley Forge. And, in 1829, it was also heard in Washington County. To continue with Mrs. Bushfield's account as she tells more of the days of the Underground Railway:

"At times, the fugitives would have to be conducted on foot through the woods to avoid pursuit, but as "coon" hunts were part of the local pastimes, a party of men and dogs could easily justify their presence in the woods.

"Perhaps the bloodhounds used by the slave catchers or patrollers, as they were called, were not as effective as the farmers thought, but when the wild drive slave came to their door, he had to be outfitted with a pair of cast-off shoes to throw the bloodhounds off the scent. Many a poor negro encased in a pair of ill-fitting boots, perhaps too for the first time, must have suffered the tortures of the damned in the unaccustomed footwear.

"Frequently the young members of a family served as conductors. James McElroy in his "Reminiscences" tells of taking two runaways from the his near Middletown to Paris (PA) in the family carriage, when he was but fifteen. It is quite likely that the McKeever youngsters enjoyed the thrill of adventure and never objected to being hauled out of bed to deliver some unexpected "cargo" to the next station.

"The stations or hiding places were of various kinds. Not often were they hidden in the homes, but at William McKeever's house, evidently built on the ground without a foundation, a false cellar had been constructed in the ground with no entrance but a trap door in the kitchen floor. A rag rug kept over the door and never removed in the presence of strangers.

"In one house, a false door was built some way up the stone chimney and painted a dull color so that it was barely notice, affording safety in a small room built off the chimney.

"The old Grove Untied Church was sometimes used as a hiding place, as was Judge McKeever's home on the Main Street of the village, Pleasant Hill Seminary, run by Matthew McKeever with its many buildings and outlying farms, was used more often.

"At times the lakeports would become unsafe as the slave catchers began to congregate along the wharfs and docks of Ashtabula and Erie, and the stationmasters would be unable to pass on their unfortunate cargoes. At such times the feedings and caring for the extras might become a problem. Lorinda Wilkins, Matthew's daughter, told of hearing her mother complain to her father that the bread baked the day before disappeared so fast. "Yes, dear," her father answered complacently, "we have a large family." Once a total of eight slaves were hidden for several weeks with no one but the master of the house and John Jordan, a negro hired hand, the wiser.

"A curious situation developed at Pleasant Hill. (The story of Pleasant Hill and its Seminary will be told in later articles). At some distance from the school, a wooded hill was visible and to the casual eye the entire hillside was a continuous woodland, but in the center was actually a clearing of several acres which was cultivated. At times the "boarders" would have to be moved from the school to a less obvious place

and would be sent "To work their board," on the hillside. From its use the hill became known locally as Penitentiary Hill. With tongue in cheek one is forced to conclude that the ports may have remained unsafe until the crops were in.

"Such a conclusion should not be taken too seriously through, for the expense of feeding and clothing the runaways must have been considerable, and there was always a certain amount of danger in running afoul of the law or being betrayed by Southern sympathizers, especially after 1850 when the fugitive Slave Law was passed, making it a Federal offense to assist a slave to freedom:

"As the law in West Middletown for the most part was administered by the McKeevers or their friends, any attempt to remove a fugitive by legal means was apt to be circumvented by the rather crude justice of the time.

"Once the runaway came to the house of Matthew McKeever, was discovered, and the case called before Judge Tommy McKeever, brother of Matthew. The Negro claimed to be a free Negro from Somerset County, and gave names to prove it. Col. McNulty signed a bond declaring that he knew this to be the truth. The Judge then informed the slave catcher that he would release the Negro to him if he could produce bond of assurance that the Negro was indeed a slave. The slave catcher being away from home could, of course, not do this and offered to give bond of a hundred dollars in cash. Judge McKeever refused to do this, saying that would not constitute bond, but forfeit. The patroller left convinced that he could not fight both McKeevers.

"John Jordan was a Negro that lived, with the McKeevers as a hired man for many years. Once a chance visitor saw him and a few days later a stranger drove up and claimed Jordan was an escaped slave, handcuffed him, declaring that he would take him home. As he passed through the village, a crowd surrounded him and so frightened him with a show of temper that he decided that he might have been mistaken in thinking Jordan was his property.

"Afterward Jordan was heard to say scornfully, 'If he had looked at my arms, he would have seen the scars he left there himself'".

## Patrollers or Slave Catchers

At times, the crude humor and uncertain temperament of the Scots-Irish men of West Middletown must have shocked the more genteel of the Southerners half out of their wits. James McElroy speaks of such an incident when he tells the following story in his "Reminiscences:"

"A wretched fugitive stumbled into the town half dead with exhaustion and fear. He was hastily taken to Matthew McKeever's house and hidden in the barn. Mr. McKeever then learned that the slave catcher was close behind. The bloodhounds used by the patrollers were hated as much by the Middletownians as the patrollers themselves. In this case, the dog soon found the terrified slave, and he was dragged from his hiding place begging for mercy. Mr. McKeever interfered as the slave catcher was attempting to handcuff the man, shouting for a group of men working nearby, who came at once with their pitchforks ready to assist in the rescue of the slave.

"Mr. McKeever told the gentleman that the slave must be taken into the village and the case tried before the Just of Peace T.J. Ogdenbaugh to see if the negro could legally be taken back into slavery. In the meantime, a boy was sent for James McElroy, Sr. who was working at a sawmill nearby. Mr. McElroy was both a strong abolitionist and extremely shrewd. When he reached the village he found the squire's office full of angry and excited men and a desperate human being crouched on the floor, guarded by an ugly bloodhound.

"The villagers were in a nasty mood and if they were not diverted at once, the Southerner was in danger of mob violence. Taking in the situation immediately, Mr. McElroy listened to the Southerner explain his demands and then said:

"Is that your dog, sir?"

"It is," said the man.

"Is he a bloodhound?"

"Yes, sir," replied the stranger, "he is."

Looking around the muttering crowd, Mr. McElroy said, "I move that the dog never leave this town."

"Second the motion," yelled the crowd and ten minutes later the unfortunate dog was hanging from a neighboring tree and the slave catcher was riding furiously out of town, thankful perhaps that he had escaped such a band of obviously mad men." Thus ends the portion of Mr. McElroy's item as published in his "Reminiscences." Again we take up Mrs. Bushfields's account of the patrollers versus the McKeevers:

"It has been said that no slave who managed to escape and reach a station in West Middletown was ever returned to slavery but there are many instances when the patrollers were too close for comfort.

"Matthew McKeever said in later years, 'I never encouraged a slave to leave his master but I never refused to help one when he asked for help.'"

"As the years went by and the war clouds hung ever closer, the slave owners in the neighboring state of Virginia became more impatient at the loss of their property, but unless the runaways were actually discovered on the premises little would be done about it, on suspicion alone.

"Matthew McKeever in a letter written many years later illustrates that point. A "shipment" was brought from Wheeling to Bethany and delivered to Joseph Bryant, brother-in-law of both Matthew and Alexander Campbell, the founder of Bethany College. Matthew's son, Campbell, then a student at the collage, and another young man, William Arney, brought them on from Bethany to West Middletown, where his father hid the runaways till they could be sent on to the next station.

"The slave owners by now were offering fabulous rewards for information as to the slaves and their means of escape. The man who brought them to Joseph Bryant turned informer and bryant was arrested and taken to Wheeling where he refused to give bail and was remanded to jail. He was there for fifteen days, but the Judge ruled that "an accomplice could not be punished while the principal was still at large," meaning Matthew McKeever. During the time Bryant was in jail, a reward of five hundred dollars was offered to any one who would bring Mr, McKeever to Wheeling "Dead or Alive."

"In his letter Matthew says, dryly, 'I didn't venture down that way for a while.'

"Many times the agents of the underground were free negroes. One of the most famous was "Old Naylor" of Wheeling, who lived by his wits around the wharfs and market.

As he appeared drunk three-fourths of the time, little attention was paid to his comings and goings. He was, however, an accomplished agent, whisking his charges off a boat or out of the market, hiding them until he could contact an Abolitionist farmer who would be driving out of the city after a day at the markets. The runaway would be hidden in the wagon and "Old Naylor" would return to town too intoxicated to know anything about an escaped slave.

"He carried on this imposture until the close of the war and having accumulated no money in his under-cover activities, wanted to spend his declining days among his negro friends in West Middletown. He had no house and no money to buy one, but the citizens of the community arranged to build him one.

Someone gave a plot of land, another the timber, others the labor. On the appointed day, the cabin was raised in short order.

"Poor 'Old Naylor' was so overcome that all he could say was, "Who'd a-thought it? Who'd a-thought it? Old Naylor has a house of his own." For many years the cabin was known locally as "Who'd a-thought it."

"Among the negroes who settled in about West Middletown, was another man who became the center of national interest for a time. Peachy Herron was quite industrious and frugal and had accumulated a small fortune for the time. The ill-fated colonization of far-off Liberia was being developed by a group of honest but misguided men. Peachy was inveigled by the group into going to Liberia. He divided his fortune into two parts, taking half with him, leaving the other in reserve.

"After a time he became disgusted with the colony and took passage home with his wife and children. Poor Peachy was designed never to see the clean hills of Middletown again, for both he and his wife died, one on board ship, and the other in New York. As his illness was thought to have been of a strange nature, it was rumored that he had been poisoned in order to keep him from telling of the failure of the project."

Thus ends the portion of the West Middletown story as concerns the Underground Railway. There is no doubt more to be told, and more to be uncovered on this fascinating portion of Washington County history. But our purpose here is to spark an interest in the younger generation and to perhaps to preserve and hold intact some of the fine physical portions of the past that remains with us today.

## America's Past Etched in West Middletown

The calibre of the early residents of West Middletown can be discerned from the fact that education was of primary importance, along with the town's efforts to abolish the stigma of slavery in America. In this article we continue with Mrs. Bushfield's account of the Pleasant Hill Seminary, which was opened in the year 1842:

"Pleasant Hill Seminary, near West Middletown, was the outgrowth of a private school conducted by Jane Campbell in the village. She was the daughter of Reverend Thomas Campbell, or "Father Campbell" as he was affectionately called by relatives and religious followers, and under his personal supervision. She was a woman of pleasant manners and disposition and thoroughly conscientious in her work.

"Reverent Campbell came back to West Middletown in the fall of 1819 after a two-year residence in Kentucky. His daughter then only about eighteen opened a school in the house in which Daniel Hodgens later lived. The school was a success, being well attended and encouraged by the citizens of the community.

"Two years afterwards, Miss Campbell married Matthew McKeever and moved to his farm, Pleasant Hill, about one and a half miles west of town. Here she continued the school in a long cabin built for the purpose. Finally in 1842 she opened a regular boarding school for girls in a small brick building. In the earlier school she evidently had boys as well as girls, for in various branches of the numerous Campbell and McKeever families we find that certain of the boys attended.

"The school was called Pleasant Hills Seminary and met with public favor from the start. Soon its modest buildings were exchanged for more commodious ones, which included dormitories and classrooms. Mr. McKeever carried on his activities as a farmer and sheep grower while acting as superintendent of the school, while his wife was principal and had general control of the school.

"The prospectus of the school set forth that 'It is surrounded by a highly moral and industrial population engaged generally in agriculture. It will not therefore be necessary to impose the ladies which are requisites in formal restraints upon young seminaries situated in cities, towns, or even villages not to incur inordinate expense in relation to dress or appearances.'

The course of study embraced not only the ordinary courses, but included Latin, Greek, French, and German in languages and in science, chemistry, astronomy, botany and mineralogy. A fine music course was taught which included piano, violin, guitar, and vocal culture. Such a course with nine experienced teachers attracted a large patronage and Pleasant Hill became widely-known.

"After some years, Mrs. McKeever associated her son, Reverend Thomas Campbell McKeever with her in its management. There is no complete list of former teachers available, but in a catalogue of 1857, Dorothea Lett taught piano, guitar, violin, vocal, music and French; Esther Lett taught piano; Cather McVay who later married Professor Bigtar of the school, taught melodeum, and sciences; Lucy Atkinson was a teacher of drawing, oil painting, embroidery, etc.: and Mary K. Matthew taught the primary department.

"The first class to graduate was in 1847 and included Elizabeth G.J. Bryant of Marion, Ohio; Elizabeth A. Campbell of Bethany, Virginia; Nancy Jane Clark of Wheeling; and Rebecca Jones of Brooke County, Virginia.

"As the seminary was a denominational institution under the charge of leading Disciples of Christ, the greater part of the patronage from other parts of the country was drawn from that sect. In the first ten years, the girls came from Wheeling, West Liberty, and Bethany, only a few miles from Pleasant Hill, and also from Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and other Southern states. Considering the McKeevers avowed anti-slavery sentiments, this was a high compliment to the integrity and high standing of the school.

"For years the followers of the Campbell's sent their daughters to Pleasant Hill and their sons to Bethany College founded by Alexander Campbell. Probably over 1000 girls attended school during its heyday. An interesting sidelight on Reverend Campbell McKeever was published in the Washington Observer on September 6, 1888:

During the palmy days of the old Pleasant Hill Seminary, when Reverend Campbell McKeever was principal, he built a study in the school grounds. It was an octagonal structure, fashioned like the offices of professional men of the "Sunny South". It had one door and three windows which extended to the floor. In this comfortable and cozy study, the eloquent preacher prepared his sermons, conducted his extensive correspondence and received visitors. But that was almost a generation ago. Professor McKeever died in 1866 and the study which had been his retreat had been deserted. But the spirit of this utilitarian age has been felt even here. It has been removed to town (West Middletown) and lifted up as a barber shop. On the classic walls which were once adorned with the cultural McKeever's choice library, are now hung the razor strap, the towel rack and looking glass; the favorite resort of the student and scene of many intellectual triumphs is now the theater of many a word conflict concerning current gossip which is amusing if not edifying.'

"Today nothing remains of the distinguished boarding school but one small brick building, the bricks crumbling and weeds growing on the threshold. Nothing but majestic memory!"

Such is the account of old Pleasant Hill Seminary, as recounted by Bernice Bartley Bushfield. The next article will deal with West Middletown's role in the start of the Agricultural Revolution of the mid-1800's and of the famed "Middletown Band."



## Big Muster Day

At the western end of West Middletown is a plaque erected by the State of Pennsylvania which tells of the Ralston Thresher. The machine was invented here and the property which encompasses the Kraus home was the site of the later McClure manufacturing company which turned out the threshers in large volume.

In continuing the account of Mrs. Bushfield, we quote from her compilation of the "McKeevers and Allied Families of West Middletown":

"It may be of interest to the western farmers and ranchers in the McKeever family to learn that the grain operator or threshing machine is said to have been invented in West Middletown. At least Patent No. 2467 was issued to A. Ralston for his grain operator on February 2, 1842, and reissued January 15, 1856, the inventor having made improvements on the original. Robert McClure acquired the patent soon after 1856 and began manufacturing in the village on what was a large-scale for the day.

"Andrew Ralston was born and reared on a farm near Mt. Hope, Independence Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania. Late in life, he moved to West Middletown and died there. Mr. Ralston also invented a sheep rack and a patent was issued him for an oil-burning lantern which was manufactured in the village by James L. Bell, a tinner.

"A granddaughter of Mr. Ralston wrote from New London, Iowa, in 1825, that she remembered seeing numerous drawings of her grandfather's drawn on the back of black oil cloth. She also spoke of two other patents, one of a dog churn and another of a rocking chair churn.

"Robert McClure manufactured the threshers in a large building which stood on the western end of town, until about 1870. The big June frost of 1858-9 created difficulties for Mr. McClure. James Bell told Earle Forrest, Washington County historian, that a consignment of threshers rotted on the wharves of St. Louis because the consignees were too hard up to pay for them when the crops were ruined by the frost.

"Henry Ford purchased the last of the old threshers for the Ford Museum." So it is that we find Middletowners participating in the throes of the Industrial and Agricultural revolutions of America. Henry Ford, with a flair for the historic and pertinent items of early days, had made many trips to Washington County to procure artifacts for his Dearborn Museum. One such trip, or perhaps we should say many, netted him the Ackley Bridge and the birthplace of William Homes McGuffey, the author of McGuffey's Reader. Perhaps it was a good move. For in the past few years we of the western Pennsylvania portion of national history through neglect and downright indifference. Today those items can be seen at the above-mentioned museum.

But to continue with the account of the early days of West Middletown and the many facets of these people who combined the inventiveness of Jefferson and Franklin, the patriotism of Patrick Henry and Nathan Hale; the desire for enlightenment in education that characterized Charles William Eliot and Louis Agassiz. All these and more contribute to the town's role of a typical cross-section of ideal American-ism.

Mrs. Bushfield tells of the Big Muster Day, as we continue with her narrative:

"In the 1830's the community had a company of militia. The state furnished a few guns and the members uniformed themselves. Even the boys of fourteen or so joined the company. In the month of May, a

general muster of the entire county was held in a central place, frequently in West Middletown. The reviews were held on the Galbraith Stewart farm on the north side of town or on Judge McKeever's farm on the edge of town on the Washington Road.

"Some of the staff officers were General James Lee of Cross Creek; General James Brice of Washington; Colonel Asa Manchester whose home is still standing near Independence; and Major Mathew Allison of Mt. Hope. John Vasbinder was Captain of the Middletown Company for many years.

"These reviews were great days for the village. Everybody came from the Virginia Panhandle, Greene County to the south, Allegheny to the north, in wagons, on horseback, and on foot. The generals in plumes, the marching men in uniform and waving flags made a holiday long remembered by the children, for among all the display was "Old Duncy" the gingerbread man. He was a friend of all the children and the big slabs of gingerbread for a penny apiece made every child look forward to the Big Muster Day. It really didn't matter that the glorious regiment was only a few country boys armed with old muzzle-loading rifles, a like number of cavalry and the rest of the motley crew armed with canes and cornstalks charging over a farmer's pasture."

So ends the description of the Day of Days...Muster Day in West Middletown...an unofficial holiday in which everyone celebrated. Then too, there was the Middletown Band, for this village not only enjoyed the means of learning all about music at the Seminary, but used it to good advantage as well. Mrs. Bushfield continues:

"Music played an important part in the lives of the people of Middletown. From the endless discussions over the propriety of singing hymns in Presbyterian services to the concerns arranged at Pleasant Hill Seminary, there was an evident interest and enjoyment of music. In the old Seceder congregations nothing was sung by Rouse's version of the Psalms and that is the oldest tune known. In the Presbyterian Church, Watt's Hymns and Psalms were sung. The "clerks", usually four men, stood on a little raised platform in front of the pulpit, facing the congregation. They had no music in their books and took turns raising the tune. Sometimes the clerks started without much of a tune in mind, wandering around until purchase he happened on some particular tune, then with a roar the rest of the clerks and the congregation joined in, making a loud if not joyful noise unto the Lord.

"Captain James McElroy writes that in about 1837 the first band was organized in the village. Eighteen or twenty young men in the town and surrounding neighborhood formed a band, hardly a brass band, but a reasonable facsimile. Among this group was Hugh Wilson, James E. Lindsey, later Clerk of Wills in Allegheny County, Stewart Adams, son of Dr. David Adams, Samuel McComb, Joseph McVey, James McGuigin, William McKeever, the eldest son of Judge McKeever, and John Allison. The band met in "Sink" Dunnion's harness shop, a small one-story building near McGuigin's Hotel. The band was in great demand, playing for political rallies and the Big Muster Day parade.

"One of the tall tales of the period concerns the band and the muster day. This was to be a great day, the first time the band was to play and many of the country people were to hear it for the first time, though it was the talk of the countryside. Out of the hills of Greene County (all tall tales in Middletown had a Greene countian as the butt of the joke) rode a lean lanky youth on a half-broken two-year-old colt. The colt was frightened and proceeded to cut up with some energy. The boy wanted to find a place safe for the skittery animal and rode into McGuigin's Hotel stable yard and asked to tie his horse in the barn.

"The stableman said the barn was full; but if he wished, he could tie the colt in a nearby shed in which the new brass-mounted village fire engine was stored. The boy looked at the engine in wonder and said "Be that the Middletown Band?" The loungers grinned and the stableman winking to the crowd said, sure

'tis." the boy rubbed his shin thoughtfully and scratched his head. "Wal, I dunno, if that thing was to start a-playin', this here colt would break for sure!"

"The Middletown Band had a long history and many of the young McKeevers played with them - William, Bernie, James, and others. In 1856, the Herald-Star of Steubenville, Ohio, reported that the West Middletown Band led the political parade for John C. Fremont in that city.

"By 1860 they had a full-fledged brass band and James McElroy offered to purchase new instruments, allowing them as much time as they needed to pay for them if they would assist in organizing a "Wide Awake" Lincoln Marching Club. The "Wide Awake's" were a political unit formed over the country to arouse enthusiasm in the new Republican Party. They usually officered and drilled as a military company. The uniforms consisted of white duck trousers, black oil cloth capes and caps, and carried oil lamps mounted on six-foot poles.

"A company of three hundred men were organized in Hopewell Township, and the band to lead them outfitted. Their reputation soon extended to neighboring communities and the Republicans determined to have a gigantic rally in the town with the Central Wide Awakes and famous Young's Band of Pittsburgh as their guests.

"The Pittsburgh Club came to LaGrange (Brilliant, Ohio) by boat and crossed to Wellsburg, where they were met by wagons and escorted the twelve miles to West Middletown. That night the excitement was intense, men yelled themselves hoarse, ladies waved flags and little boys turned cartwheels in the street. Washington County went Republican that year, and Middletown celebrated with a tremendous open house. Every house in town opened its doors to visitors and for several days the village had one big house party."

So ends the portion on the parade activities of the early day Middletowners. Community pride was much in evidence, and civic days were sincere celebrations.

The next article will tell of the visits of John Brown of Harper's Ferry to the village of West Middletown, as he perhaps took back with him the seed of rebellion against the odious slave trade.

## Village of Vast Historical Scope

It seems that just about everyone of any historic fame appears to have had some tentacles rooted deep in the past of West Middletown. For instance, there is the saying that James Clemens, the great, great-grandfather of Samuel Clemens, or Mark Twain, as he is better known, was at one time a pioneer resident of West Middletown. Robert Fulton, of steamboat fame, had at one time purchased a farm in Hopewell Township. Fulton purchased it May 6, 1786, from one Thomas Pollock and the investor's father, mother and three sisters had resided on it.

Today, when one stops anywhere in Middletown, be it the general store, the fire house or a citizen's home, he is made aware of the fact that John Brown had once visited the town. Currently, the citizens are well aware of the fine past of the village and this is good. It is good because the children of the town are raised in an atmosphere, not only of fine retrospect, but a climate of hoping to make their mark, also, in a future strong America.

But now to the story of John Brown's visits to Middletown and his acquaintance with the McKeevers. We quote again from Mrs. Bushfield:

"In the early 1840's John Brown, "Old John Brown of Oswatomie", was a frequent visitor in West Middletown, often stopping at the home of Matthew McKeever. At that time Brown was a buyer of wool. Washington County was largely engaged in sheep raising and the McKeevers had fine sheep on their lands.

"James McElroy, in his 'Reminiscences of 1910' states: 'Into this field John Brown came as early as 1840 or in the '40's representing the firm of Perkins and Brown, of Springfield, Massachusetts, heavy buyers of wool. He made his headquarters at my fathers and at the house of Matthew McKeever, west of town. Brown bought wool in this part of the country for over three years, shipping it to Springfield. Brown was an earnest, enthusiastic advocate of the abolition of slavery, as was also my father. Both were well-informed men on all subjects of the day, and interesting talkers. I well remember that Brown would come over to our house in the evening after riding hard all day in the neighborhood buying wool. Our neighbors would gather in, mainly to listen to the talk between Brown and my father on the abolition of slavery. Brown was very bitter in his denunciation of slavery and the apologizers of it.

"In 1841 or 1842, if I am not mistaken, Perkins and Brown failed. They had a large lot of wool bought at high prices, when a sudden decline in the market came and they were unable to realize on it. Matthew McKeever had bought wool for them and was an endorser on their paper to a large amount. By this he lost heavily." Thus was the extent of John Brown's business in West Middletown...at that time the role of a wool buyer.

Some years later, in a letter written by Matthew McKeever to a friend, the following facts were disclosed on the extent of the friendship of the two men. When John Brown was captured in his fanatical raid on the arsenal at Harper's Ferry in 1859, Brown's brother from Hudson, Ohio, came to West Middletown and asked him (McKeever) to interceded with Governor F.A. Wise of Virginia in order that he might go to Harper's Ferry to see his brother.

Mr. McKeever went with him to Wheeling, Virginia, where they wired Governor Wise for permission. The Governor answered by saying that he could not see his brother if he did come. The brother came back to West Middletown where he gave a couple of Abolitionist lectures before returning to Hudson.

Lorinda Wilkin, daughter of Matthew McKeever, wrote of John Brown in 1910, as follows: ..."I will not say he was a handsome man, but firm. Something after the style of Lincoln. He was about six feet in height and rather slender."

There is nothing to indicate that the McKeevers were at any time involved in the fanatical scheme of Brown, nor in fact that they had had any connection with him after the years of 1845 or 46. Several of the descendants were members of the Free Soil Party in Iowa and Kansas but there is no tradition that they knew John Brown in that area nor at any time had any connection with his Kansas exploits.

Again on the subject of the Abolitionist movement, Mrs. Bushfield states:

"Historians frequently intimate that the Abolitionists advocated overthrow of slavery by force but evaded the issue when the fighting began. In the Middletown region, practically the entire population of fighting age served with the Union Army. On August 31, 1861, the 100th Pennsylvania Regiment was organized in Pittsburgh. They were given the name "Roundheads" by Simeon Cameron, the Secretary of War, and for six months were known by no other. The nickname continued throughout the war and afterwards around Hopewell Township. At least 45 men from Middletown served in Company A of that regiment until the close of the war."

The next article will tell of present day Middletown and what the extraordinary background of the hamlet atop the ridge means to all Americans.

## West Middletown Today

"Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,  
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."  
(Thomas Gray-Elegy Written In A Country Churchyard)

The collective cemeteries of Grove United Presbyterian Church, Christian Church and Israel AME Church of West Middletown today hold in epitaphs the record of those responsible for much of the town's early imprint on the face of America. Most certainly anyone who might be buried in the Grove UP Church Cemetery, was at least half-way to his reward if physical height meant anything. For this burial place occupies the utmost high point in Middletown. Quaint too, are the inscriptions written on stone by the versatile and talented townspeople of long ago.

And what of West Middletown today? Down at the western end of Hickory, homes are beginning to blossom outward to the hills of the McKeevers, the McFaddens, the Campbells, the Stewarts and many others who helped hew out of the wilderness this gem of Americana. Soon the village with this quaint Main Street and general store, along with multitudinous historic memories, will be swallowed up in the whirl of the population explosion. It remains for those who are interested to preserve as much of the town as possible. Already the old France Hotel has been taken over for use as an antique shop. This will help marshal the items of the past into one center, where the tools with which the pioneer residents of Western Pennsylvania carved out the cornerstones of America's foundation can be viewed and revered by countless generations of young people. West Middletown can be eternal, and eventually become a tourist attraction for many out of state visitors.

In a village where time seemingly has stood still, events of the past few years may have had the "heaps of turf" mentioned in Gray's Elegy at the beginning of this item, perhaps agitating quite furiously as the forefathers of the hamlet turned over in their graves. This disturbance could have been the product of the incident of one woman in a neighboring state being able to put the huge wheels of the Supreme Court into motion to affect the use of prayer in public schools, the unheard of scope of the riot that took place some months ago at a race track in Long Island...where, like a match to a dry prairie, the emotions of a confused populace took flame, the very recent incident in Dallas, Texas...all this adds up to the face that the face of America has changed much since the days of the founding of Middletown. At the beginning of these articles, the writer mentioned the relationship of the hearth, the church and the flag. These three items had much to do with the success of West Middletown as a true reflection of the American way of life.

Today, lawlessness is rampant in the country. Not the lawlessness of the Old West, but rather a lawlessness of principles. Recently, a noted churchman and lecturer made a statement which, in effect, was to say that all the country needed to cure its ills was a good old-fashioned "religious revival meeting."

It is also very possible that today we are tailoring our constitutional rights to the whims of the coming generation, instead of molding them to the precepts of that same constitution.

Visit West Middletown in the near future. Talk to a few of the townspeople. Stop in a Farrar's store and have the clerk tell you about the time John Brown visited West Middletown.

For West Middletowners are proud and well informed on their town's history, and this is as it should be...like the Ark atop Mount Ararat, West Middletown seems likely to weather the flood of hate and bigotry that has been lapping at the shores of America.

It may well be that the good seed of a future strong America may be preserved in the views and faith of this very unique and neighborly portion of Washington County.

## Wheeling's Saturday Night Jamboree

Not since the days of little old New York's famed Hippodrome Theatre at 43rd and Sixth Avenue, has there been such an upsurge of "live show" attendance as that which crowds the weekly Saturday Nite Jamboree in Wheeling's Capitol Music Hall. While other large American cities are losing their theatres to the ball of the building wrecker, Wheeling has breathed new life into its most deluxe indoor entertainment center.

It's a wonderful wedding of owner Basic Communications, Inc.'s WWVA "Big Country" radio sound and stage show.

As E.F. Albee, one-time president of Keith-Albee Vaudeville, (for the generation born too late for the grand days of vaudeville, Keith Albee was a word as important to show business as Hart, Shafner and Marx to the suite business), thus described his Hippodrome in 1926: "It is a playhouse of surprises - big and startling novelties. There is nothing like it in the world." And the Capitol Music Hall runs it a close second.

For a city that doesn't have a nationally-known baseball team to lure tourists each year, the combination of country music, traveling road shows, and the yearly exposure of the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra, has made the Capitol the best Chamber of Commerce agent a city could have. There is nothing like it today, entertainment-wise, in all of the good old USA.

It adds up close to a million and a half dollars of tourist money spent in Wheeling each year. Yearly attendance at the Capitol Music Hall, highlighted by the famed Jamboree, runs well over 100,000 happy patrons, with the figure swelled by devotees of the Wheeling Symphony and other mid-week shows.

Here, the residents of Wheeling and out-of-towners can see Buck Owens, clad in western dress, or Van Cliburn in white tie and tails. Only difference here is that Buck does his "thing" standing up, while Van has to part those tails before sitting on that piano stool.

If we were back in the days of the old National Pike through Wheeling, there might be a name, tavern-wise as it was in those days, and apropos of the times for the Capitol Music Hall:

"At the Sign of the Guitar and Harp."

Heck's sake, harp ain't nothin' but a big fat cousin to a guitar anyway. Only thing is, you can't squeeze it into a hand-carryin' case.

All of which shows the compatibility of country music and Beethoven in the auditorium of Wheeling's Capitol Music Hall.

Each Saturday night now, these familiar words greet radio listeners from the Mountain State's voice of Eastern America, WWVA"

"Live! From the stage of the Capitol Music Hall in Wheeling, WV, It's Jamboree USA, coming to you over 50,000 watt WWVA." And the Jamboree is one of two remaining live radio broadcast shows of the old era when Jack Benny, Eddie Cantor, Ben Bernie, and Amos and Andy were top highlights on the air.



The Jamboree was first broadcast on January 7, 1933, from the studios of WWVA. Radio managing director George W. Smith had outlined the format for this first Jamboree in an effort to program something different and special for the Saturday night listeners of the then 5,000 watt station. Listener response exceeded expectations with many requesting tickets to the show. Many far-flung fans found the Jamboree a great panacea for the pinching ills of the depression, and the popularity of the air show soared. To accommodate the large number of fans, the Jamboree moved to the Capitol Theatre (it was to return many years later with many accolades under its belt), opening on April 1, 1933, with 3,266 people and another thousand turned away with an "SRO," or "full house" sign outside the box office.

By February, 1936, the Jamboree had settled down in the Wheeling Market Auditorium and here, the informal atmosphere found favor with both entertainer and fan. Seated on folding chairs, eating snacks as they enjoyed the show, fans reveled in its casual, homey, intimate informality.

Many entertainers won the hearts of fans on those early Jamboree shows. Most have dropped out of sight over the years, while a few, like Grandpa Jones and Shug Fisher are still going strong today, performing on TV and in other fields. One group, which joined the Jamboree in 1936 and whose name is synonymous with great Jamboree style, is still on the Saturday night show, chalking up 34 years or more of wholesome, family entertainment. This is Doc Williams and the Border Riders, and through the years, this one group, due to extensive personal appearance tours, has done more than any other to promote the WWVA Jamboree.

As the years rolled by, the Jamboree rolled right along with them; growing in size, reaching out in popularity, and gaining a reputation as a WWVA/Wheeling "entertainment institution." In January, 1939, the jamboree sold its 500,000th admission ticket and three months later, the first "on tour" Jamboree took to the road, playing six towns and drawing 19,464 fans.

On October 2, 1943, WWVA was granted a power increase to 50,000 watts, beamed over its ultra-modern transmitter located at St. Clairsville, Ohio. With this, a whole new eastern US and Canadian market of listeners could now tune in the Jamboree.

In December, 1952, Jamboree Christmas greetings were sent 3,000 miles to a colony of Quebec Eskimos, all regular listeners to the Wheeling country music broadcast.

Constantly out-growing its various theatre homes, the Jamboree moved again, this time to the Wheeling Downs Exposition Hall. The year was 1966 and Buck Owens headlined a special show for more than 5,600 fans. The big Exposition Hall was soon dubbed Jamboree Hall and broadcasts emanated from here until December 13, 1969, when the Jamboree "went home again," to the Capitol Theatre (renamed the Capitol Music Hall) where it all began, some 36 years before.

## When Floods Are Recalled, 1884 Inundation is Uppermost

It's flood time again along the Ohio, and of course, it brings up tales of the great inundation of 1884.

Old accounts tell of how at one point above Parkersburg, there was a place where a whole colony of houses had settled. Moved by the flood to a new location. There were mills, stores, blacksmith shops, lumber yards, in fact, everything needed for a town - except inhabitants.

In this year of 1884, Lee Wah Hing, a Mongolian laundryman of Parkersburg, had his quarters flooded out, much to his disgust. His idea was expressed in the following words: "Dammee floodee, washee allee samee likee tubee!" No Celestial polish about that.

New Cumberland too, came in for its share of woe and misery brought about by the high water. The river at Wheeling had recorded the unprecedented height of 53 feet, and Hancock County did not gain too much safety due to its being higher up on the river.

One reporter of the old Hancock Courier stated the situation in these words:

"Never have such scenes been witnessed in this vicinity before and can only be duplicated when the flood tide reaches like towns below us. The peculiar topography of the lower portion of the town which admitted the back water from below, virtually placed it in the very jaws of the surging waters before the residents were aware of what was coming. Not a single house in that part of town escaped the fury of the flood, many of them being lifted bodily from their foundations and either swept out into the rushing torrent or sent eddying down the great water ways to collide with some more substantial building. Donegan's Orchard was the popular receptacle for most of these runaways, and that gentleman is now the unwilling proprietor of the most unique and lifeless village along the Ohio.

"The upper town fared a little better than the lower portion, except that not so many dwellings were swept entirely away. Look where you will, up or down the muddy streets, nothing meets the eye but a dreary, deserted waste of wrecked homes, crushed and overturned buildings and a general assortment of mud-bespattered debris.

"Captain Tom Garlick, with the steamer Return, did valiant service by rescuing a number of families along the river front where it would have been almost impossible for them to have reached dry land. These families were well cared for on the boat until the waters receded.

"T.R. Swaney, with his steam ferry-boat, 'Seventy-Six,' also patrolled the streets and wherever a head popped out of a second-story window in distress, Tom Swaney was alongside in a jiffy to render assistance. The Harvey Brown having been delayed here by the flood, strung out her tow along the shore like a huge black snake, which formed a boom from Clifton to the ferry and prevented many buildings from escaping down the river to New Orleans."

Or at least as far as Donegan's Orchard.

The Town Hall at New Cumberland was thrown open early to give homeless residents shelter. Sleeping was difficult, as many had to use the bare floor as bedding. Private families too, helped out with sheltering the unfortunate in this year of 1884. And the further down the river one went, the more complex became the toll.

Two engines placed on the O.R. Railroad, at Parkersburg, to hold the trestle work down, went under the upset. This was a great loss at the time, as they were spanking new locomotives. The Ohio River Railroad was a newly built road, and most of its trackage was destroyed in the area of Parkersburg.

Not a foot of ground in Point Pleasant was under less than six feet of water. Fully 100 houses were upset or crushed. The townspeople lived on decks of barges, in the courthouse and wherever else shelter could be had.

At Marietta, the damage and miser was fearful. Every church in town but two was destroyed. The entire town of Texas was swept away. The railroad and county bridges were both carried off. Two thousand people were made homeless in this pioneer city.

As one old-timer remarked back in those days: "Any other flood would be a 'dew' compared to this 'un of 1884!"

## Will Fowler's Store Carved Its Own Niche In District History

Not too long ago, we had submitted a bit of prose concerning old St. John's Church and cemetery, out along the Eldersville Road, just west of Washington County. The complex of church and burial ground is just over the state line in Brooke County, WV.

In the piece we had mentioned St. John's as being the final resting place of the Fowler folk of Washington Pike, also Brooke County. Here then, is a bit of the past of William M. Fowler, one of the names on a headstone that sits just to the right of St. John's as you enter the cemetery.

William M. Fowler had been the long-time operator of the Fowler Store and Post Office contained at one time in the present Drover's Inn, an eating place just over the state line from Independence, along West Virginia's Route 27 west. The building, a red brick farmhouse type, was built around 1850 and is just outside the edge of Fowlerstown, WV.

William M. Fowler was born in 1828 during John Quincy Adams' presidency, and in his lifetime saw 20 presidential terms. Will Fowler departed this life in 1907, during the last term of Teddy Roosevelt.

Just before his death, the assistant post-master general had written to Fowler asking him to detail his life story and his experiences in the US Postal Service, from the time of the Civil War on down to the turn of the century. The letter mentioned that he (Fowler) "was the oldest man in point of service and would have an interesting story to tell."

A self-addressed return envelope was included with the letter, but death overtook Fowler before he could comply with the request. The letter lay unopened, except for its initial reading, up until 1967, when this writer became aware of its contents.

Fowler's Store, as it stood in one wing of the red brick mansion, was the original "shopping center" of rural Brooke County from 1860 to 1900, its most colorful years.

And shopping center it was. "Buggy" trade would tie up at the hitching rail in front of the store, go in and see Will Fowler and get everything they needed from anew pair of shoes to a brass collar button, then top it off by picking up their daily mail.

Fowler was a man of many functions in his store. He was store clerk, pharmacist and postmaster, all rolled up into one. When medicines were in order, one favorite was Humphrey's Pills by the Number. These were small bottles containing air-rifle shot size pills, all of them white. For instance, No. 34 of Humphrey's was for sore throat or quinsy. Or perhaps No. 5 was billed for a headache cure. Just before you entered Fowler's Store (if it were the year 1900) the last step before the door proper was one of stone. A stone worn to a depth of at least three inches from its top level by the many feet which had entered.

Inside, one wall of shelves contained yard goods for do-it-yourself dress buffs. Another area contained all makes of cigars and chewing tobacco. On one counter was the inevitable "coffee mill," or grinder of Enterprise make; small children of Will Fowler's day though it looked like the fire engine down in Wellsburg because of its red color and shiny nickle top which did look like the boiler of a horse drawn fire engine.

Occupant of center stage in the store was the post office, the cubicle creating a bulge against the northern wall of the store.

Outside the store, at the extreme west toward Wellsburg, stood a two-story log building. It is said that it was once a tavern and of a certainty was used as a voting place for that section of Brooke County, and probably pre-dated the Fowler home and store. It is still there today, evidence of the tenacity of the log building era.

The post office at Fowler's store was like a ticker tape on national and world affairs; it saw the formation of a secret series of meetings at Fowlers' and Wellsburg, called the "Union League," set up to encourage the formation of a new state out of Virginia during the Civil War years.

Then there was the homemade Confederate flag, a product of one Rev. Cree of Fowlerstown. Cree lived not far from the Fowler folk and on the flag had inscribed a message of love for the South.

The inscription read: "Long live Jeff Davis and the Confederacy!" This was not unusual as many folk near border states saw brother fight against brother and emotions could be divided in a hamlet the size of Fowlerstown.

Material on reconstruction flowed through the post office, as well as the silver controversy of William Jennings Bryan's time.

When Fowler first received his certificate as postmaster at Fowlertown, or Fowler's as it was sometimes called, it was printed on a form used by former Postmaster General Montgomery Blair. The year was 1864 and Blair had been replaced by William Dennison. The line of Blair's name was drawn through with a pen and Dennison's written below it. All of this, of course, during the administration of President Lincoln.

Another flag, this one a standard American banner of 1868, had the following cut-out paper words pasted to the cloth: "Grant and Colfax." This was in honor of Gen. Grant and his running mate, Schuyler Colfax, winners in the presidential election of 1868.

Threaded through the mass of mail over the years of Will Fowler's time as Postmaster, were the letters exchanged between Will and his second wife, Hannah Baxter. Hannah was from the Fairview section of Hancock County, now known as New Manchester and Will would often show his declaration of love by sending her the latest copy of Godey's Lady Book from the Fowler Store. All this during his courting days in the mid-1860's. Their romance, sans the family feud, was as intense as that of Romeo and Juliet.

## Wills Saint Claire Motor Car

In these days of drag-strip racing, old-time car buffs, and those who just plain like to tinker with the "innards" of the still awesome motor vehicle, we would like to call to mind the year 1921 and an early hill-climber of the Tri-State called the Wills Saint Claire Motor Car.

Every hear of it? Possibly not, but it had features that might make the reader's eyes but out a bit...like a V-type, or V-8 motor, either side of which could be run INDEPENDENTLY, 65-horsepower brake test, overhead valves, and overhead camshaft, driven by bevel spiral gears and pinions. No chains were used, as common in such early-day models.

The ad copy on this gem of the '20's mentions: "A single steadying or braking device creates a new silence in motor operation and makes possible the use of this superior form of construction, at the same time insuring wonderfully smooth, noiseless performance."

Sounds great, doesn't it?

Then there was the motor fan release on the Wills Saint Claire. The fan clutch automatically released when the speed necessary to properly perform its cooling function was reached. This made a tremendous saving in horsepower, according to the engineers at Marysville, Michigan, the city that housed the Wills factory.

C. Harold Wills had developed the use of a new type of steel for motor car construction - one with a trick name for the times - Molybdenum. And a great deal of space in the Will's car ad was given to telling of the entire automotive industry looking forward with lively interest to the "announcement of the first all mo-lyb-den-um Steel Motor Car."

The name of the firm supplying the steel for this unique car was the Climax Molybdenum Co., NY.

This then, was the Wills Saint Claire - years ahead of many innovations you might have thoughts came with the 1960's.

Other cars that traversed the hills and dales of the Tri-State during these teen-age days of the auto, were the Chalmers, made by the Chalmers Motor Co., Detroit, Michigan, the Paige Motor Car and truck, made by the Paige-Detroit Motor Car Co., Detroit, the Marmon 34, made by Nordyke and Marmon, with their factory at Indianapolis, IN.

Others included the Velie, made by Velie Motors Corp. of Moline, IL, the Haynes, made by the Haynes Automobile Co., Kokomo, IN, and of course the well-publicized Maxwell, assembled at Dayton, OH.

Also coming in for mention was the Reo, made by the Reo Motor Car Co., at Lansing, Michigan, the Gardner, of Gardner Motor Co., St. Louis, (Could this possibly have been the same Russell Gardner of Banner Buggy fame?); the Auburn, with a model called the Beauty-Six, which left Auburn, IN, with, perhaps, a Tri-State destination.

Winding up the list was the Jordan, a Cleveland product of the Jordan Motor Co.; the LaFayette of Mars Hill, Indianapolis, and the Moon of St. Louis, all experiencing the mud and dust of early-day Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia roadways.

And of course, all motorists of that day were familiar with the smiling face of cigar-smoking, rubber-burning Barney Oldfield, the master driver, beaming at them from roadside billboards telling of the famous Oldfield Tire, made at Akron, OH.

Best gimmick advertised in those times, was the Automatic Steam Carburetor, which mixed live steam with the hot exhaust gases and gave you less carbon and more miles to the gallon. This was an "extra" and did not come with standard equipment.

And when was the last time you did the daring stunt of riding on the "running board", at 20 miles an hour?

## Zane Grey: Dentist Turned Author

Every schoolboy is familiar with Zane Grey (or should be), one of America's most popular novelists, but few people know that he started out as a dentist before turning to a writing career.

His works dealt with the colorful and romantic American west.

Today the novelists's first dental tools are on display at Bethany College. The instruments, made of pearl and inlaid with pure gold, silver and fine steel, were a recent gift to Bethany by a Dr. Curtis J. Thomas, of Cleveland, Ohio.

Zane Grey was born in Zanesville, Ohio, in 1875, and passed away in 1939. He had studied dentistry at the University of Pennsylvania and struggled hard to establish a practice in New York from 1898 to 1904. But his heart was in writing and he finally gave up the boring business of "tooth-pullin'" to write his first novel.

Since Grey was intensely interested in the Indian wars of the Wheeling area, his first effort concerned the exploits of Betty Zane, heroine of the famous siege on Fort Henry.

No one wanted to publish his book, so Zane Grey published it himself. In 1912, Harper Brothers agreed to publish his now famous "Riders of the Purple Sage," and with this, Grey found literary success.

"Riders" was his fourth novel and rolled up a sale of a million copies, with a later figure of 800,000 reprints. All in all, Zane Grey produced some 60 works, many of which found their way to the script departments of Hollywood movie lots.

Zane Grey was the son of Lewis Grey, an Ohio back-woodsman, farmer, preacher and doctor. His mother was Alice Zane Grey, a descendant of Col. Ebenezer Zane, a Quaker exiled to America with William Penn in 1682. It is said that the Zanes were of Danish origin, having emigrated to France, then England, before arriving here.

When the dental tools were given to Bethany, Dr. Thomas said: "Due to Zane Grey's writings on old Fort Henry, McColloch's Leap, and Betty Zane, I can think of no better place for these antiques than Bethany College."

Zane Grey's first book, "Betty Zane," had covered a great deal of Wheeling history. Somewhat in the style of James Fenimore Cooper, it combined romance with history.

Perhaps Zane Grey got his "western touch" from a study of McColloch's Leap. Or at least an inspiration. Today there is a marker on Wheeling Hill telling of the feat. And we often wonder if a Hollywood stunt man might look over the scene and ponder on how it was done. To some it sounds like a legend. If McColloch really did not this, then he outrode Wm. S. Hart, Tom Mix and Hoot Gibson, those great horsemen of the silent screen.

The McColloch Leap incident was triggered off by Major Sam McColloch coming to the relief of besieged Fort Henry in 1777. He had ridden over from Fort Van Meter to help out, along with about 40 men. When the gate of the fort was thrown open to admit the relief party, McColloch was somehow shut out. He then galloped his horse up Wheeling Hill but soon found that he was cut off on three sides by Indians; with only the steep descent to Wheeling Creek as an escape route. Some accounts claim that the



descent was 300 feet; others that it was only 150. So perhaps shouting something akin to "Geronimo!" Major Sam put spurs to his horse and jumped into history.

Several historians have put it down as more of a "slide" than a leap. Mac may have sent the brakes on 'Ole Paint and let 'er coast down.

Then along came Zane Grey and those wonderful stories of the adventurous west; like "The Spirit of the Border," "The Last of the Plainsmen," "The Long Star Ranger," "Sunset Pass," "West of the Pecos" and many others.

The dental tools used by Zane Grey will be on permanent display in the Campbell Room of the T. W. Phillips Memorial Library on the Bethany campus.

***Part II***

***The  
West-Sylvania  
Corner***

## Bethany College Professor Keeps Circus Lore Alive

Down at Bethany College there is one of the faculty who is listed as a member of the Department of Chemistry. This is Prof. J.D. Draper, and despite the vision of symbols and formulas that may be conjured up by the position, Mr. Draper has an interesting sideline away from the classroom.

This interest is one that appeals to all in the Tri-State, since it deals with the old days of the carnivals and tent shows that at one time dotted vacant fields of summer in the area.

Back in the mid-50's, the great road show, called the Ringling Bros., Barnum and Bailey Circus, folded its tents for the last time at Heidelberg, PA, and silently stole away into the halls of posterity. The days of the big outdoor spread were no more. From then on the circus kept to the larger cities and their indoor arenas. Mr. Draper has kept alive memories of such tent shows with his unique avocation of researching circus lore.

For instance, on a recent visit to the Drover's Inn, Washington Pike, Brooke County, WV, Mr. Draper's eye was taken by the old circus posters pasted up on the ceiling of the garret in the old Fowler Mansion, the former name for the Drover's Inn.

These colorful show bills of the past advertised such exhibitions as the "Great Inter-Ocean Show" that played Steubenville in 1880. The show had a playdate of Monday, October 4. This display featured 40,000 yards of "patented French water-proofed pavilions," and new-fangled electric light (developed by Edison in 1879), Victorela and Cordella, champion trapezists; Louisa Brown, the American Queen of the Side Saddle, and Luke Rivers, the Great Equestrian Comedian.

When the Adam Forepaugh Zoological and Equestrian Aggregation played Steubenville, Friday, October 22, 1880, it billed Zuila and the French Aerialists, crossing a high wire with their feet encased in baskets. The show had 15 trained elephants and Zuila did a single riding a velocipede on a slender wire 100 feet in mid-air. Again the "wonderful" electric light was featured, along with the "world's only living hippo." The show contained 1500 wild beasts, 100 peerless performers and was called the "Largest and Best Show On Earth!" Weren't they all? And all this for 50 cents admission. Kids, 25 cents. This great extravaganza played in the city of Washington, PA, October 23, 1880. It came directly from Steubenville to close the season here.

Then in both Wellsburg and Steubenville, May 13 and 14, 1884, John Robinson's "Oldest Circus and Menagerie On Earth" had a display featuring a school of trained animals, a calisthenic exhibition, an Aviary, a Museum, Bicyclists, Skaters, Olympic games and a Dramatic entertainment center. A member of the troupe called Zenobia was hurled 200 feet by a catapult and the show gave heavy billing to the 2 (count 'em) steam organs or calliopes.

Remember going to the side show and listening to the "barker," or "talker?" Of course, the circus and carny people did not like the speaker being referred to as the "barker." In the parlance of the tent show he was always the "talker" or "spieler."

The talk, or "pitch" was usually known as the "spiel," hence the term mentioned above. The crowd of interested spectators standing in front of the showman was known as the "tip." To "turn the tip" was to end the spiel in such a manner that the crowd would rush up to the ticket booth and put down their money. Now "turning the tip" or getting the crowd to rush up for tickets, was a delicate and difficult art. And sometimes the rush was helped by a "shill."

A "shill" was a person who stood back on the edge of the "tip," or audience, and waited for the "talker" to come to the end of his act. When the "talker" asked who would be the first to buy a ticket, the "shill" pushed through the crowd, calling out that he wanted a ticket.

The name "shill" was originated by an actual circus man named John Schill. He was a German performer who had worked with many European circus groups, and he possessed a clear, strong voice that could be heard above the hub-bub of the crowd in front of the "talker." John Schill was a very friendly man and all show business. He was interested in helping his fellow showmen in any way possible. If he happened to pass a "talker" on the grounds who was about to turn the tip, he would stand back of the crowd and at the right moment call out in his loud voice "I'll buy a ticket!" Then he would push through the crowd and put his hand on the ticket seller's window as if to give him money, and dash into the tent. Schill would often come out of the tent show just as the talker was about to turn another tip, and in his human PA system voice, he would call out to all, "That sure was a good show." If John Schill happened to be elsewhere when a tip was turned, one of the carnival or circus workers would "shill in;" and thus was born the term "shill."

There are many bits of jargon other than "shill" that were colorful and which have long been silent in the Tri-State. The "Mitt Camp" was a palm-reader's tent. A "grab joint" was any concession that sold something to eat, all ready to go. This was devised so that a performer or worker could pay his money, grab the item, and go on his way.

When the carnival or circus folks "worked an act strong," they presented it in such a way as to make it believable. They tried hard to conceal the "gimmick" or "gaff," that is, the trick.

A "blow-off" in a circus was any show that followed the main show. Thus the term to "catch the blow-off" meant to sell something to the people who were leaving the main show, or to get them into another tent.

And "hey, Rube!" was not a country term for a rustic. It meant a fight on the lot. It was not used to start a fight, as many believe, but was a term given to any disturbance that had occurred on the lot.

They were all great days and Prof. Draper and his knowledge of the past glory of tent shows in the Tri-State would be a welcome adjunct to the speaker list of any service club or society that might be interested in booking his talent this coming year. He may be contacted at Bethany College, Bethany, WV.

And how did the old posters get up in the garret of the Drover's Inn? The advance man for the show would stop off here over-night on his way to the Ohio Valley, and being a good showman, couldn't resist "pasting" a one-sheet on the ceiling!

We are happy that he did.

## Bradford House - Dr. John Scott

We have a feeling that when the restored Bradford House on South Main Street is open to the public at the completion of the work, a great many of the area's residents will exclaim: "Why didn't we have this sooner?"

With the recent upsurge in antique-browsing in the county, visitors to the Bradford dwelling will be very much pleased with the period atmosphere.

And the resurrected bit of Whiskey Rebellion history might well be the key to the future restoration of other historic sites.

In an era when the "head-ache" ball of the razing contractor is having such a field day, the picture of the Bradford House, alive and bright, is very refreshing.

We noticed that the building is flanked by a state liquor store on the lower side, while a tavern takes the upper side of the street in the matter of neighbors. And we wondered what David Bradford, former tenant of the house, might think of the tax money collected in 1965, right next door, as compared with the tax on the popular "home-grown" product of 1794, were he around today.

An interesting item concerning those hectic days of homemade spirits was found by the writer in an old volume written by a minister of the times following the Rebellion against the tax...this was one Reverend John Scott, D.D., who had spent much time in the area of Eldersville and Jefferson Township.

Dr. Scott, whose history of the times from 1820 until 1893, reads somewhat like the celebrated "Notes" of early minister, Rev. Joseph Doddridge, had this to say on the "spirits" of the period:

"The young people generally had a good time in social enjoyment, and I dare say they derived more real pleasure from those gatherings than is now (1893) enjoyed at fashionable and expensive parties.

"At nearly all of those gatherings liquor was supplied, and most persons drank, and yet there was not perhaps a greater amount of drunkenness then than now. But then they drank pure whiskey. It was not like the adulterated, poisonous stuff that is used now. Of course, the quality of liquor was not a justification of its use, but it presented the effects of its use from being so injurious. Liquor was kept in most families, and men could not be obtained to assist in the harvest and at other kinds of work without it."

Such were Dr. Scott's observations on the use of distilled spirits in early times...his recorded history of 50 years in the Methodist ministry is an extremely accurate account of people and places in the northern part of the county. A copy of this book is in possession of Albert Miller of Bancroft Farm, Jefferson Township.

And while on the subject of the restoration of the Bradford House, we must mention a recent item on the salvage of such above-ground landmarks, which appeared in a Pittsburgh newspaper recently.

The Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation will launch a year-long survey to compile an architectural landmarks registry of Allegheny County under a \$30,000 grant from the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Fund.

It is said that such a registry will be an invaluable aid to planners as well as historians. Suggestions on structures to be considered for the registry should be sent to the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, Triangle Building, Downtown Pittsburgh.

## Burgettstown - Canonsburg

The recent news item on the subject of a new industrial plant, to be placed on a reclaimed strip mine tract in the Burgettstown area, gives rise to the little-known fact that James H. Hillman, coal operator, pioneered in this type of valuable restoration of mined-out coal areas as far back as the early 1940's.

One of his first projects in this direction was the establishment of Burgettstown Park, a summer haven for many in the entire Panhandle Valley.

Long before the State of Pennsylvania took cognizance of the need for land salvage, Hillman was working on such a plan as that which gave the Burgettstown community its Phoenix of recreation arising from the debris of a strip mine operation.

The new industrial plan, part of the Union Electric Company, of Allegheny County, is also to be situated on a "restored" bit of former coal acreage between Florence and Burgettstown.

A fine ending to Hillman's dream of a working "stewardship of the land," which statement can best be defined by another pioneer in the field of strip land reclamation, Albert Miller, when he says... "This means leaving the land given to you in better condition than when you received it."

So be it. The Burgettstown community and environs can well do with the additional industry and we hope that more concerns follow Union Electric Company's move.

Founded by George Burgett, the town was laid out one mile north of the center of Smith Township, February 8, 1795. Previous to this, some time between the years 1773 and 1780, Sebastian Burgett built a mill on a branch of Raccoon Creek at the site where a recent flour mill stood.

Of course, there was a fort, called Burgett's Fort and it stood near the Burgett house and mill.

Originally the town was called West Boston. One of its greatest claims to fame was the establishment of the old Burgettstown Fair.

This annual event, initially held under the name of the Union Agricultural Association, was begun in the year 1856. All of Western Pennsylvania attended the Fair and old-timers still recall the hectic days of harness racing that marked the dusty autumn days in it's oval.

Today a lumber dealer's wares cover the site of the old fairgrounds.

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Not long ago we receive an inquiry concerning the age of an old business establishment in Canonsburg.

It seems that a reader of the West-Sylvania column, Miss Fannie Machek, of McDonald RD 4, was puzzled by the lettering of an old gallon crock that had been in her possession for some time.

The antique container was labeled "McPeake Brothers, Checkered Front, Fancy Grocers, Cannonsburg, PA." So it seemed that the old enigma of the two "N's" in Canonsburg had cropped up again.

A call to Dr. Jim Herron, well-known veterinarian and historian of the Canonsburg area, and friend of both man and beast in a wide range of Washington County countryside, led to the disclosure that the McPeake store mentioned in Miss Machek's note had been located on North Central avenue, on the east side of the street, and its term of business had spanned the years 1887 to 1889.

Shortly after our conversation with Jim, who also mentioned the fact that the wandering "N", like the elusive "H" in the spelling of Pittsburgh, had appeared several times in Canonsburg history...we received a card from a roofer in the Noblestown area, telling of another instance of the double "N".

This small business card, found in the remodeling of a store along West Pike street, had the following imprinted upon it: "Eagle Clothing House. All Goods Made To Order, Fine Goods A Specialty. A.M. Forsyth, Cannonsburg, PA."

So there it is, like a receding and approaching wave, the double "N" keeps recurring in Canonsburg's long history.

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Sunday, February 7, will see Del Miller installed as the Sportsman of the year, at a banquet held by the Dapper Dan group of Pittsburgh, PA.

In selecting Miller as the recipient of the honor, the Dapper Danners get a triple threat man to grace their dias. Not only is Delvin an outstanding figure behind the reins of a trotter or pacer, sports-wise, but he is also a champion in the field of breeding and training. Then too, there is his role as a top conservationist in connection with brother Albert's Meadowcroft Camp for Scouts and nature buffs. If there is a "stewardship" in the art of animal husbandry, then Delvin has certainly proved it successful in his operation and guidance of Meadow Lands Farm. It couldn't happen to a more deserving guy.



## Cabins and Hotels

Have you ever noticed the "outer limits" atmosphere of a strip shovel at work? It's monstrous action controlled by a seemingly minuscule operator, and the "moon scape" look of the land piled up either side?

Then you pass a local horse breeding farm and see the sleek silhouette's of the fine animals outlined against the Autumn sky - quite a contrast.

And you wonder what artifacts of a pioneer's cabin and what resting place of a once might Indian warrior have been disturbed by the machines cavernous jaws. As we drive by one of these disemboweling operations, we are chagrined by just the above, and we know that somewhere in that gob pile lies a bit of the disturbed past.

Like the Indian skeleton we viewed a few years back, just outside the borough of Bridgeville. This young brave was interred about the year 1400, and although not unearthed by a strip mining scoop, had been brought to the light of our time by the need for a builder's cess-pool opening.

The bones of the long-deceased early American were straight and firm - endowed with a patina of light brown hue. The teeth, all 32 of them, had fallen from their jaw sockets and were in perfect condition. Not a flaw, not a cavity in their structure. They might have made an excellent set of dentures for a later Twentieth Century Citizen.

Alas, Poor Yorick of the Leafy wilds, there is no one in the West-Sylvania corner today who knew you well...you left no volumes, no written word of your sojourn here. Just conjecture, and a submerged rock somewhere along the banks of the Chartiers, filled with crude pictured events that highlighted your short life.

A local mystery, less gruesome, is one that concerns the many misspelled directional signs along roads that lead to Canonsburg (note the spelling) from the northern portion of the county.

Here the words, "Cannonsburg - 2 Miles", greet the puzzled motorist. how did it happen? Perhaps the error is part of a promotional scheme to give Canonsburg an appellation of "Gun Town"...We hope not, and we also hope that more will be written on the fine past of Col. Canon, the founder of the town and thus enlighten those who were misled in the spelling.

Again in the Chartiers Valley area - did you know that Adios, the famed Taut of the Meadowlands Farm, commands a stud fee of \$15,000? This month's edition of Hoof Beats Magazine, a publication devoted to the harness horse and those who breed such fine animals, mentions the fact in an advertisement of the Hanover Shoe Farms, of Hanover, PA.

Hanover is part of the syndicate that now owns Adios, and the knowledge that such an animal thrives well in the environment of Washington County, points to our being a future Blue Grass region. We certainly must have a favorable climate for such husbandry, when we can produce the most valuable harness pacer in the world...Look for more rural farms to adopt horse breeding in the West-Sylvania Corner.

Uptown in Washington, the old Auld Hotel is fast disappearing from the local scene. And in the midst of the throes the similar fate that overtook the Monongahela House, that once overlooked the busy wharf at Pittsburgh.

In the heyday of the steamboat on the Mon, the Monongahela House was a busy place...here, too, like the Auld Hotel, were many famous personages at one time or another. President Lincoln once stopped here, and for years afterward the bedroom he occupied was the center of the establishment's glamour. Too bad both hostelries could not have been preserved.

Truly, a grand portion of Washington County's past tumbles down along with the bricks and mortar that made up one of the most famous stops on the old National Pike - the Jackson Hotel or Auld House. It was formerly called Jackson in honor of that great general's visit in 1825.

## Cecil Township and Others

Cecil Township, in the northern portion of Washington County, was the third of the original townships formed in the area July 15, 1781.

One of the foremost and earliest settlers of the region was the McConnell family. The McConnells, a Scotch-Irish group seeking the liberties of a new country, came to Cecil in 1783. The homestead and barn of this family still stand, and may be seen today on the outskirts of Muse.

One of the McConnell's descendants, Irk McConnell, continues residence in the old stone dwelling, and is an enthusiastic historian of the family's pioneer days in the Cecil area.

Irk is well-known to county residents, being the county representative for the State Agriculture Department's feed and fertilizer division.

Proud, too, he is of every time-weathered log in the old barn and each and every stone in the family home - they all have a story to tell of the hewing out of an early civilization by Irk's forefathers, Matthew and Alexander McConnell. Irk is a direct descendent of Alexander McConnell.

Talk to Irk about the ancient barn, born in the hectic days of the Whiskey Rebellion, and you will agree that it is the oldest in Western Pennsylvania. Then listen to him tell of the dilemma he has concerning the continued use of the house and barn:

"I would like to reconstruct it; it was built in 1805," Irk muses, "but the cost will be prohibitive. It's a shame such a structure must leave the Washington County scene and not be preserved." Irk looked up at the roof on the old stone house, which was reputedly designed by the man who did the same type of work for General Washington at Valley Forge.

"See those shingles? Each and every one was cut by hand, and today they still keep the elements from the present family of McConnells. Such workmanship is rare today."

The shingles are indeed interesting - the peep out from under the overlapping later covering which has long since deteriorated and seen to mock the recent work's lack of longevity.

Inside the barn may be seen massive and bark-covered timbers, hewn with a hand tool and still as strong as the day they were erected.

Overhead in the barn, Irk pointed out a crude wooden track, similar to those used today for an overhead crane. It is entirely of wood, including the pulley, and still works well for hauling up heavy material. Down in a shed alongside the barn is an ancient treadmill device - Irk gave us a quiz on what we thought it might be and, not being able to guess, we finally gave up. McConnell told us it was a "dog-powered" churn - the canine member of the pioneer family using all four feet to generate "one dog power" and help out with the family chores!

All in all, Cecil Township has many items of interest for those who like to recall Washington County history. The area was the center of George Washington's visit in 1784 to reclaim his vast land holdings along the Miller's Run stream.

Irk's concern over the preservation of the two structures is not a new one. Many residents of Western Pennsylvania are perplexed by the same problem. McConnell has talked with state officials concerning the buildings, but since they are of no major historical value, like a home where George Washington slept or perhaps something of national interest, he was given a negative reply.

Garrett Hunter of West Alexander had much the same problem in approaching groups needed to restore the old Toll House that stood on his land until recently. Finally, he had no recourse but to raze the structure, although reluctantly.

Pennsylvania at present has a major drive on to promote the many things that will result in a lucrative tourist business. Recently a district newspaper mentioned a \$2 billion dollar source of revenue this summer due to visitors stopping off in the state on their way to the New York World's Fair.

However, when it comes down to hard, cold cash to restore some of the area's fine and worthy objects, it is usually left up to private individuals or private enterprise to take the major step.

The Century Inn at Scenery Hill on historic Route 40 is a fine example of a private individual's interest in preservation, being the product of the efforts of Dr. Gordon Harrington.

And in the Cross Creek - Avella area, Albert and Delvin Miller have combined their efforts in producing a fine multi-purpose tourist attraction. This is Meadowcroft, a haven for those who enjoy the nostalgia of the past and a chance to recapture the basic sense of values inherent in nature study and conservation of our land.

When completed, Meadowcroft will be a delight for many out-of-state visitors.

There is much to be done to expose the fine items of tourist attraction that exist in the West-Sylvania section. For too long now our facets of history and interest have been lying dormant, and in the interim many buildings that might have otherwise been salvaged, have been lost.

Today, the Bradford House at Washington is well on the way to being preserved for posterity. In the future it is hoped there will be more such restorations, as the general public is aroused to the value of preserving essential parts of America's glorious past.

Make it a point to visit Irk McConnell's barn and stone house this fall. From Washington take Route 18 north, then turn east on Route 50 through Hickory until you come to the bridge at Bishop. The bridge leads into Muse and just before you come to the tunnel under the Montour Railroad, turn left up a country "red dog" road to the farm.

## Cock Fights at Simpson Farm

Back in November of 1893 things were jumping in the Tri-State area; like the big cock fight raid in Ross Township, Allegheny County. Here, anti-cruelty agents corralled some 300 cock-fighting enthusiasts and put a stop to one of the biggest events ever scheduled for followers of the pit sport.

The huge rooster contest was brought to an unexpected close on Wednesday evening, November 29, 1893, by the appearance of the officers of the Anti-Cruelty Society. The big "fight," in which Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia cock owners were extremely interested was to have come off earlier than scheduled, but in some way the leaders of the affair learned that the anti-cruelty boys were on the way, and thought they would steal a march by holding the main event a day sooner than advertised.

But secretary Dorente of the society was watching the developments and was ready to attend the moment the fight got under way. Those who went with him to stop the affair were Agents Fisher and Kunz, Constables Tanner, Dickson and Beck, along with Fred Dorente and Charles Tanner.

The "posse" met in a livery stable in Millvale, and after a long wait to allow the fight to get well under way, they started off in an open wagon. No more miserable night could have been chosen for the raid. Scarcely had the party left the stable when a cold, driving rain broke over them and, in a short time, everyone was thoroughly drenched.

On the way to the pit a dozen carriages passed the wagon, most of the occupants stopping to ask the way to the "big chicken derby." Of course, the officers, hoping to make the raid as big a success as possible, told them of the proper course.

When the party neared the place they were met by an outpost, or sentry. This man waved the officers on, thinking they were part of the regular clientele.

Arriving at the scene of the fight, the party left the wagon and went up to the house, where they were met by a sentinel with a lantern who carefully examined each one, but not recognizing the Society men. He finally said: "I guess you boys are all right," and passed them into the house.

The party went through to the cock pit, which was located in the rear, where tickets were presented, and those of the party who wished entered; the balance was being stationed on the outside to guard the exits.

The pit was located on the old Simpson Farm in Ross Township, on Evergreen Road, and was three miles from Millvale. "Rube" Koppes was manager of the place, and this was the first which had been held in his pit. Koppes had just finished building the arena and expected a big turnout. The house was a square frame type, and accommodated about 500 people.

All the officers but Beck went in and their presence was not noticed at first. A rooster from Pittsburgh and one from Jeannette were doing battle in the ring and three or four hundred people sat about the pit.

Ten minutes later Constable Beck made his entrance. Loud and angry voices greeted him, as many of the fans recognized him. Things got so bad that Beck drew his gun and let go with his police whistle.

This was the signal for quick action, and a second later a yell went up that shook the sleepy echoes of Evergreen Road. Men tried to crawl through windows. Some were successful, while others were pulled

down from the openings. The door on the east side of the pit was headed for , but Oscar Tanner blocked the way.

During the fracas, a shot was heard outside, but an investigation showed that one of the spectators had shot another, thinking he was firing at one of the anti-cruelty men. After the shooting, the crowd got quieter and they were held prisoner until the officers had jotted down all the names.

The list was long and in some cases, pretentious. Men from all walks of life and professions were present, and they were all scared. The cocks were confiscated by Mr. Dorente, during which time all hands had congregated around the bar, and from here could be heard an occasional flaring up of the fight.

By midnight, the cock fight, which had turned into a "people" fight, and which was to have run into daylight, was at an end, and a more sorrowful looking set of sports were never seen. With the dawn and an empty bar, the liberating of the crowd was finally settled upon by the agreement of a well-known young professional man who was to give the Society a list of all the people who had attended.

# Conservation

Last Sunday afternoon the writer and family took the usual weekend drive into the depths of Washington County.

We wound up just outside West Alexander, high on a hill dominated by the four obelisks of a private cemetery, and marking the graves of the frontier members of the Hupp family, hardy group of people who helped tame the Western Pennsylvania outposts bordering Buffalo Creek.

Later down a country lane we spotted a red deer, still and as picturesque as a lawn ornament of wrought iron. Further on, we saw the pioneer home of the Huff family and the fine fishing afforded West-Sylvania citizens at the popular Dutch Fork Lake.

All of such pastoral beauty bringing to mind the recent meeting held in Washington, PA on the up and coming Appalachia program to help conserve our fine rural acres for posterity - at least, some of them.

Now all of these programs, despite a slight bumping together and a play on semantics here and there, are very fine and launched with sincere interest, but as to any of them getting off the ground in time to effectively combat the rising population explosion, it will be some years yet before anything resembling concrete action is taken. Urban Renewal in some areas, has been dragging its feet in the wake of private enterprise in the matter of goals, and we hope that conservation of our resources and acres does not meet the same fate.

A number of these programs cannot be openly publicized, as the resultant exposure would cause land speculation and a tripling of prices for available acres.

As a result, promoters of such programs are between the devil and the deep blue sea...to sell or not to sell the program too strongly to a dollar-minded public.

The Saturday Review of May 22, 1965, carried a very fine and graphic story by Wallace Stegner on the subject of the urgent need now for the conservation of our natural resources and available acres. Entitled "Whatever Happened To The Great Outdoors," it carried more impact than the lurid stories of the 1920's concerning the coming of Doomsday. We quote Mr. Stegner:

"Edward Hyams defines the human race as a disease of the soil, and sees its future as identical with that of a colony of bacteria planted in a dish of sugar. When it reaches the edge of the dish it must either die of starvation; or strangle in its own wastes. As we are getting ever closer to the edge of the dish.

"According to the projections of demographs, the present world population of 3.3 billion will double by 2000 A.D. Then the agar dish will have to harbor two New Yorks, instead of one, two Londons, two Tokyos, two Calcuttas, two Hong Kongs, one more of every existing human congregation. There will be double the highways and freeways to link them, double the combustion, double the air pollution and water contamination, half the elbow room, a shrunken area of crop land that will have to be more and more intensively mined, a limited amount of park land and open space trampled flat by millions wanting to smell new-mown grass or show the kids a squirrel.

"This will be in the lifetime of some of us, in the lifetime of all our children, but it is difficult for the imagination to grasp it. The projection for the year 2150 A.D., which indicates a world population of

150 billion, is simply inconceivable. Nearly fifty times as many people and social problems as we have now!

"It will no longer be human life; it will be a termite life, if indeed it is possible at all. One suspects that long before then our exaggerated competition for dwindling resources and living space will have driven us into the war that will spare us any future whatsoever."

Thus, Mr. Stegner muses on the fate of mankind sans the heritage of Adam...even the tempting Apple of Eve may be a museum piece in the next century.

The author of the above may have even gone further and mentioned the eventual possibility of the acceptance of genocide, or who shall live and who shall die...a definitely un-Christian end to a fine old world. Man cannot afford physical immortality, his planet is just so many miles square and like his fellow tenants, the animals, he must learn to live within his God-given domain.

Albert Miller, one of the area's top conservationists in the realm of definite action by way of his Meadowcroft and the replanting of strip acres in Jefferson Township, is one of the few men who has aptly put his finger on the description of the need, when he says:

"Conservation of the land for future use by future generations is merely giving Biblical action to the well-known 'Stewardship of the land' with which many Christians are acquainted."

And we firmly believe that conservation should be spoken of from every pulpit in the area...it is as important as any facet of religion to the survival of Christian principles in a troubled world.



## Continental Tobacco Catalog - 1902

The other day we ran across a gift catalogue put out in the tri-state area by a nationally famous tobacco firm. After all, it is the age of trading stamps and gasoline give-aways - listen a bit, and see how grandpa fared with the old tin "chaw" stickers and a 1902 catalogue.

This little book, of the turn of the century, was issued by the old Continental Tobacco Co. which, we believe, operated out of St. Louis, MO. It was a good year for premium giveaways and gifts ranged from a match box for 25 tags to an upright piano for a total of 40,000.

Other premiums were phonographs, penknives, handbags, baseballs, baby carriages, clocks and jewelry.

Brands of tobacco, which were mostly chewing items, were as follows: "Star," "Horseshoe," "Standard Navy," "Spearhead," "Drummond," "Natural Leaf," "Good Luck," "Piper-Heidsieck," "Boot Jack," "Nobby Spun Roll," "J.T." "Old Honesty," "Master Workman," and many others.

Paper bands from "Floradora" cigars and Trade-Mark stickers for smoking tobacco also came in for value.

One item for the mere acquisition of 650 tags was a complete carpenter's tool chest, filled with first quality tools. Rifles and pistols, too, were available to the heavy users of the twist.

Not stopping here, the Continental Co. gave the addict a fine range of reading material subscriptions. Such as The Scientific American, The Breeders Gazette, American Stock Farm, Homestead Magazine and Cosmopolitan.

Bicycles were available for a mere 2,500 tags. Fishing tackle, the old premium standby, was also profuse.

A fine family buggy was described as being extra high-grade with No. 1 machine buffed leather top and cushioned front and back. Seven-eighths AA Grade selected hickory wheels, and strictly first-class throughout. It came with either wide or narrow track wheel width. This gem of transportation required a collection of 10,000 purchases. Even a sore jaw from chewing was worth this.

Another wheeled mobile item that went for 13,000 tags was also listed as "high-grade." This was a family surrey, complete with shafts or pole. It was well made and handsomely finished, with 1-inch wheels, and either leather or broadcloth cushions and backs. This, too, came with either a wide or narrow track.

Most elaborate gift of all was the "Crown" upright piano. For the man who really liked his tobacco, a treasure trove of 40,000 tags put this music maker into his front parlor.

This was a style G.G. Orchestra Grand. Done up in fancy mahogany; double veneer, 7 1/3 octaves; three string unisons; over strung scale; ivory keys; full iron frame; heights, 58"; length 66"; depth 28". And probably took ten men and a boy to move it.

With the Grand Piano you could produce the tones of various instruments, such as the harp, guitar, zither, banjo, autoharp, mandolin, cello and so forth.

Not only were average citizens given the opportunity to enjoy the good things of life, via chewing purchases, but merchants as well. For instance, if you needed a new delivery van for customer orders,

The Phaeton Front Delivery Wagon, with an "advertisement thereon," only came to 30,000 tags. It carried 1,200 pounds of merchandise, and had an inside parcel rack, solid panel doors in the rear, and came in a choice of four colors, neatly striped.

And for a good night's rest after a hard day at the shop, there was the brass bedstead, with bow foot and brass casters, along with patent ball bearings - all for 4,400 tags.

So there you have it - the 1902 version of the trading stamp gimmick. Pshaw! These store fellers today don't know what real premiums are! Like a fire-proof safe, with combination and weighing 600 pounds - and only 3,500 little metal tags - just the thing to keep your green, blue, orange or what-not trading stamps in!

## Cross Creek

Washington County has two colorful "cricks" in its confines - Chartiers Creek and Cross Creek. Chartiers has often come in for much mention as having seen such activity as boatloads of whiskey and flour, sent down its flood crest in the early days, or hearing the name of Mike Fink resound along its tree-shrouded banks.

Cross Creek, however, seldom sees print, name-wise, these days. But its past was just as active and as contributing to the annals of western Pennsylvania history as that of Chartiers. Back in the 1880's James Simpson of Cross Creek Township did much to publicize the area, and one of his highlights of effort was the written record of old Cross Creek Cemetery. This is still an invaluable bit of literature today, and one much sought-after by those who would pierce the veil of the past.

The great times of Cross Creek as an important stream is not confined to the boundaries of present Pennsylvania - much of its history is mentioned in the records of neighboring Brooke County, West Virginia, a portion of the Mountain State through which the twisting, ever-turning artery passes on its way to the Ohio.

The township of Cross Creek, the above-mentioned stream, is located fifteen miles northwest of Washington. The creek itself rises on the borders of HOPewell and Mt. Pleasant Townships, and runs westward to a point of entry into the Ohio, just below Follansbee, West Virginia.

Many grist-mills and sawmills dotted its banks over the years. A great deal of its mill industry saw the Virginia state line a nebulous one, in the days before Mason and Dixon were active.

Timber-cutting was a big item in both the Northern Panhandle of what was then Virginia, and the border area of Pennsylvania. The stream provided power for this purpose, along with that inevitable staple of commerce, the grist-mill.

Forts, of course, were like sore-thumbs sticking up out of the creek-bank wilderness...such as Vance's Fort, about one mile north of Cross Creek, and close by the Smith Township line. Well's was a name much venerated by early settlers of the section, and Well's Fort stood five miles to the west. Wilson's Fort, comprising a stockade, was located at Well's Mill, an ancient operation hidden around one of the many turns of Cross-Creek; perhaps in the Virginia section. Reynolds Fort was named for the owner of the land on which it stood, and Marshall's Fort was named for land-lord, Col. John Marshall.

As usual with the history of any section of western Pennsylvania, religious structures came in for first mention. Cross Creek Presbyterian Church saw its awakening in the service held in many of the forts mentioned above - usually attended by those seeking refuge therein from the Indians and looking for a good prayer to hold off the wrath of the savage. They used to say during World War II, that there were no "atheists" in a fox-hole; perhaps in those uncertain days in a local fort during a siege.

These get-togethers in time of despair resulted in the formation of two societies for religious purposes - one a Richard Well's haven in Virginia, about three and one-half miles from Eldersville, and the other at Vance's Fort, previously mentioned as being one mile north of Cross Creek.

A conversation of over half a dozen people at Vance's Fort, during a frontier service, resulted in a visit to the area by one Rev. James Power, who came west to the settlement and preached the first sermon under an oak tree, in the month of September, 1778.

This caused the settlers to come forward and a total of twenty-one children were baptised as a result of Rev. Power's visit.

In May, 1779, the Church of Cross Creek was organized. The month of June, the same year, saw a meeting with the people of Upper Buffalo, or present Buffalo Village, and the outcome was a call sent out for the services of the Rev. Joseph Smith, one-time pastor in York County, Pennsylvania.

Rev. Smith, thus became the first minister and remained at Cross Creek until his death in April of 1792. His term here saw much of the activity that surrounded the stream of Cross Creek and its mill "industry."

Alexander Wells was one of the community fathers who was engaged in operating a mill and tannery. Wells had settled on Cross Creek in the spring of 1773, arriving here from Maryland, along with the Doddridges, Tennels and other families with a similar name of Wells. His was the first grist-mill in the area and was known far and wide as the busiest spot in the western country. His old log house, erected in or about 1781, stood the test of time for 100 years. In 1881 it was torn down, and the construction gave evidence of the maker's ability to do the job without the use of nails or any modern carpenter device. No "sawed" boards here.

Old Alex Wells was quite a fellow. He owned large tracts of land, much of it in Virginia. Although he could neither read nor write, he could survey land and run lines with a compass. His wife, Leah, helped him with his work and the team prospered. Alexander Wells died December 9, 1813, aged 86 years. His wife, who was such a helpmate in his lack of figures, followed him in death in the year 1815. Both are buried in the old Well's graveyard, just above the site of the former residence.

James Simpson, the historian of Cross Creek Township, was one of the best informed men on the past of the early residents. Most Western Pennsylvania families had some ties with the Cross Creek section, and Simpson's views on their past was much in demand. He spent his leisure moments writing of local and county history. James Simpson had resided on the old home farm from his birth in 1828 until his demise in 1902.

In the spring of 1890 five acres of land were purchased in order to enlarge the old cemetery at Cross Creek. Interments were piling up, and the old graveyard boundaries held too many of the long-gone contributors to the past of Cross Creek. James Simpson and James J.K. Reed decided to do something about it. Later they published *The History of Cross Creek Cemetery* in 1894, and since that time the old graveyard and new addition have always been viewed with the utmost respect by historians and researchers alike. Simpson had kept a record of all visitors to his home and of all interments.

## "Down the Bethany Road"

We hope that a number of West-Sylvania Corner residents read Mr. Ray Knestrick's colorful article in the Observer.

Entitled "Down The Bethany Road," Mr. Knestrick's description of the area involved brings to mind our statement last year in a column concerning a local park: "Today the average citizen is like a man running at a break-neck pace down a beautiful country lane - with eyes fixed on a distant and somewhat nebulous goal, while to either side of him lay the wondrous items of Nature and the commonplace.

"And if the runner would stop but a moment and savor the many simple and underfoot pleasures the bountiful earth had provided at no cost, his progress toward that distant goal would be greatly enhanced."

Well, Mr. Knestrick did just the above - he intensely savored the many often unnoticed gems of color and interest along a rural country lane.

He also mentioned the beauty that exists in the winter-scape of Washington and Greene Counties. And he is so right - for instance, the picture of West Middletown to the onlooker in the dead of winter recalls the lyrics of the popular ballad "Scarlet Ribbons". This tune conjures up a scene of children fast asleep on a past Christmas Eve of the Nineties, with all the streets white with snow and a rise over the picturesque ridge that supports the town.

Then, too, in the winter months, the Roy Thompson "Hallmark Card" type farm and it's outbuildings just below the village give rise to the words of Rogers and Hammerstein's wonderful lyrics from the "Sound of Music". Taken from the number entitled "My Favorite Things", the words in part are as follows:

"Cream colored ponies and crisp apple strudels, doorbells and sleighbells and schnitzel with noodles, wild geese that fly with the moon on their wings, these are a few of my favorite things!"

Next time you go by Roy's place just after a fresh winter snowfall, try humming the words of the above to yourself, and you will find it quite appropriate.

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If you think people are not currently interested in the nostalgia of the good old days of grandmother's time, here is an item that will make you a convert to the art of retrospect.

A large food chain, well-known throughout the West-Sylvania area, recently came out with a line of table and glassware decorated with reproductions of Currier and Ives prints. A "free" gift to encourage shopping, the tumblers and platters are replete with rural sketches and steamboats, and many of the scenes depicted are reminiscent of the back-country Washington County landscape.

All of which means that you can now sip your favorite soft drink thru' the transparency of an old mill scene, or watch your roast brown alongside a decoration of a country barn-yard.

## Duke of Windsor's Rolls Royce

One of the modern day Roman Forums known as a shopping center in the vicinity of Bridgeville had an unusual attraction this past week.

This was a trailer-enclosed Rolls-Royce sports car, said to have belonged to the Duke of Windsor, Prince of Wales and one-time King Edward VIII. The vehicle was reputedly (so the sign said on the outside) worth \$300,000.

Now the Duke used to be big news at one time during the 1920's and early 1930's, and hardly a week went by without the tabloids or large daily papers having a picture or story on the Prince of Wales' doings.

But since the advent of the space age, bigger and more daring stars have taken his place.

We recall seeing him at Newport, Rhode Island, during World War II, a rather small and frail man, close-mouthed and seemingly made to order for the fine Rolls-Royce of 1924 vintage he rode in at the time.

As we recall the incident further, it seems that the shirt-skirted female reporter who was there to cover the story of his visit for a Boston paper caught most of our attention...what with a stiff breeze blowing from Narragansett Bay that day, even from the back, the fair sex member of the Boston press made us wish that we were a member of the Fourth Estate, rather than the U.S. Navy.

Under such circumstances, even the great love of the Duke and Wally did not move us very much.

The exhibition of the sports car of the Duke, who gained a slight comeback in the public eye last year with a rather serious operation, reminded us of the days of one Phineas Taylor Barnum, whose flair for such exhibits gave him the term, "The World's Greatest Showman."

Barnum first exhibited an aged Negress, supposed to have been the nurse of George Washington, then a midget named General Tom Thumb. Following this he captured the cultural element of the times with the Swedish Nightingale, Jenny Lind.

Not stopping here, Barnum next gave the world Jumbo, a giant African elephant, and added the word "Jumbo" to the American language as a means of describing something huge.

In 1871, Barnum organized his circus, and called it the "Greatest Show on Earth". He was born at Bethel, Connecticut, and was at his best as a temperance lecturer.

We wonder what happened to the Duke and his sports car - maybe things got rough and he was forced to hock the old bus.

But there it is today - a 1965 Phineas T. Barnum exhibit to thrill a whole new generation of curiosity-seekers. And if the Duke's chariot comes your way - have fun, and don't forget that granddad shelled out, too, to see a "white elephant" in the days of the one and only P.T. Barnum!!

## Fairgrounds - Iams Building

In some quarters recently there has been considerable talk of a new site for the yearly Washington County Fair.

One of the proposed solutions to the situation is the use of the Meadows Oval and facilities as an answer to the population explosion on fair attendance. Most certainly, the somewhat postage stamp size of the old Arden Fairgrounds cries out for new expansion, but the Meadows suggestion is not too feasible.

First off, there is the fact that the yearly racing dates are not permanent, especially toward the fall end of the season. And it is likely that extended racing days in the next few years will encompass more of the Golden Days of Autumn - thus the Trotting Association officials will have committed themselves into an impasse, if a Fall meet is eventually incorporated.

Altho' this writer was one of the first to propose such a wedding of the fair activities and the Meadows space during last season's exhibition, we do not think it will ever be an actuality.

Best compromise - County Commissioners should look into the possible selection of a tract of land ADJACENT to the Meadows installation, and should fair and racing dates coincide, one will add to the other as a fine fall card of county activities.

Then, too, such adjacency would lend itself to a daylight tour of the Meadows stable area during fair week. This is a portion of the racing plant's area seldom seen by the public.

Here an exodus of farm people from Indiana, Ohio, Kansas and other agricultural belts of the nation "camp out" during the season, and despite it's being a "horse" background, a great deal of farm and dairy views are brought in with the visiting horsemen.

These seven or eight hundred people will also be able to visit our fair.

We have always described the stable area portion of the local track as "the atmosphere of 100 State Fairs." A typical stable entourage consists of the following: Two or perhaps three teenage children; at least two cats, being chased by a collie or a long-legged Dalmatian; one to two fighting roosters, at least one tethered goat (the goat makes the horse feel he is back home in the atmosphere of his own barn - the children help out here, too.) and several camp chairs for those who would like to just sit and talk of the days of fair milk prices and of the old times "back home in Indiana."

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We have often spoken of the individuality of the West-Sylvania native...a trait that has been with us since the days of the famous Whiskey Rebellion.

Now comes a news item concerning a fire in the Iams Building, a 116-year old landmark on Main Street in Waynesburg.

It seems that one of the occupants, Al Harsch, got his hair singed when he insisted on putting on his shoes before leaving the building, despite pleading from volunteer firemen to beat a hasty retreat.

How calm can a guy be in the face of disaster?

## Film of Washington County

Shades of David Wark Griffith and Cecil B. DeMille! A movie is about to be made of the historical background of Washington and Green Counties! The film, a 35 millimeter product, will be made available to out-of-state concerns, such as Chamber of Commerce, educational groups and the various historical societies interested.

Prints of the visual documentary will also be released in the popular 16 millimeter range, and perhaps an edition in the home movie size, 8 millimeter.

As for subject material, there is certainly plenty of it here in the locale, The Whiskey Rebellion, the Old National Road or Route 40 as we know it today, filled with its Conestoga Wagons and "Wagon Masters," the Underground Railroad days of West Middletown, the formative days of Jefferson College before its merger with Washington to form the present day Washington and Jefferson institution...all this combined with just as exciting events in Greene County, will add up to a much-needed visual incentive to do more to preserve our fast-vanishing American heritage.

Information on the progress of the film can be had at the office of the Washington-Greene County Tourist Agency, George Washington Hotel.

Speaking of movies on local subjects, a great many people are not aware of the recent film on harness racing, entitled "The Tattooed Police Horse." This Disney production concerns the antics of a Boston policeman's mount and his career as a trotter.

The reason we mention this is that, despite the labor of love that the Disney Studio put into the epic, a film concerning harness racing and Washington County's own Del Miller would have had more "moxie" in the way of national exposure for both the sulky sport and Western Pennsylvania area in general.

Most certainly the background of Miller's early days at the colorful Burgettstown Fair, and his meteoric rise as the nation's top breeder and horseman, plus the pastoral artistry woven into Meadowlands Farm, would have warmed the cockles of the hearts of many a devotee of the old days of state and county fair harness events.

And if there is such an animal to outdo the fabulous Dan Patch in the matter of equestrian achievement...then Adios would have come in for quite a bit of footage.

But all is not lost yet - some day a talent scout from the San Fernando wilds of Hollywood may wander into Beechie's Place at Meadow Lands - take a gander at the wall photos...one is of Delvin Miller, replete with victorious racing silks and Bing Crosby's smile, and the other that of Canonsburg singer Perry Como - glance out at the National Velvet panorama of Meadow Lands Farm across the way, and say - "This is it! A natural! - Boy Meets Horse, Horse Meets Filly, etc." And what a beautiful bit of theme music Pittsburgh native Henry Mancini could do here, a la "Moon River," with the blending of his French horns amid the scenic hills and valleys of Washington County.

Too far fetched? Well, if you are old enough to remember - how about the popularity of that grand old comic-strip song of the twenties - "Barney Google and his horse, Spark Plug?"



Who says you can't do a best-selling record about a man and his horse?

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The Reader's Digest went all out this month on a special section covering Tourism throughout the nation.

Called "See the U.S.A.," and spearheaded by a fine article from the hand of Harry (only in American) Golden, the segment was woefully lacking in telling of the State of Pennsylvania's many attractions for visitors.

Two remote and deeply hidden items...one on the Kutztown Pennsylvania Dutch Festival, Kutztown, PA, and another on the Valley Forge Shrine were all the Keystone State emerged with.

States such as Mississippi, California, Maryland, Texas, North Carolina and South Dakota took a half-page color ad. Pennsylvania should and could have afforded a similar color pitch on its highlights of national interest such as Independence Hall, Gettysburg, Titusville and Oil City's "boom" days and a host of other stops for the out-of-state visitor.

# Fort Pitt Museum

The most recent addition to the listing of tri-state historical attractions is the Fort Pitt Museum.

Located in Point State Park between the Fort Pitt and Duquesne bridges and across Commonwealth Place from Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, the museum is easily reached from any of the main highways which enter the city.

At one time, the forks of the Ohio were an eighteenth-century magnet attracting Indians, traders, land-hungry promoters, and the colorful armies of Britain and France. So intense was the competition for a foothold on this frontier, that within ten years four successive forts were built on the site. The last one, Fort Pitt, symbolized England's victory and the removal of the French and Indian barrier to westward expansion.

For many years prior to the opening of the new museum, the written story of Fort Pitt and its legions of scoundrels, heroic characters, crafty traders and just plain adventurers was difficult to bring into focus.

Today, a visual story within the museum makes absorption of Point history more comprehensive to history buffs.

In the William Pitt Memorial Hall the visitor sees a large mural and a series of floor mosaics by the American artist, Harry Jackson. In the center of the hall is a model of Fort Pitt, twenty feet in diameter, with a recorded narration heard through individual earphones while small spotlights point out the features as they are discussed. Sixty exhibits in the main entrance area illustrate the early Indian culture in western Pennsylvania, the era of the fur trader, the conflict between England and France for control of the Ohio country, and Pittsburgh as it appeared in 1800. Among the displays are life-size replicas of a fully-stocked trader's cabin, a soldier's barracks room, and an early Pittsburgh "parlor."

As the Chinese reputedly put it: "One picture is worth a thousand words." As such, the Fort Pitt Museum will serve as an adequate center for scholarly study of early western Pennsylvania history.

One of the men who was more than familiar with the name of old Fort Pitt, was General James O'Hara. O'Hara was born in Ireland in 1752. He came to this country in 1772, landing at Philadelphia and entered the service of a firm in that city as an Indian trader. Later on, he came to the western portion of Virginia in this capacity. Eventually he reached Pittsburgh in connection with a farm here called Smith and Douglas. They, too, dealt in Indian trading.

In 1774, he was appointed a government agent among the Indians, and continued in this role until the outbreak of the American Revolution. While thus employed, he made many friends among the Indians, and was not without many hair-breadth escapes from hostile redmen and other dangers more thrilling than those of many a romance.

At the outbreak of the war, James O'Hara enlisted in the Virginia regiment as a private, but was soon promoted to a captaincy, and raised and equipped his own company.

When the war ended, Captain O'Hara married Mary Carson of Philadelphia and took his newly-wedded wife over the mountains in a wagon to the growing community of Pittsburgh. His residence there consisted of a log house, but in it were all the comforts and luxuries of the age, including the elegance of

carpets, then almost unknown in the western country. In 1789, Captain O'Hara, as presidential elector, cast his vote for General George Washington to be first President of the United States.

Later he settled down to devoting his energies to mercantile and industrial pursuits. He was the pioneer in all the industries which have made Pittsburgh great. Glass works, salt transportation from New York State to Fort Pitt, and ship building were among the largest.

O'Hara's ships or "boats," cleared from this inland port to such far-off places as Liverpool, England, South America and the West Indies. In 1805 he built the "General Butler," which sailed for Liverpool, taking a cargo of Pittsburgh glass for down-river ports and picking up a shipment of cotton at New Orleans, using the Ohio as an ever-widening thread of travel until the open sea was reached. The "Betsy," another of his vessels, plied between Baltimore and the West Indies.

A fabulous man, James O'Hara. Somewhere along the line of military action he had picked up the rank of general. But our reference source does not disclose where. Little matter. In his sixty-seven years of life he had seen a frontier won, a nation established and the seeds of a mighty industrial city planted.

When he passed away on December 21, 1819, at his home on Pittsburgh's Water Street, the entire town mourned. It was said that the tears of the rich and poor, the high and the lowly, were as one. Such was the latitude of his popularity.

Which was fitting enough; the town could have been named "O'Harasburgh" instead of Pittsburgh. His industrial vision had been that helpful.

And if there is an open gap in the line of march in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade in the city of Pittsburgh, it might be filled in with a fine float depicting a few of the many highlights of his life. He traced his descent to the ancient Celtic kings of Ulster.

The Fort Pitt Museum is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Visiting hours are 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM; Sunday, noon to 4:30 PM. The museum is closed on certain holidays.

# Friendship Hill

It's mid-summer, and perhaps the echoes of fading Independence Day activities has kindled a desire to visit a bit of Americana.

Like Friendship Hill, just outside of Uniontown.

Friendship Hill is the one-time home of Albert Gallatin, and it was in the early summer season of the nation's life that he flourished. The Gallatin home and its furnishings have been preserved under the supervision of the Friendship Hill Association, New Geneva. The grounds and mansion are something out of a dream - recalling the essence of a Daphne du Maurier novel.

Albert Gallatin was one of the greatest statesmen of his day.

Along with Washington, Jefferson, and other early leaders, he was one of the men who helped weld the colonies into the United States.

A native of Switzerland, Gallatin came to America in 1780. For two years he traveled through New England, eventually wandering down to Richmond, VA. While here he decided to purchase some land in what is now western Pennsylvania, a total of 1,000 acres. In 1786 he built a log cabin and store at the point where George's Creek enters the Monongahela River. Later, the site blossomed into the present quaint hamlet of New Geneva.

After purchasing additional acreage farther up the river, Gallatin began construction of a more substantial home. This site is the one known today as Friendship Hill. The original house, built in 1789, has been added onto over the years. The newer portions were completed in 1823.

It was to the small original structure that Gallatin brought his bride, the young Sophie Allegre. The month was June; the year, 1789. After a few happy months at Friendship Hill, she suddenly died and is buried in an unmarked grave in the woodland, sloping down from the residence to the river. Later, Albert Gallatin married Hannah Nicholson, daughter of Commodore James Nicholson of the Navy.

Friendship Hill was a "mansion of elegance" when visited by the Marquis de LaFayette in May, 1825. The LaFayette Room of the mansion is set apart to his memory and his portrait adorns the wall.

The formal drawing rooms with imported marble mantles, French wallpaper, and mirrors, crystal and brass chandeliers, the state dining-room, the exquisite four-story hanging staircase made from native black walnut, are but a few of the items to appreciate. The rich furnishings are reminders of a period long gone.

To tell all of Friendship Hill would require a great deal more space...but the important thing here in this article is to have more area folk visit this wonderful bit of Americana in our tri-state. In recent years, the name Friendship Hill has seldom been in print; hence we encourage more exposure. Friendship Hill was designated a Registered National Historic Landmark in 1965 by the Secretary of the Interior.

We stopped up at Friendship Hill this past Memorial Day. At 3 PM we had been the only visitors. The day before, the guide told us: "Not too many people in yesterday, about three or four..." Sad, but true. Believe us, Friendship Hill cries out for more visitors.

Before you make the visit, bone up on Albert Gallatin history. First he was a member of the Pennsylvania State Legislature, then a member of Congress. He served as Secretary of the Treasury from 1801 to 1813 under Presidents Jackson and Madison, was Minister to France from 1815 to 1823, and to England from 1826 to 1828. He was well-known, too, for his part in the Treaty of Ghent at the close of the War in 1812.

Make it a point to visit Friendship Hill this summer. Here is how to reach it from Washington. Take Route 40 east to Uniontown. Just inside Uniontown, take Route 119 south to Smithfield. Here turn right down Route 166. This will bring you into New Geneva, the town promoted by Gallatin, and named for Geneva, Switzerland. A mile or so south of town, look for the sign reading "Friendship Hill." Just across the road on the right is the entrance. Directional signs are not too plentiful on the way to Friendship Hill, but the end result will be worth your time.

Cost of a tour is \$1.50 per person, children \$1.00. Don't grumble about the cost for a one-building show; keep in mind that your visit might help promote better road signs and put Friendship Hill more "on the map" of must places to see while in the tri-state. The attraction is open daily from May 1 to November 1, 10 AM to 6 PM.

And dig that crazy forest of huge trees that line the entrance just like it was when Albert Gallatin brought home "The Man Who Came To Dinner," the dashing Marquis de LaFayette.

Have fun, and when you return from Friendship Hill, beat the drums for the area's most fascinating tourist attraction of national mien; it's not crowded these days, but it should be.

## Harry Truax Tales of Hugh Walker

Down near the West Virginia Burgettstown and Colliers, WV, lives a man who is fond of recounting old days in the Tri-State. This is Harry Truax, slightly bent over with the gales of 86 winters but still active doing a little "farmin;" about the "place."

It's rural country out there, in the western corner of Washington County, and Harry has a little spot called home between Harmon Creek and the westward-bound tracks of the Penn Central Railroad; once known as the Panhandle Division of Pennsylvania.

Not too much traffic on the line these days, but Harry recalls when there was a passenger train just about every hour of the day over these rails.

One of Harry's favorite pastimes, between a little plowin' and corn huskin'; is to tell a story or two about his old friends of many years ago; one Hugh Walker. Hugh came from Walker's Mills, just west of Carnegie, PA, and was a sort of Baron Munchausen of his time. Which was about 1890, when the "oil boom" was getting started around McDonald, PA

Here are some of Harry's favorites:

"One time Hugh told the story about Andy Jackson takin' a grist of wheat down to Stubenville to have it ground into flour. Had a good, fast wagon and a good horse. On the way back from the mill, it started in to rain...Andy put the flour up in the front of the wagon bed, and laid the whip to that horse, and when he got home, only the back end of the wagon was wet. Kept ahead of the rain all the way. Faster than a jet plane, was Andy's trip that day!" And Hugh Walker told it with a straight face. Andy Jackson was no relation to "Stonewall" Jackson - 'cause "Stonewall" stood in one place; while this Jackson moved right along!

Then there was the time when Hugh Walker hauled casing for the oil wells in the McDonald area.

"One day, folks saw Hugh sittin' astride a fence along the road between Venice and McDonald. Was taking' a load of casin' into town. Hugh sat there for some time, jist a'crackin' his whip like mad, with nothin' in sight. When asked about the whip, Hugh answered: I'm a'waitin' for those fool mules to come to the surface. They been down in that mud-hole for an hour, now.' Pretty soon those mules hove into sight, shook the mud out of their ears and drug that casin' up out of the hole. Hugh sure could tell some whoppers!

"Another time, Hugh had a horse die on him, out in the barn. Hugh drug that horse out the next morning and skinned him. Next day, that horse was a'standin' in front of the barn door, naked as a jay-bird. Hugh had just pelted about half a dozen sheep, so he put the sheep skins on that horse, and by next season had a hundred pound of wool off'n him."

Hugh used to do a little wheat-growin' too. "One time Hugh sowed some wheat...late in the year. After that he left it alone. When he came down to look at it one day, he threw his hat in on it. To test it. Never made a dent in that wheat. Then he threw in the rake. No dent here either. His boy, Tom, was along; so he threw the boy in...No dent on this one.

"Then Hugh figured that such a STRONG stand of wheat deserved no cuttin', and he left it stand.

"One day, one of Hugh's cows come up with a broken leg. Pretty nearly tore off in an accident. Earlier in the day, Hugh had cut down a sassafras tree. So he took a sassafras limb and grafted it onto the cow in place of the bad leg. A month later the cow was as good as new.

"Only thing was, the milk from that cow tasted like sassafras!"

Ah! That Hugh could sure tell 'em!

Then Harry climbed into a neighbors truck, and when asked where he was going, said: "Jist down to look at some bottom land o'mine...Might need a little work on it, this spring."

86 and still going strong.

That's Harry Truax, out near the West Virginia border. Even when you live a little east of the Mountain State, a fellow takes on a bit of it's color and wonderful, pithy speech.

Great folks, out that way, and Harry Truax is one of 'em.

# Historical Roadside Markers

The Observer of Thursday, Jan. 21, carried a fine story and thought concerning the historical marker for the site of the McGuigin Gas Well near Hickory.

Written by William A. Lindsey, the item pointed up the pressing need for more and comprehensive roadside markers on the West-Sylvania Corner's past. We had met Mr. Lindsey a few years back while doing some research on the old Miller's Run Church and Cemetery not far from the Great McGuigin.

The restoration of Miller's Run Church had been spearheaded by Bill Lindsey, and as a result today's visitor to the tiny house of worship is permitted a fine glimpse into the background of the early heads of Jefferson College...initial presidents are interred in the Miller's Run churchyard, and part of the job was to serve the pioneer church.

Built during Jackson's administration, the tiny kirk is equipped with a guest register, and out-of-state visitors fill the book.

Here, too, a marker is needed to direct tourists to the site...just below Miller's Run Church, are two practically identical markers telling of Washington's visit to the Venice area to investigate the legality of his holdings. Only a few feet apart, it is a complete waste of such signs, when one could do the job, while the other might be placed to advantage in the Miller's Run Church location.

Another needed marker is one to tell of the fabulous days of the Great McVey Well, of McDonald. This well is still pumping today, and bears a crude, hand-lettered sign to denote its having been the greatest well to be brought in on the North American continent in the years of the McDonald Oil Boom of 1890-92.

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Again in McDonald, Bill Burns and Andy Eiler, co-editors of the town's weekly newspaper, have proposed the idea of a State College for Robinson's Run Valley.

Most citizens have taken to the idea, and several State Legislature people are interested. Biggest obstacle may be the fact that Washington County already has a going State College at California.

One outstanding advantage of the suggestion is the fact that a number of now available rural acres would be acquired for the school, and thus be held for future needed recreation areas.

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Altho' it may still be winter in the West Sylvania Corner (and according to Mr. Groundhog, it may continue), it is a good time to look forward to Spring and Summer drives throughout Washington County. Therefore, we submit a list of the many gems of nostalgia the motorist might visit.

First off, there is the Buffalo Presbyterian Church, left off Route 31 on Leg. Route 62096, about one mile from Wolfdale. This church was founded in 1775 by Rev. Matthew Henderson, who also was the first regular pastor of Chartiers Associate Presbyterian Church at Canonsburg.



Services were first held outdoors. An early pastor was Rev. Thomas Campbell, father of Alexander Campbell, who founded Bethany College.

Then, there is the Upper Buffalo Presbyterian Church, also off Route 31, one block south on the main street of Buffalo Village. This church was founded by Rev. Joseph Smith in 1779. Mr. Smith founded one of the early academies here and is buried in the cemetery of the church.

With the old family bus still headed west on Route 31, make a stop at the Brush Run Christian Church on the left, along Leg. Route 62106...altho not easily accessible for a school field trip, hardy adults might make it.

Here was the site of the first regular meeting house of a Disciples of Christ congregation. Rev. Thomas Campbell, a minister of the Secession (Presbyterian) Church in Scotland, ordained his son, Alexander, here and administered the first sacrament of baptism of the church in Brush Run Creek, about two miles south.

And since you are up this way, a must is a stop at Cross Creek Presbyterian Church. Located in Cross Creek Village, it was organized by Rev. John McMillan, but the first pastor was Rev. Joseph Smith from 1779 to 1792. Mr. Smith also preached at Upper Buffalo (as previously mentioned), where he founded his academy in 1785. The old graveyard across the road from the church contains some interesting markers. The most important probably is that of Judge James Edgar, who was elected with John Canon, to serve as the first from Washington County in the State Supreme Executive Council. In 1787 William Smiley was sent by the churches of Upper Buffalo and Cross Creek with a flatboat of flour to New Orleans to pay the salary of Rev. Joseph Smith. Enough was realized to pay for the two years in arrears and for one year in advance.

# Hotels

Uptown, in Pittsburgh, Attorney Jim McArdle, the legal Don Quixote, who sometimes takes on impossible windmills to joust with often astonishing results, has taken up the torch for the many workers who might soon be displaced by the proposed sale of the old William Penn Hotel, now the Penn-Sheraton.

Mr. McArdle is concerned with the fate of the some several hundred hotel employees who will be forced to seek a livelihood elsewhere...and thereby hangs the tale of why a famous landmark like the Penn-Sheraton must go into the oblivion of so-called progress.

Hotel obituaries seem to be in quite frequent these days in the West-Sylvania Corner. Not long ago we mentioned the demise of the old Auld House in Washington, and now up pops the newest on the list for the tumbrils of extinction - the Penn-Sheraton.

Slated to make way for a new and towering apartment building, and tho' not as historically laden as the Auld House, the old William Penn took many bows as the "Waldorf-Astoria" of the Coal and Iron Center.

This hostelry enjoyed quite a few decades as the "tops in hotel accommodations for the Western Pennsylvania area. Here the present middle age dance fan's idol, Lawrence Welk, began his career during the lean days of the 1930's.

Welk's sojourn at the William Penn was during the famous St. Patrick's Day flood of 1936 - and many of those who happened to be stranded in town during the high water, later on held reunions of the event at the hotel.

Show people converged on the popular spot in droves. This was during the days of the glamour and brilliant lights of the now defunct Rialto, known as Sixth and Seventh avenue.

Included in this were the full seasons of the old Nixon Theatre, just a short step away from the William Penn. And a bulging bill of stage and film fare, along with the many personal appearances involved, gave the inn the sight of the theater's most famous personages.

A hotel, it seems, reflects the civic pride of a community...its corridors and lobby hold a wealth of memories for those who often revisit the city. Unfortunate it is that changes such as contemplated must take place.

It is an identity that is paramount to any city's attraction for tourism.

Perhaps a more intensive public relations program may have resulted in its operating in the "black," and staved off the sale. Today most travelers from out of town must know where they will stay before they enplane in a high-speed jet to reach the city of Pittsburgh. Such advance publicity of our hotel service might well be the answer.

Who knows? Mr. McArdle's gesture might give rise to second thoughts on the razing of a warm and nostalgic portion of the Pittsburgh community. We hope the Penn-Sheraton can be retained.

## James J. Andrew's Raid

Down in the Panhandle of West Virginia, in the Hancock County section, there is a village that boasts of being the smallest county seat in the Tri-State.

This is the community of New Cumberland, a river-side cluster of now-neglected mansions formerly occupied by many of those who followed the steamboat trade in the golden days of the mid-1800's.

As the county seat of Hancock County, New Cumberland allows the out-of-town visitor a fine opportunity to observe at first-hand and on a small scale, just how a typical American segment of local government operates. Church, school, county jail and courthouse, along with the sheriff's quarters, are confined in one small city block.

Few people are aware that it was from New Cumberland that James J. Andrews, Civil War figure, embarked on his historic career that was to make him one of the Union's outstanding heroes during the War Between the States.

His famous Andrew's Raid, involving the theft of the Confederate locomotive, "The General," was highlighted by a hair-raising train ride north in an effort to burn all the bridges on the track behind him. Although the mission was not a success, it did establish the great courage of the participants. Had it been completed as planned by Colonel Andrews, the Civil War might have been terminated a year or more earlier.

The Atlanta newspaper, Southern Confederacy, on April 15, 1862, described Andrew's Raid as "the most thrilling railroad adventure that ever occurred on the American continent, as well as the mightiest and most important in its results."

The Southern Confederacy news sheet continued with the following self-diagnosis of the South's close call with defeat: "Had they (Andrew's men) succeeded in burning the bridges, the enemy in Huntsville would have occupied Chattanooga before Sunday evening (the raid began on a Saturday morning).

"Yesterday they would have been in Knoxville, and thus had possession of the whole of East Tennessee. Our forces at Knoxville, Greenville, and Cumberland Gap would have been moved up at once. This would have given them possession of the valley of Virginia and Stonewall Jackson would have been attached from the rear. They would have possession of the railroad leading to Charlottesville and Orange Court House, as well as the Southside Railroad leading to Petersburg and Richmond. They might have been able to unit with McClelland's forces, and attack Jo Johnston's army, front and back. It is not by any means improbable that our army in Virginia would have been defeated, captured, or driven out of the State this week."

Thus it was that a former New Cumberland, WV, brickyard worker gave an extra ripple of fear to the wave of the Confederate Flag - James J. Andrews, one-time laborer, teacher, house-painter, hotel clerk...and emergency train dispatcher!

And just one other side-light of the incident - Andrews provided early-day silent movie-makers such as D.W. Griffith and Cecil B. DeMille many feet of fast film action depicting the furious ride of The General.

## Joe College At Moundsville Prison

Several years ago, before increased interest in prison reform came about, four area men, three of them from nearby Bethany College, took active steps to set up a workable college course at Moundsville's West Virginia State Prison.

And the results have been extremely gratifying to prison officials, the prison inmate, and the four men who undertook the task that meant a new break-through in prisoner rehabilitation.

It all began in 1967 when the groundwork was laid by Bethany's Dr. Gary Larson, chairman of the Bethany biology department; Dr. Carl Schweinfurth, professor of history and political science at Bethany, and Professor Sawtell; all working with Robert Eaton, education director at the Moundsville prison.

They envisioned four objectives for the program: (1) to motivate prisoners to attend institutions of higher learning upon their release, (2) to help prisoners establish new cultural standards, (3) to provide inmates with mental stimulation and help prevent their mental stagnation, and (4) to provide inmates with a means to maintain ties with society.

Since the program was started, seven professors from Bethany are making weekly visits to the prison this semester to teach such courses as modern political ideology, genetics, U.S. politics, major American writers, histology and public relations.

The most popular courses seem to be public relations and modern political ideology. Twenty-one inmates are taking the former course while nineteen are enrolled in the latter.

"Courses given at the prison are equivalent to the same course taught on the Bethany College campus," said professor James J. Sawtell, director of the prison education program and an assistant professor of biology at the college. "Inmates also receive the same tests given on-campus Bethany students."

Funding for the current prison education program is coming from two sources: the West Virginia Governor's Committee on Crime, Delinquency, and Correction, and Bethany College. The initial success of the program convinced state officials of its worth and funds became available to continue and expand the educational project.

Richard Tucker, a 30-year old inmate, has accumulated 43 hours of Bethany credit since the program's inception. At the end of this semester he expects that he will have successfully completed 55 credit hours. Since he had a year and a half of college before being sent to prison, it is conceivable that he may complete his bachelor's degree while at Moundsville.

And what has been the result of the above on former inmates?

Take Mike Perkins, for instance, who enrolled at the prison before his release this January, 1972:

"Initially, enrolled to prevent the mental stagnation resulting from the inactivity and monotony of prison existence," Perkins said. He went on to explain that it was his desire for freedom that compelled him to stay in the program.

"If I ever reach this destination," said Perkins of his goal of freedom, "I wish to have it protect with weapons to combat freedom's foes: the greatest weapon being higher education."

Another former Moundsville inmate, 32-year old Carl Dearth, has just completed his first year of study on the Bethany College campus. In the next three years he hopes to earn a Bethany degree in art with a minor in psychology.

While at Moundsville, Dearth passed a high school equivalency examination and then enrolled in the Bethany prison-education program. Upon his release he received a national defense loan and promptly enrolled at Bethany.

"I used to worship the dollar bill," explained Dearth, "Had to have a new car - a big ego trip to impress my friends with how rich I was."

"I had to throw those values out," he said. "You keep them and they'll put you right back in the same place."

Seventy-nine prisoners who enrolled at one time in the educational program have received a parole or discharge from the Moundsville penitentiary. Of this group, just four have been returned to prison as crime repeaters.

Such has been the success of the Bethany project. The prime catalyst here seems to be the word "motivation." To know that the world outside WANTS you and NEEDS you as a future citizen.

And Bethany has extended the welcome hand clasp at Moundsville, with the power of positive thinking in feeling that each offender is an individual and allowing the brighter side of the coin to shine through.

Other Bethany professors who have taught or are now teaching at the prison are: Albert Buckelew (biology); James Carty, Jr., (communications); Stephen Cooney, Jr., (political science); John Trevor Pierce, (psychology); Richard Stebbins, (chemistry); John Taylor, (English); and William Young, (history). Audio-visual work and computer operations are handled by William Garvin and Thomas Koehl.

# LeMoyne Crematory

In recent news item emanating from New York City, we read of the opening of a buried vault, or room, far below the surface of the Washington Square area in the above city.

Unearthed during a utility firm's work project, the chamber contained skeletons of early residents of Manhattan, presumably during the late 1700's to the 1800's.

In one corner of the room, which had a stairway leading up to the bricked and mortared roof, lay a pile of skeletons in disarray while near or over one of the coffin outlines lay a single skeletal form.

And if Edgar Allen Poe were with us, he might envision a "buried alive" situation, such as used to haunt him so often.

Poe was given to waking up in a cold sweat during the middle of the night, fearing a burial in which he might return to life, and find himself unable to contact the outside world, while encased in a strong and unyielding coffin.

The mention of the fact that the single skeleton lay across the outlines of the long disintegrated box, might, with little effort of imagination, give rise to such a resurrection having occurred here in the New York burial vault.

All of which brings us up to the story of the Crematory devised by Dr. Francis J. LeMoyne in the year 1876, and the first of its kind in the United States.

Did LeMoyne fear, as did Poe, the inability to entangle one's self from a vault's walls after interment?

Or did he envision a population increase that might not have sufficient land acreage for burial?

The LeMoyne Crematory is a one-story brick building, 30 feet long by 20 feet wide, divided into a reception room, 20 feet square, and a furnace room. Today it stands in Washington Cemetery and remains just as it was when the first cremation took place over 88 years ago.

The first disposing of a demised party occurred in 1876, within months after the completion of LeMoyne's furnace.

This was a Baron De Palm, German nobleman, who had passed away in New York City, and who had requested in his will that his body be cremated before the end of the year. Being a member of the Theosophical Society of New York had kept him in touch with Dr. LeMoyne's work.

The India-type ritual was witnessed by a large number of persons including reporters from New York, Boston, Pittsburgh and other large cities.

Mark Twain, while traveling on a retrospect tour of his beloved Mississippi Valley, even remarked on the action in Washington, PA, as being a solution to the problem of above-ground burial in New Orleans, a city not suited to underground interment at that time.

A total of forty-one persons are listed as having been cremated in Washington, with Dr. LeMoyné being the sole resident of the community to use the device.

Since the last operation of the Crematory in 1900, which concerned the disposal of the body of Mrs. Mary S. Booth, of Booth's Landing, West Virginia, the crematory has never been fired again.

## Lydia Boggs: First Lady On National Pike

Over the years this newspaper has printed reams of copy on the days of the old National Pike, or Route 40; the colorful artery of early day travel that featured the stage coach, Conestoga wagon and the driver, all headed westward through Washington county.

It was adventurous reading.

But the road was more than a picture of stogie-smoking, swearing coach drivers; more than the sweat of laborers building bridges, or the gruff hospitality of frontier tavern keepers along the route from Cumberland to Wheeling. It had its distaff side also, in the person of one Lydia Boggs, a Wheeling woman who saw the siege of Fort Henry as a girl and later became influential in having the National Pike swing by her door. She lived to be 101 years old and passed away in 1867. During her lifetime she saw the frontier change from Indian warfare to Reconstruction following the Civil War. After two marriages Lydia took on the long moniker of Lydia Boggs Shepherd Cruger, spending much time in Washington, DC, where she made friends with many notable figures. The Perle Mesta of her time, she met all newcomers to the nation's capitol, and later invited them out to her elaborate home called "Shepherd Hall," just outside Wheeling, in the present-day Elm Grove section.

Lydia's days as a defender in Fort Henry at the age of 17, her romance with Moses Shepherd and subsequent marriage, her success in having the old pike changed from a westward route from Washington, PA, to Wellsburg, to a more convenient one through Wheeling; all add up to a great piece of historical entertainment. As a topping to the tableaux, Lydia's disclosure that it was a Mollie Scott, rather than Elizabeth Zane, who carried the powder to the defenders of Fort Henry in 1782, upset the residents of Wheeling no end, and even today, despite Lydia's statement, Wheeling folks still stand by Betty Zane as the heroine of the affair.

Lydia Boggs came to the Wheeling area as a child in 1774. Her father, Captain Boggs, had staked claim to the riverfront acreage centering around Boggs Run. Her growing-up period on the frontier was one that ran the gamut of pioneer toil, deprivation, and peril. At one time she managed an amazing escape from Shawnee Indian captors, who had scalped and killed one of her brothers, imprisoned another, and burned the Boggs cabin to the ground.

During the famous siege of Fort Henry at Wheeling in 1782, Lydia helped beat out the flames and firebrands of both British and Indians; such action being spear-headed by the infamous renegade, Simon Girty. During the battle, Lydia took a shine to one of the defenders, young Moses Shepherd. Shepherd's father, Colonel David Shepherd, had evacuated Fort Shepherd in 1777 to assume command of Fort Henry during an earlier attack by Girty and the Indians. While at his new post, Indians demolished his fort, home and farm buildings. Later, in 1795, son Moses was to inherit the remains of his father's vast estate.

After the smoke of siege and attack had cleared, Lydia and Moses were married. They quickly adapted to the sudden change from a rough pioneer way of living to one that was without fear of Indian attack. Moses soon had the post of town councilman in Wheeling, and eventually became mayor of the river city. As his fortune increased, Moses Shepherd counted his blessings in the way of a saw-mill, a tannery and a distillery. When the Cumberland Road was completed, a tavern was added to the list of Shepherd enterprises. And Lydia Shepherd took care of all the account books.



In 1798, on the site of old Fort Shepherd, Lydia and Moses built the grand Georgian stone mansion which today is the headquarters of the Osiris Temple of the Shrine for the Wheeling area. They called it "shepherd Hall." Currently, it is the oldest historical building associated with Wheeling. It was, and still is, an elaborately detailed home, with its rare woodwork and paneling, its Grecian sunbursts over the wooden-pegged doors, and its ornate ballroom across the second story furnished in keeping with its style. In its earlier days, Shepherd Hall had flagstone steps leading to terraced lawns studded with rustic arbors, benches, a well, and an unusual sundial now disintegrated. Here in this mansion Lydia Shepherd became a hostess of distinction to many national figures.

When Thomas Jefferson authorized the building of the Cumberland Road, Moses Shepherd, always with an eye for business, came up with the idea of securing the contract for building the bridges between the Pennsylvania line and Wheeling. So plans were laid by the couple to winter in Washington for this purpose. While there, they were close to Congressmen and Presidents and made contact with popular statesman, Henry Clay.

As their friendship blossomed with Clay, they sought his aid in establishing Wheeling, rather than Charlestown (Wellsburg, WV) as the western end of the famous road. While the project moved along, Lydia and Moses not only secured the bridge contract, but managed to get permission for two extra bridges to run the National Pike up close to their gate at Elm Grove. From this point, it returned across the creek to its original route.

To do something nice for Henry Clay following these favors, the Shepherds erected a statue to him on their lawn. After the road had opened, Congress questioned the \$100,000 cost of the extra bridges, and even with Clay's help they were only able to secure \$28,000.

Many famous American figures of the political scene of the early 1800's met for discussion in the parlor of Shepherd Hall. Such as Andrew Jackson, Thomas Hart Benton, William Henry Harrison, Zachary Taylor, Dan Webster and perhaps James K. Polk and John C. Calhoun. The Marquis de LaFayette stopped at Lydia's in 1825 and it is said that the dashing Frenchman danced a minuet with La Grade Dame.

A special bedroom was put aside for Henry Clay, who stopped at Shepherd Hall often on his way from Lexington to Washington, DC.

After Colonel Moses Shepherd passed on during the cholera epidemic of 1832 (he had gotten the title during the War of 1812), Lydia decided on marriage to another military man named General Daniel Cruger, New York Congressman. Cruger re-named Shepherd Hall, calling it "The Stone Mansion." Lydia outlived her second husband by many years. She was often at Presidential affairs in the capital, still being stirred by political contact. When old age finally kept her indoors, she kept abreast of the times via the newspapers. At the age of 100, or better, she was keenly aware of the Civil War that pitted brother against brother outside her gate.

In her last years, Lydia was sought out a source of information on frontier history. One historian managed to get her to issue a notarized statement which has since been labeled "The Gunpowder Exploit." This is the famous story throughout the Tri-State and especially the Wheeling area, that told of how Betty Zane secured much-needed powder for the hard-pressed defenders of Fort Henry. The boys ran short, and one of the female company was sent to a nearby store-house for more "dust," returning across an open clearing braving the fire of the Indians. As Lydia told it, she had helped a Mollie Scott, rather than Betty Zane, to fill her apron with the powder. And she claimed that Betty Zane was at the home of her father, near Washington, PA, at the time. But then, Lydia WAS there. A live witness.

Many Wheeling folk put her story down as pure figment of the imagination, discarding it, since there had been two sieges at Fort Henry; one in 1777, the other in 1782. And historians gave different versions of the powder incident, some putting it at the 1777 siege, others at the fracas of 1782.

When Lydia Boggs Shepherd Cruger died in 1867, she was buried at the summit of the Stone Church Cemetery. A triple-sided monument towers over her grave and those of her two husbands. Later, when the Shepherd Hall acreage was sold off in lots which eventually became present-day Elm Grove, a Major Alonzo Loring bought the house, giving it a third name, Monument Place. And this is what is often called today. In 1928, it was sold to the Osiris Temple of the Shrine, which has done a creditable job of preserving the mansion and its history.

If you journey down Elm Grove way these days, you will find Route 40 and the newer Interstate 70 buzzing by not too far from Lydia's old homestead. The statue erected to the memory of Henry Clay is no longer there. It found its way to Oglebay Park some years ago, and according to the lady in the Shrine office, it, like the sundial, "disintegrated."

We have mentioned above both Lydia and Moses Shepherd working together to accomplish what they did. But we believe that Lydia, sweet Lydia, was the spark plug behind the whole thing.

Do you think that "woman's lib" is a product of the 1970's?

We don't think so. When Lydia fought those Indians and beat out the flames of enemy firebrands with moccasin-clad feet, and blistered her feminine hands with molten lead as she shaped bullets for the defenders at the portholes of Fort Henry, she felt that the new country owed her something.

She got what she wanted.

## McKees Rocks - George Swetnam

McKees Rocks, for many years the butt of jests concerning the high waters of Chartiers Creek during the spring floods and the bleakness of the so-called "Bottoms," was given one of the finest Christmas presents any community could receive during the recent holiday.

Pittsburgh National Bank, which has a branch office in center of the town's most populous business district, Chartiers Avenue, two days before Christmas unveiled a wall mural depicting the early frontier day? of the village.

The mural, or painting, shows George Washington, accompanied by Christopher Gist and others, arriving and meeting the Indian chief, Shingiss, at a point where the rocks for which the town was named are prominent. Alexander McKee's name appeared first in land deeds in 1769 and, of course the term "McKees Rocks" followed.

Accompanying the display of the mural is a small, yet potent, booklet written by Pittsburgh historian George Swetnam, called "The McKees Rocks Story." The very fine brochure at present is being used by the educational systems in town for further dissemination of McKees Rocks' early history.

Now what all this unique and much needed type of promotion adds up to is this: A very necessary adjunct to the borough's efforts toward progress has been formulated. More organizations should do likewise in fostering and bringing to light the background of the respective communities in which they operate.

Often, a town's historic and interesting past lacks a media to bring it to the attention of the present generation - such as the booklet prepared by Mr. Swetnam. Not many are in a position to do this labor of love to the amount involved, such as several hundred thousand bits of literature on the subject, and as a result much needed education of the past is lost.

George F. White, a long-time resident of the McKees Rocks area and manager of the Chartiers Avenue branch, had this to say on the overwhelming response to the showing of the borough's past:

"It was unbelievable the amount of citizens concerned with the wall mural - students, education groups and just plain, historic-minded depositors came in and thoroughly enjoyed our display. I have been a native of the McKees Rocks section all my life and a lot of the items in 'The McKees Rocks Story' were new to me."

It would appear that PNB has come up with a fine and high-level bit of promotion in the initial step taken at their McKees Rocks branch. As Mr. Swetnam put it in a recent conversation: "Every community must have 'roots,' like a homeless waif needling some 'family,' the image of an historic past is most important to sowing the seeds of progress to any stalled village which hopes to attract bigger and better things for the future."

We agree. Civic pride is more important to prod all citizens of a community to put their shoulders to the wheels.

If PNB were so included, the McDonald office might have a mural or pictorial item on the walls, stories telling of the well, the largest white sand oil well ever struck on the North American continent. The Canonsburg branch could have a segment on the formative days of old and historic Jefferson College.

Up-river, other towns might have material on the Whiskey Rebellion and sundry river transportation events.

One of the as-yet unsullied portions of the American democratic way of life is the local banking structure of its communities.

Nowhere else in the world is a citizen able to walk into a bank and freely purchase a home, take part in a stock venture and, in general, pluck the fruits of American independence and security. A fitting role for the American community bank system is that of offering information on America's past.

A "Miracle on Chartiers Avenue" is quite apropos for the in and see it when you are in PNB's latest venture - drop the "Rocks" Areas.

## Mill Creek Presbyterian Church

Ever hear of Mill Creek Presbyterian Church?

Or that when the first 66 founding members of the tiny chapel wended their way through the forest, they had to make their way through an underground passage to reach the building?

The church, erected of logs in 1784, was a scant 18 by 20 feet in size.

In those days marauding Indians prowled about the woods and ravines, and were a danger to members of the second oldest church in what is now Beaver County. The passageway mentioned above gave protection from the arrows of the redmen.

According to records, the Mill Creek Presbyterian Church, originally in the Redstone Presbyterian of denomination, followed Service Creek Presbyterian Church, Raccoon Township, in being founded by five years.

The initial church building had no doors or windows, no pews, no altar and was unheated. It was lighted by an opening in the roof. Records of early minutes of the church show that supplies were first brought in to the church in 1785.

As the Indian menace diminished, a new log church was built, with a door and windows. This one measured 30 by 60 feet.

The brick church, built in 1832 on the site of the present structure, collapsed because of insufficient foundation for the 48 by 70 foot edifice.

Then, the brick building measured 50 by 60 feet was erected in 1869, but the walls began spreading. In 1882, on the same foundation, the present frame building, 38 by 70 feet, was built to seat a total of 400.

During the early days, churches were named after adjoining streams - thus "Mill Creek" was given as the name of the congregation.

Twenty-three pastors have served Mill Creek Church over the years. Many other pastors filled in when the pulpit was vacant, and elders and deacons also took the place of an appointed minister.

Mill Creek Church has been the mother church for other congregations, including First Church of East Liverpool, Chester, Glasgow, New Bethlehem, Shippingport and Frankfort, Hookstown and Mt. Olivet in Independence Township, Beaver County. Mill Creek members also were influential in founding churches in Beaver and other towns.

At least 26 members of the church became ministers. A great many took up missionary work.

Historic Mill Creek Church is situated on a side road off Route 168 in Greene Township, Beaver County, about five miles north of the Washington County line.

Nearby the old church cemetery in which, among others, was buried Andrew Poe, a noted Indian fighter. His name and that of his brother, Adam, appear in early church records.

One of the earliest "regular" ministers was Rev. George M. Scott, grandson of a member of the Scottish Parliament. Mr. Scott was graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and taught three years at Princeton University before becoming licensed to preach in May of 1797.

In April, 1799, Mr. Scott received two calls. One was from the congregation of Cayuga Lake, NY, offering a salary of \$400, one-third to be cash, two-thirds produce. The other call was to Mill Creek and the "Flats" (now known as Fairview, in Pughtown, WV). The salary offer was \$120, two thirds cash, one-third produce. He chose Mill Creek and the Flats, and made the long, arduous journey to his charge, way out in the wilds near the Ohio River.

Mill Creek and its cemetery are located on land given in a patent by Thomas Jefferson, as Governor of Virginia, to Robert Rutherford for military service during the war between Great Britain and France. It contained 1,300 acres. Together, these two parcels cover much of the area surrounding the church.

After the Revolutionary War the subsequent agreements as to state boundaries, many conflicting land claims had to be settled in court.

Nowhere were there so many diverse patents or other title claims as in Beaver County, whose land records begin with the year 1803. However, there is no account of any question being raised as to the validity of the Mill Creek Church title.

Over the years, ministers, the session, other officers and members have taken pride in the history of their church. The present congregation is extremely active and growing, and welcomes visitors.

## "Model T"

Mid-summer car trips are at hand in the Tri-State, and the old (or new) family bus is ready to take off on a pleasure jaunt. And it is a pleasure, too, with automatic transmissions, power brakes and seat belts.

But back in 1919 in the hey-day of the famous "Model T" Ford, it was somewhat different and with a lot more experimental adventure.

The "Model T" was actually an extremely simple car to operate, despite the ensuing description of how to start it - if the new owner had the footwork of a Fred Astaire and the ability to follow written directions, he made the car move the first try.

When the new "Tin Lizzie" arrived from the dealers, it had the wonderful smell of fresh, robust black paint and a sales receipt for about \$500. You looked at the operating manual, scratched your head, and plunged into what was, for many of today's middle-age readers, a "better than Christmas morning" experience.

Before starting the new car, or "machine," you filled the radiator with clean, fresh water. Then you filled the ten-gallon gas tank. Or at least made sure you had enough to get to the nearest station. Oil was put into the crankcase through the breather pipe at the front of the engine. Down under the flywheel casing were two pet cocks - when oil ran out of the upper cock, you had sufficient lubrication for the crank-shaft bearings.

The spark and throttle levers were under the steering wheel. No foot pedal here. That was to come later, via mail-order houses, as an "extra" attachment. The right-hand lever controlled the amount of gasoline mixture to the engine, while the left-hand lever altered the advance or retardation of the spark or "commutator."

When the engine was ready to "crank," the left-hand spark lever was put in the third or fourth notch on its quadrant, and the throttle or right-hand lever was opened five or six inches. When this was done, the operator made sure the vertical hand-lever on the left side of the steering wheel was pulled back as far as it would go - this was the "neutral" position for starting the four-cylinder power plant.

Next step was to turn the ignition key to "magneto," and the owner was ready to assume the stance of the big action - cranking the engine into life. This was done by taking hold of the crank handle and pushing firmly toward the car until you felt the crank ratchet engage. Then you lifted upward with a quick swing. You were cautioned, via the operating manual, not to crank downward against compression - for then an early explosion drove the handle vigorously backward; sometimes to the injury of an arm. And it often happened.

With the engine running, you were ready to set the car in motion. First you slightly accelerated the engine by opening the throttle, placed your foot on the left-hand clutch pedal, and thereby held the gears in a neutral position while throwing the hand lever forward; then to actually start the car in motion, you pressed the pedal forward into slow speed or low gear. When you were under sufficient headway, you allowed the pedal to drop back slowly into high gear, at the same time partially closing the throttle, which allowed the engine to pick up its load easily. You were on your way. When you brought the car to a stop, the clutch pedal was depressed into neutral, while applying the foot brake on the extreme right-hand side until the car came to a dead stop. There were three pedals involved; clutch or low gear, reverse and brake.

Biggest jobs for the home mechanic in those days were: Grinding valves, cleaning carbon from the pistons and cylinder block, and replacing worn "bands" on the planetary transmission. This transmission was the simplest and most direct means of speed control on the old "Model T."

They were great days, those of the "Model T." A good 30 inches on a wheel gave you high riding and not much danger of losing a muffler or scraping the underframe. But most roads were "country" style, with a lot of mud and deep holes. The "high-wheel" arrangement also came in handy during heavy snow.

And if you want (or were able to, on a good road) 40 miles an hour, you were considered a "speed-maniac!"



## Mon River Traffic

Let us tell you something about the Mon and its past, a past that is rich in the history of early river transportation and the building of Western Pennsylvania as a great coal and iron center.

First off, the Monongahela was always, in the old days, a stream of ever-changing volume. In the summer, sand bars here and there glistened in the sun, past which a slender stream gurgled over ripples too shallow for any craft save those especially constructed for the purpose. The bark canoe so light the swift or shallow water, that it could be carried past comes first on the list of boats. Later on pioneers turned to the "dugout", a hollowed out log. The "dugouts" continued to be used until a slight improvement in the river channel allowed the use of larger boats.

One of the first 5 mills to be constructed along the shores of the Mon in early days was that of Benjamin Parkinson.

Built in 1772, the venture was to herald the start of much activity on the part of the Parkinson family toward the establishment of the present Monongahela City.

Later on in the annals of the river's transportation, came such devices as flat-boats, and the renowned keel boat, with a regular crew and a captain, and when the National Road, the great thoroughfare between the "far east" and the unknown west, began to heap the landing at Brownsville with freight, or throng it with passengers from the stages and Conestoga wagons, there were two towering figures in the transportation world of the early 1800's - the stage driver and the keel-boat captain.

Among them was Mike Fink, the so-called "King of the Keelboatmen", who left Noblestown, PA, via Robinson Run to reach his fame on all three rivers of the Mon, Allegheny and Ohio. He, too, was familiar with the scenic stretches of the Mon, and was no doubt acquainted with Captain Caleb Harvey who ran a keel-boat called the Reporter, From Pittsburgh to Brownsville, making quite a regular run and time. A select crew was carried, who from long service became expert in poling (the motive power used by a keel-boat). As several men on each side set their poles and ran the boat forward at the same time, it was necessary to act in concert. Such poetry in motion may be duplicated some day in the future with the sport of "sculling" or boat racing on the Mon. Such events have become an important sporting event at many universities in past years. Why not the Mon with a crack coxswain pulling up river with a doughty California State College crew?

But back to the embryonic days of the Mighty Mon - Over the years from 1830 to the 1850's many improvements to navigation were instituted. Before this, however, the first steamboat, the Enterprise, left Brownsville, the site of its building, to make the initial trip to the depths of Mississippi. Under the command of Captain Henry M. Shreve, the vessel took the fame of the Mon to heretofore unheard-of places.

Other boats followed the Enterprise and soon towns like Elizabeth, Monongahela, Belle Vernon, California and West Brownsville became famous as the birthplace of many river steamboats.

As the steamboat spiraled as a workhorse of transportation, so did the booming coal business which spewed forth its product to the yawning jaws of innumerable barges along the banks of the Mon. Here was a "natural" loading dock for the famous Pittsburgh steam of coal - a tipple on the river bank and immediate access to the far markets of the world.

## Names and Places

This past half-year, an airy necklace of high line towers has appeared throughout the northern portion of the county.

Spearheaded by a group of Rogers and Clark-like brush and tree eradicators, the engineering firm from Philadelphia has done a creditable job of blazing a trail for the new power transmission line of the Duquesne Light Company, running from Beech Bottom, WV, to Ewing Station, or Heidelberg, PA.

The other day wire was being strung along the completed tower line in the vicinity of Avella, and just below Albert Miller's Bancroft Farm.

Towers also have been erected on the farm land of the Peter Pan Horse Farm No. 1, located just north of Hickory.

At first we thought the towers (there are several on the farm property) might detract from the scenic beauty of Arthur Resnick's pride and joy, but farm manager Elmer Taft assured us that the new addition to the equine atmosphere did nothing to interrupt the chore of spring foaling.

Taft, who looks like the manager of a horse farm should look - he usually gives the impression of having just stepped out of a scene from a Western movie epic - told us that protective fencing had been placed about the foot of the behemoth's of steel and that the mares were as content as ever without much fuss over the change in background.

While watching mothers and foals of this year's vintage running like brown and white quicksilver along the horizons of Peter Pan, it seems as tho' we were gazing at a huge panoramic movie screen with the sound turned off. Here indeed, was a picture that would be much enhanced by the addition of piped music, a la "die Fiedermaus" or McDowell's "To A Wild Rose", filling in the untouched portions of a beautiful painting. A thought for future horse farm operators.

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The names of some of the older towns and villages of Washington County often recall John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress."

Such titles as Candor, Prosperity, Independence, Good Intent and Amity are just a few, and Bunyan's every character, location or incident bore a picture-creating name.

For instance there were Giant Despair, Ignorance, the Sought of Despond (an excellent term in the realm of picture-creating for our numerous unfilled strip mine scars), the River of Death and the Celestial City.

One village in Washington County, however, despite the name Amity, did not reflect quite such an amiable view in early days toward the then-budding Mormon movement of the 1820's.

In the cemetery at Amity today can be seen the headstone of one Solomon Spaulding, the alleged writer of a romantic tome called "The Manuscript Found", and dealing with an early lost tribe of Israel. This volume was reputed to have been distorted into what is known as the Book of Mormon.

For a number of years, notably during the period of 1820 to 1840, the belief persisted in the county that the writings of Spaulding, an itinerant minister, had been plagiarized by a journeyman printer named Sidney Rigden, who later struck up an association with Joseph Smith, leader of the Mormon sect.

Complete investigation in later years has proven that the Mormon Book was in no way connected with the writings of Spaulding. But in those early days of the Latter Day Saint's trek westward, a great many people were convinced of the truth of the story. Further reading on the subject can be found at the Washington County Historical Society (Le Moyne House), under the writings of Dr. Alfred Creigh and Earle Forrest.

All of which proves that there was little in the westward movement of the pioneers in the early 1800's that did not in some way touch upon Washington County.

The Dedication Box, prominent at the recent opening of the new Citizens Library Building, brings to mind the container and its contents that was placed in the cornerstone of the old Town Hall erected in 1869 along Main Street.

President U.S. Grant did the honors and some of the items in the box were quite interesting in nature. Among them was a bottle of pure Monongahela Rye whiskey, a piece of the cloth from the pall of Henry Clay; a portion of hair of Gen. Anthony Wayne who died in 1796; aa piece from the weeping willow tree which hangs over the grave of Napoleon at St. Helena; a piece of the Great Tree in California (probably a giant Sequoia), a Japanese writing desk, some Rebel postal stamps, along with two pair of Revolutionary War shoe buckles.

All this along with newspapers of the era, ancient coins and currency, many pertinent documents and files, certainly made hefty bit if poundage for the bearded, cigar-smoking Grant.

According to Dr. Alfred Creigh's account of the incident, at the conclusion of the dedication speech: "The President silently (maybe he wheezed a little) took the box from the hands of Dr. Creigh and deposited it within the cornerstone, after which the band struck up a lively tune." No doubt to cover up a coughing spell after lifting such a load.

Alas, the Town Hall is no more and no one seems to know what became of the cornerstone box, the weeping willow branch nor the bottle of "pure Monongahela Rye whiskey" - What's your guess?

## National Pike

One of the most romantic and colorful highways of travel in the old days was the Cumberland to Wheeling road, or part of the famous National Pike. This great artery of the time, the first highway over the Allegheny Mountains, was built by the Government and was first used in 1818.

Until the coming of the Iron horse, it held a position of acclaim as having carried the most important personages of the land across its winding way to the west. Andrew Jackson, William Henry Harrison, John Quincy Adams, General Lafayette, Henry Clay, Tom Corwin, James K. Polk, Zachary Taylor, General Scott, Davey Crockett, James G. Blaine, P.T. Barnum, Jenny Lind, J.W. Crittenden, and many others whose names conjure up a page or two of history.

Drivers, too, were highly-thought-of persons, like Sam Sibley, who drove Henry Clay over the road and had an accident on the way. Sam emerged with a broken nose, while Clay escaped unhurt.

Tom Corwin, a governor of the state of Ohio, had worked as a driver on this road before taking trips across it as a distinguished passenger.

Driver Redding Bunting took a message from Washington, DC, to Wheeling in 1846 in the record time of 131 miles in 123 hours. This was the news that war had been declared against Mexico by President Polk. Bunting left Cumberland at 2 AM and was in Wheeling at 2 o'clock the next afternoon. The dust must have been really flying on this one.

The famous Indian chief, Black Hawk, had Daniel Liggett as a driver on a trip from Wheeling to Washington, DC. William Shaffer drove showman P.T. Barnum and Jenny Lind, the songstress, from Wheeling to Baltimore. And when the great Lafayette visited the section, John Buck was at the reins. Once coach line of the time boasted that none of its drivers drank or swore. This was the "Good Intent" firm of passenger hauling. The owner, General N.P. Talmadge, was also a non-believer in "drinking while driving," circa 1830.

A few years ago, the last remaining toll gate of the old National Pike was removed from the Tri-State scene. This was the structure that sat just outside the eastern edge of the borough of West Alexander. And for many years it had been serviced by Mrs. Sarah J. Noble of that community.

The building had become a liability to its owner at the time. It was razed, and no organization came forward to help preserve it. Thus it became lost forever to those who might have savored its hectic past while in the status of a historic tour item.

But we do have the story of Mrs. Noble who, in an era when "working women" were rather scarce, took over the chore of passing through the toll gate some of the famous persons mentioned above.

Sarah Lavey was but 16 years old when the family moved to West Alexander from New York state, and on February 6, 1855, she was married to James Noble. In early manhood, Noble had left Ireland and crossed the Atlantic to Canada, from where he finally moved to West Alexander and engaged in the business of boot and shoe manufacturing.

In August, 1861, James Noble enlisted for service in the Civil War. He served in a Calvary unit under the command of General Rosecrans. On March 14, 1862, he was killed by bushwhackers while on a scouting expedition. The G.A.R. Post of West Alexander was named in his honor.

Thus it was in the year 1867, the situation prompted Widow Noble, who had three fatherless children to support, to take over the chore of gate keeper. Here for a period of 40 years, Mrs. Noble was faithful to her duties and maintained the dignity which the importance of the position demanded.

In Uniontown in May, 1837, Hugh Campbell, while addressing a meeting for John Quincy Adams, had this to say concerning the importance of the road:

"We stand here, upon the Cumberland Road, which has broken down the great wall of the Appalachian Mountains. This road, we trust, constitutes an indissoluble chain of Union, connecting forever, as one, the East and the West."

## Noblestown - James Waldo Fawcett

Several weeks ago, in The West-Sylvania Corner, we mentioned some facts on the background of Noblestown, the interesting village of lost records and the site of George Washington's evening sojourn under a blanket which is still in possession of a Noblestown family.

As a result, we were visited by James Waldo Fawcett and Chester B. Bennett, of Pittsburgh, both of whom are interested in forming a group of fact-thirsty researchers who will attempt to salvage all items remaining in connection with the pioneer Noble family, originators of the village.

Mr. Fawcett, at 71, is a researcher of considerable note and was formerly associated with the Washington, DC, Star in the capacity of editorial writer. He retired from this newspaper in 1955, having spent many fruitful years in the field of journalism.

His first position, on the old Pittsburgh Dispatch, was at the age of nine, an unheard-of situation for a mere boy in those early years. Later he moved to the Pittsburgh Gazette Times, then off to the big city to become a member of the staff of the venerable New York Times.

Eventually the fast-moving whirl of the nation's Capital beckoned him and The Washington Post became his home before moving to The Star - one of the highlights of his career was the coining of the phrase in the year 1919 - "We have nothing to fear, but fear itself." This was done in a bit of philosophical writing at the time, and later on in 1933, he was to help draft newly-elected Franklin Delano Roosevelt's inaugural address and to include the now famous term.

At this writing, Mr. Fawcett is looking forward to meeting interested parties who are descendants of the Noble family and extends an invitation to all in Washington and Greene counties who may find it to their advantage to participate. Meetings will be held periodically in the Pennsylvania Room of the Carnegie Library with those souls concerned with passing on for future researchers more concrete material on such personages as George Vallandigham, the Fink family and a host of other notable figures.

The roots of Noblestown are deep, and despite the lack of recorded facts, a mere mention of the village brings on a deluge of letters concerning former families and memories.

During the course of our conversation with the extremely interesting Mr. Fawcett, we both agreed that there is much material in Washington and Green counties that would lend itself to dramatic impact - such as motion picture scenarios and the like.

A segment on the story of the underground railroad and allied events, such as John Brown's visits to the McKee family of West Middletown, would be more than apropos - then there is also the Whisky Rebellion to be put in dramatic form. Much, much work remains to be done here in telling the story of the long-neglected portion of our state's role in the world of tourism and history.

## Noblestown - Rev. Grier

In the McDonald section of Washington County, Harry Derbyshire has been doing excellent work as division chairman of the Chartiers-Panhandle Planning Commission. He is seeing to it that residents of that district are informed about the areas interested in redevelopment and is giving them a better understanding of Project 70 and allied efforts toward revitalization of the towns and municipalities involved.

Just below McDonald, and over the line in Allegheny County, is the village of Noblestown, which for many years has posed an enigma for students of early Western Pennsylvania history. This is due to the fact that there are no existing records of the town's past.

Numerous church fires and a general lack of interest in the 1920's left no threads for the researcher - men like George Vallandigham, one of the first Commissioners of Washington County; Mike Fink, the "king of the keelboatmen;" and a host of prominent church leaders who gave the town an air of importance long before Pittsburgh itself.

Today, all that remains above ground of the glorious past of this pioneer village are the former home of Henry Tarvin Noble and the farm residence of Mr. and Mrs. H.M. Carman.

The builder of the Noble home was also the man who erected the first grist mill in the Robinson Run section, his structure being the site of Robinson Run's first church services. The mill was erected in 1789 and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed in the mill in 1790. At that time there was a fully organized congregation, with four ruling elders. All this, of course, was in the pioneer days of the United Presbyterian Church in the area.

Later, Mike Fink was to leave the mill with the section's first efforts to float produce to the Louisiana Territory.

Getting back to the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Carman, the dwelling was erected by Rev. James Grier, a licentiate of the Presbytery who was well known to those who signed his call.

Mr. Grier's pastorate ran from 1839 to 1878, a long time to serve and establish the well-known Robinson Run's Church. The day of his funeral, in 1886, special trains were run from Pittsburgh, the place of his death, to accommodate the host of friends he had made during his 39 years of service to the Robinson Run Valley.

The former home of Mr. Grier is well kept and proudly shown to any interested person by Mrs. Carman.

For further perusal and conjecture on the past of Noblestown, there is a blanket or coverlet in the possession of Ms. Genevieve Wade of the village. At one time there was a cabin in Noblestown, although long razed, that was known as "the place where George Washington stopped." Now, many towns and villages have boasted of having a place where George slept - but Noblestown has the blanket he used!

The item is made of Irish calico and of hand-woven linen, and reportedly was made in 1756. It was on exhibit at the Allegheny County Fair at South Park in 1935.

A Pittsburgh paper recently ran a story on the so-called "city dump" of the 1800's found on the site of the restoration of the old basion of Fort Pitt. Among the many artifacts and items found were such things as an arrowhead of 1640 and a glass bottle made by an early company, the J.C. Buffum Glass Co.

A few years ago, on the site of the old Panhandle Hotel in Noblestown, the writer found a green glass J.C. Buffum bottle. All of which proves that our section of the West-Sylvania country is also a source of value.



## Northern Panhandle Full Of Color In Old Days

The old days in the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia were always full of color and new discovery; like this event recorded in the Hancock County Courier of 1903.

"According to the story of John Jeffers, of Wellsville, gold quartz of almost incalculable value was discovered a few days ago on his place near the base of Cemetery Hill. The discovery was made by driller who were sinking a water well on the place.

"If the quartz can be found in any quantity, Jeffers will become fabulously wealthy.

"Jeffers, who had been watching the progress of the drilling on his place, first noticed the quartz several days ago, when the hole was a depth of about 38 feet. The cone brought up the drill had a peculiar color and appearance and his curiosity was aroused. He suspected that it contained particles of the precious metal. A quantity of the rock was sent by him to the assayers at Western Reserve University and in a few days he received from them a statement showing the presence of gold to the value of \$700 a tone of the quartz.

"The result of the assay has been made public by Jeffers and aroused a great deal of excitement."

Yes sir, there was gold in them thar hills of Ohio.

Or this item, which may bring back of memories of halycon days at Rock Springs Park, Chester, WV.

"The outing was first intended only for employees of the Dennison ships but it was decided to extend it to all parts of the Pittsburgh Division and give all employees a gala day. Special trains left Pittsburgh, Newark and Wheeling at an early hour and gathered up employees and their families as they went along.

An interesting program, musical and literary, was rendered. Various games and sports were highly enjoyed by both young and old.

"The attendance from Wheeling was not nearly so great as in former years. Extra coaches that had been provided for local people were not needed as the crowd was easily accommodated on the regular train."

Road problems also took up news space in the early 1900's. Like this one:

"Our attention has been called both by requests from two different sources to call attention to the extremely rough condition of Washington Pike (Brooke County) and by a disagreeable shaking-up experience in a recent ride to Bellview Camp Grounds, and we lay the matter before the road authorities with the reminder that camp meeting time is near and the bad condition of the Pike will be noticed and commented upon more in two weeks than it would during the balance of the year. The numerous heavy rains have washed away all the surface earth and left the road bed covered with loose stones which roll under a horse's feet much to his discomfort, and rack and wrench a buggy, being particularly hard on rubber tires.

"It is hoped that the Washington To Wellsburg Turnpike company will have some prompt and effective work done to cover the stones on the road before camp meeting so that a drive out there may be a pleasure, rather than an experience in dread."

Old-timers came in for some fine obituaries in those days; like this one concerning a former stage coach driver on the National Pike:

"John Hoon, 87 years old, for many years a stage driver on the Old National Pike between Wheeling and Cumberland, is dead at the home of relatives in Wilkinsburg, PA. For a number of years Hoon was toll-gate keeper on the turnpike at Claysville, Washington County, PA. He was born in Beaver County and ran away from home when a boy to join a circus. He evidently became a clown and later a tumbler and all-around performer.

"He was a member of the celebrated troupe of performers employed by Dan Rice, the circus man. Tiring of circus life, he became the driver of the semi-weekly stage between Cumberland and Wheeling, via Washington, and in that capacity often had as passengers Henry Clay, Thomas H. Benton, Thomas Ewing, Lewis Cass and other men of national renown, of whom he had a fund of most interest anecdotes.

"He is survived by his wife and son, John Hoon, Jr., who is a stock broker in New York. He was a member of the Claysville Presbyterian Church for a number of years."

Such was the news in the West Virginia Panhandle Friday, August 7, 1903.

# Old Economy Village

Have you visited Old Economy Village yet?

A great many folks in the tri-state have put off making a trip to Ambridge to see this famous communitarian venture of the old Harmony Society; primarily because it meant bucking heavy traffic if approached from the Pittsburgh side. However, the new bridge at Shippingport makes it easier for the Washington County resident to come up-river at or near Midland.

By taking route 18 out of Burgettstown, then into Frankfort Springs and crossing Route 30 to Hookstown, the motorist can reach the city of Ambridge and Old Economy, with a fine view of the atomic power plant west of the bridge.

Economy was the third and final home of the Harmony Society, which was formally established at Harmony, PA, in 1805. The members of this society were called Pietists, part of a larger movement which shaped the religion of many Germans who had earlier come to Pennsylvania.

Here, in the heart of present-day Ambridge, on a 3,000-acre tract, the society established a large manufacturing center, among the principal products of which were textiles of cotton, wool, and silk, all of them acclaimed for their quality. For a time this was the leading industrial community in the west.

The business acumen of the Harmonists had amassed a ready and often needed source of capital for local business ventures.

Like the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad.

Back in 1874, the builders of the P&LE ran into difficulty in securing a right-of-way from Pittsburgh to Beaver. At this point, the Harmony Society, which had large interests in the Beaver Falls area that would be benefitted by the road, offered its assistance for the construction of the down-river leg of the project. On the reception of this offer, the officials of the company decided to issue \$2,000,000 in bonds. The Harmony Society took \$250,000 of this amount, and in addition granted free right-of-way through all its land between Beaver and the South Side of Pittsburgh, amounting to more than three-fourths of the distance.

To appreciate the gigantic efforts made by the first directors of the railroad in getting it underway, the following story is still recounted today in the Ambridge area.

A question of raising enough money to meet the first payroll came up soon after construction began. To solve this problem, Jacob Henrici, trustee of the Harmony Society, was consulted, and, always ready to meet an emergency, had boxes of silver half-dollars brought up to the directors' meeting in the old Monongahela House, Pittsburgh.

This money had been buried by Father Rapp for a special purpose. The boxes, emptied of their contents in the center of the meeting-room, formed a large pile of silver. The payroll was met and Jacob Henrici went on to help advise and insure the success of the new road.

Set a date now to visit Old Economy. The major portion of the show is within buildings, and inclement weather is not problem here.

Visiting hours during winter are from 9 AM to 4:30 PM weekdays; 1 to 4:30 PM on Sunday.

Old Economy Village is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and is a major western stop on the keystone Slate's "Pennsylvania Trail of History."

# Paris, Florence and Murdocksville

## County "Panhandle" Towns Have Interesting Names, Histories

In the northern portion of Washington County are some towns with interesting names. Like Paris and Florence. Or maybe Murdocksville or an old cross roads village once known as Five Points.

Paris, the town with the French touch, is located at the West Virginia line on what was once the old Pittsburgh and Steubenville Pike. It is 26 miles from Pittsburgh, and during the lively days of pike travel there was a threshing machine factory here, along with cabinet-making shops, wagon shops and others.

Alvin McCabe once conducted a "country store" here, the original shopping center of the old days. His father, William McCabe, found a good market during the Civil War era for the annual wood crop.

The town had an academy at one time. It was the forerunner of present-day high schools, and gave area youth a chance to improve their education. The academy building, four square and built of brick, stood on a knoll in a pleasant location. A fine inspiration for many years for the willing students of the Paris community. About 1880 it closed its doors and a "Goodbye, Mr. Chips" celebration was probably held.

Florence, the town with the artist touch name of old Italy, is located at the crossing of the old Washington and Georgetown Road, and Rt. 22. We call the Georgetown section of the road "18" these days.

When the wagon wheel was King on the old Pike, James Briceland maintained a hotel at the cross-roads. The village was laid out and named Florence in 1814 by James Briceland and Moses Proudfit. Before that, it was called Briceland's Crossroads. At one time the hamlet carried the name of Mount Bethel.

A tannery operated by James Allison was part of the village industry. The post office there was established in 1818 and the first postmaster was Moses Bradford. Annual fairs were held on the old Livingston farm, just south-east of town.

Florence also had an academy, opening in 1833. Its first principal was Robert Fulton, a former student of old Washington College. In 1865, a Miss Susan Duncan was principal of the venerable school.

Murdocksville is situated on historic Cross Creek at the intersection of the county lines of Washington, Beaver and Allegheny. John White once ran a mill here as early as 1870. James Murdock, an old resident, gave his name to the place. He was said to have been the first postmaster. At the close of the Civil War, "Hood's Mill, along Raccoon Creek, was a name known far and wide. "Grist" mill work in those days was as popular as steel employment today. Every creek and stream had its share of them.

Five Points was located in the northeast portion of Hanover Township. Five roads converged here. It was once the center of considerable teaming during the development of the oil fields in this region.

Addenda to what has been said above, according to old history accounts: "Between the two villages of Florence and Paris are some of the finest views in Washington County. The hill at Florence is one of the highest points in this section."

It's still fine country.

## Rain Barrels

"Boys will be boys - And even that wouldn't matter, if we could only prevent girls from being girls." The Dolly Dialogues: Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins

The author of the above lines who is better known to West-Sylvania residents as Anthony Hope, the creator of the delightful Graustarkian novels of the 1900s, among them "The Prisoner of Zenda," may have had quite a point in his statement.

The other week, in the Oakdale vicinity, we ran across a symbol of curious boyhood, sans girls, known as the rain barrel. Now this was something that Mark Twain delighted in...and often in his lectures, referred to the act of "hollering down a rain barrel" as a futile effort at stirring up a political storm.

But boys who visited a relatives farm, or some rural village that possessed these caverns of exploration, had many a happy session with doing just that for the wonderful echo - "hollering down a rain barrel."

When the dry days of August rolled around, the barrel became a haven of wriggly grubs and often mosquito families.

Not too healthful, but oh, what an education in Nature life cycles!

Alas, the rain barrel is scarcely seen anymore. The cooper's trade and need has vanished. Water-softeners have taken over - but we must say it was an era of the rugged individual.

Rain barrels and outhouses, we believe that America has lost something irreplaceable here to progress and science...The height of juvenile delinquency, long before the pilfering of hubcaps and vandalism of school rooms, was pushing over a neighbor's empty outhouse in the dark of a Halloween Eve (there were rare instances when they were occupied)...or putting a newly-awakened spring reptile in Aunt Martha's rain barrel, to frighten her out of her wits while dipping in for Saturday night's "soft" hairwashing water.

## Robert Fulton - Monaca

The recent joint purchase of land in Washington County by Congressman Jim Fulton and his brother, Robert, brings to mind the little-known fact that the Fulton name is not a new one in deed record annals of the county.

Few of the present generation are aware that the celebrated Robert Fulton (we have not yet caught up to Congressman Jim on the phone to query him on whether he is a descendant), of steamboat fame and other inventive bents, once owned a farm in Hopewell Township in this county. The farm contained about 84 acres and the patent was originally granted by the state to Rev. Joseph Smith December 12, 1785.

Steamboat Bob, whose first venture, the canal boat, is still a current topic of transportation here in the West-Sylvania area, also held three lots in Washington, PA. While sojourning in London, in 1793, he directed Mr. Hoge, an early settler, to make deeds of the lots to his sisters, Mrs. David Morris, Mrs. Isabella Cook and Mrs. Peggy Scott.

This past week while browsing about the many second-hand shops that line the western end of Chestnut Street, we ran across an old volume dealing with the Monaca, PA, Centennial of 1940.

These shops are extremely interesting to visit and to buy in, and like a beach lined with the flotsam and jetsam of the sea of life, the many items that find their way here tell a fascinating story to the imaginative client, of the halcyon days of the former owners.

This particular bit of salvage had a fine outline of the Indian background of the Beaver County section as it was in the early 1700's. Composed by the Historical Committee of the Centennial, the forward of the book represents a great amount of diligent research on the part of the above-mentioned group.

For instance, did you know that the village of Monaca was named for the famous old Indian Chief - Monacatootha? Also known as Scarouady, he was a member of the Oneida group and a vice-regent over all the Shawnees in the Ohio and Allegheny Valleys. (Frontier enemies probably called him "Old Tooth-Ache") or that Phillipsburg was the former title of the town, and derived its origin from a particular boat-building firm, that of Phillips and Graham?

Also, that in 1848, one Dr. Acker established his water-cure sanitorium which soon became so famous that for a time it outshadowed the town's name and became known far and wide as "Water-Cure, PA."

In 1892 the town accepted as official the name of Monaca...it seems that another Phillipsburg in the State kept the postmen tearing their hair, so postal authorities stepped in and made the change.

## Searight's Tollhouse

Almost every historical discussion in Washington County ends up with a few words concerning the old National Road. Perhaps more than a few.

Like a mention of Searight's Tollhouse, a restored item of the days when the "National Road" was an important gateway to the west.

Searight's Tollhouse received its name from its location near the village of Searights, named for William Searight. Searight owned a prosperous tavern on the old National Road, the ruins of which may still be seen today. A contractor for the road, he was later appointed commissioner for the Pennsylvania section of the "Pike" as it was often called.

Tollhouses east of the mountains were constructed of stone. Searights and three others on the western division were constructed of brick. All were of design similar to Searights and commanded an excellent view of the road in both directions. The tollhouse itself was only large enough to contain the needed space for money handling and living quarters for the toll collector.

Things were pretty hectic along the Road in those first days of tollhouse operation. A never-ending stream of traffic composed of wagoners, drovers on foot with cattle, stage drivers and fast-moving mail expresses left their colorful imprint on the road's history.

When the railroads came to western Pennsylvania, the picture changed. Traffic declined and after the Civil War the "Pike" was used mainly for local traffic, rather than the former passage of national travelers. But "tolls" were collected until 1905.

One of the most colorful figures connected with the days of the active toll house was Mrs. Sarah J. Noble, toll-gate keeper at West Alexander for almost 40 years. Her husband, James Noble, was a casualty of the Civil War. The GAR Post in West Alexander was named in his honor and Mrs. Noble supported her three fatherless children via her employment at the West Alex toll-gate. It was said of her - "that during the long period of her duties at the toll-house, she was faithful to her job and maintained the dignity and self-respect which the importance of the position demanded."

Should a "ghostly" collector of the old toll days appear at Searights, he would no doubt be perplexed by the means and by the congestion of present-day transportation.

The restored colorful tollhouse is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.



# Snowdon Family Pioneered In Developing Brownsville

Passed through Brownsville recently?

If you have, and had a recall of early-day stalwarts of the town, then the name of pioneer John Snowdon may have been foremost in the list of those who contributed to the development of this portion of the Tri-State.

John Snowdon came to Brownsville, or what was once called Old Redstone Fort, in the year 1818. He was a blacksmith by trade, coming here from Yorkshire, England. And blacksmiths were mighty important folks in those days.

With him were his wife and two small daughters, Ann and Elizabeth. Later Ann was to marry famed Captain Adam Jacobs, pioneer river man of the district. The day of the steamboat was about to dawn, and John Snowdon was ready for it with his own foundry and machine shop. In a short time he was busily engaged in making steamboat engines and related equipment. The National Pike needed cast mile posts, and his factory at Brownsville supplied them. So he was thus able to service two types of pioneer transportation; the clean, gleaming surface of the Mon and the dusty wheel-rutted Pike.

Snowdon was also the maker of one of the first stoves used in America, and followed this accomplishment with the building of the "National Pike" bridge over Dunlap's Creek. It was the first tubular iron bridge in the area.

John Snowdon's was a familiar face in town, during the old days of Brownsville. He was a Mason, a steady-going churchman, and a devotee of Whig politics.

His youngest son, John Nelson Snowdon, also left his imprint on the records of the town history. He grew to manhood in Brownsville, and joined with his father in business. This firm, under the name of John Snowdon and Son, furnished a large part of steamboat equipment for many years. When the Civil War began, they cornered the contract to build the famous river monitors, "Manyunk" and "Umpqua." During the war years, they opened a second factory in Pittsburgh. Both plants employed more than two thousand men, a large figure for the time.

In later years, John Nelson Snowdon was to serve as postmaster at Brownsville under Presidents Hayes, Garfield and Arthur.

But the story of the Snowdons doesn't stop with the above; John Nelson Snowdon's son, Charles Leidy Snowdon, became a clerk on the river steamboat "Geneva" in the employ of the Pittsburgh, Brownsville and Geneva Packet Company. By the year 1890 he was president of the line. Other interests touched on the coal industry and Charles Leidy Snowdon is still remembered as being a man of many functions - banker, coal and coke producer, railway executive, and officially connected with various manufacturing, financial and public service enterprises in the Pittsburgh district at the turn-of-the-century.

His sons, George H. Snowdon, Felix B. Snowdon, and Charles N. Snowdon, all gave service to the down-river city of Pittsburgh. All three were fine, outstanding men.

George Snowdon was a well-respected citizen of Sewickley, for many years. Felix Snowdon became an assistant United States district attorney in Pittsburgh, while brother Charles made his mark with the old Reliance Steel Casting Company. What's in a name? A great deal when it comes to the Snowdon folks.

# Steamboat's Attempt To Wreck Bridge at Wheeling Recalled

Most residents of Washington think that Wheeling, WV, is a city of guitar-players and good weather reports (It's true, Wheeling temperatures are always at least five degrees warmer than in the Washington area). But there is more to it than the above.

At one time there used to be exciting days in Wheeling. Like the time a Pittsburgher ran a steamboat up against a bridge in town to prove a point. The year was 1849.

Pittsburgh and Wheeling used to be great rivals as to who might emerge as "keeper" of the "Gateway To The West." River transportation in the mid-1800's was as hot as the rear end of a jet liner headed for far-off places. It was big. Big enough to start a feud between two Tri-State stalwarts, Engineer Charles Ellet, Jr., famed river spanner, and Edwin M. Stanton, Pittsburgh attorney and later Secretary of War under President Lincoln.

Ellet wanted a low bridge at Wheeling, while Stanton argued for one high enough to allow tall-stacked steamboats to pass under unimpeded. Stanton represented Pittsburgh's interest in the matter. Ellet, the designer of the new structure, had been known far and wide for his fine work with the James River and Kanawha Canal.

The bridge had first been proposed in 1818 by Noah Zane of Wheeling to carry the National Pike across the Ohio. It was slated to make Wheeling the peer of Pittsburgh on the new frontier of transportation. Congress refused to sanction the bridge, but Wheeling men raised enough money to put a span across the west channel of the Ohio to the opposite shore. Virginia finally gave Wheeling the needed charter to complete the crossing.

From the time construction begin in 1847, Engineer Ellet was more than just a planner of the bridge. He was its good angel, supervising work and planning tactics to defeat "High Bridge" Stanton. Despite the pros and cons, Ellet finished his bridge in 1849.

Famed statesman, Henry Clay, was on hand for the dedication ceremonies held the evening of September 15, 1849. Clay summed up the controversy with the classic statement: "They might as well try to take down the rainbow!" "They" meaning Stanton and his Pittsburgh objectors who feared the bridge might choke down-river traffic. A great day in the evening for Wheeling when the bridge opened.

However, Edwin Stanton was not to be outdone by this upstart from west of Pittsburgh. After the dedication, he took the steamer "Hibernia No. 2," whose stacks stood 80 feet above the river, (Ellet's bridge stood only 47 feet above water level) and ran her full steam ahead against the bridge. The impact smashed not only her stacks, but the upper part of her superstructure as well, and it almost smashed Wheeling's hopes of maintaining its role as queen of river transportation, plus the lucrative "stop-over" of the National Pike.

But Ellet won out. He managed to get Congress to declare the bridge a post road adjunct, giving everything over it right-of-way. Steamboats had to tailor their size to fit it.

So ended the great feud between Ellet and Stanton.

Edwin M. Stanton was born in Steubenville in 1814. He attended Kenyon College and later when to Pittsburgh to pursue a law career. Charles Ellet was born in Bucks County, PA, in 1810. In later years he took Wheeling to his heart and became its greatest champion of progress.

There is an ironic twist to the story, through, because when Secretary of War Stanton, during the Civil War years, needed a man with guts and get-up to solve the knotty problem of arming "coal boats" from Pittsburgh as "rams" during the naval portion of the war, he called on his old arch-foe of the Wheeling bridge battle.

Ellet came through with the needed vessels and a victory was won for the North.

## Stephen Collins Foster

A writer it seems, is one who, like a physician, places his stethoscope against the breast of the swiftly flowing stream of humanity and detects heretofore unheard-of sounds, inaudible to the average ear; not necessarily a learned man in the mechanics of journalism, but like the hazel wand of the water diviner, he is able to ferret out a deep and unusual something that interest others.

And we wish that we had been able to talk to the man whose obituary appeared in a Pittsburgh newspaper recently. With was Matthew W. Welch, whose grandfather, Stephen Collins Foster, was responsible for the listing and sometimes, sad music that painted such a glowing picture of the anti-Bellum days of the Old South.

The obituary read as follows:

"The last surviving grandson of Composer Stephen Collins Foster died yesterday (June 11) in John Kane Memorial Hospital, where he had been a patient the last six years. Mr. Welch, 88, was the son of the Pittsburgh-born composer's only daughter, Mrs. Walter (Marion) Welch, who died here in 1935. He had never married, and lived for several years with a niece, Mrs. Dorothy Melady at 1254 N. Negley Ave. Mr. Welch was said by the family to have inherited many of the traits of his grandfather - his love of music, poetry and the written word. Like the composer, he was introspective, and shunned publicity. He was described by Mrs. Melady as having 'the spirit of an artist.' He had written many pieces of poetry. His composer-grandfather died at the age of 38, in 1826, in New York City. Burial will be in Allegheny Cemetery, also the final resting place of his grandfather."

Indeed, here was a man with whom one could have conjured up a fine tale - but alas, the secret of his presence was disclosed too late.

At best, we can give you a few facts on his famous and well-loved ancestor.

Stephen Collins Foster was born on July 4, 1826 on the family farm near Lawrenceville, PA. He had a great gift of melody, despite his lack of formal training. At the age of 16, his first song, "Open Thy Lattice, Love," was published in Philadelphia.

His first minstrel songs and melodies were written in 1845. Blackface minstrel shows, in which white entertainers blackened their faces, were becoming popular in the United States at this time.

One of his songs became famous during the days of "The Forty-Niners", the era of the California gold rush. This was the immortal "Oh, Susanna," and told of fond farewells of adventurers as they left the comfort and loves of the East for new frontiers.

In 1850, he married Jane McDowell and settled in Pittsburgh to work as a composer. He selected the minstrel leader of the day, E.P. Christy, as the purveyor of his new songs to the public, via the minstrel stage. Foster was unschooled in the ways of business, and shortly was forced to sell his songs for a pittance. He lived in New York from 1860 until his death in 1864. His last years were spent in illness, poverty and the desolate atmosphere of a world that had completely forgotten him.

Among his best remembered songs are the so-called "Plantation Melodies." These include "Old Folks At Home," also known as "Swanee River," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Old Black Joe," and "Massa's In De Cold Ground."

Other most fast-moving and toe-tapping melodies were "The Camptown Races" and the previously mentioned "Oh, Susanna."

On the romantic side such airs as "Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming" and "Jeanie With The Light Brown Hair" still stir lovers the world over.

He wrote more than 200 songs, and unlike most modern tunesmiths, did the lyrics also.

## Strip Shovels, Canonsburg, Adios, Auld Hotel

Have you ever noticed the "outer limits" atmosphere of a strip shovel at work? It's monstrous action controlled by a seemingly minuscule operator, and the "moon scape" look of the land piled up either side?

Then you pass a local horse breeding farm and see the sleek silhouette's of the fine animals outlined against the Autumn sky - quite a contrast.

And you wonder what artifacts of a pioneer's cabin and what resting place of a once mighty Indian warrior have been disturbed by the machines' cavernous jaws. As we drive by one of these disemboweling operations, we are chagrined by just the above, and we know that somewhere in that gob pile lies a bit of the disturbed past.

Like the Indian skeleton we viewed a few years back, just outside the borough of Bridgeville. This young brave was interred about the year 1400, and although not unearthed by a strip mining scoop, had been brought to the light of our time by the need for a builder's cesspool opening.

The bones of the long-deceased early American were straight and firm - endowed with a patina of light brown hue. The teeth, all 32 of them, had fallen from the jaw sockets and were in perfect condition. Not a flaw, not a cavity in their structure. They might have made an excellent set of dentures for a later Twentieth Century citizen.

Alas, Poor Yorick of the Leafy wilds, there is no one in the West-Sylvania corner today who knew you well...you left no volumes, no written word of your sojourn here. Just conjecture, and a submerged rock somewhere along the banks of the Chartiers, filled with crude pictured events that highlighted your short life.

A local mystery, less gruesome, is one that concerns the many misspelled directional signs along roads that lead into Canonsburg (note the spelling) from the northern portion of the county.

Here the words, "Cannonsburg - 2 Miles", greet the puzzled motorist. How did it happen? Perhaps the error is part of a promotional scheme to give Canonsburg an appellation of "Gun Town"...We hope not, and we also hope that more will be written on the fine past of Col. Canon, the founder of the town and thus enlighten those who were misled in the spelling.

Again the Chartiers Valley area - did you know that Adios, the famed Bucephalus of the Meadowlands Farm, commands a stud fee of \$15,000? This month's edition of Hoof Beats Magazine, a publication devoted to harness horse and those who breed such fine animals, mentions the fact in an advertisement of the Hanover Shoe Farms, of Hanover, PA.

Hanover is part of the syndicate that now owns Adios, and the knowledge that such an animal thrives well in the environment of Washington County, points to our being a future Blue Grass region. We certainly must have a favorable climate for such husbandry, when we can produce the most valuable harness pacer in the world...Look for more rural farms to adopt horse breeding in the West-Sylvania Corner.

Uptown in Washington, the old Auld Hotel is fast disappearing from the local scene. And in the midst of the throes the similar fate that overtook the Monongahela House, that once overlooked the busy wharf at Pittsburgh.

In the heyday of the steamboat on the Mon, the Monongahela House was a busy place...here, too, like the Auld Hotel, were many famous personages at one time or another. President Lincoln once stopped here, and for years afterward the bedroom he occupied was the center of the establishment's glamour. Too bad both hostelries could not have been preserved.

Truly, a grand portion of Washington County's past tumbles down along with the bricks and mortar that made up one of the most famous stops on the old National Pike - the Jackson Hotel or Auld House. It was formerly called Jackson in honor of that great general's visit in 1825.

# Survey of Historical Sites in West Virginia Launched

Rev. Clifford M. Lewis, S.J., assistant to the president of Wheeling College, has received another title, that of "Research Analyst, West Virginia Survey of Historical Sites for National Register."

In the latter position Fr. Lewis will undertake a state-wide search to select historical sites and objects that should be preserved from destruction by the building of new roads and dams.

The project will be financed by a substantial appropriation from the Mountain State Legislature and an additional sum from Federal funds.

Rev. Lewis is well-known to Northern Panhandle folks, and has been much in demand the past few years, as a learned speaker and authority on items of the past.

His "mission" is one that will do much for the preservation of area history for future generations. He is well-qualified for the job.

Father Lewis was born at Meadville and received his A.B. from Allegheny College in 1932. In 1935 he obtained his Master's Degree in Journalism from the University of Wisconsin. Before going to Wheeling College, he had done some anthropological study at Fordham University in 1953-54. He went to Wheeling as the advance agent for the Jesuit Order.

He has always been interested in history and archeology. With Fr. Albert J. Loomie, S.J., he co-authored a volume, "The Spanish Jesuit Mission in Virginia: 1570-1572." This was published by the North Carolina University Press in 1953 and won an award of merit given by the Society of State and Local History his year.

Fr. Lewis also has published several articles on the French and Indian Wars in Western Pennsylvania. A former president of the West Virginia Archeological Society, he is currently president of the Wheeling Historical Society and a charter member of the National Society for Historical Archeology founded last year.

Over the centuries, the Jesuit Order has contributed greatly to exploration and historical research, and Fr. Lewis and his project bring to mind one Jacques Marquette, a French Jesuit missionary and early explorer in America. Marquette discovered that the Mississippi River flowed into the Gulf of Mexico, and was one of the first white men to enter what is now the state of Illinois.

In 1673, Governor Louis Frontenac of Canada ordered Marquette and a fur trader, Louis Joliet, to go on a searching expedition to find a route to the Pacific Ocean. They eventually descended the Wisconsin River until they suddenly came upon a broad, majestic stream. It was the Mississippi. Marquette and party then went south on this river and later met with a peaceful group of Illinois Indians. The chief of the Redmen gave them a peace pipe or "calumet," which later was to save their lives. The occasion was an incident involving hostile Indians; but the sight of the Illinois peace pipe gave them amnesty.

Fr. Marquette was born in Laon, France, and became a Jesuit priest. His first missionary work was in Canada in 1666. He passed away in 1675, and was buried near present-day Ladington, Michigan. In 1895, the state of Wisconsin erected a likeness of him in the nation's capitol.



# Travelers Along National Pike

## Served Wide Variety of Home Made Beverages

Down along Main Street in Washington are two buildings that have a close alliance; the famed Bradford House of Whiskey Rebellion days, and the colonial-fronted state liquor store. They stand side by side.

If the fiery David Bradford of whiskey tax opposition were to come back today to his old residence; he would be a stunned man. The variety of concoctions next door and the tax load of the store's stock would bring forth this remark from Washington's most talked-about old-timer:

"Alexander Hamilton was a generous man. I should have stood in bed instead of taking off down-river for parts unknown; and waited for a job as clerk in one of these state liquor stores!"

On some days, the shelves of the state liquor store look like the interior of one of the super-markets. Colorful labels proclaim new and exotic drinks; fancy brochures list many local and imported products.

Not a good old-fashioned Monongahela Rye label among them.

All of which brings to mind, the type of drink that served the travelers through Washington in the old days of the National Pike. You had to have a cast iron body and a cast iron stomach to take both the state coach ride and the concoctions served at the many tavern stops from Cumberland to Wheeling.

It was a far cry from a pretty stewardess serving you a drink on a jet flight from Greater Pittsburgh International Airport to Florida.

Such home-made spirits as mead, or metheglin, hard cider, whistle-belly-vengeance, sack, rum, black-strap, Mimbo, Scotchem, and that big seller called "Flip," were up front at bars serving bone-aching passengers of the hard-riding stages when a stop was made at a roadside tavern.

Metheglin was concocted of fermented honey, herbs, and water. It has been made by every race and tribe on earth. At one time it had been a universal drink in England and later became a favorite of the American colonists. Kentucky was famous for it long before the present-day bourbon. In Virginia, entire plantations of honey locust were set out to insure a good supply of metheglin. The long beans of the locust were ground and mixed with honey, herbs and water, and fermented.

Cider, somewhat divorced in recent years from the alcoholic scene, was a real big staple, drink-wise. Cider found its colonial beginning in New England, where the vast orchards of Massachusetts and Connecticut supplied the juice.

At one time, all the colonists drank cider, old and young. It was a common drink at funerals, weddings, ordainings, vestry-meetings, and at church and barn raisings. Infants in arms drank mulled hard cider at night as a sleep-inducer; such a drink would kill a modern babe.

College students of those years gloried in it. Down at Morey's or Puritan Pete's. Old men began their day with a quart or more of hard cider. The distaff side of the colonial home drank her share, too. All those laboring in the fields drank it in great quantities, in what may have been called a "cider break."

Cider was first made by pounding the apples in a wooden mortar. Then rude mills with a spring board and heavy maul crushed the apples in a hollow log. Presses for cider-making came into being about

1650. Most famous hard cider was that product out of the state of Connecticut. Then, in 1721, the state of Massachusetts came on the scene with one village of forty families turning out three thousand barrels of the stuff in one year. Judge Joseph Wilder of Lancaster, Massachusetts, made six hundred and sixteen barrels in the year 1728. Cider soon became cheap and was bought in great quantities for pennies. Cider-royal was made by boiling four barrels of cider into one barrel, increasing its potency as a spirit.

Another "home-made" drink was "whistle-belly-vengeance." This was made with sour household beer simmered in a kettle, sweetened with molasses, filled with crumbs of "ryneinjun" bread, and taken piping hot. This term had an old English source. Old-time AA members may have favored this as a cure for heavy drinking.

Sack was a name given to sweet wines from many places, mostly sherry, and came from such areas as Portugal, Spain and the Canary Islands. Sack became almost as cheap as cider.

Run, the liquor associates with pirate days, was also a big item of sale in early-day America. It was always linked with travel and tavern comfort. Made in large quantities from sugar cane or molasses, it too, soon became a "cheap" drink in the colonies.

One man in 1750 wrote the following about rum and Boston: "The quantity of spirits which they distill in Boston from the molasses they import is as surprising as the cheapness at which they sell it, under two shillings a gallon - Madeira wine and rum punch are the liquors they drink in common."

President John Adams once remarked: "If the ancients drank wine as our people drink rum and cider, it is no wonder we hear of so many possessed with devils." But don't be misled; Adams was one of those early morning drinkers of hard cider, before beginning a hard day at the presidential office.

An off-shoot of rum was "blackstrap." This was a mixture of rum and raw molasses. Casks of it stood in every country store and tavern, sometimes with a salted cod-fish hung alongside, to sort of increase the thirst of the viewer.

Mimbo was a drink made of rum and loaf-sugar, with a dash of water.

Scotcherm, a name that sounds like a whiskey, was far from it. This was apple-jack and boiling water, fortified with a dash of ground mustard. This would bring tears to the eyes of a hardened stoic.

Then there was "flip." Ah! That romantic beverage of the old Pike and tavern days.

It was known as a truly American drink. Its chief ingredient was beer and made in a large pewter mug or earthen pitcher. Along with the beer, it was sweetened with sugar, molasses, or dried pumpkin, and flavored with a gill of New England rum. Into this mixture was thrust a red-hot loggerhead, or poker made of iron; the hot iron making the liquid foam and bubble. After this operation of the heated iron, the mess was supposed to have a burnt, bitter taste dearly loved by travelers on the old pike.

One man in Canton, Massachusetts, had a special feeling for flip. He mixed together a pint of cream, four eggs, and four pounds of sugar, to be added to his special brand of flip. Four large spoonfuls of this calorie-laden "extra" brought eh froth boiling over the edge of the mug. In all taverns, the "loggerhead" was kept warm in the fireplace, ready for quick heating on a bed of coals, to burn into a drink of fresh flip for a customer.

One curious party in recent times ran across an old and time-tested formula for flip. Ah! Here was a chance to really find out how the inner man of modern times would react to the famous brew. Alas, they were disappointed at the result. No glow here; just a badly scorched drink and a rank bitterness from the head of the poker. Ugh!

Why was such a disgusting, bitter tasking brew so popular in Turnpike days?

Dr. George M. Briggs, chairman of the Dept. of Nutrition at the University of California t Berkeley, may have found the answer. Dr. Briggs is of the opinion that modern families do not get enough iron in their diet with the new coated cookware we use. So he recommends an old-fashioned iron skilled to cook in. Without iron cookware: "it is difficult for the average American to meet his iron needs with a typical diet. If you could grind up an iron nail find enough, you could use that as your supplement. I don't recommend it, but it's the same principle as scraping the bottom of an iron pot.

Or plunging a hot iron poker into a mug of flat beer.

Plenty of iron scale to keep early Americans in good health.

## Tourist Attractions - West Virginia

Recently, in this corner, we mentioned the blank side of the overhead highway sign near Independence. Since that time, numerous folks have inquired as to what tourist attractions nearby West Virginia, or The Mountain State, might have to offer the visitor from Pennsylvania.

The answer - many things within a short driving distance from Washington and environs. We will thus list a few such "traveler's goodies" available to the motoring tri-state resident. All of these are in a driving distance of from 60 to 100 miles from "Little Washington".

First off, there is the railroad buffs delight: The Cass Scenic Railroad, at Cass, Pocahontas County. Here you may ride a steam-powered "Shay" locomotive through the beautiful Monongahela National Forest. It is open until Labor Day, every day. After Labor day, week-end openings are in effect. Also at Cass is the Cass Civil War Museum, open until October 27 from 9 AM to 6 PM.

On the way back from Cass, you might stop at French Creek, Upshur County. This is the site of the famous French Creek Game Farm. Admission is free to a 300-acre roadside park featuring animals and birds, many of them native to West Virginia.

In the Charleston area, the mansion "Sunrise" is a must to visit. This was once the home of a Mountain State governor and is Charleston's pride and joy. The 36-room dwelling is now filled with works of art, exhibits, a children's museum-zoo, and a modern planetarium. It is open every day except Monday.

For amateur of "ham" radio devotees, there is the State American Radio Relay League Amateur Radio Convention at Weston, Jackson County, July 5 to 6. Actual site in the area: Jackson's Mill.

There are many more attractions current in the Mountain State. The above are not too distant from Washington, PA. But if you care to travel further into West Virginia, with several days to browse, here's what you might see: Harper's Ferry National Historic Park, at Harper's Ferry. It is loaded with John Brown lore. Or the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine, Beckley, Raleigh County. This is a tour through a "real" coal mine, along with an exhibit of mining equipment. Or the "Coal House," at White Sulphur Springs. This is the only inhabited house in the United States made of "Black Diamonds".

## West Middletown

Never was the countryside of Washington County as verdant and green as this past summer. Plenty of rain, very little activity on the part of tentworms, robins, fat and sleek, and fine weather in which to take the family browsing through the hills and valleys of the West-Sylvania Country.

Recently, we took a drive out toward West Middletown and deep into the back area of Claysville. On the way out a stop was made at Bill Huston's antique shop, formerly the old France Hotel...here many of the items of the fine past of Middletown are preserved and a movement is afoot to preserve more of this fascinating old village that holds so much pertinent history of Washington County.

Further out Route 31, we came by Pheobe Acheson Murdock's place. Pheobe, a person who welcomes anyone to stop and discuss Middletown and Washington County history, in general, had several fine horses grazing in her lot and gave the quaint town a fine pastoral topping as we left.

Have you ever seen the magnificent view from the West Middletown area? Almost 360 degrees of panorama is to be had from anywhere in the town.

A mile or so out of town is the Breezy Heights section. Here we turned left and found a spot where the owner of a telescope might set up shop and enjoy an afternoon of miles and miles of rolling countryside brought up close. Down in the valley sat toy farms and picturesque country lanes - a beautiful sight that makes one wonder why natives journey to other States to witness such sights. We have them all here in Pennsylvania.

And red brick farmhouses? We have a million of them...all said and lacy with age, built around 1800 and just waiting for someone with appreciation to come along and mother them with paint and "fixin' up".

Back of Claysville, after turning off at the church toward the Williams Holmes McGuffey Memorial, we were treated to the sight from the ridge further up, of a distant thunderstorm forming in the hills to the south...and through it all the pattern of green fields and lush trees dressed in matronly beauty.

On the way back, after going to the depth of Wheeling Creek and Majorsville, we blessed the Legislature that provided the roadside tables and picnic spots that dot Pennsylvania's highways at present. These were a much-needed item for many years, and give a family group a touch of "the good old summertime" that grandfathers often spoke of...And if you have a basket of fried chicken in the rear of the car, Delmonico's nor the fabulous Tony Pastor's could have matched the fine atmosphere of eating alongside a Pennsylvania "clean stream." And we do have them in portion of Washington County.

A word must be said concerning the new and attractive signs that herald your approach to a village on any of our highways...the signs are rectangular" and are in colors of blue and gold and designate each town as "The Village of..." or "Borough of..." A forward step toward making out-of-stater's conscious of our fine facets of interest to the tourist.

The most outstanding portion of the trip to the outermost reaches of the County on our tour? The sight of the barns covered at both ends with the grand old Mail Pouch insignia! "Treat Yourself To The Best"...A standby in rural areas for many years, the best way to keep weather out of a barnside is to put up a commercial. I think we all love the sight of the tobacco sign. It is as American as the hot dog and the ball game.

# West Virginia Boundaries

Ever hear of the state of "Westsylvania?" Or the fact that the nearby state of West Virginia may have just as easily become the 14th member of the colonies instead of the 35th in the Union?

It all goes back to the days when the clean cut outline of the Keystone State, in its southwest portion, was an open, festering sore of contention. And the boundary line was a nebulous outline of constant friction between the French, English, Indian, Virginian and Pennsylvanian.

Most uninformed folks believe that West Virginia became a separate state due to conflicts arising from the Civil War. Nothing could be further from the truth.

As far back as Revolutionary War days, the natives of the western portion of Virginia were caught in the middle of a gigantic squeeze-play, or boundary dispute, between the land regions of Virginia and Pennsylvania. Although originally included in the far-flung boundaries of Virginia, along with Kentucky, part of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, West Virginia was never a part of the Old Dominion, except in name.

The above-mentioned boundary of the two states, which bounced around like a freshly caught eel prior to 1774, had been a great subject of controversy, bloody and political. Thus the western Virginia inhabitants found themselves part of a "no man's" land of pioneer times.

In the previously mentioned year of 1774, the hassle began to assume a threatening aspect of bitterness and was intensified when Pennsylvania included all the disputed territory under her jurisdiction. This took in the major portion of present West Virginia land.

Prime cause of the boundary mess was the indefinite character of the charter granted to Virginia in 1606 by James I of England, and to William Penn, of "Penn's Woods" fame, in 1681 by Charles II. Loyalties often swayed back and forth as the inclination came upon the settlers. Both grantees established land offices and sold the same land at different rates. The Virginia price being \$25 less on 100 acres.

Also in 1774, Governor Dunmore of Virginia appointed the unpopular John Connolly governor of West Augusta, which covered the territory of western Virginia. This too, did not set well with the "Free Mountaineers."

The colonies at this time, were on the verge of war with England, (the American Revolution) and something had to be done to insure a degree of unity in the coming strife. The people therefore petitioned the Continental Congress to make a new state of the disputed and much-wrangled over land. Had this been the 14th state, and part of the early colony unit.

Again, in 1776, a similar petition for a new state was presented to Congress by one Hon. Jasper Yeats, and it proposed that the new state be called "Westsylvania." But it was to be almost a century before any action toward separate statehood was taken.

At the time, some people were not in favor of the formation of a new state. A conservative element, they felt that they owed much to Virginia for defense and protection in the past, and that such a move of internal nature would weaken them in the struggle for freedom against England. Slowed down by the turn of events, the advocates of the "new state" policy then distributed circulars suggesting a division of the various districts of the territory, along with the selection of delegates to a convention at which representatives to Congress might be chosen.

This too, was unsuccessful and the question hung fire until, finally in 1863, the name "West Virginia" was chosen, and the long-disputed territory came into its own as the 35th state in the Union.

In the earlier days, before Mason and Dixon, it was indeed "the dark and bloody ground" - if the term can be borrowed. Today, the old wounds of the boundary dispute are healed and no scars remain.

Other names bandied about at the time of the separate state issue were "Vandalia" and "Kanawah."

## *Sometimes You Could Cry*

When I taught English in high school and savagely assigned kids to memorize poetry, for some reason I could never fathom, many of them stumbled through Sara Teasdale's shortie about life having bitterness to sell. Or give. Or something. I haven't read the poem in years. It came back to me the other day after the mail was in. Here among the letters was one from Jim Mullooly in Pittsburgh. He wanted to know what I thought about the installments he had been sending me of his biography of our border hero, Adam Poe. I sat down at the typewriter and answered him at once. I liked the series and was waiting for all of them to be finished before I started them, I told him. Slip betwixt cup and the lip, I said. Two days before there'd come another one from Jim, one with a picture of a farmer who attached a stool to his backside for efficient milking of his cows. I marked it for the paper and had read proof on it. For ten or fifteen years, a steady stream of mail came from Jim Mullooly two, three, sometimes four times a week. Much of it contained stories which were printed. All of it couldn't have been. The paper would have been called the Jim Mullooly Gazette. I met him but once. He then lived in the Northern Panhandle and he came to hear me speak in Wheeling one evening. When he moved to Pittsburgh, he became a kind of one-man Gideon Society and passed out copies of Hillbilly to Pittsburghers. I sent him twenty copies a week, and when we recently started cutting off "dead wood," and cut him off, he squawked and we put him back on. As I say I had this letter from him in the mail, which wasn't unusual. And then I opened the last envelope. It too, was from Pittsburgh. It contained a printed obituary. It was a Jim Mullooly message, but he hadn't sent it. And he won't ever be sending anything more. Sara Teasdale was right and the kids in my classes were right because life does have bitterness in store. Goodbye, old pen pal.

Jim Comstock, Editor of The West Virginia Hillbilly