

Carroll History Journal

Historical Society of Carroll County, Maryland

THE HOFF BARN: YOST GREENWOOD'S LEGACY

by Pat Brodowski

A Slave Remembers

The wizened old woman looked with clear eyes upon historian Thomas Scharf and declared, "If my health weren't so bad, I could do more work than any woman in the county!" The year was 1881 and Nancy Sanders, a former slave, told the historian she was 114 years old. "About the time the first wa' with the English closed I came to Carroll [then Frederick] County, on Sam's Creek. Then I was sixteen years old." Scharf was impressed: "Her mind seems clear on all subjects, except she thinks some one has put a 'spell' on her." Nancy and her owner, a stone mason named George Robeson, had come from Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, to build stone houses, including one for Yost Greenwood, a house that still stands on what is now Hoke Road, about a mile and a half southwest of New Windsor, between Sam's Creek Road and Hawk's Mill Road. Nancy Sanders remembered that house vividly and in 1885 told its story to fifteen-year-old John H. Hoff, who lived nearby.

During the two years it took to build the house with its two-foot-thick stone walls, Nancy cooked the meals for the mason's other slaves. She also drove the oxen, which pulled the "lizard," a forked tree used to drag the large indigenous greenish foundation stones down from the hill facing the house site. To protect the interior from the prevailing winds and help capture the

warmth of the rising sun, Robeson "banked" or dug the foundation hole for the home into the hillside. One wall was fully underground, the opposite wall was exposed, and the side walls were half-covered by the slope. As the house walls gradually grew higher with each new course of stone, the mason's men would pile logs against the uphill side of the wall, creating a ramp upon which Nancy would drive her ox cart. Eventually, she would reach the dizzying height of two-stories above the hillside.

Nancy was surely one of the oldest people in Maryland; hers is a first-hand account of slave labor in early years after the American Revolution; and the stone house she helped build for Yost Greenwood



Yost Greenwood's stone house, c.1786. Photo by Pat Brodowski.

was until recently accompanied by a log barn even older than the house itself.

For more than two hundred years, the “Marlin K. Hoff Memorial Log Barn,” as it is now known, stood in the farm field, a unique survivor among barns for it was constructed from almost one hundred hand-hewn oak logs. When the barn faced probable decay, its late owner, Marlin K. Hoff (1938-2004), inspired a citizen committee to save the historic structure by relocating it to the Carroll County Farm Museum in

Westminster. The Hoff Barn Committee raised funds and hired restoration contractors to dismantle it in January 2008. In that summer they built a new, historically accurate stone foundation on which they laid the first log in October. The rest of the logs, carefully preserved, will return as walls and chambers this spring and the reconstructed barn is anticipated to open later in 2009. As an educational exhibit at the museum, the Hoff Barn will become a lens through which visitors can view farm life from the time of the Revolution through the mid-1800s, including German emigration and the pioneering movement westward, the acquisition and distribution of land, the choice of crops to grow, the use of slave labor, service in the early militia, and how farm families created the Carroll County we know today.

Marlin Hoff's great grandfather, Samuel M. Hoff, originally from York County, Pennsylvania, returned from the Civil War in 1865 as a veteran of the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade. He purchased a ninety-acre home farm along what is today Hawk's Hill Road, in 1866. His neighbor to the south was Peter Greenwood, living on a farm of about 157

acres that included the log barn and stone farmhouse built by his grandfather Yost Greenwood a century before. Greenwood and Hoff shared political views; while Samuel was serving in the Union army, Peter

had hidden horses from the rebels in his stone smokehouse. When Peter died without descendants in 1887, Samuel purchased his log barn, stone farmhouse, and land to add to his own farm.

This is the story of the Greenwoods, the family that built the barn and lived for four generations along a little stream that flows south into Sam's Creek.



Marlin K. Hoff and his prize heifer Kewpie.
Photo courtesy of Kathleen Hoff.

Who Were the Greenwoods?

The family patriarch, Philip Greenwood (c.1720-1780), and his wife Catharine (c.1727-1795) emigrated from Germany to Pennsylvania probably during the 1740s. Hundreds of Germans like them had sailed north on the Rhine to the port of Rotterdam and then to Philadelphia; by 1775 one-third of the Pennsylvania population was German. Learning of a vast acreage as fertile as in their homeland, the newly arrived Germans moved away from the city in a pattern generally flowing west and south: from Pennsylvania into Maryland and following the Shenandoah Valley south eventually as far as Tennessee. The part of Maryland that was Frederick County (the eastern part of which would become Carroll County in 1837) seemed familiar: low rolling hills that could be farmed by oxen, fresh water running in shallow streams, and dense forests of oak for building homes and barns.

The Greenwood name describes the family relationship to nature. Back in Germany, Philip's

Philip GREENWOOD (c. 1720-1780) Blacksmith

m. 1748 Catharine _____ (c. 1727-1795)

Children:

1. Johann Adam GREENWOOD (1749-by 1790) Probably not competent.
2. **Yost (or Joseph) GREENWOOD** (1752-1828)
m. c. 1772 Maria Margaret ENGLEMAN (c. 1749-1812) 5 children
3. Philip GREENWOOD (1755-1842) He moved west, eventually to Indiana.
m.(1) c. 1781 Maria _____ (?-by 1788) 1 child
m.(2) 1788 Sarah _____ (c. 1764-living 1843) 1 child
4. Maria Magdalena (or Margaret) GREENWOOD (1758-1841)
m. by 1779 Frederick George SNIDER (?-by 1841)
5. Susannah GREENWOOD (1760-1834)
m. c. 1781 Johann Heinrich NICODEMUS (?-1835)
6. Anna Maria GREENWOOD (c. 1762-1828)
m. after 1779 Andrew HULL, Jr. (1754-1816)
7. Barbara GREENWOOD (c. 1764-1828)
m. by 1782 Jacob HULL (1755-1843+)

Table 1: Family of Philip Greenwood (c. 1720-1780)

Philip Greenwood worked as a blacksmith, an essential and profitable trade on the frontier. Every metal item was created or repaired by a blacksmith. Smiths were also farriers, who made and attached shoes for horses and oxen to protect their hooves when pulling loads or plowing fields. Fresh iron ore, if not purchased from

surname would have been spelled “Grüne Walder,” meaning “Green Forests.” Philip and Catharine, who had traveled west through Pennsylvania to Littlestown by 1749, baptized their first son “Johann Adam Gruenwald.” In Maryland civil records, the spelling of Philip’s surname began to change: to “Greenwalt” in 1752, “Greenwald” in 1758, and “Greenwood” in 1759. But more Germanic spellings persisted in church records. He was “Grönewald” in a 1758 baptism record, and as late as 1801 his grandson John signed his name “Joh: Grönewalt.” Philip signed a 1770 deed “pbb greenWold,” and ten years later his tombstone displayed “Philib Grinawalter.” Philip and Catharine named their second son Yost, a Germanic first name that gradually changed into Joseph by 1795, as it appears on his mother’s will.

One can wonder if Philip and Catharine told their children the story of their journey from Littlestown with baby Johann Adam in about 1749 or 1750. Back then, the ox—it might have been the sturdy Milking Devon cattle which served as meat, milk and power for settlers—would have pulled a two-wheeled cart loaded with belongings as the family walked alongside. Traveling with them might have been the livestock—a horse, pigs, chickens, sheep—and seeds of tobacco, edible grains, and flax to sow. Philip mentioned his “Loom House” and Catharine’s spinning wheel in his 1779 will. Linsey-woolsey, woven of spun flax and wool, was the common textile of strength and warmth.

ironmongers, was found locally in swamps and combined with burnt lime into pig iron that could be forged into tools. Even today, swampy tributaries penetrate the Greenwood land. The need for weapons, wagons, and tools for soldiers made blacksmiths even more important during the American Revolution. By 1776, a trio of Greenwoods—Philip and his sons Yost and Philip, Jr.,—and at least one neighbor worked as blacksmiths. They were probably able to produce iron products in significant quantities.

Blacksmithing became a Greenwood legacy for at least four generations. Philip bequeathed his tools equally to his sons Yost and Philip. In his 1828 will, Yost divided his blacksmithing tools among his three sons John, Ludwick, and Philip. Fourteen years later his brother Philip died in Indiana and passed his tools to his son, Joseph. Ludwick passed his tools after his death in 1844 to his sons Uriah, Josiah, and David, who worked as farriers in Carroll County.

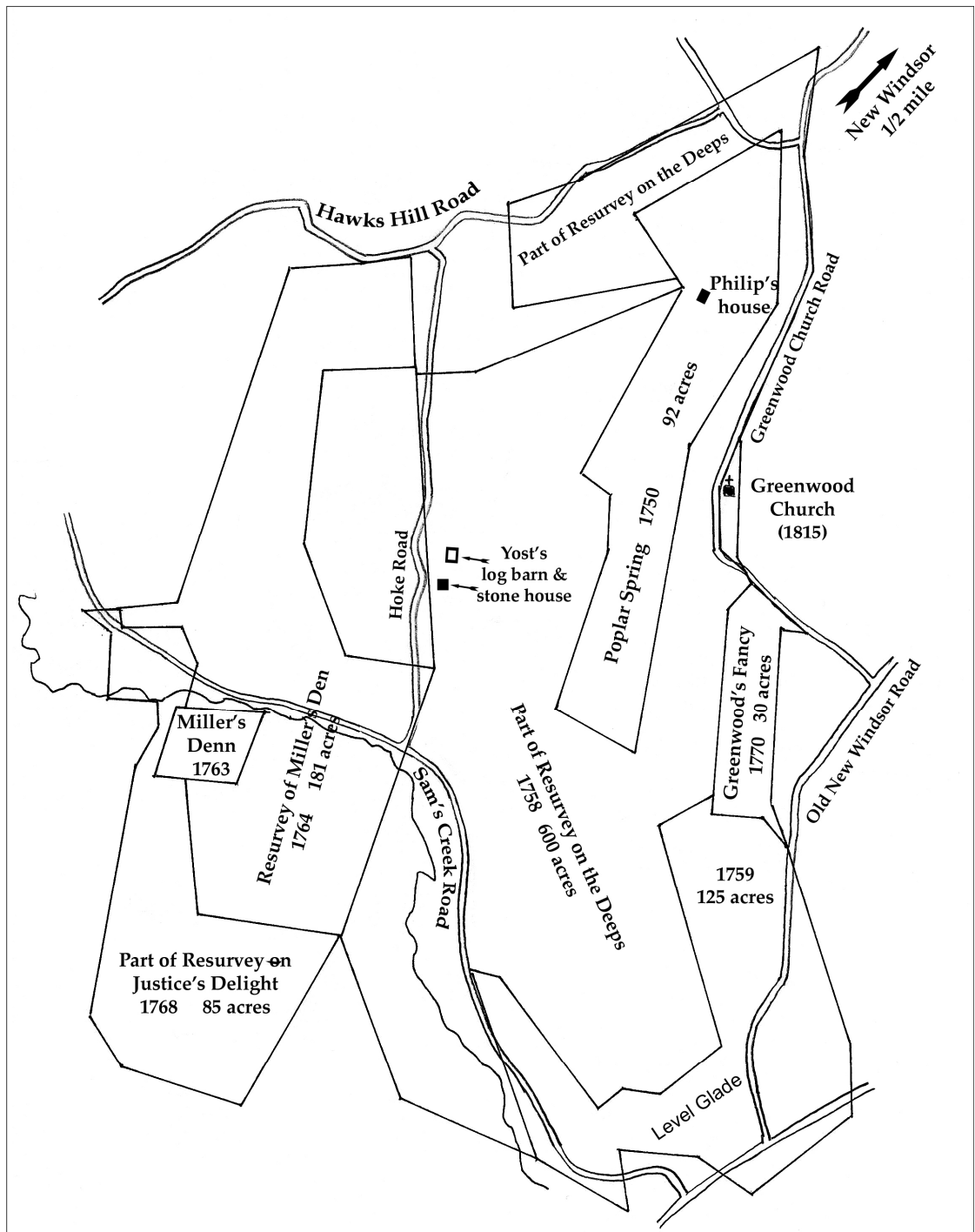
Land Purchases

Philip Greenwood probably anticipated providing his children with farmland of their own by dividing a large estate he would create for them. On June 1, 1750, Philip began with a 92-acre plot, surveyed for him in the valley just north of Sam’s Creek, a mile southwest of where Isaac Atlee would in 1797 lay out the village later known as New Windsor. Philip called the long and narrow lot *Poplar Spring*. The

family probably lived there even before Philip received the patent for the land in 1753, because his name first appears in the Frederick County records in March 1752, when he recorded his cattle mark, the pattern of notches and cuts made in the ear to identify his stock.

Eight years after he patented *Poplar Spring* in 1750, Philip showed signs of prosperity. He seemed to increase his acreage as often as Catharine brought a new child into the family (Table 1). Daughter Maria Magdalena, called Margaret in later years, was born in March 1758. Philip had “one hundred pounds Current Money” on hand in November 1758 to purchase an additional 600 acres from local miller Eberhart Apler, part of a large tract called *Resurvey on the Deeps*. The acreage Philip bought surrounded *Poplar Spring* like a glove,

and brought his farm to 692 acres. In April 1759 he bought 125 acres called *Level Glade*, bordering the southwest end of his land, for £43 from farmer William Roberts. Susannah was born in November 1760. Anna Maria was born about 1762; Philip bought 15 acres called *Miller's Denn* from Andrew Smith for £12 pounds in March 1763. Philip added 181 acres to *Miller's Denn* a month later, and patented it the following January, just about the time Barbara was born. *Resurvey on*



Philip Greenwood's land purchases, 1750-1770. Plat drawn by Sam Brainerd.

Millers Den included land on both sides of the densely meandering Sam's Creek that powered several small mills in the region.

One land purchase suggests Philip was growing tobacco. He bought 85 acres called *Resurvey of Part of Justice's Delight* that adjoined *Miller's Den* in 1768 from planter George Becraft for £125 pounds on June 21, 1768. To be called a planter generally

meant a man grew tobacco, and most planters employed slaves to give four to five thousand tobacco plants per acre the intensive cultivation they required. Ten days after Philip bought *Justice's Delight*, he paid Adam Fisher, a Frederick Town surgeon, £75 for a "Mulatto Man Slave called Cuffee." The inventory of Philip's estate recorded in 1780 showed tobacco was used for payment in place of cash: the register of wills noted 341 pounds of tobacco, worth almost £128.

In 1768, a century before public schools were mandated in Maryland, Philip sold a narrow four-acre strip of land south of his house at *Poplar Spring* to a company of a dozen neighbors who wished to build a schoolhouse. For almost fifty years this school educated the neighborhood children. In 1815, when most of the original company of neighbors "were dead or removed to the western country," the state legislature passed a law allowing part of the school lot to be sold so the remaining members could raise funds to erect a church. Today, the Greenwood Church still stands next to its cemetery on Greenwood Church Road. Many of Philip's descendants are interred there.

Philip's final land transactions took place in 1770. First, in July, he patented 30 acres called *Greenwood's Fancy*, bordering the east side of his homestead. Two weeks later, in August, he sold off 192 acres at the south end of his property to Abram Welty, a neighboring farmer.

Dividing the Estate

It had taken Philip Greenwood twenty years to patent, buy, and sell acreage to create an estate of 932 acres. At his death in 1780, his wealth was inventoried at £13,292, about \$2 million today. According to his will, his wife Catherine received a life estate in one third of his property, as well as a bed, a milking cow, a mare, a spinning wheel, and the "Negro Girl Bell." The rest of the estate was divided among Philip's seven children. Johann received only clothing and was remanded to the care of his brother Yost, probably because he was not competent to care for himself. Maria Magdalena and her husband, Frederick George Snider, received the 266 acres comprising the resurveys of *Miller's Den* and *Justice's Delight*. The three single daughters,

Susannah, Anna Maria, and Barbara, received money and important household fixtures such as stoves (iron-plate boxes for heating the house) and Philip's clock (presumably in a tall case). All three single sisters married within two years of their father's death: Susannah to Johann Heinrich Nicodemus, Anna Maria to Andrew Hull, Jr., and Barbara to Andrew Hull's brother Jacob. Philip left Barbara the slave Bell's "Increase" (that is, her children).

Philip divided the remaining 666 acres of the homestead between his two younger sons, Yost and Philip, Jr. The latter received the northern portion, consisting of *Poplar Spring* and that part of the *Deeps* surrounding it. But Philip probably knew his youngest son, who had fought in the Revolution (see the following story), had inherited the same spirit of opportunity that had brought him across the Atlantic some four decades earlier: along with the land, Philip bequeathed his namesake essential farming and blacksmith tools, plus "my bay mare and yearling colt, a saddle," and a "small plantation wagon." Less than two years after his father died, the younger Philip had moved his wife Mary and daughter Catherine to Berkeley County, Virginia, the first stop on a series of moves that would take him through Kentucky and into Indiana. He sold his part of the family farm to Jacob Hull, who had married his youngest sister Barbara.

Yost Greenwood Builds a Log Barn

Yost Greenwood, unlike his younger brother, stayed in Maryland his entire life. His father had willed him the southern 300 acres of the *Deeps*, upon which section Yost and his bride, Maria Margaret Englemann, had probably been living ever since their marriage in about 1772. Their first house was probably built of logs and likely accompanied by a log barn, perhaps the same barn being reconstructed at the Carroll County Farm Museum. Log buildings were common enough back then. The 1798 tax assessment for District Three of Frederick County—the area that would become Carroll County—lists 248 log houses, along with 218 log barns.

There is no oral history about the log barn, so structural features must tell the story. The stone foundation was of three walls banked into the hillside. A fourth wall of wooden stable doors faced

the morning sun. The builders framed a small door in the stone wall facing the house and three windows with vertical wooden bars high in the walls for ventilation. They set a heavy three-peg rack to hold harnesses into the wall opposite the door. Once the foundation was complete, they packed an earthen ramp against it to allow wagons to drive into the barn. A massive summer log beam ran from both foundation walls across stone pillars to support the structure of the log barn above.



Yost Greenwood's log barn before deconstruction and removal to its new site at the Carroll County Farm Museum. Photo by Pat Brodowski.

Carpenters cut logs and placed them according to Sweitzer tradition, a blend of Swiss and German techniques. In the Greenwood barn, they stacked notched logs into two individual square structures called pens, each nine logs high that would hold sheaves of dried grain. They laid a central threshing floor, of two-foot-wide tongue-and-groove planks, two inches thick, between the pens for flailing, or hand-beating, the sheaves in winter months. The long floorboards extended out beyond the thirty-two-foot foundation to create a forebay, a floor and roof overhanging the animal yard and stable doors on the sunny side of the barn. Yost would toss hay down to

his cows through doors in the forebay. Atop both pens, four additional fifty-foot logs ran the entire length of the barn, to tie the pens and floor into one rectangular whole. The builders pegged the rafters into notches in the topmost logs and pitched the roof from the walls at forty-five degrees. On the banked side, they hung heavy doors from hinges inserted into round holes bored into the underside of the lowest full-length beam. The doors swung out to allow Yost to drive wagons filled with sheaves and hay up the earthen ramp and into the barn and onto the threshing floor.

Logs cut for a barn were generally used within a year because the fresh sap aided smoothing, or hewing, the two opposing sides. If a carpenter did not remove the bark first, he swung axe several inches through the bark and into the wood to make a series of parallel cuts. Then he swung the broadaxe, flat on one side and held by a handle that curved away from his body, horizontally against the axe cuts to chip the bark and wood away. The carpenters usually did this large-scale work in the forest, where they saved chips of wood and bark in

piles to be sold to the local tanner, who extracted the tannins from oak to soften leather hides.

Glenn James, who is in charge of reconstructing the Hoff Barn on the campus of the Carroll County Farm Museum, has recently examined the hewn marks of the axe and broadaxe in the barn's old timbers. Noting varying levels of craftsmanship, he has determined that at least four people worked on the barn's logs. Two feet from the end of each log, measured with a handle or axe blade, they cut V-shaped notches. Gravity pulled the notches of the stacked logs together. There were no nails. Unlike the hewn logs that were stacked on notches,

Yost Greenwood's barn rafters were of sawn timber, probably from logs driven downhill to a mill on Sam's Creek. The structure that supports the roof is made of posts and beams held together with wooden pegs. Before 1800, carpenters crafted each post one by one with a matching beam and used their axes to inscribe Roman numerals for workmen to follow when they reassembled each unit atop the pens, some thirty feet in the air. In the Greenwood rafters, Glenn James has noticed very unusual "maker's marks." Instead of numerals, they appear as strange symbols, as if to map architectural detail for workmen who spoke different languages. Another unusual mark appears three times on a single beam: a six-pointed compass rose, about two inches in diameter. This is the most common Pennsylvania German decoration easily crafted using a compass, and someone etched one on the gravestone of Yost's father, Philip.

Yost Greenwood Builds a Farm and a Family

A log house would have suited Yost and Maria just fine during the early years of their marriage, with only their son John, born in 1773, to care for. But after his father's death, Yost's family began to grow. Ludwick arrived first, in 1780, followed by Philip in 1783 and Magdalena (or Margaret) a year or two after that (Table 2). Moreover, compared to the average size farm of about 185 acres, Yost's 300-acre spread practically insured he would be a successful German farmer. In the post-Revolutionary era, such farmers built homes of stone to announce their wealth and permanence.

The exact year that Yost hired mason George Robeson to build his two-story stone home remains in doubt. The best evidence we have is Nancy



Glenn James, of Craftwright, Inc., hews an oak log for the barn restoration. Photo by Pat Brodowski.

Sanders's story that she was fifteen when she drove the oxen that hauled the stones to build the walls. Yet Nancy's exact age is difficult to pin down. In his *History of Western Maryland*, Scharf said she was 114 in 1881. But his list of people in the New Windsor area older than seventy in 1879 lists her as 110. She told John Hoff she was 115 in 1885. The

1880 census of Frederick County has her at age 108. The 1870 census says 90, but that figure could well have been rounded off. All in all, her birth year was probably about 1771, which implies, in turn, that Yost Greenwood's house and probably the adjacent stone spring house were started in about 1786. If,

Yost (or Joseph) GREENWOOD (1752-1828)

m. c. 1772 Maria Margaret ENGELMANN(?) (c. 1749-1812)

Children:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. John GREENWOOD (1773-1850) | |
| m. 1801 Anna Barbara SCHUEY (1781-1855) | 8 children |
| 2. Ludwick GREENWOOD (1780-1844) | |
| m. 1815 Catharine SCHUEY (1796-1875) | 8 children |
| 3. Philip GREENWOOD (1783-1849) | |
| m. 1814 Maria BAILE (1795-1874) | 8 children |
| 4. Magdalena (or Margaret) GREENWOOD (c. 1784-?) | |
| m. 1806 George KEEFER or KIEFER | 2 children |
| 5. Elizabeth GREENWOOD (1795-1837) | Unmarried |

Table 2: Family of Yost Greenwood (1752-1828), son of Philip

as Nancy Sanders said, the house took two years to build, it was finished well before Yost’s fifth and last child, Elizabeth, was born in 1795.

A glimpse of life with five children in the two-story farmhouse can be gleaned from the items Yost mentioned in his 1828 will. To his daughters Magdalena, who had married George Keefer in 1806, and Elizabeth, who remained unmarried, he gave bedsteads and bedding. The bedding was probably all produced on their farm: thick ticks, or mattresses, of woven check, stuffed with down feathers from their chickens, plus linen sheets woven from flax grown, spun, and woven on the farm; and probably bed curtains, too. There was a loom house mentioned in Yost's father's will, and every young girl in that era wove the family linens.

Perhaps Magdalena had a penchant for cooking: Yost bequeathed her two iron pots, which were bowl-bottomed with stubby feet to hold them above hot coals. These were also called stew pots and had flared rims to hold close-fitting tin lids. She received a Dutch oven, in which she would have baked the staple pumpernickel called Rye-and-Indian Bread. This brown bread recipe mixed flours of whole wheat with rye (a grain, tolerant of varied growing conditions, brought to America by the German immigrants) or cornmeal (Indian meal) and took six hours to bake in the iron pot with hot coals on top and beneath. Dutch ovens also baked pies of fruit, nuts, or various sweet fillings. Some type of pie was served at nearly every Pennsylvania German meal. To Magdalena Yost also gave Dennis, who would be a slave until he turned twenty-eight, and money to her two sons. Yost gave his eldest son, John, the large copper kettle, an expensive item essential for cooking apples into a thick paste called apple

butter, savored more than dairy butter by German farmers who spread it heavily on their dark bread. John also received the boy Harry as a slave for life.

The Greenwood Farm Becomes the Hoff Farm

When Yost Greenwood died in 1828, ownership of his home farm passed to the youngest of his three sons, Philip, the third Greenwood to bear that name. Philip had married Maria Baile in 1814 and with her had at least eight children (Table 3). Of the four sons who lived to adulthood, John became a merchant, Joseph Baile took up milling, and Abraham moved west, eventually reaching Iowa. Their youngest son, Peter, remained at home in a common pattern of farm inheritance in America. Older sons marry and move to land of their own. The youngest son finds himself the likely one to inherit the family farm. The pattern held true for Peter's father and in 1849, at age twenty-four, he took over management of the stone house with its log barn. But Peter never married. Instead, he and his widowed mother, Maria, lived in the stone house accompanied by servants and farm laborers.

When Peter Greenwood died in 1887, his last will and testament instructed his executor to auction the 157 acres surrounding the stone house and log barn to the highest bidder. For the first time in almost 130 years someone other than a Greenwood would own

Philip GREENWOOD (1783-1849)			
m. 1814	Maria BAILE (1795-1874)		
Children:			
1.	John GREENWOOD (1817-1878)	Merchant.	
	m. 1843	Ann M. DEVILBISS (1823-1907)	no children
2.	Joseph (Joe) Baile GREENWOOD (1819-1883)	Miller	
	m. c. 1845	Adah Zela (or Adazilla) DEVILBISS (1820-1906)	no children
3.	Abraham GREENWOOD (c. 1821-living 1870)	of Franklin, Carroll County	
	m. 1846	Caroline S. SCHUEY (c. 1828-living 1870)	
	<i>[This family moved to Canton Twp., Benton Co. Iowa, by 1870]</i>		
4.	Peter GREENWOOD (1823-1887)		Unmarried
5.	Ann Maria GREENWOOD (1828-1865)		
	m. 1850	Adam A. DEVILBISS (1823-1908)	5 children
	[He m(2). 1867 Alverdia Josephine LOOKINGBILL		4 children]
6.	Mary Catherine GREENWOOD (c. 1830-?)		
	m. 1854	Lewis Henry HOFFMAN (?-?)	
7.	Levi GREENWOOD (1832-1835)		
8.	Sophia GREENWOOD (1833-1875)		
	m. 1854	David W. SNADER (1829-1877)	

Table 3: Family of Philip GREENWOOD (1783-1849), son of Yost

this farm. The highest bidder was Peter's neighbor, Samuel M. Hoff.

Inscriptions

Over time, several Greenwood and Hoff family members etched mementoes into the house and the barn. Yost's son Philip inscribed his initials, "P G," in a stone in the porch wall of the house, adding the year "1804," perhaps in celebration of turning twenty-one, the age of majority. His brother Ludwick was older when he etched his own initials, "L.G." on May 25, 1813. More than a century later Edwin Hoff, Samuel Hoff's grandson, added his initials, too. He tapped a series of holes into a beam on the right side of the threshing floor in the log barn: "E .D. H. Aug 25, 1920." In the plaster of the cellar wall of the house, he scribed "E. D. H. Sept 5, 1922," leaving his own mysterious marks for posterity.

By fortunate circumstance, the barn Yost Greenwood built more than two centuries ago will help modern visitors to the Carroll County Farm Museum experience farm life of the past, learn how German

emigrants settled the area, see antique building techniques, feel the excitement of serving in the American Revolution (see following story), and understand the toil of a slave who helped build his house and decided her experience should be saved for future generations. Yost died in 1828, and is buried just across the field in the family's Greenwood Cemetery. His log barn has become his legacy, and our portal into eighteenth-century America.

We are indebted to Rev. Priscilla Normandy Greenwood, who enthusiastically shared the results of her tenacious investigation into the ancestry of her husband, Dr. Gordon Greenwood, a direct descendant of Philip Greenwood. In turn, she benefited from the seminal research of Dixie Kline Richardson, whose own efforts have too often been overlooked. Sam Brainerd assisted the author with research and maps. All sources are available upon request.



Edwin D. Hoff's initials in the log barn. Photo by Pat Brodowski.

IN WASHINGTON'S SERVICE:

THE FREDERICK FLYING CAMP SERVICE OF PHILIP GREENWOOD

by Pat Brodowski

When the idea of Revolution began to form in the minds of American leaders in 1775, they expected the British to retaliate with force. Although thousands of hearty men enlisted to form the Continental Army, George Washington desired a special, highly mobile force to serve under his direct command. This band of rough and ready men, enlisted for short terms, was the Flying Camp, and it was created just before the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

From the countryside of Maryland, hundreds of men like Philip Greenwood (1755-1842), the youngest son of farmer Philip Greenwood of New Windsor, chose to enlist in the Flying Camp. Fifty-six years later, he appeared as an aged man at the Monroe County courthouse in Indiana to apply for the new national pension for Revolutionary War veterans. Philip's memory was clear, however, as he recounted serving George Washington "under his immediate personal view and command" at the surrender of Fort Mifflin in 1776 and the Battle of Germantown in 1777. Philip had joined thousands of able young men across the colonies who left farms and towns to receive precious little training before meeting the expert military forces of Britain. What he told investigators in 1832 to document his eligibility for the pension benefit is the basis for this article, corroborated by the stories told by other Flying Camp soldiers who survived as he did.

German Settlers Had Mixed Feelings

At the onset of the American Revolution, many German settlers like the Greenwoods (Grünwalds) tried to avoid the war. Some held a deep loyalty to the British stemming from the rescue of their ancestors by Queen Anne of Britain (1665-1714). The German exodus from their homeland along the Rhine began when Louis XIV of France displayed his power by approving the pillaging and burning of Palatinate villages between 1688 and 1697. In 1709, two months of arctic temperatures in France and Germany not only froze the Rhine River from shore to shore, but people and animals froze to death. Compassionate toward the Palatine Germans, Queen

Anne that year offered them citizenship in Britain for one shilling and alliance to the Protestant church. Now, some sixty years later, German settlements on Maryland soil were secure and farms were profitable. On the eve of American independence from Britain, Germans found themselves divided between Loyalist and Revolutionary: one-fifth of the American population were Loyalists. Some paid as much as fifty guineas (about half an average year's cash income) for a substitute to serve in their place. In Maryland a legislative decree required any person considered vagrant (one who neglected to pay his taxes) to serve for nine months. Historian Gary B. Nash notes: "These down and outers . . . were most likely to endure the awful conditions of camp life and battlefield gore. . . . It was only the poor, particularly the unmarried and young, who could stand up against England's professional army. The poor man's fight was the only fight that the Americans could wage." Philip Greenwood, young and single, enlisted voluntarily; his older brother Joseph managed to stay at their rural farm with his wife, children, father's family, and disabled brother.

The Flying Camp was a mobile strike force, similar to the Minutemen of New England, disbanded in 1775 to eliminate Loyalists within their ranks. Washington felt that, with such a force, he could strategically guard and defend the enormous coastline and land mass of the colonies from the inevitable British invasion.

The idea of the Flying Camp was approved June 3, 1776, by the Continental Congress and in Maryland by a hastily formed State Congress on June 21. Thomas Johnson, who would be elected Governor of Maryland nine months later, was the first brigadier-general who recruited and trained the regiments and attempted to procure armaments and provisions throughout the war, including ammunition, kettles, and cannon cast by his brother, Roger, at the Catocin Furnace near Frederick. Ten thousand men were enlisted for the first Flying Camp, including thirty-four hundred from Maryland, six thousand from Pennsylvania and six hundred from Delaware. Three companies were raised from Lower, Middle,

and Upper Frederick County, each with about eighty men. Nine companies formed a battalion; four battalions, or about three thousand men were expected, but the enlistments doubled by October 9, 1776.

Each Flying Camp officer had a quota of men to enlist: a Captain was to sign up at least thirty privates, a lieutenant recruited twenty, and an ensign, sixteen. By the end of June, Philip Greenwood was one of sixty-eight privates under Captain Valentine Creager and First Lieutenant Philip Smith, one of the three companies from Frederick County's Middle District. Greenwood's fellow soldiers included Christian Smith, William Slick, Thomas Parkinson (a substitute for Philip Cramer for two months), and Joseph Allsop, the company drummer. Musicians, being defenseless while striking the drum to keep troops marching together, were exempt from attack. They all might have witnessed a scene that became a legend: to choose their Captain, Creager and Smith tossed a coin. Smith won but gave the honor to Creager.

The soldiers were to be paid like the Continental Regulars who enlisted for three years, except their six-month term would end on the first of December, 1776. Upon enlistment, Greenwood said they "received eight dollars in Continental paper money," far less in value than gold or silver coin. They wore no uniform. Each man in the Flying Camp put on his own felt hat, a white or yellow hunting shirt, and blue or scarlet trousers or leather breeches. Some had a brown waistcoat, and all wore light-colored jackets or grey cloth coats. None of these clothes were suitable for winter duty.

The Frederick Flying Camp Departed

Creager's company rendezvoused and waited for arms, Philip said, at "Bentley's Tavern on the Frederick Town Road" which might have been the Bentley Tavern in Sandy Spring, on the way to

Baltimore. They finally departed for Philadelphia at the end of August 1776, wearing backpacks followed by wagons of "baggage" (tents and provisions) and marched from fifteen to twenty miles a day from the tavern along what is now called the Old Philadelphia Road for 123 miles to Philadelphia. Once there,

Thomas Parkinson said, they waited three weeks and probably received elementary military training for disciplined maneuvers on the battlefield. The 1st Maryland Battalion of the Flying Camp arrived from Annapolis, as described by its seventeen-year-old ensign, William Beatty: "On the third day of July I received my warrant, in seven days recruited my quota of men, marched for Philadelphia the 13th of August, where the company joined the regiment." It was September, and the Maryland Flying Camp boarded boats on the Delaware to go upriver thirty miles to Trenton and resume the march.



Like Philip Greenwood, volunteers in the Frederick Flying Camp wore their own hunting attire, pictured at left.

The Continental forces received various uniforms such as pictured at right.

Greenwood's company marched past other Flying Camp units stationed in the New Jersey waterway towns that were vulnerable to British attack. Each day or two they passed through a new town in a line toward New York: They went eleven miles from Trenton to Princeton, seventeen miles from Princeton to New Brunswick, twenty-five miles to Perth Amboy, and fourteen miles to Elizabeth. Greenwood then "marched with a Sergeants Guard to guard a powder Waggon up to Fort Lee," another twenty-two miles north along the Hudson River.

British ships had begun sailing aggressively up the Hudson River in June. Washington's continentals built two five-bastion (star-shaped) forts on opposing banks of the Hudson in July. Fort Lee was three hundred feet above the river on the New Jersey bluff known as the Palisades, and Fort Washington was at two hundred and fifty feet, Manhattan's highest point. Shot from those promontories, cannon and mortar shells could fly a thousand feet into the British ships. In the Hudson, a *cheveux de frise* was built of ships with spikes extending upward from the

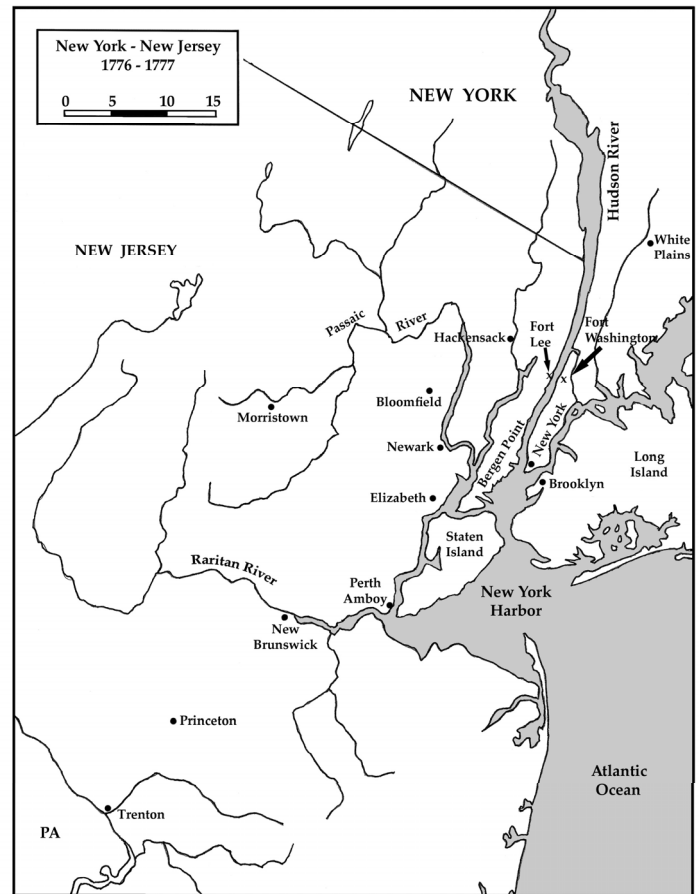
decks and sunk to create an underwater wall to rip through the hulls of passing enemy ships. Five British warships teased the American gunners that summer by running the gauntlet between the two forts. One of these would lead the battle at Fort Washington.

Fighting and Losing at Fort Washington.

Philip Greenwood arrived with the powder wagon at Fort Lee, where he said “Washington was stationed with his army and he [Philip] was ordered with a Sergeants Guard from Fort Lee to Tappan, [sixteen miles upriver] on North River and was there on guard.” Greenwood returned from Fort Tappan as eight thousand British and Hessian troops under British General Howe were marching to attack Fort Washington. Leaving about three thousand Continental Regulars and the Flying Camp to defend Fort Washington, General Washington evacuated across the river to Fort Lee. On Saturday, November 16, the Maryland Flying Camp—including Greenwood, Parkinson, Allsop, Smith, and Slick—gave stiff resistance to the invading British. On the southern bastion, one hundred and fifty Americans were pitted against eight hundred British who pushed them back into the fort where the falling cannon fire proved more deadly. William Slick caught a musket ball in his leg and was captured. He was imprisoned by the British with two thousand others destined for the filthy prison ships in New York Harbor. By 3 P.M., the fight was over. General Howe offered the Americans their lives if they surrendered the fort, which they did, withdrawing from Fort Washington within four days, losing cannon and equipment.

Flying Camp forces were stationed at Bergen Point Fort, a tiny but vulnerable point on a tidal strait just a thousand feet wide, to defend New Jersey. Through the summer, the fort had lobbed cannon shots at the British Fleet and British encampments on Staten Island. “Following General Washington's orders,” Philip marched there on Sunday with fifty soldiers to stand picket, including Private Slick, who had been luckily freed by exchange.

But orders came “by express next morning [Monday] to return to Headquarters of General Washington at Fort Lee,” Greenwood recalled. Washington was retreating, for the third time in as many months,



saving the men but leaving Fort Lee and the Hudson open to the British. Ensign Philip Bowman of Frederick, in Captain Peter Mantz's company of the Middle District Frederick Flying Camp, helped “evacuate Fort Lee and blow up the powder magazine.”

British General Cornwallis pursued the Continental forces southwest across New Jersey toward Newark. Washington directed one brigade to go to Bloomfield, the other with him toward Trenton. Greenwood went with Washington, crossing a series of rivers each time barely ahead of the British. We “crossed Second River with 50 men,” he said, on November 21, getting over the drawbridge to Hackensack, just five miles away. All troops spent a nervous night listening for sounds that Cornwallis's forces had caught up to them.

Thomas Paine, who earlier that year had written and published *Common Sense*, the influential argument for independence, was in the Pennsylvania Flying Camp at Fort Lee and now retreated with Washington's army toward Hackensack. He crystallized his impression of the bleak impact of retreat in *The American Crisis*, which he published

on December 19, 1776. George Washington would have it read aloud to the Continental troops to inspire them before they began the Battle of Trenton on December 26. It began:

These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value

Before the twelve-mile march to Newark, “baggage wagons and horses were personally sent to Winter Quarters,” Greenwood said, for safekeeping at Morristown. Thomas Parkinson guarded the weak wooden bridge on the Passaic River and watched the company march over into Newark. From Newark on November 28 they marched twenty-four miles to New Brunswick and passed over the Raritan River. “Washington . . . ordered the Bridges cut down to prevent the pursuit of the British” said Philip, and he “was at the Cutting down of Brunswick Bridge.” The American forces could hear the British coming, for they sounded their bugles as if they were chasing a fox in the woods.

In the afternoon on December 1, the British troops caught up and both sides shot cannon across the Raritan. As sundown approached, an American colonel told the Delaware Regiment to burn all one hundred of their tents. With no wagons to carry supplies, keeping tents out of British hands was more important than spending a cold night in the woods. The next day the fourteen hundred soldiers moved into Nassau Hall at the College of New Jersey, which is now Princeton University.

Desertion was common, but Greenwood and the others continued to support Washington barefoot and in threadbare clothes. Historian George O. Trevelyan explained the situation: “Riflemen's canvas was not suitable for winter. The Continental regulars who had started the war in buff and blue, admitted they would be ‘all buff’ should the retreat last a month

longer. They starved from Hackensack to Newark, from Newark to Brunswick.”

While at New Brunswick, Washington sent men to reserve every ferry, barge, and heavy commercial boat above and below Trenton, enough to load all the Continental soldiers, supplies, and wounded. By December 7 and 8, the men had left the college, marched twelve miles to Trenton, and the “whole army” crossed the Delaware into Pennsylvania. They left behind a frustrating situation for the British. One American officer at Trenton wrote, “On Sunday morning, we crossed the Delaware. About eleven o'clock the enemy came marching down with all the pomp of war, in great expectation of getting boats, but of this we took proper care by destroying every boat or shallop [a two-masted sloop] we could lay hands upon . . . the enemy are at least twelve thousand strong, heading for Philadelphia.”

Philip Leaves for Home

“Six months had expired before [we] arrived at Trenton,” Philip said, sounding dispirited. Those in the Flying Camp service had already stayed a week longer than their enlistment dictated. Philip looked at the neighboring company from Frederick and recalled, “Captain Mance [Mantz] . . . joined the ‘Flying Camp’ troops with a Company of all Single Men, healthy and robust and in high spirits—This Company was remarkably thinned . . . before and after their arrival at Trenton and before they reached home, by the great Number of deaths.” The Flying Camp, Philip summarized in 1832, “was more harassed than other species of troops in the service.” They waited up to ten days to collect their pay then marched home to Frederick, arriving around December 14, missing the frigid winter encampment at Valley Forge and Washington's heroic Christmas attack on Trenton.

Drafted to Save Philadelphia

Nine months later, Washington again called for troops. Philadelphia, the capitol and largest city of the United States, faced invasion by the British. Greenwood, now twenty-two, was among the two thousand Maryland Militia drafted for two months under Brigadier General William Smallwood and Colonel Baker Johnson, Governor Thomas Johnson's

brother. The militia left Frederick in September 1777 and marched 113 miles on the northern route toward Lancaster “across the Susquehanna at the sign of the Cross Keys,” on a ferry near Wrightsville. Smallwood wrote to Thomas Johnson requesting cannon, dry powder, and “about 87 stand of Arms for Colo. B. Johnson's Regt., who are good men, & ought to be Armed, rather than many who come . . . with much Reluctance.” As they waited for munitions, the Battle of Brandywine took place without them on September 11.

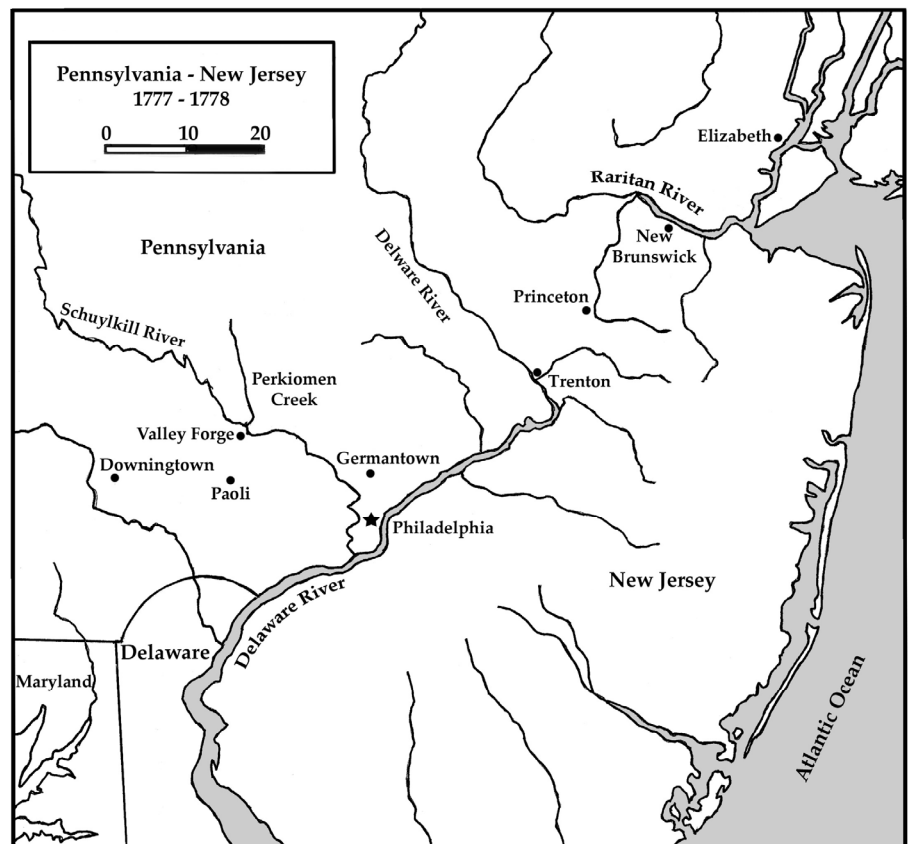
Now, delayed by lack of arms and slowed by roads muddy and rutted from three days of rain, Smallwood's men tramped along the Lancaster Road toward Downingtown and the White Horse Tavern. They planned on “joining General Wayne at the Paoli,” a popular tavern where his fifteen hundred troops were encamped, Philip said. The Schuylkill had risen eight feet, making it impassable for any British advance into Philadelphia. The swollen river gave Washington time to formulate a plan for combining the Continentals under Wayne with the Marylanders arriving with Smallwood into a force that would appear larger than they really were. They were to harass the British and cut off their baggage as they waited to cross the Schuylkill River. However, Loyalists acting as spies were everywhere. Local legend tells of a blacksmith who was forced to give up the location of Wayne's encampment to British General Grey. On September 20, the British swept in a surprise attack through Wayne's camp.

Narrowly Missing the Paoli Massacre

Just after midnight, the British army turned the camp into a night of butchery later known as the Paoli Massacre. Few shots were fired. Reinforced by Irish Highlanders, they charged into Wayne's camp in three waves to stab and slash with sabers and bayonets. Even the musicians were killed. Meanwhile, Philip Greenwood, marching in the rain with Smallwood's Marylanders, had almost

reached Wayne's camp, filling Lancaster Road for a mile. The British charged from the field in full battle rage and cut through the confused Maryland militia. To fire a gun at night had little chance of accuracy, particularly against a charge of bayonets. At least half of Smallwood's men panicked and ran headlong through the woods or scrambled back down Lancaster Road. On Sunday morning, Quakers at the Meeting House a few yards from the Red Lion Tavern encountered “Smallwood's weary forces trudging, stumbling, and limping toward their meeting house,” wrote historian Thomas J. McGuire. “The condition of the bloodied wounded who were able to escape . . . suffering from saber slashes or horrific puncture wounds created by the 18- inch-long triangular bayonets . . . was beyond words. Tradition holds that bloodstains were visible on the floor of the meetinghouse for years afterward.” General Wayne soon realized he had lost at least 15 percent of his men, plus supplies, food, wagons, and hundreds of muskets.

Greenwood, however, apparently escaped injury. With eleven hundred of Smallwood's Marylanders, many of them without muskets, he arrived at Red Lyon tavern, then marched with General Wayne to



the Little Conestoga Valley, twenty miles northwest of the British army. On September 24 the able ones left and marched along Perkiomen Creek, where Philip “joined the main Army under General Washington. Thence . . . marched with the main Army moving into the vicinity of Germantown” about twenty miles overall.

Germantown, a Surprise Attack

Germantown was six miles from Philadelphia on the main northwest route from the city and had been occupied by nine thousand British and Hessians for nine days. Washington devised a plan to expel them before winter would end the battle season. He moved his Continental army of ten thousand men at night, starting out at 7 P.M. on October 3. They marched twelve miles into positions along the four main routes into Germantown to ready for a surprise, four-pronged attack at daybreak. Each American soldier carried only forty cartridges, three days of provisions in his haversack or pocket, and a white paper in his hat, so they could see each other by the scant sliver of moonlight. Many were still barefoot.

It is impossible to move ten thousand men and forty cannon without creating a disturbance. General Howe knew the Americans were moving, but he didn't move his own men because he was confident the British held excellent positions.

Unfortunately for Washington, the night was frosty and the morning warm. Dense blankets of fog rose with the dawn, obscuring fields and roads so that the American soldiers could see barely beyond twenty to forty yards ahead. The smoke from guns and cannon decreased visibility even more. Sullivan's men, arriving on time, surprised the British picket at 5 A.M., and ruined the British line in twenty minutes. But the other divisions arrived late or in the wrong place. Smallwood's and Greene's division had gotten lost. Greenwood, and probably the rest of the soldiers, did not realize their error. He reported what he believed had happened.

“The Dutch Regiment commanded by Colonel Muhlenberg marched through the German Town fighting as they went,” recalled Philip, charging ahead with bayonets lowered in retaliation for the massacre at Paoli. “Sullivan, Wayne, &

Muhlenberg's divisions commanded the attack about the same time. . . . General Sullivan commanded the left and General Wayne the right. . . . After about three-fourths of an hour General Smallwood engaged in the Battle and the enemy was driven.”

Heroic Fighting until a Rumor Confused the Men

He fought in the left wing with his best effort, Philip said, “from sunrise until eleven o'clock . . . warmly and perilously engaged in . . . firing . . . upwards of seventy rounds.” The black-powder muskets they fired took a minute and a half to load for each shot. Firing seventy rounds would have taken almost two hours of concentrated loading, discharging, and defensive movement. It is the only reference Greenwood made to firing his gun.

But the battle turned against them as a rumor spread, causing panic. The militia thought the “enemy's reinforcement [was] in their rear,” and Philip heard “the Division of General Smallwood . . . ordered to retreat.” Smoke and fog confused the men; part of Wayne's division had begun to fire upon the Americans, and amidst the muskets and cannons firing, Philip reported that he “missed his division and fell into the ranks of General Sullivan's division where he fought until he got out of ammunition.”

Defenseless now, he was suddenly wounded. Shells filled with grape shot, individual one-inch balls of iron or lead, were fired by cannon. One grape shot grazed the left side of Philip's head and he was “stunned, and enveloped in smoke.” Even worse, the British saw him alone and struggling. “[I] knew not [my] situation until a British soldier called out ‘my prisoner!’ which roused him up from the ground. ‘Being swift on foot,’ Philip fled. The British soldier chased him ‘about two hundred yards,’ until Greenwood dashed into the protective ranks of General Sullivan's division, ‘upon which a retreating fire being made, the British soldier in turn fled back to his own rank.’”

As the British continued to fire upon them, the Americans were forced to withdraw “several miles” while working together, “divisions alternately forming, retreating after firing, and covering each other's retreat,” Greenwood said. The American troops withdrew until they had passed Perkiomen

Creek, which flows into the Schuylkill at Valley Forge, where Washington would set up his winter camp. They had lost 1,073 men, either wounded or killed.

Philip did not know that the Battle of Germantown, although a defeat, was significant because it revealed the stamina of the American soldier. General Muhlenberg's Orderly Book recorded this: "altho' an unfortunate Fog joined with the Smoke prevent'd the different Brigades seeing and supporting each other, or sometimes even distinguishing their Fire from the Enemy's. . . . they [British] finally retreated . . . and may be put to flight when boldly push'd." The British had finally felt the passion of the Americans. Two weeks later General Horatio Gates defeated the British at Saratoga. These two battles impressed European leaders, particularly the French, who decided to ally with the American forces and help them win the Revolution.

Philip Greenwood Moves West

After Germantown, Greenwood was discharged and did not re-enlist. He didn't see the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781 with Allsop and Parkinson, who did; he had received farm tools, a horse and a wagon from his father's estate in 1780, and moved westward to Berkeley County, Virginia. He and his wife, Mary, baptized their daughter Catharine in 1782 and three years later moved west into Kentucky Territory, to a farm along the Ohio River, a region known for bluegrass. He married his second wife, Sarah, in 1788, and both saw their region become the state of Kentucky in 1792. When their son Joseph Philip Greenwood turned a year old in 1799, Henry County, named for Patrick Henry, was formed around them. The Greenwoods lived there through 1810, then moved southwest to Little York in Hardin County before

1820. Greenwoods left Kentucky in 1828 and moved north to Madison County, Indiana. By 1840 they lived next door in Owen County.

"From the weight of years and hardships his memory has considerably faded especially of dates and names of men & places," his examiners wrote in 1832. What Philip Greenwood knew is that "he served faithfully & fully . . . to the acceptance and satisfaction of his officers . . . He was constantly on duty." For that, he was awarded a pension of \$26.66 per year. He died on September 5, 1842, and was buried beneath a commemorative headstone at the Dutch Bethel Church of Christ in Jefferson Township, Owen County, Indiana, some five hundred miles from his birthplace in Maryland.

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Historical Society of Carroll County
210 East Main Street
Westminster, Maryland 21157
Phone: 410-848-6494 Fax: 410-848-3596
Email: hsc@hsc.org Website: hsc.org