GERMANTOWNE CRIER



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Volume 3 . . . Number 3

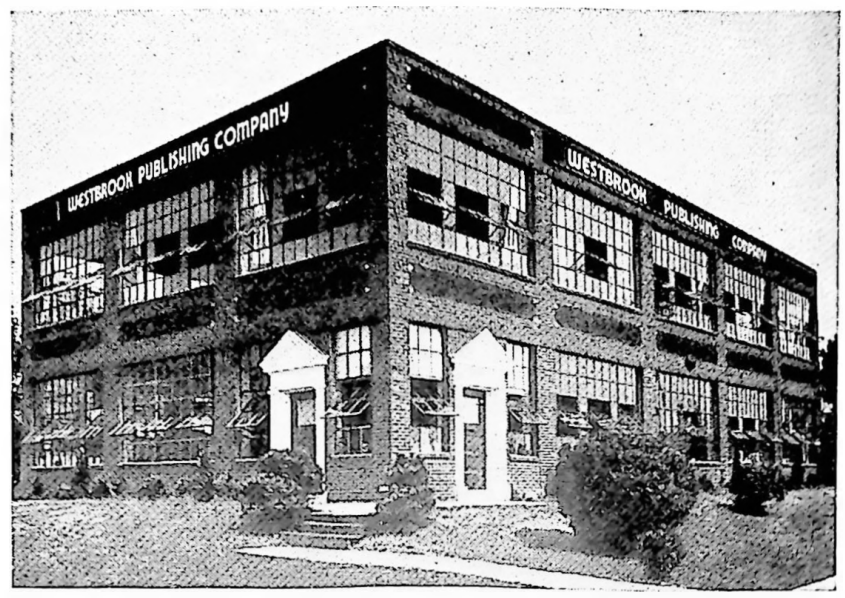
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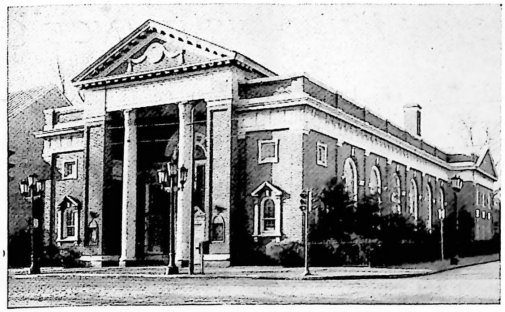
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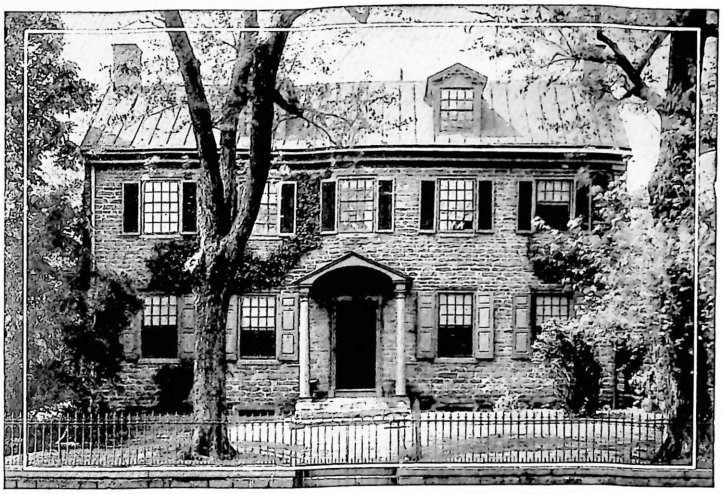
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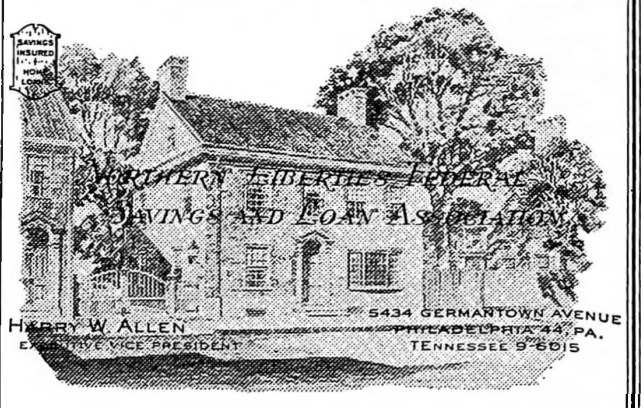
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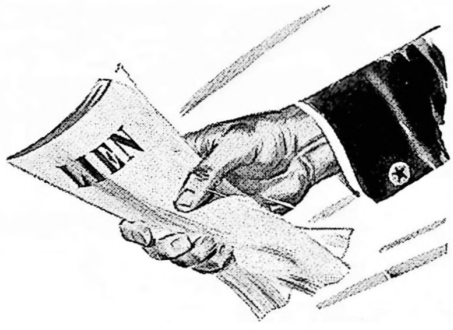
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GERMANTOWNE CRIER



Vol. 3 DECEMBER, 1951 No. 3

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CORRECTION

The picture of the Rock House on September '51 Crier was painted by Charles J. Wister, Jr., son of Charles J. Wister, Sr., in 1863. He was the last member of the Wister family to live at Grumblethorpe.

James W. Wister, M.D., who was given credit for painting the picture, is his great-grandson, and the owner of the original painting.

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Museum Happenings

The Museum of the Historical Society is, through the months, a busy place. Open to the public three afternoons a week a surprising number of people, from near and from very far, come in and are entertained and made wiser—Mrs. Gruber has a way!

Every Tuesday Mr. Hocker, with his amazing stores of Germantown knowledge, helps seekers, often from afar, with definite facts about their Germantown ancestors.

A young girl sketches an 1840 gown as model for her wedding dress, an artist seeks authentic detail for a period picture; a chairman asks advice on a club program. These are the kinds of things that happen over and over through the year—this is the function of a live historical society—an obligation we strive increasingly to meet.

On Friday, October 26th, the 1951 annual meeting of the Society was held at the Museum with a large and representative attendance. The usual reports and the election of officers—of which more later—were followed by an announcement by the President, Mr. Stradley, of the new and exciting project sponsored by the Society of which Dr. Nichols tells more in this issue of the CRIER.

Then a most interesting program, a reel, kindly loaned by WCAU, Inc., gave a realistic description of the Battle of Germantown as though broadcast in the modern manner. The announcer . . . "We take you now to a Captain . . . on the Ridge Pike" and the Captain's voice tells of the passing of troops bound for Germantown and the enveloping fog. Then . . . "We take you now to another Lieutenant . . ." who describes the movement and the enveloping fog and so on. Then, soberly, the word . . . "General Washington has ordered a general retreat. He is a very sad man."

The interesting fact was emphasized that, though a defeat, the Battle of Germantown established Washington as a military leader, gave him confidence in his own power and paved the way for victory to come.

Seasonable cider and a pleasant social hour ended a very worthwhile evening.

There were few changes in the official set-up. Mr. Samuel Huston was elected Honorary President; Mr. Leighton Stradley continues as President; James W. Wister, M.D., takes Mr. Huston's place as Vice President; and Mr. Benjamin H. Shoemaker, 3rd, takes Dr. Wister's place on the Board of Directors.

It is with genuine regret that we announce the resignation of Mr. John Henderson from the Board. Mr. Henderson has served a long term as efficient chairman of the House Property Committee and will be greatly missed.

The Society is most fortunate in securing George E. Nitzsche, L.L.B., Litt.D., for years active in the University of Pennsylvania, as a member of the Board.

Since the spring meeting of the Board the following gifts have been made to the Library of the Society:

THE WISSAHICKON, compiled by Tom A. Daly. Published by The Garden Club of Philadelphia, 1922.

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert N. Bayne.

PACKAGE OF GENEALOGICAL PAPERS relating to the Shoemaker Families of Germantown.

Gift of Mr. Benjamin H. Shoemaker, 3rd.

JOURNAL OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS (23 Vols.).

Gift of Mr. Courtney V. Franklin.

PLANS OF EARLY GERMANTOWN (5 sets) Drawn by Robeson Lea Perot.

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TWELVE BOOKS AND VARIOUS PAMPHLETS relating to Germantown.

Gift of Mrs. E. H. Hergesheimer.

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GERMANTOWNE CRIER

Volume 3 DECEMBER, 1951 Number 3

CHRISTMAS

Rev. John Robbins Hart

THREE places suggest Christmas to me above all others. The original scene in the Holy Land, the north countries in Europe and Valley Forge. These three are my special inspiration for the fullness of the meaning of this joyous season.

The first needs no explanation as the manger at Bethlehem gives us the eternal thought and depth of feeling about Christmastide and makes us want to sing "Joy to the world, the Lord is come."

The north countries of Europe were the scene of tradition and historic fact which is quite unique. The long established customs and practices of these ancient peoples at the season of the winter solstice were united with the facts of the birth of the Christ Child brought to them by the Christian missionaries. As a result, we have the roots of our faith, with all the seriousness of life's meaning and purpose, combined at this season with the gayety, drama, color and sensation of the Yuletide, the Christmas tree, the Christmas stocking, the fireside and hearthstone sentiment of the children at play and the refreshment of old age, with the extra kindliness displayed toward those in poverty and special need from whose lives the brightness of life has too much departed.

Valley Forge is comparatively modern history, but the chapter it has added to the Christmas story is a great one. There, amid the rigor of a severe winter, with unusual exposure to the elements and within six days after their arrival, affording so little time in which to become acclimated, General Washington and his heroic men came into the Christmas season.

Jessie Fant Evans writes: "To house his troops there were only rough-hewn log huts built by the men themselves to shelter the entire encampment. Without windows or heating facilities of any kind, these huts were filled deep with straw, the men's only insulation against the bitter cold. Washington even gave a prize of twelve dollars out of his own purse to the first squad in each regiment to complete a hut."

The fires by which the men cooked their meals were in the open, opposite the doors to the huts. When a fire became low, so the story goes, the soldier whose chore it was to replace it, was given the warmest clothes his hut associates possessed. One would lend a sound pair of boots; a second, a pair of pants; a third, an extra coat; someone else, a fur cap with ear tippets.

Washington wrote to Congress, "For some days just a little less than famine exists in camp," and that his "troops would either starve or have to be dissolved." "More is expected of me than is possible to be performed and on the ground of safety and policy I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army from the public view," he stated. Much of the trouble came about in large measure through the failure of the congressional system in attempting to manage the commissary department.

While the Colonial patriots with the blood of their feet on the snow of Valley Forge were writing one of the most magnificent pages in the making of our history, the Continental Congress was replying to Washington's urgent "measures with friendly cajoling, full of advice, mostly unworkable. When it could think of nothing else, it would appoint a day of fasting and prayer."

There were even reports that Congress was bargaining behind Washington's back with General



Valley Forge Memorial Chapel

Howe, commander of the British forces, comfortably entrenched in nearby Philadelphia and much feted by many of her citizens. It is known that Howe made surreptitious visits to the vicinity of Valley Forge.

The year before, in 1776, Washington, using Indian tactics of war by lurking quiet for days, then striking suddenly, unexpectedly and effectively, had triumphantly crossed the Delaware on Christmas Eve and gone on to an overwhelming victory at Trenton, N. J.

Perhaps this inspired him at Valley Forge as he gathered his staff commanders around wood fires and held candlelight conferences with Lafayette, Knox, Morgan, Wayne, Green, Hamilton Von Steuben and Muhlenberg, doggedly looking toward what spring might bring.

A day or two before Christmas, 1777, Washington's steward was able to report "the purchase of cabbage, turnips and potatoes." While there were no eggs, wild fowl was obtainable and venison. "No coffee or tea was available, nor was flour, so there were no pastries not even bread on Christmas Day. Neither were their spirits enlivened by a grog ration. None was issued."

Mrs. Washington, as was her custom throughout the war, journeyed from their home at Mount Vernon on the Potomac River by coach, under a special guard provided for her, to spend a portion of the winter with General Washington. The rest of her time was spent in keeping the domestic routine functioning and conducting what would be known today as a Red Cross production program in providing garments, knitted wear and bandages for the soldiers.

Of her Valley Forge experience in 1777 she writes: "We are in a cold and dreary place, and the general's apartment is very small, but he has a log cabin to dine in, which has made our quarters more tolerable than they were at first."

No other period of the war so tried the loyalty of the troops, yet in spite of great suffering, harsh criticism and even plots against his command, Washington clung to his strategic position and by the early summer, with the aid of Von Steuben, an efficient and well-organized body of troops moved triumphantly on to Philadelphia in June, 1778. Free men had not paid the price in vain for the sacrifice of even life itself to guarantee freedom of thought and action under Almighty God to future generations.

The Christmas Eve of 1777 marked the lowest point in the fortunes of this nation and the highest point in the efforts of Washington to preserve the cause. By their faith and courage, especially that of their gallant leader, these men at Valley Forge made Christmas mean more to all of us. Out of the sacrificial endurance and the sharpest pangs of suffering, their willingness to lose life in order to find it, they won the greatest battle of the Revolution—the battle of the spirit. The new snow which fell that Christmas Eve, adding to the drifts already deep in the forest and by the stream, seemed to have a special whiteness and impressiveness. It was the whiteness of those who "came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white."

If there are any limitations to the Christmas story I have never found them. It begins with a Child, it embraces the antiquities, the "Ancient of Days", and has no end. Central among our Christmastide associations are the universality and the "cease fire" effectiveness of its appeal.

In our attempts to unify the world today, and surely they are many and varied, we have great difficulty in overcoming the natural barriers that have arisen between nations. Steeped in the sentiments and convictions born of age long local circumstances each part of the world wants its own rights and privileges uninterrupted. Those who are close neighbors seem to have pride and prejudice to work against, while those who are at a distance have followed the pathway of life to quite different conclusions. Occasionally someone finds common grounds on which we may stand to effect changes and establish sound cooperative unity. Christmas is common ground for all of us. Not only of the battlefield are the "cease fire" orders given, but in the lives of most people a similar order comes from the heart at this sacred and controlling season. A strong desire to forget and forsake bad relationships comes over the best and the worst of us. It is a moment when the

Litany petition "From pride, vain-glory and hypocrisy, envy, hatred and malice and all uncharitableness, Good Lord, deliver us" seems to be specially understood. It has special power over us and we want some relief from the poisons of our inner perversions.

On the campus of Johns Hopkins University one Saturday afternoon, at an intercollegiate conference, students and faculty worked out a definition of religion. "Religion is the art and science of personal relationships both human and divine." An art puts into practice what a science teaches us. Religion must be understood and practiced, so it partakes of the nature of both an art and a science, and the material it deals with is the material which shows the way in which we are related one to another and to the Divine Life. The centrality of these relationships cannot be questioned and we must spend more time on cultivating them aright. Amid all our arts and sciences, technical advances and all the rest of this precision instrument civilization, we just assume that we can get along well together rather than working at it as scholars and craftsmen. What a fine art it is to be related to every person the right way. No two people are alike and so no two people are to be treated alike. Each one is to be treated as an individual. To understand what his personal and individual life means and to live with him accordingly is my task. No mass attitude will do it, but rather one that learns the give and take of life with each one separately. In this way our personal relationships, ranging from those whom we love most to the last acquaintance out on the circumference, will be approaching the requirements of every form of art—harmony, rhythm and balance.

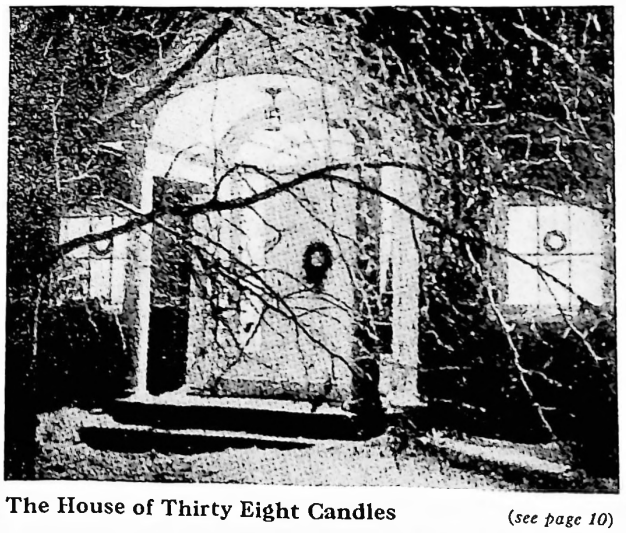
All of this, and so much more, get a chance as Christmas Eve draws nigh. From the worst of us—the Scrooge of the Dickens' Christmas Carol or the one deep in sin—to the advanced saint, we want to have it made better at this hour. We want to allow the spirit of this unique season to rule us, and with great power and might we behold it coming to pass year after year. Maybe it will stay longer and become, not only deeper, but the ultimate ruling and redeeming part of our human nature some day. "O, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet" wrote Rudyard Kipling, who knew the Orient and the Occident equally well. We must ask them to meet on Christmas Day, however, and get well enough acquainted to stay together. The things that bring us together in a working unity, in the warmth of true personal fellowship, in the expression of charity and good will and love, are the important things of life. Those that separate us are of little consequence.

To those who care—really care—for old Germantown, for its history, its lore and legend, for its people, then and now, I send this greeting through my friend, your president, from the snow-covered hills of Valley Forge. Together we have the privilege of reassembling the history of days gone by. We may see it and interpret it in many ways, but above all, we are concerned about the abiding spiritual truths that have been, and always will be, present as forces, human and Divine, work together. Contemplate and see these meanings, and like the sages who left their contemplations on the first Christmas Day, we shall find the reward of all the ages—"the one, far-off, divine event toward which the whole creation moves."

JOHN ROBBINS HART
President—Valley Forge Historical Society
Rector—The Washington Memorial Chapel,
Valley Forge

THOUGHT AT CHRISTMAS

Now many times the chimes have rung,
Now many times the carols sung.
And dear familiar friendly rites
Have blessed the happy days and nights—
While o'er the hushed and starry sky
Comes still each year the same glad cry
That woke the world to vision new
And made us heirs of God, to do
On earth His will for peace.
Oh let not gifts and candle light
Dim in our hearts that challenge bright—
Our Christmas Heritage!



The House of Thirty Eight Candles (*see page 10*)

Christmas Eve at Six

George A. Haviland

THIS Christmas Eve promptly at 6 P. M., as has been the case for the past three-quarters of a century, tall tallow candles will be lighted in each of the thirty-eight square windows of the house which sits peacefully on the northwest corner of Washington Lane and Baynton Street.

For the 76th consecutive year, the "House of the Thirty-Eight Windows" will welcome the Yuletide in its own unique fashion.

The house itself, now owned and occupied by Dr. Nathaniel W. Boyd, offers little in the way of historical background. Although situated only one block from the hustle and bustle of Germantown Avenue, it has never found itself caught up particularly in the whirl of events in our community; a community where the importance of a building is so often measured by its role in the American Revolution.

That fact alone is sufficient to bar the Dorsey House—for that is how it is most frequently referred to—from a prominent place in the pages of local history. The fires of the American Revolution had long since been extinguished when Mary Dorsey and her sister gained possession of the property now designated as 51 West Washington Lane. The history of the house is particularly vague. Information concerning it is lacking even in the works of such well-known local historians as Naaman Keyser and Charles Francis Jenkins.

We do know, however, that the earliest available deed to the property is dated January 24, 1850, and lists Rachel I. Field as the owner. It was at that time a rather large farm extending from Hancock Street (now Baynton Street) to Germantown Avenue, and from Abington Road (now Washington Lane) nearly half the distance north to Duval Street. That portion of Baynton Street, incidentally, served originally as a carriage path to Pomona, a large estate to the north.

The candle-lighting custom had its origin in the Dorsey House during the Civil War, which would indicate that the house is nearly 100 years old at the very least. Although the custom was begun by the Dorseys, it was not until 1875 that they made it a Christmas Eve tradition. During the Civil War, they and their neighbors were accustomed to meeting there in the evenings. On "sewing nights," by the light of candles placed in the windows, they made uniforms for Union soldiers.

Ten years after the close of the Civil War, the Dorseys, for the first time, put candles in each of the windows on Christmas Eve and lit them "as beacons of welcome to passersby." Each owner of the house since that time has been asked to carry on the tradition and has done so.

Numerous divisions and subdivisions of the original property through the years have served to cloud its history to some extent. When Dr. Boyd purchased the property on which the house is situated in 1924, it had become considerably smaller, so that it no longer borders on Germantown Avenue.

Prominent among the owners of that tract and those adjoining it have been the proprietors past and present, of the Kirk and Nice funeral home. Much of the original Field property now belongs to that firm, and John Kirk was one of those who helped perpetuate the Christmas Eve tradition, as did Midie Knight, from whom the house was purchased by Dr. Boyd.

It is only in recent years, however, that the custom has transcended the bounds of family tradition and gained fame in other parts. Needless to add, though, the Boyd family continues to be most directly involved. During their childhood the younger Boyds each were assigned to a particular floor of the house. They were responsible for lighting certain of the candles and for examining them periodically to see that none had gone out.

Although they have married and have gone from Germantown, the Boyd children return each Christmas Eve to perform their customary task. This year, as in years past, the candles will be lighted at 6 P. M. And it is a strict rule in the household that there shall be no other lights in the house until they are finally extinguished.

Through the medium of radio the custom has gained prominence even outside the State of Pennsylvania. Five years ago, the old and new were joined when Dr. Boyd's explanation of the time-honored tradition was recorded in his home by a local broadcasting station. Included was the sound of the match struck by Dr. Boyd as he lighted the first candle. The recording was later played as a part of a special Christmas program on a nationwide network. Sometime after, a Germantown resident called Dr. Boyd to report that he had heard the sound of that match being struck while he was vacationing in Florida.

The Dorsey sisters would have been astonished at the suggestion that their humble ritual, begun in an unimposing home on one of the community's by-roads, might one day be transported to a distant corner of the nation.

Recent Geologic History of the Wissahickon Creek

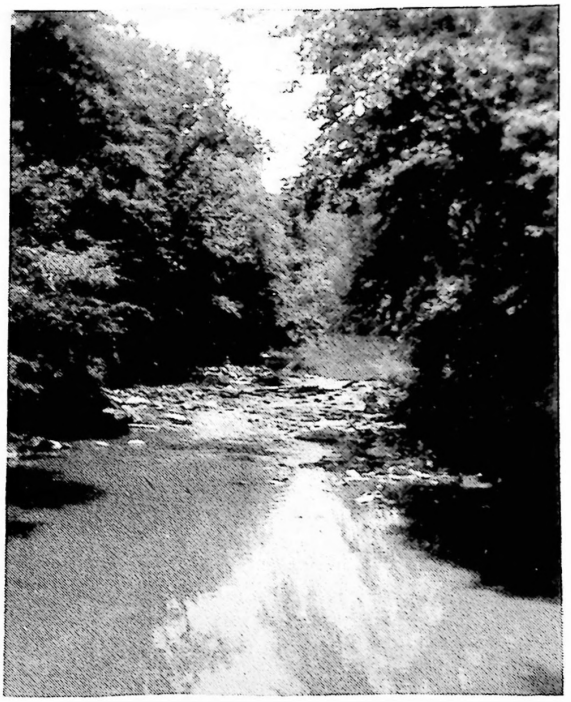
PAUL A. DIKE
University of Pennsylvania

ONE OF THE favorite haunts of Germantowners is the historically rich and naturally beautiful valley of the Wissahickon where it cuts a gorge between Germantown and Chestnut Hill on one side and Roxborough on the other. The section set aside for the use of horseback riders and hikers is particularly rich in human history. This same area has a history which reaches far back into the dim distant geologic past in common with the rest of the eastern seaboard.

Anyone who has habitually walked along the Wissahickon Creek admiring the carefully preserved "primeval" beauty of the scenery is undoubtedly well aware of the facts which I wish to present here. However, these facts will be given an interpretation which I am sure will be new to many of the readers of the GERMANTOWNE CRIER.

At the Northwestern Avenue entrance to the park the Wissahickon flows through a meadow as a fairly placid stream with one or two small rapids. To the north of Germantown Avenue it passes through the grounds of the College of Chestnut Hill in a lazy loop, flowing placidly between low banks. A stream flowing slowly, following a meandering course through a broad, flat valley is spoken of as being in "old age" by geologists. This term depicts the inability of the stream to carry anything but the finest sediments, its inability to do anything but the lightest of "work."

As we walk down Wissahickon Drive from Northwestern Avenue the creek makes a sharp turn and can be seen flowing over rapids at the base of the fill for the drive some thirty feet below. A hill rises to the right. After walking a short distance down the drive Chestnut Hill can be seen rising to the left. This curve has been exaggerated by undercutting and sideward cutting. The channel between the hills is a little narrower than it is in the meadow. The creek flows quietly for a short distance and then hurriedly over rapids, in places flowing around and over natural rock barriers, the speed of the water greatly increasing for a short time until another stretch of placid water is reached. Rapids and falls and placid waters will be encountered the rest of the length of the Wissahickon. Some of the quiet stretches are artificial, man having taken a hand and built dams for his own purposes. Along the entire length of the Wissahickon from Chestnut Hill to Ridge Avenue the creek flows between high, steep hills—a veritable gorge in places (as, for example, the section crossed by the Henry Avenue Bridge). A closer examination of the valley will show that it is essentially a V-shaped valley, the valley walls coming down to the water's edge in places. The tributaries draining the surrounding highlands are mostly short and straight, possessing steep and rough channels. These tributaries enter the Wissahickon at essentially right angles. All these factors, including the falls and rapids, define a "youthful" stream and valley. This stream is full of energy, bustling along, carrying large loads of sediment, doing vast amounts of work. So far, I am sure, nothing appears out of the ordinary to the casual observer. Everything combines to create a beautiful recreation area, and, since the stream behaves this way, evidently it is supposed to. For the geologist, however, the stream is not behaving in a normal fashion. A well regulated stream just does not go from old age into youth as it progresses down stream! A proper stream is in youth in its headwaters and progresses gradually into an older and older condition as it approaches its mouth, having its greatest age at its mouth. These age relations do not denote time relationships, they denote a certain



Typical scene of Wissahickon Creek looking upstream from Paper Mill Road



The overhanging tree opposite Lincoln and Wissahickon Drive

degree or condition of development. We speak of youthful men of seventy and old men of forty or fifty, indicating their relative physical and mental conditions. Most well-regulated streams will have been working longest on the part of the valley nearest the mouth reducing the valley to as low a level as possible. Through this area the stream will flow sluggishly. Up in the headwaters the stream will be constantly trying to reach new areas to drain (drainage being one of the functions of rivers). To do this it cuts rapidly into the rocks, its valley walls are necessarily steep and its channel is steep in order to drain the water most rapidly and to carry away the sediments most efficiently. In the Wissahickon the order of progression has been reversed. Northwest of Chestnut Hill the creek is in early old age, down stream in the deep valley which we think of as "the Wissahickon", the creek is in youth. Obviously something must have happened to cause this reversal.

Before we start trying to determine what caused this reversal let us look at the rest of the scenery. If we become tired of walking and wish to leave the valley and reach public transportation, we must climb up the steep sides of the valley, or follow the steep course of one of the tributaries. After climbing to the top of the valley we find, in most areas, that we must walk some distance across a gently rolling terrain to reach transportation. This gently rolling upland gradually rises from an elevation of about two hundred twenty feet in the vicinity of the Henry Avenue Bridge to an elevation of over four hundred feet in Chestnut Hill and northwest of Roxborough. The creek bed, incidentally, rises from an elevation of approximately forty feet above sea level to approximately one hundred ten feet in the same distance. The Germantown-Chestnut Hill upland is cut by the valley of Cresheim Creek. On the Roxborough upland Ridge Avenue follows a continuous unbroken ridge which leads to the northwest. This upland area bordering the Wissahickon is a northern remnant of a shelf of land called the Piedmont Plateau which extends between the Coastal Plain and the Appalachian Mountains from here to Alabama, disappearing around the south end of the Appalachian Mountains. The eastern edge of the plateau here in the vicinity of Philadelphia is gently sloping in most places, although above Midvale Steel in Fernhill Park one can see the edge of the plateau defined as a rather abrupt change in slope. Further to the south in Maryland and continuing on to the south the eastern edge is a definite cliff or very steep slope. Streams flowing from the Piedmont Plateau to the Coastal Plain must cross this line. They do so either in a short series of falls or a longer series of rapids. This is the Fall Line along which the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad has its track.

If one walks out to the center of the Henry Avenue Bridge and looks out at the surrounding country, it will be discovered that all the hill tops are at the same level, even the hills on the far side of the Schuylkill River to the southwest. This is the Piedmont Plateau and is the same sight which would greet one anywhere in the Piedmont. The vegetation of the Piedmont is typically oak and hardy pine. Other trees have been introduced.

Returning to the valley and examining the rocks closely we find that they are highly contorted masses of layered material. Some of the layers consist dominantly of flaky minerals, isinglass of old touring car curtains and equally old oven doors. The technical name for these flaky minerals is mica, the majority of the mica being an essentially colorless variety called muscovite. An occasional jet black book or flake will be found—this is called biotite. The micas are folded, crinkly. Other layers of the rock will be light gray in color and rather massive. On an old weathered surface it will be sandy in character, the individual grains brushing off readily. Quarrymen call this rock sandstone. It probably was sandstone at one time, but it is no longer true sandstone. It has undergone too many changes. This massive rock is made up of grains of feldspar (a mineral used in the ceramics industry for the manufacture of high grade porcelains, such as false teeth), quartz (one of the chief constituents of glass), and micas. The whole rock is extremely massive, hard and tough. It is a highly popular building stone, more massive parts being readily dressed into neat building blocks. The more micacous rock is frequently used in Philadelphia for foundations where it will not show. This rock does not break down very rapidly under the attack of the atmosphere and is rather hard for running water to cut through. This rock is called the Wissahickon formation, the Wissahickon Creek area being the type locality. This same rock is found as a strip running with a few breaks far to the south into Maryland and Virginia.

Cutting the Wissahickon formation are numerous vein-like bodies of light colored rock. These are called pegmatite dikes and are composed of coarse

crystals of feldspar, quartz and mica. These masses of rock are the remains of some extremely ancient volcanic activity in this vicinity.

If we follow the Wissahickon Creek toward its source we find, after we leave the gorge, that it crosses a series of rocks, some of which are sandstones and others are limestones and that it has its source in the red shales and sandstones of Montgomery County. None of the rocks stand as high as Chestnut Hill. The limestone which the creek crosses is a rock so easily attacked by the atmosphere that it has made a broad shallow lowland extending from Willow Grove to the southwest through Whitemarsh Valley and Chester Valley on into and across Maryland. At Whitemarsh where the creek starts across Whitemarsh Valley the elevation is only approximately one hundred fifty feet.

A few of the questions which have to be answered by a history of the Wissahickon Creek are as follows: Why does the Wissahickon Creek cut across a region of hard rocks which today stand so much higher than any of the other rocks across which the creek flows? Is the present course of the Wissahickon the original course? Why does not the Wissahickon flow along the limestone valley and empty into the Schuylkill River around Conshohocken? Why do we have the concordant hill tops above the valley?

About one hundred million years ago the east coast of North America was not quite the same shape it is today. Where today we have the Appalachian Mountains there was a low lying mass of hills with sluggish rivers flowing through them gradually carrying more and more fragments of the rocks of the area down to the sea. These particles filled in the western portion of what we recognize today as the Coastal Plain. In the course of about thirty million years even the low lying hills were worn down to an almost perfectly flat plain across which the rivers flowed leisurely, following meandering courses down to the Atlantic Ocean. Some seventy million years ago the entire area started rising with the center of the rising being along the axis of the present-day Appalachian Mountains. This rising was a gentle doming which simply caused the sluggish rivers to flow more rapidly. As a result of this more rapid flow the rivers were able to pick up and carry more sediments. At first the most convenient place to get the sediments was out of the choked up channels of the streams. This caused the meandering courses of the rivers to be preserved as incisions in the terrain. After the supply of loose sediments was exhausted the rivers started cutting sideward, widening the valleys. Streams started flowing down the sides of the valleys greatly increasing the amount of erosion taking place and starting to cut new valleys. At the same time some of the smaller streams had been unable to downcut as rapidly as the land was rising and after cutting a short distance down into the sandstones they diverted their courses into the limestones and followed the strike of the rocks to the nearest large river. In this way the Appalachian Mountains were etched out, the hard sandstones being left standing as ridges and the limestones being cut out as valleys, the shales frequently forming the sides of the mountains. The brief attempt of the smaller rivers to downcut in their original channels can be seen in the numerous wind gaps to be found in the Appalachian Mountains. The doming did not take place all at once nor did it continue steadily upwards. There were periods of rising and then periods of rest. During the periods of rest the rivers started cleaning out all the loose sediments and even cutting down the new hills forming around the diverted smaller streams. One of the periods of quiet can be seen as an erosion level called the Harrisburg Level. Around Harrisburg there is a broad plain between the mountains. The Susquehanna and all its tributaries are incised down into this plain quite deeply. The Susquehanna today flows in a channel which is slightly incised in the bottom of the broad valley. In other parts of the Appalachian Mountains several erosion levels can be seen etched on the sides of the mountains. Each one of these erosion levels and the slopes leading down from them represent a period of quiet followed by a period of rising. The Piedmont Plateau region is not made up of parallel bands of variegated sedimentary rock as is the Appalachian Mountain region. The Piedmont is made up of irregular masses of crystalline rocks, most of them very hard and resistant to erosion and weathering. There are a few limestones to be found, as in the case of the limestone of Whitemarsh Valley, but these are limited in extent and do not exercise much control on the topography as a whole. The streams flowed across this area incising their channels rather uniformly, preserving the major features of the original complex drainage pattern. Thus the Wissahickon, once committed to downcutting its channel across the hard Wissahickon formation, maintained its original course even though in doing so it cut across both the easily eroded limestone and the harder Wissahickon formation. The limestone was weathered and eroded by other streams and tributaries of the Wissahickon down to the wide valley of Whitemarsh. In the area of the Wissahickon formation brooks draining the flat uplands started developing on the steep banks of the valley. Owing to the steep gradient these brooks were able to cut themselves deep channels and have become a prominent feature of the landscape.

There were a few tributaries feeding into the Wissahickon when it was an old age stream flowing across the undissected plain prior to the doming. One of these is Cresheim Creek. Today Cresheim Creek flows through a broad, steep sided, deep valley, entering the Wissahickon through a narrow gorge over a series of falls. A short distance upstream from the gorge there is a flat open space which is partially the result of the work of man—a dam was built here some

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"The Signers' Walk"

A Recently Created Historic Landmark in Germantown

By George E. Nitzsche

THIS BEING the One Hundred and Seventy-fifth Anniversary Year of the birth of the United States, it would seem eminently fitting to publish some information about "The Signers' Walk" on the Germantown estate of the late Charles F. Jenkins, one of the founders of the Germantown Historical Society and one of its past Presidents.

For many years I had taken groups of students from the University of Pennsylvania, as well as visiting distinguished guests, to "Far Country" by which name the attractive home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Jenkins on Kitchen Lane at Scotforth Road, west of Wissahickon Avenue, is known. Such visitors were always welcomed by the genial Mr. Jenkins, whose gracious cordiality made them feel at home immediately. They were soon absorbed in their host's varied collections of rare books, autographs, his world famous Hemlock Arboretum, his historic stepping stone walks, and his many unusual trees, shrubs and plants. Most of these groups, however, seemed especially interested in, and thrilled with, his "Signers' Walk", which he had completed within the last fifteen years. For the purposes of this article, therefore, we shall confine ourselves to this interesting historic project.

Mr. Jenkins usually assembled these visiting groups at the head of his "Signers' Walk" where he had placed, most appropriately, a Pennsylvania Marble slab from Independence Hall. Here, after a few preliminary remarks, he would, occasionally, with a twinkle in his eyes, take delight in asking which of his guests knew how many signatures there had been to the Declaration of Independence. It always surprised me that so few people could answer correctly. Then, sometimes, he would follow with easier questions, such as who drafted the Declaration, how many were on the Drafting Committee, when was the declaration signed. After such pleasantries he would take his guests leisurely over the walk, pausing at each of the stepping stones, and in his inimitable manner, give a brief account of the signer, the place from which the stone came and how it had been associated with the signer.

As stated before, the beginning of this historic stepping-stone walk is the slab of Pennsylvania Marble which had been the door sill of the south portal of Independence Hall. This old sill had become worn so thin by the millions of visitors to the ancient shrine, that eventually it had to be replaced by a new one. That was in the early 1930s. One day Mr. Jenkins, when walking from his Washington Square office through Independence Square, noticed that the discarded sill, along with other débris, had been dumped against the side wall of Independence Hall. He paused, what was to become of that discarded marble stone? Realizing its importance, and fearing that through carelessness or indifference, the stone might be lost to posterity, he took steps to prevent it. As one of the leading historians in Philadelphia he had no difficulty in procuring it for his Germantown estate, which already had historic significance.

Mr. Jenkins had been collecting autographs of the signers of the Declaration of Independence for many years; and he finally succeeded in completing the collection by acquiring a signature of Button Gwinnett, the signer from St. Catherine's Island, Georgia, which I have been told, was the rarest autograph of the signers. Mr. Jenkins, having achieved his goal, seemed to feel that he had too much capital tied up in this collection of autographs of all fifty-six signers, so he sold the collection in New York. With part of the proceeds he purchased four antique candlesticks that had been the property of the Earl of Clare and presented them to Mrs. Jenkins as an anniversary gift. Just about this time the old marble door sill from Independence Hall arrived at "Far Country," and Mr. Jenkins conceived the idea of creating a garden stepping-stone walk, each stone of which would in some way commemorate one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. This project also afforded him a most appropriate opportunity to devote the remaining proceeds from the sale of the signers' autographs, to acquiring the necessary stones. Such a substantial and permanent collection of memorial stones, he felt, might be enjoyed by a greater number of persons, and probably be just as impressive, if not more so, as was his autograph collection. This viewpoint already has been shared by the thousands of guests and visitors who have trodden over those historic stepping stones.

After years of collecting, Mr. Jenkins succeeded in getting a stone for every one of the fifty-six signers. Each stepping stone in the "Signers' Walk" was at one time associated with the life of a signer, coming from his home, his birth place, his estate, or his burial place.

To accumulate these historic relics, Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins made many trips throughout the eastern part of the United States, and their quest aroused the interest and generous co-operation of the donors to the enterprise. Some of the stones were contributed by Chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution; some by custodians of historic shrines; others by public officials; a number were secured from descendants of the signers who co-operated by supplying the relics in which they had a particular personal interest; and then, many were purchased outright. Thus, finally, stones closely associated with each of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence were given a permanent setting in the now famous historic "Signers' Walk." They form a path in the Jenkins gardens from the terrace of the house to the path which leads to his Hemlock Arboretum. At the twelfth stepping stone of the "Signers' Walk" a branch path goes off to the right and forms a walk which ends at the road leading to the dwelling. The two paths, and a short curved one of the last six stones, also partly encircle a gorgeous specimen of a Tree Wistaria.

Fortunate, indeed, are those who have had the experience of going over this unique walk with its creator, Mr. Jenkins, to have been carried away by his enthusiasm, and to have been spellbound by his art of the raconteur, as he told the stories connected with the finding, securing, transporting, and placing each of these historic relics. Some of these historic stones were shipped to "Far Country" by their donors, others came by rail or truck, but most of them were brought back by Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins in their own car after their various trips. Indeed, Mr. Jenkins had a little story or anecdote connected with the finding, securing, transporting, and finally the placing of each of the stones, but I fear that many of these have not been preserved, and even if they were available at this writing they would make this article unnecessarily long.



Painting of George Washington and his family by an unknown artist, now displayed at the Morris House

While the stones are not numbered, they are placed in the following order in the "Signers' Walk". The old Pennsylvania marble sill from Independence Hall, at the terrace of the Jenkins home, marks the starting point. Then follows the stone associated with Thomas Jefferson, who played such an important part in drafting the Declaration of Independence; Mr. Jenkins secured this stone from the graveyard enclosure at Monticello, near Charlottesville, Virginia. The next stone is from the home of John Adams at Quincy, Massachusetts; then one from Stratford, Virginia, the birthplace of Francis Lightfoot Lee; then a stone from "Chantilly", the ruined residence of Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia; then comes a stone associated with Benjamin Franklin, who was also one of the committee of five on the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. The other members of the committee were Jefferson, John Adams, Livingston and Sherman. At the Franklin stone, whenever I had a university student group with me, I would remind them that Franklin was also the founder of the University of Pennsylvania, and that there were at least nine of the signers closely associated with the University; and that it was John Nixon, of the University, who, on July 8, 1776, read and proclaimed publicly for the first time, before a great gathering of people in Independence Square, the Declaration of Independence.* The next stone in the walk is from the birthplace of William Whipple, Kittery, Maine, signer from New Hampshire. The next is a stone from the home of Josiah Bartlett at Kingston, New Hampshire; the next one is a stone from the home of Matthew Thornton at Londenderry, New Hampshire; the next two stones are associated with George Ross and John Morton, both signers from Pennsylvania. The next stone is from the birthplace of Benjamin Rush, at Byberry, Philadelphia, another Pennsylvania signer. Robert Morris, of Pennsylvania, is represented by a stone from "The Hills," his country estate. James Smith, another Pennsylvania signer, is represented by a stone from the old Cocorus Furnace in York County, which he owned. The next four stones represent signers from the state of South Carolina, viz: Edward Rutledge, of Charleston; Thomas Lynch, Jr., whose marker consists of two tiles set in cement, from the interior of his home, "Peachtree"; then a stone commemorating Arthur Middleton; then a piece of wall, bricks and "tabby mortar" from "White Hall", the home of Thomas Hayward, Jr. The next stones represent three signers from Delaware, viz: one from the birthplace of Thomas McKean, New London, Chester County, Pennsylvania; one from the birthplace of

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William Birch's Philadelphia Views

By Martin P. Snyder

TODAY, when Philadelphia's new city charter is about to bring it an official public relations officer for the first time, there comes to mind an unofficial but most unusual effort in the same direction which is already more than 150 years old.

This was the project of one man, who carried it out almost single-handed at a time when that was still possible. While we have no way of gauging its success in the line of its original purpose of building up the city, during the passage of a century and a half an extremely worthwhile by-product has come out of the work. This is its unique historical value not only for Philadelphia but for our whole country. It has gradually come to be recognized as one of our truly valuable national documents.

The man who did this was William Birch. The project was his *Philadelphia Views*, first published in the year 1800. Many are familiar with these pictures by sight; but few know the tale of how they came to be made, of what an impelling drive and unusual purpose went into them, and of how they became something far beyond the ordinary—endowed with the qualities which have brought them the esteem they deserve.

Considering the life of Philadelphia as 250 years (of course it is more), the story is begun and reaches its height at roughly the 100-year mark, just when Washington's death brought the nation to the end of its era of birth.

To understand how much ground was broken by these pictures, what a pioneer Birch was, we must first realize that there was nothing from which his prints with their unique spirit could have been copied.

In Europe, some 50 years before Birch's views were made, Piranesi had dedicated himself to engraving the ruins of ancient Rome. Other printmakers had issued handsome city views. But in all of them architecture was starred. The *people* were insignificant and microscopic. This was not Birch's approach at all.

In America, what there were in the way of historical prints followed the same pattern. But the state of the arts was much less advanced, much more "primitive." Those living through the early days here had no time to devote to the arts and no real training or skill in them. When great talent was manifested, its possessor usually left us. The artists who came to us from abroad were not of the best.

Only a small number of Philadelphia views had appeared, and these were definitely along "primitive" lines. The first engraving of a local building had appeared only in 1750. The highest development had come in the 1780's, when several scenes of Philadelphia were published in the *Columbian Magazine.* They were all in the European tradition—they lacked people as an intrinsic part of the portrayal.

So we must conclude that Birch's views were motivated by something inside him without any other person or work to blaze the way. And it will be seen that this was definitely the case.

Birch's arrival on the local scene brought the first person equipped to do what he did. He was then about 40 years old, an experienced artist recognized throughout England. He had won national awards. He was a protégé of Sir Joshua Reynolds and his close personal friend. His specialty was the painting of miniatures, and he had been offered the appointment of Enamel (or miniature) Painter to the King. But he had also published engravings. It is highly significant that his *Philadelphia Views*, if they were to be done at all, had to be done in that field of expression and represented a departure from the firm ground where his reputation was established and his income sure.

Birch also happened to arrive at the time when the city was ready for him. In 1790 it again became the capital of the United States, and entered upon a period of great expansion and public building. Birch came in the Fall of 1794, when this was well under way.

Here, then, were the man and the circumstances in combination. After a few years in his adopted city, the idea was kindled in his mind. The combined beauty and vitality of Philadelphia had deeply impressed themselves on him. He determined to record the city as fully as he could, so as to share his enthusiasm. Not only this, but it was his conscious plan to send his pictures to Europe and encourage others to follow him here, if not as settlers, then in trade. As he put it in his manuscript autobiography written many years later:

"Let me now return to my removal upon the bank of Neshaminy where I settled my family, in a small tenement till I could form a plan for building, and forward the work of my Philadelphia Views, which I had projected as a work of duration, to be published by subscription.... As no other work of the kind had ever been published by which an idea of the early improvements of the country could be conveyed to Europe, to promote and encourage settlers to the establishment of trade and commerce, . . . the restless minds of those with capital (who) expected nothing but a Forrest, seeing number after number of the elegant establishments of a City, soon caused the full effect of its intention, by the arrival of Funds, Tallants, Projectors and every other aid that a new country could wish."

I have referred to Birch's purpose and impelling drive. Now the purpose appears in the round, but let me suggest what quantities of determination and very hard work were involved in translating that purpose into actuality.

Birch did not have an establishment in the city already geared to handle the work. He lived far out in the country, on the Neshaminy Creek not far from Bristol. On his land was an abandoned toll bridge over the creek, and perched on the remaining pilings was the toll house. It was in this that his project was completed.

He first had to examine all the city to determine how many pictures would be needed. On doing so, he decided that almost thirty would be required. Surely five or ten active scenes, of the kind he had in mind, would have given the general flavor, but he wanted to be complete.

To work on such a scale, he had to have help. He first formed a partnership with his son; then he called in a friend and engraver, Samuel Seymour.

For each of the twenty-eight pictures in his book he had to create a watercolor in the right size and containing the right subject matter. On the site, small water color sketches of the street-life were made, about four inches square. The best of these were then worked into the larger water color picture which showed the finished scene.

But this gave Birch only one picture. It had to be duplicated. It was at this point that engraving entered the picture. A copper plate of the right size was purchased and upon it there was drawn with the engraving tool every line needed to reproduce the watercolor, but all in reverse. In this way, when the plate was inked and paper pressed against it, the inked lines appeared on the paper as the scene actually was.

After repeating this process nearly thirty times, the engravings were ready to be printed, and in the space of a few years approximately three hundred copies of most of the pictures were drawn off by use of a heavy hand-operated press. Probably more than ten thousand engravings were "pulled" in this way.

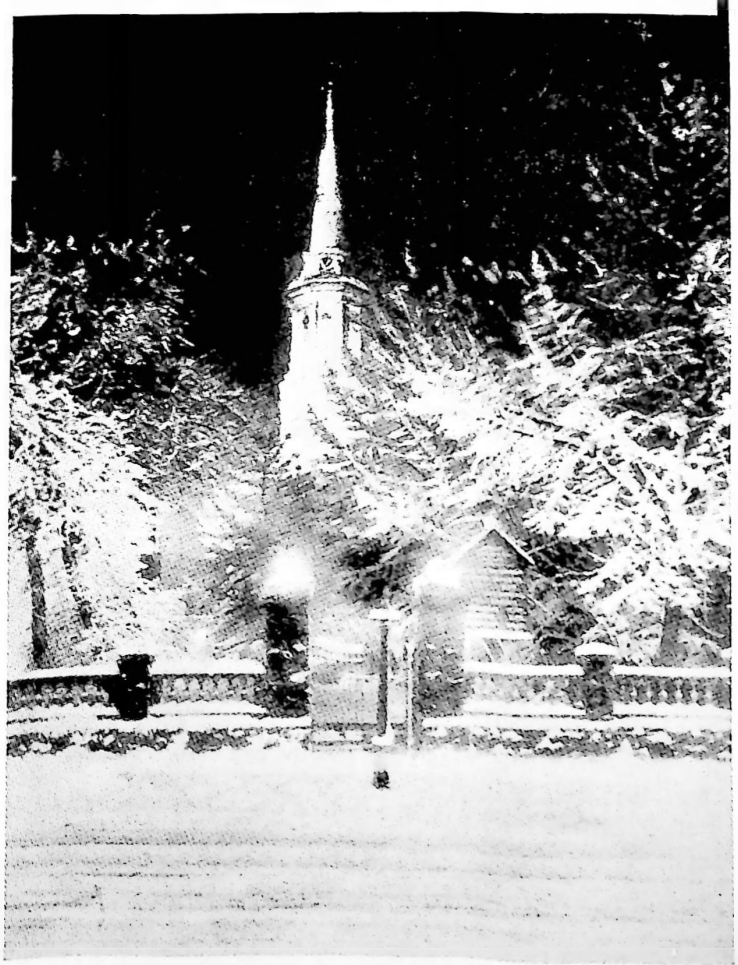
The work can be outlined so closely because there exist today a number of the original sketches, finished water colors, and even copper plates which Birch did. All are in the hands of public or semi-public institutions or collectors. The plates can still be used to produce more engravings on modern paper, but this privilege is carefully restricted.

Even with the complete sets of the engravings, the task was not complete. Some sets were sold to subscribers who ordered them in color, and in that event all the coloring had to be done by hand to match each original watercolor. And in every case the prints were made into a beautiful book. For it an engraved title-page was prepared by an artist specially skilled in calligraphy, an engraved map was included showing the then extent of the built-up city, and Birch himself prepared a single page of text which was set up by a printer.

This text fairly rings with the conviction of Birch's mission to preach the accomplishments and virtues of our city:

"PHILADELPHIA

The ground on which it stands was, less than a century ago, in a state of wild nature, covered



Trinity Lutheran Church, 5300 Germantown Ave.

with wood, and inhabited by Indians. It has, in this short time, been raised, as it were, by magic power, to the eminence of an opulent city, famous for its trade and commerce, crouded in its port, with vessels of its own producing, and visited by others from all parts of the world . . . This work will stand as a memorial of its progress for the first century."

Turning to the prints themselves, we are struck with their life and activity. The backgrounds are beautiful, but for the first time the *people* are given importance. They bring everything excitingly alive. With a team of ten horses they move a house. They build a warship. They load boats at the quay. In one picture, a blacksmith is active in his shop; in another, everything imaginable is sold at the outdoor market. The populace crowds onto the street from the theatre, reclines in the park, lounges at the public house, parades in uniform, mourns the death of George Washington, and much more. Their costumes, their vehicles, homes, public buildings, habits, street signs—all are captured to show us city life in America at its highest development in the national capital one hundred and fifty years ago.

The willing effort involved in creating such a labor of love no doubt intensified the prints and heightened their dramatic qualities. Birch's pride, and his conviction of the high destiny of his city, shines out of the pictures produced under such primitive conditions. Yet he never let his desire to "sell" the city affect the strict integrity of his work. Time and again it has been attested that the prints are strictly accurate in everything they depict.

It has been said that "an appropriate picture will often make clear what a thousand words cannot." Consider on this basis what a treasure Birch's enthusiasm has given us!

His books went out at the end of the year 1800, with some of the pictures dated 1798 and 1799. At that very time the capital moved away. But he had caught and recorded it at its peak at the turn of the century. Not so concerned with that, Birch instead kept careful track of his project. His subscribers were listed as living in Philadelphia, up and down the Atlantic seaboard, and as being in the United States from abroad. His report in later years, with his own viewpoint in mind, is that:

"It will be found there is at this time scarcely one sett of the work in Philadelphia that was not sent to Europe for that purpose."

Having accomplished all this, Birch might be expected to rest on his oars. But even before his book was finished he had many ideas for revising it. Some of the plates he felt were not as strong and appealing as they might be. Then too, changes were rapidly taking place and he wanted to record them, so as to show the city in its most advanced state. For these reasons he destroyed certain of his copper plates, made a number of new ones, and in 1804 brought out a second edition of his work. Both editions were large, impressive volumes which were hard to miss, their pages being about fifteen by eighteen inches each.

We must not overlook, too, in gauging the influence of Birch's work, that, being in book form, one copy could do the work of many. Such a copy was the one subscribed for by Thomas Jefferson as Vice President and left in his anteroom during the years of his Presidency. Birch tells the story this way:

"It may be easily conceived what the opinion was of this work with our late Friend and best wisher to mankind that formed the constitution of the Country, while it is recollected that during the whole of his presidency it layed on the sophia in his visiting Room at Washington till it became ragged and dirty, but was not suffered to be taken away."

The project had an immediate effect. As Birch estimates it:

"There is reason to suppose that from that ardent attempt of the Arts, at so favourable a season, when Europe was everywhere at war, that the present bustle in the solid improvements in our cities, and internal projections in the country did originate."

Really only Birch could have done what he did. He had the experience such that the task did not seem too great. He not only had an artist's eye for his subject, but he was new enough here to have the great era of building in the capital make a unified impact on him. And withal, he was more than a little of an architect, which gave him his interest in the buildings which is so beautifully blended and combined with his interest in the people and their activities. It is a pity that we have no way of knowing how successful was his original plan—how many accepted his unique invitation to come and enjoy our way of life.

Today, long after that plan has been fulfilled and its motion arrested, we realize the large significance of what Birch did: he provided us in lasting form with a comprehensive record of early American city life nation-wide in its interest. He seems to have sensed, far before the normal time, the true importance of many historic shrines revered today by the whole nation. He seems in the same way to have recognized how important the individual would become in our national life. His *Views of Philadelphia* reflect these attitudes; and this, together with their obvious artistic charm, insures that the work will live as long as our traditions survive. Its importance is now widely recognized. It is being and has been freely copied and reproduced. During the late war the copy of the

(*Please turn to page 31*)

Some Phases of Presbyterian Beginnings in Germantown

Guy S. Klett

IN ANY study of the Presbyterian Church in Germantown one can safely say that it found its way into that community by way of the back door. As a regularly organized group the Presbyterian Church was late in making any establishment in Germantown. Since the term Presbyterian was used chiefly by the English-speaking settlers who adhered to the Presbyterian form of government, the lateness of this branch of the Christian Church in getting established in Germantown can be partially explained in the light of the non-English element being more numerous. Occasions, however, arose when the Presbyterian influence made itself felt in various forms before it became an established institution in the midst of other denominational groups. One phase of this influence was through the Reformed Church.

Basically those churches that used the name Reformed had much in common in their religious life and doctrine. And although the name Presbyterian in church life was absent from Germantown for more than a hundred years after its settlement, there was a strong Calvinistic element present in the Reformed Church that arose there in the Market Square Congregation which eventually became Presbyterian.

The similarity in doctrine and in features of church structure linked the congregations of the Reformed Faith in various countries rather closely together. The Dutch and German Reformed people worshipped together. And the German Reformed people sought assistance in their religious life through the Dutch Reformed Church of Holland, and in turn one Dutch Reformed minister, who sought to minister to the German as well as the Dutch people, became an early link between the Reformed people of Germantown and the organized presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the British colonies. This relationship in structure and doctrine between the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches paved the way for closer association in what became "The Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System" in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In view of such connections this paper takes as its province for treatment the Reformed group that settled in Germantown and paved the way for the beginning of the Presbyterian Church there. Both the Dutch and German elements were responsible for the laying of this foundation.

Francis Daniel Pastorius in his "Circumstantial Geographical Description of Pennsylvania" in 1700 stated that there were some adherents of Calvinism in his company. But the number must have been small. Rudolphus Varick in writing to the Classis of Amsterdam on April 9, 1693, and in describing the "Dutch village, near Philadelphia" remarked that it consisted of "forty four families, twenty eight of whom were Quakers; the other sixteen are of the Reformed Church. I addressed those who had been received as members by Mr. Oyer (?). The Lutherans, Mennonites and Papists, all of whom are much opposed to the Quakers meet lovingly every Sunday, when a Mennonite, Dirck Keyser from Amsterdam, reads a sermon from a book by Joost Harmensen . . ." (*Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York*, Albany, 1901, II, 1053). But as yet there is no intimation of a distinct congregation of the Reformed Church as such. Pastorius, however, did state that "Here in Germanton, in the year 1686, we built a little church for the community."

But certain conditions were shaping up so that before a decade of the eighteenth century had elapsed enough people had gathered to prompt some attention from organized sources. The Church Record of Neshaminy and Bensalem, kept by a Rev. Paulus Van Vlecq during 1710–1713, states that he was "installed pastor or shepherd and teacher in the church of Jesus Christ at Shamminie, Benselem, Jermentouw [Germantown] and surrounding villages" (*Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, I, 111–112). Although Van Vlecq mentions Germantown, some doubt exists as to whether or not a Reformed Church existed in Germantown at this time. But in those days when frontier conditions prevailed and families were scattered, a minister might act as an overseer of church adherents in a community that was part of a larger parish. It appears from this record that his installation over these areas took place on May 20, 1710.

It was through Van Vlecq that the first link of the Presbyterian Church, in an official way, with Germantown occurred. Just four years after the formation of a Presbytery in Philadelphia in 1706, an item came

before the Presbytery that made this link possible. On September 21, 1710, the Presbytery record states: "The committee reported Mr. Van Vleck's case, and after serious debating thereon, put it to the vote, admit him a member of the Presbytery or not, and it was carried in the affirmative." At the next meeting of the Presbytery in 1711 he is reported as absent, but "Mr. Van Vleck's excuse with respect to his absence, was sustained, he being disabled by sickness, as one of his elders reported, being sent for that purpose." His connection with Presbytery, however, was of short duration. He was present at the meeting of Presbytery in 1712. Difficulty arising between Van Vlecq and the people of Neshaminy led to his suspension by Presbytery because of conduct unbecoming a minister. In 1715 the Presbytery reported that he had "run out of the country" (*Records of the Presbyterian Church*, pp. 17ff). With his disappearance an abrupt end was brought to this contact between the Reformed and Presbyterian elements in Germantown.

With the increase in the German migration the Dutch influence, once strong, began to decline. Hence the German Reformed Church grew to be one of the major congregations in Germantown. During the 1720's John Philip Boehm, a parochial schoolmaster, did much to hold this growing Reformed element together. In 1732 ground was purchased for a church building which was constructed the following year. By its location this structure gave the name Market Square to the congregation which it housed. Through varied fortunes this church continued as a German Reformed Church. (See the article by the Reverend Ellsworth Erskine Jackson entitled "A Brief History of Market Square Church," in the GERMANTOWNE CRIER, Vol. 2, No. 3, 18–19.) In 1856 under the ministry of the Rev. Jacob Helffenstein it took the name of the Market Square Presbyterian Church and was enrolled among the churches of the Fourth Presbytery of Philadelphia (New School) on July 1, 1856. But before this congregation became Presbyterian a movement began within its ranks that helped to bring into existence what became the First Presbyterian Church of Germantown.

During the eighteenth century a transition began to take place in the life of this strong German community. The English-speaking forces gradually began to settle in Germantown. Among some of these was Dr. William Shippen, Sr., who was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. His son, Dr. William Shippen, Jr., was also a member of this same Board. The Rev. Samuel Blair, a Presbyterian minister, took up his residence in Germantown about 1769, and did much in the first two decades of the nineteenth century to foster the formation of a Presbyterian congregation.

Other conditions added to the growth of the English-speaking population. With the ravages of the yellow fever of 1793 a number of Federal officers took up their residence in Germantown. Since Germantown did not suffer heavily from the fever, others sought escape from the scourge by settling there. Others found that it was a region well suited for summer residence. So this growth of the English-speaking population soon made itself felt in the religious life of the community.

As this transition in population occurred there was a growing demand for preaching in English. Even the younger generation of Germans, schooled in English, began to add their influence to this demand. The effort, however, on the part of the older members of a congregation to maintain preaching in the language of their mother country produced considerable unrest and friction. Furthermore, the difficulty of getting ministers from the old country at various times did much to strengthen this demand for preaching in English.

Through this series of circumstances the way for the formation of a Presbyterian congregation began to take shape. This is evident in the records of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Through the minutes of this Presbytery in relation to the ordaining of a Mr. Thomas Dunn the emergence of the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown appears. On October 18, 1809, Thomas Dunn, "a foreign Licentiate, formerly in connexion with the Baptist Church, & more recently with the Independent Church of Phila.", appeared to be taken under the care of Presbytery. On October 17, 1810, an entry appears in these minutes that the Presbytery of Philadelphia "did also find, on inquiry, that he had preached within the bounds of this Presbytery, for more than one year, to the satisfaction of the congregations, among whom he has laboured," and having met the requirements received him "under their care as a Licentiate for the gospel ministry." In response to an application before Presbytery it was "On motion resolved: that the Moderator of Presbytery write a letter to the people of Germantown, who have requested the labours of Mr. Dunn, and who, it is understood, wish for his ordination; and inform them, that Presbytery have appointed Mr. Dunn to labour among them, agreeably to their request, till the next meeting of Presbytery . . .; that the Presbytery are willing, and desirous to ordain Mr. Dunn, as soon as it can be done in an orderly manner; and that, in the mean time, the neighbouring Ministers of our church, who have received ordination, will cheerfully perform for the good people of Germantown, any services to which they may be orderly called." On April 16, 1811, Dr. Samuel Blair, a Presbyterian minister resident in Germantown reported to Presbytery "that there is, at this time, a pleasing prospect of establishing a presbyterian congregation in Germantown, & that measures to build a house of worship have already been taken. It moreover appeared that this object would be greatly promoted by the presence of an ordained minister in the place. Whereupon it was, on motion, resolved, that application be made, by our commissioners to the next General Assembly, for permission to ordain Mr. Thomas Dunn *sine*

titulo." After discussion on some constitutional questions in the matter of ordaining Thomas Dunn in view of the fact that he had left the Baptist Church, the Presbytery of Philadelphia met in the Methodist Church of Germantown on June 18, 1811, to proceed to Dunn's ordination trials. On the 19th of June they met in the house of Dr. Blair for the opening of Presbytery that morning and then proceeded to the Methodist Church where Mr. Dunn was ordained "to the whole work of the gospel ministry," and took his seat in that Presbytery as a member. It was not until May 13, 1813, that Mr. Dunn was ordained as pastor of the English Presbyterian Church in Germantown, as it was designated in its Constitution of 1814. Under its Constitution of 1832 it took the name of the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown.

Although the evidence is lacking for any positive date of the first assembling of this congregation, meetings had been in progress before Thomas Dunn was ordained. The growth of this group had been such that in March 1811 a committee, made up of Joseph Miller, Henry Bruner, Joseph Jacobs, William Sinclair, Robert Bringhurst, William Stewart, Jr., Jacob Miller, George I. Howell, and Isaac Roberdeau, was chosen to serve as a building committee. It will be noted that a number of German names appear in this list. Joseph Miller, who was treasurer of the building committee, had served as an officer in the German Reformed Church, and was a staunch supporter of this movement for a church in which preaching was in English. A building was constructed and dedicated on July 19, 1812. In October 1812 a Session, consisting of the Rev. Samuel Blair, Joseph Miller, Henry Bruner, and William Turnbull, was chosen to provide for the spiritual life of the congregation. The charter of 1814 provided for the further organization into a corporate body, known as "The English Presbyterian Church in Germantown", to attend to the temporal affairs of the congregation.

Through those Germans of the Reformed Church, who joined with the English-speaking residents of Germantown to form this new congregation the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown can, in a sense, be regarded as an offspring of the German Reformed Church. A check of the Sessional Records of the German Reformed Church reveals some interesting facts of a trend in this congregation that occurred in other German-speaking churches. This was the struggle over the use of German or English in the services. Although the text of the minutes was written in German script, in the late 1750's some of the names were entered in English script. This is definitely apparent in the list of 1761. The English script for entering the names continues in use until 1798. But in the list of 1800 the German script is used. The clerk alone may have been responsible for this use of German script. Yet it indicated a trend on the part of the older members to stick to the use of German in the services. Such resistance to the growing demand for English services prompted some members within such congregations to join in a movement for churches with English services. So it was that the Market Square German Reformed Church lost a number of its members, among whom was one of its active officers in the person of Joseph Miller.

But in the midst of a strong German community this English Presbyterian Church did not have a rapid growth. In April 1814 the Presbytery of Philadelphia reported the membership of the English Presbyterian Church as 47. Reports show a marked fluctuation in its membership through three decades. It was not until 1851 that the number of communicant members passed the hundred mark with a reported membership of 119. This congregation continued as an Old School congregation following the division of the Presbyterian Church in 1837 into the Old School and New School groups with two distinctive organizations up to the time of union in 1870.

But the time arrived when the parent German Reformed Church joined the ranks of the Presbyterian Church. The Sessional Record of the German Reformed Church has this entry: "Agreeably to a unanimous resolution of the German Reformed Church in Germantown, Pa., application was made to the 4th Presbytery of Philadelphia, on the 1st of July A. D. 1856 to be received into connection with that body. The application was cordially sustained, & a change of ecclesiastical relationship effected.

"In accordance with the requirements of the Charter, an election was held on the first of May 1856 for four Elders, to serve for one year. The election resulted in the unanimous choice of Messrs. Clem Tingley, Jacob M. Bochius, Joseph Boucher & Adam D. McKell. Mr. Bochius declining to serve, the other three brethren only were inducted into office."

As indicated earlier this transition of the Market Square German Reformed Church to the Market Square Presbyterian Church occurred under the pastorate of the Rev. Jacob Helffenstein. The Fourth Presbytery of Philadelphia of which it became a member was a New School Presbytery. The statistics in 1857, when the first report of this church was given to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. after its entering Presbyterian ranks, show that the Market Square Presbyterian Church had a communicant membership of two hundred and ninety-three. The communicant membership of the First Presbyterian Church of Germantown as reported in this same year was one hundred and seventy-five. Members from both of these congregations became active participants in the establishment of other Presbyterian Churches that came into existence as the community grew.

In the rise of the Presbyterian Church in Germantown the European background exerted a significant influence and the language problem played an important part. The Presbyterians, however, were not the first to use English in their services. The Friends' Meeting conducted their services in English. In

(*Please turn to page 30*)

Early Transportation to Germantown

By Naaman H. Keyser, D.D.S.



TRANSPORTATION and roads are so intimately related that we can hardly consider one without referring to the other. Accustomed as we of this generation are to journey by speedy railroads, and along well-lighted avenues, we but little appreciate the inconvenience, the difficulties and the danger associated with travel in the early history of our country, when transit facilities were of the most primitive character. When the early settlers came to Germantown, they made use of the narrow Indian trail. The burdens at that time were borne upon the backs of men, horses and cattle. One of the early writers tells us, "They brought their grist on men's backs, save one man, who had a tame bull, which performed the labor."

As the settlement grew in population, roads were first opened for convenient access to the mills in the vicinity, as they were established on the various near-by creeks.

The earliest road or cross street, as it was called, was laid out to Townsend's mill, built on a branch of the Wingohocking Creek, in 1683. Subsequent to this other mill roads were opened and named after the owners of the mills, the names of the roads changing with the ownership. Thus, for instance, Townsend's Mill Road became Lukens' Mill Road, now Church Lane, on account of the German Reformed Church on the Market Place at the end of the road. There was also a Church Road opened by Pastor Muhlenburg to connect a church circuit. This road still exists and in good repair, running through Ogontz.

We have had mill roads, church roads, limekiln roads and the Schuylkill Ferry Road, which led to Fort St. David's, now Falls of Schuylkill, where there was a ferry. It is better known as Indian Queen Lane, after the hotel that stood on the corner of the Main Street; it is now known as Queen Street. Robeson's mill road followed in part the original Indian trail that led from the Wingohocking to the Wissahickon Creek. It was later called Ashmead's Lane and Bensel's Lane, and is now known as School House Lane.

When the paper mill was erected on Monoshone Creek by William Rittenhouse, a road was opened to Germantown. It was afterwards called Poor House Lane, after the Borough Almshouse that was erected upon it. It is now Rittenhouse Street. Fisher's Lane is the old mill road that led to Hay's Mill; the part of the road within Germantown is now known as East Logan Street. The old Limekiln Road is the present Mermaid Lane.

It was over these old roads that the early inhabitants traveled to and from the town. When the old liberty bell took its first journey to Allentown to keep it out of the hands of the British, it passed up the Main Street of Germantown and over the road that had been opened to Bethlehem. It was accompanied by a train of Conestoga wagons and guarded by cannon. The bell was mounted upon a heavy truck, and it was with great difficulty taken up and down the hills.

How very different from its journey to St. Louis, when it was placed on a specially constructed iron car and drawn easily and rapidly over steel rails by an American built locomotive.

The establishment of post roads was the first step in opening direct communication between towns and villages. Previous to this, the Indian trails, or the "blazed" paths, were laboriously followed by the aid of guides, or the wanderers depended upon the compass, the stars or the sun, in order to find their way.

Later on, as the requirements of trade demanded, these rude trails were made more passable, and were cleared of obstructions and made more direct. Bridges were built, high hills were leveled and deep valleys filled in. At convenient distances houses of entertainment were erected, and as increasing trade called for more and more prompt and regular communication, the Commonwealth took the matter in hand and established "post-roads." The more important of these were gradually improved, until from being passable only "when weather permitted," they became well-built highways that could be traveled upon both in summer and in winter, by day or by night. Three of these great highways led into Philadelphia,

one directly from New York and one from Lancaster, which drained that extensive territory west of the Alleghenies.

Another "great road" out of Philadelphia passed through Germantown. In the upper part of the township it branched off, one road leading to Reading, the other to Bethlehem.

At these points they met roads which followed the Tulpehocking Valley, the Schuylkill, the Delaware, the Lehigh and Wyoming Valleys, where large numbers of early pioneers had settled, the Wyoming Valley being peopled by the Moravians, who were massacred by Mohawk Indians, led by Tories, during the Revolution.

The history of turnpike roads in the vicinity of Philadelphia began in 1792, by the building of Lancaster Road. Upon its completion, toll gates were established. This road is credited with being the first turnpike in the United States.

A few years after, in 1800–1801, the Germantown and Perkiomen Pike was established. This road commenced near Second Street, and was in a wretched condition, until the turnpike company took it in hand. No wheeled vehicles could safely use it at the breaking up of winter, and horses and men sometimes foundered in the quicksands at Fairhill.

It is related that Reuben Haines, who lived at "Wyck," when the road was in this condition, would saddle his horse to visit a neighbor, who lived only across the street. It was largely through the influence of Caspar Haines, a son of Reuben Haines, that this turnpike was built.

After the roads were opened through the State, the usual means of conveyance were the stage coach and Conestoga wagon. The "Conestoga," as it was called, was used for general transportation, such as collecting skins for the tanners, furs, flour and produce, exchanging them for hardware, sugar, coffee, tea, seeds, dry goods, shoes and other merchandise.

The widely separated communities of Pennsylvania first suggested a vehicle with great freight carrying capacity. One of these wagons, with a team of six horses, was able to carry 10,013 pounds over the Allegheny Mountains.

These vehicles were so named from the fact that the draught horses were high bred animals, raised in the Conestoga Valley of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The wagon was long, canoe-shaped, with a decided curve in the bottom to obviate any slipping of the contents in transit up and down hill. The harness was of superior manufacture.

"It was an animating sight to see five or six high-bred horses, half-covered with bear skins, or decorated with gaudily fringed housings, surmounted with a set of finely-tuned bells, with bridles adorned with loops and red trimming, moving over ground with brisk, elastic step, as if half conscious of their superior appearance, dragging their heavily laden caravan swiftly over the uneven roads."

Germantown, as soon as the roads were opened into the interior of the State, began to do a thriving business with the teamsters of these large wagons, many of them preferring to trade with the merchants of Germantown rather than run any risk with the quicksands and marshes between Germantown and Philadelphia. General stores were opened all along the Germantown Road.

About 1800 it was estimated that there were over one thousand Conestoga wagons running out of Philadelphia. James Stokes somewhere about 1812, counted in one day more than five hundred wagons on the Germantown Road, many of them Conestogas. Among the early roadside storekeepers we notice such familiar names as Rex, Stoneburner, Miller, Adams, Frey, Bockius and Ashmead. One of this family, William Ashmead, was the inventor of the so-called Germantown wagon, a light vehicle which was a great improvement over the heavy, cumbersome imported coaches of those early days.

The Germantown wagon was really a development out of the light market wagon called a calf wagon, and was the product of the skill of the wheelwright and blacksmith. The claim has been made that John Bringhurst, a cousin of William Ashmead, is the real inventor, on account of his occupation as a wheelwright, but as William Ashmead was a blacksmith, and his son John, who was associated with him in business, was a wheelwright, there is but little doubt that this celebrated vehicle was a product of their shop. This reputation no doubt was conferred upon Bringhurst on account of his subsequent success as a maker of Germantown wagons and coaches. When General Washington was conducting his campaign in northern New Jersey, he wrote to his Deputy Quartermaster General, John Mitchell, who was then stationed in Philadelphia, under the date of March 20, 1780, the following letter, in part: "You do me a favor by enquiring & letting me know, as soon as possible, if any good coach maker in Philadelphia or German Town (Bringhurst, for instance) will engage to make me a genteel, plain chariot, with real harness, for four horses, to go with two postilions. I wish to know the terms, and in how short a time it can be done."

Ten days after this he writes in another letter:

(*Please turn to page 27*)



Washington Coach



ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

GUY SOULLIARD KLETT, Ph.B., M.A., a native Pennsylvanian, is the author of "Presbyterians in Colonial Pennsylvania", University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1937; "The Scotch-Irish in Pennsylvania", Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1948, and various articles on Presbyterian Church History.

He is an Elder and Trustee of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia; Treasurer of the same, 1940–1951; a member of American Historical Society; Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Pennsylvania Historical Association; American Society of Church History, and a lecturer on Historic and Picturesque Philadelphia with kodachrome slides.

GEORGE A. HAVILAND: descendant of David Rittenhouse, born in Germantown, graduated from Germantown High School; student of political science at Temple University and a feature writer for the *Germantown Courier*, for which he has written a number of articles dealing with historic houses and other landmarks in the community.

PAUL A. DIKE, born in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, in 1912. Lived in Europe until 1923. Came to Germantown in 1925. Attended Germantown Academy for two years. Graduated from Germantown Friends School in 1932. Spent freshman year at Rollins College, a half year at Temple, and graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1937 with a B.A. in geology. The following year did graduate work at Hopkins on a partial scholarship. After that knocked around for a few years eventually entering the Navy as an Ensign in 1942. Married in 1945 and left the Navy as a Lieutenant the same year. M.A. in geology from Bryn Mawr in 1950. Has taught at the University of Pennsylvania for four years. Has a boy four and a half and a girl one and a half.

MARTIN P. SNYDER, a Philadelphia lawyer and graduate of Haverford College, has long been interested in Philadelphia prints and has devoted his leisure time to research on the subject of William Birch and his engravings since acquiring a copy of the First Edition of Birch's *Philadelphia Views* some years ago.

DR. NAAMAN H. KEYSER was a descendant of Dirck Keyser who came to America with his son Peter in 1688. In 1738 Dirck Keyser built the house which stood, until recently, at 6205 Germantown Avenue, said to be the first house in Germantown with two full storys and a loft.

The demolition of this house was a great sorrow to those of us who have the welfare of Germantown at heart. The first Keyser home on this spot was a one-story cabin erected when the lots were allotted, on the site of Pastorius cave. In a very real sense this place was a reminder of that valiant scholar who led a group of humble seekers after freedom to a new world. It was said that the remains of a cave could be seen in the cellar.

Dr. Naaman H. Keyser was a graduate of the Pennsylvania College of Dental Surgery and was known far and wide as the chief authority on the history of Germantown, sites, localities, and families. People came long distances to consult him. He was a stickler for accuracy and thoroughness.

He had a small printing press in his home for brochures, printing covers for pamphlets, and decorative work. One of the subjects so embellished was the story of the journey of the Liberty Bell from Philadelphia to Allentown in 1777.

He prepared and published a book, "Old Historic Germantown" under the auspices of the Pennsylvania German Society, and with others compiled a two-volume *History of Germantown*, only one volume of which was printed.

The lower burial ground, Hood Cemetery, owes its present excellent condition to Dr. Keyser who undertook its rehabilitation and the collection of the scattered records.

He was one of the leading spirits in the Site and Relic Society, 1901, and a chairman of the Relic Committee, an active member of the Germantown Horticultural Society, and of the Mermaid Club, Germantown's oldest group of literary students, established in 1877. He died in 1922, at the age of fifty-five.

DR. JOHN ROBBINS HART, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, and a graduate of the Philadelphia Divinity School, is the rector of the Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge. Dr. Hart is the founder of the Valley Forge Music Center and the president of the Valley Forge Historical Society. He is the author of "Valley Forge During World War II", and "Fourteen Reasons Why I Believe in God."

Dr. Hart is a consulting psychologist and lecturer and professor of psychology at the Junto, Philadelphia's Adult Education School.

He is Vice Chairman of the Speakers' Research Committee for the United Nations, a member of the Mental Health Council of Philadelphia, and a former columnist for the *Evening Public Ledger* of Philadelphia.

Historical Germantown

THE Germantown Historical Society is deep in plans to bring to the attention of the citizens of the Commonwealth and its neighbors the historical treasures of Germantown. There are few regions in the United States which have more historical interest so well preserved as does Germantown. Germantown Avenue is in itself an historical and architectural museum. Residences and public buildings dating from the 18th century are scattered along its length and no one can travel very far in Germantown without realizing what a wealth of historical interest is there. From time to time it has been apparent that there could be much better care taken of these treasures and their meaning could be given much wider currency if more efforts were made to preserve and mark them. Occasionally buildings of historical value have been destroyed or altered in a way to make their significance dim.

The Germantown Historical Society, under the leadership of its president, Mr. Leighton P. Stradley, has secured funds to make an historical survey of the architectural treasures of the section. Mr. Stradley is in the process of planning the organization of a committee of Germantown citizens who will sponsor a survey to be made by a smaller committee of historians and architects. Mr. Stradley has had extended conferences with authorities both local and national. He has been in contact with officials of the National Council of Historical Sites and Buildings, The Independence National Park Project of Philadelphia, and the Departments of History of the University of Pennsylvania and Temple University.

It is the plan of this smaller committee to gather together all the data available regarding historical buildings and to prepare a report illustrated by photographs, architectural drawings and historical notes which will explain the historical significance of every building of any age in the area. It is the expectation of the CRIER, that as this report progresses, to make periodic statements as to the development of the work. It is the hope of the Germantown Historical Society and those working with them that eventually Germantown may attract the historical interest of the country to visit and study the great riches which it has, illustrating the development of the American nation and the advance of American democracy.



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"THE SIGNERS' WALK"

(Continued from page 15)

Caesar Rodney, near Dover, Delaware; and the third associated with George Read. The next three represent signers from North Carolina, viz: John Penn; Joseph Hewes, whose memorial stone came from his birthplace in Kingston, New Jersey; and William Hooper, whose marker came from his burial place at Guilford Court House, North Carolina. The next stone is a doorstep from the home of William Ellery, Newport, Rhode Island. Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, Maryland, who was the last survivor of the Signers, is represented by a stone from his home, "Dougheregan Manor". George Clymer is represented by a stone from the foundation of his home at Morrisville, Pennsylvania; and George Taylor, another Pennsylvania signer, by a stone from Durham Cave, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, once owned (in part) by him. The next stone is a memorial to William Floyd, Long Island, New York. Then come the memorial stones to four signers from Virginia, George Wythe, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Carter Braxton, and Benjamin Harrison; the Wythe stone came from his garden at Williamsburg, Virginia. The next four stones memorialize signers from New Jersey, viz: Abraham Clark, Richard Stockton, whose marker came from the Stoney Brook Graveyard near Princeton, New Jersey, his burial place; a stone from Princeton University is a memorial to Dr. John Witherspoon, its President, and Francis Hopkinson, from Bordentown, New Jersey. The next four represent signers from Massachusetts, viz: Robert Treat Paine, Taunton, Massachusetts; John Hancock, the President; Samuel Adams; and Eldridge Gerry, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The next four represent four signers from Connecticut, viz: William Williams, Samuel Huntington, of Norwich; Oliver Wolcott, Litchfield; and Roger Sherman. The next three are stones representing signers from Maryland, viz: Samuel Chase, from his home in Annapolis; Thomas Stone, from Port Tobacco; and William Paca. Then Philip Livingston, New York; then three from Georgia, viz: George Walton, Augusta; Dr. Lyman Hall, Midway; and Button Gwinnett, of St. Catherine's Island. The fifty-third stone is that of Stephen Hopkins, Rhode Island, followed by those of Lewis Morris, New York; Francis Lewis, New York; James Wilson, Pennsylvania; and the last stone in the walk, the fifty-seventh, is from the home of John Hart, of New Jersey.



Washington Custis—1808

Through the years, as an ever-increasing number of pilgrims step their way back into the past over these stepping stones in the "Signers' Walk", their hearts will throb with a rekindled patriotism echoed by the memory of the courage, the determination, and the singleness of purpose of those early patriots when they attached their signatures to that greatest of all American documents of freedom, the Declaration of Independence.

**Note. The Declaration of Independence was drafted largely by Thomas Jefferson in a house which stood at the southwest corner of Seventh and Market Streets. This historic house was demolished many years ago to make room for the Penn National Bank Building, on the front wall of which there was a large bronze tablet commemorating the fact that it was the site of the house in which Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence. A few years ago the bank building was demolished and the bronze tablet disappeared, and today there is nothing on the vacant lot to identify it as one of our great American historic landmarks. All of the first drafts, the revisions, and the final copies were in Jefferson's neat and fine handwriting. The most perfect of the original final drafts reposes in the vault of the American Philosophical Society. The Jefferson draft, with but few alterations, was unanimously adopted on July 4, 1776. It was not until July 19, 1776, that Congress ordered it to be engrossed and then signed by every member of Congress. The Declaration was then engrossed by Timothy Matlack, of Philadelphia, so that many of the signers did not attach their signatures to the engrossed document until August, 1776.*

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EARLY TRANSPORTATION TO GERMANTOWN

(Continued from page 23)

"In case you should purchase, please to have my arms and crest properly disp'd of on the chariot."

The following reply was sent to General Washington by Mitchell: "This day I went to Germantown & have prevailed on Mr. Bringhurst to let you have a chariot he has in hand—it appears to be good work & well seasoned timber, the size is 3 feet 6½ inches high, and 3 feet 10 inches wide—& I will have a very good second cloth, or better, if to be got, this will be ready in 6 weeks."

The price agreed upon was £210, and Bringhurst was to allow £27 for the old coach. There was some delay in finishing it, and Washington sent an impatient letter, to which Bringhurst curtly replied that if it did not suit him when finished, he need not take it.

On June 26th Mr. Mitchell writes to Washington: "Mrs. Washington is very well and expects to sett off for Virginia on Sunday next;—the chariot will be finished on Thursday or Friday next, & I believe will please your lady."

The coach Washington used on his later visits to Germantown was built by G. W. Clark, of Philadelphia. This is the coach he probably had in Germantown while a resident here in 1793.

Thomas Bringhurst succeeded his father in the business. The copper plate from which he printed his cards is still extant and in a good state of preservation. The place of business was on Main Street, near Bringhurst Street, and the 6-mile stone stood opposite, in front of "Conyngham," now No. 5214 Main Street and occupied by the Germantown Historical Society.

Christopher John Junkurth, a prominent manufacturer of these light wagons (Germantown), made so many, and his name became so closely associated with their development that he was also credited with being their inventor. Thomas P. Cope owned one of the first of these wagons. He also built stage coaches, which were very often shipped to Bethlehem and elsewhere for sale. Jake Peters and William Stadleman, drivers of stage coaches, would haul these coaches for him on their stage trips up the State. During the Civil War Junkurth was an extensive manufacturer of army ambulances.

It was not long before lines were established throughout the State. There was a stage line running from a tavern, on Dock Street, near Second, out Second street, and Germantown Road to Cox's Tavern, on what is now the corner of Manheim Street. Other lines ran to Chestnut Hill, Bethlehem and Reading.

The first means of conveyance in the Germantown Township was the two-wheeled cart, which occasionally had a covered top of canvas. These vehicles remained in use by the bakers of the town as late as 1840.

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"Youth today isn't interested, but forty years from now the 'Winter of '36,' with its bursting gas and water mains, flooded subways, shivering winter resorts, frozen fruit trees, mountains of snow, sub-zero temperatures and all the suffering and inconvenience it brought, will be a subject of comparison with those who have reached the 'reminiscing' age.

"We can't go back to the days when the Delaware River was frozen over to the Jersey shore with ice so thick that sleighs and heavily loaded bob sleds travelled back and forth safely, but we do recall several seasons when the Schuylkill, frozen from shore to shore in Fairmount Park, was covered with thousands of skaters during almost the entire winter.

"The automobile and the mild winters of recent years have robbed the Wissahickon and East River Drives of their most colorful season. From November to March the jingling sleigh bells, flashing silver mountings, trailing plumes, cracking whips, buffalo robes, fur caps and gloves and high-stepping steeds made a picture for the eye and music for the ear never to be forgotten as the crunching of hoofs and squeak of runners on the frosty snow bespoke a temperature unfamiliar to the present generation.

"Many residents of Germantown and Chestnut Hill will remember the late John Lowber Welsh, an ardent horseman, and his spanking team, as they dashed up and down the "drive" on the banker's way to and from his office."



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RECENT GEOLOGIC HISTORY OF THE WISSAHICKON CREEK

(*Continued from page 13*)

years ago to supply water power to a mill. There was a broad, relatively flat area here long before man ever built a dam. It has been suggested by some geologists that this low spot represents a part of the original course of the Wissahickon. This explanation is virtually impossible because there is no indication of how the Wissahickon reached this area. If it did flow through here why is there no fairly broad valley leading in and out of this low spot? Why should the Wissahickon abandon a channel already cut so deep into the plateau for another channel which would have had to be carved from the same hard, resistant rocks deep enough to divert the stream? If this area is to be considered as part of the old channel of the Wissahickon why should not the area around Rittenhouse Paper Mill be regarded in the same light? The objections cited above apply equally well to the latter area. A more plausible answer can be found by contemplating the history of intermittent uplifting and quiet with downcutting and sideward erosion taking turns as shown in the rest of the uplifted area. These open areas along the Cresheim and Hermit Creeks are most likely erosion levels formed during one of the intervals of quiet. Later uplift caused the Wissahickon to downcut much more rapidly than its small tributaries could. They had to keep up by cutting deep gorges and falling over waterfalls.

There is a hairpin curve in the Wissahickon Creek at the juncture of Wissahickon Drive and Lincoln Drive. This curve is not the original course of the stream. It is the result of the exaggeration of a gentler curve in the original channel. When one looks at the banks of the Wissahickon Creek at the juncture of the two drives one discovers that the roads have almost perpendicular walls rising up above them, while on the side toward the creek high retaining walls have been built. In the channel of the stream are to be seen a great many large rocks on the outer side of the curve. A few years ago the Wissahickon was threatening to remove a section of Lincoln Drive in a spot where it would be very difficult to replace. The rocks were placed in the channel to divert the normal flow of the water away from the base of the retaining wall. On the inner side of the curve, exactly opposite the guard house, there is now a bank about three to four feet high. A tree hangs out over the water clinging desperately to the receding bank with outstretched roots. Before the normal flow of the water was changed by the rocks this tree was growing happily on good firm ground. The water was several feet away down a gentle bank, a sand bar being built out to protect it even more. The Wissahickon Creek had been building this sand bar and undercutting the steep cliff to which Lincoln Drive clings for hundreds of thousands of years, performing one of the normal functions of streams. The water of streams sweeping around a curve strikes against the outer bank of the channel cutting away material rapidly by hydraulic action and by grinding with sand and gravel carried by the water. This cutting is both outwards and downwards, cutting the channel deeper and under the cliff above. When the undercutting becomes great enough the cliff collapses and the creek works for a long time to remove the debris. On the inside of the curve there is slack water in which sediments are dropped building out a sand or gravel bar. The movement of the creek sidewards in its channel is balanced on the inside of the curve by the building out of the sand bar. The downcutting coupled with the sideward movement produces what is called a slip-off surface. This may be seen at the hairpin turn by crossing the creek at the bridge further upstream and following the foot trail back to the crest of the ridge. Turning toward the hairpin curve and walking down the crest of the ridge one comes to a low cliff which is easily descended by a series of natural ramps. This cliff probably represents the position of the original channel, probably being formed when the normal flow of the water was diverted by the caving in of the outer bank. Continuing down the ridge another low cliff is encountered. At the base of this cliff is the flat surface to which the overhanging tree is clinging. This flat surface is an old gravel bank or bar, the highly mixed nature of the alluvium being shown on the downstream side of the overhanging tree. The rocks of the outer side of the curve have diverted the water so that it is now cutting away this bank, gathering up tools with which to grind the rocks on the far side.

Fishing on the Wissahickon



To briefly review the history of the creek: It is an antecedent river, one which was present in an old age stage before the area was uplifted, and which has maintained its original course by downcutting. It will continue downcutting until it reaches a point where it no longer has the velocity necessary for cutting its channel and then it will start sideward cutting. By the time the Wissahickon has cut its channel down to grade so that it no longer has rapids and falls, the tributaries will have rounded off all the surrounding hills and the area of Chestnut Hill will be simply a low hill standing maybe a couple hundred feet above the surrounding lowlands.

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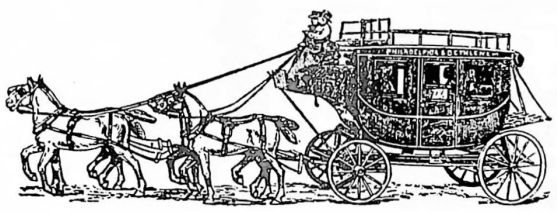
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SOME PHASES OF PRESBYTERIAN BEGINNINGS IN GERMANTOWN

(Continued from page 21)

the 1790's a "class" was formed among the adherents to Methodism, who organized a Methodist Church in which English was first used in a church service. The Mennonite, Brethren, Lutheran, and Reformed churches used German in their worship services (Edward W. Hocker, *Germantown*, 1683–1933, p. 134). In a somewhat unique sense a combination of the English-speaking settlers, including the Scotch and Scotch-Irish, with adherents of the Reformed Church who had been accustomed to the use of German in the worship service but advocated the use of English, was responsible for the founding of the Presbyterian Church in Germantown.



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WM. BIRCH'S PHILADELPHIA VIEWS

(*Continued from page 18*)

book in the Library of Congress was protected with other chosen volumes in its strong vaults.

In recent years it has been variously stated that these views "form a great historic monument, the importance of which cannot be overestimated"; that they are "one of the greatest pictorial records of 18th century America", "the finest volume of early American views issued", and (with another of Birch's books) one of "the two initial masterpieces of American color plate publishing."

Nor is this all, for the force of the prints is still being exerted today in producing *action* rather than mere contemplation (which in itself quickens our sense of the historic and has its own definite value). As an example, in the recent past John Frederick Lewis, Sr., seeing from prints, including these, what the Schuylkill had once been like, campaigned vigorously for its restoration below Fairmount Park. His urgings are finally about to bear fruit. Again, our most recent center-city bank building, at 15th and Sansom Streets, was designed on the direct inspiration of a Birch view.

In someone who catches the spark of Birch's enthusiasm and has his will to achieve for our city, I feel sure that his early record will inspire and bring about still further civic accomplishment in our time.

Ten original engravings of William Birch's "Views of Philadelphia" are now on display at the Morris House, 5442 Germantown Avenue. They can be seen there any day from two to five in the afternoon, with the exception of Mondays.

The engravings are from the collection of the late Col. F. Churchill Williams, author and editor, and have been loaned indefinitely to the Morris House by Mrs. F. Churchill Williams. A small fee of twenty-five cents is charged for admission to the house which goes towards its upkeep.

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"About the year 1762, the Lord was pleased to turn my mind, under its various exercises, to consider the vanity and loss of time, which is taken up in the dying of different colours, materials, and the cloth intended for making our garments, &c."

"Under such considerations as the foregoing, my exercise became weighty, and increased so much that at length my soul seemed not likely to obtain ease, until I submitted to what I really believed was required of me, in making some alterations in my dress. To get a white hat, and to wear white stockings, was going as far into a change of my dress, as I could clearly see to be right at that time."

"After wearing my old hat until it began to look too mean, I went to Philadelphia, intending to get a white one; but returned without leting my exercise be known by obtaining it."

"Not attending to the pointings of the inward monitor, the first time, I had to make another trial: then, again, through weakness, my resolution failed me and I procured a black one."

"This pretty soon brought on me such trouble for my disobedience to Him who waited to be gracious, that I felt the terrors occasioned by guilt both day and night, until I became willing to be accounted a fool, and to confess my fault to the man I got the hat of; which I did, and offered to pay him the damage done, if, he would take it again, and inform me where I could get a white one; which he complied with. My mind was then much humbled, but not low enough yet; for again I returned home without buying a white hat."

"But I again felt the righteous chastisements of the Lord, then deeply in the cross. I went to the place I had been informed of, and bought a white hat; with which I returned in the enjoyment of sweet peace of mind. I also procured stockings made of white wool, and wore them, and also my new hat; and so far felt easy in mind."

"After this I saw there was an inconsistency in my dress, until a further step was taken. My gracious Master dealt kindly with me, he furnished me with strength so I declined wearing dyed garments. He knew my heart, and that my change to a white dress was in obedience to what I believed to be His will, though much in the cross to my own."

"Thus I was enabled in sincerity to adopt the language, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth; because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes'."

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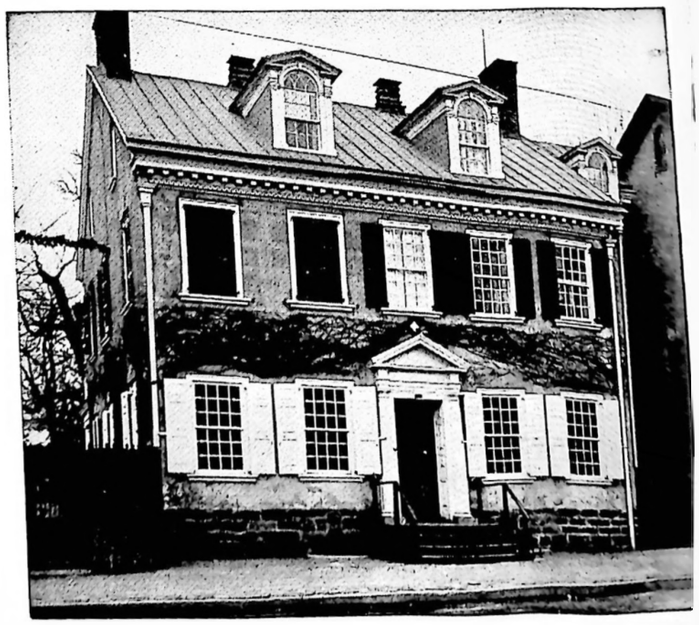
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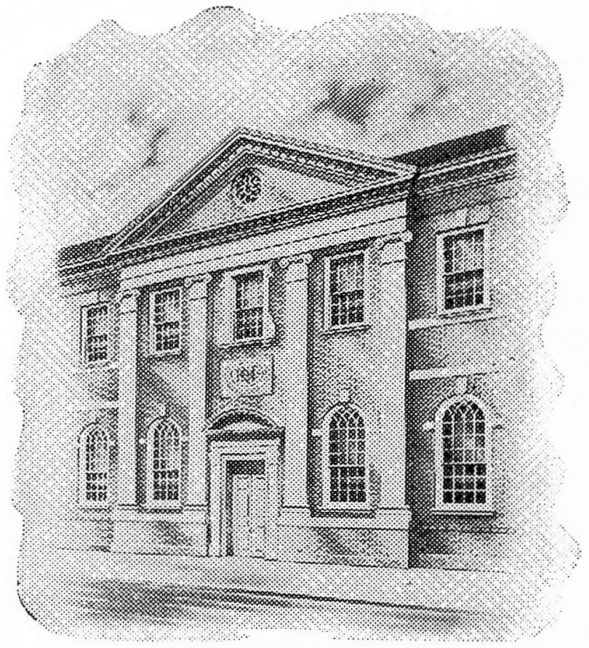
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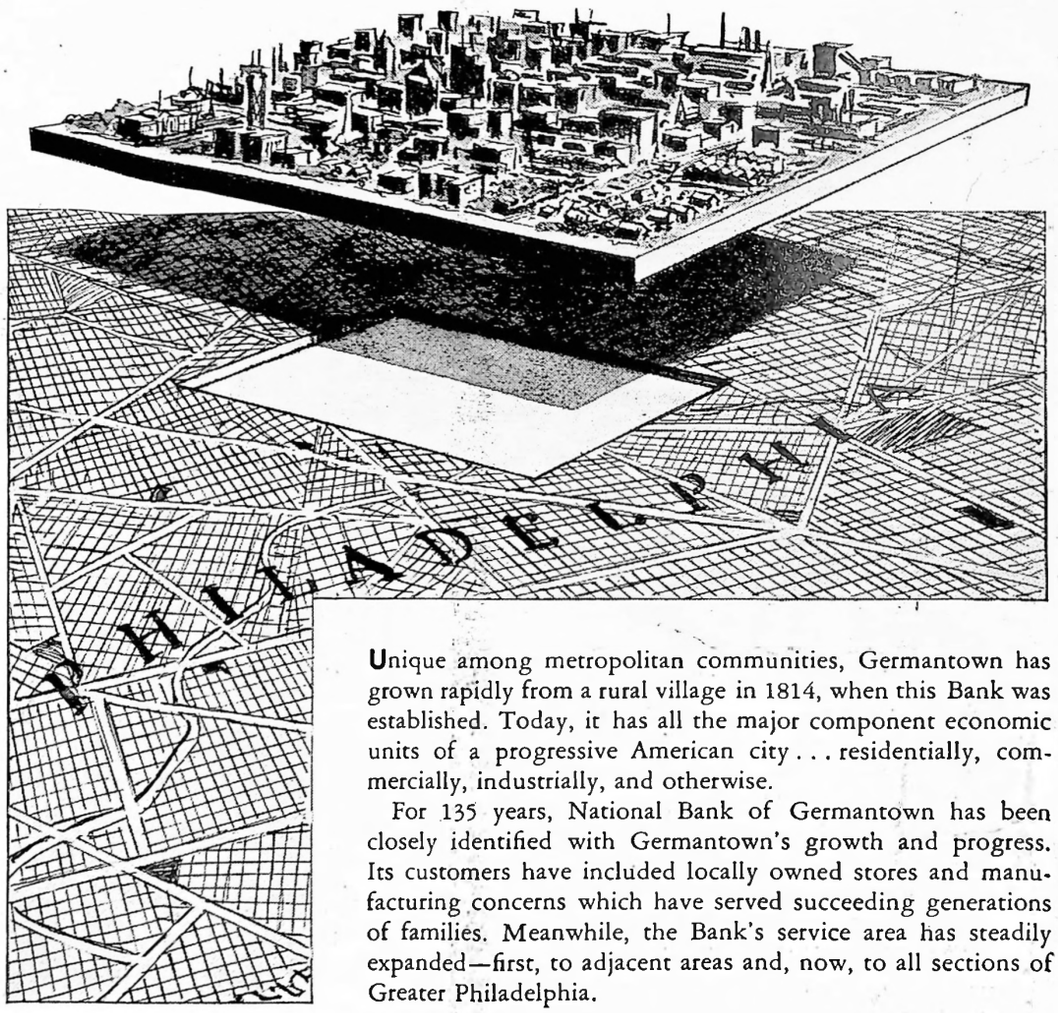
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