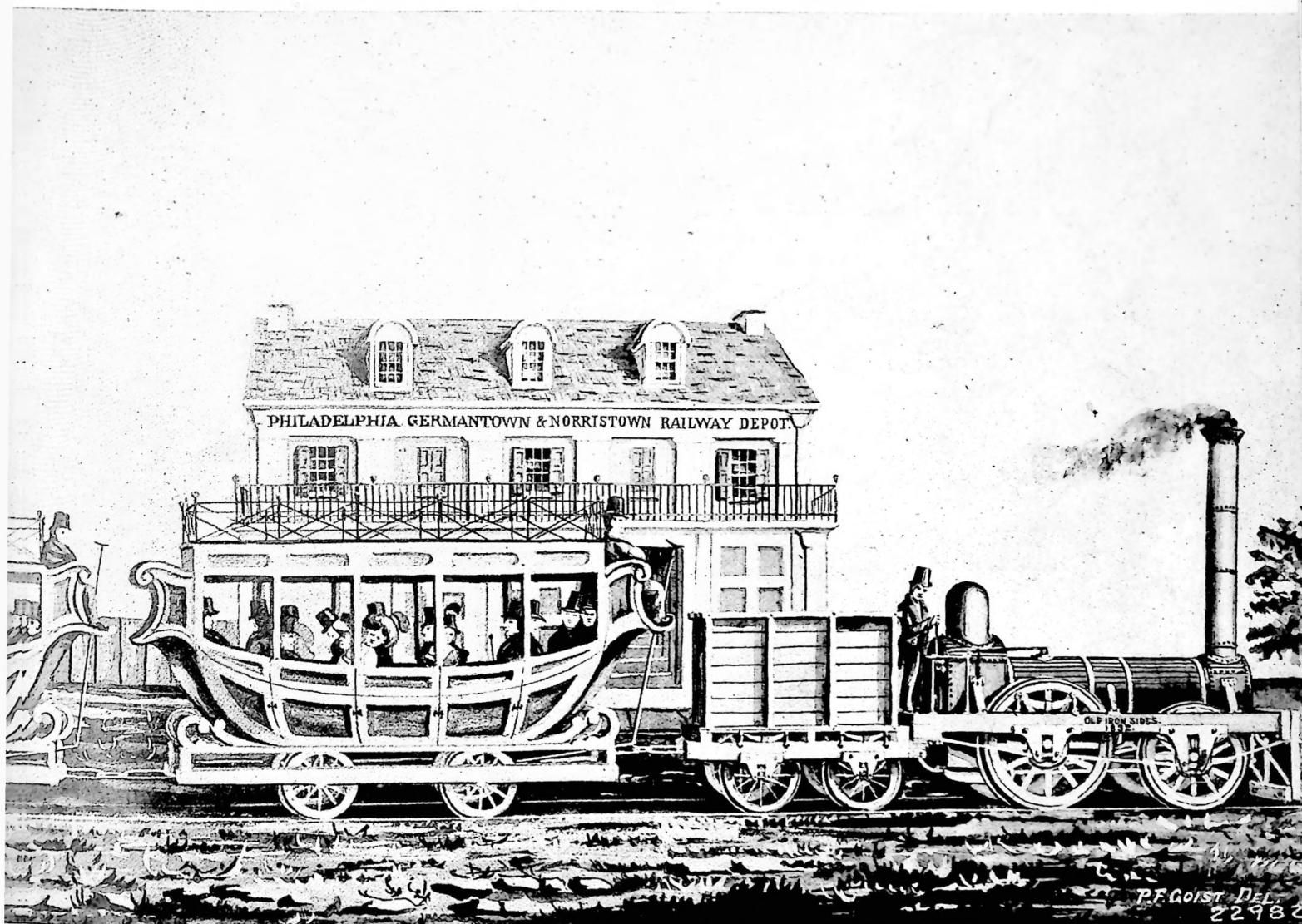


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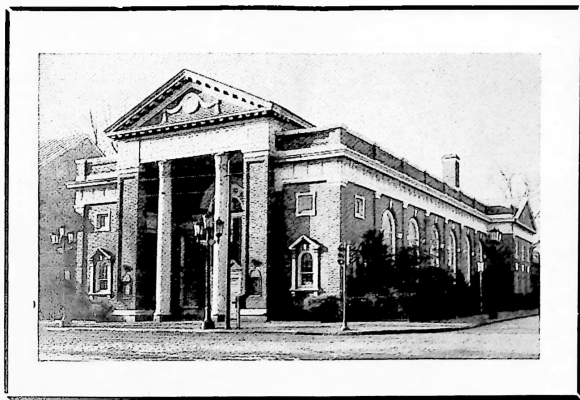
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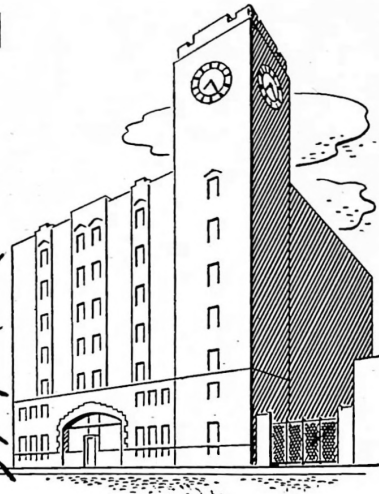
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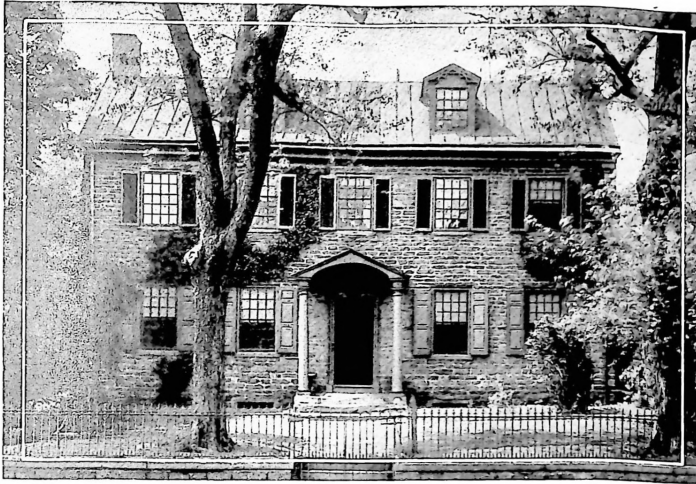
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GERMANTOWNE *CRIER*



Vol. 2

SEPTEMBER 1950

No. 23

PUBLISHER

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Published Quarterly—Germantown Historical Society—Subscription \$1.00 per year

Publication Office

Photography
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Fiftieth Anniversary

The Germantown Historical Society Is Fifty Years Old

SUCH an important milestone deserves special observance and the Society bids its members and their friends to a Garden Party at the Morris House, Market Square, on Sunday afternoon, October 15, 1950, from 3 to 5 o'clock. President Stradley will tell something of the Society's plans for the future and Charles Francis Jenkins, a Founder and for many years its President, will speak briefly of the value of such an undertaking.

There is no town in America with such important historical associations as Germantown. It was the scene of one of the major battles of the Revolution, the Capital of the United States when President George Washington lived here surrounded by his cabinet—Jefferson, Hamilton, Know and Randolph. Germantown Academy, still pursuing its distinguished career, is the oldest school in the United States with a continuous existence in the same building and same ownership. Many leaders in professional and industrial life were educated here, including the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, a Justice of the United States Supreme Court and a President of the University of Pennsylvania. Here was the cricket center of America when that game was in its heyday. So one could run on in a recital of many men and women and events of major importance connected with Germantown.

It is well, therefore, that there is a Society devoted to the preservation of these records and in a pleasant association engaged in making people aware of them.

Our Main Street has lost many of the treasures and quaintness it once had, as it winds over an old Indian trail from Wayne Junction to Chestnut Hill, but there are houses open to the public where one can step aside from the immediate and invite one's soul in the tranquility of graciousness of a past day. Stenton, at Wayne Junction; Loudon up Neglees Hill, Grumblethorpe at Indian Queen Lane, the Morris House at Market Square, Upsala at Upsal Street and of course, the Hacker House at number 5214, the Headquarters of the Society, where its many priceless treasures are on exhibition.

You would do well to cruise around Germantown on the afternoon of October 15th and end up at the Garden Party. In case of inclement weather, arrangements have been made to entertain guests indoors so that all will be comfortable.

That engaging person, Mrs. Miniver, said that "In the convex driving mirror she could see, dwindling rapidly, the patch of the road where they had stood; and she wondered why it had never occurred to her before that you cannot successfully navigate the future unless you keep always framed beside it a small clear image of the past."

Adults and children should know about their homeland and we need to cultivate roots about here for their flowering has yielded a rich heritage. There are "Acres of Diamonds" here at hand!

HORACE MATHER LIPPINCOTT

GERMANTOWNE CRIER



Volume 2

SEPTEMBER 1950

Number 3

“WYCK”

By ROBERT BOWNE HAINES, 3D

THE early descriptions of Germantown tell of the long crooked Main Street, the fruit trees lining it and the fact that many of the houses had their gable ends to the street. It is therefore of interest to note that “Wyck”, the oldest house standing in Germantown, is the only dwelling on the Main Street that now shows its gable end to the passerby.

The house originally consisted of two parts. The one further from the Main Street was erected about 1690 by Hans Milan, for his daughter Margaret, and the part towards the street at a later period.

Hans Milan's daughter Margaret married Dirck Jansen; their daughter Catherine married Caspar Wistar, and in turn their daughter Margaret married Reuben Haines, designated in family records as “Reuben, the Elder.” “Wyck” has remained in possession of the Haines family to this day.

The property was given its name by Reuben Haines (the Younger), one of Germantown's distinguished men and grandson of Reuben (the Elder) and Margaret Wistar Haines. He called it “Wyck” after the name of the estate of Sir Richard Haines in England.

Like almost all houses of importance along our Main Street, “Wyck” was used as a field hospital after the battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777. It stood in the thick of the fight and it is known that a party of British were in possession of the big house on the opposite corner of the street and that they were vigorously attacked by the American troops. The covered passageway between the two sections of “Wyck” was used as an operating room and the bloodstains of the wounded were for many years to be seen on the floor boards.

In 1824 the house was re-modeled by Reuben Haines (the Younger), who made use of many suggestions from his friend, William Strickland, the noted architect. The passage-way between the two buildings was enclosed and the house presented one continuous front as it does today.

Here in 1825 was given a reception to General Lafayette, then on his last visit to the United States. He had come to Germantown with his son on a hot morning of July 20th. He had been received by the whole town at Neglee's Hill, had been asked to breakfast at the Chew house, visited the Mt. Airy Military Academy, journeyed up to Chestnut Hill for a view of Barren Hill, the scene of the skirmish of that name, and early in the afternoon the party had returned to “Wyck.” Here Lafayette stopped for an hour, “where he again received visits from ladies and gentlemen of respectability.” The presentation of the townspeople was made by Charles J. Wister, for many years one of the best known and most active citizens of the town. He was the brother of Sally Wister, the diarist, and not without local distinction as a writer and poet. It was in his father's house, known as Grumblethorpe, that the British general, James Agnew, had made his headquarters, and had later died, leaving the indelible bloodstains on the parlor floor.

On this occasion at “Wyck” an appropriate address was made by Charles Pierce, Esq., after which a relic of more than ordinary interest was presented to Lafayette through Reuben Haines, the host. This gift was a small round box made of wood identified with different historic sites, and also a piece of the American “Alliance” frigate in which Lafayette had twice crossed the Atlantic. The box had been made either by or under the supervision of the historian John F. Watson, then a comparatively young man, the cashier of our Germantown Bank for many years. He was at this time gathering material for his “Annals,” which were not published, however, until six years after Lafayette's visit. General Lafayette was highly pleased, his secretary says, by Mr. Watson's present. He received it with gratitude and with a pledge that it should find a place among the precious memorials of his tour. The box was for many years a treasured relic at La Grange, France, and it is illus-



Entrance to "Wyck"
(view from front gate)

trated in the "Souvenirs sur la Vie Privée du General Lafayette" by his friend and surgeon, M. Jules Cloquet, published in Paris, 1836. Shortly after Lafayette's death in 1834 the souvenirs were divided among his three children and their heirs. A box similar to the one presented to General Lafayette was given by Mr. Watson to Reuben Haines at the same time and is preserved as one of the interesting curios at "Wyck."

Just where the ceremonies at "Wyck" occurred on July 25, 1825, can only be conjectured, but it is known that the reception took place in the passageway through the center of the house. The General, fatigued by the labors of the day, was seated during a portion of the reception in an armchair which is still carefully preserved by a descendant of Reuben Haines. The tradition is that it was one of two chairs which Franklin brought with him on his return from his service abroad as Minister of the United States to France. The chairs passed into the possession of Miss Molly Donaldson, of Germantown, and on her death she bequeathed one to Reuben Haines and the other to Charles J. Wister. The chair was placed on the right side of the passageway, nearest the street, and the guests filed through into the garden at the rear. Here "the guests were embraced by the General,"

as the account states, "with his usual politeness and cordiality."

The reception at "Wyck" concluded, Lafayette, seated in his barouche, accompanied by Charles J. Wister and Reuben Haines and surrounded by the cavalry escort, moved down the Main Street to yet one more function—a visit to the Academy on School House Lane, where an address on behalf of the School was presented by Walter R. Johnson, the principal.

Reuben Haines was deeply interested in agriculture and in many phases of community improvement. He was one of the projectors of the turnpike road. Of the horrors of the Main Street in the early days, before it was turnpiked, many stories are told. It was deep with mud in the winter and spring and almost as deep with dust in the summer. It is related that at one time Reuben Haines wished to cross to the other side, and in order to get safely over he saddled his horse and rode.

Reuben Haines was also much interested in the sciences, being an active member of the American Philosophical Society. He was the first Secretary of the Academy of Natural Sciences, which position he held for twenty years. He was also one of the early and most active members of the Franklin Institute. Audubon and Charles Bonaparte, with whom he shared ornithological interests, visited in his home. In the field of education he fostered progressive methods and was instrumental in bringing Amos Bronson Alcott and his family to Germantown in 1831 to conduct a school for younger boys and girls. Louisa May Alcott was born in the home provided for Bronson Alcott on the site of the Masonic Hall opposite the Friends' Library. The school was conducted in this home. Reuben Haines gave liberal financial support to this school until the time of his sudden death in October 1831. A portrait of Reuben Haines by Rembrandt Peale is preserved at "Wyck."

"Wyck," a quiet and peaceful memorial of the past, stands in the midst of the noise and bustle of our Main Street, now Germantown Avenue. The house is one continual delight to everyone fond of the old days and ways. From time to time necessary improvements have been added in keeping with its low ceilings and simple lines and furniture of the olden times, in order to provide modern comforts and conveniences.

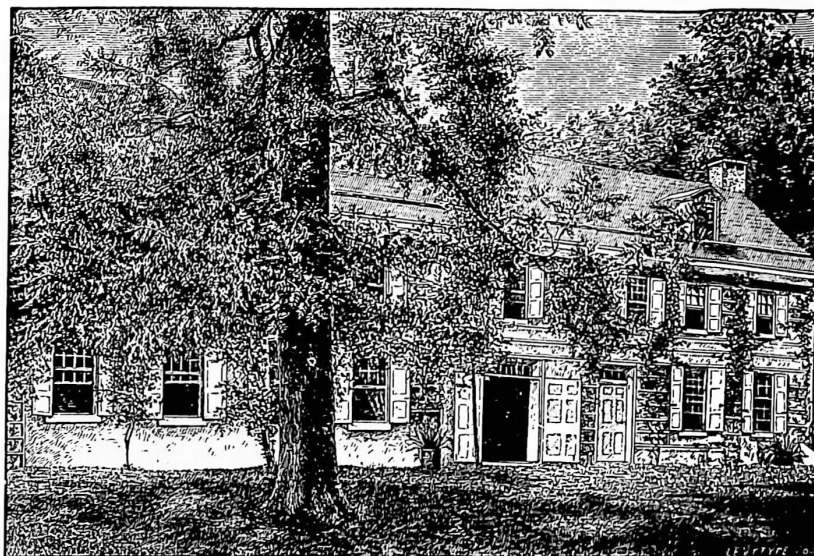
The formal garden on the north side of the house has been kept up with its gravel paths lined with boxwood hedges and its beds of damask roses. Many rare and unusual plants were added from time to time. Among the trees about the house is the tall stump of a large Spanish Chestnut, a seedling from a tree which George Washington had planted for Judge Peters on the lawn at Belmont in Fairmount Park. Beside the kitchen stands an old seckel pear tree, said to have been budded from the original seckel pear, while near the ice house are two mulberry trees, memorials of bygone days when silk worms were reared experi-

mentally in an effort to develop the silk industry in the Germantown area.

The ice house in the back yard was built in 1837 and was used for storing ice until the early years of this century, when all the ponds in the neighborhood were either abandoned or filled up. The old wooden pump still standing at the back door, has also been out of use for many years by order of the Board of Health.

In 1794 Caspar Wistar Haines, son of Reuben Haines, the Elder, and Margaret Wistar Haines, built a brew house on the corner of the property about where Walnut Lane is now. It was torn down about 1842 before Walnut Lane was opened. In 1796 he built the large stone barn which was bought in 1890 by Mantell Fielding and altered into a comfortable dwelling for himself. Its entrance is on Walnut Lane. There was another barn on the place which was torn down in 1819, but there is no record to indicate where it stood. Probably during the occupation of "Wyck" by Reuben Haines, the Younger, a small building fronting on Main Street and between the Mansion House and the brew house was erected for the use of the hose carriage of the local Hose Company. It was removed about 1860. When he remodeled the Mansion House in 1824 the stones taken from the Dutch ovens, which originally stood in the present dining-room, were used to build a low terrace between the shaded lawn and the vegetable garden. The carriage house stands back of the wood lot at the corner of the vegetable garden.

After the death of Reuben Haines, the Younger, his widow and family continued to live on the place; and after the death of Jane Bowne Haines in 1843, the unmarried children still occupied the house. Upon the final partition of the Estate of Reuben Haines the Mansion House and lawn and gardens came into the possession of his youngest child, Jane R. Haines, who was born July 4th, 1832, and lived there continuously until her death November 11th, 1911. Although for more than fifty years she was an invalid as the result of a severe injury received on shipboard when returning from a trip to England, Jane R. Haines kept



"Wyck" from south lawn
(built about 1690)

closely in touch with matters of general and local interest through an extended circle of friends, acquaintances and correspondents who were drawn to her by her charming personality, appreciative sympathy and engaging conversational gift. She never married and in her will the house and grounds were left to her oldest great-nephew, Robert Bowne Haines, 3d., who was named for one of her two brothers.

Following the death of Jane R. Haines, her nephew Caspar Wistar Haines, a retired civil engineer, took up his residence at "Wyck" until his death in 1936. During these years many civic and church organizations enjoyed the hospitality of the house with its lovely lawns and gardens. He took an active interest in the Germantown Horticultural Society and built a small greenhouse adjoining the old carriage house. His sister, Jane Bowne Haines, named for their grandmother, often made her home with him, and remained in charge of "Wyck" until her death September 21, 1937. She was the founder of the Pennsylvania School of Horticulture for Women and was actively engaged in many horticultural pursuits, and "Wyck" became the center of much Garden Club activity, especially during the season when the damask roses were in bloom. Many visitors came from far and near to admire and enjoy their beauty and fragrance.

Since 1937 Robert B. Haines, 3d, and his wife, Mary, have occupied "Wyck." They have made some needed improvements to the house and grounds, keeping constantly in mind the historic significance and family tradition of the old homestead—one of the very few properties—if not the only one—in Germantown to remain in continuous, unbroken possession for nine generations of the descendants of the original owner.

"Wyck" is still a center of interest in Germantown and the scene of many delightful gatherings, including family re-unions.



Rose garden at "Wyck"

Addresses at the Morris House Dedication Ceremonies

Delivered by DR. RONALD F. LEE,
Chief Historian, National Park Service

IT IS A pleasure to participate with the members of the Germantown Historical Society, their guests, and friends of the Morris House and of historical preservation generally in these dedication ceremonies. I bring you the greetings of Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman, and Director Newton B. Drury, of the National Park Service, who have asked me to express their keen regret that they cannot be present to share in the pleasure and significance of this occasion.

In this day, when so many landmarks of our history are being mutilated or destroyed by the pressures of public and private construction, the building boom, and the spread of commercial and industrial developments, it is a particular pleasure to share in the dedication of a fine historic residence which has been saved from such a fate and will be permanently preserved and exhibited for the benefit of the present and future generations. I feel especially privileged to have been invited here by a historical society which has done more than talk about conservation but instead has been stirred to effective action by the challenging opportunity presented by the Morris House.

The Morris House, with its distinguished facade, and beautifully furnished interior, is significant for all of us as a splendid example of the architecture of its period.

It is further endowed with rich associations which give it a permanent place in American history. Its situation near the square in Germantown reminds us also of the great events which occurred here during our war for American independence. It is now added to the other sites and buildings in this vicinity which together portray a stirring chapter in our national life, significant far beyond the particular spot where we are holding this observance. Today, the Morris House joins the 180-odd areas of the National Park System which together mark the successive milestones in the march of our history.

The National Park Service acquired the Morris House property on December 30, 1948. It was the generous gift of Mr. Elliston P. Morris and the late Mrs. Jane Rhoades Morris who donated the property to the Federal Government as a memorial to Elizabeth Canby Morris and Marriott C. Morris, and for the benefit and inspiration of all future visitors. To Mrs. Jane Rhoades Morris the National Park Service is also indebted for the presence here of the many fine pieces

of antique furniture which she generously left in the house either as gifts or on indefinite loan as an aid to the understanding and appreciation of its history and decoration. On behalf of the National Park Service, I wish to express to Mr. Elliston P. Morris and the Morris family our deep appreciation for these gifts and this assistance.

This community, the National Park Service, and the wider public as well, are indebted also to the officers and the members of the Germantown Historical Society, who from the beginning have contributed greatly to the success of our joint undertaking. Through you, Mr. Stradley, as President of the Society, I should like to extend the warm thanks of the National Park Service for all that you and the many able men and women of your Society have done, and are doing, here.

It is a happy arrangement under which we are collaborating together. The Federal Government, through the National Park Service, holds the title to the property, and has been responsible for placing the house and grounds in physical condition for public use. Your Society, having completed the furnishing and decoration, has dedicated itself to the high task of interpreting the history and traditions of the Morris House to the thousands of Americans who will visit it from all parts of the United States.

As you know, the Morris House was basically in a sound condition when the National Park Service took it over. However, it had been used as a private home until recent times and certain repairs, alterations, remodeling, redecorating and restoration were necessary to bring the old part of the house to the appearance it had in Washington's day and to adapt the newer portions to their present use as quarters for the custodian and for administrative purposes. Toward this end, the National Park Service has prepared a suitable apartment for the custodian. A new electrical system has been installed for the whole house; old mill work and old pipes have been replaced where necessary; and minor restorations have been made, such as the removal of the dormer window on the back. The entire interior has been repainted, care being taken in the old part of the house to first scrape off the old paint, coat by coat, to the original, so that the colors of Washington's day could be restored. We are now ready to let a contract for the improvement of the

gardens and the grounds and are arranging to replace one of the furnaces and to repair and correct the other heating plant. We also plan to erect a bronze historical marker at an early date. This work has been directed by the professional staff of the National Park Service, including Mr. Dick Sutton and Mr. William Haussman, architects; Mr. Robert Hall, landscape architect; Mr. Paul Hudson, museum curator; all with the continuing assistance and counsel of Coordinating Superintendent Francis S. Ronalds of Morristown, New Jersey.

As the building now stands the older portion or front part of the house is almost as Washington himself knew it in 1793 and again in 1794 when he spent the summer here together with Martha Washington and their adopted children, Eleanor Parke and George Washington Parke Custis.

It is worthy of particular note that under the authority by which the National Park Service has accepted the Morris House, this shrine will become a part of the Independence National Historical Park. The present occasion is therefore significant, not only as the official inauguration of a program devoted to the public use and enjoyment of a building once used as the home of George Washington, but, in a sense, as the dedication of the first unit of what will certainly be, in time to come, the most important single area in the National Park System commemorating our existence as an independent nation.

The Independence National Historical Park project is a joint development of the City of Philadelphia, State of Pennsylvania, and the United States Government. It will result in the permanent preservation, as a national shrine, not only of all of the historic structures in Independence Square, but many other historic buildings and sites close by associated with historic events in Independence Square, such as the old Philadelphia Custom House, the First Bank of the United States, the Merchants' Exchange, Carpenters' Hall, and Franklin Court. The official opening to the public, today, of this, the first unit of the proposed Independence National Historical Park, is therefore a happy augury for the realization of the whole project.

It is not easy to preserve historic sites and buildings. There are always those persons, as it has been said, who find a difficulty for every solution. There is, of course, a powerful economic argument for preservation. More and more, people are coming to realize that historical and architectural monuments are an economic and travel resource that ought to be tampered with lightly. But the most important reasons for preserving historic sites and buildings are not primarily economic, nor are they principally reasons of sentiment. If you, or anyone, are to succeed fully in preservation, you have to believe in the value of continuity in the life of the community, linking past generations, the present generation, and those still to come. You have to believe in the value of beauty and tradition as essential parts of community and national



MORRIS HOUSE
5442 Germantown Avenue

life. You have to believe in the worthwhileness of remembering and preserving the best of the creative achievements of our ancestors.

It has been well said that "historical preservation is no cloistered unimportant activity". In a broad sense, it is part of the fight we are now waging to understand and to defend the basic historic aspirations of the American people. We have no desire in this country to disown our past and to start afresh with a totally different political philosophy. Each historic site, such as this one, that is saved, is a reaffirmation of our determination to be loyal to the past, of which we are so proud, and to go forward to a future of which we are unafraid.

With these thoughts in mind, we dedicate the Morris House today as the first unit of the Independence National Historical Park.

Delivered by Bernard Samuel
Mayor of Philadelphia

I was very pleased to accept the invitation extended by Doctor Gordon W. Venable, Chairman of the Morris House Committee, to come here this afternoon and join with you in the dedication ceremonies we have just begun.

1.

It was a happy thought to select today for the dedication, in order that what we are doing here falls within the week of the local celebration to be known as Germantown Week. The Morris House dedication, of course, will be one of the highlights of the week, as it should be

2.

I am happy to know that the main speaker at today's ceremony was Mr. Robert T. McCracken, a distinguished lawyer and outstanding Philadelphian. Mr. McCracken is an old friend and, being a resident of this section of our city for many years, has been

interested in every project which has for its purpose the development of Germantown.

3.

There are more authentic colonial and revolutionary period houses in Germantown preserved in approximately their original condition than exist in any other community in the country. All Philadelphians are duly proud of this fact and of the traditions and associations connected with such buildings.

4.

It is with this in mind that the effort is being made to preserve the Morris House for posterity in the condition in which it existed at the time of its occupancy by President Washington. The Morris House is the only existing home occupied by Washington during his presidency. Our most celebrated building is Independence Hall, now being enshrined in a splendid mall.

5.

The City of Philadelphia is pleased to welcome as an addition to the same project the Morris House with its important associations. It will be carefully protected by the citizens of Philadelphia and we hope that all of them and many from other communities will visit it and be inspired by its traditions.

6.

I would like to talk to you for a few minutes about Old Germantown.

"The German Towne" as Penn identified this area, was settled in 1683 by 13 families from Crefeld, Germany. Heads of these families met in Pastorius' cave by the Delaware to draw lots for ownership of ground in the new settlement.

7.

Theirs became the first community established independent of government or commercial patronage. Town lots 231 feet wide were quickly laid out, and cabins appeared along the central street.

The people were not farmers by trade, but linen weavers; industrious, frugal, hospitable, loving comfort and substance. So the village increased.

8.

Even after the Revolution it remained thoroughly German. Consolidation with the greater city came only in 1854.

I said a moment ago there are more colonial and revolutionary period structures in this section of our city than exist in any other community in the nation.

A recital of these buildings is to bring to our attention many of the most interesting episodes occurring both before and after the founding of our country.

9.

I would mention, not in the order of their importance but in the order which came to my mind and which I culled from histories in my library in the preparation of the material for my remarks here today, some of these historic buildings.

I was thinking of Stenton Mansion. This was the

Manor House of James Logan, William Penn's friend and confidential Secretary. In Penn's absence to England he had charge of the provincial government. He erected it in 1728 on his estate which extended from "Fisher's Lane to Nicetown Lane."

Logan, the Quaker scholar, official, book gatherer, was also a friend of the Indian. Red men came by hundreds to confer with him, camping here where Wingohocking Creek wandered through Broad Meadows. In the center of the Park is the low-walled Logan burial ground.

Market Square, and the Market Square Presbyterian Church there, which resulted from a merger with the First Dutch Reformed Church established long before the Revolution.

Washington attended services there and, only a short time ago, I had the pleasure of participating in ceremonies arranged for the 125th anniversary banquet of the Sunday School of the Market Square Presbyterian Church.

Here in this section is famed Vernon Park, which was the early estate of Melchior Meng. His home was taken over for wounded during the Battle of Germantown, when barrels of vinegar in the cellar helped stanch the blood flow.

Here is the Wister Mansion. John Wister bought it and John, Junior, member of Congress, lived here until his death in 1883.

We see his statue standing before the Manor House. Farther north an imposing memorial by Albert Jaegers commemorates Francis Daniel Pastorius and the original settlers.

Pastorius can be called Father of Germantown, for in the beginning it depended greatly on the genius of this educated, forward-looking German leader.

His salutation to the Germantowners to come is on the back of the monument, with an excerpt surrounding our map.

In this old section of Philadelphia are scores of other historic buildings, each with an interesting history dealing with bygone days as far back as the early part as the 18th Century.

The part that Germantown played in the Revolutionary War drama is known to all of you here. We were thrilled by the story of the Battle of Germantown and all that went on in this historic section of Philadelphia during the Revolution. We are mindful, also, of the many outstanding Philadelphians who lived in this old section.

We recall such names as Benjamin Chew, Pastorius, Reverend Henry M. Muhlenberg and his son, John Muhlenberg, Doctor Christopher Witt, Captain Douglas Ottinger, Alexander Henry, Thones Kunder, James Barron, Gilbert Stuart, John Bringham, Christopher Saur, John Wister, John F. Watson and many others whose names dotted American history not only in the formative days of our nation but also during the early days of the 19th Century.

So, in closing, ladies and gentlemen I congratulate all of you who have taken such a deep interest in Germantown and its historic buildings, especially the Morris House, so well known to Washington and the leaders of the Revolutionary War period.

We must ever cherish and protect our historic shrines. Nowhere in our country are there so many as in the City of Philadelphia.

Because, after all, Philadelphia is the birthplace of American Freedom and here are the most important shrines of American patriotism.

And here were prepared, debated and adopted the original charters of liberty, the documents of freedom, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

Delivered by Robert T. McCracken, Esq.

Chairman Board of Trustees, U. of P.

WHEN a private citizen is asked to address such an assembly as this, he always wonders why the invitation was presented to him. If Mayor Samuel, or Congressman Scott, or Senator Lord, who are all sitting at this head table, had been asked to address you, the explanation would have been apparent. They are all distinguished public servants and have much to say that you would like to hear. As for me, the only explanation which has occurred to me is that some member of the Committee must have known that for a number of years I lived in what was originally a part of the Morris property, which is the property being dedicated today as a national shrine. We lived at 5443 Greene Street. The Morris house is at 5442 Germantown Avenue. Our property was undoubtedly a part of the garden of the Morris estate at the time when President Washington resided there. Often, during quiet evenings or holidays, I used to walk under the trees in my father's garden and meditate upon the fact that undoubtedly President Washington and his lady, or perhaps some member of his Cabinet had walked under those same trees in 1794. I used to get a good deal of a thrill out of those thoughts.

Mr. Elliston P. Morris was then the owner of the property and resided therein. I remember that shortly after we moved there he came over to see my father one evening and discussed the joint expense of erecting the fence which separated our two properties. My father readily agreed to this, and from time to time we had other agreements with Mr. Morris, such as trimming trees which overhung one another's property and so on. He was a delightful old gentleman. It was a pleasure to be his neighbor.

This meeting is devoted to historic Germantown, and, in particular, to the dedication of the Morris House. Much could be said, which I will not attempt to say, about the splendid modern community which is Germantown, with a population of well over 100,000, with its own banks, shops, schools, churches, mills,

play grounds and other civic facilities which render it a self-contained community. What we are concerned with today is the preservation of a priceless landmark and, along with that, the preservation of some of the traditional atmosphere and characteristics of this old community. For there is something very distinctive and unique about Germantown. It used to be evident on Greene Street at the turn of the Century. It is still evident on such streets as Coulter and Penn and Locust Avenue and High Street and a number of others. They are quiet, shaded, dignified thoroughfares, lined with properties set well back in green gardens, unpretentious yet solid and refined, expressive of the folks who have lived in them for generations. More especially, may I refer for a moment to that area which is the heart and centre of Germantown. I mean its Market Square, upon which the Morris House fronts. I have often thought that the market square is a characteristic peculiar to Pennsylvania. You don't find such squares in New England. There you find the common, originally intended for the grazing of cattle and horses and perhaps sheep, now usually devoid of grass and used as a convenient thoroughfare for pedestrians. The Southern towns with which I am familiar have no such opening. They are characterized by wide streets. The stately houses sit back among the trees. But in Pennsylvania cities, certainly in those settled by the original German settlers, you find the market square. You will see one in Reading, Easton, Allentown, Lancaster, Harrisburg, York, and many smaller places. I have seen them, as many of you have, in the German cities where, indeed, they still conduct markets in them once, or perhaps twice, a week. And I like to think that the Market Square of Germantown is the prototype for all those to be found throughout the Commonwealth. For Germantown was the first of these settlements. Through Germantown most of the German settlers passed, spreading out fanwise into the countryside, and from Germantown, as from their home country, they carried with them the idea of the market square. It is something well worth preserving in as nearly as possible its original condition. Fortunately, not much has to be done to accomplish this. A long step is being taken today. The Morris House dominates the Square. From henceforth, it will be a National Shrine. The entire Square should be such, or as nearly such as possible. It is my hope, and the hope of many in this room that this end will be accomplished in the not distant future.

But there is something more in the unique character of Germantown than its physical aspects. The people of Germantown, the old citizens, the old families, the descendants of the old families—they exhibit characteristics peculiarly their own. The best definition of these characteristics that I have seen is to be found in that delightful volume of Dr. Cornelius Weygandt's called *The Wissahickon Hills*. In the last chapter, entitled "The Old Stock", Dr. Weygandt says some-

thing about the people of Germantown which I am going to take the liberty of reading to you:—

"Our neighbors in Philadelphia suburbs outside of the Wissahickon watershed say that we of Germantown, for instance, are Germantowny. That means that we are a little queer, a little different from other folks, a little set in our ways, a little too individual. . .

"We like old houses with heirlooms in them. We like families who have had a settled sense of the values in life for a century or two. We care for money, but we care more for the comforts and amenities that money makes possible. We like pleasant homes, set amid well-planted grounds. We are devoted arborists, and collectors of this and that, lovers of antiques.

"We have a good deal of local pride, but it in few people takes the form of worship of bigness. We like what is choice and rare and old. We minimize what the crowd says. We are rather sure of ourselves. We like to do things for ourselves. We like chores, manual labor, fussing over hobbies. We are workers, most of us, and few of us are fond of parade and show. There is more that is Quaker-like about us than is revealed at a first glance, for all that we grow less Quaker-like year by year. We are still, for this motoring age, stout walkers. We are fond of out-of-doors. We are unafraid of sweat. We are unashamed to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. Conservative though we are, we are devoted to 'reform' in political and social matters. We own to an interest in natural science more gladly than to an interest in art. We are interested in art, and intellectual things generally, but we are not sure that we ought to admit it.

"I do not mean for a moment that we are all of this pattern, but merely that this pattern is dominant among us."

That, as I saw it and as I see it, is Germantown. Those attributes, those peculiarities, apply to you and to me, whether we like it or not. We can't get away from the stamp which 250 years of tradition has placed on us. I, for one, don't want to get away from it. Where does that stamp come from? Who cut the die which impresses it? I like to think that it comes from three great gentlemen. The first, in order of importance though the last chronologically, was, of course, President Washington. Those of you who have read James Truslow Adams' great book *The Epic of America* will recall that at the end of the chapter on the Revolutionary era he makes the statement that the young nation began its career with one priceless asset, the character of Washington. That is a striking statement—a nation founded upon character, the character of a great gentleman! It has borne that stamp for a century and a half, and I think it still bears it.

The second of these great gentlemen was William Penn. He was one of the great men of history, a friend of two kings, of all the great in his native land. He might have risen to a high place in the councils of the realm, as did his father. He chose rather to embrace a

new and, at the time, little known sect and to devote his life and his fortune to the founding of a province in a strange land to which all who desired to be free might repair. He came here, plotted his "greene country town", and established a stately country house at Pennsbury, on the banks of the Delaware, which became the model for a kind of gracious living for which Philadelphia and its outskirts have become famous throughout the land. He was a man of sterling character and, above all, of wide tolerance, and much of his thinking has been impressed upon his city and his province.

And finally we come to the founder of Germantown, Francis Daniel Pastorius. Here was an amazing man, educated in four universities on the continent of Europe, familiar through extensive travel with a large part of that continent, acquainted with the outstanding figures in every great European city. He came over here the year after Penn founded Philadelphia, bringing with him a small company from Frankfort, and followed by group after group of Mennonites. He procured from Penn what you and I believe to be the choicest area in this corner of the province, and there founded Germantown. He established and presided over the first school in the community. He was a leader in worship in the churches. He impressed his personality upon all who came in contact with him. Much of the unique tradition to which Dr. Weygandt refers undoubtedly comes from the character of this man.

Here then is a great heritage, something to be preserved for all time to come. Few communities in the United States or elsewhere can trace their origin to three such men. Let us never forget that we can. Let us resolve that at least in our lifetime nothing shall be lost of that heritage and that tradition.

Address by Leighton P. Stradley

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF GERMANTOWN
AND DISTINGUISHED GUESTS:

In behalf of the Germantown Historical Society it is my privilege to extend a cordial welcome to all in attendance here.

Today, May 16, 1950, is a "Red Letter" day in the history of Germantown.

Through the generosity of the Morris family, the famed Morris House will now be dedicated as a national shrine having been already donated to, and accepted by, the United States Government, Department of the Interior.

The Morris House, built in 1772-73 by David Deshler, is rich in history, typical of colonial and revolutionary Germantown. The nerve center of the British Army during the Battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777, the house served as the headquarters of General Sir William Howe, Commander in Chief of the British Army.

(Continued on page 23)

Book Printing in Germantown after the Sowers

Part One—Michael Billmeyer, 1784–1830

EDWARD W. HOCKER

GERMANTOWN had gained fame as a publishing center through the activity of Christopher Sower and his son of the same name, continuing from 1738 until 1778. After the confiscation of the Sower estate, in the latter year the community had no important printing shop for six years. In 1784 Peter Leibert and his son-in-law, Michael Billmeyer, formed a partnership and began printing. This arrangement continued for a few years and then each set up his own printing business.

Michael Billmeyer in a measure maintained the early prestige of the Sowers as publishers. He was active in his craft in Germantown for nearly a half-century. Like the Sowers he published an almanac and a newspaper, besides many books. The scope of his book publications was not nearly so wide as that of his predecessors, being confined largely to numerous editions of the New Testament, the Psalter, hymnals, catechisms and primers, mostly in German.

Peter Leibert was a bookbinder in the upper part of Germantown in the 1750's. Along with Christopher Sower the younger and Alexander Mack, he was a trustee of the Church of the Brethren and in later life a minister. Leibert advertised in the Sower newspaper in 1756 that "as Christopher Sower the younger no longer rebinds old books, (Leibert) will now bind both old and new books."

Michael Billmeyer came to Germantown in the early days of the American Revolution. William McCulloch, a Philadelphia printer who interviewed Billmeyer about 1815, quoted him as saying that in his youth he had distributed Christopher Sower's newspaper.

Member of a York Family

Billmeyer was a native of York, Pennsylvania, having been born there on January 1, 1752 (O.S.), the son of Jacob Billmeyer and his wife Helena. He was the fourth of eight children, all of whom were baptized by the pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, York. The father died in 1781, but the mother lived until 1805, attaining her 86th year.

The first documentary record of Michael Billmeyer as a resident of Germantown is that at the sale of Christopher Sower's confiscated goods, August 24, 1778, he bought twenty-five books.

About the same time he married Mary, daughter of Peter Leibert and his wife Mary, the latter a daughter of William and Mary Nice, of Germantown. The clergyman who solemnized the marriage was the Rev. Michael Schlatter, of the Reformed Church, who was then without a charge and lived on a farm at Chestnut Hill. Schlatter was known as a "marrying parson" because many young people who for one reason or another found it undesirable to be married by the pastors of their own churches would have Schlatter marry them. It may be that Billmeyer and his bride went to Schlatter because Billmeyer was of a Lutheran family and Mary Leibert's family were of the Church of the Brethren, or Dunkers.

After his marriage Billmeyer probably returned to York, for in the late 1770's and early 1780's his name appears in the York tax lists, but not in those in Germantown.

Leibert & Billmeyer Firm Established

Leibert continued his bookbinding business, combined with a book store, on the west side of Germantown Avenue, opposite Sharpnack Street, until 1784, when he and his son-in-law joined forces and opened a printing shop at the Leibert house. It has been said they obtained some printing equipment once used in the Sower shop. Business records of the firm preserved in the library of the Germantown Historical Society show that in 1786 they bought type of Justus Fox, who operated the Germantown Typefoundry which Jacob Bay had established prior to the Revolution, at Germantown Avenue and Queen Lane. Paper was obtained from the Scheetz mill, probably that on Sandy Run, in Whitemarsh Township, Montgomery County.

"Old Armbruster," the accounts of the firm say, was employed as a printer at 20 shillings a week and board. Two brothers named Armbruster had been printers and publishers in Philadelphia in the eighteenth century. In 1786 Benjamin Armbruster was in the service of Leibert & Billmeyer. Anthony Armbruster later worked for Billmeyer and died while in his employ, July 6, 1796.

Anthony Armbruster was known among printers for his queer notions about witchcraft. He was in the habit of hunting for buried treasure, but is not known

to have found any. Watson in his Annals (Vol. I, p. 269) mentions Armbruster as adept in the black art. Theophilus Cossart also was at one time a worker in the Billmeyer shop. Prior to 1781 he had had a shop of his own in Lancaster. Other workmen in the shop were John Bergman, Henry Clemens and men named Margraff and Weinland.

Almanac and Newspaper Issued

One of the earliest products of the new printing house was a German almanac for 1785. It was called *Der Hoch-Deutsch Americanische Calender*, which was the title of the Sower almanac. At the Sower sale John Dunlap, of Philadelphia, bought the plate for the front cover of the almanac, and he published the almanac until 1784, when Leibert bought from him the plate and the rights of the almanac, paying £50.

The almanac was continued according to the general style of the Sower almanac, including weather forecasts, and had a large sale. It usually consisted of forty pages. At the beginning the Rev. Johann Friedrich Schmidt was employed to make astronomical calculations for the almanac. He was at that time pastor of St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Germantown Avenue and Phil-Elena Street, of which Billmeyer was a member, and he lived in the house at the northeast corner of Germantown Avenue and Upsal Street where Billmeyer later made his home, after Pastor Schmidt had taken a Philadelphia charge.

Leibert & Billmeyer began publication of a newspaper, *Die Germantauer Zeitung*, February 8, 1785. It consisted of four pages, each sixteen by nine and a half inches, and appeared on alternate Tuesdays, the subscription price being five shillings a year. The newspaper was made a weekly and its size reduced to eight by ten inches, beginning July 20, 1790. The subscription price was now lowered to 50 cents a year. By this time Billmeyer was sole proprietor of the business. The newspaper was continued until 1809 and the almanac until 1833.

The partnership of Peter Leibert and his son-in-law as terminated in August, 1787. Soon after Leibert opened a printing shop of his own and published some religious books. Billmeyer continued the old shop and also the almanac and newspaper.

Billmeyer House Historic

In 1789 Billmeyer removed his home and shop across Germantown Avenue to a stone house at the northeast corner of Germantown Avenue and Upsal Street. The house still stands and has long been known as the Billmeyer house, descendants of the printer having lived there until the present century.

In his paper of May 26, 1789, Billmeyer thus announced the change: "The printer of this paper has removed from the house of his father-in-law into the house opposite, formerly owned by the late Widow Däschler, where the Rev. Pastor Schmidt lived for

several years. There he will continue the printing business."

The widow mentioned as having owned the house was Mrs. Elizabeth Deshler, whose husband was Anthony Deshler. She was a daughter of George Bensell, of Germantown, who had bought ten acres here in 1727 and is believed to have built the house soon afterward, though he did not live there, his home having been on Germantown Avenue, above School Lane. George Bensell, by his will, left the house and the ten-acre plot at Upsal Street to his daughter, Mrs. Deshler, for life. She dwelt there at times, and also had a home on Second Street, Philadelphia. After her death Billmeyer bought the place, in 1789.

The house figured in Revolutionary War annals. Standing on a large stone in the grounds, south of the house, General Washington, in the battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777, directed the American attack on the British stationed in the Chew house, which was then the next house to the south along Germantown Road. Here he held consultations with his generals, and from this point he finally ordered the retreat of the American army when its efforts to dislodge the enemy in the Chew house proved futile. The stone on which Washington stood is now in the museum of the Germantown Historical Society.

British raiders afterward caused much damage in the house. Evidence was long visible of an attempt to set it on fire inside. This action is supposed to have been inspired by the fact that the Rev. Johann Friedrich Schmidt, who lived there, had been outspoken in his support of the American cause in the war. Because of the feeling against him on the part of the British and their adherents in the neighborhood, Schmidt left his home shortly before the battle and sought refuge in the interior of the state during the time of the British occupancy of Philadelphia. Reimbursement to the amount of £556 was awarded to Mrs. Deshler by the state of Pennsylvania for the destruction caused by the enemy.

After the Revolution Schmidt was one of the pastors of the large German Lutheran congregation of Zion and St. Michael's Churches, Philadelphia. Here his co-pastor was the Rev. J. H. Christian Helmuth. Perhaps Schmidt told Helmuth something about the house that had been his home in Germantown. At any rate in the time of one of the yellow fever epidemics in Philadelphia, Dr. Helmuth made his home with the Billmeyer family in Germantown. Helmuth was much given to writing verses, and at this time he wrote some stanzas about the Billmeyer children. In 1793 Billmeyer printed a book of 344 pages by Dr. Helmuth: *Betrachtungen der Evangelischen Lehre*—Studies of the Evangelical Doctrine.

The house, a two-and-a-half story stone structure, the front being of cut stone, is typical of the better class of dwellings that once lined the Main Street of Germantown. For later generations of the Billmeyers

the house was divided into two dwellings. Originally the doorway was only a few steps above the sidewalk, but by the regrading of Germantown Avenue in the nineteenth century a higher flight of steps became necessary. A marble tablet at the front of the house, placed there by the Site and Relic Society of Germantown, recalls its history.

Important Products of the Press

Leibert & Billmeyer and subsequently Michael Billmeyer were the authorized German printers for the Pennsylvania Assembly, beginning in 1786. At that time the proceedings of the Assembly were annually printed in German as well as in English, and Billmeyer made the translation into German. Melchior Steiner, publisher of a German newspaper in Philadelphia, criticised the action of the Assembly in giving its German work to Billmeyer, declaring he had not supported the Revolution. Possibly as a result of this criticism, the contract for printing the *German Minutes* for 1795, 1796 and 1797 was awarded to the Philadelphia firm of Steiner & Kämmerer, but in 1798 Billmeyer again printed the minutes.

At first, as the Assembly consisted of but one chamber, only one book of minutes was needed. Under the new state constitution of 1790 the Legislature comprised the Senate and the House of Representatives, and, beginning in 1791, a book of minutes was printed for each chamber. Billmeyer did this work until 1799, with the exception of the years mentioned.

Billmeyer also was the printer for the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the first Lutheran synod in America. While he was still associated with Peter Leibert, the firm printed the first Lutheran hymnal authorized by an American synod, this having been in 1786. The Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg assembled the hymns and wrote the preface. It was a work of 600 pages, entitled *Erbauliche Lieder-Sammlung*. The Marburger hymnal, previously issued by Sower, was a Lutheran collection, but it was not officially sanctioned by the Ministerium. Nine further editions of the hymnal of 1786 came from the Billmeyer press—in 1795, 1803, 1805, 1811, 1812, 1814, 1822, 1826 and 1829.

Further, among the Billmeyer productions there were at least seven editions of the Lutheran catechism, as well as Lutheran A,B,C, books and numerous other works for that denomination.

Billmeyer also did much printing for the German Reformed Church, including two different hymnals appearing in 1799, 1806, 1807, 1811, 1813, 1814 and 1826, four editions of the Reformed Catechism and Reformed A,B,C books.

For the Mennonites, Billmeyer printed the following:

Ausbund, 12 mo., 812 pages, with register and appendix of 103 pages, 1785. This was a compilation of favorite Mennonite hymns appearing in Europe for the first time in 1583 and reprinted by Sower in 1742.

Die Kleine Geistliche Harfe (The Little Spiritual Harp) a hymnal of 432 pages, in 1803, 1811 and 1820.

Christliches Gemüths Gespräch, in 1790, a doctrinal work of 241 pages, including hymns by Christopher Dock, 18th century Mennonite schoolmaster.

Christian Funk's Defense, 16 pages, 1785. The author, a Mennonite bishop, had been excommunicated following a controversy as to the duty of Mennonites in the Revolution, when he upheld payment of taxes to the new American government.

The Schwenkfelders in 1791 had Billmeyer reproduce for them a European work, *Christliche Betrachtungen über die Evangelische Texte* (Christian Studies of the Evangelical Texts), by Erasmus Weichenhan, 719 pages, and a prayer book of 275 pages in 1806.

The Church of the Brethren (Dunkers) was represented among the output of the Billmeyer press by their first American hymnal, which, unlike the other Billmeyer hymnals, was in English. Entitled *The Christian's Duty*, it appeared in 1813. This was the third edition, the preceding editions having been printed by Peter Leibert, Billmeyer's father-in-law. Billmeyer issued the fourth edition of this book in 1825.

Billmeyer never undertook to print the Bible, but he did produce nine editions of the New Testament—in 1787, 1795, 1803, 1807, 1808, 1810, 1815, 1819 and 1822. Editions of the Psalter came out in 1784, 1790, 1796, 1810, 1815 and 1830.

Billmeyer reproduced several popular religious works of European origin which had been printed for the first time in America by Christopher Sower. These included:

Christliche Morgen und Abend Gebäuer (Christian Morning and Evening Prayers), by Johannes Habermann, 12 mo., 113 pages, 1788, 1802 and 1812.

Der Kleine Davidische Psalterspiel (The Little Davidic Psalter-play), 16 mo., 572 pages, with register and appendix of 20 pages, 1797, 1813 and 1817. This was a collection of hymns well regarded in Europe among Mennonites, Brethren and other sects.

Geistliches Blumen-Gärtlein, (Spiritual Flower Garden), by Gerhard Tersteegen, 24 mo., 578 pages, 1800. It was a favorite book of the Pietists in Europe.

Die Wandlende Seele (The Wandering Soul), by J. P. Schaibele, 16 mo., 16 mo., 493 pages, 1805. It was the fourth American edition of a religious work that had wide circulation in Europe.

Kurze Andachten einer Gottsuchenden Seele (Brief Meditations of a God-Seeking Soul), 1 mo., 128 pages, was published in 1786, 1795, 1803, 1805, 1825 and 1829.

Billmeyer's Business Methods

These books, as well as the almanac and the newspaper, were sold by agents in districts where Germans were numerous. There were such agents in Philadelphia, Lancaster, Middletown, York, Hanover, Lebanon, Lititz, Reading, Kutztown, Emmaus, Allentown, Easton, in Pennsylvania; New Germantown, in New Jersey, New York and Albany. The newspaper at one time had 160 subscribers in New York City.

Like all publishers, Billmeyer sometimes experienced difficulty in collecting what was due him. In 1800 he employed Abraham Bachman, a justice of the peace in Easton, to try to make collections. Bachman sued several persons, but he found that course costly because often the debtors could not be

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A Brief History of Market Square Church

REV. ELLSWORTH ERSKINE JACKSON

PASTORIUS, in one of his letters to Europe, says, "Wir haben allhier zu Germantown, Ann. 1686 ein Kirchlein für die Gemeinde gebauet" (We built here in Germantown in the year 1686 a small church for the community). Gemeinde, it is true, is in America usually understood to mean a religious society or congregation. But in Germany the word names primarily a political district, comprising in its limits a state church. The government of Germantown was set up by special permission of Penn. So it happened that Pastorius caused the erection of a "Kirchlein für die Gemeinde," a small church not for any particular denomination, there being no state church in Pennsylvania, but for the use of the community in general.

In the course of time the Reformed people of Germantown crystallized into a congregation. On the 20th of May in the year of Our Lord Jesus Christ 1710, says a contemporary record Mr. Paulus Van Vlecq was installed pastor of the Church of Jesus Christ at Shanninie, Bensalem and Germantown and the neighboring villages. A congregation was organized by this minister, to meet the needs of the Germantown people on the 4th of June 1710 under the name of the Whitemarsh church, with Hans Hendrick Meels as senior elder; Evert Ten Heuven, junior elder, and Isaac Dilbeck senior deacon. On the 25th of December 1710 the officers installed were: Evert Ten Heuven senior elder, Isaac Dilbeck junior elder, William Dewees senior deacon, and Jan Aweeg, junior, deacon. On the same day, Christmas 1710, Sibes Bartels and Marytie Hendricks, his wife, and Kasper Staels were admitted to membership upon profession of faith.

Pastor Van Vlecq's ministry apparently ended here in 1712. About the year 1720 John Philip Boehm, a parochial schoolmaster, then just arrived from the Palatinate of the Rhine, began to hold religious meetings among the Reformed settlers at Whitemarsh and elsewhere. On the 23rd of December 1725 he administered communion to twenty-four persons of the congregation which he had previously organized at the house of William Dewees, who then lived in the Crefeld district, on the Wissahickon.

In the year 1710, a strong character was added to Germantown's Reformed contingent. That year

Samuel Guldin, a minister of the Reformed Church of Switzerland, came to Pennsylvania. He was born in the city of Berne. He first preached in the neighborhood of Berne, but his reputation as a forcible pulpit speaker led to his election as associate pastor of the minister of Berne and subsequently he became the minister of the three chief churches of the city. His fervid presentation of Christian truth gave offence to his ecclesiastical superiors. He was accused of Pietism and in 1699 declared guilty of the charge. He was then relegated to the pastorate of an inferior and obscure congregation outside of Berne. On the 16th of January 1710 (probably 1710-11) then a resident of Roxborough township, he bought 275 acres of land located along Wissahickon Creek.

Residing so near Germantown and sometimes in the town he became intimately acquainted with his Reformed brethren here, and as would be expected, he preached to them occasionally. Thus, we see there was a steady although small stream of incoming colonists of the Reformed faith who located in and about Germantown in the earlier years of the Province. The great rush of the Palatines came later. What opportunities had these primitive settlers to worship after the manner of their fathers in Germany, Holland, Switzerland and France? Prior to 1710 we know of no clergymen of their faith in the Province. It may be, however, that upon occasion one or another of the Reformed dominies at Manhattan Island penetrated southward.

The following year, 1733, a house of worship was erected upon the lot. It was well built of stone, and of good capacity. Rev. John Philip Boehm, in a communication addressed to the Holland Church authorities, in 1739 describes it as "Eine wohlgebaute ziemlichgrosse Kirch von Steinen."

In 1733 Rev. John Bartholomew Rieger preached in Germantown. We do not understand that John Bechtel had any relations with the congregation at this time other than as lay member and voluntary leader of meetings of its members. Under date of March 4, 1733 (unless this is 1733-4 it must have been before the new church was built) the consistory of the Philadelphia Reformed congregation wrote a letter to Holland regarding Bartholomew Rieger who preached the second Sunday at Germantown.

The year 1742 was the most turbulent in the annals of Market Square church. On the scheme to unite the leading men of the several denominations in the state, especially the Germans, for evangelical work. John Bechtel at once entered heartily into the movement. Henry Antes, a prominent Reformed churchman, issued a call for the first meeting in furtherance of this object to be held in Germantown New Year's Day, 1742.

Now let us turn to a few more items of interest touching the Market Square church, gleaned from the manuscripts in the archives at Rotterdam and the Hague. A letter dated 14th July, 1744, from the members of the German Reformed congregation of Germantown addressed to the deputies of the Synods of South and North Holland, was received and read at the Synod of South Holland, held at Gouda, July 16, 1745. In 1745 the Germantown congregation received some additions to its membership from a nearby source, as explained by a letter written by Rev. Mr. Boehm to the Holland supporters of the Pennsylvania churches. His words are: "The Whitemarsh congregation, which at all times consisted of but few members, has, through the death of the aged, faithful elder William Dewees, come to a standstill (because his house was at all times our church, but since his death it can be so no longer, nor is there opportunity at hand to worship elsewhere, much less the means to build a church). The lower portion of the membership has gone to Germantown, which will serve to strengthen that congregation somewhat. In 1746 Rev. Michael Schlatter, a Swiss Reformed minister was sent by the Holland Synods to Pennsylvania to supervise the churches here. He assumed the pastorate of Philadelphia in connection with his duties as superintendent. He wrote letters from Philadelphia dated September 28th and October the 30, 1746 which were read at the meeting of the Synod of South Holland held at Gorichem July 4-14, 1747 in which he stated that he had preached at Germantown and that in this congregation fifty-five men had subscribed the sum of £ 24, Pennsylvania money. He advised making one charge of the Philadelphia and Germantown churches with one service in each every Sunday. The congregation was in good condition. When it was further canvassed, eight—two male members whose names are in the Holland archives, subscribed £ 34 towards maintaining a pastor." minister—Bartholomew Rieger—who came a year and a half ago to take the place of Dominie Weiss. He preaches on one Sunday at Skippack, the second Sunday at Germantown and the third at Philadelphia. Owing to the dissension caused by all kinds of sectarian persons, the Germantown church is in a very pitiable condition. However, if the Germantown and Whitemarsh congregations can be united, Ten Pounds Pennsylvania money can be collected annually for a pastor's salary. Signed by the members of the congregation, by—Jacob Baumann—Johana Nicklaus Rausch."

In 1747 in pursuance of his mission to introduce order among the Reformed churches, Schlatter organized a Coetus, or Synod, subject to the Holland Church government. At the initial meeting of the Coetus, held in Philadelphia September 29, 1747, the Germantown congregation was represented by Michael Schlatter, V. D. M., and Christopher Meng and Paulus Geisel, elders. At the second Coetus, a year later, Mr. Schlatter was still pastor of Germantown, in connection with the Philadelphia congregation.

In the church books of the Race Street Reformed Church is recorded a contract with Rev. William Stoy to preach for that congregation from July 1, 1756 to July 1, 1757 for a stipulated sum. There is in this instrument a postscript as follows, translated:

"P. S. It is expressly reserved that although Rev. Mr. Stoy is to preach a sermon on Sunday every fortnight, in Germantown, the foregoing agreement shall remain in force in all its clauses touching the salary."

In 1762 the church was renovated and enlarged. The rear end was taken out and an addition built, which doubled its former capacity. We hear in connection with this improvement of a steeple on the church. In this steeple we are told by the late Townsend Ward, a faithful historian, hung the historic bell, cast in 1725, bearing the words: "Gott allein die Ehre" (to God alone the glory).

In 1771 the congregation was chartered by the Proprietaries, under the Minister, Trustees, Elders and Deacons of the German Reformed Congregation of Germantown. The names mentioned in the articles of incorporation are: "Christian Frederick Foering, the present minister, Christopher Meng, Ulrich Zollinger, John Moore, and John Bockius, the present trustees; Jacob Weidman, John Unruh, John Dedier and Godfrey Bockius the present elders, Peter Smith, George Walter, Jacob Hoffman and Jacob Ritter, the present deacons." These incorporators are required to apply the income to the maintenance and support of the ministers and officers of the said congregation, and their church yards or bury grounds and a parsonage and supporting one church more and a school house in said town.

On May 10, 1794, Christopher Ottinger, on behalf of the congregation, bought two and a quarter acres, fronting on Germantown road. This ancient church has played a patriotic part in our national history. Mr. Ward, already quoted, says: "In the battle of Germantown a battalion of Virginians under Colonel Matthews, having been taken prisoners, were lodged in the church." Watson says: "The church was where, during the fever of 1793, Washington regularly worshipped as often as there was English preaching, a service performed occasionally by Dr. Smith, from the Falls of Schuylkill." Here Count Zinzendorf preached his first sermon in America December 31, 1741. Here the Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury, preached and in this square the voice of George Whitfield was heard.

THE RIDGE ROAD TO PERKIOMEN

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LIKE many others of the old roads out of Philadelphia, the Ridge Road—so named because it is on the ridge between the Schuylkill and the Wissahickon—follows an old Indian trail. The owners of the primitive lime kilns along the Schuylkill sought an easier way to market than the rough forest path afforded. So, in the days of Governor William Markham, a cartway was opened along the ridge. An early historian records that this cartway led "from the 3d limekiln into Plimouth rode, near Cresson, where there is neither improved land, hill nor water to impede."

Gradually the country was developed. The forests were cleared, the land was improved, and thousands of settlers found their way to the region tributary to the Ridge.

A map made in 1796 showed that everything north of Callowhill Street was country. The entire territory beyond was shown as well covered with trees.

In 1804 the country along the Ridge Road was so open that it formed a refuge for many citizens in a time of need. Robert Sutcliffe wrote in his account of his travels in America: "Joseph Paul Ridley took me in his carriage to see a large encampment on the Ridge road, where many poor persons were accommodated who had left Philadelphia to avoid the infection of yellow fever."

Thirty years later the country beyond Twentieth Street was still wild and lonely. In 1830 two highwaymen attacked a Ridge Road stage carrying the United States mail, at what is now Twenty-third Street and Ridge Avenue. A hue and cry was raised, and the desperadoes were apprehended and thrown into jail at 17th and Spring Garden Streets. It is said that an appeal was made to President Jackson and he pardoned one of them, an Englishman, but refused to interfere with the punishment of the other, an Irishman. Irish residents of the city thought this an insult to them. On the day of execution soldiers were sent to guard the gallows lest the infuriated compatriots of the offender should effect a rescue.

As early as 1803 a petition was made to the legislature for a turnpike road along the Ridge, but this was refused because the Germantown turnpike was parallel, and at some points was but a short distance away.

Eight years more passed before the desired permission was wrung from the careful legislators, but on March 30, 1811, an act was passed "to enable the governor to incorporate a company for making an artificial road beginning at the intersection of Vine and Tenth Street," Philadelphia, and thence to the Perkiomen. The route of the new road was to be "as near as may be consistent with economy and utility, along, over and upon the bed of the present road . . . to Wissahickon creek; thence to Barren Hill; thence to Norristown in the County of Montgomery; and thence by the nearest and best route to the Perkiomin bridge in the county aforesaid."

Earlier turnpike roads had had so much difficulty with travelers who sought to escape the payment of tolls that it was thought wise to include in the act of incorporation a provision for the fining of anyone who should pass a tollgate without paying the required fee, or who should evade payment in some other way. It was further ordered "that if any person or persons shall wilfully break, deface, pull up or prostrate any milestone which shall be placed in pursuance of this act on the side of the said road, or shall obliterate the letters or figures inscribed thereon," or on a direction post, he was to be fined ten dollars.

Part of this early turnpike was used for the first stage of the journey of Samuel Breck, the framer of the public schools law in Pennsylvania, when he took a trip from his estate, Sweetbrier, on the Schuylkill, to Boston. Mr. and Mrs. Breck, Miss Breck and a maid were in the party. The trip required twenty-six days, the distance covered was six hundred miles, "over excellent roads and meeting with exceedingly good inns, and not an accident excepting the lameness of one horse." Mr. Breck carefully added that the expense of the journey was about five hundred dollars.

It is interesting to read in the *Recollections of Samuel Breck* a description of the Sweetbrier estate, which is now a part of Fairmount Park. The house still stands not far from Belmont Mansion. Of his home Mr. Breck proudly said:

"My residence has been when at home with my family where it now is, for more than thirty years, being on an estate belonging to me, situated on the right bank of the Schuylkill, in the township of

Blockley, County of Philadelphia, and two miles from the western part of the city. The mansion on the estate I built in 1797. It is a fine stone house, rough-cast, fifty-three feet long, thirty-eight broad, and three stories high, having out-buildings of every kind suitable for elegance and comfort. The prospect consists of the river, animated by the great trade carried on in boats of about thirty ton, drawn by horses; of a beautiful sloping lawn terminating at that river, now nearly four hundred yards wide opposite the portico; of side-screen woods, of gardens, green-houses, etc. Sweetbrier is the name of my villa."

The first famous landmark along the Ridge Road, Girard College, was completed in 1848. The north-eastern boundary of the college grounds extends from Nineteenth to Twentieth Streets. Today houses cluster thickly about the college grounds, and pleas have been made to the city for opening streets through the large campus, but when the site was chosen it was well out of town.

For forty years before his death, which occurred in 1831, Stephen Girard, the founder of the college, was the loneliest man in Philadelphia. His wife was in an insane hospital. Hints of his great loneliness were given in his letters. Once he said: "I live like a galley slave, often passing the whole night without sleeping. I am wrapped up in a labyrinth of anxieties and am worn out with care. I do not value fortune. The love of labor is my highest ambition." And again: "When I rise in the morning, my only effort is to labor so hard that when night comes I may be enabled to sleep soundly."

The lonely worker who did not value money for its own sake used it for the good of his country and for his fellows. During the war of 1812 his was the part that Robert Morris played during the Revolution. Once, when the public subscribed but twenty thousand dollars to a national loan of five million dollars, he restored public confidence by taking the remainder.

And when his will was read it was found that he had left the bulk of his fortune to care for the poor boys of Philadelphia and the State. He planned that the college should be open to poor white boys, between six and ten years of age. Every orphan admitted was to be bound by indenture to the city authorities until twenty-one years of age, his entire care and education to be paid for by the college. No boy, he declared, must be permitted to remain in the institution after the age of eighteen. At that time, if not before, he should be apprenticed to learn a trade. One hundred orphans were admitted when the college was opened.

Several miles beyond Girard College is Falls of Schuylkill, noted in early days as the Mecca of the fisherman. The early name of the settlement was Fort St. David's, so called for an early fishing and social club which flourished until the Revolution.

Loyalists thought of the members of this club as traitors to the king of England, and they took pleasure in seeing the Hessians tear down the log club house and use the logs in building huts for the officers of the British force.

Further down the stream stood another fishing club, the Colony in Schuylkill, founded in 1732, which now, under the name of the State in Schuylkill, has its club house on the Delaware, not far from Eddington station on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Fishing was good at the Falls of Schuylkill until the building of the Fairmount Water Works dam, and during the season tons of fish were taken from the water daily.

In 1805 Sutcliffe told in an entertaining manner of the great catch he witnessed:

"At this part of the river, the Shad Fishery is prosecuted with great spirit in the early part of summer. Almost every farmer who happens to have a field on the banks of the river, keeps a net for the purpose; and, with a little industry, may, in the course of two or three weeks, lay up a supply for the whole year. The fish are salted, and are brought out, through the winter, as a relish at breakfast and supper. I have sometimes stood by in the evening watching the people taking these fish. The nets used are about fifty or sixty yards in length, and about six feet in width; the lower side being weighted with lead, and the upper side supported with pieces of cork. One end of the net is fixed firm to a stake on the edge of the river, whilst the other end is taken out in a small boat towards the other side. After getting to the extent of it, the boat is rowed down the river, bringing the end of the net with it, and at length it comes to land a little below the stake to which the other end of the net is fastened, forming a circular enclosure, within which the fish are secured. As the net approaches the bank of the river, the fishes are seen struggling in all directions; till at last they are brought close to the shore, where they are quickly gathered up, and thence into the boat. Several hundreds are, at times, taken at one draught, but as the fishing is continued through the night, during the season, the farmers often think themselves well paid with 20 or 30, and they weigh about five pounds each."

The Falls and the region up the river as far as Norristown saw much of Washington and Howe during the Revolution. At one time Washington's army crossed the Schuylkill at Levering's Ford, at Manayunk, just beyond the Falls. Colonel Pickering told in his journal of an annoying delay at this crossing, which took place on September 14, 1777. One cannot help sympathizing with the soldiers, while at the same time seeing the commander's point of view:

"The army, having yesterday cleaned their arms, and received ammunition to complete fifty rounds a man, this day marched up a few miles and recrossed the Schuylkill at Levering's Ford, the water being nearly up to the waist. We lost there much time, by

reason of the men stripping off their stockings and shoes and some of them their breeches. It was a pleasant day, and had the men marched directly over by platoons without stripping, no harm could have ensued; their clothes would have dried by night on their march, and the boots would not have hurt their feet. The officers, too, discovered a delicacy quite unbecoming soldiers; quitting their platoons, and some getting horses of their acquaintances to ride over, and others getting over in a canoe. They would have better done their duty, had they kept at their platoons and led on their men."

Another incident is told of those trying days, of which John Kirk was the hero. Near the point where School Lane intersects Ridge Road this man, one of Washington's spies, popularly known as Fear-nought, unexpectedly met a trooper of the British picket. The trooper was armed, but Kirk was unarmed. Stealthily he crept upon the unsuspecting trooper, and then sprang suddenly upon him, at the same time wresting the gun from his surprised foe. Clubbing him with the weapon, he knocked the trooper insensible, and so was able to make his way safely to Washington's camp with his valuable information.

Perhaps the most historic building in Falls of Schuylkill is the house, near Indian Queen Lane, which was occupied for many years, beginning in 1773, by Dr. William Smith, first Provost of the University of Pennsylvania. It is related that on April 17, 1790, Dr. Smith was dining here with David Rittenhouse, the astronomer, Thomas Mifflin, first Governor of Pennsylvania under the Constitution, and several others, when word was brought to them of the death of Benjamin Franklin. At the time a fierce thunderstorm was raging. Dr. Smith, always quick with his pen, on the spot wrote the following verses:

*Cease, cease, ye clouds, your elemental strife!
Why rage ye thus, as if to threaten life?
Seek, seek no more to shake our souls with dread;
What busy mortal told you, "Franklin's dead"?
What though he yields at Jove's imperious nod?
With Rittenhouse he left his magic rod!*

In 1777, when Washington's army was encamped in the neighborhood, General Stephen of Virginia had his headquarters in this mansion. During the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, General Knox, Secretary of the Treasury, and Oliver Wolcott, Jr., Auditor of the Treasury, had their offices here.

In a house on Dr. Smith's estate lived Joseph Neef, who became famous because of his introduction into America of Pestalozzi's system of education. In 1808 he published a small book, printed in Philadelphia, in which he explained how he became interested in the system; how he had studied with Pestalozzi in Berne, Switzerland, and had taught with him

there, and how he had been brought to America by friends of education, who paid his expenses while he was learning their language, that he might show Americans the superiority of objects over books in teaching.

Not far from the Smith mansion, on Indian Queen Lane, is a historic schoolhouse where books rather than objects have always been used. This was built as an academy in 1813, the funds being raised by subscription. On Sunday it was used for religious purposes. This has been called the birthplace of the churches, for here many of them made their start. It is now a mission of St. James the Less.

Falls of Schuylkill has an even greater claim to distinction than its connection with early education through the work of Joseph Neef and through the old Academy. Here, it has been claimed, anthracite coal was first used for manufacturing purposes, in a wire mill, one of the early industries of this manufacturing town.

Philadelphia long looked with suspicion on the "black stones," the first of which came to the city in 1786 or 1787. Some of this importation from Wilkes Barre was distributed among the shipwrights and smiths, but most of it was taken to the cellar of Robert Morris' partner, John Nicholson. When he was thrown into prison for debt, those who seized the valuables in his house threw the coal out on Franklin Square, regarding it as rubbish.

One historian says that an early miner issued hand-bills printed in both German and English, explaining the method of burning the coal. "They went also to blacksmiths' shops, exhibited certificates from smiths who had successfully used the new fuel, and sometimes bribed the journeymen to make the experiment fairly. All these efforts availed very little." It was not until 1819 that a newspaper advertised the fuel, though within six years of that time it had won its way to the coal bins of the citizens of Philadelphia.

Soon after leaving the Falls, the traveler comes to the High Bridge Tavern, one of the early hostleries of the Ridge Road, which had a better reputation than the road house of which Elizabeth Drinker told, under date of August 29, 1771:

"This evening our Landlady, a dirty, old, Dutch woman refused changing very dirty for clean sheets; this after much entreaty she pretended to comply—but we found to our mortification she had taken the same sheets, sprinkled them and then ironed and hung them by the fire, and placed them again on the Bed; so that we were necessitated to use our Cloaks &c., and this night slept without sheets. With the assistance of our two women servants cooking, we supped very well, and slept better than we had reason to expect, all in one room."

(Continued on page 24)

ADDRESSES AT THE MORRIS HOUSE

(Continued from page 14)

In 1793, George Washington, as First President of the United States, resided within these walls while seeking refuge from the devastating yellow fever epidemic then raging in Philadelphia. Numerous meetings of his cabinet were held on this site, in which were decided many questions of vital importance to the new government under the Constitution of 1789.

Here, in 1794, President Washington and his wife, as well as Eleanor Parke Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, resided while taking a prominent part in the life of the community, thus making Germantown and the Morris House a focal point of national interest. In a very real sense, therefore, this famed building was the Capitol of the United States and the White House of the Nation.

The Morris House, now safe and secure for generations to come, is the keystone of the project for the restoration of Market Square, a program designed for the recapture of the colonial and revolutionary atmosphere of this historic locality. Today's event gives new encouragement to our hopes for the future. In the long-range project fostered and supported by the Germantown Historical Society, the Morris House and a restored Market Square are important milestones in the desired preservation of the many original and historic shrines in this area. These activities conform to the national movement to preserve for posterity the visible monuments of the nation's early epic struggle—a movement taking form in the reconstruction of the Independence Hall area and the preservation of a series of interesting and attractive colonial houses in Fairmount Park.

If the heritage which is ours as American citizens is to be rightly valued today, we must rekindle interest in the lives and deeds of those whose efforts established that heritage and forged our nation. The people of today and those of future generations will find in these landmarks of our history the inspiration for devotion to the ideals which motivated our forefathers and which must bring the unity of thought and purpose by which our power as a nation can be realized.

To this end, we solicit the interest of the citizens of Germantown, the City Administration and its officials in this civic enterprise now being unselfishly promoted by the Germantown Historical Society and its members all for the best interests of Germantown the City and the nation and the preservation of our rich historic traditions.

THE REVEREND JOHN T. FARIS was born in Missouri. After graduating from Princeton University he studied for the ministry and was ordained in the Presbyterian Church.

In 1914 he became a member of the editorial staff of the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia, and held that position until his retirement in 1936.

Among the great number of books of which he was the author, are many of interest to local historians; these are: *Makers of Our History*, *Seeing Pennsylvania*, *Romance of Philadelphia*, *Old Gardens In and Around Philadelphia*, *Old Roads Out of Philadelphia*, and *Historic Shrines of America*. He died in April 1949.

Extensive repairs made necessary the closing of the Morris Mansion during August.

It is now open every day except Monday from 2 to 5 P. M. and is staffed by a hostess committee of 55 ladies, acting for the Germantown Historical Society under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service.

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THE RIDGE ROAD TO PERKIOMEN

(Continued from page 22)

Next day she wrote:

"H. S. and self each folded a dirty sheet Nutmeg fashion, and left them covered up in ye Beds, for the old woman to tag and scold at. May it be the means to mend her manners."

The High Bridge Tavern is familiar to Philadelphians because it is near the beginning of the Wissahickon Drive, one of the most famous bits of road in the country. At every turn new beauties are discovered, and in most unexpected places historic spots are found.

Among the earliest settlers in this beautiful glen were a company of forty men who came, in 1694 from Geneva, with John Kelpius and Daniel Falckner. They had come to America hoping to be free from religious intolerance, and here they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. One of these Hermits of the Wissahickon, as they were called, wrote:

"What pleases one here most is that one can be peasant, scholar, priest and nobleman all at the same time without interference, which of all modes of living has been found to be the best and most satisfactory since patriarchal time. To be a peasant and nothing else is a sort of cattle life; to be a scholar and nothing else, such as in Europe, is a morbid and self-indulgent existence; to be a priest and nothing else ties life to blinders and responsibilities; to be a nobleman and nothing else makes godless and riotous."

The Wissahickon was a favorite haunt of Captain Allen McLane, who commanded the famous cavalry troop known as McLane's Rangers. The British put a price on the head of this daring commander whose unexpected appearances and hardy exploits kept them guessing. The region for many miles around, as far as Barren Hill and Germantown, was apt to shelter him at any time. He was an invaluable aid to Washington in intercepting the supplies which the British tried to smuggle into the city.

Perhaps his most famous exploit was on the night of the Meschianza, the entertainment given in honor of Howe and some of his officers when they were about to leave Philadelphia for England. Taking the enemy at a disadvantage, McLane made a sudden descent on the British front. "An abatis of felled trees with bristling branches had been built all the way from the Schuylkill to a point in Germantown so as to cover the approach to the city by the Ridge Road, Germantown Road and intervening roads. The whole line of abatis was fired by the dragoons under McLane." The alarm was given. Thomas Buchanan Read has written of this:

*There rose a tumult wild without,
A hurried rush of wild alarms,
The flash of flames, the sentinel's shout,
The shuddering guests no more could doubt*

*But quaked to think the rebel crew
Had burst in all their midnight power
Upon them in their revel hour
To act the Trenton scene anew.*

McLane and most of his followers crept by way of Barren Hill to Washington's army. There he was re-enforced. He turned upon his pursuers and drove them back to the city.

At Roxborough and Ridge, at the side of Grace Lutheran Church, is a stone barn where, after the battle of Germantown, a few British stragglers sought refuge, while near the car barn are two places worth more than a passing glance.

Another spot that interests the student of Revolutionary movements is between the ninth and tenth milestones, where a tablet gives this information:

"About three hundred yards northwest of this place were encamped the Indian scouts that were a part of Lafayette's Command."

On the reverse is this record:

"On the ground in the rear of this Stone the American troops under Lafayette were encamped from the 18th to the 20th of May, 1778."

BOOK PRINTING IN GERMANTOWN

(Continued from page 17)

located and then the costs were imposed on the plaintiff. In one instance money due Billmeyer was paid to a tavernkeeper at Hope, New Jersey, and Bachman reported he "has gone off." However, this time Bachman did collect \$70 for Billmeyer.

Four years later Bachman made another effort to get some of the money due Billmeyer. One debtor came to Easton in court week, but dodged Bachman. The latter then issued a summons and sent a constable after the man, whereupon he came to Bachman's office and confessed judgment for a sum due for thirteen years, with interest added for that period.

Books which Michael Billmeyer printed from 1814 until 1818 have the imprint of G. & D. Billmeyer, Philadelphia. His two sons, George and Daniel, had a bookstore in Philadelphia at this time. The venture was not a financial success, and after 1818 the imprint was again that of the printer in Germantown.

The first edition of John F. Watson's widely popular *Annals of Philadelphia*, in 1830, was printed by Billmeyer, though it does not bear his imprint. Watson himself financed the work, which was in one large volume, and placed the names of several booksellers on the title page as publishers.

Billmeyer attempted few innovations. In the almanac for 1812 he did, however, introduce a novelty that would have been unthinkable under the Sower regime. He included a long installment of a sensational novel, *Rinaldo Rinaldine, the Robber Ceief*. The story was continued in the almanac for several years.

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The Later Billmeyer Family

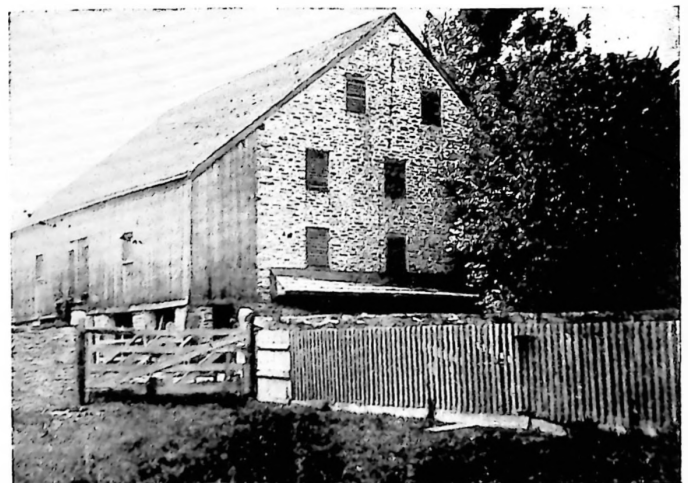
Billmeyer's wife died February 2, 1831, in her 76th year. His own death occurred February 8, 1837, when he was in his 86th year. He had discontinued his business several years before. The Billmeyer family vault is in the grounds of St. Michael's Lutheran Church, a short distance above the Billmeyer house.

Michael Billmeyer had four sons, but they did not continue the printing business. Because the sons had all failed in business, Billmeyer by his will placed most of his property in trust, the proceeds to go to his children, but not for payment of their debts. The trustees were also to hold the printing office and its equipment, which, when the will was written, in 1831, were in possession of the son, Daniel L. Besides Daniel L., the children living at the father's death were John, George F. and Mary, wife of William Steinmetz. One son, Jacob, had died. George F. Billmeyer having adjusted the claims against him, the trustees in 1856 transferred to him the house and ten acres at Germantown Avenue and Upsal Street.

The last of the Billmeyer family to live in the home-
stead were Williamina G. Billmeyer and her sister,
Susanna G., daughters of George F. Billmeyer and
granddaughters of the printer. Both died in 1910,
when past the age of 80.

It was an event for collectors of antiques when, in 1912, the contents of the Billmeyer house were sold at public sale. The place proved to be a storehouse of fine old furniture, household utensils, linen and woven goods. Such books as remained did not attract bids, and a large quantity of account books, letters and other documents were sold as junk. Later some of this material was recovered for the Germantown Historical Society. The library of that society also has copies of nearly all books printed by Michael Billmeyer.

(To be continued next issue)



"Wyck" barn built in 1796
Remodeled by Montell Fielding into dwelling in 1890

A Revolutionary Soldier in Market Square

IN MARKET SQUARE CHURCH YARD is the tomb of John Rorer b. 1755, d. 1824, son of Heinrich Rohrer and Margaret his wife, of Frankford and Milestown, Pennsylvania. John Rorer was a private in Colonel Butler's regiment, Captain Davis' Company. He was ten years old when his father, then known as Henry Rorer, purchased the extensive "plantation" in Oak Lane lying East of the Old York Road.

The Rorer homestead on 5th Street below City Line was a landmark until recent years. John Rorer married Margaret Young and in the course of time four sons and one daughter erected Rorer Homesteads on Rorer Land.

"At the time of the Revolution during the winter of 1777-1778, while General Howe and his officers were living in luxury in Philadelphia, foraging troops were sent to surrounding country in search of provisions, some stealing cattle from the Rorer Homestead to supply beef for the British Army, while Washington and his men were starving and freezing at Valley Forge. During that same winter two American soldiers who were taken prisoners at the Battle of Germantown, escaped and hid in the springhouse of the "Homestead," later joining Washington's Army at Valley Forge."—From program of dedication of memorial at Market Square Burial Ground, May 12th, 1928, just acquired by the Germantown Historical Society from Miss H. Gertrude Douglass, a descendant of John Rorer, and a charter member of the Society.

Another account states "an old homestead belonging to the Rorers was situated near City Line Station, now called Melrose, and just in the lower edge of Cheltenham. Here Joseph Rorer, father of Charles S. Rorer of Horsham, was born about 1760. He lived to the great age of 97 years. He was a youth of seventeen at the time of the Battle of Germantown, and safely hiding in a tall tree, he witnessed some incidents of that struggle such as the pursuit of the American soldiers by the British horsemen. Jacob Rorer, grandfather of Jacob Rorer, of North Wales, also lived in this old homestead."

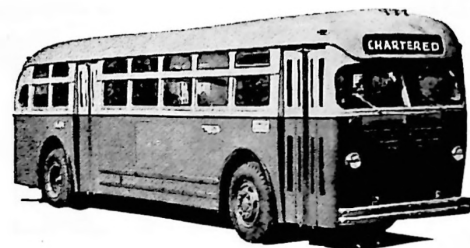
Heinrich Rohrer and his wife Margaret have many descendants in and around Philadelphia. Perhaps the widest spread reputation of that name has gone to one who acquired it by marriage, Sarah Tyson Rorer, teacher of domestic science and author of *Mrs. Rorer's New Cook Book*, and *Mrs. Rorer's Philadelphia Cook Book*, and a host of others. Editor and part owner of *Table Talk*, and for many years editor for the Domestic Science Department of the *Ladies' Home Journal* and for the "Chautauqua School" of Domestic Science. Living for a time at Oak Lane, she later made her home in New York and died there.

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ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

The REV. ELLSWORTH ERSKINE JACKSON is a graduate of Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania. He is president of the Germantown, Mt. Airy, and Chestnut Hill Ministers Association, chairman of the Preaching Mission for the year 1950, and former treasurer of the Philadelphia Ministers Association. He has served as president for both the Philadelphia and West Philadelphia Christian Endeavor, and is pastoral counsellor for the Germantown Christian Endeavor, vice-president of the Philadelphia Sabbath Day Association, honorary vice-president of the Seamen's Church Institute, director of the Rittenhouse Y. M. C. A. and civilian chaplain for the Presbyterian Church in World War II, for Alexandria, Louisiana. He received a citation from the U. S. Treasury Department for public speaking aid for drives during the war.

Dr. Jackson was commissioner of the General Association of Presbyterians in the United States of America in 1948, Seattle, Washington; a member of the Anti-defamation Society; speaker for program institute work among negroes, and a member of the Kiwanis, Rotary, and Lions Clubs. He has four sons and one daughter. All of the sons expect to be Presbyterian ministers, the eldest, Ellsworth Erskine, Jr., is now a senior at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Over one thousand members have joined the Market Square Church during the fifteen years of Dr. Jackson's ministry, and the church has become free of all indebtedness.

ROBERT BOWNE HAINES, 3RD, is the owner of "Wyck," one of Philadelphia's oldest colonial homesteads, located on Germantown Avenue at Walnut Lane. He was born at Coatesville, May 26, 1893, the son of Robert B. Haines, Jr. and Mary Huston Haines. A member of an old Germantown family, his early education was in the Germantown Friends' School on Coulter Street. Later he prepared for college at The Choate School, Wallingford, Conn., and was graduated from Haverford College in June 1917. He took two winter short courses in fruit and vegetable growing at Penn State and at Rutgers in New Jersey.

In February, 1935 he married Mary Troth Haines, daughter of Charles C. and Lydia Jones Haines of

Moorestown, the marriage taking place in the Moorestown Orthodox Friends' Meeting. She is a graduate of Westtown School, Bryn Mawr College and Cornell University. Since 1933, he has owned a farm in Berks County, now comprising more than 100 acres of bearing fruit trees. He is a member of the New York State Fruit Testing Cooperative Association and of the American Pomological Society, which his great uncle John Aston Warder of North Bend, Ohio, helped to found 100 years ago. He was active in helping to organize a cooperative fruit marketing association among the neighboring fruit growers in eastern Pennsylvania. This later became the Berks-Lehigh Cooperative Fruit Growers, Inc. He is still an active member of the board of directors in this successful cooperative venture.

He and his wife are birthright members of the Society of Friends, and attend the Abington Orthodox Friends' Meeting where his grandfather's family worshipped.

EDWARD W. HOCKER—Historian and author, needs little introduction to CRIER readers. Though born in Norristown, Pa., he has been a resident of Germantown most of his life. Throughout all his writings, he is precise and factual, qualities not always to be found associated with historians. His book, *Germantown, 1683—1933*, which covers a period of 250 years, is a unique and outstanding history of our community.

Among many articles from his pen, to mention but several, are, *Biography of General Peter Muhlenberg*, often spoken of as The Fighting Parson of the Revolution; *History of Trinity Lutheran Church*, written in commemoration of its 100th anniversary; and *The Sower Printing House*.

Some may recall our local newspaper, discontinued in 1928, *The Independent Gazette*, of which he was editor for a number of years. He also formerly wrote for several of our city newspapers, and at present contributes articles regularly to the Norristown *Times-Herald*.

Mr. Hocker has been Librarian of the Germantown Historical Society since 1921, and may be found in the Library every Tuesday afternoon, from one o'clock until five, always ready to aid any who may be interested in our local history, concerning which he has a profound knowledge. And here it should be said, that the Library has on its shelves, a collection of historical books and records, old photographs and newspaper clippings, second to none.

Several years ago, he was appointed to write the history of Montgomery County, now completed, and expected to be published in the near future. He is affiliated with numerous organizations, and is a member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the Genealogical Society.

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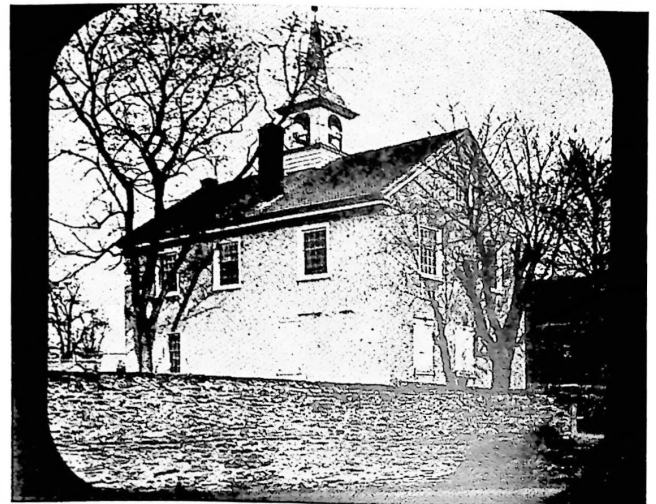
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We regret and apologize that the following portion of the article on "Old Concord School House" by George Clarence Johnson and including the above illustration was omitted in the June 1950 issue of the "Germantowne Crier"



In 1903, the first move was made in the matter of the use and occupancy of the lower room by the Site and Relic Society of Germantown, organized in 1900, for a permanent exhibition of relics. At a special meeting on February 27th, at the home of Ellwood Johnson, a letter was presented and read from the society requesting the use of this room. A resolution was passed, granting it. On April 1, 1903, a formal agreement was executed between Charles J. Wister, president, and Charles F. Jenkins, secretary of the Site and Relic Society, and the trustees of the Concord Schoolhouse, who consisted of David C. King, president, and Romaine Keyser, secretary, and the trustees: Ellwood Johnson, Edward T. Johnson, William N. Johnson and Jacob Keyser.

The Site and Relic Society was required to keep the premises in good order and condition; to bear all expenses thereto and vacate on 60 days' notice. This Society performed a wonderful work, not only in gathering together objects of great historical interest and value, marking sites of equal interest, but in stimulating the thoughts of the community in that direction and in perpetuating the reputation of Germantown as one of the most interesting spots in the state and even in this country.

By 1908, the Site and Relic Society had outgrown its quarters; and having received permission to occupy "Vernon," in Vernon Park, vacated the schoolhouse and moved into this commodious building, where they remained until 1927. In that year the name of the Society was changed to the Germantown Historical Society, and was presented with the

Hacker House, 5214 Germantown Avenue, which allowed them to expand to their ever-increasing growth. The library and museum there are well worth a visit.

In 1911 and 1912, the Men's Glee Club of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Germantown occupied the second floor of the schoolhouse; and in a letter of June 6, 1911, to the Glee Club from the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Secretary states the following, "I am directed to communicate to you the appreciation of the Board for the excellent care taken of the quarters occupied by you, and our gratification at the knowledge that our selection of a tenant was so wise a choice."

In 1915, The Daughters of the American Revolution made an offer to occupy the schoolhouse, which was declined.

Through the years since then there seems to be little to record, but many a visitor has crossed the threshold of its well-worn sills and found interest within the hallowed walls. The birch rod is gone, but the old desks are still there; the old bell in the belfry still peals out its clear notes on stated occasions. The Board of Managers who are entrusted with its care still meet as did those through the years since it was founded.

Such is the barest and briefest outline, most fragmentary in character of the activities and career of the old schoolhouse from its humble beginning in the year 1775 to the present time.

Many are the wars it has seen and in all of these the old schoolhouse has stood untouched and unmoved, and, let us hope, will stand for many generations, a monument of the past and an inspiration for the future.



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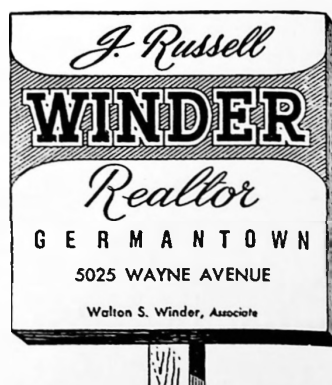
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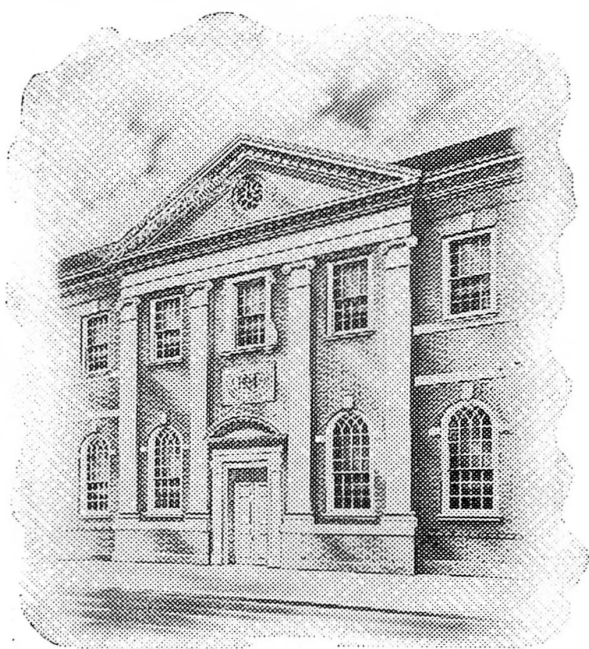
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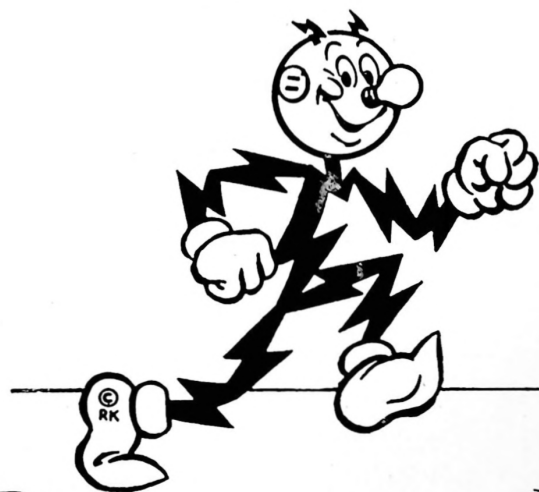
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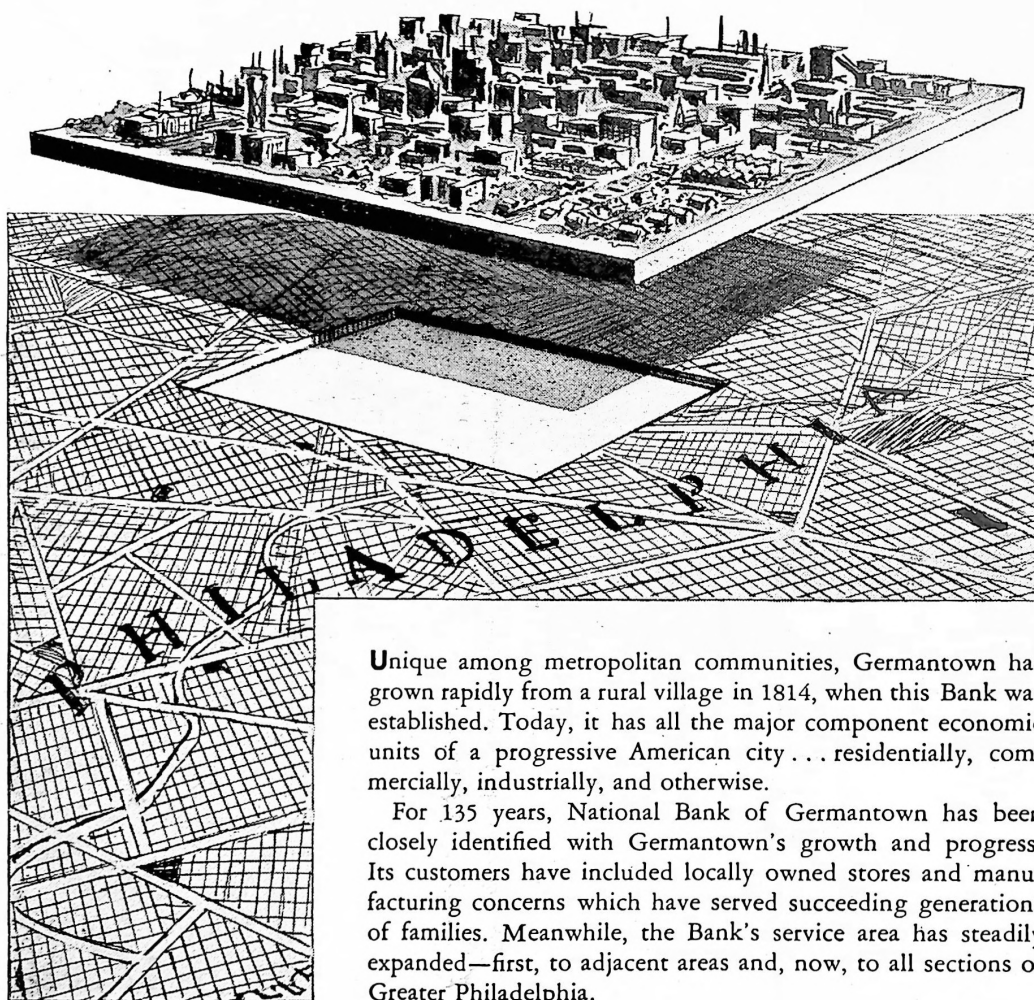
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