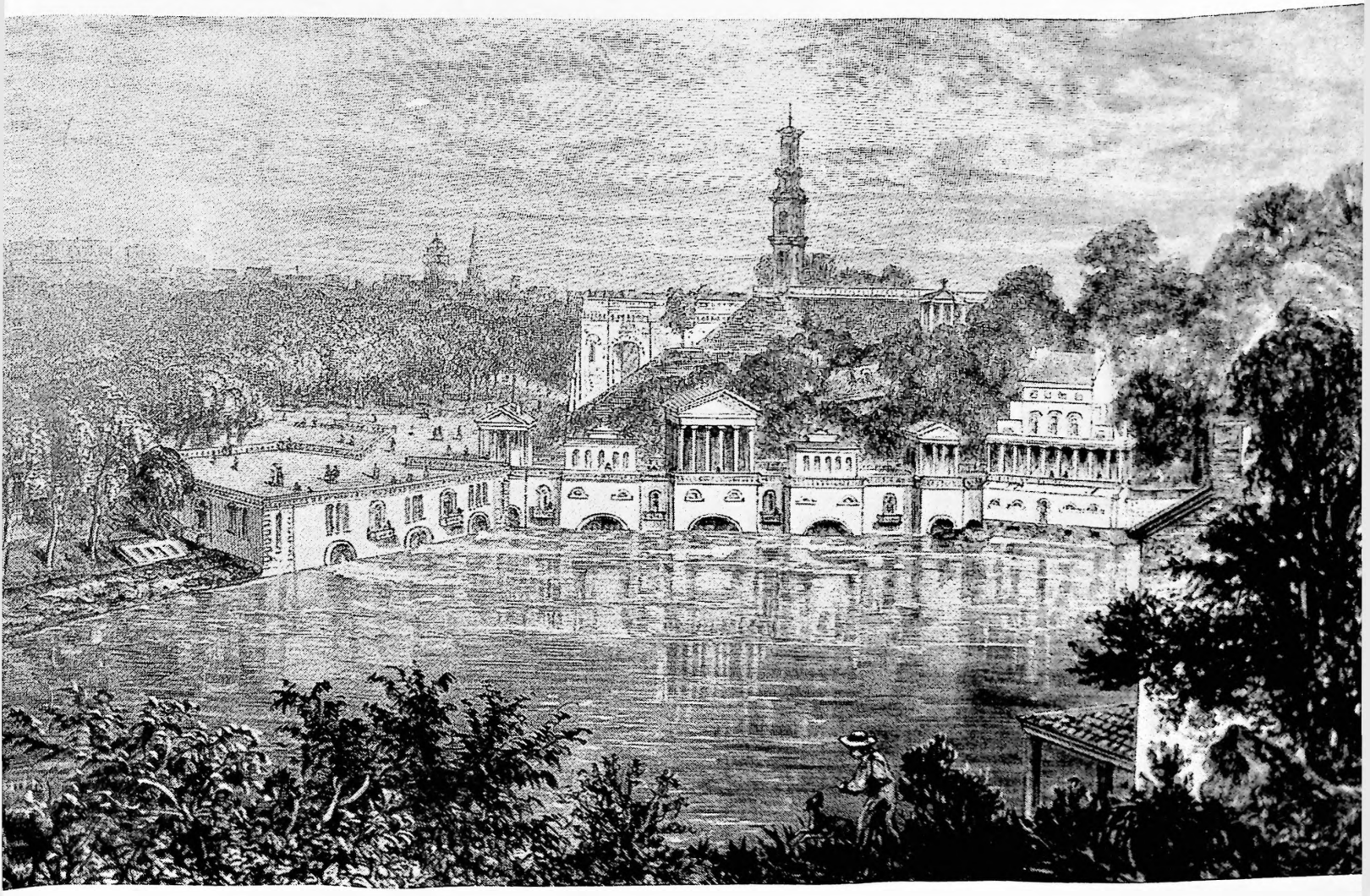
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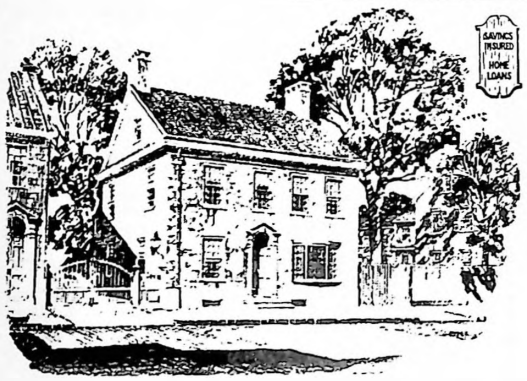
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AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

The Germantown Historical Society is dedicated to the fostering of the cultural traditions of Germantown, the preservation of its historic landmarks, and the maintenance of the Society's Museum of historic relics.

A membership in the Society helps to further these aims. It also entitles members to attend the interesting series of monthly lectures and to receive the "Germantown Crier" which is published quarterly.

Membership dues are:

Junior Membership	$3.00
Annual	$6.00
Sustaining	10.00
Life (payable quarterly)	100.00

Subscription to the CRIER for non-members is $1.00.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The lecture program of the Germantown Historical Society will be devoted this season to different aspects of collecting. Thus the series of talks will be related and have a coherence which, it is hoped, will prove instructive as well as enjoyable to the Membership. The lectures will all take place on Thursdays at Vernon at 8 P.M. The dates and subjects are:

March 18, Old Philadelphia Prints
by Carl Zigrosser
April 22, Antique and Contemporary Silver
by Virginia Wireman Cute

FACTS ABOUT THE SPEAKERS:

Mr. Zigrosser is the Curator of Prints at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. He is a distinguished American authority in his field and he also enjoys an international reputation because of his numerous publications. His books, *Fine Prints Old and New* and *Six Centuries of Fine Prints*, are valued sources for scholars and students here and abroad. Mr. Zigrosser has built the print collection at the Museum to its present position of leadership among American museum print collections.

Virginia Wireman Cute is one of our leading designers and makers of fine silver objects and jewelry. She is an authority on old and contemporary silver and has travelled extensively abroad. She has exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. She has worked in England where the two pieces done there were submitted to the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and hallmarked with the date letter F. Mrs. Cute has taught at the Philadelphia Museum School of Art and, presently, is Assistant Director of the School of Occupational Therapy at the University of Pennsylvania.

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GERMANTOWNE CRIER



Vol. 6 MARCH, 1954 No. 1

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Historical Society Honored	6
The Conestoga Wagon, *by Albert Thomas Von Trott*	6
Fairmount and the Wissahickon Eighty Years Ago, *edited by William Cullen Bryant*	7
Wild Life on the Wissahickon, *by Cornelius Weygandt*	10
The Billmeyer House, *by Horace Haverstick*	12
Washington's Four Doors to Happiness, *by Francis M. Wetherill*	13
Germantown Fire—Past and Present, *by Arthur O. Rosenlund*	15
A Newcomer in Germantown, *by Jane Campbell*	17
Park Houses	20
John Fanning Watson	23
Excerpts from Joshua Evans' Journal	24

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SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS

Complete sets of the Germantowne Crier consisting of all numbers issued to date, are being offered (on order) at $3 per set.

The remaining copies of the "Guide Book to Historic Germantown" will be sold at One dollar each; copies of "Washington in Germantown" at One dollar each, in board covers, and Fifty cents in paper covers, both of these books being the work of our founder and former president, Charles Francis Jenkins.

Volume One, numbers 1 to 10, of the old "Site and Relic Society's" publications, are for sale at the Museum, and also Volume Two, numbers 1 to 8. Some of the second volumes are in the name of the Germantown Historical Society, the older name being discontinued during that period. The prices of the separate numbers vary from 25c to $1. They can be purchased separately or the whole 18 copies can be bought for $7.50. The publications start from the very beginning of the Society, and many of the articles were written by old historians now dead, and constitute first hand information. An index comes free of charge for the first ten numbers, no index has been made of Volume Two.

Copies of current issues of the Crier may be purchased at the Museum, the Morris House, and at various stores in Philadelphia, Germantown, Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill.

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Historical Society Honored

The American Association for State and Local History is pleased to recognize and commend the distinctive contribution of the Germantown Historical Society, Germantown, Pennsylvania, for its sprightly magazine, "The Germantowne Crier", and for its "Survey of German Township" pre-Revolutionary houses as a basis for the preservation and restoration of its earliest houses.

Voted at the annual meeting of the Association in Detroit, Michigan on September 10, 1953, signed by the President of the Association and Chairman of the Committee of Awards



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"The Conestoga Wagon"

Pennsylvania's Contribution to Early Transportation in America

By Albert Thomas Von Trott

Albert Thomas VonTrott a long time resident of Germantown and an active member of the Germantown Historical Society.

By profession a "Commercial Artist" who specializes in the design of insignia, the restoration of documents and similar work. He produces official personal flags for officials of the United States Government being probably the chief supplier of the latter.

THE first use of the Conestoga wagon became noticeable during the decade between 1750 and 1760. The peculiar type of pioneer vehicle thus evolved remained in persistent use during all advance movements of the population for about a century. As the frontier inhabited by white men pushed toward the west for generation after generation the Conestoga wagon was always in the van of travel progress, always years ahead of the stagecoach, the steamboat, canal and railroad. The ruts that were dug deep into the soil by its wide and ponderous wheels were the marks that guided all other vehicle movement by land.

The travel conditions which confronted the early inhabitants of Pennsylvania were in several respects different from those faced by the other colonists. There was no considerable seacoast that permitted movement from one part of the commonwealth to another by means of sailing boats. Necessity forced its people to resort to land travel for journeys of consequence, and to that circumstance was due the widespread use of the pack-train within its limits, and its early efforts to solve the problems of the roads. To necessity can also be attributed the creation of the Conestoga wagon, which, though at first evolved to fit conditions in the neighborhood of its origin, was speedily adopted, with slight modifications, for all long overland migrations and heavy traffic throughout the country.

The precise reason for the name of the vehicle is uncertain. A breed of very heavy horses had already been developed in the valley of the Conestoga, and had commanded wide notice. Probably the wagon was first built in the same region (Lancaster County, Pa.), or else acquired its name from the type of horse with which it no doubt associated in its earliest days. A Conestoga wagon was a huge affair, very heavily built, with a bed higher at each end than in the middle, and topped by a dull-white cloth cover which had a similar curve of still more pronounced degree. The wagon bed was constructed in concave shape in order that its contents might not spill out when it was going up or down hill. Still another distinguishing characteristic of the conveyance was its color. The underbody was always painted blue, and the upper woodwork was invariably bright red. This chromatic scheme was as inevitable for every Conestoga wagon as though it had been prescribed by law with a penalty for refusal to decorate.

In the course of time tens of thousands of Conestoga

(*Continued on page 27*)

GERMANTOWNE CRIER

Volume 6 MARCH, 1954 Number 1

"Fairmount and the Wissahickon" Eighty Years Ago

EDITED BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

FAIRMOUNT WATER-WORKS have been, for many years, one of the recognized "sights" of Philadelphia; but the great improvements recently made in their vicinity have transformed this resort into one of the most charming pleasure gardens in the world. Twenty years ago "Fairmount" meant only the buildings, in which the machinery used in supplying Philadelphia with pure water was enclosed, and the pleasure ground and reservoir lying near it. Now the vast expanse of Fairmount Park is included in the generic term, and days might be spent in investigating the attractions of this charming spot.

As early as 1800 the necessity of providing for Philadelphia a supply of water greater than that offered by wells and cisterns was recognized; but it was not until 1818 that the scheme of elevating and turning into it the river Schuylkill, by means of an immense dam, was determined upon. The principal features of this plan are the construction of a dam over fourteen hundred feet long, which backs the water up the river about six miles, creating power sufficient to raise into the reservoir ten million gallons a day; the immense forcing pumps placed in a horizontal position and worked by cranks on the water-wheels; and the vast net work of mains and pipes which convey the water to all parts of the city.

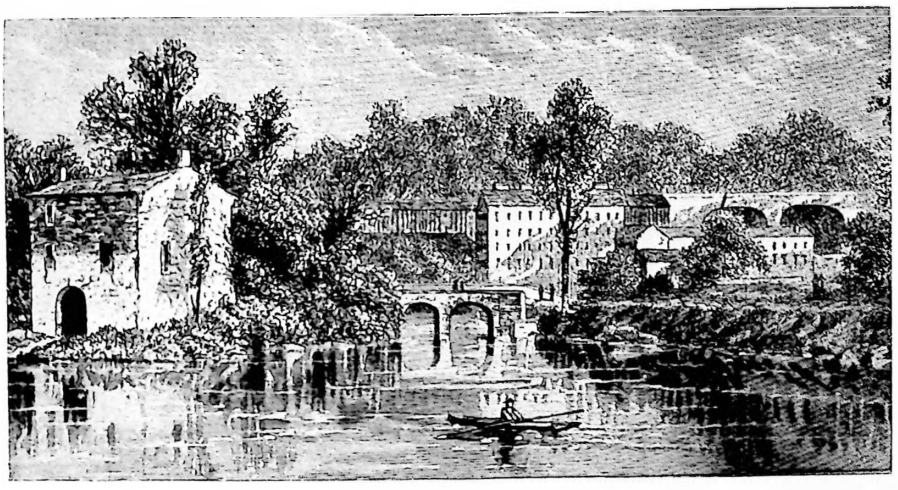
The buildings containing this ponderous machinery are open to the public, and the majestic, regular motion of the massive forcing wheels offers a constant source of attraction to the curious visitor. The peculiar and by no means disagreeable odor produced by the fresh water when in broken motion pervades these buildings, and can be detected at some distance as you approach them.

The grounds in the immediate vicinity of the Water-Works, though limited in size, are pleasantly laid out; and wooded paths wind up the Reservoir hill, summer houses and rustic seats being placed on various coignes of vantage. Projecting from the Reservoir there is a massive stone belvedere, from which may be obtained an extensive view of the Schuylkill and its picturesque shores on the one hand, and the roofs and spires of the great city on the other. The view of the Water-Works from the opposite side of the Schuylkill is quite unique, a pleasant architectural effect being produced by two little Grecian temples which overhang the water and by the symmetrical colonnade of the larger of the half dozen buildings which appertain to the Water-Works.

Embowered in the trees near these buildings is the monument erected to the memory of Frederick Graeff, the designer and first engineer of the works. It is but a few minutes walk from this spot to the large bronze statue of Lincoln erected in 1871—probably the most elaborate monument yet erected to the memory of the martyr President.

Fairmount Park, in its entire extent, comprises some four thousand acres, is three times larger than the famous Central Park of New York, and is by far the most extensive pleasure ground in the country. It lies both sides of the Schuylkill, and communication between its different sections is maintained by the bridges at Girard Avenue and Schuylkill Falls. There is also, below Fairmount, a wire bridge which when it was new, was thought to be a remarkable triumph of engineering skill, and attracted the attention of all visitors to the Quaker city. It is today as useful and as sightly as ever but its celebrity has long been eclipsed.

Fairmount Park was gradually formed through purchase by the municipal authorities of several of the elegant, well cultivated estates which lay on either side of the Schuylkill in the vicinity of the city. The property includes Belmont, once the country house of Judge Peters, a noted jurist in the early part of the century, and a personal friend of General Washington; the Landsdowne estate, belonging to a Mar-



Old Mill buildings formerly at the mouth of the Wissahickon. ". . . tempting bits of form and color for the artist's pencil."

quis of Landsdowne, who married Miss Bingham, an American Lady; and the Sedgley estate.* These lands are all on the west side of the river. On the east side the city has acquired Lemon Hill, Eaglesfield, and all the estates on that side of the stream, up to the Wissahickon River. Not only do these acquisitions offer "ample room and verge enough" for one of the most magnificent parks in the world, but the admired natural advantages—gentle declivities, and a picturesque river among them—were enhanced by the fact that the private country seats of which this property is mostly composed, were all richly improved. The ancestral trees were in excellent preservation and in the fullest splendor of their foliage. The roads were all laid out and the grounds showed that for years they had received the careful attention of skilled landscape gardeners. In fact the park authorities had only to combine into one, a number of pleasure grounds already constructed, and to invite the citizens of Philadelphia to the immediate enjoyment of one of the loveliest out door resorts in the country.

Of course, the points of view, the quiet retreats, and the charming nooks in Fairmount Park are almost innumerable. The windings of the river offer a constant variety of sylvan scenery. At Rockland Landing, for instance, there is an extensive view in both directions until the bend of the stream cuts it off, while directly behind the spectator towers a rocky perpendicular cliff on the face of which the various strata of rock are exposed to view in a manner which would delight equally a scientific geologist or the casual lover of the picturesque.

Above Belmont the stream assumes a wilder character. The shores slope gradually down to the water's edge; and the overhanging trees curve gently forward over the road way, as if, like the fond Narcissus they were enamored of their own reflection in the limpid stream. From the heights of Landsdowne there is a wider scope of vision. Seated on the rustic benches, overshadowed by stately trees of almost primeval growth, the lounger may enjoy one of the most delightful bits of river scenery of the milder order which our country affords.

Perhaps among the noblest views which are afforded by the rich variety of the Fairmount country is one to be gained from West Park. In this view the river is not visible. The eye wandering over an expanse of billowy foliage, descries in the distance the roofs and spires of the fair city, and the smoke of industry arising from a hundred tall chimneys. Near the centre of this scene arises a graceful and varied architectural grouping formed by the tower of the Masonic Temple, the sharp spire of the adjacent church and the swelling dome of the Roman Catholic Cathedral. These buildings are not really together; but, by effect of pallax, they seem to form one group, and in their proud majesty dominate the entire city.

The Delaware and Schuylkill. "The Wedded Rivers" Whittier calls them in his lovely pastoral, "the Pennsylvania Pilgrim". Perhaps the sympathetic visitor wandering in Fairmount Park at the sweet hour when day is melting into night, may keenly realize the Quaker poet's description of the city and its vicinage in the colonial days nearly a century ago before the colonists were troubled with dreams of independence:

"Through the deep
Hush of the woods a murmur seemed to creep,
The Schuylkill whispering in a voice of sleep.

"All else was still. The oxen from their ploughs
Rested at last, and from their long day's browse
Came the dun files of Krisheim's home-bound cows.

"And the young city, round whose virgin zone
The rivers like two mighty arms were thrown,
Marked by the smoke of evening fires alone—

"Lay in the distance, lovely even then,
With its fair women and its stately men
Gracing the forest court of William Penn—

"Urban, yet sylvan; in its rough-hewn frames
Of oak and pine the dryads held their claims,
And lent its streets their pleasant woodland names."

*See "Park Houses" on page 20

In the west park will be erected in 1876, the superb buildings intended for the International Exhibition connected with the Centennial Celebration. The central structure will be permanent and will remain most probably for ages to come, an ornament to the park, a source of attraction to strangers, and an object of pride to citizens. The crowds of visitors from all parts of the world who will flock to Philadelphia on the occasion of the official celebration of our hundredth national birthday, will ever recall with pleasure the sylvan beauties of Fairmount Park and will spread far and wide the fame of this most delightful pleasure resort. In twenty years, Fairmount will be as famous in its way as the Bois de Boulogne of Paris, Hyde Park of London, the Pincian Hill of Rome, the Casino of Florence, or the Prater of Vienna, it possesses a greater variety of natural beauty than any of them.

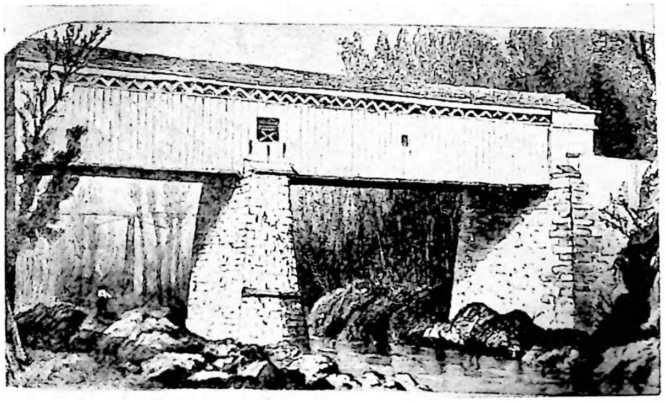
No notice of Philadelphia would be complete without some description of the Wissahickon. This very picturesque little river winds through a narrow valley, between steep and richly wooded banks, and possesses all the wildness of a stream far from the haunts of men, though it is but a few miles from one of the largest cities on the continent. Its beauties begin from the moment it pours its crystal current into the waters of the Schuylkill. As it approaches the latter river, it is quiet and peaceful; but it soon becomes almost a mountain-torrent, as it is confined between narrow banks and overshadowed by towering hills. Its water power has been made available for manufacturing purposes; but as it has lately been included within the limits of Fairmount Park, it is understood that the unromantic mill-buildings will be soon removed, and nothing allowed to remain which can in any way interfere with its wild and picturesque beauty. Even at present, these objectionable structures are not wholly unsightly; and the factories at the mouth of the Wissahickon are so shaded by foliage that, in conjunction with the arches of the bridges nearby, they offer tempting bits of form and color for the artist's pencil. The old log-cabin bridge, which crosses the stream at one point, has attracted the attention of both amateur and professional sketchers nearly as much as the falls which give variety to one of the wildest stretches.

A wide carriage road runs along the bank of the Wissahickon, and is a favorite drive of the Philadelphians, the river dancing along one side, and high rocky projections crowned with wild, overhanging trees and shrubbery, bordering the other. Nothing can surpass the variety of this river-scenery. Even the covered bridge, so often an unsightly object in the rural scenery of America, when compared with the open, arched bridges of Europe, seems to be in keeping here. We can hardly say as much for the so-called "Pipe Bridge," which, to the unprofessional eye, looks as if it were thrown upside-down across the valley.

Various restaurants and houses of resort for pleasure-seekers are to be found on the Wissahickon road. Other spots are noted as the localities of various traditions, generally of a rather apocryphal nature. Near the "log-cabin" is a lane which leads to a well dug, some two centuries ago, by one John Kelpius, who is generally known as "the hermit of the Wissahickon." He was the possessor of a "stone of wisdom," which he threw into the river shortly before his death and which has never been found. Whittier speaks of him as "the painful Kelpius," who

> "in his hermit den
> By Wissahickon, maddest of good men,
> Dreamed o'er the Chiliast dreams of Petersen"

Laurel Hill, the famous cemetery of Philadelphia, which for many years has been the subject of artistic illustration, is now, like the Wissahickon, included within the limits of Fairmount Park, though a suitable wall of partition secures to it the privacy becoming a metropolis of the dead. Here rest many of the most noted citizens of Philadelphia, including persons who have won an abiding fame in the worlds of literature and of art.



Covered bridge over the Wissahickon with pipe line bridge showing through one arch

NOTE. The eminent American poet and author, William Cullen Bryant, was the editor of two huge handsomely bound folio volumes, published by Appleton in 1874, entitled "Picturesque America or The Land We Live In." This monumental work, of more than a thousand folio pages, is profusely illustrated with many rare full page steel engravings, and also numerous wood cuts. All of these illustrations were the products of some of the most talented artists of the time. The chapter on "Philadelphia and its Suburbs" was contributed by C. D. Gardette, and edited by William Cullen Bryant. The woodcuts, illustrating the text, were executed by Granville Perkins. We are indebted to the Appleton Company for permission to use in THE GERMANTOWNE CRIER the interesting and rather quaint description of Fairmount and the Wissahickon, written at least eighty years ago.

GEORGE E. NITZSCHE

WILD LIFE ON THE WISSAHICKON

By Cornelius Weygandt

Cornelius Weygandt, A.B., Ph.D., Litt.D., is known to thousands of graduates of the University of Pennsylvania. For over a generation he was head of the English Department, and has been Emeritus Professor since 1942. An author of note, such books of his as "Philadelphia Folk," "The Dutch Country," "Down Jersey," "Wissahickon Hills," and "The Red Hills," have done much to acquaint the public with our local countryside.

One of his hobbies is ornithology.

THERE is just as much savagery in a weasel killing a rabbit on Kitchen's Lane in 1954 as there was in a panther killing a deer there in 1683, if not savagery on so large a scale. The utmost savagery I ever saw on the Wissahickon Hills was about 1890 when I encountered a pack of dogs, large and small, on the trail of some creature through a field of redtop just east of Allen Lane. The most surprising display of wild life to me was along about 1915, when I drove our 1914 Ford into our lane from Wissahickon Avenue to be halted at the turn northeastward by a bunch of deer filling the roadway. I cannot remember how many there were of them, but I well remember the stag at their head, a formidable looking fellow. They had been introduced to the park as a picturesque feature, but the belligerency of the stags and the habit of the whole herd in descending on a garden and cleaning it out made it necessary to take them away.

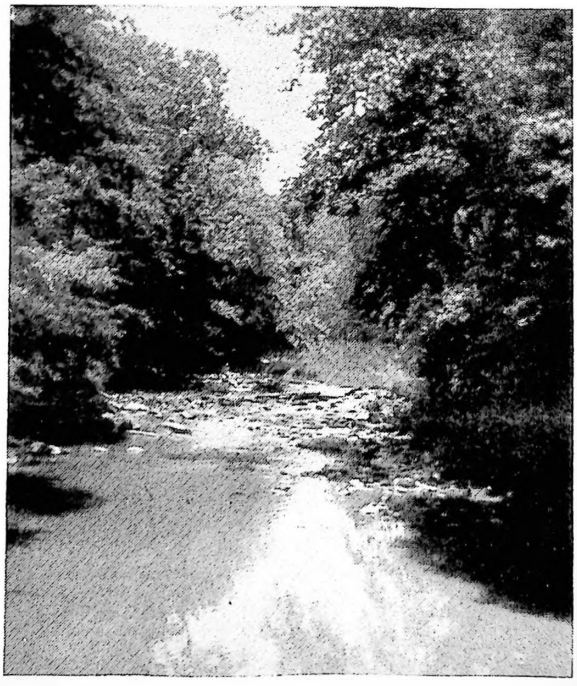
There are still raccoons on Wissahickon, and opossums, and foxes, minks and weasels and rabbits, grey squirrels, red squirrels, flying squirrels and chipmunks, muskrats and skunks. Strangely I have never come on a groundhog there, or anywhere this side of Norristown, and the presence of skunks has been irregular. I never saw one hereabouts in my boyhood, but about 1920 they established themselves under our front porch, to the discomfiture of the rabbits that had used that retreat as a nursery. The skunks attacked the young rabbits, were soundly kicked by Mrs. Rabbit, exploded, and drove us away from the front of the house for days.

I have only once seen a fox on our place, on the two-inch wide two by four of the top carrier of our picket fence. How he got there I do not know, but he progressed along it slowly, looking up longingly at the row of guinea hens perched high in a great black oak. I had installed the guineas as guardians of my Dominiques and Dorkings, but their noisiness disturbed my neighbors and I had to get rid of them. Milady once saw a flash of red in the heathbed of our front yard, and wrote down the apparition as a fox. A student of mine living in Roxborough missed several of his hens, set a trap and caught a mother fox. She was so mangled he killed her. Looking up her den he found it, well down to the creek, dug out five cubs, raised them on the bottle, and freed them when grown. Foxes have been a nuisance north of Cresheim Creek, where a mother and cubs were found in a conduit under a road, stopped in and asphyxiated.

The policemen patrolling at night frequently see raccoons on the road. One neighbor has two that harbor in a hollow tree just outside his window, where he has satisfaction in seeing them, cheek by jowl, looking out at him as they snuggle together. Another neighbor breaks up a loaf of bread each midnight and spreads the fragments about his garbage can, for a raccoon that is punctual on his twelve o'clock visits.

On reporting to a handyman of a neighbor that I had lost three Red Dorking pullets, he said to me: "Next time you take trolley look at the lefthand bank. The weasels live there." I did as I was told, and there were three of them wedged in, noses out, within twenty feet of the double tracked trolley on Wayne Avenue.

The rabbits have grown scarce since the blackberry patch, overgrown with honeysuckle, back of us, has given way to houses. Down to three years ago you could see a cottontail on the lawn almost any time you looked out. The cats have cleaned out the chipmunks, and grey squirrels have displaced the reds. It is years since I have seen a flying squirrel, but one recently appeared on the breakfast table of a house on Lincoln Drive just back of Upsal Station.



Typical scene of Wissahickon Creek looking upstream from Paper Mill Road

It had apparently come down the chimney. Once I had one alight on the lapel of my ulster in the woods by Upsal Station.

Tortoises have disappeared from our neighborhood and ground moles. I have not seen a star nosed mole for thirty years. The cats still bring in shrew moles, and meadow mice and an occasional white belly. Bats are still about but not in the numbers of yesterday. Garter snakes are about no more and toads are rare discoveries. Frogs, also, are fewer than they were and we have no tree toads singing of summer nights. The starlings have cleaned out the katydids. Now the starlings are many less than they were.

For years we had a blue mink down Kitchen's Lane. That was so long ago it came to its death by a man who lighted the gasolene lamps along the lane.

In fifty-four years on Wissahickon Avenue I have seen just thirteen eagles, the last ones three circling in the southwest skies. Earlier I had seen one alighting with a great crashing of rotten limbs on a dead oak tree back of the John Welsh place, and another sailing serenely across the Andorra Nurseries. I have seen just one loon heading southward in all the years I have lived here. I have heard many wild geese in migration times and seen one V headed southwest. I have seen very few great blue herons here and no white ones, but there used to be a nightly flight of a bunch of night herons up the creek valley, and noisy concourses of them above the stream under "Toleration Rock".

The sparrow hawks that used to nest here in a dead chestnut by Wayne Avenue have moved away, the sharpshins are infrequent visitors, and the little blue hawk out of the northlands is still rarer. The Cooper's hawk stays with us, and an osprey flies over now and then. A boy of the neighborhood shot off all our screech owls twenty years ago. I have seen just one little sawhet owl. The crows are our most faithful birds. Few days pass without them parading on our lawn or alighting on the limbs of the great black oaks by the lane. I have never seen a raven here. I have always had my eyes on the skies for swans, but I have never seen one in Germantown. A friend beat on the window of the car in which I was going to town as the train stopped at Queen Lane Station, and told me whistling swans were going over, but I could not get the window open to chance a view of them.

Flickers breed in the neighborhood each spring, and one winters with us now and then. A red headed woodpecker nested one year in a tree by the Waterworks Dam, and another year further north by the trolley tracks on Wayne Avenue. We have hairy woodpeckers, downy woodpeckers, nuthatches, little brown creepers, ruby-crown and golden crown kinglets, crested titmice, snowbirds and white-throats in winter, and song sparrows, field sparrows and chipping sparrows in summer. Of the thrushes bluebirds have moved on, but robins are steadfast, and we have the wood thrush of priceless oboe chants as our first



Wissahickon Creek

singer from late April to early August, and, strangely, the veery of late years has come to nest along the Wissahickon Creek.

Of the warblers the Louisiana water thrush haunts the valley at the right time of the year, as do the worm eating warbler and the blue winged yellow. The yellow-throated vireo is irregular in its visits, but the red-eye is a constant summerer. Pewees and wood pewees pass the nesting period with us, great crested flycatchers and kingbirds used to be plentier than they are now. The orioles, too, are fewer than they used to be, the golden oriole and orchard oriole, the red-wing and the meadow lark. There are fewer grackle colonies. Cuckoos still foretell rain by their calls, and mourning doves rival them by their cooing. Kingfishers are not found every year along the Wissahickon, and the wood duck no longer nest there in hollow trees. Chimney swifts no longer keep our chimneys free of soot, night hawks are rarities now, barn swallows are but a memory, and humming birds are far to seek.

I once found a turkey buzzard's nest with its two, eggs under an overhanging cliff back of Valley Green but that was a yesterday long gone. Shrikes seldom come my way.

One wonders when the last panther roamed our Wissahickon Hills and struck down elk and deer there. The last one to be killed in Pennsylvania was shot in 1871. It is unlikely one prowled here much after 1700. In 1683 William Penn wrote of young bear being eaten here, and fifty pound wild turkeys. Peter Kalm, whose *Travels Into America* was published in 1770, records that in 1748 old Swedes told him of tamed wolves and beavers trained to catch fish for their masters. Watson, our fellow townsman, tells us that a bear was killed in Germantown in 1721, and a panther at Conestoga in 1729. He also writes that in 1751 a bear was gotten up at Fairmount, chased five miles, and finally shot by Reuben Haines, a good Germantown name. Even to this day deer wander into the city. Only a short time ago one was killed at Broad and Erie. The wild has a way of hanging on.

CORNELIUS WEYGANDT

THE BILLMEYER HOUSE

By Horace Haverstick

Read before the Site and Relic Society, February 7th, 1902

AT THE northerly corner of Germantown Avenue and Upsal Street, in Germantown, there stands a quaint old-fashioned two-and-a-half-story stone building—now occupied as two separate residences—known as "The Billmeyer House," so called from the name of the family who have owned it for the past 115 years.

The building—originally one dwelling—was erected about the year 1730, possibly a year or two earlier, and it is therefore one of the oldest houses now standing, not only in Germantown, but also in Philadelphia. At the time of its erection, less than 50 years after the landing of Penn, it must have stood quite alone, surrounded by the primeval woods. The Germantown settlements, except for possibly a few houses scattered along the highway, could not have reached that far north; it was only a year or two before that date that a bear had been shot in Germantown Main Street, showing how sparsely settled was the neighborhood.

On the 28th and 29th of March, 1727, John George Bensell (or Benzell) by, what in old-time conveyancing, were called Deeds of Lease and Release, purchased from Griffith Jones the tract of land on which the house is built; the Deeds describe it as being situated "in the adjacent sideland of Germantown," and contained in front on the road 11 perches and 11 feet, and extended in depth 140 perches, and contained 10 acres; the Deed is recorded at Philadelphia in Deed Book D, No. 20, page 447. He afterwards built the house on this land, and as he purchased the property for his own use the house was probably built very soon after the purchase, and I have always heard from the older members of the family that that was the fact.

The house even now, altered as it is so much from its original appearance, is quaint and picturesque, and must have been quite an imposing house at that early period of our history. It is two-and-a-half-stories in height; is built of stone, the front being of dressed stone; there is also a back building, likewise of stone, extending from the main building; back of this there is now a frame extension, but that is evidently modern; over the first story on the front, there is a pent-roof-like projection; before the surface of Germantown road was cut down, the ground floor, or first story instead of being, as at present, six or seven steps above the sidewalk, was only one or two; and there was no doubt, originally, a porch or stoop at the front door, which is now removed, and in place of one entrance door into a wide hall, there are two doors, one for each of the dwellings into which the house has been divided; on the north gable, near the front, there is an iron ring fastened in the wall, for what purpose I have not been able to learn.

John George Bensell, or simply George Bensell, as he was generally called, the builder of the house, was a son of Conrad Benzeil,—the name was originally spelled thus—who emigrated from Sweden very early in the 18th century, and died a resident of Germantown in 1748. He—Conrad—was a son of Eric Benzel, a clergyman of the Swedish Lutheran Church, who was ordained a bishop of that church and was finally appointed by Charles XII, of Sweden, to be Archbishop of Upsal, the principal See of the Swedish Church; he died in 1709 and was succeeded in that See successively by two of his sons. The coincidence of the connection of the Benzell family with Upsal, and the naming of the street opened along the side of this property as Upsal Street, suggest the thought that the street was so named because of that connection.

George Bensell, when he purchased the property, was a weaver, probably of linen, an industry as is well known associated with Germantown from its beginning. He was an elder of the Reformed Church of Germantown, and in 1734 became one of "The Associated Brethren of Skippach." He died in November, 1763, aged 68 years. One of his sons was Dr. Charles Bensell, who was a well-known physician of Germantown, and one of the founders of the Germantown Academy, and about whom many stories are told by Watson and other historians. He lived on the site now occupied by the Bank of Germantown, where he died in 1795.

George Bensell, as has been said, died in 1763. By his will, which remains on file in the office of the Register of Wills at Philadelphia, he devised this property in trust for the use of his daughter, Elizabeth, for the term of her life, and at her death it was to go to her children.

Elizabeth Bensell married Anthony Deshler. He was a son of David Deshler; the latter migrated from Baden early in the 18th century; his wife was Maria Wister—or Wuster—and a sister of John and Casper Wister. Another of the sons of this David Deshler, also named David, was a well-known merchant of Philadelphia; he lived on Market Street, near Third Street. About the year 1772 he built a handsome house for himself on Market Square, in Germantown. In this house Sir William Howe for a time had his

(*Continued on page 22*)

WASHINGTON'S FOUR DOORS TO HAPPINESS

By Francis M. Wetherill

Rev. Francis M. Wetherill, S.T.D., graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1907 and received a degree of M.A. from that institution in 1911. He graduated from the General Theological School in 1925. S.T.M., and from Temple University in 1936, S.T.D.

Dr. Wetherill is Chaplain of Colonial Society of Pennsylvania and former Chaplain of the Houston Post, Germantown. He was Chaplain overseas in the 1st World War, A.E.F., and American Red Cross. A.E.F. He retired as Associate Rector of St. Simeon's P. E. Church after 21 years and as Rector Emeritus of St. John's, Germantown, after 12 years and was formerly Assistant Minister of Old Christ Church for five years.

Dr. Wetherill is the author of "What Made Washington Great" and the "History of Living Religions."

GEORGE WASHINGTON unlocked four doors to happiness. The first was Activity. He entered into life in February 1732, and maintained a superb physique, alert mind, and optimistic spirit. From a dozen or more of the standard and recent biographies we have read, and the diaries as well, we learn he was strenuous and enterprising whether in sports, surveying, dancing, military strategy, politics, patriotism, or agriculture, travel to church and social engagements, and ultimately, and for the greater part of his life, active in what he considered to be a holy, righteous cause.

He loved what he was doing, and strove to do it well. His leadership on the battle field reminds me of a snappy little Sergeant-Major who came back from the front in World War I and said to me: "It's great fun up there. If a whiz-bang can be heard you know you are still alive."

Those who followed his surveying lines to this day find them correct. Those who have visited Mt. Vernon have witnessed the happy results of his planning and engineering and farming of that estate of 4,000 acres.

The only reference I find in the Washington diaries to a limitation of his activity through illness is the smallpox caught in the Barbadoes, and what was frequent colds and severe dysentery (bloody flux).

So in soldiering, and labors for God and Country, he had the joy which came from surpassing vitality. This gave him the thrill of reaching the goals he tried to attain.



The first portrait of Washington. Painted by Charles Willson Peale at Mount Vernon, May 1772

The second door was Fortitude. As sportsmen say, "he could stand up and take it." This capacity to ride over circumstances, this equanimity which left him unperturbed when things were beyond his ability to solve, made him a source of inspiration to this subordinates. There was in him a fortitude, courage, bravery,—call it what you will, that could only have its source in what he so repeatedly called Providence.

The General had the fortitude to lay aside all unnecessary worry and froth over regrets. This door opened to him larger, happier rooms, rather than the confines of self-pity, self-consciousness either in blasted love affairs, which appear to have been many, or the political chicanery of opponents before and during the presidency.

The records and biographies which come down to us (other than that of Parson Weems, which is more or less discredited by Washington himself), convey only the slightest sense of humor, it is true. Yet I can read between the lines of letters to and from Washington that he was, though in outward appearance austere and dignified, nevertheless a very happy

man. He kept up a whirl of social appointments, dining, dancing, cards, etc.

She who knew him most intimately, and lived with him 16 years, portrays him as a joyous man, full of laughter and high spirits. I refer to an authentic memoir of his adopted daughter, Nellie Custis. In those times that tried men's souls, we would expect and find the seriousness and stability of a Christian gentleman of his station. Men who ran for office in those days were not wanted who threw mud and wisecracks. George Washington had the fortitude to employ self-control. He enjoyed a reputation and congeniality among friends and opponents for his strength of moderation and restraint, his temperance and sobriety, his fortitude to say "no" graciously.

Third—Tolerance has a lot to do with forcing open a closed door into a happy state of mind. With a fiery and aroused temper, such as he showed to Col. Charles Lee for this former Englishman's cowardice and treachery, was exhibited. Washington not always expressed his opinions and rebukes with what he defines in a prayer to be used by all the State Governors: "To demean ourselves with that pacific temper of mind." While his enemies, and a cabal of Generals and representatives from the Colonies, were in collusion to withdraw his commission as Commander-in-Chief, others accused him surreptitiously of blasphemy, perfidy, cowardice, ignorance. His treatment of them was firm but marked with justice, courtesy and tolerance. It must have been a happiness to him in his lifetime that the above charges and accusations were all proven to be untrue. This Christian spirit of bearing and forbearing, not harboring grudges, nor moping over failures in love or war, led to the cheerful confidence which he could place in his Staff and subordinates, and they could use the same confidence to encourage him, a loyalty to him which was abounding.

Lastly, but none the less important, one of the chief factors which made George Washington not only a great but a happy man, was his religion. In relying upon Providence it appears he was neither rushed nor confused. He took things calmly even in the heat of battle. He was definitely happy in his membership and association in Truro Parish as a consistent worshipper and Vestryman. He enjoyed attending to the oversight of the Pohick, Falls and Alexandria churches. His habitual public worship on Sundays, his well authenticated custom of private devotions daily, morning and evening, religious expressions in Orders to his troops, and copious and sincere references to Providence in his addresses, all witness to the deep contentment and happiness in trying to serve the Ruler of Heaven. The witness of contemporary friends and many Ministers allude to the comfort, joy and guidance George Washington derived from his religion.

Washington's charity and sacrifices, serving in the state militia, and commanding the U. S. Army, without salary or benefits, could bear the modern tax exemptions with closest scrutiny. He was happy to offer his life and talents regardless of reward. From a religious point of view we are sure this gave him a satisfied conscience. What could be happier than that! The treatment and gratuities, during his life and in his Will, toward black and white slaves attest the love of his fellowman. Adoption of the two children, his support during life and later endowment in his Will of education, and gifts to the poor and needy on the plantation and elsewhere, bespeak a Christian conscience, a happy disposition.



Painting of George Washington and his family by Savage, now displayed at the Morris House

As a Communicant he accepted the invitation: "Draw near and take this Sacrament—ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins." Washington was happy to believe these words (written 1642), in his hymn book, although he had no vocal talent to sing them:

Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates
Behold the King of Glory waits;
The King of Kings is drawing near,
The Saviour of the world is here.

O blest the land, the city blest
Where Christ the Ruler is confest;
O happy hearts and happy homes
To whom this King of Triumph comes!

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple set apart
For earthly use, for heaven's employ
Adorned with love and prayer and joy.

So we have reason to conclude George Washington entered all these doors of happiness. His wife's favorite portrait of him reveals a very contented and therefore reasonably happy character.

Germantown Fire—Past and Present

By Arthur O. Rosenlund, *President*

Arthur O. Rosenlund *is the president of the Germantown Fire Insurance Company and a member of the board of directors of the Germantown Historical society.*

IT IS DIFFICULT, if not impossible, to manage a business in Germantown without experiencing a sense of history. Whether your business has been in existence a year, five years or twenty-five years, you develop an awareness that where you conduct your affairs others—many others—conducted their affairs a century and more before you.

The pavements of Germantown—which once were brick walks and, before that, merely earthen paths—still seem to vibrate with the footsteps of generations that lived in an earlier day and whose collective efforts developed out of a patch of earth little dissimilar from any other patch of earth, a community as individualistic as a community can become. In fact, the farther one travels, from one end of the country to the other, the more aware he becomes of the impress that Germantown has made on the national imagination, and he says with Shakespeare's Portia: "How far that little candle throws his beams!"

As a Westerner by birth, I perhaps am more conscious of this than many native-born Philadelphians—or even native-born residents of Germantown. The state in which I was born was virtually unexplored territory as late as the year in which Germantown Fire was founded—one hundred and eleven years ago. At that time, Germantown was already a bustling community. It had seen Washington and, for a time, had housed the very seat of government.

Such a background not only gives one a sense of history, it also impresses him with his smallness in the face of time. I have reviewed the yellowed minutes of the early "managers" of Germantown Fire—in this day and age referred to as "directors". And, as one discovers who reads the history of the civilizations that built Egypt, Sumeria, Babylonia and Assyria, he is struck by the realization of how little things change. The spear has been superseded by the bow, the crossbow, the gun, the machine gun and the atomic weapon, but human affairs are still conducted for the same ends and purposes.

Oddly enough, when Germantown Fire was founded in 1843, Franklin's "Contributionship" was already 90 years old, and "The Mutual Assurance Company for Insuring Houses from Loss by Fire" (The "Greentree") had passed the half century mark. Compared to these companies, Germantown Fire was an upstart.

The company was brought into being by thirteen residents of the area who met at the Stokes House at what is now N. W. Maplewood and Germantown Avenues. Its first policy was issued in the name of one Samuel Harvey, for whom Harvey Street was named. The policy was in the amount of $3,000. It covered a stone house. To obtain it, Mr. Harvey signed a note for $75.

Somewhere that first policy exists. It has never been found. The earliest policy the company has been able to recover is Policy Number Eight, dated June 29, 1843, made out in the name of Wm. K. Cox. It covered a risk amounting to $400 and, to obtain it, Mr. Cox deposited with Germantown Fire his promissory note for $10.75.

It is interesting to find, in the history of Germantown Fire, that in 1854 it set aside a room, rent free, for Samuel B. Morris, in which room he started the Germantown Saving Fund with an initial deposit of his own of $300.

The board meetings of Germantown Fire, in those days, demanded attendance in silk hats and frock coats. If a director should appear so attired in these days, his fellow directors would undoubtedly conclude that, following the meeting he would attend a rehearsal of the Germantown Players Group. Even if he *were* to attend in such attire, I am confident he would attend to the business at hand with a seriousness and an intentness not unlike those displayed by his predecessors on the Board. Indeed, the responsibility has grown rather than lessened with the years.

We have, in the company's offices, portraits of all Germantown Fire's presidents with the exception of Henry S. Mallory. I find he was quite an army man, and enjoyed leading volunteers in parades. I also find he moved to Columbus, Ohio, in 1847 and died there two years later. But how he looked, diligent research has been unable to discover.

Of Germantown Fire's other presidents we have, however, what I suspect are fairly faithful portraits. With one exception—the late William H. Emhardt—they are all bearded or mustached. There was Benjamin Lehman, who headed the company from 1847 to 1867; Spencer Roberts, who headed it from 1867 to 1885; Jabez Gates, father of Thomas S. Gates, former president of the University of Pennsylvania, who headed the company from 1885 to 1896. There was Charles W. Otto—a man with an unusual sense of humor—who headed the company from 1896 to 1901. And then there was the first William Emhardt, who assumed the presidency in 1901 and relinquished it in 1909—the father of the later William Emhardt, who watched over the company's destiny for a third of its history. Following the first Emhardt came Joseph Fling—a man whose destiny seemed inextri-

cably bound up with Christmas Day. He was born on Christmas Day in 1830. He was married on Christmas Eve, his first son was born on Christmas, and he died on Christmas Day in 1921. It is impossible to look at his portrait without realizing that the white beard he wore looked exactly like the beard attributed to Saint Nicholas.

William Emhardt, Jr., was the first president of Germantown Fire who assumed office clean shaven. The company has a picture of him as a child standing next to the "Shagrag", the oldest fire engine in America, a hand pump affair created during the days of Benjamin Franklin. Young William, probably twelve at the time, stands prophetically by the engine, with his hand upon it, as if restraining it from the necessity of extinguishing conflagrations.

Despite its steady and consistent growth, Germantown Fire can hardly be said to have had a dull history. Many sections of its minutes make reading as exciting as any novel. Fortunately, the company was always blessed not only with a strong management, but with officers and directors interested in the long run. If it had not been for such men, Germantown Fire would not today be in its second century of service, stronger than ever and still growing.

In 1946, the 103 year old mutual was converted into a stock company. Its investment portfolio had grown to a point far in excess of the amount required to support the business the company was writing. While this made it one of the strongest companies in the country, it was obvious that it was not writing as much business as it might.

The new management that came in with the conversion from a mutual to a stock company decided to expand the company's operations by applying for permission to write insurance in other states. Up to that time, the company had confined its operations largely to the Philadelphia area. It was easy to see that expansion required going beyond this limited area.

Expansion, however, was not undertaken for its own sake. The company's management and its directors realized that the quality of the risks underwritten were of even greater importance than the quantity of the business done. As a consequence, expansion into other states was undertaken with a conservatism that has become a tradition with Germantown. Management carefully analyzed business conditions in other states, the kind of building that was being done in them, and then sought out the most effective agents to have as representatives.

The company today does business in 17 states. The Philadelphia area accounts for approximately 35 per cent of the total business written—as contrasted to 100 per cent prior to 1946. The company's loss ratio is one of the lowest among all fire insurance companies —an indication of the quality of its agents and the care with which its risks are selected.

Germantown Fire's expansion is still in its early stages. That expansion will continue, however, on a basis every bit as conservative as in the past. This is in line with the history of the company—and the area in which it has its roots.

When, during 1954, Germantown Fire moves into its new quarters in the old Harkness House, it will be conducting its business in a building once owned by the First Bank of the United States. While these new quarters will represent one of the most modern and efficient office buildings in the country, the building itself will resemble as far as is possible the structure that stood on Market Square long before Germantown Fire itself was founded—at a time when the "father of our country" himself made his quarters in Germantown.

I have little doubt that the operations of Germantown Fire, the decisions made by its management and its directors, are to a large extent influenced—as they have been over all the years since its founding—by the long and conservative history of the Germantown area itself. Both the directors and I travel extensively during the course of a year and we find it most gratifying that, wherever we go, not only Germantown itself, but Germantown Fire, enjoys a standing enjoyed by few communities and few companies, regardless of size. As far as the company is concerned, it is our intention that this shall continue.



Wyck

Historic House at the Falls

By John T. Ferris

J. B. Lippincott Company, 1917

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 thunder storm was raging. Dr. Smith, always quick with his pen, on the spot wrote the following:

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!

From "Old Roads Out Of Philadelphia"

A NEWCOMER IN GERMANTOWN

By Jane Campbell

An Address delivered before the
Site and Relic Society of Germantown
October 25th, 1913

Miss Jane Campbell *was born in Philadelphia and moved to Germantown in 1885, therefore called herself a newcomer.*

She and her brother were charter members of the Germantown Historical Society. Miss Jane was the society's historian for many years. Her scrap books of historic data are invaluable to students of Philadelphia history today.

She was a lecturer and a writer of note. Her column in the old Philadelphia Record called "The Why Stories" brought response from many readers.

She was an authority in music and her collection on that subject, well codified, has just been purchased by the Free Library of Philadelphia.

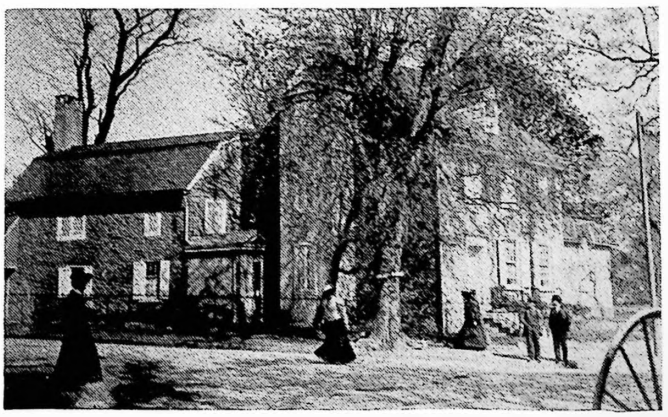
At the age of 70 Miss Jane studied Norwegian and translated a book of poems.

JANE CAMPBELL'S very first venture into Germantown as a visitor was going with some friends to "spend an evening"—it was in the days of "spending evenings"—on Duy's lane.* Her only clear recollection of the visit was her surprise that a street should be called a lanea, nd that if b-u-y spelled buy (bi) and G-u-y spelled Guy (Gi), why D-u-y spelled Du-y, but she finally accepted it as a Germantown idiosyncrasy.

Later again she visited a friend who lived on the Main street of Germantown and the newcomer was amazed at the Saturday night procession on that thoroughfare, totally unlike anything seen in her own quiet city and neighborhood.

Probably what led to serious interest was seeing some of Richards' prints displayed in a window of the building near Coulter street in which the postoffice was then located. The old houses, despite the crude drawing, were most attractive, in pictures at any rate, and making a note of their localities the newcomer set out on a genuine historical pilgrimage to find them. Need it be said she did not succeed. The majority of the old houses depicted had disappeared, for even a quarter of a century ago the new was displacing the old in tradition-loving Germantown. But from this time forth the newcomer began historical research in earnest and spent many an hour in wandering up and down the streets of Germantown and Chestnut Hill noting the ancient buildings that adorned them. She was much impressed by the diverse style of architecture, and the prevalence of small substantially built stone houses, especially on the Germantown road in Chestnut Hill. The many churches, the oft-time quaint parsonages, and the numerous old inns and taverns, all seemed like survivors of an older day. The first veritable log cabin the newcomer had ever seen in a city she noted at Mermaid lane, and took pains to learn its history, for by this time the newcomer was gradually shedding her fund of miscellaneous Germantown fiction, replacing it with more accurate knowledge. She decided that interesting as the log cabin undoubtedly was in appearance and age, yet it must have been an uncommonly uncomfortable domicile, though an old account of it assured the reader that it "was cozy within and had a pleasant attic." Tastes do change in the course of centuries! Across the road from the long cabin stood an old-time tavern, hoary with Germantown antiquity, the "Mermaid Hotel."

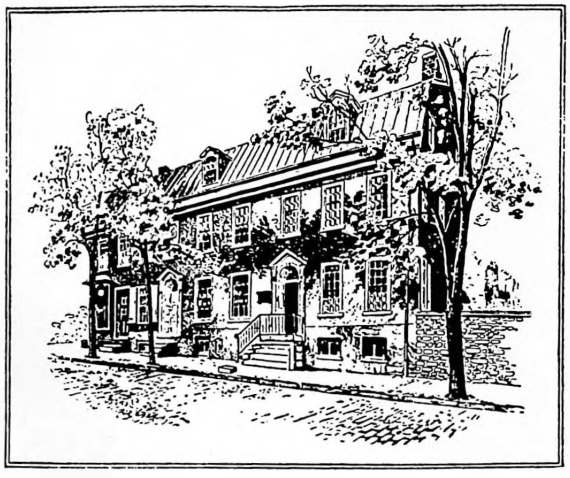
Some distance further south on the Main street the newcomer was attracted by a fine old house, of an ample width in front, as a good and characteristic specimen of a style of architecture prevalent in the town, which she learned was the Bayard house, with the interesting story attached of its cellar digging at the time of the Revolution. Still further down on the Germantown road the newcomer was immediately interested in an old-time building with a lattice work porch and a miniature ship in plaster neatly imbedded



S.E. cor. Germantown Ave. and High St., on this site a Botanical Garden was planted by Dr. Christopher Witt

*Now E. Wister Street between Germantown Ave. and Chew

on the south wall near the roof. This was what was popularly known as the "Ship House," and with the "Steamboat House" some distance up gave the street quite a nautical flavor, as sea captains were said to have lived in both of them, while the nautical air was further enhanced when the newcomer was shown the identical house in which a Commodore of the American Navy had lived at one period. Near the Ship House were standing old, rather forlorn relics of better days, the Metzger, Bockius, and Unruh houses. This particular section of the Main street the newcomer found thickly studded with historic memories of all Germantown ages, Dutch, English, German, Revolutionary, for the neighborhood of Washington lane is rich in such tradition, both authentic and legendary.



King of Prussia Inn

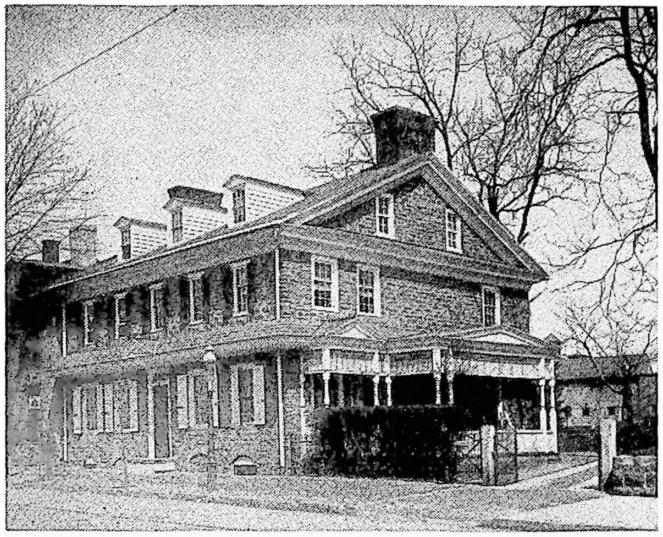
Another locality that engaged the especial notice of the newcomer was in the vicinity of Chelten avenue, where the beautiful Vernon Mansion stood in its extensive grounds which were enriched with a great variety of rare trees. A little stream meandered through the luxuriant grass of the meadow and an old-time springhouse stood not very far from the entrance, near which there was a fine specimen of the swamp magnolia of New Jersey. At the entrance to Vernon stood an immense tree, chained in an endeavor to preserve it from the ravages of time and the elements. The newcomer cannot remember what species of tree the chained giant was, and on looking over old contemporary descriptions felt rather confused on finding it called a linden, a horse chestnut and a buttonwood, but she is positive it could not have been all three at once. The meadow at Vernon was considerably lower than the level of the street, and the whole extent of grassy sward was a delight to the eye.

Germantown road below or south of Chelten avenue was a succession of old-time buildings of historic interest. There were the Lehman houses. The tiny little stone building set well back from the road said to have been the residence of Christopher Lehman, the first nurseryman in this vicinity, was chiefly interesting to the newcomer as having been the birthplace of one of her Germantown friends. Next were two most attractive houses painted white, also called Lehman, with beautiful gardens attached. There was nearby what had been an especially historic old tavern, "The King of Prussia," but when the newcomer saw it part of it had been turned into a most prosaic plumbing shop. Nearby the King of Prussia, adjoining the Bank on the corner of Schoolhouse lane, were a few stores, only noticeable because embedded in the garden wall in the rear of the one numbered 5506 was a stone Indian head which was a great puzzle to craniologists, ethnologists and historians, as it was a type of head totally unlike that of any Indian tribe or even lone Indian known to have frequented the vicinity of Germantown even in prehistoric times. The stone head is now declared in all probability to be German.

Across the street from the King of Prussia the newcomer found a most delightful tiny old-fashioned toy shop, to enter which it was necessary to step down from the sidewalk. This was a fascinating place for children, who found in it an abundant supply of toys, and at such a low figure that even a penny bought something valuable. (It was called the "Steppy Down" Store.)

Schoolhouse lane was so well-known by reputation to the newcomer that she paid particular attention to it, especially to the Friends' Meeting and the famous School of Germantown, the Academy. At the very corner of the Academy domain, at the Greene street corner, stood a tumbledown most commonplace little house, built on a bank above the street level and quite detracting from the staid and dignified building of the Academy itself. Nearby, in the same square, was a pebble-dashed, pink hued house directly on the line of the pavement with its high wooden front steps extending on both sides of the front door. This was the old Coulter Mansion, which had an extensive garden in the rear, and a tiny building in it, which was said to have been the fire engine house of earlier days and about this old mansion the newcomer learned that in Civil War times war meetings had been held in the parlors. West of Wayne avenue there were very few houses on Schoolhouse lane. Next to the Saving Fund on Germantown avenue the newcomer was especially pleased with the old-time houses, fine from their very simplicity and absence of meretricious or meaningless ornament.

Another locality that appealed to the newcomer was in the vicinity of Wayne Junction. On the Wayne avenue side two quite old dwelling houses were of marked interest, though both even twenty-five years ago were falling into decay. One was on Wayne avenue at the very foot of the Reading Railroad station and was a good sized, white building with outhouses, which in its day was evidently a mansion house of considerable importance. The other was some distance south, about the present Eighteenth and Cayuga streets. This was also a large, square



Green Tree Tavern, 6023 Germantown Avenue, erected 1748 by Daniel Pastorius. Date stone bears letters "D.S.P."

mastic house, which had likewise evidently been an imposing dwelling, but was going almost piecemeal, as the front and rear porches had been torn down and the house presented every appearance of old age combined with hard usage. These two old buildings the newcomer identified as being in all probability the two houses marked "Naglee" and "De Walden" on the 1750 map. One of them in later times had been known as the Roberts Mansion, having been the residence of the Roberts who was cashier in Girard's Bank. A small house on Germantown avenue, close beside the Reading Railroad station at Wayne Junction, the newcomer also heard called a Neglee house, and this same little house with its one story and attic—perhaps this last also of the "pleasant" variety—seemed a fittingly appropriate introduction to historic Germantown when entering it by way of Wayne Junction. It was positively rural in almost every section of Germantown a quarter of a century ago. The newcomer often found the cheerful blue chicory growing wild in some of the principal streets and there were many vacant lots and fields to be seen on every hand. On Schoolhouse lane, almost at Wayne avenue, a vacant piece of grass-covered ground was called by the children the "Cows' Lot," so many cows grazed on it.

The newcomer was interested in the numerous burying grounds to be seen along Main street and took occasion to visit them. At first the Germantown names on the stones meant but little to her, and the few graves she noted as of special interest were those of men who had more than local Germantown fame, such as Condy Raguet, the political economist, in the Lower Burying Ground, whose name was familiar to the newcomer as the organizer of the first saving fund banks. A banker himself, a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature in both branches, the holder of various government positions, the author of a number of books on banking and the currency, and an advocate of free trade. The newcomer was very much surprised to learn he had lived in Germantown and was buried here. Another notable grave was that of Watson, the annalist, which the newcomer found in St. Luke's graveyard, and the third that attracted her was that of Christopher Ludwig in St. Michael's Lutheran burying ground, and the great stone slab covering it on which is inscribed a brief history of the patriot who lies beneath. As the newcomer, however, progressed in her knowledge of Germantown history, learning who was who, and gleaning as much knowledge as possible of the early settlers and the stirring deeds of Germantown, she found a visit to any one of the old burying grounds almost like reading a chapter of Germantown history.

The street names the newcomer found exceedingly interesting in their historic memories, showing plainly the influence exerted by the War for Independence, for she noted Washington, Jefferson, Lafayette, Knox, Morris, Adams, Pulaski, Wayne, Greene, though she found there was some dispute about the last, some authorities averring it was Green street before a single battle of the Revolution was fought and others pointing to the General for the origin of its name, but the latter seem to have gained the day as the name rejoices in that mark of distinction, the final e.

Rather early in her sojourn in Germantown the newcomer had the pleasure of entering what had been the "Cocoonery" of silkworm craze fame. It was somewhere near Morton and High, and though it had had additional stories added after its silkworm day had gone by, yet the newcomer passed through the very rooms in which the worms were expected to spin the silk that was to make the fortune of their owners and also saw some few of the same mulberry trees which were still in existence at the time, the purchase and planting of which caused the bankruptcy of many a speculator. She was told that through some mistake the wrong variety of mulberry had been imported, and the poor worms sickened and died for want of their proper nourishment.

These are just a few of the landmarks scattered here and there which the newcomer noticed when she took up her residence in Germantown, some twenty-seven years agone.



Johnson House, a landmark in historic Germantown

Park Houses

SEDGLEY is on the east side of the Schuylkill river. It is said to be the first Gothic building in this country, designed by Henry Latrobe about the beginning of the 19th century and built by William Crammond. William Birch made an engraving of it in 1808. Sedgley passed into the possession of the Mifflin and Fisher families in 1836 and became part of Fairmount Park in 1857.

The rocky hill called Fairmount was purchased by the city in 1812. It had been part of the country estate of Robert Morris, financier of the Revolution. As Fairmount Gardens it was opened to the public in 1825. When omnibuses were introduced, the gardens became one of their termini.

Another part of Robert Morris's grounds was called THE HILLS. That part was bought by Henry Pratt in 1812 and the name was changed to LEMON HILL. The opinion of historians now is, that Pratt made use of the original Morris house, changing it little, if any, to suit his needs. Fanny Kemble is supposed to have written her poem to the Wissahickon while at Lemon Hill.

Isaac Lloyd, Philadelphia's first real estate speculator, with courage "to do big things", bought both Sedgley and Lemon Hill but a financial panic swept the country the following year which put an end to his venture. Lemon Hill was bought by the United States bank and eventually purchased by the city in 1844.

The CLIFFS was built by Joshua Fisher in 1753, and named after his birthplace in Germantown. Though small in size it is an architectural gem. It was probably used as a place to spend the day, returning at night to a permanent home, as was then the custom. It remained in the Fisher family until it was obtained by the city. Occasionally it was rented to a desirable tenant, such a one as Sarah Bache, who leased it in 1789. Joshua was the grandson of John Fisher who came on the *Welcome* with William Penn.

MOUNT PLEASANT is referred to by John Adams as "the most elegant country seat in Pennsylvania". It is pure Chippendale, built by Captain John MacPherson in 1761–62. Later it became the property of Benedict Arnold, who presented it to his bride, Peggy Shippen. Due to subsequent events she never lived there.

ROCKLAND NEARBY WAS BUILT IN 1810–30

Joseph Galloway occupied a house near Rockland which he probably used as occasion warranted on his way from his town house to Trevose the mansion built by his wife's grandfather, Judge Joseph Growden in 1684. Joseph Galloway like Robert Morris and Benedict Arnold fell a victim of the times. The house was occupied by General Read in 1780 and bought by Edward Burd in 1798 for 194 Spanish Milled Dollars. The old house was torn down and on it was erected a new dwelling of Georgian domestic architecture named ORMISTON after Edward Burd's grandfather's seat near Edinburgh, Scotland.

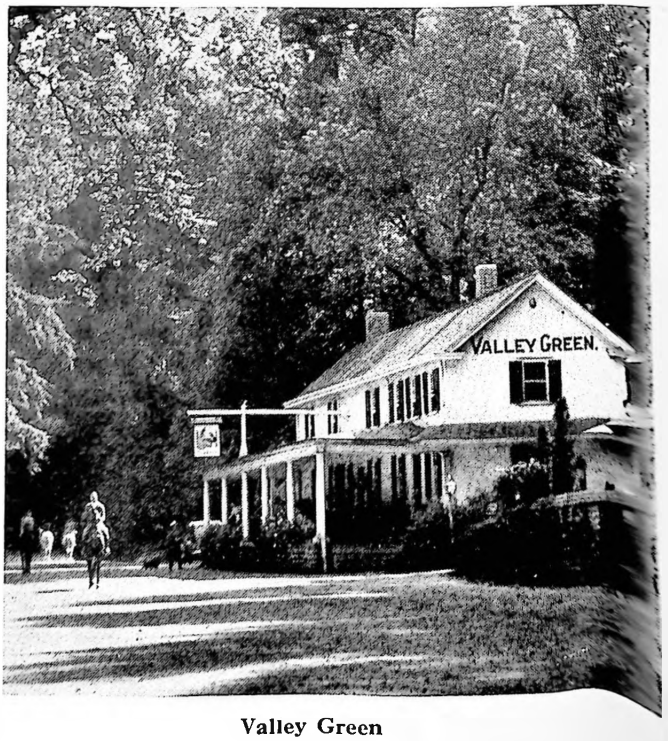
Separated from Ormiston by a "deep wooded comb" is LAUREL HILL (not to be confused with the cemetery by that name) standing on a high bluff overlooking the river. It is of Georgian Architecture, two stories high with a hipped roof, and walls of brick painted a pale yellow. It was built by Joseph Shute in 1748 and occupied by Francis Rawle in 1760.

Rawle willed all his property to his widow. After his early death she married Samuel Shoemaker, a widower. They each had children and would, with this large family, spend part of the time at Laurel Hill and part of the time in the Shoemaker house in Germantown.

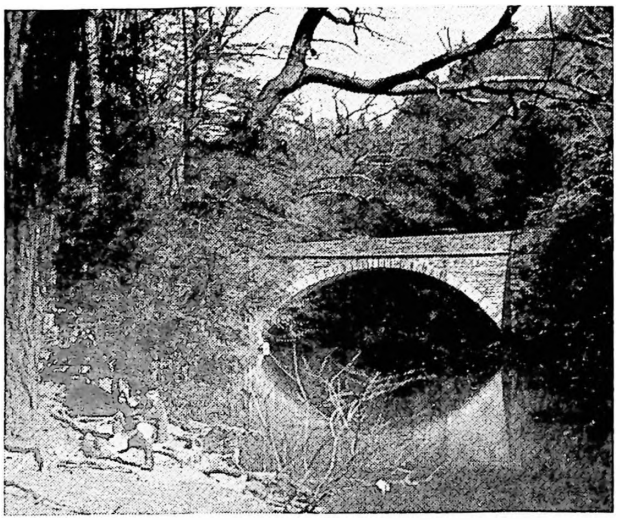
Laurel Hill was bought by Philip Syng Physic in 1828 who left it to the Randolphs. The city obtained it in 1869.

Part of WOODFORD was built in 1734 but so much had to be replaced, in the eyes of historians, it stands today as a 1756 dwelling. The ground on which the house is standing was deeded to Mary Rotchford by William Penn in 1693 who in turn deeded it to Thomas Shute. It was bought at sheriff's sale by R. Coleman. Later it was occupied by the Franks and Wharton families. It was restored and refurnished by Naomi Wood within the last few decades.

STRAWBERRY MANSION was first called Somerton. The exact date of the original house was unknown. It was burned by the British in 1777 and rebuilt by



Valley Green



Judge William Lewis in 1798. Joseph Hemphill bought it in 1820 and built the wings in 1825. His wife, the former Margaret Coleman, was one of the most charming hostesses of the day. Their famous dinners with the celebrated strawberries, grown in their garden and served on these occasions, eventually gave the place its present name. After Hemphill's death in 1842 it was sold and acquired by the city in 1865. Eli Kirk Price saved it from being demolished in 1870.

Laurel Hill cemetery was founded at a meeting called by John Jay Smith in 1835, inspired by Mount Auburn outside of Boston and Pere La Chaise outside of Paris. The estate of Joseph Sims called THE LAURELS was purchased in February 1836 and in October 1836 the first interment was made. It was probably the first cemetery to make provision for perpetual care of lots. John Notham, architect, designed the entrance and laid out the grounds. Mr. Smith became the superintendent. With him was associated Nathan Dunn, Benjamin Richards and Frederick Brown. The statue group called Old Mortality by James Thom, a native of Ayrshire, Scotland, with the figure of Walter Scott in modern costume attracted visitors from near and far.

The city bought the estates not only to provide a fine park for the people but to insure them a pure supply of water. The owners did not mind leaving the river because they had been suffering with malaria and they welcomed the cemetery and said, "if live men could not live there dead men could."

Going to the west side of the river we find "SOLITUDE" built by John Penn, the grandson of William Penn, in 1785. It was to be the last property owned by the Penns in Pennsylvania. It is now in the Zoological Gardens.

BELMONT MANSION is said to be the oldest building in the park, part of the edifice dating from 1743. It was built by William Peters and descended to Judge Richard Peters of the United States District Court. The Peters occupied the house until 1786. George Washington visited Judge Peters while he was living at Belmont.

The site of the original LANSDOWNE MANSION is now occupied by Horticultural Hall.

SWEET BRIAR on the Lansdowne Drive was built in 1797 by Samuel Brock, a wealthy merchant, and occupied by him until 1838. He had recollections of the battle of Bunker Hill and Fort Sumter.

Standing on a high hill above the west river drive is a house long known as CHAMONIX; it was built by George Plumstead, a well known merchant, in 1802. Later it was bought by Benjamin and Topliff Johnson, ancestors of the husband of our former board member and historian, Mrs. Topliff Johnson. It was they who named it Chamonix because it reminded them of a place where they used to live in Europe.

Down on the west drive nearer the city is the cottage of the poet Tom Moore.

PHILADELPHIA'S FIRST BUS

In 1812 James Boxall, who kept an inn at Upper Ferry Bridge, Fairmount, bought and drove the first bus in Philadelphia. He advertised in the daily newspapers that his bus would run every hour from The Merchants Coffee House on Second Street, to Schuylkill Seventh (16th Street) and Chestnut Street.

The fare was ten cents, or twelve tickets for one dollar. He stated that he had been asked by several gentlemen to run an hourly stage for the accommodation of the inhabitants of Chestnut Street from the lower part of the city, and wished to let the citizens know that he provided a superior new coach, harness and good horses for the purpose.

Also he added, comfort and warmth and neatness had been in every respect carefully studied.

The bus had four to six seats running from side to side and well set up on its wheels showing a broad back. It was called Boxall Accommodation and bore on the back in gilt letters Fairmount Observatory in preparation for an astronomical observatory which was never built at Fairmount. The warmth was provided for the riders by means of straw on the floor reaching to the knees.

From, *Encyclopedia of Philadelphia* by Joseph Jackson.



Loudoun

THE BILLMEYER HOUSE

(*Continued from page 17*)

headquarters. Watson, in his "Annals," says that during Howe's occupancy, Prince William, afterwards William IV, of England, and then one of Howe's staff, was an occupant with him. During the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 it was occupied by President Washington. It was afterwards sold to Samuel P. Morris, and is now known as the "Morris House."

Anthony Deshler, the husband as above mentioned, of Elizabeth Bensell, lived on Market Street, near Third Street. The date of his death is uncertain, but it was some years prior to the Revolution. After his death his widow purchased a house on Second Street, near Arch Street, and until the time of her death, in 1788, she alternated in her residence between this Second Street house and her Germantown house, raising a family of one son and three daughters, living a quiet, peaceful life until the storms of the Revolutionary War broke out and around her. When the war broke out, her son, Charles Deshler, then a young man 23 years of age, at first entered the privateer service and after a few cruises left that service and entered the army. One of Mrs. Deshler's daughters—Mary by name—in the midst of the war, married William Haverstick (the great-grandfather of the writer of this sketch), who was a son of Col. Michael Haverstick, of Lancaster. When the war broke out, William, a youth of but 19, enlisted in Capt. Richard Peters' company of Militia, one of the first companies raised in Philadelphia, and was commissioned a sergeant in that company. He was afterwards commissioned an ensign and subsequently a lieutenant in the Second Battalion of Philadelphia troop of cavalry, and in this troop he saw field service, among others, the Trenton-Princeton campaign. Of him, it is said, that his father wanted him to become a member of one of the three learned professions. William said he was not "good enough" to become a clergyman, the law was distasteful to him, and so he was sent to Philadelphia to study medicine. Bleeding was a great part of the practice of those days, and the duty of the student was to hold the basin while the patient was being bled. A very short experience of this was enough for the young William, and after leaving the army he entered commercial life.

On that fateful October morning when the storm of battle raged in Germantown, and the Chew House became the centre of conflict, and the fatal mistake was made of trying to dislodge Col. Musgrave from that house, it was from the Bensell-Deshler house that the attack was made, and there were at that time no intervening houses between the two, only the gardens and fields attached to them. In directing the attack, Washington stood on a block beneath an old tree that stood alongside of the house, remaining there a short time and then proceeded to another part of the field. In the conflict this house was struck a number of times, and the marks of the bullets are still to be seen.

During the British occupancy of Philadelphia and vicinity, this house was taken possession of by them, and some of their soldiers were quartered there. While thus in possession of it, they damaged it very much: all or nearly all of the woodwork of the interior was used for fire wood, they probably thinking it less labor to chop up a balustrade, or a door, than to cut up a tree. When on the evacuation of Philadelphia they abandoned the house, they wantonly, and out of malice, defiled and destroyed all the movables, dining room and kitchen ware, etc., that were left. After the evacuation upon the assessment made by the State authorities of the damage done to property owners by the British, Mrs. Deshler's damage was assessed at £556. Whether solely for the damage to the Germantown house, or for both that and her Second Street house also, I cannot say, but as there was comparatively little damage done by the British to property in the city, the probability is that most of the amount, if not all of it, was for the damage to the Germantown property alone.

Mrs. Deshler died in 1788 and according to the will of her father, the property became vested in her four children. For the purpose of dividing it among themselves, or rather dividing the proceeds of a sale of it on January 3, 1789, by Deed of that date, they conveyed it to Jacob Schreiner, a conveyancer of Germantown, with directions that he should sell within two years. This he did very quickly, and by Deed dated February 7, 1789, sold and conveyed it to Michael Billmeyer. Both of these Deeds are recorded in Deed Book D, No. 22, pages 325 and 323, respectively. The price at which it was sold was £750 Pennsylvania currency, or about $2000; a sum which seems to indicate that the heirs were anxious to get their money and sacrificed the property in order to make a quick sale, because in 1780 it was assessed for taxation at £1800, or more than double what it was sold for.

The old house has thus stood for 175 years, and to all appearance is capable of standing that much longer, and while much changed, the changes, exteriorly at least, have not been such as to destroy its probable original appearance. But Germantown itself and to use the quaint language of the old Deed of Bensell, "the adjacent sideland of Germantown," has also changed, they have lost their rural or semi-rural character, and are also rapidly losing many of those peculiarities which made them unique among our towns and of such interest to an antiquarian. But it is to be hoped that the memories of those early days and of the places "which have been dignified by wisdom, bravery or virtue," will always remain fresh and green in the hearts and minds of the inhabitants of Germantown, and that they will be a stimulus to encourage them to follow in the footsteps of their forefathers.

John Fanning Watson

June 13, 1779—December 23, 1860

Perhaps no one has rendered a better service to his community than John Fanning Watson.

Born in Batsto, Burlington Co., N. J., during the darkest days of the American revolution he early acquired an interest in the history of his country. This seems to have been in his mind when he entered the publishing business in Phila. in 1809. He was still publishing books in the eventful year of 1812 when he married Phoebe Barron Crowell of Elizabethtown, New Jersey.

Whether it was the business depression due to the war that caused him to change his work we do not know, but two years later he accepted the position of cashier for the newly organized "Bank of Germantown" to which he had been elected by the board. It paid a salary of $1,000.00 a year, sufficient for a growing family.

With some time to spare he began to think about the past. In 1820, by means of questionnaires, letters, and considerable travel, mostly by foot, he started to set down, methodically, the recollections of the "oldest inhabitants." The result of these recollections was the appearance in 1830 of a fat volume of 800 pages printed by Michael Billmeyer of Germantown. The title of this book was "Annals of Philadelphia," in the back of which were "Olden Time Researches and Reminiscences of New York City." Its success was instantaneous. Other editions of "Watson's Annals," those volumes so dear to our hearts, appeared in rapid succession. They have been an unfailing source of information to historians ever since.

John Fanning Watson was not only an able historian but a man of importance in the community, either making a protest against a Germantown toll gate, or speaking in the Market Square church before the "Temperence Society" in favor of beer, or acting as secretary for "citizens" of "Germantown Township" to consider the formation of a new county, or presiding at a meeting for "borough government."

When Lafayette visited Germantown in 1825 he was presented with a box given by John Fanning Watson and made from sections of wood, each piece identified with a different historic site.

In this same year, 1825, when the Bank of Germantown moved to 5275–77 Germantown Avenue, Watson and his family came to live in part of the building. This dwelling was already of note, having been occupied by Thomas Jefferson and Edmund Randolph during the yellow fever epidemic which made Germantown, for a brief season, the capitol of the nation.

It was from this house that Watson's small daughter walked to the school taught by Bronson Alcott at Pine Place, now 5425 Germantown Avenue. Perhaps she caught a glimpse of the new baby, Louisa May, destined to attain renown.

No doubt it was this same daughter of Watson's who later christened the sloop of war "Germantown," launched during the Mexican war, breaking a bottle over its prow containing wine from the stock of Commodore Bainbridge mixed with water from a Germantown spring.

A stone marks his resting place in St. Luke's church yard; the yard where he was wont to walk, a member of the congregation.



Germantown Historical Society Museum was occupied by David Hayfield Conyngham at the time of the Revolution. It marks the lower end of the British Army encampment at Germantown

Excerpts from Joshua Evans' Journal

from Friends, Miscellany, Fourth Month, 1837, Vol. X

"It seems with me to leave a brief account of some further exercises which attended me about the year 1774. On hearing some people complain of a scarcity of bread, I considered that our crops in many places had not so much failed, as to give cause for complaint. But the circumstance of sending out so much of our best flour, &c. to the West Indies, and in return, importing from thence great quantities of rum—brought my mind under weighty consideration on the traffic by which so much of that and other strong distilled spirits have been introduced into our land; and I was led to doubt whether it could be safely called a righteous traffic.

"As we had been, for many years much in the practice of using rum plentifully in time of harvest—I was induced to consider whether that be a justifiable practice or not? At length, as my mind was quietly turned inward to my guide, waiting to be instructed what was best for me to do, considering also that I had a crop of grain and grass to cut and gather,—I received a plain, gentle intimation, as a silent language inwardly spoken on this wise: 'Use no more rum; it is a great evil in the country: and thou shall have peace in declining it'.

"It was generally believed to be of great service to drink rum, as thereby men were supposed to be supported under fatigue of hard labour in the time of hay-making, harvest, &c. I had been of the same opinion myself, and had heretofore used it pretty liberally; for some entertain a notion that men's health was in danger without use of it; and I had heard of some who were said to have died instantly when they had drunk cold water, for want of rum in it.

"A considerable struggle attended my mind on this occasion, and my exercise appeared three-fold. First, to testify against my own conduct, in using rum as I had done. Secondly, to withstand custom, and thus endanger the labourer's health. Thirdly, to stand alone in the refusal of rum—supposing I must sacrifice my harvest; for I was afraid none would reap for me if I denied them liquor.

"When harvest time came I was free to offer additional wages to those who laboured for me, in lieu of strong liquor: and I informed them they must drink water, or a little milk in it, and they need not expect rum from me. Although some were reluctant, others on hearing the solid reasons I gave them for my not using or giving out strong drink, and mentioning the bad consequences which often follow a practice of that kind,—were satisfied, and I obtained assistance sufficient to answer my purpose."

On the Custom of Shaving

"Some years afterward another exceedingly close trial of my faith and love towards Him who had been so merciful came upon me; and nothing short of a full belief that it was my divine Master's requiring could have induced me to yield to it, so as to decline a generally prevailing custom in relation to shaving my beard.

"It seemed to me probable, if not most likely, that our blessed Savior and His immediate followers did wear their beards; and if so I concluded their example might be followed by Christians; and that without giving just occasion to be treated as offenders by their brethren.

"Great offence was taken by a number of my fellow-members. But there was a remnant who sympathized with me in my trials, which was some encouragement to me. These were not offended at the symplicity of my beard; although they did not see their way to forego custom, by refraining to shave their own."

Fine Riding Wagon and Horses

"Being at a friend's house, there was sent a fine riding wagon, with nice horses, for the friend's wife and me to ride in to visit her mother and some others.

"I told her I had no objection to going, but was not free to ride in that carriage, nor with such horses; and that I could go on foot, but she might ride in it if she chose; a late rain having caused the roads to be wet; and unpleasant walking."

"This was a trial to us both, as she appeared to be a good-spirited woman; but I believed it best to maintain my testimony of simplicity and lowly-mindedness."

The Narrow Path

"I think I have seen with clearness, that the Lord had a service for me in pointing out so narrow a path for me to walk in, particularly in that of wearing my beard.

"I have now travelled extensively over this continent of North America, and from the largeness of the meetings in general where I have been, I suppose I have seen thousands of people whom I should not have seen but on account of my different appearance from most men.* This has been a comfort to me, because I wanted to see the people for their good."

"Ninth month, 27th. (1795); I am this day sixty four years old; and am at times deeply humbled in beholding how my way has been opened; and every kindness necessary have I witnessed from all sorts of people. I have also ability to undergo hard travelling through scenes and places where, to human view, it seemed impossible."

"On the 1st. of the 12th month, 1797, I returned to my own home; having been absent nearly fourteen months, and travelled upwards of five thousand

*He refused to wear anything that was dyed.

miles. Next day, I met with a number of my dear friends at our select meeting held at Haddonfield."

Concord Road
Sudbury, Mass.

"After having about twenty meetings in these parts, I came to Frankford, where I was under exercise on account of the people's being so much engaged in the traffic of this world. I am apprehensive that too many of the elderly rank among the people too much attached to earth and earthly things, while the young are delighting in airy pastimes."

"Sixth month 22nd. I was at a small meeting at Germantown. When people are too much taken up with caring for the things of this life, they seem to have little time to provide for the next."

"twenty-fourth, Being first-day, I was at Plymouth meeting, which was a very large and a favored season. Here I thought the young people seemed to be the most lively in spirit, which was comfortable; tho' riches I believe have been hurtful to some of them."

"Next day I attended Abington monthly meeting, where at first it seemed as though Friends were likely to do business pretty well; but some long speeches and flowery expressions tended to flatten the life."

"The 26th. I was at Gwynedd monthly meeting, where I had some close labour, and one Friend could hardly bear the remarks that appeared to touch his case."

"I also attended Horsham monthly meeting next day, which ended well, being a favored season. Then had a meeting at Byberry, where my gracious Master gave me ability to labour fervently in his cause."

—

Joshua Evans was born in West Jersey in the year 1731. He died 7th. month 7th. 1798 having risen before sunrise to hoe sweet potatoes.

—

George Churchman, a friend and contemporary writes;—

"He exhibited a commendable and very uncommon degree of mortification, patience and self-denial; which were manifest to all, not only in the remarkable simplicity of his dress and demeanor, but in the sparing and simple diet he partook of to sustain nature.

"He was much respected, and generally well received by people of all ranks, being mostly treated with remarkable tenderness. People in all places where he travelled, seemed willing to hear the council he had to impart, though it was often attended with plain dealing."

"He appears to have been persuaded in his own mind that it was right for him to walk in the narrow path of self-denial which led him into divers singularities, different from his brethren—. He was aware that of others might not be required the same abstemiousness in living, nor the singular appearance in apparell and in the wearing of a beard."

HISTORIC NOTE ON CHRESHEIM VALLEY

By One of Our Members

ONE of the most picturesque of our smaller parks is along the Chresheim Valley. Originally Chresheim included 855 acres in that part of Germantown now known as Mt. Airy. It was given the name of "Chresheim" about two and a half centuries ago by the followers of Francis Daniel Pastorius in honor of the town in Germany from which they came. While later this section became known as Mt. Airy, the older name of Chresheim still clings to this part of Germantown.

Foremost among the colonial residents of "Chresheim" was Chief Justice William Allen, a member of the family for whom Allentown, Pa. was named; and also from whom Allen's Lane derived its name. The Allen property, now the Lutheran Theological Seminary, was occupied more than a century ago by Benjamin C. Constant, for his military school, in the direction of which he was associated with Col. Augustus L. Roumfort. This school was famous in its day as "The American Classical and Military Institute" and was visited by General Lafayette in 1825. Admiral Dupont and Henry Dupont were among the students. General Quitman, of Mississippi, was a teacher there, and among the most distinguished alumni were General Beauregard and General Meade. Later the property became part of the Gowen Estate.

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Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike

List of laws enacted by the State Legislature, December 5, 1797, to April 5, 1798.

"An act to enable the Governor of this commonwealth to incorporate a company for making an artificial road from the city of Philadelphia, through Germantown, by the route of Chestnut-hill, to the twelve mile stone on Reading road, and thence to Reading, in the county of Berks."

—*United States Gazette, April 6, 1798*

"Laws of Pennsylvania passed at the late session. * * An Act to enable the Governor of the Commonwealth to incorporate a Company for making an artificial road from the City of Philadelphia through Germantown, to the ten mile stone on Chestnut-Hill, and from thence to the new stone Bridge over Perkiomen Creek in the County of Montgomery."

—*Poulson's Advertiser, March 10, 1801*

The incorporation of a company to build a turnpike through Germantown to Reading, as authorized by an act of 1798, did not become effective, evidently because, as predicted, sufficient stock could not be sold. The law of 1801 resulted in the construction of Germantown pike as far as Perkiomen Bridge, now Collegeville.

"At an election of the Stockholders of the Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Company, held at the Union School House, in Germantown, on the 1st inst. the following gentlemen were duly elected officers to conduct the affairs of the company, until the first of November next. President, Benjamin Chew, jun. Managers, Joseph P. Norris, Henry Fraley, Matthew Huston, Daniel Thomas, John Fromberger, George Cress, James Barclay, James Hart, James Stokes, Andrew Heath, George Logan, John Smith. Treasurer, John Johnson, junr."

—*Poulson's Advertiser, June 8, 1801*

"Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Road Company. The President and Managers have the pleasure to announce to the public, the completion of the first Five Miles of said Road, and that tolls thereon are now received, which afford a prospect of yielding the compensation to the subscribers that the law allows. They are therefore encouraged to proceed to the execution of a second section of five miles of this artificial road, with the utmost expedition, and to offer to the public an opportunity of making further subscriptions in addition to the ballance now in the hands of the Treasurer. The said President and Managers therefore give notice, that on Monday the 22nd day of this instant (February) Messers Davy, Norris and James Stokes, will attend at the City Hall, in Philadelphia; Messers John Johnson, Fromberger and Heath, at Charles Macknit's Tavern in Germantown, to receive subscriptions, on which an advance of 15 per cent will be required.

"N.B. Stage-keepers and persons living near the road, and wishing to commute for the tolls by the year, will leave written proposals with the Secretary at Germantown."

"Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Road Company. Proposals in writing, for contracts to make a second section of five miles of the Artificial Road to Chestnut-Hill, with stone or stone-gravel, will be received at the Secretary's Office, at Germantown, until the 20th of March next, each contract to be for half a mile. Ample securities will be required for the completion of the contract. Proposals will also be received from persons disposed to superintend the execution of the Contracts, whose duty it will be to attend constantly on the road, and report regularly to the Board the proceedings thereon."

—*Poulson's Advertiser, Feb. 15, 1802*

"Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Road Company. The President and Managers of the Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Road Company have declared a dividend of two dollars and twenty-five cents on each share of stock of the first section of five miles, for the period since they began to receive toll, commencing the 9th day of February last, which will be paid to the stockholders, or their legal representatives, at any time after the 13th instant, on application at the Company's office in Germantown. By order of the Board. John Johnson, junr., Treasurer."

—*Poulson's Advertiser, May 3, 180*

"1805. Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Road Company. Notice is hereby given that an exemption from toll will be granted for two years on the first ten wagons using the road, with wheels not less in breadth than six, and rolling ten inches, from the time the said wagons shall be respectively registered in the Company's Office. By order of the Board. Joseph Bullock, Sec'ry."

—*United States Gazette, January 3, 180*

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THE CONESTOGA WAGON

(Continued from page 6)

wagons rumbled over all the main roads of the country. The driver of the Conestoga rode on a wheel horse, and he and those with him carried their own bedding, which they spread out on the floor of the public room in the tavern where they halted for the night.

Previous to 1812, great numbers of Conestoga wagons, drawn by from four, six to eight horses, passed through Germantown on their way to the City. The roads were bad, the Germantown Road in particular got the reputation of being the "worst road in the U. S.", having at all times frequent "holes filled only with mud and the curses of the teamsters." These were the days of large general stores—"great stores," —for the teams would rather sell their loads in Germantown than attempt to reach the City in bad weather.

The badness of the great roads leading into the City caused these "great country stores" to develop and prosper. Farmers sought a market for their surplus produce and would naturally have taken it to Philadelphia, but the roads were at times almost impassable. "To avoid such," Watson says, "farmers bringing produce could sell out their whole loads to Rex, and others, on Chestnut Hill, or at Stoneburners, Frys and Millers, in Germantown. In return they could get salt, fish, all kinds of groceries and dry goods. You might see a dozen Conestoga Wagons at a time about their premises. All this continued until turnpikes insured safe passages."

The condition of the road connecting Germantown with Philadelphia interfered seriously for many years with ready communication of any kind between the two places.

The building of turnpikes proved a great boon to Germantown. The first of these to be incorporated was—"The Germantown and Reading Turnpike Road," the act of incorporation being signed in March, 1799. It was to begin at the intersection of Front St. and Germantown Road, and to pass through Germantown to the top of Chestnut Hill, and thence through Hickorytown, the Trappe and Pottstown to Reading. On February 12, 1801, "The Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Company" was incorporated. This road began at Third and Vine Streets. Benjamin Chew was chosen as its president and John Johnson as its treasurer. A third turnpike company was incorporated in 1804, to be built "from Chestnut Hill through Flourtown to the Spring-House Tavern in Montgomery County." The first of these to be completed was the Germantown and Perkiomen road. Watson gives Casper Haines great credit for bringing it to successful issue.

—

Re: History of Travel in America—S. Dunbar.
History of Old Germantown—Dr. N. H. Keyser.
History of Philadelphia—Sharf & Westcott.
Watson's Annals of Philadelphia.

The Conestoga Wagon was presented to the Germantown Historical Society by the FOOD FAIR STORES, through Mr. Robert West, manager of the Germantown Avenue and Haines Street Store.

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