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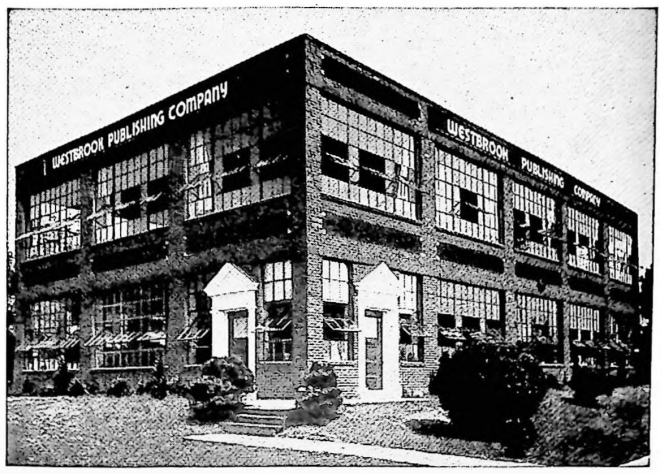
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Museum Happenings

The Museum's winter has been pleasant and uneventful—some interesting vititors, some interesting acquisitions. As the spring advances the pace accelerates when tourists from far and near seek the historic corners of our historic city.

June will as usual, bring the Garden Party, always a pleasant chance of meeting friends before the summer partings so save Thursday June, 25th, 7:30 p.m.

Mrs. Gruber has welcomed a quite surprising number of school classes, not only from Germantown but from schools as far away as Frankford and Overbrook and grades from primary to Junior High.

As a rule they are interested and intelligent audiences—receptive and cooperative and quite often send charming letters of appreciation. The fire engine is always a center of interest in which fire arms and costumes share. One small girl wrote, "I never saw a churn in all my life before."

An instance of how really far-reaching our helpfulness may be is shown in a letter received the other day, which we quote in part—

"Dear sirs:

For two years I lived in Germantown attending Roosevelt Jr. High and the High School.

Recently I moved to Casablanca, French Morocco with my father who is connected with the Armed Forces here. Thus I had to leave Germantown with many regrets.

I am now in my junior year at the U.S.A.F.E. high school at the air base. One of my assignments in history is to write a 1000 word semester theme, and I would like to write on *Historic Germantown*, for I feel a Germantowner's pride in its history. Therefore I would appreciate it very much if you could send me some pamphlets on the sights of interest, the battle during the Revolution, and other matters of interest.

I am enclosing air mail stamps for your use in sending them to me.

Thank you very much for your help—

Sincerely—"

A fat little bundle is on the way!

Mr. Hocker gives the following—

The most notable collection of parchment deeds of the eighteenth century pertaining to Germantown that the library of the society has received in many years has come from Clarence Wilson Brazer, of Flushing, N. Y. It comprises seventeen deeds, from 1688 to 1774. One deed of 1716 was written by Francis Daniel Pastorius and he and his son Henry signed it as witnesses. From Mr. Brazer, twenty years ago, the library received a collection of deeds some of which had been recorded in Germantown's original independent government and bore the seal of that government. For the first time this made possible a historical study of the seal of Germantown and it was thus proved that previous attempts to depict the seal based on descriptions were erroneous. At that time the society made Mr. Brazer an honorary member. He then lived in Chester and was president of the Delaware County Historical Society.

With the deeds Mr. Brazer has also presented a receipt of Hugh Roberts, treasurer of the Pennsylvania Hospital, May 10, 1765, acknowledging receipt of a legacy of £60 bequeathed by the will of Dr. Christopher Witt, of Germantown.

On April 28th The Daughters of the Cincinnati visited the Morris House. We were happy in Germantown to welcome this interesting group.

The Morris House is again to have important visitors when The Pennsylvania House and Garden Tour sponsored by the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania will, during its carefully planned week, visit Germantown and Chestnut Hill on May 10 and plan to stop at the Morris House. The headquarters of the Tour is at the Penn Sheraton Hotel where information and a most interesting and inclusive booklet may be obtained.

On May 16th Fair Hill's 250th Anniversary is to be celebrated by the Friends Historical Society. Visitors are welcomed. All guests are invited to bring supper. At 3 P.M. Walter Brenner will deliver a talk on the "History of Fair Hill and its Vicinity."

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GERMANTOWNE CRIER

Volume 5 MAY, 1953 Number 2

JOSEPH WHARTON

Discoverer of Malleable Nickel in the United States

By Anna Wharton Morris

WE ARE told that a man builds his own character. Well, yes. But he must built it from the materials which are given him.

Therefore it is important to state that the parents of Joseph Wharton were both Philadelphia Quakers. His father descended from Thomas Wharton of Westmoreland County, England, and his mother from John Fisher who came over with Wm. Penn on the ship "Welcome." Also important is the fact that he was one of ten children, which is quite an education in itself.

And speaking of education, it may be mentioned that, after attending three Quaker schools and one Unitarian school in Philadelphia, his formal education ended; though he was educating himself as long as he lived.

From the age of sixteen to nineteen he worked all summer as a farm hand, thus gaining precious knowledge of crops, beasts, and the value of hard manual labor. In winter he returned to his parents' home at 336 Spruce Street, and began studying chemistry, which later became of great service to him, as did his self-taught mastery of the French and German languages.

At nineteen, he entered the mercantile house of Waln & Leaming, to perform whatever work was given him for 2 years. He began by sweeping the floor and ended by keeping eight hundred ledger accounts, *without pay.*

At twenty-one he made some attempts to go into business for himself, thus gaining more in experience than in cash.

What he especially enjoyed was horseback riding. He used to say "There is something about the outside of a horse which is good for the inside of a man." So his travelling was done on horseback, which enabled him to see something of the country and to judge of its possibilities. In this way, he did in fact make two of the biggest discoveries of his business life; one was the Lehigh Zinc Works at Freedensville near Bethlehem, Pa., where he rode in to ask if they needed a man, was engaged, and later became their manager. This provided opportunity for his manufacture of metallic zinc or spelter, the first ever made in the United States. It also made possible his marriage to Anna Corbit Lovering in 1854, who was, like himself, a follower of the Quaker leader, Elias Hicks.

The young couple spent three happy years in a room at Bethlehem, where Joseph was within reach of the Zinc Works, and where his intimacy with the Bethlehem Iron Company and with Lehigh University began, and where he and his wife could exercise their knowledge of German with the Moravian citizens.

Though Joseph Wharton had never attended any college, it is interesting to note that after earning a fortune he spent much of it to benefit two colleges. One was the Quaker college at Swarthmore, of which his mother, Deborah Fisher Wharton, had been a Founder. He served as President of its Board of Managers for nearly thirty years, each year making the graduation address himself. He was the donor of its Men's Dormitory, of its Meeting House, of its Chair of Economics and Politics; and half of its Scientific Building,—and he also enlarged its astronomical equipment by the gift of a seismograph which recorded earthquakes all over the world.

As for his second big discovery during a horseback trip, it occurred at Gap, Lancaster County. Noticing that the soil indicated metal, perhaps copper, he rode into a farm to explore and ended by buying the place. And the metal proved to be *nickel*, the first

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to be found in the United States. This discovery appears to have been the source of his personal fortune,—as it was the source of his world-wide fame.

He mined his nickel in Lancaster County, and built his nickel-works at Camden, N. J., where visitors might see some of the interesting associates of nickel, such as pure silver and great vats of glorious cobalt.

Wharton provided the U. S. Mint with all the nickel for its five-cent coins. He also sold it to foreign countries, as nickel was scarce and malleable nickel had not previously been known.

Wharton also became the owner of gold, silver, copper, coal and iron mines.

Except for a few winter months in the city, he lived on the Old York Road at Branchtown, near Germantown. First, he owned a comfortable place, where he and his wife could see their three children grow up in a happy atmosphere of swing, big seesaw, creek, friendly animals, and *plenty* of fruits, with young cousins to eat them. Later, he built a larger house on the hill behind the first one, and it was in this mansion that he died, before his 83rd birthday.

He built another large house for summer use, on the rocky ocean-front of Jamestown, R. I.

All his life, he was a home-loving soul, and one in whom children rejoiced, for the games and jokes he shared with them.

In addition to his heavy business-life, he lectured, preached, wrote, and drew extremely good portrait-sketches of friends or relatives on pieces of old envelcpes or wrapping paper. His knowledge of geology and of volcanoes enabled him to make an important discovery about the eruption of Krakotoa, the sort of discovery which must have delighted his closest friend, Dr. Joseph Leidy.

He became greatly interested in the State of New Jersey. He built four iron furnaces in the Northern part, which made him the country's largest individual producer of iron; and he bought a hundred thousand acres in the Southern part, to conserve its pure water of streams and lakes, which he felt the State must sometime buy.

Seeing that our war-ships lacked protection, he went to Europe to study the making of armor plate. This resulted in his building sixteen iron furnaces in Bethlehem, at his own risk, which provided what our American vessels needed in our war with Spain.

He gradually became the largest stockholder of Bethlehem Iron Works, and finally put through the sale of these Works to Charles M. Schwab, when the name was changed to Bethlehem Steel Works.

In all his business experience, he observed that young men were largely ignorant of what they must face in the world, and that there was no source of the necessary teaching. His mind and his heart seem to have been constantly planning a way to help these fellows to prepare for a life of straight thinking and straight living.

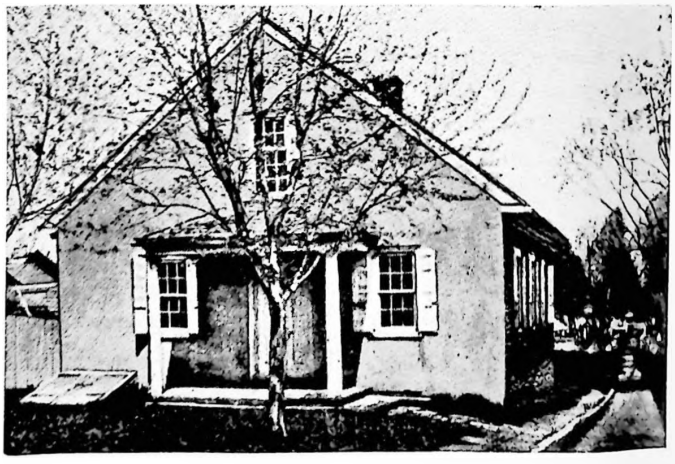
His plans grew into the practical form of a business school which should be attached to some established college. The University of Pennsylvania had already received from him the first *Reflex Zenith Tube* in America, of which there was only one other in the world, at Greenwich, England. So now his thoughts turned to his home college, and he gave to it the money and the land for the school of his dreams, naming it "The Wharton School of Finance & Commerce", in tribute to the Wharton family which had helped to build up Pennsylvania. Joseph Wharton's contribution was not so much the money as it was the *idea* of a practical business school. The idea was original with Joseph Wharton, and it took Harvard twenty years to produce the second school of business in this country.

Yet it was quite another branch of study in which Harvard recognized Wharton's value, for he was appointed to the chair of the visiting committee on chemistry to Harvard College. Much later he decided to give Harvard a Chemistry Building, but the architect's plans for this were drawn just before his death, so it came to nothing.

The Deed of Gift to the University of Pennsylvania, dated June 22, 1881, is an example of his careful use of the English language and his ability to express his meaning clearly. He says, "the School shall offer facilities for obtaining an adequate education in the principles underlying successful Civil Government," and "a training suitable for those who intend to engage in business or to undertake the management of property."

But here is perhaps the most important statement in the Deed, "*The instruction shall inculcate the immorality and practical inexpediency of seeking to acquire wealth by winning it from another rather than by earning it through some sort of service to one's fellowmen.*"

This paragraph should guide the Faculty of the Wharton School, in its handsome new building at 3620 Locust Street.



Church of the Brethren Erected in 1770

KELPIUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS

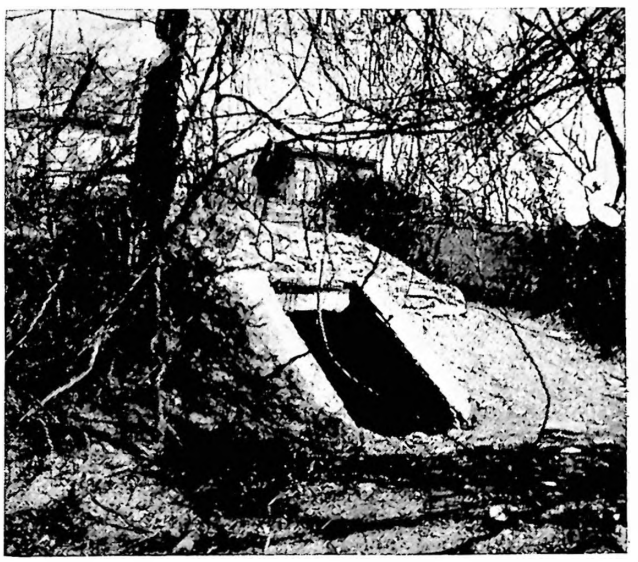
By Dr. Henry V. Gummere

Late Astronomer of Haverford College

IN THE latter half of the 17th century there was much spiritual unrest in Germany. In many places small groups of persons who were dissatisfied with the teachings or the ritual of the local church, Protestant or Catholic, associated themselves together, usually under the leadership of some learned person, for religious study and development. Most of these groups were of strongly mystical tendencies, because of the influence of the inspired writings of Jacob Boehme, the shoemaker of Silesia, Theosophist, and of the much earlier Johannes Tauler, whose followers called themselves "Friends of God," and sought by prayer and meditation, to achieve that state of ecstatic spiritual exaltation in which, they believed, that, like Enoch, they truly walked with God. Many of these 17th century groups were but local in their significance; some, however, were of such vitality that similar groups were organized in many places, under one general leadership. Of course, in every case, very soon after they were started these groups came under the ban of the church, and edicts of suppression were issued against them.

One group, of the vigorous type, was that formed by Philip Jacob Spener, of Dresden and Berlin, who "advocated a system of personal and practical piety, having for its central principle that Christianity was first of all life, and that the strongest proof of the truth of its doctrine was to be found in the religious experience of the believing." Organizations formed under his doctrines were known as Collegia Pietatis, or Schools of Piety; their members were called "Pietists," and this name came to be applied in general to many others of these revolting groups. At Erfurt, in Thuringia, a center of this Pietist movement was organized under the leadership of Rev. August Hermann Francke, assistant pastor at the Augustine Church. This was about 1690. This soon became a rallying-point for students, and Mystics from all over Germany, and very soon met with stern suppressive measures from the church. Francke himself, a very learned man, was excommunicated, ordered out of Erfurth, his books were forbidden, the meetings of his followers suppressed. What wonder that, under such persecution, their thoughts turned longingly towards the new world, and especially to Pennsylvania, where, under Penn's proclamation, they could be assured of religious freedom?

One of Francke's enthusiastic followers was John Jacob Zimmerman, pastor of the Lutheran Church in the Duchy of Wirtemburg. He w[illegible] appealing for help in getting to the new world, to Benjamin Furley, of Rotterdam, in Holland, a wealthy Quaker, who was Penn's agent in that city. Having made sure that this group was a desirable one, Furley rose nobly to the occasion; he fitted out a ship for them, paid for their passage and keep (a matter of about 130 pounds sterling), and assigned to them 2400 acres of land in Pennsylvania at an almost vanishing rental. Zimmerman himself died just on the eve of sailing; most of his party, however, including his widow and four children, sailed in the ship provided and came to Philadelphia.



Entrance to the Cave of Kelpius

A few, however, did not do this. Instead, they went to London, arriving there in August, 1693. Here they had considerable intercourse with the so-called "Philadelphists," a society formed under the leadership of Jane Leade to study and explain the writings of Jacob Boehme. This band was under the leadership of Johann Kelpius, a native of Transylvania, then but twenty years of age. It is with him and his group that we are particularly concerned. At sixteen years of age he graduated from the University of Altdorf, in Bavaria, with the title of Doctor of Philosphy and the Liberal Arts. He was always referred to, however, as Magister, or Master, Kelpius. This was because when Zimmerman organized his "School of Piety," or, as he called it, "Chapter of Perfection," with himself as Master, he named

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Kelpius as Deputy-Master, and, at Zimmerman's death, Kelpius became Master.

Zimmerman was skilled in the Mathematicks, and had predicted that the Millennium would begin in the fall of 1694. The London group was, therefore, anxious to begin their journey to America, and finally, on February 11, 1694 (O.S.), they embarked on the "Sarah Maria", at London. There are two accounts extant of this voyage; one, the diary of Kelpius himself, the other, a letter sent back to Holland shortly after their arrival, which letter was published. It was written by a member of the party, Daniel Falkner, who afterwards became the secular leader, as Kelpius was the spiritual. At the beginning they encountered a furious storm; things came to such a pass that they thought all was lost, when Kelpius, stirred by some inward prompting, went to the captain and told him that more dangers were impending but that they should arrive in safety. After a long delay at Plymouth, waiting for their convoy which never came (nearly all European nations were then at war with France), they finally left under the protection of but one ship, the "Providence." On the way they had a fierce encounter with several French war vessels, but not only escaped but even captured one of the French vessels and took it with them as a prize. On June 12th they had their first glimpse of the new world, and on June 14th entered Chesapeake Bay. Five days later they landed and immediately made their way across to Delaware Bay, where they took a sloop to Philadelphia, arriving there on June 23, 1694. There were forty of them, the number prescribed for a "Chapter of Perfection," all men. Their first act was to call upon Benjamin Fletcher, Captain-General of Pennsylvania, and his Deputy-Governor, William Markham, to take the oath of allegiance and explain their reason for coming. They then made arrangements for lodging for the night. That evening a number of them, tired as they were, participated in a curious ceremony. They betook themselves to a highland, just northwest of the city proper, known as Fairmount, and there performed the mystic rites peculiar to St. John's Eve.

The next day, Sunday, St. John's Day, before sunrise, they started to walk to Germantown. It took them four hours to make the trip. Here they found anxiously awaiting them a friend in need, one Jacob Isaac Van Bebber, who secured them shelter and sustenance and looked after their every need.

This little band of forty enthusiasts, this "Chapter of Perfection," was composed of men in many different walks of life, many of them very well grounded in the learning of the day. The nobility and gentleness of their characters soon made them welcome guests in The German Township. Mystics as they were, devoted as they were to their purpose of retiring from the world, to prepare themselves by prayer and meditation for the "Coming of the Bridegroom," which they were assured was very near. they took an active, even energetic, part in the affairs of their adopted community. To their great surprise, they found that, in all the Province of Pennsylvania, there were no specially designed places of worship except the Quaker meeting-houses, although there were representatives of many different sects, as might be expected. They found religion, even the morals, of the community at a low ebb. They undertook to correct this by holding meetings for worship at various times and places, where their eloquence and sincerity won them many converts. They undertook also instruction for the children, for which they were eminently well fitted; being also, some of them, learned in medical science, they were of great assistance in a community where there were no regular doctors. When the time came that their own tract of land, some distance out of Germantown, was surveyed and made ready for them by Thomas Holme, the official surveyor of Pennsylvania, and they made preparations to build their own home on this tract, they met with much opposition from those who said that such talents should not be wasted in the wilderness, but should always be readily available in the community. When they persisted, being steadfast in their purpose of retirement, for a short time praise was turned to blame, and many ugly stories about their incantations and sorceries were circulated. They chose a spot near this cave, and on it built, of massive logs, a Tabernacle, forty feet square, and oriented to the points of the compass. It contained a large room for their services, a school-room, and cells for the individual recluses. Surmounting the roof was an observatory, where some of the scientific members kept nightly watch with a telescope and other instruments, so that if the Bridegroom came in the middle of the night He would find them ready and waiting. On top of this was the emblem of the Rosicrucians, a cross within a circle, so placed that the first rays of the rising sun would flood it with rosy light. Kelpius himself, wishing to be able to retire altogether from all others, and having found this cave, fitted it out for his own dwelling. Here he lived for fourteen years, and this cave is all that is left of their structures. They brought over with them many ancient treatises on Rosicrucianism and Theosophy, and some of these still exist, in the archives of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and elsewhere. The nature of these books proves them to have been true Rosicrucians.

The following eulogy of Kelpius was taken from some MSS. at Ephrata:

"Kelpius, educated in one of the most distinguished Universities of Europe, and having had advantages of the best resources for the acquirement of knowledge, was calculated to edify and enlighten those who resorted to him for information. He had particularly made great progress in the study of ancient lore, and was quite proficient in theology. He was intimately acquainted with the principal works of the Rabbins,

(Continued on page 26)

"Button Hill" near Chew's Woods

By Katharine Elkinton

JUST beyond the 6th. milestone on the fringe of what was once Chew's Woods, and before the Main Street dips down through Beggars' town, the road is crossed by Upsal Street, named for the splendid old mansion, Upsala, which stands not far away now entering a second stage of its life history.

Strangely enough Upsal is not an old thorofare, although it links several old properties. Dr. William N. Johnson, who lived most of his life beside it, describes it thus: "W. Upsal from Germantown Ave. to Jefferson St. (Emlen) and about 12 feet below the present grade, was a wide country lane shut in by an almost impenetrable hedge, filled in the middle with wild rose, honey suckle, blackberries and raspberries, not to mention two or three locust trees." This lane led down hill through a wooded pasture part of which was later called "Button Hill" to a pond and stream on which the neighborhood children loved to skate.

On the East side it may have been merely a cart track meandering back through Chew's fields, or perhaps only a lane leading to the Bilmeyer barn yard, and coming to a halt by the wide swung gate. Who remembers now?

But here at this definitely rural crossing stood one hundred and fifty years ago, and still stand to-day, a little oasis of olden times, holding back the on-rush of so called progress.

On the right, as we travel north, is the Bilmeyer House, oldest of all hereabouts, and since the needless removal of the Dirk Keyser house at Tulpehocken St., almost the oldest in all Germantown, built in 1727. Two houses now, it was once one, but with two front doors, two stoops and two sets of inside stairs leading to identical rooms on the second floor. Thus Michael Bilmyer, the second printer in Germantown, provided for his son's family under the same roof. Inside by judicious tapping in a closet on the first floor, and a hallway on the second, one can discover where at an earlier date doors were cut through to make the house a unit. This home with its pent roof, so typical of the early German homes, and now only to be found in about five or six still standing on the Avenue, once had a pleasant garden to the north and east, but during the last thirty years its breathing space has been cut down to the merest strip, and its plebian neighbors crowd it rather ungraciously.

On the opposite corner, number one Upsal St. the



Garden of the Crowson House
Home of the Author

little white house snuggling behind its high hedge as if to shut out the passing years, is known as Sparrow Jack's. The front part of this house with its Dutch door and pent roof was standing at the time of the Battle of Germantown, and as it is said that Washington used the Deshler horseblock across the street as a vantage ground to direct the battle raging at 'Cliveden' just below, this little house must have been very much in the center of hostilities. Many years later its then owner John Bardsley, a painter by trade, was sent to England to bring over a lot of English sparrows to destroy the caterpillars then infesting the trees of the city. Report has it that they more than did their necessary work and stayed on to become, in turn, rather a nuisance. But those days are gone and the few jolly little rowdies that are left are now welcome visitors at winter bird feeding stations throughout Germantown. Still later Sparrow Jack's became the real estate office of John Crowson, an eccentric Englishman, who suffered from megalamania, which led him into amusing but harmless ways—but that is another story.

Next north of it at 6504 stands a beautiful example of Georgian colonial architecture built about 1800 by Michael Bilmeyer for his oldest son, who had just been married. Tragically he died before he could bring his bride to his new home, and the story goes that his ghostly footsteps are to be heard quite plainly mounting the stairs whenever a new bride comes to the house. There are several beautifully

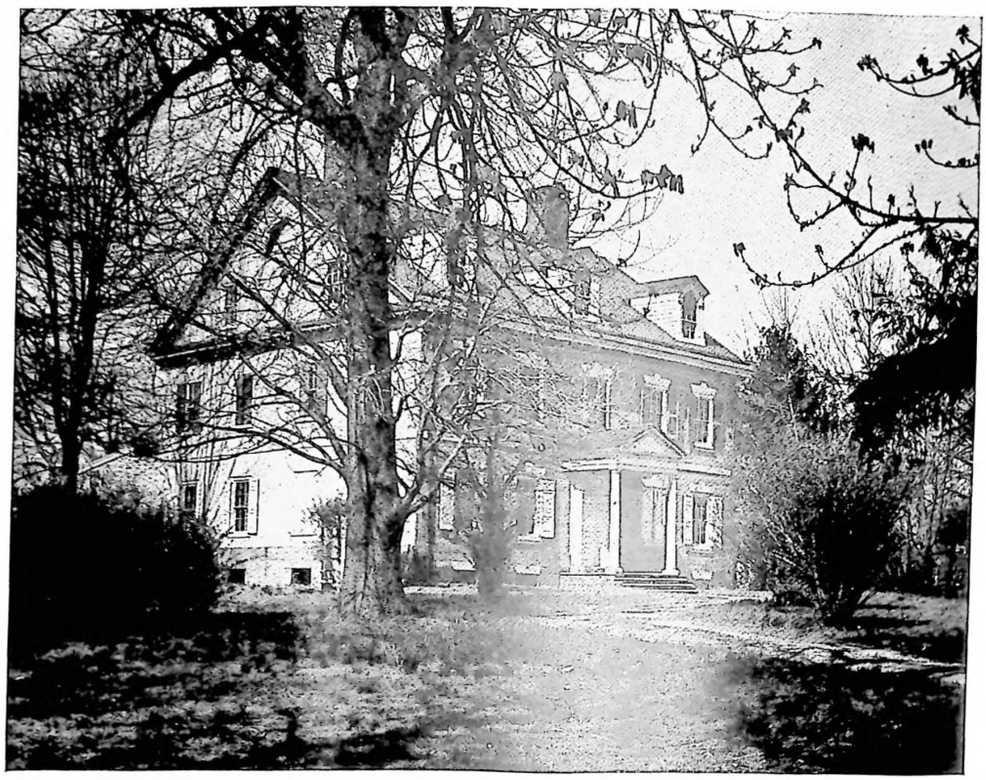
(Continued on page 21)

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UPSALA
A Germantown Heritage

By

Mrs. James Bradford Ritter



Photograph by Walter F. Pullinger

Cut Courtesy of the Troop Committee, Troops 402 and 406, Penna. School for the Deaf

BY THE late eighteenth century there were a great many houses scattered along the upper part of the "Great Road". Wyck was probably the oldest, part of it having been built in 1690 by Hans Millan whose daughter Margaret married Dirck Jansen. They lived at Wyck and it may well be that during their residence there the part of the house nearest Germantown Avenue was added. Across from Wyck in the early days lived Francis Daniel Pastorius. Some years later a few steps to the north his grandson Daniel owned and operated a tavern known as the Sadler's Arms, since called the Green Tree Inn. To the south lived Christopher Witt, physician and botanist. Going north again, at the corner of Walnut Lane still stands the Shippen-Blair house and at Tulpehocken Street was the Dirck Keyser house built in 1738, now demolished.

In 1768 John Johnson, son of Dirck Jansen of Wyck, erected for his son John Johnson, Jr., at the corner of Washington Lane, one of the largest and most substantial houses of that time. Diagonally across from it was the old Washington Tavern, a much frequented inn at this important crossroads. Still further along on the east side stood Pomona and the Rodney house. On the west side above Duval Street there still stands a house of the early days. It was built at two different times as so many Pre-revolutionary dwellings were. The back part may date back to 1710, a simple three and a half story farmhouse, two rooms to a floor. In the latter half of the eighteenth century the front part was added. It is said that soldiers, both British and American, who fell in the battle of Germantown are buried in the garden.

In 1795 John Johnson, 3rd, son of Joseph Johnson and nephew of John Johnson, Jr., began to build Upsala. It was to be a much finer house than most of these earlier ones. Built at a later date when many refinements had become possible it has the beautiful detail of expert craftsmen, each a specialist in his trade. It is no wonder it was to be three years before it was finished. The beautiful plaster cornices of hall and drawing-room were done by an Italian brought to this country to do that particular work and who probably did similar work in other houses of this period. Unfortunately his name is lost to us. The mantelpieces are outstanding examples of federal design. The front doorway, the arch in the hall, the graceful staircase, all proclaim a fine sense of proportion and skill in execution.

It was a large tract of land on which Upsala was built, extending westward to Wissahickon Avenue then the township line. Lying across the road from Cliveden, the home of the Chew family, this land was acquired by John Johnson, Sr. in 1766. There was a little farmhouse on it dating back perhaps to 1730 and in front of this little house probably were placed the cannon which shelled the Chew house where a small detachment of British soldiers were installed that historic October day in 1777.

As was frequently done in those days, the big new house was built directly in front of the small older one so that the two became one. It was many years

before it was given a name. Mrs. John Johnson, 3rd (Sarah Wheeler) was a great admirer of Frederika Bremer, the celebrated Swedish authoress, and when the latter came to this country in 1849 she visited the Johnsons. It was at this time that the name Upsala was chosen, after Uppsala in Sweden.

It was just ten years ago that Upsala was rescued from the merciless hands of house wreckers. The demolition was well underway when the late J. Mitchell Elliot happened to pass by. By quick action he was able, through the co-operation of The Pennsylvania Company for Banking and Trusts, to have the work suspended. The Upsala Foundation was formed to raise funds with Miss Frances A. Wister chairman and in due course were able to take title to the property, free of debt.

In the regular course of business the wreckers had sold the eight handsome mantelpieces. Fortunately they had not been removed and the buyer very graciously accepted the purchase price from the Foundation and allowed the mantels to remain. All the inside doors of the main house and the panelling from the second floor hall had been sold and removed; again the Foundation was fortunate enough to be able to locate nearly all of these and buy them back. Some small items of woodwork have not been recovered and will in time have to be reproduced but for the most part the interior of the house remains intact.

Much has been done to restore the house under the able direction of Mr. George Clarence Johnson, an architect who specializes in houses of this period and who is a collateral descendant of this Johnson family. In 1942, the roof was destroyed by fire and some of the supporting rafters were burned away. For almost two years the house was open to the elements before it was covered with a temporary material. In 1950, a permanent roof of Ludovici tiles was put on. It takes a second glance to realize that these tiles are not wooden shingles. Meanwhile the back part, that once was the little farmhouse was made habitable and in the summer of 1945 custodians were installed. With the house now weatherproof it was time to work on the interior.

The restoration of an old house is a delightful occupation. There is suspense, anticipation and just pure joy of achievement. The joy of course being in proportion to the funds at hand. Only one room has been finished but the most careful research was done before a brushful of paint was applied. The room, the former library, has a northeast exposure so it seems natural for the first owner to have chosen a warm color for the walls, best described as Pompeian red or as some remarked: "Just the shade of salmon brick dust." We know that this color was used in houses of this period and even earlier throughout the colonies. It can be seen in the restorations at Williamsburg as well as in New England. By removing layer after layer of paint it was discovered that the woodwork of this room had been grained to resemble a natural finished oak. "Why?" we asked ourselves. Why not just have rubbed it down with wax? The answer came when a workman removed a section of wainscoting. No less than six different kinds of local wood had been used including oak, pine, maple and walnut; so if a uniform appearance was desired the grain must be painted on. A man who does this work is more than a painter he is an artisan and today there are but few with this skill. Philadelphia is fortunate in having a man most proficient in this art and his services are much sought after both at home and far afield. It was fun to watch him at work, a long sweep here, a short curl there, all with a master's touch. The tools of his trade would be unrecognized except by the initiated so strange do they appear. A different one for each kind of stroke, a turkey feather or a sponge sometimes produces the desired effect, but many of his implements look like wooden combs of various sizes with teeth at irregular intervals. There is even a brush with bristles spaced like a comb. The graining of wood and the imitating of marble were very much used in the eighteenth century in England and to a certain extent in this country. Marbleized columns and painted graining can be seen in the House of Burgesses in Williamsburg.

There is a large and impressive book, "The Decorative Painters' and Glaziers' Guide" by Nathaniel Whittock, published in London in 1832 that describes in great detail interior decorating of that time and earlier. It gives many formulae for mixing colors and the technique for imitating the grain of various woods. Among its many colored plates is one similar to the graining we have used and one of spanish mahogany that should be used on the baseboard of this particular room. It is now painted a mahogany color but our hope is that when the room needs to be repainted this graining will be added, for it was definitely there originally. Nathaniel Whittock says one species of spanish mahogany can be produced by using as a first coat "indian red, lake and white lead. When this is dry a thin glaze of rose pink, ground in ale, is spread over the whole surface. This must be evenly laid on and while wet a thin piece of sponge dropped accidently on various parts of the work will, wherever it touches the surface, take off some of the rose pink just laid on. When this is quite dry it must be varnished, which must remain till quite hard before any colour is applied. This second ground will now present a most beautiful appearance, which will not be altered by the distemper colour about to be applied. This is Vandyke brown and lake, which is put on with short quick strokes with a small tool: upon this the sponge is dropped nearly in the same places it was on the first ground: this will produce the second light tint. The whole may be freely blended with the softener: when dry, take the flat brush with

(Continued on page 28)

Germantown Roses

By George E. Lippincott, *Consulting Rosarian of the American Rose Society*

IN A vote by the members of the Germantown Horticultural Society it was shown that more people grow Roses than any other flower, proving that the Rose is truly the Queen of the Garden. There are some 6150 named varieties of Roses including 300 species. Of this total many are not in commerce and unobtainable; 1452 Roses have been named for women as compared to 874 for men. All of these had to wait 10 years to be so honored as it takes that long from the time a Rose is hybridized before a new variety is placed on the market.

Philadelphia does not have a Municipal Rose Garden, in this, many smaller towns have the advantage such as Wilmington, Allentown and upwards of 100 towns in the United States have either city or private Rose Gardens open to the public.

The headquarters of the 13,000 members of the American Rose Society is in Harrisburg. Last year the city of Columbus, Ohio raised over $100,000 by a bond issue to bring the headquarters to that city donating a plot of over 50 acres for the purpose and the erection of a building for American Rose Society. Columbus will have the largest Rose Garden in America, larger than Hershey, Pa., in the number of Roses planted. Approximately three quarters of a million people go to Hershey every year, its Rose Garden is famous. The business interests of Columbus want three quarters of a million people to come to their city, a continual stream of people as Roses bloom from May to December. Philadelphia has spent this much to get a political convention for just one week. But can you imagine our city putting up $100,000 to bring the American Rose Society and its Rose Garden to Philadelphia? Many people just can't be convinced of the advertizing value of flowers. Look at the crowds that go to Washington every spring to see the Cherry blossoms.

But tucked back in many Germantown gardens are some beautiful Roses. Some old, some new and some in between. What do you call old? Old Roses are those of a type and class used in good gardens of the past. When did the past end? Yesterday! Today! or tomorrow? By the time the argument is ended it is already past the hour. There is in Germantown a Test garden where patented unintroduced Roses are being tried out for tomorrow; if they appear worthy they will come on the market as new Roses. One such Rose in this test will be called, Pennsylvanian and will be introduced to commerce under that name. It has the richness of color and tint you find on the skin of a sun-ripened peach.

The older folks of Germantown were raised in the time of the Hybrid Perpetual and Rambler Roses and have seen them displaced in favor to the Hybrid Teas. The Hybrid Perpetuals are the old nobility, the stately blue bloods of Rose aristocracy. The Hybrid Teas, the Show Girls, the Debutantes and glamour girls of the Rose kingdom. Each have their place in the garden.

Many of us remember the Crimson Rambler that was all the craze and took the country by storm to be shortly followed by Dorothy Perkins, the pink rambler, and Dorothy Perkins, for whom this rambler was named, is now living on School House Lane, Germantown. Her married name is Mrs. E. Burke Estabrook and she is an Honorary Vice President of the Philadelphia Rose Society.

Do you remember walking under a Rose arbor in some old garden in July? The Rose petals are slowly falling on your head as you pass by. They are God's messages to us and if we love the Rose we can understand them in the fragrance around us. It is in the old Roses that we find sentiment, there is something permanent about them and in their fragrance. We are reminded of "old forgotten things and times of



Courtesy of Conard & Pyle

Prize Rose Garden

long ago," of crinoline and lace, of powdered wigs or hoop skirts and antimacassars.

"When I see and touch some lovely thing that my grand parents owned or grew in their gardens . . . that they were fond of, took care of and lived with, then I feel as if they and we who are here now, are not separated by the accident of our different eras of existence but are near and, in a sense, contemporary in our common love of beauty and of life."

This quotation is by a Mrs. John Gibbs and is from the catalog which is really a brochure that reads like a novel, of Will Tillotson, Watsonville, California, the main source for old Roses in America. Do you love the old Hermosa, the Damask Rose that was brought to Europe by the Crusaders, the Sweetbrier and the Moss? If so obtain this brochure and you will pick it up again and again on winter nights as you sit by the fire.

The Roses of the Colonial period of Germantown were confined to the June blooming Roses except for a few Damask Roses that had some repeat bloom and the Musk Rose that came into bloom towards the fall and continued until frost. Perhaps the most prominent Rose of the time was the Centifolia, often called the Cabbage Rose which was known to have been in cultivation as early as 1596. Also the *Rosa centifolia muscosa* or Moss Rose which dates back prior to 1750; the Eglantine or Sweetbrier which Linnaeus named Rosa rubiginosa. It was the pink, generally called "red" Centifolia, or the red Gallica that was the Rose of the House of Lancaster and the White,—rosa alba,—of the House of York.

These were the Colonial Roses of the time, brought from England or France to America and later uprooted to be carried by Prairie-schooners across the plains to California. In addition they had our own native Roses as the Rosa carolina, etc. These are the Roses or at least some of them that will be donated and planted in the Morris House Grounds on Germantown Avenue.

Among more modern Roses it is interesting to note that quite a few are named for people who lived in Germantown, Chestnut Hill and Philadelphia. But today there are but three people now living in Philadelphia who were honored by having Roses named for them—"Dorothy Perkins", previously mentioned; "Sophie Thomas", now Mrs. Schuyler Volkmar of Chestnut Hill and W. Freeland Kendrick of Philadelphia. Strange to say, of the more than 6150 Roses listed as known today, there is no Rose named for our most prominent citizen, Benjamin Franklin, although there are more towns in the United States named Franklin than for any other man. Many towns would claim George Washington as a citizen as he led a restless life and slept in many places but he did live in Philadelphia and Germantown before it was incorporated in the city and when it was the Capitol. Contrary to a statement in a recent Flower Magazine there was a Rose named for him—"General Washington", introduced in 1861. Somewhere in the South there is said to be a climbing Rose named Martha Washington, but not officially identified.

Dr. Huey, a Civil War veteran, lived in West Philadelphia and is possibly the most important, not for what he produced although an accomplished Rosarian, but on account of the influence he had on Captain George C. Thomas who lived at "Bloomfield", the name of his home, in Chestnut Hill. In the line of what he accomplished George C. Thomas was the most outstanding Rosarian of Philadelphia. The following list starts with the names of the Thomas Roses and date of their introduction:—

"Captain Thomas", 1938. "Dr. Belville", 1931, a physician who lived on Greene St., Germantown. "Dr. Huey", 1914; "Ednah Thomas", 1931, his wife; "Mrs. George C. Thomas", 1925, his mother; "Sophia Thomas", 1931, his sister. W. Freeland Kendrick", 1920. "Margaret Anderson", 1931, a trained nurse who lived in the Thomas family for 25 years. Many of his Roses have the prefix "Bloomfield", such as "Bloomfield Courage", "Bloomfield Quakeress", etc.

The list of those who lived in Philadelphia honored by Rose names follows with "Mrs. E. T. Stotesbury", 1918, who lived on Tulpehocken Street before moving to Whitemarsh. This Rose was produced by Edward Towill of Roslyn, near Glenside, Pa. and received a Certificate of Merit from the Germantown Horticultural Society. Eva, no doubt, appreciated the honor. "Mrs. Prentiss Nichols", 1923, of Pelham, Germantown, who was Vice President of the Germantown Horticultural Society. The Rose was produced by R. Scott of Sharon Hill, Pa.

Other names that are familiar are:—"William F. Dreer", "J. Otto Thilow", "Ben Stad", who founded in Philadelphia the Society of Ancient Instruments and is buried at Valley Forge, "S. S. Pennock", "Robert Craig", etc.

Many Roses, especially foreign, have strange names. We all remember in our mother's or grandmother's garden, the red General Jaqueminot Rose. The General was certainly not a Philadelphian although he would have found himself at home in Brewerytown. It is said he served under Napoleon but is mostly famous for having run a brewery opposite the Hotel Terminis in Paris. One wonders why he rated having a Rose named for him, probably the quality of his beer, no doubt. The story behind the names of Roses is often very interesting but one wonders who was "Mary Mulligan", a Rose produced in France. She must have been a French lady from Cork.

So in the spirit of historical Germantown along with the restoration of Colonial houses let us revive the fragrance of the past by each one of us setting aside a part of our garden as an Old Rose bed.

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An Excerpt from
Gardens and Gardeners of Germantown

By Edwin C. Jellett

ONE of the most interesting characters connected with the gardens of Germantown, and more particularly with the grounds that are now included in "Vernon Park" was Matthias Kin, locally known as the "wild-man," because apparently he had no abiding place, for as the winds, he came and departed as he "listed." Kin was a friend of plant lovers about Philadelphia, and as such, he disposed of his plant collections to sympathetic customers, among whom were Henry Kurtz, and John Melchior Meng, whose gardens adjoined.

As indicated, Kin was a collector, and made frequent journeys into unexplored parts for seeds and rare plants. From every known scrap of information concerning him, he was a character unique. As described by a friend to Thomas Meehan, Kin "was a remarkable specimen of humanity, full 6 feet tall, broad shouldered, with enormous bones and little flesh, and as one said a 'literal' picture of death." He dressed like the Indians among whom he lived. Kin had a wide acquaintance, and it is strange that more is not known of him.

Henry Muhlenberg wrote September 13th, 1814. "Mr. Mathias Kin, one mile from the city where the Germantown Road joins, has sent me four living plants." "He is a man of great information, has an excellent herbarium to which I have added the generic names." "When you have an hour of leisure or so will you honor him by calling in." "He is an original and honest man, but suspicious with a stranger." Kin was not seen in Germantown "after the year 1816," he died in the year 1825.

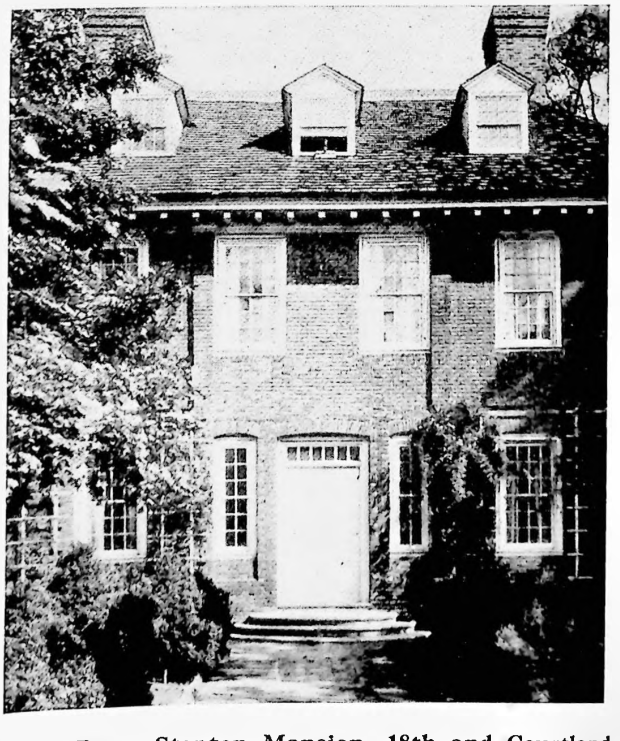
Quoting Prof. Thomas Meehan, "Melchior Meng had a fine garden and shared with Kurtz his friendship for Kin and his seeds. The immense Linden tree that stood in front of his place was certainly planted by him, as probably were many other of the large trees which stood there. That part of Meng's property lying north of his home, which was nearly the whole of it, was purchased by the late John Wister, who added to, and resided in the ample building, and who called the place 'Vernon'. This property is now in possession of the city of Philadelphia and is known as 'Vernon Park.' Thomas Meehan, the writer of the foregoing, was the leader of the movement which secured this acquisition to the citizens of Germantown; and the suggestion of "Vernon" for a park, it should be remembered, was Horace Ferdinand McCann, the owner and editor of the Germantown *Independent-Gazette*.

Col. T. Ellwood Zell, a descendant of John Melchior Meng, thus wrote of a visit to "Vernon" in 1892, "The old house built and occupied by Mr. Melchior Meng or at least a part thereof, was still standing, soon to be removed. The old spring house to which Grandmother Dorothy Ogden, nee Meng, so often attended, is still standing there in a very delightful condition. It was in this house that Dorothy Ogden lived as a girl during the battle of Germantown.

"One who walks about 'Vernon Mansion' has yet before him several of the most magnificent trees in Germantown." The row of young buttonwood trees along the front was placed there by the Germantown Horticultural Society, a society which also in part placed the pin oak trees in Market Square.

The large maple tree near the "Free Library Building" was planted in 1840 by James Gowen and Harry Bruner. Throughout the park are holly, papaw, cypress, oak and many other interesting trees, but we shall note but two, the fine yew tree which stands to the west of "Vernon" and Meng's magnolia which stands to the rear. The name is "local" for the tree is a native of the southern United States, the seed being brought to Germantown by Kin, and planted by John Melchior Meng.

—From *Gardens and Gardeners of Germantown* by Edwin C. Jellett.



Front Door, Stenton Mansion, 18th and Courtland Streets, Philadelphia

Germantown Historical Society

HISTORIC TOUR COMMITTEE
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MUSEUM
5214 Germantown Avenue
Germantown, Philadelphia 44, Pa.

To the friends of Germantown:

You are especially invited to visit the houses and gardens of Germantown and Chestnut Hill which will open their doors to you on Saturday afternoon, May 16. These beautiful examples of colonial architecture and of some of the most charming private gardens in the Germantown - Chestnut Hill area are only open to visitors all at one time on one day of the year.

The accompanying map shows you the location of each of the houses and gardens so that you may plan your itinerary in advance. Tickets at $1.50 each may be purchased at any one of the 17 houses and gardens - or mail your check to Germantown Community Council, Vernon Park, Philadelphia, 44 and tickets will be mailed promptly. Each ticket is good for twelve visits and may be used by any number of people.

Still remaining in Germantown are more splendid examples of Colonial houses in their original condition than anywhere else in America. If some of them have escaped you, here is your opportunity. The hostesses at the houses will be in Colonial costumes many of which are originals, worn by colonial hostesses when Germantown was making national history.

This tour and the receptions at the houses will climax eventful Germantown Week (May 11th to 17th). The families living in the historical houses and their volunteer hosts and hostesses have spared no effort to make you welcome. Don't miss this opportunity to spend a delightful afternoon in Colonial Germantown.

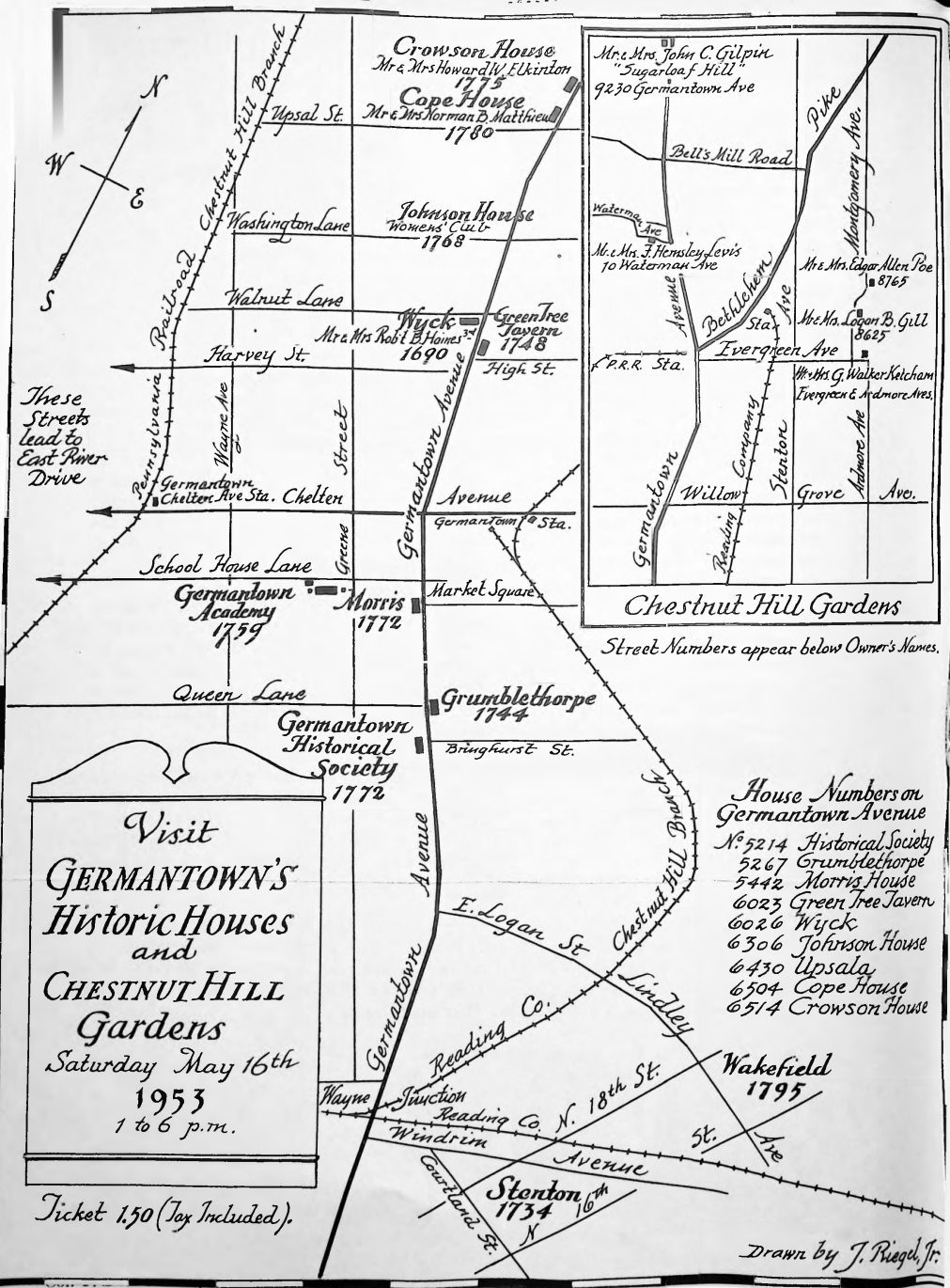
Send for your tickets now.

Sincerely,

John S. Child

John S. Child, Chairman
Historic Tour Committee

25c Per Copy


Crowson House
Mr & Mrs Howard W. Elkinton
1775
Cope House
Mr & Mrs Norman B. Matthieu
1780
Upsal St.
Washington Lane
Johnson House
Womens' Club
1768
Walnut Lane
Wyck
Mr & Mrs Robt. B. Haines 3rd
1690
Green Tree Tavern
1748
Harvey St.
High St.
Germantown Avenue
Chestnut Hill Branch
Railroad
Pennsylvania
Wayne Ave
Street
Greene
These Streets lead to East River Drive
Germantown Chelten Ave Sta. Chelten
Avenue
Germantown Ave Sta.
School House Lane
Germantown Academy
1759
Morris
1772
Market Square
Queen Lane
Grumblethorpe
1744
Germantown Historical Society
1772
Bringhurst St.
Chestnut Hill Branch
E. Logan St.
Lindley
Reading Co.
Wakefield
1795
Wayne Junction
Reading Co.
N. 18th St.
Windrim
Avenue
Courtland St.
Stenton
1734
16th St.
Ave
Mr. & Mrs. John C. Gilpin
"Sugarloaf Hill"
9230 Germantown Ave
Bell's Mill Road
Waterman Ave
Mr. & Mrs. J. Hemsley Levis
10 Waterman Ave
Pike
Montgomery Ave.
Bethlehem Pike
Stat Ave
Mr & Mrs. Edgar Allen Poe
8765
Mr & Mrs. Logan B. Gill
8625
Evergreen Ave
P.R.R. Sta.
Mr. & Mrs. G. Walker Ketcham
Evergreen & Ardmore Aves.
Ardmore Ave
Stenton
Company
Germantown
Reading
Willow
Grove
Ave.
Chestnut Hill Gardens
Street Numbers appear below Owner's Names.
House Numbers on Germantown Avenue
No. 5214 Historical Society
5267 Grumblethorpe
5442 Morris House
6023 Green Tree Tavern
6026 Wyck
6306 Johnson House
6430 Upsala
6504 Cope House
6514 Crowson House
Visit
GERMANTOWN'S
Historic Houses
and
CHESTNUT HILL
Gardens
Saturday May 16th
1953
1 to 6 p.m.
Ticket 1.50 (Tax Included).
Drawn by J. Riegel, Jr.

GERMANTOWN WEEK

Monday, May 11th
through
Sunday, May 17th,
1953

Sponsored by
GERMANTOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
PROGRAM



Vernon, drawn by John Richards about 1865, built 1803 by James Matthews. It was sold a few years later to John Wister whose family lived there until 1883

The Vernon Art Exhibit in Vernon, Vernon Park

11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.—Except Saturday and Sunday. (Opens Monday Evening, May 11th, for two weeks).

MONDAY, MAY 11th

9:30 to 11:30 A.M.—School Students' Tour of Historic Houses

12:15 P.M.—Community Luncheon of Germantown Business Men's Association, at Alden Park Dining Room. Speaker: Judge John Morgan Davis

7:30 P.M.—Opening Program of Germantown Week in Vernon Park

8:45 P.M.—Opening of Vernon Art Exhibit in Vernon

TUESDAY, MAY 12th

10:00 to 12 Noon—Gallery Talk for High School Students at Vernon Art Exhibit

12:15 P.M.—Lions Club Germantown Week Luncheon, at Alden Park Dining Room. Award of Distinguished Service Medal

8:00 P.M.—Schools' Music Festival in Germantown High School Auditorium. Eleven Schools participating

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13th

11:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.—VERNON FAIR and CLOTHESLINE ART EXHIBIT, in Vernon Park. Auto Show, Pony Rides, Concert by Police and Firemen's Band

11:30 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.—Luncheon in Vernon, 85c. Served by Church Women's Group

2:30 P.M.—Drill by Fairmount Park Mounted Guards in Vernon Park

5:00 to 6:30 P.M.—Hot Supper. Served on Fair Grounds

THURSDAY, MAY 14th

Rain Date for Fair

Sales Day in Germantown Stores

FRIDAY, MAY 15th

Sales Day in Germantown Stores

4:00 to 6:00 P.M.—Tea in Vernon to "Meet the Artists"

8:30 P.M.—Concert by Germantown Symphony Orchestra in Germantown High School Auditorium

SATURDAY, MAY 16th

Sales Day in Germantown Stores

1:00 to 6:00 P.M.—Tour of Germantown Historic Houses and Chestnut Hill Gardens. Tickets $1.50 for 12 admissions. (Usable by more than 1 person).

SUNDAY, MAY 17th

Church Day

—

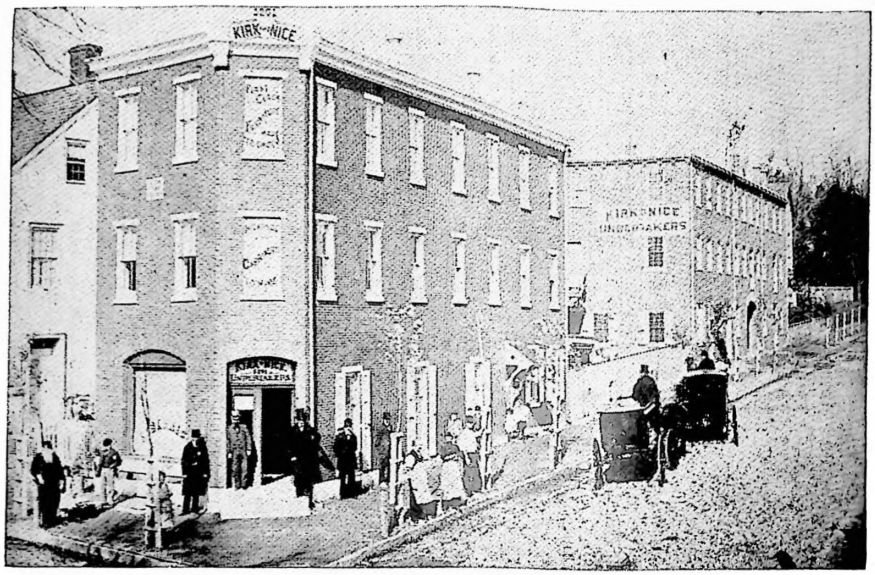
Tickets may be secured at Vernon Park—GE 8-9044

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A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP OF WHICH GERMANTOWN IS PROUD

By Frank Kirk Henderson

From the Memoirs of Frank Kirk



Kirk and Nice Corner—1875

THE northeast corner of Germantown Avenue and Washington Lane or Abington Road as it was called has long been connected with the undertaking business and is perhaps the oldest site continuously used for that purpose in the United States. Samuel Nice in 1850 gave the date of the building of the first shop as 1761, and as the Knorr family built the two adjoining houses in 1760 it is very probable that Jacob Knorr, a Friend and founder of the business, was making coffins, furniture and selling lumber shortly before or after that time.

Because of fires in the old building and general carelessness all records have been destroyed. However, bills have been found dating back to the last decade of the eighteenth century and Abram Keyser who died in the early eighteen forties at the age of 90 said the building was fairly old at the time of the Revolution and had been always used as a "joiner's shop". He also stated that after the battle of Germantown, dead soldiers were taken into the shop, put in boxes and buried in the burying ground above.

Whether all the British were buried in that manner seems improbable. Frank Kirk, while digging for the remains of a person that died before that time found not quite three feet below the surface a skeleton that was resting across the previous grave. It proved, from the examination of the belt buckle and buttons, to have been a British soldier.

Jacob Knorr became a prosperous cabinet maker and many fine pieces of furniture made by him may still be found in Germantown and the surrounding country. Frank Kirk had a corner cupboard and chest of drawers made by Knorr for his great grandfather in 1765 that had been carried to Bucks County and back to Germantown several times.

During the last decade of the eighteenth century George Knorr, the son of Jacob was in charge of the business. George had interests in Philadelphia as well as Germantown and upon the death of his father gave it over to his younger brother Jacob who purchased it in 1805. Jacob, Jr. carried on the business until his death.

In 1813 the executors of Jacob Knorr, Jr. sold the property to William Johnson with Samuel Myers, a relative of the Nice family taking over the business. Times were bad and Myers was in financial difficulties during the whole time of his occupancy with George Knorr frequently coming to his aid by selling furniture and giving Johnson the money for rent.

In 1820 John Nice, a farmer from Bristol Township, brought his twin sons John and Samuel to learn the trade and in 1828 the boys seem to have assumed some of the responsibility. Both Myers and Johnson were disgusted with the corner and the latter sold the place to John Nice, Sr. for $2200. in 1830. Nice established his sons in business. The price of the property was considered low even in those days. It consisted of a large tract of land with a seventy-five foot frontage, a nine-room stone house, a two-and-

one-half story work shop, a stone barn and a carriage shed, besides room for garden and pasture.

John, Jr. married and moved to Jenkintown where he established a business that bore the family name until lately.

Samuel Nice remained, marrying George Knorr's niece, Hannah Heller, and lived in the house next to the shop until his death. Samuel developed a very successful business making coffins, pumps, furniture and the frame part of coffee mills. These mills or grinders were perfected by John Rittenhouse, who received a gold medal from the Franklin Institute for the best coffee grinder exhibited at the Exhibition of 1844 in Philadelphia. They sold in large numbers and brought Rittenhouse considerable money.

In 1849 Charles Jones brought Frank Kirk, a Bucks County boy and former pupil of Jones, to Nice, asking that he be taught the trade. Nice accepted and Kirk remained in Germantown for the rest of his life.

Kirk, however, had not come directly from Bucks County to Germantown, but by way of Norristown, where his family had placed him with an uncle, William Paxson, to get better schooling. The experiment was a failure for Paxson was an abolitionist and member of the underground railroad and there was a bitter feeling between those and the pro slavery element.

One night Frank was put in bed with Frederick Douglass who was going to speak at a meeting next day. The anti-slavery boys had a hard enough time of it but when this occurred, and news got around, Frank was subject to jeers of sleeping with a monkey. War was declared between the groups and many a bloody nose was taken and given. The result was that he was removed to Charles Jones's boarding and day school in Germantown where Friends' principles influenced the school. He had, however, had the opportunity of meeting all the anti-slavery leaders at his Uncle's house and had received numerous pieces of advice about life from Lucretia Mott. He remained in the school which was held in the old Methodist meeting house and was taught first by Charles Jones and then Isaac Morgan until 1849. These two men made a great impression on him and deeply influenced his life.

The corner to which Kirk came was a very busy place. Tuesdays and Thursdays were market days at the Washington Inn, when great wagons drawn by four horses came from the outlaying counties bringing all kinds of produce and things made on the farms. These were sold and the farmers then bought articles to take back and sell. Among the articles they bought was furniture made by Samuel Nice.

In the evenings forty apprentices and other boys collected at the corner and slowly went back west Washington where out of hearing of their elders they talked about the past war or made plans to go west for gold. A party of these boys started west but perished on the way. There were also abolition meetings in the hall near where Pomona Street now runs. The meetings were generally free but a nickel or a dime was charged for prominent speakers.

As for the main street at this section, because of the nature of the soil it was muddy or dusty, but the people accepted both without complaint. Every one established what grade he wished for a sidewalk, which was of board, brick or stones.

The undertaking business when Frank Kirk arrived at the corner had changed little since the Knorr's time. A person came, ordered a coffin the length of a string he brought with him. After delivering it, if the one-horse hearse was not required, he was finished, as the neighbors did the rest. However, the coffin makers made sure that the coffin was going to be used immediately. If not, he was in trouble. He could not leave the coffin in the house as it was bad luck, and he could not retrace his steps with it as it was worse luck. He had to place it in some shed in a church yard until he had use for it. For the coffin maker's labors he received five or ten dollars. Of course, that was not the whole cost of the funeral, for the dinner afterwards frequently made people short for months. In an executor's statement in 1717 the coffin maker and the doctor both received the amount of the cost of the butter and cheese consumed at the occasion. There is also a bill in pounds and shillings where John Smith purchased a coffin and cherry dining table on the same date evidently to supply more eating space for friends and neighbors. The price of each was the same, about ten dollars each.

In 1853 Frank Kirk started for himself at the corner of Manheim Street and Germantown Avenue. The next year he married Elizabeth Knorr Nice, the daughter of Samuel Nice. Financial conditions in the country were bad and with two journeymen and four apprentices to feed beside his wife and mother, who had bought a property opposite Manheim Street he nearly failed. However, with the financial aid of Casper Heft who told him to stick it out for another year, and the recommendation of prominent Friends, he at last made good, although he was competing against four established businesses in lower Germantown.

It was here Kirk made the first casket produced in this country. It was a rectangular affair with rounded corners and flat top made of walnut. This casket was eventually adopted instead of the old fashioned coffin and was in its walnut form used by all Germantowners until a covering of cloth became common.

In the meantime Samuel Nice's business continued to grow and Charles, his son, went into the business. In 1861 Charles Nice died and Samuel asked Frank Kirk to take his place. Kirk had made strong friendships in lower Germantown and was unwilling to leave it. However, he agreed to run both places. This proved too great a hardship and as his wife wished to get back with old friends, he sold the lower

(Continued on page 24)

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CLOCKMAKING TRADITION

By George H. Eckhardt, *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

GERMANTOWN is indeed rich in the tradition of clocks and clockmaking. It may safely be said that few other places in America can claim a greater tradition in the field of early scientific endeavor that later flourished into the achievements of men like David Rittenhouse. It was in Germantown that astronomy emerged from astrology in America in the early eighteenth century and here science was firmly planted in the Colonies.

All are more or less familiar with the story of the band of mystics who came from Germany in 1694 under the leadership of Johann Kelpius and set themselves up in the caves along the Wissahickon.

The original leader of this band was Johann Jacob Zimmerman, an astronomer of note, but he died on the eve of departure and Kelpius was chosen magister, or master.

In 1704 this band was joined by a most remarkable man—Christopher Witt—who came from England in 1704 and went to live in the caves. In 1706 Witt painted a portrait in oils of Kelpius and this is now regarded as the first oil painting in the Colonies.

But more than this—Witt had a very good working knowledge of the astronomy of the day although this knowledge was colored by the occult and he was a combination of astronomer-astrologer. It is not surprising that all through his life Witt was looked upon as a necromancer and like the astronomer-astrologers of the Middle Ages he was looked upon as a caster of spells and his principal source of income was in casting horoscopes.

There is evidence that Witt made clocks while still living in the caves of the Wissahickon but upon the death of Kelpius in 1708 Witt moved into a small house in Germantown and among other things established the first botanical garden for raising and studying medicinal herbs. This was long before Bartram set up his botanical garden.

During the long winters, when Witt could not roam the country-side in search of plants, he turned to clockmaking. At first, it seems, he made wall clocks but later made very fine tall case clocks some of which still survive.

When Christopher Sower came to Germantown in 1732 he fell under the influence and patronage of Witt and from him learned clockmaking. Witt died in 1765 at the ripe age of ninety and was the last survivor of the group that had dwelled in the caves of the Wissahickon.

It should be remembered that these mystics and necromancers prepared the soil in which the science of Rittenhouse later took root. Here in Germantown, almost two and one-half centuries ago, men were familiar with astronomy and mathematics. These were not men apart, or a small group of learned men who made up an aristocracy separate from the common people, but rather they were part of the people themselves.

Out of all this there arose an affection and love for clocks and clockmaking that has persisted in Germantown down to the present day. Clocks and clockmaking have been symbols of science to these people.

Coming down to the early nineteenth century we need only call attention to the strong ties between Isaiah Lukens, the clockmaker, and Charles J. Wister, who was a "gentleman clockmaker" of note. The poor of Germantown were invited to leave their clocks at the Wister gatehouse and there were repaired by the master of the house and returned.

In 1834 Lukens made a very fine clock for his friend—Charles J. Wister—which is still in the possession of the family.

The town clock of Germantown, now in the Municipal Building, was originally made by Lukens and has an interesting history. When the first State House clock had fallen into hopeless disrepair it was Lukens who in 1839 made the new one to be placed in the steeple. Then, when a generous citizen offered to purchase a new clock and bell for the State House in 1876, the Lukens clock was given to Germantown and placed in the old Borough Hall. The starting of this clock in its new home was part of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Germantown. When the new Municipal Building was erected in the 1920's the clock was moved to its present location. This clock has been electrified during the past few years but it is still well worth seeing.

Clockmaking, it will be seen, has been part of the fabric of life in Germantown for almost two and one-half centuries. Few other localities in America can claim this horological distinction. Augustine Neisser, the Heilig family and George Miller are the names of but a few of the great Germantown clockmakers during this time.



Johnson House, a landmark in historic Germantown

BUTTON HILL NEAR CHEW'S WOODS

(*Continued from page 11*)

hand-carved mantels and a charming panelled stairway to be seen here.

Behind a high stone wall in which a postern gate tempts one to explore, stands another example of old Germantown farm house. Like the Bilmeyer house across the street it has a pent roof sheltering its single door-way but it cannot claim the hoary antiquity of its neighbor being built in two sections, the oldest part about 1750. These old properties had a rather narrow frontage on Germantown Avenue and stretched back a mile or so to what was then called County Line (Wissahickon Ave.) thus giving their farmer owners the dubious pleasure of sitting on their front stoops and watching the few passersby plod through the mud or dust of the so-called 'worst road in the colonies'. Down this road came also the Indians under their chief, Shekillimy, to beg for protection and food from Brother Onus in Philadelphia. It is said that the good Germantown burghers shut and barred their doors when this motley crew passed by, which does not sound too hospitable in this day of relief drives. The 'poor Indian' was not always the 'noble Redskin' the early writers described. Bitter experience taught the farmers wisdom.

Gradually the character of this corner has changed. The Second Baptist Church was built, the gardens of the Bilmeyer house gave way to stores, the open fields flanking West Upsal were built up with larger houses, the road was surfaced and became a much used thorofare. Still, however, an occasional little screech owl can be heard along the road at evening and now and then the shadow of a night-prowling opossum betrays his presence and his hunt for food; —little things, but still links with those bygone days when Upsal Street was a country lane bordered with wild roses and honeysuckle.

CLIVEDEN like nearly every old Germantown Home, had a hardy flower garden of the standard type, but it was better known by its spring, by its great trees, and by the "Ghost" which walked its walls at the "Curfew Hour". What was known as "Chew's Woods," now a part of "Cliveden Park", is a survivor of the primal forest, its grounds not having been disturbed from the time the Creator made them, until our "Bureau of City Property," under the direction of the Site and Relic Society, prepared desirable walks, and cleared away its underbrush.

—From *Gardens and Gardeners in Germantown* by Edwin C. Jellett.

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Concluding Installment

His Family

The children of Richard and Ann Townsend listed in Abington Monthly Meeting records were:

Hannah, born 8 mo. 13, 1680; married 1 mo. 14, 1706, Isaac Cook, of Germantown; she died 2 mo. 18, 1763.

James, born on the ship *Welcome* in the Delaware River, 9 mo. 2, 1682; married Elizabeth Tomlinson, 1703.

Mary, born 3 mo. 22, 1685.

Joseph, born 5 mo. 16, 1687; married Elizabeth Harmer, 9 mo. 11, 1712.

Sarah, born ——; married 9 mo. 26, 1711, James Bartlett, of Maryland. A record quoted by Frank Willing Leach gives the birth date of Sarah as Nov. 5, 1689.

Makes His Home in Philadelphia

Richard Townsend sold his Bristol Township mill and farm in 1713, and he and his wife than made their home in Philadelphia. The buyer's name in the deed is given as Joseph Townsend. Presumably he was Richard Townsend's son of that name, though it is not so stated in the deed. The price paid was £100.

The elder Townsend and his wife now came under the jurisdiction of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. The certificates they brought to that meeting from Abington Monthly Meeting were dated 5 mo. 26, 1713. That a housing shortage existed in Philadelphia at that time is suggested by this minute of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting: "There being some room in the house that was left by John Martin, Richard Townsend wanting a place, friends are willing he shall have room there upon rent."

The property sold to Joseph Townsend in 1713 embraced only 99 acres—less than half of the 200 acres in the tract originally granted to Richard Townsend. It comprised the end of the farm bordering on Germantown to the width of eighty perches. The deed states that the other 101 acres were "formerly sold to Thomas Godfrey, of Bristol Township, malster." The deed to Godfrey has not been found on record. (Deed Book E-7, Vol. 8, p. 139.) Mention is made in the 1713 deed of "the mill and other buildings," also orchards, gardens, fields, woods, meadows and watercourses. Subsequent surveys showed that the supposed 99-acre tract really consisted of 108 acres.

The eastern end of the 200-acre grant to Richard Townsend was the home of several generations of the Godfrey family. Thomas Godfrey, malster, according to one historian, bought the 101-acre tract in 1697 and built a house, which became the home of his son, Joseph, and his grandson, Thomas, Jr., 1704–1740. Thomas Godfrey, Jr., was a glazier, an occupation which few followed at that time because of the scarcity of glass. He was well versed in optics and mathematics and he invented a mariner's quadrant which was generally used in navigation. Parts of the foundation of the Godfrey house were still to be seen at the beginning of the present century. When Laurel Hill Cemetery was opened, John F. Watson had the remains of the Godfrey family, with the tombstones, removed there from the former Godfrey farm.

Later Years of the Mill

Joseph Townsend owned the mill site until 1728, when he sold to John Peter. The next owner was Matthias Lukens, who bought the place from Peter in 1731, and upon his death it went to his son John. Because of the long ownership by the Lukens family, the mill was known by the Lukens name even after other owners held it, and the present Church Lane became Lukens' Mill Road.

The mill is mentioned in Revolutionary War annals connected with the battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777. The British army, in Germantown, had extended their main line west along Schoolhouse Lane and east along Lukens' Mill Road. At the eastern flank, near the mill, was a small redoubt. General Washington's plan for the attack on the British in Germantown provided that the left wing of the Americans, under General Greene, should proceed south on Limekiln Road and attack the British right flank to drive them back into Germantown. A Pennsylvania regiment, under Colonel Walter Stewart, assaulted the redoubt near the mill and captured it, but confusion ensued among Greene's troops in trying to carry out the plan of battle, a dense fog being a factor, so that a retreat was sounded before Greene's men could proceed much farther.

The next family name associated with the mill was that of Roberts. Hugh Roberts bought the mill in 1811. His eldest son, Spencer, became the owner in 1835. He sold the mill and thirty-three acres in 1870 to the Germantown Land Company.

Hugh Roberts, Jr., who learned the milling trade in his father's mill, left the following description of the mill as he knew it:

"It was mainly a grist mill; some merchant work, however, was done. There was a large overshot wheel, perhaps twenty-five feet in diameter, outside the mill. But the water in dry seasons was insufficient, causing many lamentations from the millers and steam was put in about 1841. No other mill stood above it on the stream. A dam had been made some fifty yards above the mill and a 'trunk' constructed from the dam fall.

"In the back part of the mill, on the second floor,

land plaster (gypsum) was ground. Two 'runs' of stone were operated on flour, one on wheat exclusively and one on corn, rye and oats, and one 'run' on plaster. The plaster stone was a solid one, a 'country stone'; those for grinding flour were 'French burr.' Three kinds of flour were made, superfine, coarse and bran.

"Conestoga wagons used to come to the mill in the time of Hugh Roberts, Sr. He ground a great deal of rye flour, and had at one time a profitable contract to supply it to the almshouse, but in the time of his sons wheat flour was chiefly ground."

The mill was operated until 1858, though the structure stood until 1874. In its later years the ancient mill and its big waterwheel appealed to artists and photographers, so that attractive pictures of the landmark have been preserved. The Germantown Land Company, upon acquiring the farm, began laying out streets and selling sites for dwellings, and in the present century rows of dwellings covered the entire Townsend estate, a sewer eliminating all trace of the creek. A large house which the elder Hugh Roberts had built about 1820 was demolished in 1904.

Townsend's Closing Years

In the later years of his life in Philadelphia Richard Townsend evidently employed some of his leisure hours in writing the reminiscent Testimony from which quotations have been made in this paper. Virtually every writer who has discussed Townsend made use of the Testimonial, but none has said anything about its origin, except that it was written "about 1727." It was probably printed for the first time in 1797 in Robert Proud's History of Pennsylvania, Vol. I, p. 228. The heading terms it "Extracts from the Testimony of Richard Townsend," indicating that the complete document was not printed.

Richard Townsend died March 28, 1732, while visiting his nephew, Joseph Townsend, at his home in East Bradford Township, west of the present site of West Chester, in Chester County. He was in his 93d year.

Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* had this announcement in the issue of March 23–30, 1732:

"March 30—This day was decently interred here Mr. Richard Townsend, a very eminent Preacher among the Friends and a man of exemplary innocence and piety."

The records of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting of Friends note the burial of Richard Townsend 1 mo. 30, 1732, and of his widow, Ann, 1 mo. 15 (March), 1733. The widow died at the home of her son-in-law, Isaac Cook, in Roxborough Township.

The will of Richard Townsend, probated April 14, 1733, terms him a resident of the city of Philadelphia and a millwright by occupation. To his son James he left 40 shillings, while the remaining chil-

(Continued on page 25)

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A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP

(Continued from page 19)

place and came to the Washington Lane establishment. Greatly to his surprise, his old friends still patronized him.

Samuel Nice's other son, William, now entered the business and for a short time Charles Pastorius, his son-in-law, was in the firm. After he left, the firm became Kirk and Nice and has retained that name.

Samuel Nice during Kirk's absence had built a new building as the old one had been greatly damaged at times by fire.

In 1869 William Nice and Frank Kirk bought the shop and near buildings from Samuel Nice and laid greater emphasis on undertaking as furniture making was no longer profitable. In 1878 cabinet making was given up entirely.

The two young men proved to be ideal partners. William Nice took care of the business end of the firm and supervision of the stables, while Frank Kirk managed the funerals. There were no quarrels as each tended his own business. Nice was a good and careful business man and Kirk a sympathetic man who gained many friends so the business grew with the town.

In the early seventies a smallpox epidemic came to Germantown and the firm buried twenty-six people of that disease in a short time. Besides this, Kirk offered his services free to victims to be taken to the Municipal Hospital. As he insisted upon doing all this work himself, he worked eighteen hours a day and nearly broke down physically for a long time.

In 1874 the firm received word that Washington Lane was to be widened, and their building stood ten feet in the required space. After some discussion they decided to go in debt to the sum of seventeen thousand dollars and construct an entirely new plant, as the old buildings were six feet above the proposed level of the street. These were removed as well as a plum, cherry and apple orchard and the ground brought to its present level. A front office, show rooms and dwelling for the night undertaker were constructed on the corner and in the rear a building of three stories one hundred by forty feet was built in the rear. This consisted of a horse stable, carriage house, work shops and store rooms.

Neighbors shook their heads and talked about the sheriff coming in the near future. The debt was finally paid and Kirk and Nice had for those days the largest and most complete establishment in the country. Because of this debt, however, they had to build their own hearse, a two-horse affair of which Germantown was very proud. All was completed in 1875.

During the eighties a struggle began that changed the position of the undertaker considerably and the corner had a part in it. When it was over the undertakers were united, had a code of ethics and were considered no longer a trade, but a profession.

As president of the Undertakers Association of Pennsylvania, much of the burden of those years rested on Kirk's shoulders. He claimed that undertaking had a right to be considered a profession, that rules requiring educational standards should be made, that advertisements should be severely limited, and economy should be urged.

He was so successful in his own state that he was asked to write and speak for the undertakers in New York, who were having a bad time in their legislature because of persons of distinction who were supporting measures against them. Kirk's article was to the point and the bills were defeated in the committee. He spoke and wrote articles for other states and gave much sound, but not always welcome, advice to undertakers until he became known throughout the states in Undertaking articles as the Sage of Germantown.

After all was over, Kirk retired from the Presidency of Pennsylvania Undertakers Association but still wrote articles for their journals, the *Journal of Hygiene* and other related papers.

In the meantime, Samuel Nice and Samuel Pastorius, grandsons of Samuel Nice of 1830 came to work for the firm.

In 1909 William Nice died and his son Samuel took his place in the firm. Shortly after that Frank Kirk

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had offered Samuel Pastorius a chance to enter the business but because of ill health or other reasons he declined. These two men were known as The Sams throughout Germantown and widely known outside the district.

In 1917 Frank Kirk died and his grandson John R. Henderson took his place in the business, buying Samuel Nice's share upon his death, shortly after taking his son Malcom into the business. The place has lately been rebuilt and completely fills all requirements.

Frank Kirk was a man of considerable ability and not only left an influence on his profession but many others. He gave himself little credit for the business he had largely built, giving the credit to the men who worked for him and the people of Germantown. He appreciated most of all the respect the people of Germantown held for him. Money meant little to him and he gave to all that needed help. He had aimed to be Germantown's undertaker and had largely succeeded.

TO PENNSYLVANIA WITH WILLIAM PENN

(Continued from page 23)

dren, Joseph, Hannah, Mary and Sarah, were to have 20 shillings each. As the wife was dead when the will was probated, Hannah Cook was appointed administratrix.

The will of the widow, Ann Townsend, dated 29 of 9 mo., 1732, was probated March 31 following. She was described as late of Philadelphia but now of Roxborough. Her sons, James and Joseph, were each to receive 20 shillings. A featherbed and some land were bequeathed to the daughter, Hannah Cook, and the residue to the daughters, Mary and Hannah and four children of the daughter Sarah, the latter no longer living.

None of the records consulted tell where the Townsends were buried. The Friends' burial ground at Arch and Fourth Streets was in use at that time and was the principal burial ground of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting.

Attempts to study the genealogy of the Richard Townsend family have proved confusing because of repetition of the same Christian names in various Townsend families. In the seventeenth century and earlier the family lived in Bucklebury, a parish in the Hundred of Reading, County of Berks, England. Much information about this Bucklebury family was gathered by Gilbert Cope, Chester County genealogist, and by Frank Willing Leach, of Philadelphia, the latter including a Townsend article in a series on "Old Philadelphia Families," printed in the Sunday *North American*, of Philadelphia, in 1907. The compilations of both these genealogists, though not published in book form, may be consulted in the library of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. The name Bucklebury was sometimes given to the Bristol Township farm.

Richard Townsend had a brother, William, who died in England. His son, named Joseph, born in 1684, came to Pennsylvania and eventually settled in Chester County. It was at his home that Richard Townsend died. There is also mention of another brother, John, and of sisters named Joan, Elizabeth and Mary. The father's name was Richard. The family joined the Society of Friends, and because of this the father was thrice fined. The son, Richard Townsend, went to London in 1676. There his goods were seized for the support of the clergy and again for his refusal to bear arms. The father died in Bucklebury in 1697, at the age of 95.

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Kelpius and his Followers

(*Continued from page 10*)

the Heathen and Stoic philosophers, the Fathers of the Christian Church, and the Reformers. He was conversant with the writings of Tertullian, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Tauler, Eck, Myconius, Carlstadt, Hedio, Faber, Oslander, Luther, Zwingli, and others, whose opinions he would frequently analyse and expound with much animation. He was also a strict disciplinarian, and kept attention constantly directed upon self. To know self, he contended, is the first and most essential of all knowledge. . . . He directed a sedulous watchfulness over the temper, inclinations, and passions, and applauded very much the Counsel of Marcus Aurelius: 'Look within; for within is the fountain of good'."

An old manuscript in the handwriting of Pastor Heinrich Melchior Muhlenberg sets forth that, in 1742, Daniel Geissler, a trustworthy man of over sixty years of age, and the former *famulus* and confidential assistant of Kelpius, gave to him the following interesting particulars of the death of Kelpius:

Kelpius, among other things, was of the firm belief that he would not die a natural death. . . . As his last hours drew near, the Magister spent three long days and nights in praying to God. . . . At last, on the third day, after a long silence, he ceased his pleadings, and, addressing himself to his faithful famulus, said: "My beloved Daniel, I am not to attain that which I aspired unto. I have received my answer. It is that dust I am, and to dust I am to return. It is ordained that I shall die like unto all children of Adam."

Kelpius thereupon handed Geissler a box or casket, which was well secured and sealed, and told him to carry it to the Schuylkill, where the water was deep, and cast it into the river. Geissler took the casket as far as the river bank, and being of somewhat an inquisitive nature, concluded to hide the casket until after his master's death, and then possess himself of the secret of its contents. Upon his return, Kelpius raised himself up and, with outstretched hand, pointing to his famulus, looked him sharply in the

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eyes, and said: "Daniel, thou hast not done as I bid thee, nor hast thou cast the casket into the river, but hast hidden it near the shore." Geissler, now more than ever convinced of the occult powers of the dying Master, without even stammering an excuse, hurried to the river bank, and threw the casket into the water as he was bidden.

The MS. goes on to state that, as the mysterious casket touched the water, the "Arcanum" exploded, and for a time flashes of lightning and peals like unto thunder came from out of the water. When Geissler returned to the bedside of Kelpius, at the Tabernacle, the latter told him that now was accomplished the task he had given him. A few days after this episode the pious Magister entered into rest. All tradition seems to agree that his remains were consigned to a grave within the orchard or garden belonging to the Tabernacle.

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* This article was submitted by Mrs. Henry V. Gummere, of Germantown, the mother of Dr. Gummere, Head Master of Penn Charter, and the widow of the author, who used this material when he headed a pilgrimage made to Kelpius' Cave, on the West banks of the Wissahickon in a ravine along Hermit's Lane under the Henry Avenue Bridge. Since Kelpius was a most interesting and historic religious character in Philadelphia before 1700, it seems that the cave in which he lived, and which is still in existence, should be well marked, as well as the road leading to it on both sides of the small bridge over the Wissahickon and leading up Hermit's Lane to a path near the top of the hill. There, another marker should be placed, pointing down to the valley where the cave is located and where stood the famous Tabernacle of the cult. Kelpius lived here until his death in 1708. Some of his followers started the historic cloisters at Ephrata (now a Pennsylvania State Park), and some of them again returned to the Wissahickon and founded the "Monastery" and Baptistry on the East Banks of the Wissahickon near Kitchen's Lane.—G. E. N.



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UPSALA, A GERMANTOWN HERITAGE

(Continued from page 13)

the hairs separated and draw a glaze of thin Vandyke brown crossing the touches on the dark side." . . . "When this is dry varnish the whole, and the imitation of finely watered spanish mahogany will, if neatly executed, be excellent."

The combination of soft red walls, light graining and crimson band in the cornice presents a striking appearance when first seen. The crimson band offered a minor problem to the painter. He had nothing among his pigments that would match the color we had found in the cornice. The writer found a tube of alizarin crimson in her paint box and the day was saved.

Directly across the hall from the library is the drawing-room in which is a beautiful and intricate plaster cornice. All the repairs necessary to woodwork and plaster have been made in this room and it only awaits the installation of heat to blossom forth in its former glory. We envision it a very lovely room with its panelled wainscot and delicately wrought mantel. Perhaps it will have yellow walls and a pale cerulean ceiling with touches of gold leaf in the cornice; there are traces of gold to be seen, and a much wished for Waterford chandelier glistening in the centre. In this room is a grandfather's clock given to Upsala by the late Miss Augusta Chase. When restoration is complete this clock will chime the hours from the stair landing.

Upsala has already received gifts and bequests of furnishings. Several pieces once in the house have been returned to it. The Women's Committee were able to purchase from an antique dealer the beautiful Sheraton bed which graced the master bedroom of the first owner. A cradle once belonging to the house has been lent by The Germantown Historical Society. The last resident, the late Mrs. William Norton Johnson, gave back to the house a four-post bed, a fine Chippendale mirror, two pairs of Sheffield candlesticks and some silhouettes of early Johnsons.

Mr. Graham Roberts presented the house with a number of appropriate and fine things including an English Hepplewhite armchair, beautifully inlaid, a handsome pair of andirons, a pair of English sconces, a pair of regency chairs and a bracket clock. All these things are in the restored room and it goes without saying that they are all as old if not older than the house. From Mr. deFord Baker of New York came a very nice Sheraton desk and a gateleg table. Even from as far away as Rochester, New York, came an old English love seat, the gift of Miss Helen Ellwanger. In the dining room the wool brocade hangings and the oriental rug were part of Mr. Roberts' gift.

The southwest room, like the drawing-room is already for the finishing touches and has some furnishings. The man who actually stopped the demolition,

Mr. J. Mitchell Elliot, left in his will to Upsala certain pieces of furniture and bric-a-brac. A lovely eighteenth century Italian landscape hangs over the mantel and matching Chinese stone-ware vases are at each end. There is a French Chippendale ribbon backed chair and a Chinese Chippendale stand on which is a large Chinese porcelain vase with wild horses in the most entrancing colors depicted on it. From Mr. Elliot also came a Hitchcock type chair, an old English barometer in a mahogany case and a Dutch painting, beautiful framed. When the house is completely restored there will be an Elliot room in which all the things in his bequest will be placed.

The restoration of Upsala has proceeded with great care. The plaster cornices have been meticulously repaired. Where pieces were missing molds were made of like pieces and replacements were cast and it is practically impossible to tell the new from the old. The staircase to the second floor, badly damaged by water and fire hoses, has been reconstructed and renewed where necessary. That to the third floor awaits similar treatment.

To Upsala have been added some mementos of Carlton, the beautiful home of the Newhalls which was torn town in 1948. The front door from it has become the north side door of Upsala. At the door on the south side stands the old pump from Carlton and the stone steps outside the back door of the main hall are made from the front steps of the Newhall house.

At the turn of this century Germantown Road presented a succession of colonial and federal houses. One by one they are disappearing in the name of progress. But is it progress to destroy that which is irreplaceable? Rather, isn't it shortsighted to destroy that which is part of our history. Bit by bit we are losing our tangible heritage, our material connection with the past. In recent years we have lost the Gilbert Stuart and the Harland houses. What is replacing them? A supermarket. The Keyser house one of the oldest in Germantown disappeared in 1951 and what is rising on that corner? Another supermarket.

Other towns and cities are reclaiming their antiquities and people in countless numbers travel to Williamsburg, to all parts of Virginia, to Maryland and Mississippi, to New York and to all the New England states, in fact they go wherever there is Americana on display. Americans are interested in the early history of their country, its houses and their contents which tell a way of life. Let us awake to the value of our heritage here in Germantown! Let no more of it be taken from us!



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About Our Authors

ANNA WHARTON MORRIS is well known in Germantown having long been a member of Greene Street Friends' Meeting.

Mrs. Morris is the youngest daughter of the Joseph Wharton of whom she writes and the wife of the late Harrison S. Morris, a distinguished man of letters and an authority on art. Their only child, Catharine Morris Wright, has carried on the family tradition of achievement and is a noted poet and painter.

—

DR. H. V. GUMMERE, the eminent astronomer and scientist, died on February 9, 1949. He was an alumnus of Haverford and Penn Charter, of which his son, John, is now headmaster. He taught at Haverford, Ursinus and Drexel, was a member of many scientific societies, a distinguished author, and an elder of the Friends Meeting.

—

GEORGE E. LIPPINCOTT lives at "Roselawn", 266 W. Tulpehocken St., in Germantown; is a graduate of the Germantown Academy and the University of Pennsylvania; is engaged in the lumber business and was President of the Lumbermans Exchange of the City of Philadelphia. During the First World War he was in the Signal Corp., later the Air Service and assigned to the General Staff in Washington. One of the founders of the Henry H. Houston Post, Germantown, American Legion. A lecturer and writer on the Rose, an Accredited Rose Judge and Consulting Rosarian of the American Rose Society, one of the founders of the Philadelphia Rose Society and past president of the Germantown Horticultural Society. At "Roselawn" he grows about 800 Roses and about 400 at his New Jersey home on Seven Mile Beach Island. He was the first lecturer and helped in the forming of the Cape May County Garden Club.

—

MRS. JAMES BRADFORD RITTER is interested in working for the preservation of Germantown's old houses and makes her home in one of them on the "Main" street, 6358 Germantown Avenue. She is a member of the Germantown Historical Society and has for many years been on its Board of Directors, acting as Chairman of the Relic Committee.

Mrs. Ritter is active in the restoration of Upsala, a member of the Women's Committee and secretary of the Trustees of the Upsala Foundation. She is also a member of the Stenton Mansion Committee of the Pennsylvania Society of the Colonial Dames of America.

Part of each year, Mr. and Mrs. Ritter and their family spend in their lovely second home at Jamestown, Rhode Island.

FRANK KIRK HENDERSON was born in Germantown and is the elder grandson of B. Frank Kirk. He taught in the Public School of Philadelphia for some years before moving to Spring Valley, in Bucks County His hobbies are antiques, family history and flowers.

—

KATHARINE ELKINTON is descended from Casper Wister, being a great, great, great, great, great granddaughter and a namesake of his wife, Katharine Johnson. She is descended also from Samuel Mason and is a real American and Germantowner for she says she has English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and German blood in her veins. Mrs. Elkinton is an active member of the Society of Friends and interested in all worthy local projects. She has a keen sense of humor and is a delightful speaker.

—

GEORGE H. ECKHARDT, after more than twenty five years of research, study and writing on the clocks and clockmakers of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania has come to be the recognized authority on this subject. He has prepared the definitive list of clockmakers of Pennsylvania which will appear as part of his book "THE GRAND HEIRLOOM, Being an Account of the Clock and Watch-Makers of Pennsylvania" which will be published by Devin-Adair this fall.

Mr. Eckhardt is president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors and chairman of the library committee of the Association. During the past few years one of the most comprehensive collections of books on horology has been built up by the Association and this collection is deposited permanently in the Library of the Franklin Institute, this city. It may be consulted freely by all interested in horological research.

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Obituary

The Historical Society has been, for many years, the richer for the life of an unusual woman—keen of mind and rich in understanding her interests were many and varied.

Mrs. James Mapes Dodge, a life member of the Historical Society, died, suddenly, on April 17th in her ninety sixth year. She enjoyed life to the very end of her many full years and communicated to others her enthusiasm and interest. She has made, at various times, prized bequests to the Society's museum.

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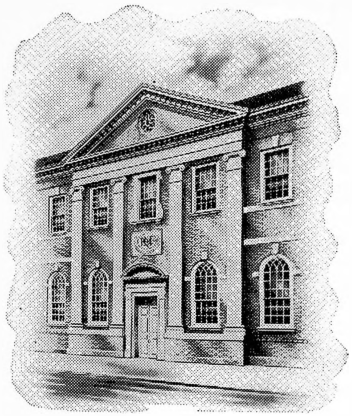
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