GERMANTOWNE CRIER





Wartime flags on display at the Germantown Historical Society Museum.

Foreground, left to right; Grand Union Flag (1775-1777); Betsy Ross Flag (1777-1795); Star Spangled Banner (1795-1818); Mexican War Flag (1846-1847); Civil War Flag (1863-1865); Spanish American War Flag (1898-1908); First and Second World Wars Flag (1912).

Background; the union (showing stars laid out in star pattern) of a flag used by the Army and also for civilian display during the Civil War.

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Volume 29 | FALL, 1977 | Number 4

CONTENTS

	Page
Battle of Germantown Shapes Nation's Destiny ..... *By Leighton P. Stradley*	81
We Salute a Long-time Board Member of our Society	86
If This Tree Could Talk — Think About It a Moment ..... *By Amelia N. Farr*	86
The Mount Airy Schooldays of Charles Fleury Bien-Aimé Guillou ..... *By Lisabeth M. Holloway, MS in LS*	87
1777-The Battle of Germantown-1977 ..... *By Margaret Bacon Bostwick*	92
The Edwin C. Jellett Collection ..... *By Leonard Rossiter Denis, Librarian*	94
Index to Advertisers	94

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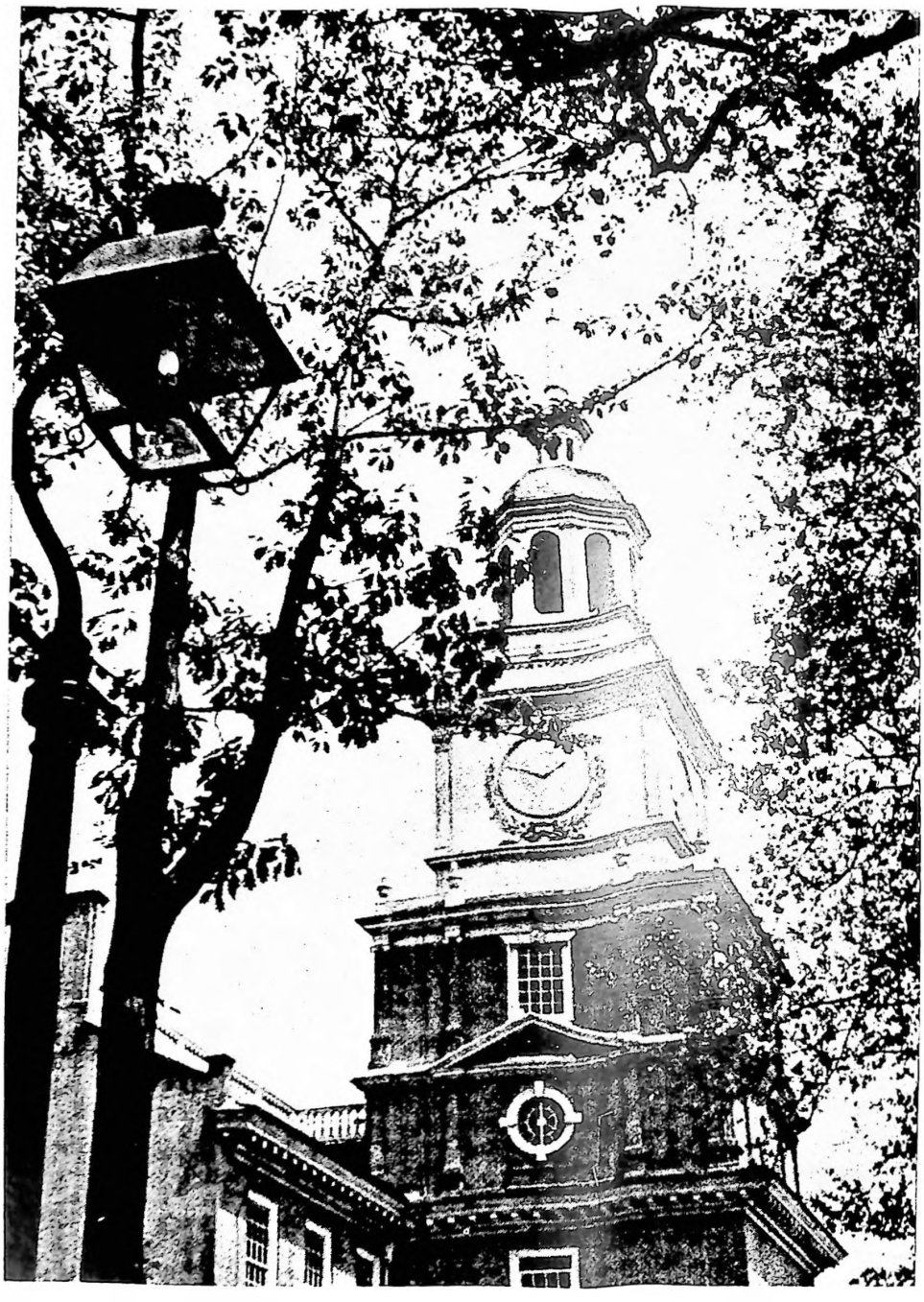
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Battle of Germantown Shapes Nation's Destiny

By Leighton P. Stradley

The following is reprinted from the September, 1952 issue of the "Crier," Mr. Stradley was at that time, 175th anniversary of "The Battle of Germantown," president of our society. Editor

MARKING the turning point of the Revolutionary War, the Battle of Germantown proved the pivotal occasion which determined the destiny of the United States of America. Contemporary observers so appraised it and modern historians concede the fact. General Washington, in the strategy here demonstrated, engaged and demolished the British plan to subdue the "middle colonies" while forcing Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga a few days later.

Therefore the English were forced to abandon their conquest of the New England states also, leaving Washington and his Continental army intact, with equipment and commissary mobilized for the final campaign which concluded with the Redcoats' surrender at Yorktown. All that being true, the vital objective in the Continental cause at the moment was the psychological effect it would make upon the French Court at Versailles. In this bold maneuver here at Germantown, Washington was playing for high stakes; a victory more important even than the rout of Lord Howe's regulars and mercenaries. At that critical period Washington was angling for a French alliance.

Munitions of every category, with gold to pay his troops was imperative to Freedom's cause just then. Positive demonstration in the field, of the Colonists' capacity to thwart George III's minions and wrest independence from the British Crown, would tip the scales at Paris in favor of the American Revolutionists. So, news of the action at Germantown, and that at Saratoga only a few days later, reached Paris simultaneously it seems. It proved a sensation of major significance. Whatever Washington's personal reactions, following the fog and confusion of this Battle, he had actually won an important victory.

Concerning its significance as influencing French assistance, John Adams wrote a friend and member of Congress (7–26–1778) then assembled in Philadelphia: "General Gates was the ablest negotiator you had in Europe; and, next to him, General Washington's attack on the enemy at Germantown. I do not know, indeed, whether this latter affair had not more influence upon the European mind than that of Saratoga. Although the attempt was unsuccessful, the military gentlemen in Europe consider it as the most decisive proof that America would finally succeed." At that time Adams was in Paris, having been appointed by Congress as the U. S. Commissioner to the Court of Versailles. Lynn Montross, author of *Rag, Tag and Bobtail*, quotes (p. 232) this Adams communication. And Carl Van Doren, in his *Benjamin Franklin*, acknowledges John Adams as the responsible historian among his contemporaries in the American delegation; which applies to those commissioned to aid Franklin, ultimately Minister Plenipotentiary, at the French Court.

Alfred Hoyt Bill approves this conclusion by his statement of the case in *Valley Forge* (preface, p. ix) which observes that: "The attack at Germantown, though it failed, did as much as Saratoga to convince the French King's ministers that, in recognizing the independence of the United States of America, they would not be going to war for a lost cause . . . it took the fog to beat them at Germantown."

And he elaborates this point (p. 74) with the assur-



Chew House, around which the Battle raged

ance: "That the Americans had attacked at all and, on being repulsed, had retired in good order deeply impressed observers in Europe, old Frederick the Great in particular. Politically, Germantown was an American victory hardly less potent than the surrender of Burgoyne in influencing France to come openly to the aid of the United States. Nothing, Count de Vergennes, French minister of foreign affairs, told the American Commissioners, had impressed him so much as General Washington's attacking Howe's army: that to bring an army raised within a year to that point promised everything." Again (p. 157) he reiterates the conviction that "Saratoga and Germantown had made their impression abroad."

Though our school histories, reflecting certain authority, record Germantown as a military defeat there have been quite as many whose exhaustive research presents that engagement in a very different light. These adhered to the idea that, aside from Washington's original plan to rout the British in this engagement, it exerted a vital influence upon European psychology; and assumed the significance of a great military achievement in the eyes of militarists abroad. Mr. Bill addressed the Historical Society of Pennsylvania March 24th of this year; his subject being "Valley Forge: The Making of an Army." He justified his impressions, as previously quoted, in that discourse. His book came off the press about that time.

Then we have this excerpt from John C. Miller's *Triumph of Freedom* (p. 206): "Germantown was the last time Howe fought Washington . . . and the British general gained few laurels at Germantown; . . . caught by surprise . . . off guard and forced to give ground . . ." With all considered, the "military gentlemen in Europe" concluded that this Germantown engagement established George Washington as a brilliant military tactician and leader; determined no less his military genius which started from scratch at Cambridge.

This Battle's pivotal importance, its influence in determining our destiny as a free Nation was not a mere accident, rather it eventuated as the logical conclusion in Washington's shrewdly conceived and effectively planned campaign strategy. His genius, his capacity for leadership is accentuated the more, of course, by his achievement of what—to others—would have proved the impossible. Despite all discouragement, such as a half-starved, half-clothed and unpaid meagre force of inexperienced militia—just the "rag, tag and bobtail" literally—he outwitted his thoroughly organized adversary and accomplished his objective.

His schooling in the military science had been gained only on the frontier, primarily in the French and Indian War (1755–56) as a colonel of militia under Virginia's Royal governor. In that campaign he was credited, it should be recalled, with saving the British General Braddock's army from a more complete annihilation than would have been the case otherwise. Then, some twenty years later, he was called from his extensive Virginia plantations to assume command of the Continental Army at Cambridge in June, 1775.

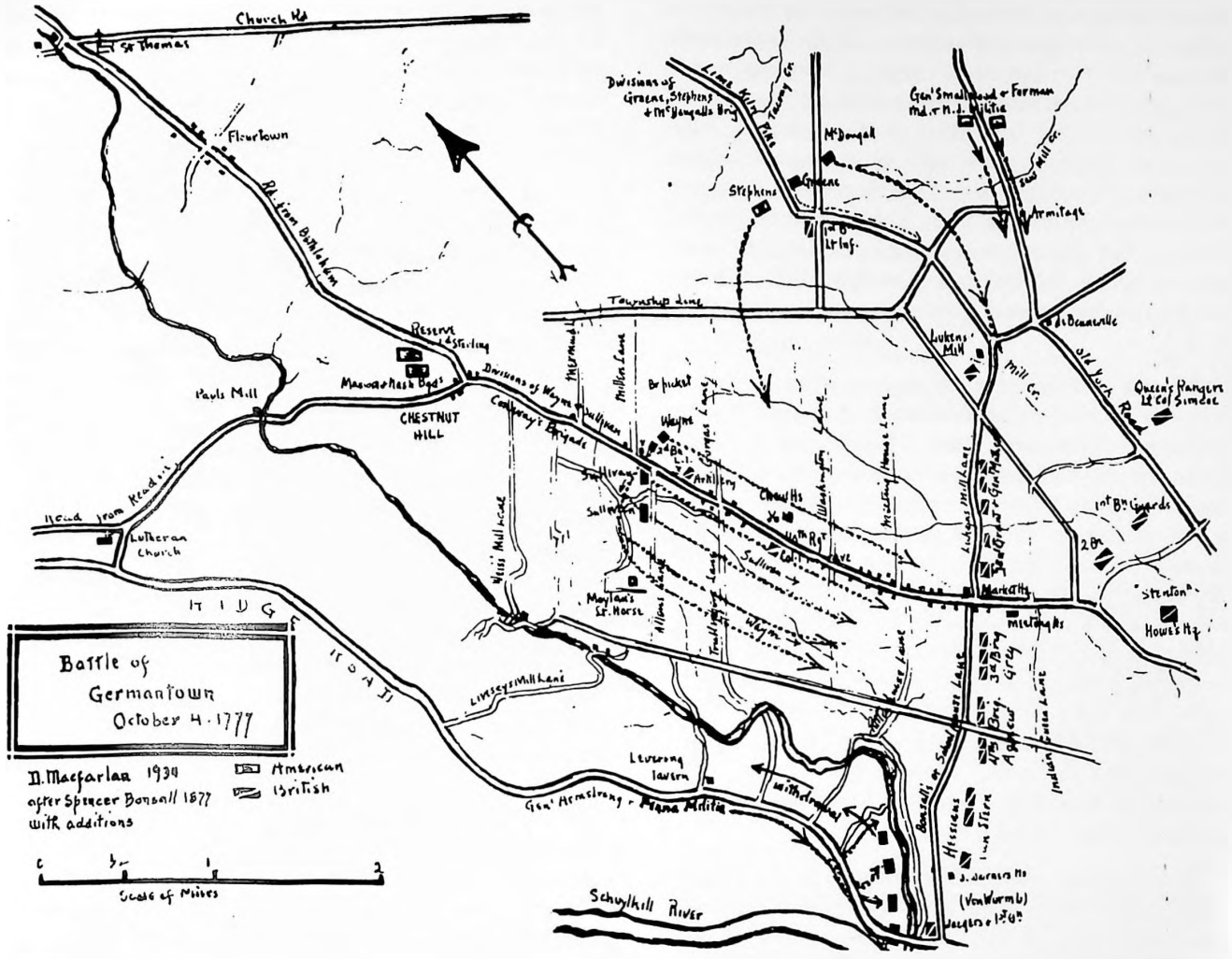
Immediately there his superior ability as a militarist was asserted; his prescience in field operations placed the blatantly boastful British grenadier regiments at a disadvantage promptly. In realizing that Washington, with the eye of a competently experienced engineer, lost no time in seizing every advantage the neighboring terrain afforded; entrenched his ridiculously ill-prepared force on Dorchester Heights overlooking Boston. The rest is history, British arms were humiliated and forced to evacuate Boston and abandon New England to the revolutionists.

If this early success did not afford him too much military experience, it certainly enhanced his personal prestige and inspired his associates in the fight for independence with new hope and confidence, and that was invaluable. Although there followed a phase of the campaign which, through its frustrations, offered little encouragement Washington kept his army together, even gained recruits. If his maneuvering on Long Island for possession of New York was tantamount to a defeat, "the Fox" evaded Howe's more effectively supplied regiments and led the way southward across New Jersey; weathered a winter's severe cold with all its physical privations at Morristown where he established his impoverished Continentals "in their ragged regimentals."



Wyck—used as a hospital and operating room after the Battle

There Washington availed himself again of a terrain which assured him natural advantages. But this time Howe did not venture to challenge his defenses and Washington assumed the initiative, stepped out of Morristown, apparently on his way to the Quaker City, and barely succeeded in gaining the west bank of the Delaware while leaving the British pursuers on the opposite bank without means of making the crossing. They had not dubbed Washington "the Fox" in idle jest. Here they had another opportunity to appreciate his cunning, his natural talent as a prescient militarist. They found themselves helpless in further pursuit because Washington had taken advantage of



One may profitably refer to the map here used. It was drawn a hundred years after the battle, by Spencer Bonsall, yet it remains the best of the many maps made. On it Bonsall placed only the positions and movements of the British forces, and to it have been added the American movements.

the weather; crossed the river before the severely cold weather set in and it was frozen over. However, he had directed his scouts to commandeer all the boats along both shores of the stream, and that had been accomplished with meticulous care. So, the famished Continentals had utilized all available floating equipment for their own convenience and—retained possession of it.

Which but spot-lights this martial genius the more emphatically; regardless of those wearisome months, their monotonous, tedious marches and their depressing effect upon his troops' morale, Washington saved the situation by his brilliant victories at Trenton and Princeton, which followed soon. Especially, that Christmas Eve rout of the festive Hessians and the capture of Trenton gave the Continentals' cause a tremendous up-lift and probably at a moment when they most needed it. Also it is appropriate to note that some, perhaps the more cursory, commentators rated the second Battle of Trenton as the turning point of the revolutionary war.

Studious martialling of facts, at home and abroad, have decided otherwise. Subsequently General Howe, leading the pride of King George's cohorts, headed back to Staten Island; shipped his army in a vast flotilla and, after some weeks of apparent indecision which kept Washington on the anxious bench, appeared in Chesapeake Bay to embark at the mouth of the Elk River, only some sixty miles across country to the west of Philadelphia. But Washington's intelligence service had anticipated him once more. The British found Washington, with the young Marquis de Lafayette on his staff, waiting for them at Brandywine, September 11, 1777.

The result of that Battle did not prove a victory for either army and for the remainder of September the British and American forces maneuvered around Chester and Montgomery counties; Washington, bringing the wounded Lafayette to Col. Henry Hill's estate, "Roxborough Plantation," on School House Lane to recuperate. History notes that his Army encamped for the greater part of that two weeks on the same property, which we later knew as "Carlton." When Howe advanced from the south Washington

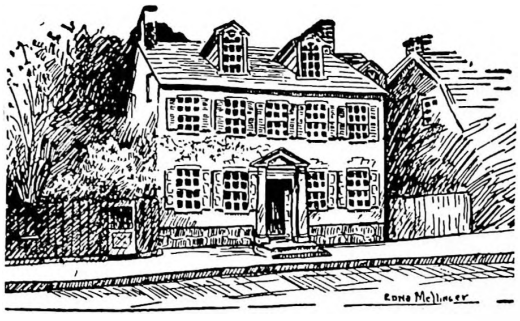
withdrew to the hills around Whitemarsh leaving the enemy to occupy Germantown. While Howe made himself comfortable at "Stenton", Cornwallis moved on down Germantown Road to Philadelphia with his 5,000 British regulars; some 10,000 Redcoats, regulars, and Hessian mercenaries remaining with Howe. Of these, the latter were entrenched along the south of School House Lane from Ridge Road to Market Square; the regulars formed the British right flank located along the road to "Luken's Mill" (Church Lane today) and east of their center at Market Square.

That, of course, was the set-up on the eve of October 4, just twenty-three days after his forces had retired in perfect order from the field at Brandywine, his army practically intact. Washington held his staff meeting at Pennypacker's Mills, on the Perkiomen Creek and there mapped the Battle details; but it is interesting—and accentuates Washington's prowess as a strategist—to note the comments Montross (p. 228–31) makes at this point. Concerning the plan Washington made for the impending engagement, Montross remarks that it was based on the concentric advance of four columns of his troops at night; that such tactics, under such conditions particularly, would have been shunned by any European general. But, he adds, the miracle of it was that these troops actually did converge at the four strategic points with fairly good timing.

The exception was Greene's Division on the Continentals' left flank. This proved forty-five minutes late in attaining its objective, hence influenced unfavorably the maneuver's results. His misfortune was that, in coming down Limekiln Pike in the darkness, Greene's column turned off to the right at Luken's Mill. That diversion from his ordered procedure created serious confusion; because he was not intended to be at that point at that time, the presence of his division there conflicted with Wayne's. Also, because the entire field of operations was now enveloped in fog, these two divisions were unable to identify each other, became entirely confused, and so exchanged shots.

This unhappy episode, plus the unexpected resistance the British regulars interposed at "Cliveden", and the delay thus entailed upon the Continentals' massed assault on Howe's center at Market Square, induced Washington's order for a general retirement. That, too, redounds to Washington's credit since his several division commanders, despite the enveloping confusion in which fog and battle smoke combined, extricated themselves in remarkably good order.

Considering that they had assumed the offensive, which opposed some ten thousand troops under the Stars and Stripes to approximately the same number supporting the Royal colors, the American casualties reflect credit upon the generalship exercised by their Commander as well as his subordinates. Omitting



The Morris House, facing Market Square, center of British Line

the 400 Continentals the British captured (after the former had taken 100 Redcoats prisoner) Washington's killed and wounded totalled about 600; Howe's, something over 500.

Had Congress been more cooperatively disposed, Washington might have been spared much anxiety as to the progress of Franklin's diplomacy at Paris. With, or without, their Government's official blessing French compatriots had been forwarding supplies and ammunitions in aid of the Rebel Colonists. Both Feuchtwanger and Van Doren, recalling the more intimate relationships, purposes and practices then current around Versailles, make that fact clear. They both identify Pierre and Phillip Beaumarchais as the filibustering principals in this case; advancing several million livres of their private fortune in munitions with only a promise of repayment.

Mr. Miller's *Triumph of Freedom* (p. 208) supports this record with the statement that "during the Spring and Summer of 1777, French ships carrying cannon, muskets and ammunition, procured by Beaumarchais, continued to arrive at New England harbors. Beaumarchais' secret aid was now beginning to pay off; the arms and ammunition that stopped Burgoyne at Saratoga originally came from French arsenals. Without this timely assistance, it is doubtful whether the Americans could have recovered from the heavy losses in artillery . . . sustained at Ticonderoga."

At Paris we find the U. S. Consul-General, Mr. Franklin, doing very well all this time. As a matter of fact both Messrs. Van Doren and Feuchtwanger afford generous detail concerning the factors, friend and foe alike, Franklin implemented to advance the French alliance. Though he had established himself very securely in Marie Antoinette's good graces—hence was already a great favorite with all the Court at Versailles, except King Louis XVI in person—it was the word of "Saratoga and Germantown" which crystallized sentiment into action there. Franklin made the most of it.

To that point the King had declared that he detested the proposed alliance. Employed every excuse

his vacillating intellect could devise to avoid signing such a compact. He argued with the Queen and his ministers, Vergennes, Maurepas, and Gerard, that such encouragement of democracy could but threaten all the monarchies of Europe with revolt, especially, his own already restless citizenry would be excited to violence. Then he proposed an alliance with his cousin George III, also the Emperor of Austria; because he believed no combination of revolutionaries would dare challenge such an entente as that. Later still, he parried "Toinette's" urgent appeals in support of his ministers' advice with the announcement that he could not champion the American colonies' liberation without consulting another cousin, King Charles of Spain, with whom he was allied already.

Kept apprised of the Royal resistance maneuvers, Franklin concentrated the more persistently upon the King's vanity. This "uncouth American," as Louis regarded him, was confident that the Bourbon's inherent selfishness would respond eventually to self-aggrandizement. "Old Ben" played on that chord consistently, with "Toinette"—as the Court favorites addressed Marie Antoinette—and with the King's ministers. Franklin, immediately that word reached Paris (early November) of the Germantown engagement and of Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga (October 7), urged upon the Queen and the King's ministers that the French alliance must be approved as proposed with the utmost dispatch.

In making his representations the more realistic Franklin confided that now England was offering peace terms, very attractive to the Colonies, but still short of absolute independence. That being the case, he suggested, France would have no one to blame but herself for her misfortunes; her signature on the pact now would certainly bring England to her knees. Urging that the Continentals, already certain of success, would realize their independence much sooner upon consummation of this alliance; the Allies would be in position to dictate terms of surrender and, certainly, France would repossess her lost Canadian provinces.

And that worked, finally. Above all, Louis XVI craved an achievement which would glorify his "ancestors". The Spanish throne was no less desirous of new West Indian acquisitions with greater security for those she already possessed. Therefore, but no less grudgingly, Louis authorized Count Gerard to affix the Royal approval to the proposed treaties, one relating to commerce and friendship, the other pledging offensive and defensive aid until absolute independence was realized. That was done February 6, 1778, in Franklin's apartments at Passy, some four months after the dynamic eventualities at Germantown and Saratoga.

After Franklin had signed, as Minister Plenipotentiary, Arthur Lee added his signature with his title as U. S. Commissioner to France and to Spain. Silas Deane, as the remaining member of the joint Commission to France, concluded the ceremony. Though Lee's jealousies and baseless suspicions, confided to his colleagues in Congress, had resulted in the latter's order recalling Deane that member of the Commission had waited out the signing of the treaties. Determined to see that accomplished he had delayed compliance with those instructions some two months. His successor, John Adams, though appointed months earlier did not arrive at Paris until after the alliance had been concluded.

Hence Van Doren says Deane sailed March 31, 1778, from Toulon with Count Gerard, the new Minister to the U. S. A., aboard Admiral Count d'Etaing's flagship in the French fleet, and that, according to others among these historians quoted, arrived in the Delaware river July 8th of that year.

Considering the assembled evidence it is apparent that Washington and his insurgent Colonial forces had to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the European militarist, the ability to cope with the English army so effectively as to assure the Continental arms eventual victory. And that assurance was impressed upon the authorities at London as well as at Paris. George III and his Tory party found little encouragement either among the Colonists or at home; in Parliament or abroad in the land.

Therefore, covering the field with these authors, viewing events as they see them, we must come to the conclusion that the Battle of Germantown, as the turning point in that 1777–78 campaign, actually determined the destiny of the United States of America, naturally then, it became eventually the ninth Capital of the United States of America.



The Billmeyer House. From here Washington viewed the Battle at the Chew House

We salute a long-time board member of our society.

Henry J. Magaziner, Philadelphia architect and developer of Gettysburg's downtown renewal plan, has been named a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects for outstanding contributions to the profession.

He is one of 56 newly-elected Fellows invested at the annual AIA convention in San Diego, CA., on June 5.

Since 1972 he has been the Regional Historical Architect for the 22 National Parks in the Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Park Service.

He currently serves as an on-going consultant to the Gettysburg community and Historic Gettysburg-Adams County, Inc., through the cooperation of the National Park Service.

A board member of the Chestnut Hill and Germantown Historical Societies, he was a founding member of the Allens Lane Art Center, the Philadelphia Chapter of the Victorian Society and founder and first president of the Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion, a Victorian restoration.

A past president of the T-Square Atelier and vice president of the Philadelphia Chapter of AIA, he is AIA regional representative to its National Committee on Historic Resources and is on the national board of the Society of Architectural Historians.

He was the first architectural advisor to the Philadelphia Historical Commission, a post he held for five years, and was chairman of the Commission's Architects' Committee for three years.

Our sincere wishes for continued success.



Market Square

If this tree could talk — think about it a moment

By AMELIA N. FARR



LOUDOUN — 4650 Germantown Avenue

An oak tree, a noble specimen, stands near a lane on carefully tended land. It is the year 1777 and the quiet little village of Germantown, which stretched along the Germantown Road for three miles, was torn with strife. The early German settlers had carved a life for themselves out of the wilderness and it was a happy, contented village, then came the Revolution.

Philadelphia was held by the British. General George Washington, with his army, was miles away in Montgomery County — and the oak tree grew. Every spring it put forth new leaves, every fall saw them flutter to the ground, and a few inches added in height and girth to this beautiful creation — today it is fifteen feet in circumference.

In the summer of 1777 General Howe, of the King's Army commandeered "Stenton" and brought his troops to be nearby on the rise, known as Neglee's Hill. Three battalions were camped there, one under General Agnew, one under Grey and the Hessians under Knyphousen. It was an ideal spot, grassy, airy and fed by a sparkling spring — and here stood the young oak tree.

History tells us a battle took place on the morning of October 4th. It was warm and foggy which added greatly to the confusion that followed. The well-laid plans of General Washington came to naught. Both sides had many losses and, in true Army tradition, buried their fallen heroes. The Hessians were brought to Neglee's Hill and interred under the oak tree. Today, two hundred years later, it is said some of these unhappy fallen can be seen walking in the shade of the oak tree and, occasionally, in the drawing room at "Loudoun." Thomas Armat built "Loudoun" for his son, Thomas Wright Armat, on this ground in 1796. The oak tree, the Hessian soldiers and "Loudoun" are all with us in the year of our Lord 1977.

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The Mount Airy Schooldays of Charles Fleury Bien-Aimé Guillou

By LISABETH M. HOLLOWAY, MS in LS*

This article, and its subsequent installments, represents an effort to collate existing accounts of the small but influential academy which occupied Chief Justice William Allen's great house "Mount Airy" from 1807 to 1835. (Now, of course, the site is occupied by the Lutheran Theological Seminary.) Guillou's first-hand "reminiscence," recently come to light, has led to other materials both in manuscript and print. To some extent, we can reconstruct the characters and personalities of the school's five somewhat singular Principals. Later we can report Guillou's precise descriptions of the great house itself in its latter days, and its skylarking schoolboys, with something of the talented and eccentric faculty. Lastly will be noted the subsequent careers of its rather illustrious alumni. For many years, almost to the end of the century, their sunny Mount Airy boyhood lingered in the memories of generals and admirals, business magnates, and political figures in North and South America, in Europe, and other far places.

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During the summer of 1974 a large collection of manuscripts, drawings, and other memorabilia unexpectedly came into the possession of the Library of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. Charles F. B. Guillou, 1813-1899, an American naval surgeon of French descent, was little known except for a few scattered reminiscences and his granddaughter-in-law's romantic preface to his published drawings of the California area in the late 1840's. Toward the end of his long and colorful life, he composed several "Reminiscences," at the request of his daughter, he said, for his infant grandsons. The longest — 89 pages of neatly-written foolscap — concerns his recollections of, and judgments on, eight years' attendance at Mount Airy College seven decades before.[1]

Not much remains of this short-lived and rather small academy beyond reminiscence and reputation. In its heyday it had at most 125 students per year. Drawing from a limited clientele — impoverished French emigrés, a few American Catholic families of means, and aspirants to military and naval careers —Mount Airy produced between 1807 and 1835 an impressive percentage of graduates who achieved high place in the Army and Navy, the Church, both Catholic and Protestant, business and politics. Such names as du Pont, Ingersoll, Biddle, Meade, Girard, Drayton, Kenner and Ducachet appear on its rolls, alongside those of South American families of consequence. The faculty, according to one of them, John A. Guitman (later major-general, USA, and governor of Mississippi) were "all young men [with] many wild schemes." Nevertheless, several of them realized their schemes, wild or not, and became men of prominence.

Two of the school's five Principals, Brosius and Constant, were well-trained professional teachers of ability. Two, Bouchard and Roumfort (father and son) left behind them reputations no more than ambivalent at best; the fifth, Alden Partridge, ablest and most controversial of all, made no contribution to the school except to close it down. The house which it occupied, "Mount Airy," was one of two mid-18th century mansions built along the outer reaches of "the Great Road." Unlike its counterpart, Cliveden, fortunately still surviving, Mount Airy came into the hands of a succession of owners and lease-holders, and fell victim to the Victorian passion for "modernity" before the end of its first century.

Guillou's detailed reminiscence, though biased, has provided clues to other manuscript and printed references to Mount Airy, from which a clearer picture begins to emerge. No collection of "official" papers has been found; only the manuscript "Roll of Students, October 28, 1822 to July 12, 1828" at Eleutherian Mills Historical Library, and printed prospectuses of 1813 (broadside, Eleutherian Mills); of January 1826 (15 p., Eleutherian Mills); of April 3, 1826 (19 p., Germantown Historical Society); and of May 26, 1827 (24 p., American Philosophical Society Library.)

Published accounts exist in some number,[2] largely based on hearsay and recollection, repeating a number of statements not borne out by the documentary evidence, such as it is. Perhaps further source material will come to light.

* * * * *

In September, 1820, a very small seven-year-old reluctantly left home to join his two elder brothers at boarding school. Charles Guillou was born in Philadelphia July 26, 1813, the third surviving son of Victor-Gabriel and Acélie Faure Guillou, French refugees from Santo Domingo. He learned his ABC's from "the venerable widow Pascale," then graduated at five to the higher lore of Mlle. Emily Thouron, whose "watchful eye and ready ferule" introduced him to numbering beyond twelve and multiplication above twice five. He remembered being frightened into a faint by his sister's mischievous friend Caroline Auzé, playing "ghost" in a crumb-cloth and broomstick; and he and his brothers had had a sharp lesson in refugee economy when they dumped the family's supply of firewood down a well. He had watched an overheated tramp die on the street after a drink of cold water from the pump. The alert, imaginative, undersized boy who was sent off to Mount Airy was already an acute observer with an unusual memory.

The Guillous had been Santo Domingan planters in

coffee and sugar for nearly a hundred years when Victor-Gabriel was sent to school in France at the age of seven. When he returned, twelve years later, Santo Domingo was in the throes of slave insurrection. Two years afterwards, in 1796, fulfilling betrothal plans made by their fathers on the night of her birth, he married 14-year-old Acélie Faure. With her sister Josephine and others, she was soon spirited away to Maryland, while Victor-Gabriel fought on till 1803, seeing his father and brother killed in the vain struggle to save their plantations.

When at last Victor joined his wife, according to family legend, he gained the friendship of Chief Justice Marshall, who lent the destitute little family a house in Fredericktown, Maryland. Later he attempted to teach Greek and Latin at the University of Virginia, but his pronunciation and his limited English did not suit. On moving to Philadelphia, he joined the numerous ranks of the *petits-maîtres,* refugee teachers of dancing, fencing, music and French, who created and supplied a surprising demand for these aristocratic accomplishments. He never ceased to long for the plantation-life to which he had been bred, and three times attempted ventures of this kind in Florida, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, where he died in 1841.

The resilient Acélie bore seventeen children, according to family legend. Nine survived to maturity: five sons, Victor (born 1805 or 1806, died before 1851), Constant (1812-1872, a well-known lawyer in Philadelphia), Charles, Alfred (died 1841), and René (a Philadelphia businessman); and four daughters, Philippina (1804?-1898, married John de Milhau of New York), Acélie (teacher, married Dr. Joseph Togno, settled in Charleston, S.C. before the Civil War); Héloise (d. 1843, married William Vaughn Pettit); and Elizabeth (d. 1858 in Texas; married John Thibault). From the late 1820's to 1847, with the help of her daughter Elizabeth, Acélie conducted a ladies' seminary in Philadelphia. She died about 1860, at the home of her son Constant.

*****

The Principals of Mount Airy

Francis Xavier Brosius[3] opened Mount Airy Seminary, as it was known during his tenure, in 1807. (In European sources, he is referred to as "Felix" Brosius; Guillou — who never knew him — says the boys called him "Savers," and he is so entered in the Germantown tax list of 1809.) He was probably not close to the Guillou family, who seem not to have practiced Catholicism actively in Philadelphia, except for the devout Josephine Faure.

Brosius, a native of Strasbourg in holy orders, is first heard of as tutor, in 1790 and before, in the Catholic household of Count Adolphe Droste-Vischering, near Muenster. In this capacity, he came to the notice of Amelia, Princess Gallitzin, wife to the Russian ambassador to the Hague. "A very expert mathematician," Brosius was studying English in Liége, to respond to Bishop John Carroll's call for German-and-English-speaking priests to serve in western Maryland and Pennsylvania. To the Princess, a devout Catholic and anxious mother, Brosius appeared an ideal tutor-companion for her son, Prince Demetrius, whom she proposed to send on a tour of the New World, instead of the standard Grand Tour, both inconvenient and hazardous in revolutionary Europe.

Accordingly, the Princess paid passage, and in October 1792 the priest and the prince disembarked in the raw, unfinished town of Baltimore. Here Bishop Carroll and the prince, no longer the dutiful son, permanently upset the Princess's arrangements. Brosius was detached for parish duty, and Gallitzin, of his own volition, began to study for the priesthood, ultimately spending his life in the backwoods settlements Brosius had originally intended to serve.

It would seem that Brosius was never altogether at home among these unlettered German and Irish farmers. At least once he had to be rescued from militant Protestants by local Catholics. Though he faithfully observed his parish duties, his real vocation seems to have lain in teaching. He established a Latin school at Conewago, Pa., he taught at the Jesuit academy at McSherrytown, Md., and probably at Clermont Seminary near Frankford. By July of 1805, his sister Mary Louisa had arrived in America to join him, and by January, 1807, he had arranged to open Mount Airy:

> The Rev. Mr. Brosius having been urged by his friends to open
>
> A SEMINARY
>
> FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH
>
> offers his services to such parents as are desirous to procure to their children a Classical Education in the French, English, Latin and Greek languages, Ancient and Modern History, Geography, the Use of the Globes and Maps, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, etc. He intends establishing his Seminary a few miles from the city, where proper masters will be engaged in superintend the different classes. He will first confine to a few pupils, in order to enable him to judge how far at the future day he may extend the number. The French will be the predominant language. For admittance and further information the parents are requested to apply at the present residence of Mr. Brosius, No. 28 Pine Street, or at Mr. Stephen Sicard's, No. 130 Arch Street.

On April 29th, after the school has opened, he advertises again:

> . . . Likewise, if desired, dancing, drawing and music. Every exertion will be made to facilitate [the pupils'] progress in learning: wherefore, such children as may not be sufficiently advanced for a regular course of classical education, are attended to in an elementary class.

One wonders how far Catholicism was openly practiced at Mount Airy under Father Brosius. (Griffin cites a tradition "among older Catholics in Germantown," that he "celebrated Mass in a private house between 1809 and 1812.") In Europe, of course, non-Catholics frequently attended schools run by priests or nuns, but in Protestant America at this time only a few Catholic schools maintained a precarious existence, generally at the elementary level, without religious orders to support them. The small, impecunious American Catholic church, with Carroll for many years its sole bishop, continued apprehensive of official and

popular hostility, even in relatively tolerant Pennsylvania. Nevertheless, in the early decades of the 19th century, Catholic education was beginning to reach tentatively into the secondary level at local initiative. This reflected the growth of well-established Protestant religious academies, especially Quaker, and the small private tutoring-establishments of Protestant clergymen, some of which turned into important boarding-schools. Secondary education was almost always privately financed by parents or, rarely, patrons.

Under such circumstances, a classical academy "for the sons of gentlemen," in so impressive a house as Mount Airy, must have constituted a formidable financial undertaking for an immigrant priest without personal resources. No direct evidence has been found as to the source of capital, though there may be a clue in Brosius' list of character and business references: the Reverend Dr. Matthew Carr, incumbent of St. Augustine's Church, and Messrs. Patrick Byrne (1734-1808, retired innkeeper), Stephen Sicard (prosperous dancing-and-fencing instructor), L. Desaque (grocer), John Carrell (1758-1830, retired goldsmith and clockmaker), and Matthew Carey (1760-1839, the famous publisher and bookseller). Perhaps these Catholic laymen, all well-to-do, put up the money among them.

Without doubt, Brosius' mathematical competence, together with his emphasis upon "the French" in speaking and writing, was the chief attraction of the little academy. "The French mathematics," to which Florian Cajori, writing on the history of mathematical education in America, devotes a long chapter, consisted of analytical mathematics, analytical mechanics and astronomy, and descriptive geometry and its applications, as developed at the *École Polytechnique* in Paris toward the end of the 18th century. It was carried across the Atlantic by an impressive number of influential textbooks in French — many used at Mount Airy — by graduates of the Polytechnic, and by such interpreters and exponents as Brosius. Its most immediate impact, reinforced by Bonapartist military prestige, was upon American military education. West Point, the new national academy of military and naval science, promptly adopted the French mathematical curriculum.

One curious little by-product of the new mathematics was the blackboard-and-chalk, a simple device which Yankee ingenuity was rather stubborn about adopting. The Unitarian pastor and educator, Samuel J. May, says that he first saw the blackboard in use in 1813 at Mount Airy, when he would have been sixteen years old — of school age, though not a student at Mount Airy — "in the mathematical school kept by Rev. Francis Xavier Brosius, a Catholic priest from France, who had one suspended on the wall, with lumps of chalk on a ledge below and cloths hanging on either side." Guillou's traumatic geometrical demonstration, the Great Blackboard Incident, of which more anon, confirms the relatively early use of the device.

Nevertheless, the Reverend Mr. May, Charles Guillou, and other chroniclers notwithstanding, by 1813 Father Brosius had left Mount Airy. His departure is dated by the Reverend Patrick Kenny of Philadelphia, in a diary-entry for August 24, 1811: "Father Brosius sold out at Mount Airy and came to town yesterday." About the same time, Brosius wrote to Gallitzin, inquiring whether his sister Mary Louisa and her new husband, Rufino James Lavigne, might profitably take up land near Loretto, Gallitzin's Catholic settlement. Might he, Brosius, then "renounce the world, which I do not love and have never loved," and assist Gallitzin in the parish? Gallitzin, the practical backwoods missionary, did not encourage the mathematician. From occasional references by Father Kenny, Gallitzin would seem to have remained in or near Philadelphia until June of 1812.

In December of that year, Jean-Louis Lefebvre de Cheverus, Bishop of Boston, wrote to Archbishop Carroll: "The good and amiable Mr. Brosius has a few young men to whom he gives lessions of mathematicks. I begin to hope he may be enabled to remain with us. What a pity his health is so precarious." Again, March 18, 1814: "Mr. Brosius has been approved by the University of Cambridge as a Teacher of Mathematics, and he is going to reside near the College. He has now got 38 scholars who pay him $10 per quarter. . . ." The catalogues of Harvard University show Brosius as "permitted by the Corporation to teach such students as so desired," from 1814 to 1815. In 1815, Joseph Octave Plessis, Bishop of Quebec, records breakfasting with the "Abbé" Brosius at Brookline, Massachusetts, mentioning his "infirmities," which have now

> reduced him to the teaching of mathematics. . . . He has rented a fine spacious house belonging to the vice-president of the United States, for which he pays annually three or four hundred dollars, and has to support himself and his numerous relations on nothing but the profit he may realize on five or six pupils who are at the same time his boarders. He is blessed with great urbanity and a most uncommon evenness of humor. In a word, he is one of those rare persons who know how to capture and retain the favor of all those with whom they have to deal.

In 1815, George Ticknor, the educator, having trouble finding anyone in Boston to teach him German (!), is recommended to Brosius, who agrees to help him, though warning that Alsatians do not pronounce German correctly.

In May of 1817, Brosius wrote from Brussels to Mathew Carey that he and the Lavignes have established themselves there, Lavigne having bought the Belgian rights to the new process of lithography, and that the family at last has prospects of better times.

In spite of all his vicissitudes of health, geography and family finances, Brosius seems to have found time and means to prepare and publish mathematical work. In 1813 he edited Tiberius Cavallo's *Elements of Natural or Experimental Philosophy,* (Philadelphia, Dobson), adding notes from other authors; this work went into several editions, the fifth appearing in 1832. In 1815 he issued *A New, Easy, and Concise Method of Finding the Latitude by Taking Double Altitudes of the Sun* (Boston, printed by Hilliard and Metcalf). After his return to Europe, he published short essays on calculus and on cubic equations, the last of which appeared in 1832. No indication has been found as to the

dates of his birth and death, or the sources of his mathematical training.

Louis-Antoine de Roumfort Bouchard Bourgeaux,[4] Principal of Mount Airy during the single school year 1811-1812, has escaped the notice of all the school's published historians except Townsend Ward. In Guillou's manuscript, he is unsympathetically represented as an uncouth, unlettered farmer, working at Girard's "Place on the Neck," south of Philadelphia, and recommended by Girard to Blondin Constant, third Principal, as farmer at Mount Airy. Furthermore, says Guillou, Bouchard's pretensions to an aristocratic heritage in France — even to having been a colonel of Sansculottes, which is hardly the same thing — were exceedingly shadowy. In reality, says Guillou, Bouchard's only claims to aristocratic connections were through his wife, herself merely the dependant of a noble house, whom he had rescued from a revolutionary prison by marrying her. Supposedly they emigrated directly to Philadelphia with their young son Auguste, whom Mme. Bouchard educated and supported in humble circumstances in the city, while her husband labored on the land. (While the reader of Guillou's sometimes supercilious animadversions is glad to catch him out now and then, it must be admitted that the Bouchards do not emerge unscathed from critical scrutiny either.)

From examination of such other sources as the writer has been able to put together — under highly knowledgeable guidance — the family first comes to American notice in November, 1805. Madame Victor du Pont, writing to her friend Madame Gabriel Manigault, particularly recommends to her the very deserving Madame Bouchard, newly come to New York with plans to open "un petit commerce du modes." Monsieur Bouchard, "a worthy man, is a former soldier"; they had a pretty fortune which they have lost; they have only limited means, and have been recommended to the du Ponts, who find their attentions rather trying. Nevertheless, Madame Bouchard is a hardworking person: she is also desirous of boarding two or three young persons to whom she may teach French and music. (As time goes on, Madame du Pont's opinion of Monsieur Bouchard diminishes, but she retains her respect for Madame.)

By February of 1807, Madame's fashion success has attracted the satirical notice — and the inspired advertising — of Washington Irving and his friends, who describe her in the third number of *Salmagundi* as "an intrepid little woman, fresh from the head-quarters of fashion and folly." In the battle for "supreme direction of caps, bonnets, flowers, feather and tinsel" it is "the prevailing opinion that Mme. Bouchard will carry the day, because she wears a wig, has a long nose, talks French, loves onions, and because she does not charge above ten times as much for a thing as it is worth." Whether her fashions grew stale, or her communications with Paris lapsed, or even because her talented advertisers turned their attention elsewhere, Madame's business declined abruptly and the family moved to Philadelphia, possibly in fear of creditors.

Perhaps she is the "Lewis [Louise?] Boucherie" listed in the Philadelphia directory for 1808 as "teacher of music"; perhaps her husband is the Antoine Boucherie whose naturalization is supposed to have taken place on April 26, 1809 in the Court of Common Pleas; in any case, on October 30, 1809, Mme. du Pont reports to her friend that the unhappy Bouchards appear "at the brink of the abyss, although they have still a few interested friends." (The *famille Bouchard-Roumfort* seems to have thoroughly understood the value of a few interested friends.)

Describing himself as a "former French officer having served in that capacity in the American War and now a citizen of the U.S.," Antoine Bouchard addressed the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania on the 6th of February 1810. (The writer has not been able to discover the name Bouchard or Roumfort — with any appropriate forename or other surname attached — in the long, unindexed lists of French officers and men serving in the American Revolution which the French government issued in 1903. This is by no means conclusive. But it is suggestive that later accounts of the family, while repeating the claim to aristocratic origins, never repeat this claim to American Revolutionary service.) Bouchard sent the Trustees (without references of any kind) a handwritten "Prospectus of an Establishment particularly intended for the students of the University of Pennsylvania, who are so circumstanced as to be obliged during the course of their studies as to be put in private houses." The Establishment was to be modelled "on the plan of former establishments at Paris," and, "agreeable to [their] pattern [to] be a school for morals." Besides French literature and conversation, the University students would be "diverted and instructed" by "drawing of civil and military architecture," (which certainly suggests some theoretical military training in Bouchard's background), and all at a cost of $68 per quarter. "Economy, order & cleanliness" would be "inherent to the plan, as would the "exercises of piety," and, of course, board and washing. Bouchard's prospectus, while of course not directly concerned with Mount Airy, gives us our only glimpse of his educational theories.

The Trustees referred the matter to committee, and on its favorable report, endorsed the plan at their March meeting. In the 1811 directory Antoine Bouchard appears as proprietor of a boarding school at No. 1, North 10th Street, not far from the University. Presumably the Establishment prospered that year, for when Brosius "sold out" at Mount Airy in 1811, Bouchard was able to purchase his interest.

By July 1812, Bouchard was dead, and his "intrepid" wife, whose given names turn out to be Esprit-Jeanne-Louise, had deposited the first papers relative to his estate. The assets, including payments on behalf of scholars, cash-in-hand and furniture and equipment — the study-room had 40 desks — came to something over $6,650. Liabilities, on the other hand, totalled nearly $9,200, including $445 still owing to Brosius, and $1,000 to Willing Francis, father of two pupils, for notes which he had endorsed. To N. G. Dufief, bookseller and professor of French in Philadelphia, was owed $250, plus about $138 for books. No debts to the du Pont family are shown, and no connection between Stephen Girard and Bouchard is to be found either in this document, or in available indexes to Girard's

enormous correspondence. Instead of Bouchard's having been employed by Constant as farmer, clearly it was the other way about: Constant was teacher under Bouchard. (Constant and one William R. Thompson, also a teacher, drew up the inventory, expressly naming Bouchard as Principal. This is the earliest important surviving manuscript bearing on the College, except for a few students' letters, and, of course, printed references.)

The third Principal, *P. F. Blondin Constant,*[5] often miscalled Benjamin Condon Constant — perhaps through a misreading of his rather careless signature — was well known to the Guillou family.

> This gentleman was also an Alsatian, born near Strasburg, but educated in Paris, France, where he had received his diploma as duly qualified Teacher. He had near relatives in Paris. He was a bachelor, and remained such through life. In 1838 he returned to France, and was residing with his nephews at the time of his death, in the early forties.
>
> Mr. Constant had been a teacher of French in Philadelphia before making the venture of Mount Airy. During this period there grew up a friendship between himself and my father. . . . There existed some arrangement . . . by which my father's services in teaching dancing during the summer months, and later on the work of my brother Constant and myself . . . balanced in part or in whole our expenses of education and maintenance.
>
> Mr. Constant on taking possession of the school, made several changes in the organization; principally by the extension of its schedule of studies. He changed the name of the institution: instead of "Seminary" he called it "Collegiate Institute" situated at Mount Airy, and this was soon abbreviated to "Mount Airy College." Under this title it was known until 1826. At this time, under the combined management of Blondin Constant and Auguste Louis Roumfort [i.e., Auguste Bouchard, son of Antoine], it further changed its name to the "American Classical and Military Lyceum," adding military instruction to its other educational departments. Under this title it continued to exist until its final dissolution in 1835.
>
> Blondin Constant withdrew from the partnership and the school in 1828; leaving the establishment under the sole management of Auguste Roumfort. . . .

Townsend Ward in 1869 remarks that Constant, like the Roumforts, "had a title in France"; if correct, it is surprising that Guillou, a lifelong admirer of the aristocracy, did not mention the fact. James Stokes Biddle, a former student, reports that Constant, "a Frenchman of good abilities, . . . went to Havana [after leaving Mount Airy] and was private tutor in the Scull family, an offshoot of the Sculls of this city." An advertisement in *The Catholic Herald* in 1834 places Constant as head of the Western Academy, "a select school for boys" lately established at St. John's Church in Philadelphia. His last extant letter, to the writer's knowledge, is to be found in the papers of Samuel F. du Pont, also a former pupil: on July 23, 1838 Constant wrote from Philadelphia of recent reverses, and noted that he had money left for only five weeks' board. The exact date of his return to France, and of his death, are not known.

1. Unless otherwise indicated, this paper is based on "Reminiscence No. 1," Guillou Papers, Historical Collections, Library of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. Mary Guillou Redfield's "Recollections," a typewritten account compiled about 1935, recently added to the Guillou Papers, includes some family legends not mentioned by Charles.

2. Published accounts of Mount Airy include: 1) Townsend Ward, article headed "City Intelligence," *The Philadelphia Age,* v. 7, no. 13, p. 1, column 4, August 26, 1869. 2) S. F. Hotchkin, *Ancient and Modern Germantown, Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill* (Philadelphia, Ziegler, 1889), pp. 363-374. Hotchkin collected and excerpted other accounts of Mount Airy. 3) E. W. Hocker, *Germantown: 1683-1933* (Philadelphia, The Author, 1933) pp. 139-140. 4) M. I. J. Griffin, "Rev. F. X. Brosius' Mount Airy Seminary, 1806-1813," *American Catholic Historical Researches* 5:155-159, 1888, brings together a number of Catholic archival references and perpetuates an error in dating. 5) J. McA. Harris' "Mount Airy," *Germantowne Crier* 20 (1):13-16, March 1968, is primarily concerned with the 19th-century history of the mansion and its site.

3. This account of Brosius is based upon Daniel Sargent's *Mitri, or, The Story of Prince Demetrius Augustine Gallitzin, 1770-1840* (New York, Longmans Green, 1945); and on various references in *American Catholic Historical Society Records,* 1901-1911, detailed in its Index to Vols. 1-31. Reference is made to Florian Cajori's *The Teaching and History of Mathematics in the United States,* (Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1890); and to "American Educational Biography: Rev. Samuel J. May," in Barnard's *American Journal of Education* 16:141, 1866. The writer is much indebted to Rev. Thomas Fahey for counsel and interest in the search for materials relating to Brosius.

4. Antoine Bouchard's "Prospectus" is deposited with the Trustees' Papers, Archives of the University of Pennsylvania, and was brought to the writer's attention by Francis James Dallett, University Archivist. The correspondence of Mme. du Pont, in the Winterthur Mss. at Eleutherian Mills Historical Library, Greenville, Delaware, was brought to light by Mrs. Betty-Bright P. Low, who has published some of it in *Winterthur Portfolio* informed me of the reference to Mme. Bouchard and her rivalry with Mrs. O'Toole by Washington Irving and his collaborators. This is to be found in *Salmagundi; or, The Whim-whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq. and Others,* by William Irving, James Kirke Paulding, and Washington Irving; 3rd number (Friday, Feb. 18, 1807) under title, "Fashions, by Anthony Evergreen, Gent." The papers *re* administration of Bouchard's estate are held by Register of Wills, County of Philadelphia, as of 1812, File 153, Book L, p. 19. Naturalization papers for Boucherie, indexed under date of April 26, 1809, Court of Common Pleas, Philadelphia, are not to be found at the time of the writer's search.

5. P. F. Blondin Constant's letter to Samuel F. du Pont is held by Eleutherian Mills Historical Library (W9-3810).

To be continued

An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.
Benjamin Franklin



JUNIOR BILLMEYER HOUSE

Daniel Billmeyer House—6504 Germantown Ave. The Junior Billmeyer House, a beautiful example of a more formal Georgian colonial architecture. There is a lovely panelled stairway and several beautifully carved mantels. The house was built shortly before 1800 by Michael Billmeyer, Germantown's second printer, who lived directly opposite. He built it for his oldest son who had just been married. Unfortunately, before he could bring his bride to the new home, he tragically died.

The Battle of Germantown 1777 1977

By MARGARET BACON BOSTWICK

One day last winter a knock on the door at the Conyingham-Hacker House (the Society's Museum) announced a gentleman from England. He wished to compare a plaque (map), which he understood we owned, with theirs at home.

The plaque is on the wall at the entrance of the Conyingham-Hacker House and is made of plaster. It is well worth studying. The gentleman took from his pocket a description of the British owned plaque which seemed just about the same as ours, but we compared details. Our plaque is about three foot square. Starting at the left bottom corner is the Schuylkill and goes north to Barren Hill, then west through Whitemarsh to Limekiln Pike, south to about Wayne Junction, and back to the Schuylkill. The Wissahickon is clearly marked by indentation with several of the streams entering it. Germantown Road, Ridge Pike and Limekiln Pike are also clearly marked. A few of the side roads such as Queen lane, Shoemaker's Lane and Washington Lane are shown. Along Germantown Road are small square blocks indicating the houses around which the troups were bivouacked and the battle fought. One can pick out many of them even though they are not individually marked.

Our Museum Complex is marked on the lower middle of the plaque below Indian Queen Lane. Each General's name and the troups he commanded are clearly marked such as Sullivan coming down Limekiln Pike, Lafayette at Barren Hill and Washington on Germantown Road.

The British came north on Germantown Road — these consisted of General Howe's troups and the Hessians. All sides converged around the Chew House where the battle raged.

The Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes are liberally sprinkled over the plaque designating which army was at the mark of a skirmish shown by crossed sabers.

After careful study and almost literally fighting the Battle of Germantown over again, we decided that there were no serious discrepancies in either map. We parted understanding friends.

Mrs. Bostwick is Director of the Germantown Historical Society's Museum.



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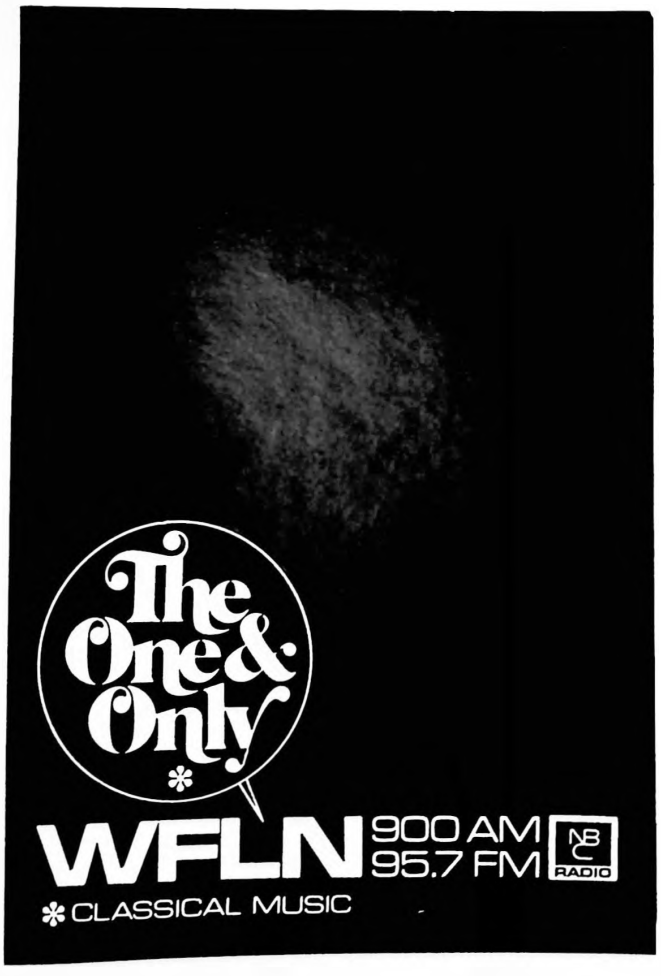
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Alden Park 94
Allen's 78
Boardman-Hamilton Co. 75
The Boswell House 78
Connor Co., Martin F. 92
Cunningham Piano Co. 78
Durkin World Travels 92
Eldon Press, Inc., ... 74
Fidelity Bank, The 74
First Pennsylvania Co. 93
Germantown Insurance Co. 95
Germantown Savings Bank ..... *BC*
Girard Bank 95
Groben's Sea Food 74
Hamilton-Reliance Savings Ass'n. 76
Ivy Hill Cemetery 95
J. Henderson Jones & Wm. J. Niblick 3rd 78
Kane and Brown 95
Kirk and Nice 80
Koelle Greenwood Co. 92
Liberty Federal Savings & Loan Ass'n. 93
Provident National Bank 75
Robertson & Sons, Inc., George 78
Schuck Electric 86
St. Martin's Coal Co., Inc. 92
Winder, J. Russell 93
WFLN 94
Wooden Eagle, Inc. 86

The Edwin C. Jellett Collection

Our library is the fortunate owner of the entire manuscript collection and the published works of Edwin C. Jellett, a noted scientific botanist and an authority on horticulture. Mr. Jellett lived most of his life in Germantown, in the late 19th century and the early 20th. He was for many years an active officer and president of the Germantown Horticultural Society.

His writings include:

Germantown, its Founders and Progenitors — 1903
Germantown Old and New — Its Rare and Notable Plants
Grumblethorpe and its Garden
Personal Recollections of Mr. Kite
The Winter Flora of Germantown
British Notes — a record of a trip to England in the summer of 1894 (Five bound volumes of notes)
Eight volumes of photographs, newspaper clippings and manuscript notes related to the Wissahickon, collected by the author.

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