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LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MEMBERSHIP MEETING PROGRAM

1972

January 20, 1972

ANDREW K. GRUGAN, President, late 19th and early 20th century glass lantern slides from the collections of the Museum
"A Magic Lantern Show of Yesterday"

February 17, 1972

MISS VIRGINIA LONG
"Antique and Victorian Jewelry"

March 11, 1972

TOUR of Society members and friends to the New York Coliseum Antique Show and Garden Display

March 16, 1972

JERSEY SHORE MEMBERS
Slide Show — "Historic Jersey Shore" — by Mrs. Olive Cooney

April 20, 1972 (6:30 p.m. dinner, Lycova Grange Hall)

MISS ELIZABETH HOMET, Secretary of French Azilum, Inc.
"French Azilum Today"

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COVER PICTURE — Original pencil drawing of Picture Rocks, dated September 6, 1916, by J. Wesley Little. See story on page 22 relating to the early history of Picture Rocks.

## GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

It has been nearly a year since I assumed the presidency of your Society, and I would like to take this opportunity to share some thoughts on the many happenings during that period of time.

We regret the loss of several interested members who worked very hard during their lifetimes to promote the work of your Society and whose interest was an inspiration to many of us. We are very grateful for the continuing efforts of the other members who volunteer much time and expertise in improving our Society and its stewardship in the community. We are most happy to welcome the new members who have joined in the past few months, and we ask them to take a serious interest in our activities.

The regular monthly membership meetings of the Society have continued to meet with success, and the new series of Sunday afternoon Musicales in the Museum is already receiving a great deal of attention from the community at large. This series is being co-sponsored by your Society and the Williamsport Music Club.

Your Museum has received many fine gifts during the past year, the largest single gift being the complete archives of the Keystone Shortway Association presented to the Society by Senator Z. H. Confair and Mr. Charles E. Noyes. This one specialized collection will be invaluable to us for educational purposes in the future.

We have enjoyed this year's activity, and hope that we can expect continued support and enthusiasm from all of our Society members and friends.

Andrew K. Grugan, President

LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## DR. CHARLES LOSE

Proudly the people of Montoursville hail Dr. Charles Lose. To the people of this locality his name stands for — scholarship, sportsmanship, statesmanship, humorist, naturalist, conservationist, and many more fine characteristics rolled into one man. Dr. Charles Lose was born in Montoursville, March 9, 1856, and died there March 9, 1940.

Montoursville must have been an ideal place to live in the 1860's to hear him tell it, with a half square mile of town and six times as much countryside. There were swimming holes, fishing pools, and places for skating and coasting in the winter. It was the country around the town with its fields and streams that most interested him.

One of the favorite pastimes was to watch the log rafts that were brought down the Loyalsock as they passed thru the chute in the dam just below the old covered bridge. Sometimes the boys would be permitted to board the raft and make the perilous trip thru the chute with the raftsmen. While the log drive was on, Charley and the boys would play truant from school so they would not miss the excitement.

Another bit of fun was to ride the canal boat from the lower lock up to the upper lock, which was two miles. Once a boat tied up at the dock near town which contained a load of white gravel gathered on the seashore and intended for roofing purposes. Pieces of the bright colored shells were mixed with the gravel, and before the captain knew it, the boys had carried off most of the cargo.

When the canal would be filled with muddy water the boys would line the bank, each one eager to see who could catch the longest string of "catties" for the evening meal.

Their old swimming hole was under the covered bridge. Here the water was very deep and only the older boys swam there. The boys were promoted from the canal when they became expert swimmers. Tying hard knots in a boy's shirt or plastering

him with mud when he started to get dressed was always part of the performance.

Did you ever read the book, "The Vanishing Trout"? He certainly must have loved the Loyalsock, as we do, for he wrote so many tales of his favorite fishing haunts. His descriptions were so vivid of the beauty of the fields and hills and streams that when he painted those word pictures of his, you almost forgot that he was blind in later life when he wrote them.

He said that no other place gave him so many hours of fine sport and genuine pleasure than Lewis's Riffle on the Loyalsock. This riffle was long and narrow, deep and rapid, and only when the creek was at its lowest stage could it be waded readily. There was a big log that lay half buried near the head of the riffle, and here was where the trout would rise to take a minnow or a fly. This must have been the place where he caught a trout that had so many hooks in it that he sold it for scrap iron.

Lewis's Riffle took its name from the Lewis family, whose four generations have dwelt there along the Loyalsock. At one time they owned the whole mountainside, including Eagles Mere Lake.

Charles Lose would tell the story of old Mose Lewis, who was long and narrow like the riffle named for him. He was also a pessimist who believed that "there ain't no more fish in the crick" and "there's more fishermen than fish."

Dr. Lose was a family man. He was married to Rebecca Johnson from Williamsport, whose father was Judge Henry Johnson. The Lose's had four sons and three daughters. Every one of the boys became engineers. He always found time to have a lot of pleasure with his children — camping, hunting, and fishing. There was one hunting incident that the boys would tease him about, and that was the time he supposedly shot a bear and it turned out to be a black and white cat.

His wife, Rebecca, was a civic-minded person as well as a good wife and mother.

She was active in organizing the P.T.A. of Montoursville, and that is why it is named the Rebecca Lose Association. She also did some writing and had some magazine publications.

Montoursville Borough can thank Dr. Lose for the lovely school grounds and park, for he was the one who bedevilled the school board to buy the property.

Charles Lose was quite a humorist, too, and always could arouse a hearty laugh in any audience. Here is a story that he told on himself: "When he was visiting schools in Lycoming County rural sections, he stopped at a small rural hotel for the night. After caring for his horse he engaged a room, had his dinner, and spent the evening hours in the lobby. The hotel had but one kerosene lamp for the entire building, so he did not go to his room until ready to retire.

"The innkeeper took the lamp and guided Dr. Lose to a large front room with a high ceiling. In the room was a four-poster bed and a large dresser. Dr. Lose carefully surveyed the room as best he could in the dim light and mentally marked the location of the bed. The innkeeper returned to the lobby, and Dr. Lose began undressing in the dark.

"When he was ready for bed he groped his way to where he had located the bed, but was somewhat embarrassed when he was unable to find it. He walked around and around the dark room, but the bed did not appear to be there.

"A very much disgusted Dr. Lose finally located his clothing, dressed, and returned to the lobby. There he asked the innkeeper to bring the lamp to his room so he could locate the bed. This the good man did, tho he seemed somewhat amused with the superintendent who could not find a large four-poster bed.

"Again Dr. Lose took a good look at the room, particularly the bed, and once again dismissed the innkeeper. When he was finally ready for bed, he confidently walked to its location, but again it had disappeared. Once more he searched the dark thoroughly, but to no avail. Grimly he dressed and went downstairs. This time he insisted that

the innkeeper hold the lamp at the doorway until he was safely in bed. When the innkeeper left, a rattling noise came from the attic, which he attributed to rats or squirrels.

"As he was dozing off he felt a strange sensation. The bed seemed to be moving. He immediately jumped out and landed eight feet below on the floor. Sounds of laughter came from the attic. The innkeeper brought the lamp and Dr. Lose took a good look at the four-poster bed which was cleverly wired so that it could be pulled to the ceiling by some boys who liked to play a joke on the County Superintendent."

Dr. Lose was a school man. He was educated in the public schools of Montoursville, graduated from Lafayette College, Bucknell University, and the Horace Mann School in New York. Can you imagine that he was teaching school at the age of 17, back in 1873? He continued his educational career until his retirement in 1919. In 1877 he was principal of the Montoursville schools; from 1881-1885 he was principal of the Muncy Normal School; from 1885-1891 he was Superintendent of the Lycoming County Schools; from 1891-1895 he was supervising principal of Phillipsburg; from 1896-1913 he was Superintendent of Williamsport Schools; from 1914-1920 he was principal of the Lock Haven Normal. 1920 was the year that he lost his eyesight in an accident, but even that did not stop him from his very active life. He was President of the Pa. State Education Association, and for sixteen years was a member of the Montoursville School Board.

The Charles Lose Elementary School in Williamsport was named in his honor, which was a fine tribute to pay him while he was still living.

After losing his eyesight he devoted much of his time to writing educational and outdoor articles. Then from 1925-1934 he served in the State Assembly for the Republican Party. Our school children of today can thank him for a number of improvements in the Pennsylvania school laws which he introduced while he was at Harrisburg.



## WIN ELY'S TROUT FLIES

(From "I Go A-Fishing," a collection of poems by Charles Lose)

Win Ely fished the Loyalsock  
From Plunketts Creek to Wallis Run;  
He fished from time of morning star  
Far past the time of setting sun.

He fished the riffle at the bridge  
Where trees were in their light spring  
green;  
He fished the riffle at Cold Watch  
And all the water that ran between.

At dawn he heard the Wilson thrush  
Sing sweet and clear in pipe and trill;  
At dusk he heard the long complaint  
Of solitary whip-poor-will.

All day the dove-like columbine  
Looked down at him from rocky ledge;  
All day the blue forget-me-nots  
Looked up at him from water's edge.

At four o'clock that afternoon,  
A bright new hatch of flies came out,  
That were so luscious and so fat,  
They tempted every leaping trout.

Win Ely made his own trout flies  
Of tinsel, feathers, silk, and hair.  
His gnats and quills, his kings and queens,  
Were natural beyond compare.

He sat him down upon a rock  
Where spring and tree gave drink and  
shade,  
And while he rested there content  
Three imitation flies he made.

Win Ely ne'er in skill surpassed  
His handiwork of that fair day,  
For when his flies were all complete  
They took to wing and flew away.

## WILLIAMSPORT'S MUSICAL HERITAGE

## 1830 Marks Arrival of First Piano in Borough

(This is the first installment of a series of excerpts taken from "The History of Music in Williamsport," written in 1957 by Mary L. Russell of the Lycoming College faculty and published in the Sun-Gazette.)

In the early 19th century when Williamsport was a village with a population of about 200, its inhabitants were so busily engaged in providing the practical necessities of life that there was very little time to think of culture and the arts.

Although there were no musicians by trade in the first few years of the borough, the first settlers used their voices in church, in the fields, and in the taverns.

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Shortly after 1800, one Abram Grafius migrated to Williamsport from York. Among his household possessions was an instrument called a spinet. Upon the marriage of his daughter to Joseph B. Anthony,

the instrument was included in her wedding dowry. Subsequently it became the property of a man referred to as "Old Johnny Seitz," a person whom everyone knew and whose performances on the spinet were the admiration of the town.

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The earliest music instruction was probably through the well-known "singing school," an institution of early American life. As early as 1821 the first advertisement appeared in the Gazette and Bulletin informing the public that:

"Charles Low respectfully informs the gentlemen and ladies of the borough of Williamsport and its vicinity

that he intends to teach sacred music during the present winter and solicits the attention of those who wish to be taught at the Court House on Thursday evening next at early candlelight."

Through the efforts of Mr. Low and probably others who offered instruction, an interest was developed in forming a regular group to enjoy choral singing. In 1833 an organization called the Williamsport Singing Society was formed.

The year 1830 witnessed the arrival of the first piano in Williamsport. An unknown writer contributing a column of reminiscences to the Gazette and Bulletin in 1881 was the owner. The piano was brought from Milton where it was made and it created quite a sensation among the local residents. In the words of the writer:

"When the piano sounded out its music, crowds of people would assemble in front of the house and hang about the windows. In front of a great many of the residences were posts eight or ten feet apart with a rail from post to post. On these rails the boys would perch like black birds on a fence."

With the advent of pianos there was naturally a desire on the part of many to learn to play, and it is thought that the first piano teacher was a Mrs. Griswold who taught at the corner of Market and Fifth Streets. Other early piano teachers were a Mrs. Catherine Jones, widow of a Presbyterian clergyman, and her daughter Eudora.

With the establishment of Dickinson Seminary in 1848, greater advantages in music were offered.

Opportunities to hear public concerts were rare in the first half of the 19th century. Theater accommodations were provid-

ed in Doeblers Hall, the third floor of a building located in Market Square.

\*\*\*

One of the first known public concerts in the city was a performance in September, 1852, by the famous Norwegian violinist, Ole Bull. According to an account of the concert in the Lycoming Democrat, the performance was given in the Court House with Ole Bull using fiddles belonging to Williamsporters Walter Willard and Daniel Repasz.

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Louis Moreau Gottschalk, first American Pianist of any note, appeared in concert in Williamsport during the Civil War, 10 years after Ole Bull's performance. By 4 o'clock the day of the concert, the town was in a commotion, for a dispatch had been received announcing the invasion of the state by three columns of rebels. The following excerpt describing his stay in Williamsport is found in Gottschalk's diary:

"I go out into the streets. The crowds multiply and increase every moment. A voluntary military band draws up in battle array on the principal square. Is it necessary for me to say that it is composed of Germans? There are five of them — a cornet with a broken-down constitution; a cavernous trombone; an ophicleide too low; a clarinet too high; a sour-looking fifer — all of an independent temper, but united for the moment through their hatred of time and their desire to cast off its yoke. I must confess that they succeeded to the extent that I am doubtful whether they played in a major or minor key."

## DO YOU KNOW ?

How many readers of The Journal know that Williamsport is located on the exact meridian with Washington? Two stones in Brandon Park mark this north and south line, and if it were extended south far

enough, it would pass through the national observatory in the national capital. The stones referred to are near the Market Street side in the northern part of the park.



## MEMORIES OF WARRENSVILLE AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

This is not a history of Warrensville, but rather a portrait of the town and some of its people during the period of the 1890's and early 1900's.

In 1802 Samuel Carpenter cleared the land now occupied by the village and erected the first log house, which was still standing in the 1900's and occupied by the Aderhold family. In 1841 a John Weisel laid out the village in regular form with streets and alleys. Mr. Carpenter owned a flour mill, a feed mill, a lumber mill, and a carding machine shop, and until 1842 the village was known as Carpenter's Mill. On July 23, 1842, the first post office was established; and, since it had to have a name, Warrensville was selected in honor of General Warren of the Revolutionary War.

It was a town surrounded by farms. Its only natural resource was timber on the mountains north of the town. Yet with the timber and the farms it was almost self-sustaining.

No names were given to the two streets of the village. The main one followed the Mill Creek Road, on either side of which were dwelling houses, two general stores, a one-room schoolhouse, and a building commonly called the Band Hall, which was used for band practice, voting, community meetings, and social affairs. There were several blacksmith shops, a barber shop, a wagon maker's shop, a harness shop, a carpenter's shop, two churches, and offices for three doctors and a veterinarian. On the road leading to Loyalsockville were a shoe repair shop, post office, butcher shop, and a flour and feed mill. Farther south and across the creek were a saw mill, a flour and feed mill, and a cider press. At the top of the hill on the road toward Loyalsockville was the Christian Hill School, two cemeteries, and the Christian Church which was opened only on special occasions. Below the south end of the village and east of the creek in a beautiful woods was the picnic grove owned

by farmer Waltz. This ground was used by both churches for their annual picnics and for the annual Eldred Township reunions.

Perhaps the most interesting buildings were the two flour and feed mills with the raceways being fed from Mill Creek. The raceway of the upper mill emptied into the raceway of the lower mill, and it emptied into Mill Creek at the lower end of the village. The lower mill raceway was also used for floating logs to the saw mill. These mills were real engineering feats.

The one-room schoolhouse at the north end of the Main Street served the children of the village. The school term was eight months. The teachers who had trained at the Muncy Normal School received \$20.00 per month, for which they not only had to teach but act as janitors as well. They also had to procure board and lodging.

The area was entirely Protestant and supported two churches, viz: the United Evangelical and the Baptist. The Baptist Church conducted its yearly baptismal service in the dam at the north end of town.

For relaxation and entertainment there were swimming in the swimming hole north of town, fishing for trout in Mill Creek or bass in the Loyalsock, skating on the raceway, sledding on Christian Hill, the completely uniformed Warrensville Cornet Band conducted by Walter Kimble, a baseball team captained by Charles Steiger, numerous church suppers, festivals, and picnics, not to mention hunting deer and bear in the mountains or small game in the fields.

Three days out of the year were very special ones: Decoration Day, Fourth of July, and Hallowe'en. Prior to Decoration Day the two cemeteries were cleaned. On that day there was a parade up Christian Hill to the oak grove on the schoolhouse lot, at which there was an appropriate program in honor of the war dead.

Fourth of July was quite different. From the crack of dawn to sundown Warrensville was one of the noisiest places in the county. From some secret source a small muzzle-loading cannon appeared and two anvils. Powder was placed between the anvils and ignited. In the evening sanity was restored and there was a fireworks display paid for by public subscription.

The Hallowe'en pranks were the worst, and residents were hard put to restore the damage done at times.

Another custom always followed was to serenade, or "bell," the bride and groom on

the night they returned from their honeymoon. Anything that could make a noise was pressed into service, but the real one was a large box resined on the tops of each open side. Then a resined board was pulled back and forth along the top of the box. If anything brought the bride and groom out, this really did; after which the crowd was treated.

*(This is a portion of the narrative prepared by William E. Derone of Williamsport and Mark T. Milnor of Harrisburg who were boyhood friends and residents of Warrensville during the era portrayed herein.)*

## A NIGHT OF HORROR

### Particulars of the Drowning of the Youngmans

*(Article taken from The Semi-weekly Gazette and Bulletin, Williamsport, Pa., Tuesday, June 11, 1889.)*

One of the saddest of the many sad incidents of the terrible flood was the loss of the Youngman families at the Woolen Mills on Antes Creek. George W. Youngman, Jr., who lost his wife and five children, related to a representative of the Gazette and Bulletin, on Saturday, the particulars of the terrible calamity as follows:

#### *Before the Flood*

"We had," he said, "a little commencement of our home school on Friday, and the following visitors were present: Mrs. John F. Carothers, Mrs. J. F. Hull and daughter, and Miss Maggie Pfouts, of Jersey Shore. The latter was the only daughter of a widowed mother. They were our guests. Mrs. James Mahaffey, Mrs. Hall Reighard, and several others were expected to be present, but were detained. Mrs. Hull and Mrs. Carothers left early in the evening. I took them to the station in a wagon and they took the train for Newberry.

"On my return we took tea at the usual hour. Mrs. Youngman entertained them with music until between 9 and 10 o'clock.

It was constantly raining, and I had fears of the dam breaking. We retired at 11 o'clock, but couldn't sleep on account of the violent rain and wind. But having lived along the creek, and being well acquainted with the highest water and knowing the danger lines, and remembering the flood of June, 1881, which was two feet higher than the flood of 1865 — and also having seen the dam break twice, and knowing its height, my brother Will and I rested easy on knowledge of these facts and considered our houses safe, even if the water should reach the highest point.

#### *Early Saturday Morning*

"At 2 a.m. Saturday my wife and I arose, being unable to sleep on account of the violence of the storm. I procured a lantern and an umbrella and went to the creek. The rest of the family and guests were still in bed.

"I called to my brother Will and told him there was danger of the dam breaking. In a few minutes he came out of his house (our houses were situated close to-



gether) with a lantern. We stood at the main bridge near our houses, the creek being bank full, having our hands on the railing and fearing to pass over to arouse Mr. Harmon, who lived on the opposite side. Without warning the bridge suddenly gave way with a crash, and was instantly swept below. We then proceeded up the creek to the next foot bridge opposite the mill, and crossed half way over, but finding it dangerous to proceed, returned. I stopped at my house and reported the stream in a dangerous condition.

"During all this time the rain was pouring down in torrents and the creek was rising very rapidly. When it approached the danger line, we were still four feet higher. We sat upon the porch with our lanterns in hand watching the rising of the angry waters. When they reached the danger line and approached the lower story, my brother went towards his house and said the dam had broken. I then proceeded up the creek to the next foot bridge and crossed half way over, but finding it dangerous to proceed further, returned and woke up Mr. Marcus and family, and also the family of Mr. Bastian. I went to my house and reported that the stream was in a dangerous condition. My brother called at his house and reported the same.

"My brother then called out that he thought the dam had broken, and I replied that I thought so, too, but said the water would recede in a few minutes and we would all be safe.

#### *Scene in the House*

"I immediately entered the house and found all the family and guests up and dressed. I told them I thought the dam had broken and that the water would recede in five minutes. While I was conversing with them and assuring them that there was no immediate danger, I passed through the sitting room and kitchen to look to the safety of the barn and horses and found from eight to ten feet of water passing between the house and the barn with the swiftness of an avalanche. This showed me for the first time that we were cut off from retreat to the mountain.

"I had all the family retire to the school room in the house. The water now began to dash against the house, and floating trees, logs, and other rubbish began to break in the south end of the building. As the water rushed through the house, and as it was struck by floating timbers, it would tremble and cause consternation among the twelve inmates. I endeavored to calm their fears by telling them that the dam had broken and that I momentarily expected the water to begin to fall. But instead of receding it increased in volume, and the floating trees and timber came in greater quantity and force than ever.

"While they were confined in this room, I heard the kitchen and room overhead cut loose from the main building and float away. I said nothing to alarm them, but in two minutes the porch broke loose and floated off, and in less than five minutes more the parlor, hall, and room overhead cut loose from the main building and disappeared in the madly rushing waters. This left a building in which we were imprisoned only 16 by 32 feet in size, with two rooms. Finally the room south of the one in which the family and guests were collected broke away, leaving them in a sixteen-foot room on the north.

"Before this I had become convinced that we must all be lost, and I notified my family and guests that they must prepare to save their lives. I said to the women, 'Doff your superfluous clothing,' which they quickly did.

#### *An Impressive Scene*

"Miss Phelps, the governess, heroically endeavored to calm their fears by declaring that this house and family should not be destroyed. They had carried with them into the room a large family Bible from the flooded room below. She turned to the 2nd verse of the 43rd chapter of Isaiah and read it aloud. Mrs. Youngman turned to her and asked whether she had just opened the Bible at that place. She replied: 'I knew where it was.'

"At this moment the room in which we were gave a lurch to the southward and leaned at an angle of almost forty-five de-

grees. Miss Phelps then went among the frightened friends and with her hands upraised and her face beaming, as it appeared to me, with the radiance of the face of Joan of Arc, and declaring that she knew that this family would and should be certainly saved. I drew her to the window and pointed to the rushing torrent beneath and said, 'Miss Phelps, you have a great deal of faith, but when we drop into that seething cauldron we cannot live a minute.'

#### *The Parting Scene*

She then reiterated the same declaration with great emphasis and solemnity. By this time all were cognizant of their certain death. My daughter Mary came to me and placing her arms about my neck, kissed me and said: '*Papa, we will all go to Heaven together.*' My wife, with her little babe in her arms approached and kissed me and said, 'Are you ready?' I replied, 'I am'. Then she said: '*I am glad.*' Miss Phelps then said, pointing to my wife, 'I *know* what you are,' and she replied, 'I know that *you* are.' I replied I know what the whole of you are!

"The danger had now become more threatening, with the flood still increasing in volume. Miss Phelps now took the keys of her trunk from her pocket, opened it, and seizing her jewels, placed them on her fingers and body, remarking to the rest that this was the hour to wear jewelry!

#### *In the Jaws of Death*

"Satisfied of our fate I tore my necktie off, threw off my gum boots, rolled down my collar and rolled up my sleeves. My wife looked at me with anguish depicted on her countenance and frantically asked me what I was doing. I informed her that I was going to be prepared to save their lives and my own, if possible. My little boy Reynolds did the same.

"Two minutes after Miss Phelps had placed her jewelry on her person and we had made preparation to battle with death, the east side of the room fell into the fierce torrent with a crash, and the twelve inmates were engulfed!

"We all stuck together in the water. I was watching for the moment we would strike to grasp all I could and haul them onto the floating wreck. And looking around for them in the dim twilight of the break of day I saw but two, Reynolds and Gardner. I kept watching for some of them to appear. The wreck proceeded in the torrent in the direction of the creamery some 500 feet below. Here I found Miss Pfouts and hauled her on the wreck in a drowning condition. I brushed the mud from her face and she gasped: 'George, what will we do?' I replied that I told you before our only hope of life was to catch on to some secure tree or leap from the wreck when it struck the banks.

"We were not two minutes in going half a mile when we struck a sharp curve in the creek among a wreck of houses, which were rapidly moving. Just before this two long timbers struck the wreck ahead and it ran under the timbers. The current struck the timbers and one struck me, which I pushed aside. The other sheered from the wreck taking Miss Pfouts and Reynolds with it. Seizing my niece, Emily Hull, I dragged her on the drift dislocating her arm in the effort. She and I were now isolated on this drift until eleven o'clock Saturday morning, not knowing that my brother Will's house had gone, until I found his boy, Walter, in the wreck with me.

"In the scramble for life my son Reynolds exclaimed, 'Don't hold me — save the rest — I can swim!'

"To prevent the little girl, Emily, from perishing I laid her in some hay and lifted her in a tree, where she remained for an hour until the flood subsided and she was rescued. I had to lie by her side to keep her warm.

"Thinking over the loss of life while lying there, I began to count them on my fingers, and as I enumerated the names of the lost each time I'd miss little Charlie, and she would call from under the hay each time, 'You have missed little Charlie.'"

#### *The Lost and Saved*

Of the twelve in the wrecked house, the



following were drowned:

Mrs. Tillie Youngman, aged 38, and infant, aged six weeks.

Anna Mary Youngman, aged 17 years and six months.

Ralph T. Youngman, aged 9 years.

Phoebe Youngman, aged 6 years.

Charles J. Youngman, aged 3 years.

The saved were Reynolds Youngman, aged 13, and Gardner Youngman, aged 10, Emily Hull, (Mr. Youngman's niece) aged 11.

Miss Eliza Phelps, the governess, aged 24, and Miss Maggie Pfouts, aged 38, were among the drowned.

"I have lost everything," said Mr. Youngman, "even the clothes I have on had to be furnished me. I cannot go back to that dreadful place again!"

William L. Youngman, his brother, was

found in an insensible condition in the wreck. His house was destroyed and his wife, Margaret R., aged 35, and two children, Walter R., and Emily, aged, respectively, 9 and 4, were lost.

On the opposite side of the creek the house of J. M. Harman was wrecked and one boy, Ray, aged 5 years, drowned.

After this terrible avalanche of water it was learned that the dam did not break — that it did not contribute to swelling the waters any more rapidly than the natural cause. Only part of a dirt embankment gave way. It is Mr. Youngman's opinion that the surface water, which accumulated rapidly from the tremendous downpour, rushed through the gorge in the mountain from Nippenose Valley because it was the only outlet, and bore death and desolation in its course. The theory is undoubtedly the correct one, and the terrible loss of life at the woolen mills will be a sad reminder for generations of the great calamity.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SUSQUEHANNA BOOM

By James Myers

Prior to the year 1846 it is doubtful that the idea of locating a boom on the west branch of the Susquehanna River ever occurred to anyone other than James H. Perkins; if so, there is no record of it. In December, 1845, he came to Williamsport with John Leighton for the purpose of engaging in the manufacture of lumber, and soon realized the advisability of building a boom at or near Williamsport. Soon after their arrival, they directed their attention to this matter of location and settled upon what is known as Long Reach. The mountains on the south side of the river afforded a strong barrier to the overflowing of the logs after they would once be inside the boom, and the bend in the river at this point and for miles above would draw the logs to the south side of the river.

In 1846 there was but one sawmill in Williamsport. It was known as the Big Wa-

ter Mill and was built by a Philadelphia company in 1838-1839. The company failed and the property was purchased at sheriff's sale by Abraham Updegraff, James Armstrong, and Mr. Perkins. Mr. Perkins soon became the sole owner, and it was he who became interested in obtaining a charter for the incorporation of a boom company.

The Susquehanna Boom Company was incorporated by an act of the General Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania, and approved by Governor Francis R. Shunk on the twenty-sixth of March, 1846. The original stock consisted of one hundred shares at \$100 a share. It was sold to the following stockholders: John Leighton, one share; John DuBois, Jr., twenty-five shares; Matthias DuBois, twenty-five shares; James H. Perkins, twenty-four shares; Isaac Smith, twenty shares; and Elias S. Lowe, five shares.

Prior to the erection of the boom great difficulty was encountered in getting the logs to the sawmills. They had to be watched all the time for fear of getting away and going down the river. In those early days the lumbermen used small boats to pick out and fasten the logs together in the form of rafts. To prevent these logs from escaping in the night, men were stationed at several points in and along the river to catch the logs as they came down. To enable them to see, a large fire was built on the river bank and another on a flatboat in the middle of the river.

This primitive method of securing the logs was continued until the spring of 1849 when J. H. Perkins, the pioneer of the boom movement, put in two temporary booms. Constructed with sunken cribs, one was located at Goose Island and another at the lower end of the location of the later boom, or in the vicinity of the present Maynard Street bridge. These temporary booms, however, proved to be only partially effective when it came to catching any great number of the logs as they came down the river. From the day after the organization of the Susquehanna Boom Company, arrangements were made to accept proposals for building twelve cribs, five to be completed in the spring and the remaining seven in the fall. More piers were put in under contract of December 8th, and the structure was complete enough to hold all the logs that came down the following spring.

The Loyalsock Boom Company was organized several months after the building of the Susquehanna Boom Company to take care of the handling of the logs for the mills below the dam. Trouble soon arose between the two companies, caused mainly by logs of the lower company passing through the boom of the upper company. In the winter of 1857 the two companies petitioned the legislature to consolidate, and this was done. The officers of both companies met and adopted measures for the proposed consolidation. Commissioners were appointed who appraised the property value of the two corporations. Each stockholder in the new company received an equal number of shares corres-

ponding to his previous holdings; thus a specified number of shares to cover the amount agreed upon as the monetary value of his boom property.

The first notable event in the history of the new company was the flood of 1860. Up to this point there had been only ordinary high waters causing little or no damage. In 1860, however, many of the logs were lost. The boom had been hung and was ready for the next flood. The first logs had been brought into the boom on very low water with little or no racking, the logs just covering the surface for the full length of the boom. While the boom was in this condition, a later flood brought in a large addition of logs which increased the pressure from the high water and caused a violent surging of the whole mass. As the logs settled down, the pressure was so great as to rupture the portion of the boom known as the sheer, or fly, where there were no cribs to resist the pressure caused by the jamming of the logs. Owing to the breaking of the sheer, and its failure to direct the logs into the boom at this point, more than fifty million feet of logs were driven with irresistible force down the river and into Chesapeake Bay.

During the summer of 1860 a contract was made with Crisswell and Day to build fifty-four cribs up the middle of the river. These were to be about twenty feet wide, forty feet long, and twenty feet high. They were like huge crates formed by heavy timbers crossing each other at the ends and spiked together with large oak pins. At the bottom, heavy timbers were laid side by side through the entire length, forming a floor. The cribs were then filled with stones and acted as monstrous anchors on the bottom of the river. Inch and one-quarter cable was then used to secure the floating boom rather than the less substantial buoys.

In the month of September, 1861, there occurred another of those disastrous floods almost as damaging as the one in 1860. There had been only light waters during the early part of the summer, necessitating the holding back of most of the logs. During the height of this flood, the Lock Haven boom broke. The logs held there were





These pictures relate to the 1889 flood of Antes Creek. They show the Youngman houses on Antes Creek before June 1, 1889, and their site after the flood. They are the property of Mr. John C. Youngman, Esq.



This large picture, or photograph, shows another Youngman cottage immediately following the 1889 flood. The Youngman family is gathered on the porch with their cook. The picture gives visible evidence of flood damage to the building. This building was saved from being swept away by a grove of trees seen in the background of the photograph. This photo is also the property of Mr. John C. Youngman, Esq.



carried by the violent current down the river crushing everything in their way, tearing board-ratts loose from their fastenings, and hurling the whole mass upon our boom with such sudden force as to tear out the sheer boom and one of the large cribs. This flood meant another loss of many millions of feet of logs. The boom was repaired and hung in time to catch the first logs of the next season.

The experience gained by the boom company during the first few years of operation convinced them that the boom could be very much stronger by reducing the distance between the cribs from two hundred feet to one hundred feet. The contract was then given to Mr. John J. Berry to build forty-one new cribs beginning at the upper end of the boom and working down, constructing one new crib between each two of the old ones. This was the last contract made by the boom company for the extending or repairing of its booms.

The following spring there occurred the great St. Patrick's Day flood when the river was twenty-six feet above low water mark. The entire boom was under water, yet there was very little damage done to the boom itself and no damage to the cribs. However, when the water had subsided, the company added from four to six feet to the height of all the cribs in order to guard against a similar flood in the future.

The company erected its boom at Linden by connecting the two islands at that point, and built a new dam to replace the old one in 1867.

The operation of the boom itself was based primarily on controlling the logs as the current brought them down the stream. The mechanics of the operation was simple, but the control of the water level itself was impossible. Extremely high water or extremely low water forestalled any effort to handle the logs.

The essential parts of the boom were the cribs, the sheer boom, the fly boom, and the rafting channel. The cam was a vital part of the boom which must take the greatest amount of pressure in the event of extremely high water.

The cribs which have been described ex-

tended from the dam to a point about six miles up the river. These were nothing more than huge anchoring places to which were fastened the logs making up the side boom. These logs were fastened to the cribs by inch and one-half iron rings and clevises. When in place, the side boom was a continual chain of logs anchored every one hundred feet to one of the cribs. The sheer boom was constructed the same as the side boom, running from the upper end of the main boom at an angle of about ten degrees, four hundred feet to a crib about two hundred feet from shore. This two hundred foot opening was left to take care of rafts and other timber not to go through the boom. This space could be closed at will with a device known as a fly boom, similar in construction to the sheer boom. Thus one can see that the upper end of the boom acted as a gigantic funnel designed to bring the logs into a position where they could be controlled. The rafting channel at the lower end of the boom was the place where the sorting was done. There the logs were taken as they came, sorted into rafts according to the owner's stamp, scaled for the quantity of lumber contained, and made ready to be run to the many mills below.

The cribs were the only permanent fixtures of the boom. All floating timbers were removed at the close of the rafting season and harbored in the winter, to be replaced the following spring.

#### RANDOM FACTS ABOUT THE BOOM

The Susquehanna Boom, one of the largest and most efficient booms in the country in its day, employed from one hundred and fifty to two hundred men and boys. Boys went to work on the boom, rafting logs together, when they were eleven to thirteen years old. Because of their agility in scurrying around, they were soon termed "boom rats" by the older men. The following is a list of jobs to which some of these "boom rats" might attain if they stayed in the business: wedge-driver, shover, plankman, puller, cornerman, checker, channel rusher, wedge-maker, cant hook maker, log runner, log scaler, hacker, rope man, blacksmith, pike hole maker, footbook maker, and channel boss.

In the years 1862-1882 the men on these different jobs rafted out over 18,738,000 logs. This meant a board foot measure of 3,536,741,000 feet. Though this is a tremendous figure, it must be realized that in those days of wasteful cutting and careless manufacturing many, many millions of board feet must have been wasted.

As the boom was finally constructed, it was as efficient a method as possible for handling the large volume of logs that came down the river. But efficient as it was, it was not able to cope with the river in the years 1889 and 1894. In those two years no boom ever built by man would have held back the logs that were thrown down the Susquehanna by that raging torrent. On June 1, 1889, when the river crested at thirty-three and one-half feet, there were over three hundred million feet of logs in the boom. These logs were jammed toward the lower end of the boom and racked twelve to sixteen deep. When the boom broke, the logs spread out into a single layer and covered the city from Arch Street in Newberry to the Pennsylvania Railroad bridge east of the city. Logs, lumber, lath, pickets, chicken houses, and hog pens were strewn from Williamsport to the Atlantic Ocean. A sawmill that was built at Sparrow's Point, Md. sawed the logs that had settled on farms nearby. For four years that mill was sawing logs that had come down in the 1889 flood. After lying idle one year, the mill was repaired in order to take care of the logs that came down in the flood of 1894. When the boom broke on those two occasions, a large number of logs finally landed where there were no mills to saw them into lumber. These logs were loaded onto flatcars and hauled by the Pennsylvania Railroad back to the boom above Duboistown where they were rolled down the bank and put into the same boom from which they had escaped three months before. John F. Wahl of the Pennsylvania Railroad said that he fired the engine that brought the first train load of logs back to the boom. When the boom broke in the year 1889, the men were lustily enjoying the spectacle aided by the consumption of many gallons of whiskey. They composed a song and sang all day for the boss' benefit:

"Boom Boss Dinehart stood on the bank,

But there's a hole in the bottom of the boom.

There's a hole in the bottom of the boom.

There is a hole in the bottom of the boom,

There's a hole in the bottom,

There's a hole in the bottom,

There's a hole in the bottom of the boom."

The year 1909 marked the end of the boom days. All but a few of the forest giants had been felled, and the industry had moved to new fields in the northwest. Insufficient water in 1908 allowed only half the logs to be brought in, the other half to be held until 1909. That year marked not only the blight on a great industry in Williamsport but also a blight on our native chestnut trees and the end of a national pastime — chestnut picking in the autumn.

Bowman and Foresman Company contracted with the Susquehanna Boom Company to buy all usable timber of the boom. This usable timber was made up primarily of the boom sticks which ranged anywhere from forty to seventy feet long. The boom crew collected and towed these sticks from the upper end to the harbour behind Goose Island just above the Newberry-Dubois-town bridge. The few logs left in the boom had to be floated by constructing a splash dam because of low water. In the final rafting there were only three marks to be sorted: Brown, Clark, and Howe; Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company; and the Star Mill.

So passed an industry that made the name of Williamsport synonymous with millionaires and sawdust.



## COLONEL HENRY W. SHOEMAKER

Wild Life Conservationist and Folklorist

*(Researched by Mrs. Wendi Enstine, Jr., Lycoming College Student.)*

Col. Henry Wharton Shoemaker, writer of Pennsylvania folklore and lover of wild-life, was born in New York City on February 24, 1882. His father was Henry Shoemaker from Schuylkill County and his mother was Blanche Quiggle Shoemaker of Lock Haven.

Henry Shoemaker had an ancestry of which he was proud. The first of his family to come to America was Peter Shoemaker, who came to Pennsylvania from Holland because he was being persecuted for his Quaker faith. His son, Peter Shoemaker II, changed his religion to Anglican and became a prominent Pennsylvania citizen. He was one of the first burgesses of Germantown, Philadelphia. Peter Shoemaker III served in the French and Indian War; John Shoemaker served in the Revolutionary War; Henry Shoemaker served in the War of 1812; John Wise Shoemaker served in the Mexican War; and Henry F. Shoemaker, Col. Henry's father, was an officer in the Civil War.

Henry Shoemaker was educated well by private tutors and at the E. D. Lyons School, a New York private school. He graduated from Columbia University at age eighteen in the class of 1901. It was in his college career that he began to show his talent for writing. After he graduated from college, he went into the railroad business as confidential secretary to his father. During this time he went on trips to Ohio and Kentucky where he became interested in the folklore of the area.

In 1904 he left business and went into the United States Foreign Service as Secretary of the American Legation at Lisbon, Portugal. In 1905 he became Secretary to the United States Embassy in Berlin.

When World War I broke out, he joined the army and became an officer with the Intelligence Corps where he attained the rank of major. He had a history of military activity in his service with the

New York and Pennsylvania National Guard. He continued his military career in World War II as a Colonel in the Military Intelligence Reserve in Bulgaria, broadcasting the truth about Communism. These broadcasts carried weight because he was well known and well liked. He received a special citation for exceptional services for these activities in 1943.

From around the end of World War I until 1930 he was active in Pennsylvania Republican policies. While a member of the Pennsylvania Forest Commission (1918-1930), he was instrumental in bringing Gifford Pinchot to the state as Chief Forester. At the request of Pinchot, he organized and selected the sites for a system of state parks and recreation centers in Pennsylvania. He also helped prepare curriculum for Pennsylvania Forestry schools. In 1921 a mountain in the White Deer Range of mountains was named for him by this department. He also belonged to the Pennsylvania Alpine Club, was on the Pennsylvania Geographic Board, and was Chairman of the Pennsylvania State Historical Commission.

Following World War II he returned from Bulgaria to enjoy his home, "Restless Oaks," at McElhattan in Clinton County. Here he began to deal with Pennsylvania folklore in earnest. He was President of the Pennsylvania Folklore Society, and after 1948 he was director of a new division of Pennsylvania Folk History. One can see that his interests were really in the welfare of Pennsylvania, especially its nature and outdoor life. What was it in his life which encouraged this strong interest of his? It seems difficult to understand considering his upbringing in New York City. Much can be traced back to his grandparents' home where he went nearly every summer as a boy. It was the same home, "Restless Oaks," that became his own home in later life.

## THE STORY OF ALTAR ROCK

*(This is from the collection of legends edited by Col. Henry W. Shoemaker. Concerning this legend, he wrote: "I obtained the legend of Altar Rock in 1898 from Seth I. Nelson, then virtually the last survivor among Pennsylvania's big-game hunters. His life had nearly spanned the 19th century, as he was born in 1809. Rising above his mountain cabin near Round Island, Clinton County, was Altar Rock with a lone primeval white pine growing out of it. Nelson explained that the tree once had a companion that was blown away by a strong wind. He then proceeded to tell me the legend woven around those two white pines.")*

In the first half of the 18th century, several bands of French trappers found their way from the trading posts on Lake Erie to the Elk Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek. They followed the stream to the main run, where some of them went toward Benezet, while another party of five built a camp and stockade on a high point at the great bend west of what is now Round Island station. The camp was christened Grande Pointe, and to this day the foundations of the ancient fortification can be located in the pine forest that has since grown up on the scene.

The French policy toward the Indians was to fraternize and be honorable in all dealings with them, and for this reason their trading and trapping enterprises were successful.

However, a few of the young bucks did not like the whites, especially after the building of Grande Pointe camp, which seemed to indicate that they would live there permanently. Of all the hostile braves, none carried a more bitter and uncompromising hatred than the tall young soothsayer whose name is equivalent to "Two Pines."

A medicine man by descent, he visioned nothing but frightful omens of his people's annihilation at the hands of the pale-faced strangers. Still, the greed for barter and luxury was too strong in the majority of the tribe for them to give more than a passing thought to such forebodings. They turned away, shaking their heads, when on festal days Two Pines mounted Altar Rock for devotions. On this narrow ledge an Indian was supposed to bear a charmed life and be invulnerable to poisoned ar-

rows.

Altar Rock, which modern writers call Pulpit Rock, Chimney Rock, Steeple Rock, or Nelson's Rock, is one of the most remarkable natural wonders in Pennsylvania. Its diameter in no part being over ten feet, it rises like a graceful column to a height of sixty feet, where it is surmounted by a flat slab, the dimensions of which are about ten by twelve feet. The entire cliff is composed of brownstone and is undulated and fluted by the action of water in past ages.

On top of the flat slab stands a living white pine, forty feet tall; its gnarled roots clutch at the rocks in a grim effort to hold its place against the onslaught of the elements. There is no earth on Altar Rock from which the tree can gain sustenance, but it grows healthy and green in its barren home. There was once a second white pine, the exact counterpart of its mate, growing on the rock; but it was struck by lightning, lifted bodily from the roots, and blown into the valley below.

One bright September morning after Two Pines had spent the night on top of Altar Rock in meditation and prayer, he heard the crack of a gun fired somewhere near the Sinnemahoning. A few minutes later he came face to face with a Frenchman, Pierre Le Bo, dragging the carcass of a bull elk to the river's edge to sink it until he might have time to prepare it for eating. Two Pines' anger was thoroughly aroused. To see this intruder killing the beasts of the forest, which he thought belonged to the Indians, was too much for him. He struck the Frenchman a terrific blow on the head with a stone mallet,



crushing his skull and causing instant death. Then he climbed back to his retreat on Altar Rock and prayed for strength to annihilate the white beings who defiled the valley of the Sinnemahoning.

It was in this attitude of prayer that he heard footsteps and voices in the wood beneath. Nearer and nearer they came until, through the leaves, he saw four heavily armed French trappers. Two Pines arose and stood erect. In the dignity of his titanic stature, and with arms folded across his breast, he seemed to defy the avengers to slay him on his immortal pedestal, where poisoned arrows and javelins had less effect than drops of summer rain.

A little Frenchman named Lafitte leaned his heavy gun upon a snag, took careful aim,

and fired at the defiant warrior. There was a loud report, and when the foul-smelling smoke had cleared, the dead body of Two Pines lay upon Altar Rock.

An hour later the Frenchmen abandoned Grande Pointe with its valuable stores and started downstream in canoes. That night their camp was looted and burned by the Indians. Whether the trappers succeeded in reaching a friendly refuge or were murdered on the way has never been determined. But from the flat top of Altar Rock two little pines with long silky needles sprouted slender and straight. Taller and taller they grew until, side by side, with their smooth-barked trunks and shapely tangle of dark green foliage, they resembled the figure of an Indian youth, the slain but defiant Two Pines.

## EARLY HISTORY OF PICTURE ROCKS

By W. L. Sprout

*(Delivered before the Lycoming Historical Society Thursday, March 15, 1928.)*

The history of Picture Rocks previous to the nineteenth century is mostly legendary, although it is known that this particular section along Muncy Creek at the southern end of the terminal moraine among some of Pennsylvania's most beautiful hills and mountains was inhabited by the Seneca and Monsie tribes of Indians. A number of Indian relics, such as grinding stones, skinning knives, arrowheads, and chips of flint, have been found at the foot of the rocks from which the town obtained its name.

In all probability this particular spot was an Indian shop where implements were manufactured, as there are no known deposits of flint, such as they used, within a radius of one hundred miles. A lookout on top of the cliff of rocks was used as a signaling point without a doubt, as from this point the North Mountain, Bald Eagle, and Allegheny mountains can readily be seen, and these were favorite camps and hunting grounds of the early Indian tribes.

### *Origin of Name*

The name Picture Rocks was derived from either the picturesqueness of the rocks and surroundings or the murals that were painted upon the rocks by the Indians depicting battle scenes. Had they been carved in the rocks, some trace of them would have been discovered by the early Scotch and English settler.

John F. Meginness' History of Lycoming County states that crude Indian paintings were found by the earliest settlers, and Col. Henry W. Shoemaker tells in his Pennsylvania Mountain stories of the legend which gave the town its name.

### *Started With Industry*

The first land warrant, dated June 3, 1773, of the land which is now the borough of Picture Rocks, was taken up by Henry Rody, who sold it to Abraham Singer, who conveyed it to John Tice. In October of 1848 A. R. Sprout and Amos Bur-

rows, the founders of the town, came from Montrose, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, purchased the land and primitive saw mill from John Tice and established a sash and door factory; the first to be established in the county. The carpenters of this particular section were immediately prejudiced against it as they argued the making of sash and doors by machinery would ruin their trade. The pioneers, however, did not become discouraged and they lived to see many other factories of its kind established in other parts of the county.

Town lots were laid out and sold, and with the aid of the factory machinery homes were built, the first house being completed in 1856. The lots were originally divided into the Amos Burrows division and the A. R. Sprout division. Purchasers of lots were required to enter into an agreement not to open a saloon or engage in the liquor traffic.

### *Worshipped in School*

The majority of original settlers were Baptists, and in 1849 with a membership of twenty they were compelled to worship in the schoolhouse. One Saturday evening in the spring of 1851 the Rev. E. C. Hewitt, the supply minister, while staying with one of his parishioners made the remark that he dreaded to preach in that pig pen of a house with such low ceilings and rough walls. After preaching services the next day, a business meeting was held and one of the members suggested they plan a general turnout and build a church that would be a credit to their members and minister. The plan was that each member contributed something in the line of material as well as his or her services. A day was set to begin the work, and in eight days the church building was completed, ready for use. This building was used until 1884 when the present Baptist church building was erected as the membership had outgrown the original edifice.

Not all of the early settlers agreed with the Baptist faith, and in 1869 the Methodist followers erected another church that they might worship as directed by the dictates of their consciences.

### *One Piano in Town*

The first public school, known as the Woodley School, was originated in 1852 with Martha Bates, a sister of the wife of A. R. Sprout as teacher. Miss Bates was musically inclined and in 1860 owned the first and only piano in town. Later a singing school was organized.

In 1868 the settlement had grown so large that a larger and better school building was required, and the school directors let the contract to A. C. Little at his bid of \$1,100 for the erection of a two-story school building.

In operating the sash and door factory as well as the sawmill connected with it, the water from Muncy Creek was used for power. The logs were floated to the mill by means of the creek, sawed into lumber, manufactured into sash, doors and blinds, and transported to the canal at Muncy by means of horse and wagon. The sash and doors for the Main College building of Bucknell University were made at the Picture Rocks plant.

### *Other Industries Started*

Following the success of the planing mill industry, other manufacturing plants were established. Sabin H. Burrows, son of Amos Burrows, was employed for a number of years in the factory of A. R. Sprout and his father, but when he became of age about 1856 he began making bedsteads. From this beginning the furniture factory of Burrows Bros. Company was organized. The father, seeing the success of his son, sold out his interest in the sash and door plant and joined his son in manufacturing bedroom furniture.

A. R. Sprout, after losing his partner Amos Burrows, sold his interest to his brothers S. E. and L. B. Sprout and established a box factory, making berry boxes and shingles. This business was in 1870 purchased by C. H. and A. L. Eddy, who also were originally from Susquehanna County. These men were manufacturers of rakes, handles, and excelsior. This industry is still operating, although the ownership changed hands in 1887 to F. J. Persun,



G. D. Sprout, James H. Burrows, and M. I. Sprout.

The bending factory, manufacturing wagon bows, was established in 1873 by John P. Little and his son William H. Little.

A shingle mill was established about 1866 by Peter Fry and A. W. Burrows who were the first to use steam power. Eddy Brothers, who later purchased the box factory from A. R. Sprout, first began manufacturing of hand rakes and handles in this plant; Mr. C. H. Eddy coming to Picture Rocks from Illinois where he had learned the method of manufacturing this product. Soon after starting this business the plant burned and A. R. Sprout offered room in his box factory for their use. Later Mr. Eddy purchased the entire factory. John P. Little and son then bought the site of the shingle mill and moved their bending works where they later started manufacturing step ladders, clothes racks, and ironing boards.

#### *An Experimenter*

A. R. Sprout was a genius and tried out the raising of sorghum for making molasses, but this did not prove profitable so he established a peach orchard on the hill just above our present public park and also raised strawberries on the more fertile lands within his addition. The fruit and berry cultivation proved more profitable than his molasses factory and gave employment to more people. Mr. A. R. Sprout was a public spirited man and was constantly trying to build up the community by establishing more industries, that more men could find more profitable employment. Following his adventure in the raising of fruit, he planned a toboggan slide from the top of the peach orchard hill to the level lands below, now called Van Rensselaer Park. The maple trees as originally planted in the park were placed for the purpose of marking the course of Mr. Sprout's proposed toboggan slide.

#### *Called "Yankee Town"*

Thus, through the inventive genius of the Connecticut Yankees, "Yankee Town", as Picture Rocks was formerly called, be-

came an industrial center in Muncy Valley. The town received its present name officially July 9, 1861, when the government established a post office, after a plea from the citizens who were too anxious to receive the Civil War news to wait until someone would bring the mail from Hughesville, the nearest post office three miles away. Not many newspapers arrived and those that did were read in public so that all the folks could hear the latest news about the Union Army, as a number of citizens from the town and community had volunteered and were in the service. A. R. Sprout obtained the services of an artist, Mr. Batcheller, who made a pen and ink sketch of the rocks, placing a proposed lookout building on the top, and the sketch included the sash and door plant on the opposite side of Muncy Creek at the foot of the ledge. The name suggested to the authorities at Harrisburg was Pictured Rocks, but in establishing the post office the past tense was omitted and the town was named Picture Rocks with James Lobdell receiving the first appointment as postmaster.

#### *A Railroad Excursion*

The town was incorporated as a borough September 27, 1875, and C. H. Eddy was elected the first burgess. The men who have held offices of trust and responsibility in the borough since its organization have proved progressive and the development has been constant. They have been men who considered the best interests of the community and not merely their own. Good schools, well equipped, have been a credit to our citizens and worthy of praise. Our churches have had most wholesome influence, and through their organized efforts no license for a saloon was ever granted within the borough limits. The building of the first railroad through the borough limits was an event to be remembered, and the Williamsport and North Branch Railroad Company, after giving up one proposed route on account of so many bridges across Muncy Creek, finally completed their lines to Picture Rocks in 1884. The first train carrying passengers was an excursion to Williamsport to hear the noted temperance lecturer, John B. Goff.

The arrival of the railroad as a means of transportation was a big help to the local industries as transportation by means of wagons and sleds was difficult, expensive, and at times impossible on account of impassable roads. Even the toll road, built and maintained by Edward Lyon to haul lumber from Hughesville and points above in the Muncy Valley to the canal at Muncy, was difficult to travel in the spring and following heavy snows and rains. It was due to the difficult marketing conditions that some of our early citizens moved their industries to communities where means of better transportation were available. Samuel E. and Lewis B. Sprout, establishing a plant for the manufacture of the Sprout Hay Fork and Elevator, invented by their brother, Ariel B. Sprout, located in Muncy in 1866.

The house purchased by Burrows and Sprout from John Tice, and occupied by them upon their arrival in 1848, was a large log house located near the site of the mill along Muncy Creek. With the assistance of the planing mill machinery, other homes were soon built but not without thought of style of architecture. They built homes following out a definite plan relative to location and uniform style of architecture. The first homes were two-story square houses with comparatively flat roofs and well built. Twelve by twelve inch hewn timbers were used in the foundations; matched boards were used as siding, and in some cases these were made to imitate stone construction. Bandsawing and turnings were arts of these pioneers, and their craftsmanship is shown in the spindles and brackets used in building these attractive homes. The style of architecture has been called distinctive Scotch, and is found in other sections settled by early Scotch settlers. As the homes were built, flagstone sidewalks were laid of stone quarried from the surrounding hills, and trees, practically all maple, were planted along the outside of the walks for shade trees. Lawns were graded and flowers planted, a thing that proved their desire for pride in beautiful homes. A number of the first houses were built with cupolas above the flat roofs; whether for the purpose of appearance, or with the idea of some day viewing a Fourth of July

celebration, or Lindbergh arrival, I do not know, but it was probably for all purposes.

The early settlers were craftsmen with inventive minds and business ability, as well as public-spirited men who were interested in the welfare of the entire community. There is no better place to live if you want to enjoy real living in a clean healthful community surrounded with nature's most beautiful hills and mountains, and an environment that is most pleasant. To those who have lived for sometime in other localities than in the town of Picture Rocks, this statement is not history but an opinion. The lives of those who settled and guided the destiny of the village throughout its years of growth have made history, and we who are now living in the community appreciate their efforts.

Before giving a brief history of the Sprout and Burrows families, I want to mention some of the other pioneer families who were instrumental as builders of the borough, and whose influence was probably just as much felt as that of the two families whose history is given: Shaner, Tice, Eddy, Melhuish, Smith, Cruse, Fague, Gray, Kahler, Clark, Frantz, Fry, Cowles, Rogers, Collins, Hessler, VanBuskirk, Persun, and Little. To the last named family, our noted landscape artist, J. Wesley Little, belonged.

The Sprout, or Sproat, family date their ancestry back to Scotland as the name Sproat was designated in the Scotch Heraldry by a coat of arms representing three salmon with rings in their mouths; colors deep and pale blue with spots of gold and silver. Robert Sproat was the first Sproat to land in America, coming to New England about 1633, fifteen years after the landing of the Pilgrims. There has been no known effort to prove that the Sproats came over in the Mayflower, although she might have been sailing the seas at that time.

#### *Served in Revolution*

Robert Sprout settled in Scituate, county of Plymouth, Massachusetts, a farmer. A number of the descendants fought in the Revolutionary War: Nathaniel Sprout, a



grandson of Robert, serving in the French and Indian War, and four of his sons, James, Robert, Ebenezer and Samuel, were soldiers in the War of 1776. None of them were killed or wounded, although Ebenezer was taken prisoner at the battle of Ticonderoga. Ebenezer was the father of Ebenezer, Jr., who married Miriam Burrows, daughter of Amos Burrows, Sr., of Stafford, Connecticut, and emigrated from Connecticut to near Montrose in Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania, in 1817 and in 1848 to Picture Rocks. His sons, eight in number, were Asa (Rensselaer), Ariel B., Erastus T., Charles, Zebina E., Amos B., Samuel E., and Lewis B.; his daughters were three: Mary Ann, Emiline, and Sophronia M.

Asa R., who married Mary E. Bates, was the pioneer settler of Picture Rocks and the promoter of the sash and door industry, the box factory, the fruit farm, the toboggan slide, and various enterprises. His schemes and ideas were numerous and most of them proved successful.

#### *An Inventive Genius*

Ariel B. married Julia Bergstresser and Rachel Cowles. He was an inventor, inventing the Sprout horse hay rake and hay fork, both of which proved successful, although his brothers proved better businessmen and manufactured his inventions. He established a hub factory at Villa Grove between Picture Rocks and Hughesville, and also assisted his brother, Lewis B. Sprout, in raising trout at the Trout Ponds, now Boaks Park. This adventure did not prove very encouraging. They were successful in raising the trout, but the market price of one dollar a pound was too low to be profitable. His children were Samuel B., by his first wife, and Sidney, Alton, Edna, and Vennie by his second.

Erastus T., who married Mary Eddy and Angeline Freeman, was interested in the manufacturing of sash and doors, the inventor of the Sprout wagon spring, purchased the interests of S. E. and L. B. Sprout in the sash and door factory upon their removal to Muncy in 1866, and successfully carried on the business for a number of years, after which he followed the blacksmith trade, manufacturing the wagon

springs and hay forks his brother invented. He had seven children all by his first wife: Henry, Alice, Emma and Eva (twins), Charles and Lucy.

Charles the fourth son of Ebenezer, Jr., married Jane Hinds and spent his life as a farmer in Susquehanna County near his old homestead. He had eight children: James M., Susie, Edgar, Lewis H., Samuel, Richard, and George. James M. was a soldier in the Civil War.

Zebina E. married Elizabeth Nichols and spent his life on the Ebenezer Sprout, Jr., homestead in Susquehanna County near Montrose. He had seven children: Edwin, Ellen, Samuel, Burton, Elizabeth, William, and Frank.

#### *Patented Fence Post*

Amos B. Sprout, after teaching several terms of school, married Catherine G. Hinds and moved to Picture Rocks to enter in business with his brother, Asa R. He also had a sideline and manufactured peck and half-bushel measures, and patented an iron fence post. He was an earnest temperance worker and wrote several articles, including some poetry. He was the first justice of the peace of Picture Rocks and held that office until shortly before his death in 1904. He had four children: Judson H., Gordon D., Morton I., and Orpha D.

Samuel E. married Mary Sutton and engaged in the sash and door business with his brother Lewis B. at Picture Rocks. In 1866, after successfully conducting this business for ten years, the two brothers moved to Muncy and added the Sprout hay fork and elevator to their products, the invention of Ariel B., their brother. In 1874 the two brothers dissolved partnership. Lewis B. continued to manufacture the fork and elevator, and Samuel established a plant where he manufactured sash and doors, also the Williams fruit evaporators. His four children were Marion, Clarence E., Annie, and Willis.

Lewis B., the youngest son of Ebenezer Jr., married Ellen Donnelly and engaged in the manufacture of wagon springs, known as the Sprout wagon spring, at the age of 18 years in Susquehanna County, and

also engaged in the manufacture of sash and blinds at Montrose. In 1854 he moved to Picture Rocks and associated with his brothers as stated. Lewis B. Sprout was primarily the founder of the firm of Sprout, Waldron & Co., and his business ability and clear judgment were valuable assets to its success and growth. His five children were: Gussie, Maggie, Charles, Lulu, and Fred.

#### *Laid Out Park*

Mary Ann married Joseph Krause and had six children, two of them serving in the Civil War. Franklin J. was prisoner at Andersonville, being paroled in 1864. He witnessed the out-breaking of the famous spring in camp at Andersonville, but declared it came after a period of rains, and not from the parched earth as we sometimes hear it told. Franklin J. spent his life following the war in Picture Rocks, and was the man who did most of the work that has made our park so attractive, while employed by his uncle Asa R. Sprout. His name should be honored. Edgar, another son, lost an arm in the Battle of the Wilderness.

Emeline married William Lathrop and had three children: James, Charles, and Juliet. Two of them died in infancy.

Sophronia M. married Charles Wells of Susquehanna County and had three children: Melissa, Ida, and Harriet.

#### *Community Builders*

Most of the Sprouts of the family of which a brief history has been related were, in physique and personality, distinctively Scotch. They endured hardships and loved adventure. Raised on a farm, but two of the eight sons followed that occupation, the other six as related preferred industrial enterprises; the most of which proved successful even though they manufactured their own patents. The Sprouts were unselfish in disposition and community builders, practically all of them were dyed in-the-wool Republicans, temperate in their own habits and using their influence and power to advance the cause of temperance. Most of them took advantage of such education as

was available to the average boy and girl of that age. Religiously, most of the Sprouts were Baptists, but two or three through various influences joined other denominations. They were thrifty but generous with their possessions and thoughtful of mankind in general, strong in their convictions, and determined in their efforts.

#### *Burrows Family*

The Burows family originally came from England, although the time and ancestry are unknown by the descendants of the Amos Burows, Senior family.

Amos Burrows, the second, came to Susquehanna County near Montrose from Connecticut about the same time as his sister, Miriam Burrows Sprout, and her husband, Ebenezer Sprout, Jr. He married Mary Melhuish and followed farming as an occupation until he removed to Picture Rocks with Asa R. Sprout in 1848 and established the manufacturing business already referred to. After conducting the planing mill for several years, he sold his interests to S. E. and Lewis B. Sprout and joined his son, Sabin H. Burrows, in manufacturing bedroom furniture, continuing this pursuit until his death in 1882.

He had six children, two of them died in infancy, Asa W., Sabin H., Amos the third, and Elizabeth.

Asa W. married Huldah Hinds, a sister of Catherine and Jane Hinds, wives of Amos and Charles Sprout. They had six children, three sons and three daughters: James H., Miriam, Catherine, Edgar, Howard, and Fannie. Mr. Burrows engaged in the manufacturing of shingles as his first industry, but later joined his brother, Sabin H., in manufacturing furniture, and continued in that business until his death in 1903.

#### *Too Many Marys*

Sabin H. Burrows married Mary Lockard, and there were so many Marys in the Sprout and Burrows families that they were designated as Mary Amos, Mary Rensselaer, Mary Sam, Mary Erastus, and Mary Sabin. Sabin Burrows was twelve years old when his parents moved to Picture Rocks and



his education was completed in Lycoming County, after which he taught school for two years. He began the furniture business, starting in the sash and door factory on the second floor. Later in conjunction with his father he established a plant, using water power from the waters of Laurel Run, upon the present site of the Burrows Brothers Company furniture factory. A general store was also conducted along with the factory. He had two sons whom he admitted into the firm in 1882, Charles W. and Judson H. In addition to the above pursuits, he built and conducted a large summer hotel at Highland Lake. He served as Burgess of Picture Rocks, also Postmaster during the administration of James A. Garfield. Through an appointment of a personal friend, John Wanamaker, then Postmaster General, Mr. Burrows was made Postmaster at Highland Lake.

#### *Another Inventor*

Amos Burrows, the third, married Martha Baldwin and was an inventor and started various enterprises. He made an attempt to construct a machine that would produce perpetual motion, but as one who saw it for the first time expressed, "It's a fine

machine and the principles are right, but it won't run." Mr. Burrows invented the Burrows steam and pump regulator, both very useful inventions that are manufactured by the Burrows Mfg. Company of York, Pa. As a side line he managed the Grand View Hotel at Highland Lake until it burned. He had three children, Clara, Harry, and Fred.

Elizabeth married A. M. Cowles, residing in Picture Rocks, as Mr. Cowles was interested in the manufacturing of furniture, and associated with the Burrows Brothers. There were seven children in the Cowles family: William H., Ralph C., Lewis, Jennie, Pluma, Agnes, and Carrie.

The Burrows, like the Sprouts, were for the most part Baptists and staunch Republicans.

While there have been other families besides the Sprouts and Burrows instrumental in the early history of Picture Rocks, these two families were pioneers in establishing industries that were essential in the growth of the town, and to them credit is given for the excellent principles upon which the town and its thriving industries were founded.

## THE LYCOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILLIAMSPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

Organized February 22, 1907

Office of THE PRESIDENT  
HERBERT RUSSELL LAIRD  
FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING

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LETTER WRITTEN BY DR. AUGUST RICHTER

(This is from a letter written by Dr. August Richter, the first Health Officer of Williamsport, to Miss Margaret Porter, under date of June 6, 1882. Dr. Richter was visiting a famous health spa at Kissingen, Germany.)

To my good patient Miss M. Porter:

Most respected lady, I can not refrain from sending you a few lines from afar, about my journey, and the place I now reside.

After the successful completion of the voyage I went to Dresden, where my good sister awaited me patiently. Stayed two days in the place and strolled to the Park, the Zoological Garden, took coffee on the Terraces, and enjoyed the evenings in the Theater. Started the 26th of May for Kissingen which we successfully reached at 6:00 P.M., very tired, but we have excellent rooms and close to the park where the water is drunk and the bath is taken.

This beautiful spot is not a driving park but a promenade ground for the guests who drink the water. Most of our guests commence about 6 A.M. to take from one to six glasses of cold or warm water at the spring, then walk for a few hours and take afterward a very light breakfast.

This beautiful spot is planted all over with thrifty shade trees, in straight rows, about 18 feet apart, except the central walk, which is probably 60 feet wide, where no smoking is permitted. The walks are swept three times a day.

This lovely spot is probably 400 feet wide and several thousand long, where in the midst of it is a large open building where the water is given to the guests. In the central promenade is a large arbor where a music band of 30 or 40 pieces is playing for several hours every morning and evening. To the right of this ground are fountains and flower beds in multiple profusion. Beyond this floral display are very fine buildings with large collonades in front of them where the guests promenade on rainy days. The whole concern is on a large scale and very fine.

Thursday, the first of June, at 8:30 P.M. was the commencement of a fine ball in one of the salons in the Collonade building. The band was playing lively, and the young

ladies and gentlemen enjoyed their round dances. I did not see a Cotillion. The salon is magnificent, with two large collonades on either side of the dancing space, the columns of which were ornamented most fantastically, then the high ceiling of the salon was ornamented with large square designs with most tasteful color displays, where five elegant chandeliers hung all pouring out a profusion of light. The Ball was grand and I wished many times Miss M. Porter would have been with me.

On the 3rd of June was a remarkable fine display in the Park termed Italian Night, which might have been called a large, extravagant illumination. Now conceive that every tree is three times surrounded with lights, then think of having wires stretched about 12 feet above ground from tree to tree over each walk equipped with large variegated, ornamental Chinese lanterns. To the right are beautiful flower beds and two fountains, the former were also illuminated with tulip-like Chinese lanterns. The fountains were illuminated with a double row of lights, as were every column, every window, and even the edges of the roof. In addition there were six large Bengal lights of intense red and blue, for the illumination of the Collonades. This labyrinth — this ornamental maze — was a perfect flood of light. The band was playing and thousands of people were marching up and down to enjoy the occasion.

Sunday, the 5th of June, from 5 to 7 P.M. was concert time again on the Promenade ground. The park was full of visitors, some listening, some walking, some drinking coffee, beer, or wine. The stores are open all day, except during church; otherwise there is no change in the general transaction of business.

The climate is very damp, rain or fog every day, and once we had severe hail, breaking plenty of windows. We had to hurry up our driver when returning from a pleasure trip to Trimborg old ruins, two hours from Kissingen.

THE 16th ANNUAL INSTITUTE OF
PENNSYLVANIA RURAL LIFE AND CULTURE

Will be held at the Pennsylvania Farm Museum near Lancaster, Pennsylvania, June 20-23, 1972. Institute's general theme, "Rural Life Heritage," will be explored through the following seminars:

Plant Hunters in Colonial Pennsylvania
Farmhouse Architecture
Tobacco Culture of Southeastern Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Antiques - 1972 Edition
Folksong Traditions of Pennsylvania
Folkspeech and Folklife of the Pennsylvania Germans

Workshops introducing techniques of early American craftsmanship will be offered in:

Old Fashion Rug Hooking
Crewel Embroidery
Traditional Methods of Decorating Redware
Traditional Blacksmithing
The Fine Art of Scissor Cutting or "Scherenschnitte"
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Contact:

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Institute
P. O. Box 1026
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108

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The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and
The Landis Valley Associates

LYCOMING COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

OPERATING STATEMENT

April 1, 1971 to March 31, 1972

Checking Account - April 1, 1971 \$ 1,011.61

RECEIPTS

Dues from Members	\$ 3,764.00	
Admissions to Museum	849.40	
Lycoming County Commissioners	5,400.00	
Williamsport Area School District	4,000.00	
Williamsport Foundation	4,200.00	
Rentals-Wmsport,Area Com. College and Others	3,810.00	
E.S.E.A Arts Centre	1,150.00	
Gift Shop - Income in excess of Expense	975.72	
Dinners & Bus Trips-Income in excess of Exp.	332.35	
Interest and Dividends	882.50	
Other - Pledges,Pay Tel.,Vending Mach.,Misc.	1,258.28	26,622.25
FUNDS AVAILABLE		\$27,633.86

EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$18,658.00	
Insurance	1,158.70	
Office Supplies, Postage and Telephone	1,248.55	
Printing - Journals	707.50	
Social Security Taxes	977.66	
Blue Cross - Blue Shield	445.30	
Power and Light, Heat and Water	3,819.68	
Bldg. - Cleaning, Supplies and Repairs	845.46	
Other - Traveling,Dues,Exhibit Exp.,Misc.	1,134.02	28,994.87
Operating Expense in Excess of Funds		(\$ 1,361.01)
Non-Operating Additions and Other Credits		
Taxes Withheld,Unemployment and Sales Tax	640.80	
Gift Shop Inventory - net decrease	37.16	
A/C's Payable - net increase	34.49	
Receipts Applicable to 1972-73	2,051.42	2,763.87
		\$ 1,402.86
Non-Operating Expenditures and Other Debits		
Taxes Withheld March 1971- paid in April	362.98	
New Equipment purchased	268.87	631.85
BALANCE - Society Checking account - 3-31-72		\$ 771.01

LYCOMING COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

BALANCE SHEET

March 31, 1972

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Checking A/C-Fidelity Nat'l Bank of Pa.	\$ 771.01	
Savings A/C - Artifacts sold	776.91	
Gift Shop Inventory (809.39) - Petty Cash(50)	859.39	\$ 2,407.31

TRUST FUNDS INVESTED

Federal Home Loan Bank 8.05% Bonds	\$ 10,125.00	
Savings Accounts	3,459.90	
Stock of Corporations	1,878.75	15,463.65

FIXED and OTHER ASSETS

Land, Building, Furniture and Fixtures	\$343,322.63	
Display Equipment, Cases, Materials,etc.	19,961.37	
Victorian Period Room	4,762.04	
Artifacts	69,271.63	437,317.67

TOTAL ASSETS

\$455,188.63

LIABILITIES and FUND BALANCE

Accounts Payable and Taxes Withheld	\$ 910.31	
Deferred Income - Receipts Applicable to fiscal year 1972-1973	2,051.42	\$ 2,961.73

FUND BALANCE

452,226.90

TOTAL LIABILITIES and FUND BALANCE

\$455,188.63

We continue to face problems in securing funds for operating the Museum. As shown in our operating statement for the fiscal year just completed, expenditures of \$28,994.87 with receipts of only \$26,622.25, left an operating deficit of \$2,372.62. A cash balance forward at the beginning of the year reduced the excess of operating expense, over available cash funds, to \$1,361.01. This will have to be provided for during the fiscal year 1972-73.

A subsidy of \$8,400.00 was received from the Williamsport Foundation, payable over two fiscal years, to assist in establishing the position of Museum Director.

School oriented programs such as "Operation Museum", originated by the Junior League, have enabled us to receive funding by the Williamsport Area School District. We are hoping that other School Systems, participating in these programs, will join in much needed financial assistance. The E.S.E.A Arts Centre and other Federal programs, administered through the Williamsport Area School District, are providing additional funds.

We wish to remind members as well as others, that Life memberships and bequests (as well as contributions, if so designated) are placed in our Trust Funds. Only the income from the investment of these funds is used to help defray operating expenses.