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LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Cover photo—done particularly for our lumbering gallery by Steven Collier of Muncy.

SOCIETY PROGRAM

1968-1969

Meetings will be held at 8:00 P.M. in the Museum Meeting Room

SEPTEMBER 19, 1968

Joseph Haag - Planning Engineer, Williamsport Area Community College, "History of the Automobile in Williamsport".

OCTOBER 17, 1968

Robert Johnston - Head of Art Dept., Lock Haven State College, "Woodland Indians in the Susquehanna Valley".

NOVEMBER 21, 1968

Thomas T. Taber - Chief Industrial Engineer, Sprout-Waldron & Co., "Early Railroad in Lycoming County".

DECEMBER 19, 1968

Christmas Party at the Park Home. Program by Junior Historians (Refreshments served by Park Home). For members and their guests.

JANUARY 15, 1969

BENEFIT - Fred Waring and His Pennsylvanians, at the Capitol Theater. This benefit takes the place of the regular meeting.

FEBRUARY 20, 1969

Eric de Jonge - Chief Curator, William Penn Memorial Museum, Harrisburg, Pa., "The Why and What of Antiques" with an audience participation time.

MARCH 27, 1969*

Ralph Hazeltine - Director, Wyoming Historical & Geological Society. "Adventures in Local History".

*Please note that this is **not** the third Thursday of the month.

APRIL 17, 1969

Junior League - "The Fourth Street Story — Williamsport".

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

We wish that all the members of the Society could see, as I have the tremendous amount of work being done for our new museum by various groups of volunteers. Preparations for exhibits, storage, research, craft areas and general building interior completion has been under the general direction of our Exhibit Consultant, John Strawbridge. He has given unstintingly of his evenings and weekends, as well as working daytimes. He has been ably assisted by such men as Jim Bressler, Chick Schell, Joe Dincher, Bill Turnbaugh, Tom Taber, Jim Marshall and others.

The same can be said of Sam and Chet Dornsife who have spent months in the selection and assembly of furnishings and more recently in the actual preparation of the very sumptuous Victorian Parlor. Construction work for it was contributed by the Community College and expert wall finishings by Clarence Dell. Most of the cost was contributed by the Junior League.

Possibly our most dedicated volunteer and certainly one who has a great deal to show for his many hours of hard work is Frances Maneval. His accurate restoration of a blacksmith's shop, a cabinet makers'

and coopers' shop and grist mill are completely furnished and will actually operate, as they did 100 years ago. He has been helped from time to time by such men as Tom Taber and Lloyd Skriptchuk. He was also ably assisted by 10 members of Civil Air Patrol, Squadron 401 on moving several loads of heavy farm and shop objects to the new museum.

Our most recent specialist volunteer is Cliff Breidinger who has been classifying and cleaning up our collection of weapons.

A good start has also been made in archæology, geology and Indian lore by Mr. George Howe, Bill Turnbaugh, Don Schmidt, Chick Schell and Jim Bressler.

Unpacking storing and further cataloging of artifacts is being done under the direction of Elizabeth Carson. Currently she is being assisted by Barbara Bressler, Betty Stewart, Mary Gaulin, Barbara Taber, Margaret Horn and Mrs. Conway. The job of numbering and recording objects has been a continuous effort for the past four years. The group has been manned from time to time by literally dozens of Junior League Provisionals and regular members, whose names are too numerous to mention.

One of our most enthusiastic and loyal volunteer groups has been working in the evenings for the last year on a similar project on clothing and textiles under the leadership of June Foresman and advised by Jane Ingersoll. They have included:

Jane Ingersoll	Miss Ethel Ertel
Pat Shelly	Mrs. Fred Snell
Mrs. Lecce	Phyllis Wagner
Mrs. DeHardy	Marcia Carry
Joyce Wise	Dorothy Ribando

Possibly the most challenging of our volunteer jobs is that of bringing order out of the chaos that is presented by our 50 years accumulation of documents, pamphlets, manuscripts, photographs, clippings, publications, books, etc. that came under the general heading of archives. Most of the credit for making tremendous progress on this monumental job goes to Gladys Tozier for her determination and know-how. Some of the sorting and nearly all of the packaging has been done by Leroy Derr. Gladys has been assisted from time to time by:

Beryl DeNeil	Frances Hough
Jesse Andrews	Mary Girton
Emily Derr	Marie Fredericks
	Helen Rote

Volunteers have risen to the occasion for special jobs such as to make acoustical drapes for the meeting room. These were cut, sewed, ironed, assembled and hung by Annette Selleck, Marion Frank, Jesse An-

draws, Janet Frank, Phyllis Briel and Edith Wright's Junior Historians; Valerie Ludwig, Kathy Gray, Jane Hoffman, Patty Schradler, and Eileen Hoffman.

The following group of Junior Leaguers headed by Joyce Wise have been working this summer on making silk screen stencil note paper for sale, typing and making a start at molding bayberry candles:

Mrs. Henry Foltz	Mrs. John Eck
Mrs. John Smead	Mrs. Lecce
Mrs. John Detwiler	Mrs. Robert Colley
	Mrs. Robert Steiger

Junior Historians deserve credit for their recent labors such as Stu Hellring, Gary Doeblen and John Imrisek who put in a hard day helping move objects to the new museum.

Credit must also be given to our Office Staff of Elizabeth Helmrich, Executive Secretary and Marie Mabb, Executive Assistant, each of whom works a half day. They have both shown the volunteer spirit, "above and beyond the call of duty". We also have a new part-time custodian, Ralph Wikstrom, who has proved himself to be extremely helpful with all kinds of handiwork at the new building. Your more active officers such as Treasurer Abe Snyder and Membership Chairman Peggy Lindemuth should also take a bow for their unselfish service.

D. M. Carson

PLEASE NOTE

Seats for the Fred Waring Benefit Show are more than half sold out. Get your tickets now if you wish to see this live, musical extravaganza.

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We are badly in need of a typewriter for the Archival Department of the Museum. Anyone willing to contribute one in reasonably good condition, please call the office.

SLIDING LOGS IN THE OLD LUMBERING ERA

BY MILTON W. LANDIS



Slowly the snowflakes floated lazily down from the leaden sky. Already a mantle of white blanketed the mountains and valleys of the Flooks Run lumbering region. Smoke wafted slowly upward from the chimneys of the various lumber camps scattered along the length of the valley, giving notice to one and all that busy cooks were at work in the kitchens preparing food for the next meal.

Extending up the valley near the creek, beside a newly built road, was the log slide. To a woodsman's eye it was a thing of beauty. Built as sturdy as man could devise and construct it, the log slide stood ready and waiting to receive the onslaught of hundreds of thousands of pine and hemlock logs that would soon be sliding on it from mountain slopes to the valley far below. Old sections of the log slide from the mouth of Flooks Run and extending upstream had been repaired. During the past summer a new section of log slide had been added to the old slide to tap a newly lumbered-off tract that had been harvested during the past spring, summer and fall mon-

ths. Lumber-jacks had cut down the tall trees, peeled the hemlock bark and cut the fallen trees into log lengths. Loggers had hauled the logs over dug-roads and rolled them into high piles along-side the new section of the log slide. Watering barrels were placed on the slide. The goose-necked (braking) spikes were at the ready. In fact, all was in readiness to receive the waiting logs.

Word had gone out from the lumber company that conditions were right for sliding logs. Snow had started to fall and it was cold enough to freeze water to ice in the slides. Along the trails and road in the valley and on the dug-roads over the mountains could be seen woodsmen headed for the lumber camps in knots of twos, threes or larger groups. Briskly and erectly they walked in their calked, high-topped Wisconsin shoes. Loud boisterous talk filled the air as they headed for their winter's job on the log slide. Sometimes winter set early and work commenced the last part of November. More often log sliding was delayed until the month of December when cold,

freezing weather marked the beginning of the job of sliding logs down to the main creek, which was the Blockhouse Creek, where the logs were piled high on the landings to await the coming of the spring floods.

Most of the arriving men were assured jobs on the log slides. They were experienced men who had worked on log slides for years. Most of them had talked with the boss previously and had spoken for a job before winter had set in. Others without a promised job spoke with the boss and hit him up for a job upon their arrival at the camp.

A scene of activity and excitement greeted each group of new-comers. Old friends were greeting each other with much shoulder slapping and hand shaking, loud talking and laughing. Sometimes the company Superintendent was present and visited with the men. The Jobbers with their straw-bosses were busy assigning the waiting woods hicks to their jobs for the winter's work.

The afternoon hours slipped by swiftly. Darkness closed in on the lumber camp. The cook (or cookee) appeared in the doorway and indelicately announced supper by yelling out, "Come and get it or I'll throw it out." The waiting men filed into the lobby, hung up their coats, hats or caps and then went outside again to a long bench filled with tin wash basins where they washed their faces and hands, dried themselves on coarse towels, combed their hair and entered the dining room to partake of a well-cooked and nourishing meal. Satisfied comments were heard to the effect that this cook was putting out good "grub". Requests were heard to pass the "spuds" and the like.

After supper some men assembled in the lobby to visit and loaf on the benches under the mellow light of kerosene lamps in wall brackets or lights suspended from the ceiling. Others put on their coats and hats and went outside to continue their visiting. Some who had walked a long distance that day soon went upstairs to the bunkroom where they soon fell asleep. Long before midnight all were asleep and the camp was silent except for the lusty snoring of more than a few tired men. Outside the snow was falling.

THE LOG SLIDE IN OPERATION

The log slide has now been in operation for many weeks and the different crews have learned the routine to perfection so that the logs come running down the slide in an almost continuous procession with little interruption. It is about time for the Superintendent of the Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company to pay a visit to the job to make an assessment on the progress being made in the woods. Eugene M. McCracken is the Land and Timber Superintendent of the C.P.L. Part of the company's holdings is the entire watershed of Flooks Run in Cogan House Township which comprises over five thousand acres. Their lumbering operations began in the 1890's. Let us go back to the year 1898 and in our imaginations let us join the superintendent on his trip of inspection.

Supt. McCracken cordially invites us to accompany him along with a number of the company officials. On the appointed day we walk to the end of the slide near the top of a mountain. The inspection is about to begin. There is much to see and learn. We use our ears and eyes to good advantage as the inspection proceeds. From where we stand at the head of the slide we see mountain sides laced with trails and dug-roads over which the logs had been dragged to the landings near the slide. Still standing are scattered groves of hardwood trees but among the groves of hardwoods the ground is covered with tree-tops and limbs which were trimmed from the pine and hemlock only recently cut. All around us at the log slide are great piles of logs waiting to be rolled into the nearby log slide.

As we watch, a woods hick picks up a large tin horn, points it down the mountainside and sounds loud signal blasts on it. Echoes of the signals bounce back from surrounding mountains. Far down the log slide faint blasts of an answering horn waft back to us. Now, all workmen along the slide are aware that logs will soon be coming down the slide. Teams of men at the log piles use their picklevs to roll logs into the slide. Two men at a log working together bounce the logs into the slide with speed. The grade of the log slide here on the mountain is quite steep and the logs gain momentum quickly. The air is filled

with the roar of the speeding logs. Our party starts walking down the road near the slide, all the time keeping a wary eye on the running logs watching for that wild log which might leave the slide and endanger limb or life.

Supt. McCracken went to work in the woods as a youth and worked at all the different jobs associated with lumbering. He became expert in all the skills associated with lumbering. Today, as he passes men at work, he can tell at a glance whether a man is capable of doing his job. Today, the Supt. is dressed as a woodsman. He walks in caked, high-topped shoes and wears woolen socks, woolen pants and a couple of woolen "hickory" shirts. He wears a hat and leather-faced gloves. He looks just like his men except for that air of confidence and authority which sets him apart as the "boss". More often than not he is addressed as "boss" by his men as he exchanges greetings with them. The boss has a word of advice here, a compliment for good work there, a word of caution where needed.

As our party continues down the mountain trail it is noted that the logs are running extremely fast. The grade, here, is steeper. The ice on the slide is smooth as glass. We arrive at a station where a "spike tender" is watching the logs with a worried look on his face. He already has two "goose-necked" spikes inserted into the slide to slow down the running logs. The boss talks with him and advises that a third and perhaps a fourth braking spike be inserted into the slide for a spell to put a brake on the logs and slow down their speed. Woodsmen do not like to use the braking spikes because it tears out shavings and splinters from each passing log. Already, a high pile of shavings has accumulated by the side of the log slide. With the speed of the logs now under control, the spike tender settles back to relax and our party continues down the mountain side. We pass several more spike tenders before reaching the valley floor where we see the logs running at a fast clip far down the valley and out of sight. The first logs have come to an uneasy rest nearly a half mile down the slide. Speeding logs, coming up behind them, hit the first logs with a "whump" and jolt them onward another few rods. There is a continuous sound of "whumps" as the slide in

the valley begins to fill up solid with logs and the sound carries for miles on a clear day. As our party watches the logs come to rest it is noted that soon the level part of the slide will be filled with logs, and logs would start backing up the mountain side. A workman picks up a tin horn and sounds a signal to the woodsmen up the slide at the log piles. He is warning them to stop rolling logs into the slide until further notice. These men at the piles will not have time to sit down and rest or maybe play a game of cards. They immediately start rolling logs from the far end of the log pile to the front near the slide so that they will have an ample supply of logs ready to roll into the slide once the signal sounds for them to start sending logs down the slide again.

The "running slide" is that part of the log slide where the logs slide along under their own momentum. After the logs come to rest, they must be moved onward with a team of horses. This part of the slide is called the "shove slide". It is always kept well watered and iced to make it slippery so that a team can move more logs at a time.

A scene of activity greets our party as we come to the end of the resting logs. We have been walking on a well packed road along-side the log slide. The hooves of many horses have packed the snow on the road. Far down the road we see a number of teams of horses coming toward us. The teamster at the head of the procession counts off the number of logs he thinks his team can move. He stops his horses and turns them around so they are headed downstream. He has a long chain, thirty feet long, one end is fastened to his double-trees with a clevis. The other end of the chain has a grab welded into the last link. The grab is a right-angled heavy piece of iron and the end or point is sharpened to a point. The teamster carries a grab-maul with him. One end of the maul is flattened and is used to hammer the grab into the last log of his "trail". The other end of the maul is pointed and is used to knock the grab loose from the log. The teamster takes his maul and grab to the end of his last log. He places the grab point on the log and mauls it deep into the log. Next, he drives the point of his grab maul deep into the log because he wants that maul with him on his

trip. The teamster gathers up his reins (sometimes called lines) and speaks to his horses. They start out slowly and tighten the chain. If he is in luck the logs begin to move as the horses strain against their collars. The trail of logs stretching out in front of his team is really being shoved by the last log which the team is pulling. By this line of reasoning, it is easy to understand why this section of the log slide is called the "shove slide". If weather conditions were just right, logs lying on the slide would freeze fast making it difficult for the teamster to start his trail of logs. With a lever, he would bust loose a few of the back logs and move them up-slide leaving a few feet space between the logs. After starting his team, a series of bumps would occur as the logs came together, creating a force strong enough to free the whole trail of logs.

While this first teamster was hooking on to his trail of logs, team after team of horses passed him on their way up-slide where other teamsters counted out their trails, drove their grabs, and started down-slide with their logs. When the slide operation was working at top efficiency there was a continuous flow of logs down-slide and a parade of teams returning up-slide for another trail of logs.

In and out around all this activity at the slide we see another workman busy all the time watering the slide. He is also called a slide-tender. He operates a fifty gallon barrel which he fills with water through a square hole sawed out of the top where the bung-hole of a barrel is usually found. The hole is about a foot square and is large enough that a pail of water can be dumped into the barrel with dispatch and speed. From the square hole to the back end of the barrel a stout, narrow board has been nailed fast which serves as a handle to guide and manage the barrel. The barrel itself lies on the log slide like a log. At the front end of the barrel and near the bottom two small holes have been bored and pegs have been inserted to keep the water from flowing out. Now, the barrel is filled with water and the tender goes to the front of the barrel and pulls out the pegs. Streams of water gush out and against the sides of the slide and soon will freeze a coating of ice on the slide. He grabs the handle of the barrel and gives a push and goes slowly

down the slide watering the slide. Sometimes a trail of logs comes up behind him and pushes the barrel for him and if he cares to, he can sit on the log and handle his barrel with little effort and get some rest.

It is not long until all the logs on the push slide are moving and we hear a series of signal blasts on the horns to the men at the head of the slide alerting them to start the logs running again. Our party proceeds down the slide at a brisk walk. Behind us comes the roar of running logs and the "whump" of bumping logs as they come to rest in the valley. It is nearing the noon hour and we are nearing the lumber camp where a brief stop will be made. Arriving at the camp, the party is treated to a good, nourishing meal served by the cook and the helpers. After resting and visiting a short time, the party dresses again in the winter clothing and resumes the trip to the landing. We pass team after team of horses as they plod along with their trail of logs. We meet many teams as they go back from the landing for another trail. After walking a mile or so at a brisk clip our party arrives at the landing on Blockhouse Creek at the Patterson farm. The C.P.L. Company had leased some land from Mr. Patterson and had built a large splash-dam, cleared off trees and stumps and graded the surface for a landing on which to pile their logs. From the edge of the creek and back across the clearing large piles of logs were being piled. At some splash-dam logs were piled at the edge of the pond where they could be rolled into the dam. Other piles of logs were stacked below the dam in readiness for the spring floods. The piles of logs were built up layer upon layer. The logs lay straight and neat. Next to the creek the piles were highest. By the end of the log sliding season the woods hicks were rolling their logs on skids up-hill from the slide. These men working on the landing were called "pilers". Pilers worked in pairs. Two men with levers would roll a log from the slide onto their skids. They rolled the log a short distance until they met another pair of men who took over and kept the log rolling to its place on the pile. This same operation was going on at many piles of logs along the slide. Teamsters never stopped their teams

as the pilers took out the logs from the slide as fast as they came along-side the piles and when the last log arrived at the pile, the teamster stopped his team, took up his maul and with one clip he knocked the grab free of the log and started back up-slide for another trail. A steady stream of logs were arriving at the landing and the men working next to the slide had to keep the logs moving from the slide to make room for the logs coming in on the slide.

The straw-boss in charge of piling the landing held a responsible position. He hired and fired men at will. He had a position of authority and sometimes drove his men to their utmost. If a man couldn't handle his job, he was fired. There was always men coming in hunting a job, for jobs were scarce those days. When a good workman played out on the landing he was sent up the slide to work at a less arduous job. The straw-boss was all over the landing giving orders and advice. He carried a lever with him and lent a hand when men had trouble with a large, heavy log. The whole successful operation of the log slide often depended on the boss in charge of piling the landing. If he understood his job and had sufficient help of high caliber everything went along smoothly. However, if things got "balled-up"

down on the landing, it could stop all work on the entire slide.

After the superintendent and other company officials had looked over the splash-dam and the landing they got together for a short conference. If cold weather held up they felt confident that all their logs would be on the landing by spring. This season's work would net them between fifteen and eighteen million feet which would float down to the boom at Williamsport in the spring. Drivers with teams of horses hitched to sleighs stood waiting. Supt. McCracken would be driven to the railroad station at Trout Run where he would board a train to his home in Williamsport.

Our imaginary trip to the log slide is ended. Our party disperses. We go our separate ways. Without ever having left our comfortable armchairs we have made a strange journey. We have had a glimpse of a phase of the great lumbering industry that brought growth, fame and fortune to many and to Williamsport in particular. As we sit back and muse over this singular trip to a log slide, we begin to wonder about other aspects of the lumbering industry which I will try to describe to you.

PART TWO

LUMBERING IN FLOOKS RUN

Sometime late in the 1800's, thousands of acres of prime timber land on the watershed of Flocks Run came into the possession of the Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company. Most of the timber was hemlock with some pine intermixed with stands of various hardwoods. The company was interested chiefly in the hemlock and pine which could be floated on water to the boom at Williamsport. Hardwoods were too solid and heavy to float in a log drive so were left to stand and grow. Hemlock was the most valuable to the company because hemlock bark was in great demand. There was a very large tannery at English Center, not many miles away from Flocks Run which bought up all the hemlock bark then available.

The C.P.L. (as the company was familiarly known) started to lumber off the Flocks Run area in 1903. At this time the lumbering industry was at its peak in Pine, Jackson and Coganhouse Townships. All the hemlock bark was hauled to the Kingston Tanneries at English Center and in the spring the pine and hemlock logs went down Little Pine Creek in the log drive. Many lumber companies were operating in this northern part of Lycoming County. Their offices and headquarters were located in Williamsport. Whenever an official wished to make a trip to the lumber camp, he went by train either to Trout Run or Waterville, hired a horse and rig at the local livery stable and drove to the camp.

Before starting lumbering operations in Flocks Run, the company officials divided their timberland into large tracts. A tract contained enough timber for a years work and to make a log drive profitable. The first tract to be worked was the mouth of Flocks Run along Blockhouse Creek. A splash-dam was built and a landing was made ready for the piles of logs that would come down the slide from the woods. These tracts were let out to "jobbers" who would do the actual lumbering. Two brothers, Grant Roupp and John Roupp, got the job of lumbering this first tract. They built a large lumber camp, barn and blacksmith shop at Dry Hollow about a half mile up-stream from the dam. In the spring, when the sap began to flow, they started hiring men to cut and peel the hemlock. Hemlock bark would peel off easily until hot weather sometime the last of June when the bark began to tighten and peeled with difficulty. At this point the cutting and peeling job stopped. When the bark was dry, the Roupps hired men with teams and wagons with bark-racks on them to haul the bark to the tannery at English Center.

Already in bark peeling time, the boss in charge of building log slides had hired a crew of men who had acquired special skills in slide building.

When a right-away for the slide had been mapped out, crews set to work cutting out the trees and brush, removing stumps, grading a road and otherwise getting ready to lay the slide.

BUILDING THE SLIDE

While all this activity was going on, the boss was cruising the valley and hillsides for the tallest, straightest trees to be used in building the slide. A crew followed him. Sawyers notched and sawed down the trees. Swampers chopped off the limbs and other protuberances. The trees were cut into log lengths and teamsters came and hauled the logs to the slide. The cry, "timber" rang out often during these busy days of slide building. The slide was built as sturdy and permanent as man could devise because it would take the beating of millions of logs over a decade or more.

In Flocks Run, beech trees were most

avored as the ideal timber for slide building. Here the beech trees grew tall and straight. They were plentiful and close at hand. There was little demand for beech lumber on the market. It was a hard wood and also weathered better than some other species of trees. Logs of fourteen to twenty-four inches were considered ideal for the slide. Where beech was scarce other timber was used to build the slide. First to go on the ground were the ties. Ties were short thick logs about five feet long. Ties could be of almost any diameter as various thicknesses were required to maintain a level grade over uneven ground. Ties were placed five to ten feet apart and partly embedded in the ground for stability. Notches were chopped on top of the ties to cradle the slide logs firmly into position. Next the slide logs were hauled from the woods to the slide and rolled on top of the ties. These logs fitted snugly into the notches. Carpenters had made half-laps on the ends of the slide logs before placing them on the ties. Half-laps were made by measuring eighteen inches back from the end of the log. With a cross-cut saw, a cut was made half-way down through the log. This eighteen inches of severed material was slabbed off the end of the log leaving a half-lap. The half-lap of one log fitted into the half-lap of its mating logs giving the appearance of one long, straight log. We could say the logs had been spliced together. Two notches were chopped out of the top of each tie so that two logs lay in the notches, side by side, and for the full length of the slide when completed. The splices in the logs were always directly over a tie. No two splices were ever allowed on one tie. The splices were staggered so that only one splice was made on a tie. Over the center of the tie, a notch or recess was chopped out and a hole was bored from the recess down through the two half-laps and into the tie. A long slide spike was inserted into the hole and mauled home through the laps and solidly into the tie. The spike held the two logs together and anchored both firmly to the tie.

When the slide passed over a creek, a gully or other depression a framework of smaller logs was built from the ground upward to support the slide. This framework was called "cribbing". Cribbing enabled the

slide builders to keep their slide level. When crossing a large stream of water some bridging was necessary and could be combined with cribbing when necessary.

Quite often a branch slide came down off the mountain and was united with the main log slide by putting a big, wide curve in the branch slide where it met the main slide. These curves in a running slide were the source of many accidents and great care was used in building them. The slide boss spent many hours searching through the woods for trees with a natural curve in them. The slide logs from these naturally curved trees had just enough bend in them to curve the slide without resorting to any artificial means to build it. A regular log slide on a curve was not sufficient to contain the speeding logs on a running slide. Centrifugal force built up by the speed of the log caused the log to lift up and out of the trough of the slide on a curve and go crashing over the outside of the curve. To overcome this problem the slide builders built up a wall of hewed logs on the outside of the curve. The hewed timbers were spiked fast to the outside log on the curve. Layer upon layer of timbers were spiked into the wall until a height was reached that would contain the running logs.

HEWING THE SLIDE

As soon as the slide logs had been spiked firmly into place on the ties, a team of specialists in their trade began their job of making the trough in the slide logs. With axe, adz and broad-axe these men started "hewing the slide". When a woods hick once achieved a position on the team of hewing slide, he was looked up to with respect and admiration by his fellowmen. A man who could hew slide was a man who had acquired special skills in handling the tools of his trade. The slide crew worked with speed and precision and they received a higher rate of pay for their work. With chalkline they

outlined the limits of the trough of the slide. The first man started to work with a sharp axe to score the log with deep-cut gashes about six to eight inches apart and as deep as he could chop with one blow of the axe.

The second man in the team came along behind and with his axe chopped loose the large chips scored by the first man. This first time over was not enough to complete the trough and the scoring and chopping out was repeated several times until the proper angle of the trough had been reached. The finishing touches to the trough was applied by a man with a broad-axe. This broad-axe had only one bit which was very wide and honed to a razor's edge and came with a very crooked handle. With this axe an expert could shave off the surface of the trough so that one not familiar with the work could well believe that the log had been planed smooth by a carpenter.

SLIDE ROAD

It was necessary to have a good road along-side the log slide especially down the shove slide where teams of horses "shoved" the trails of logs. This road was graded at the same time the slide was being built. Over solid ground a good dirt road was built but where swampy ground was encountered a corduroy road was constructed and it was relatively easy to build. Long, straight logs were laid in pairs the length of the swampy area and about eight feet apart. At this stage of construction these logs reminded one of a wooden railroad track. These bottom logs were called "stringers". Crosswise upon the stringers were laid smaller logs about ten feet long. These top logs were packed together, side by side, and spiked fast to the stringers. Sometimes loads of earth was hauled and spread over the top logs. Corduroy bridges were built over streams and gullies. By late fall the slide and roads had been completed and readied for operation.

PART THREE

JOBS IN FLOCKS RUN

One article we read about lumbering in Flocks Run states that the Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company was organized in

Williamsport in the year 1903 and that Mr. Eugene M. McCracken of Ralston became associated with the company in the same

year, coming from Ralston to Williamsport, where he built a new home at 828 High Street. Mr. McCracken became Land and Timber Superintendent of the company and, as such, took full charge of the lumbering operations in Flooks Run. He took personal interest in awarding the first tract of timberland to his nephews, the Roupp Brothers, John and Grant Roupp, who were the sons of Mr. McCracken's sister Mrs. Charles Roupp. The Roupp homestead was near the Beech Grove School, in Cogan House Township, and was located quite near the Flooks Run timber lands.

John and Grant Roupp built a lumber camp and a barn and started the bark-peeling job in the spring. Their camp might have been located at Dry Hollow although some old timers believe it was located downstream nearer to the mouth of Flooks Run. Their sisters, Idessa and Viola were the camp cooks. Laura Weaver was hired to help in the kitchen. Sometimes, when the crew was extra large, their mother came to the camp and helped the girls.

During the ensuing years, tract after tract of timberland was let out to jobbers. It was just a matter of ten or so years until the entire water-shed had been lumbered off. A man by the name of Wagoner (Wagner) jobbed off the second tract. He had his camp at Gummy Hollow. Clayton and Lawrence Mitstifer took the third tract. This was a large tract and they were busy for several years clearing off their tract. Their camp was located on the creek near the end of the Weaver Road that commenced at the Weaver farm up near Beech Grove. This road was a fairly good road and was much used in lumbering days to reach the Mitstifer Camp. Still later on, the jobbers, Jesse and Frank Clark opened up a new tract above the Mitstifer Camp followed by Drumater and Ed Caldwell who jobbed the eastern part of the C.P.L. Holdings.

As soon as the first tract was finished, the woodsmen from that camp moved upstream to work for a jobber just starting in on a new tract. Each jobber built log slides which connected to the old slide built the previous year. By the time Drumater and Caldwell had built their slides, there was a long slide the full length of Flooks Run and many branch slides coming down off

the mountainsides. In the Steam Valley area, back of the old Anderson homestead, the main slide was built to the branch slides that came down out of Shingle Hollow, Norman Hollow and Wagner Hollow.

OLD WOODS HICKS

The term "hick" was a title applied only to skillful woodsmen with many years of hard work in the woods behind them. These men were proud to be called "an old hick." Seasoned woodsmen greeted each other with, "Hello, you old hick." It was a term of affection among old hicks.

We cannot presume to list all the names of old woods hicks at this writing. Many of the old woodsmen moved away from this area as soon as woods work was finished and their names have been forgotten. The names of a few have been recalled and are as follows: John R. Moyer, Perry Baumgartner, Oscar Landis, Bill Landis, Charles Haynes, Stanley Livermore, Oliver Livermore, Grant Roupp, John Roupp, William McCracken, Thomas McCracken, Benjamin Roupp, Harry Roupp, Harvey Roupp, Jim Brewer, Oliver Brewer, John Brocius, Fred Brion, Ed Brion, Bob Black, Normie Black, Charles Keagle, Daniel Krise, Frank Keagle, Thomas Livermore, Sam Livermore, Dan Livermore, William Persun, Donald McCracken, Jim Patterson, Walter Alexander, Harry Alexander, Glen Moyer, Geo. Hughes, Edward Baumgartner, Charles Carol, Hank Carol, Dempster McCracken, Charles Crist, John Brouse, Murry Brion, Cinnamon Crist, Oliver Crist, Jim Schmouder, Charles Knipe, George Dannley, Ed Roupp, Wellie Kulp, Homer Kulp, Forrest Royder, Oscar Drumater, Cordy Drumater, Ed Finch, Sam Kissinger, Charley Kissinger, Uriah Krotzer, Ira Ling, Jacob Metzgar, Charles Sawyer, Purley Ling, James Post, Moran Beck, Bill Gibson, Barney Hinkly, Willard English, Tom English, Big Charley English, Wilber Day, Foster English, Decker Johnson, Harrison Dodd, and others who can be remembered only from their last name like; the Okome Dennisons, Oregon Hill Teeds and Scheiders, Hughes, Fairchilds, Thomases, and many others who have been forgotten which is regrettable for they were all worthy men and deserve to have their names recorded in history.

No attempt has been made to record the names of the younger generation of woodsmen who started working in the woods after the era of lumbering in Flooks Run. It was they who worked in the hardwood forests and around the sawmills. Many of them are

still living at this date.

Many incidents, accidents and amusing episodes occurred in the log slide days and we could not close this narrative without relating a few of them.

PART FOUR

OLD HICKS' YARNS

Earlier in this story it is related that Idessa Roupp cooked for her brothers at the Roupp Camp. One cold, crisp, mid-winter's day one of the teamsters came down with a severe sickness and was compelled to put his team in the barn and go to his bunk. The slide was in perfect condition and the logs were coming faster than the teams could shove them down the slide. Idessa could not allow this waste of horsepower and against the protests of her helpers and the men alike, she dressed in warm clothing, went to the barn and hitched up the team and with great determination drove team all that day and the next until the teamster was well enough to resume his job. In 1967 just a few months before his death she again related this story to her brother Bill Roupp who had come to her home in Mansfield to visit her.

Then there is the story about a camp further up Flooks Run where the cook - a man was the cook there - was busy getting supper ready for the crew. The log slide was near the camp and the logs were running fast. Through some mis-adventure a log jumped the slide and came head-on toward the camp. The log smashed through the wall of the kitchen and came to rest with one end under the stove. It heaved the stove at a dangerous angle. This cook was a quick-tempered man and he started raging against the injustice of it all. He rushed to the open back-door, shook his fists at no one in particular, yelling and screaming that he could lick the whole crew for this terrible injustice to him. After the cook had calmed down so that it was safe to approach him, a crew rallied to his aid. They removed the offending log, eased the stove carefully down on its legs and found that the supper was intact and would be ready at the usual hour.

Many accidents happened in the woods. If a man was injured so severely that he had to be hospitalized, the men in camp took up a collection to help pay hospital expenses and if a man died a collection was taken up to help defray the funeral expenses.

A frightening experience occurred at one of the camps one could winter night. Late in the evening, a man, pale and shaken, burst into the lobby saying there was a woman lost up on the mountain side and she was screaming for help. The men dressed hurriedly, lit a kerosene lantern and went out into the cold. As they listened they heard a scream far up the mountainside. They called to her to come down to them. After an interval the scream came again, this time farther up the valley. The men followed the slide road, calling as they walked. This continued until the screams ended far back in the mountains. The men returned to the camp. Some old-timers said it was a panther out hunting. But a few of the men were not convinced that it was a panther and always entertained a haunting fear that a human being had perished up in the mountains that heart-breaking night.

When log sliding got into high gear, the operation of the slide continued around the clock. Night and day the logs came running down the slide and teamsters shoved trails of logs down to the landing regardless of the cold of night. The infrequent appearance of "Northern Lights" was the cause of some fear and alarm among the night shift on the slide. Very few had any knowledge at all about Aurora Borealis and most believed it to be an Act of God. A few scientists of that day did advance the theory that the sun shining on the tumbling icebergs near the North Pole caused the great

flashes and streamers of light to illuminate our temperate skies heedless of the fact that the North Pole is in total darkness for six months of the year during our winter and receives no sunshine at all. On Monday, February 15, 1892, a remarkable display of the Aurora Borealis or "Northern Lights", illuminated the sky for hours and brought fear to the hearts of many who observed the phenomenon. Old timers who were working on the slide that night down Bear Run - this was years before Flooks Run was lumbered - claimed they could hear the hissing of the lights as they raced across the sky. At times the lights were bright enough to read a newspaper by. Horses became frightened and could hardly be controlled by the teamsters. One God-fearing teamster stopped his team, fell to his knees and prayed aloud. Others stood and gazed spell-bound at the marvelous sight in the skies. It was a night to be long remembered.

When their work schedule permitted, most of the woodsmen left camp Saturday evening to go spend Sunday at home. The young ones cleaned up at home, dressed in their best clothing and went to visit their girls, or in the vernacular of the day, they went to "spark" their girls. If one of the local schools was having a box social or holiday entertainment, all the young couples gathered at the schoolhouse for fun and gaiety. Young married couples went to visit their friends and neighbors on Saturday nights. I was very young at the time but remember well the get-togethers here at our home. Sometimes we had music. Mother had a parlor organ on which one of the fellows would play chords in accompaniment with a violin. I can remember the many times that Jim Brewer and Billie Persun came to spend an evening with us. Jim was the only left-handed fiddle player I ever knew. He had the strings reversed on his old fiddle so that he could bow with the left hand. Billie played chords on the organ and they made the most beautiful music I ever heard in my youth. Sometimes Don McCracken came along with Jim, and Don played the organ. We were one of the very few families who owned an organ in the early 1900's, so we enjoyed more musical entertainment than most families. If enough neighbors came to hear the music, sometimes an impromptu dance was held in

our kitchen and they had a square dance there while the musicians played in the parlor near the organ with the caller standing in the doorway between the two rooms. At other times, when a few woodsmen dropped in for a visit, they would sit around in the kitchen and tell stories or "spin yarns" as it was called.

Sometimes their stories turned to the supernatural and were extremely frightening to us young listeners. One of these stories had to do with a woodsman returning, late at night, to a camp in Flooks Run. Near the outskirts of Steam Valley stood an abandoned house, empty of all furnishings, its bleak glass windows staring out at the dark of night. This old house stood near the road that led to the lumber camp. As the woodsman approached the house he thought he saw a glimmer of light. He stopped in bewilderment for he knew no one lived there. As he watched in trepidation, his pulse quickening, he saw a pale, blue flame of light move slowly through the upstairs rooms, passing by one window after another and from room to room. He was convinced that this was a ghost he was watching. He thought the spirit might be searching for some object lost long ago here in this house. He did not tarry long but hurried away on his trip to the camp, thoroughly shaken by his experience. Others also claimed they had seen the blue light at night in the old house.

Another old hick's story had to do with a harrowing experience some teamsters had one cold winter morning. They had just left the barn with their horses and were going up the slide road to hook onto a trail of logs when the lead teamster's attention was drawn to a trail of tracks coming down the road toward the camp. These tracks were imprints of small hooves shod with horse shoes and the tracks were spaced as if a man shod with horse shoes had walked down the road. Other teamsters came to view the tracks. What raised the hair on the backs of their necks and glazed their eyes was the horrible truth that the tracks were melted clear through the snow and ice down to the bare ground. Most appalling of all were the tracks where the hooves had stepped on pieces of wood. The wood was burned and scorched and the men thought they detected an odor like sulphur and brimstone in the tracks. They examined the

entire length of the mysterious tracks. The tracks all at once appeared on the road just ahead of the teams standing on the road. They decided a "thing" had dropped out of the sky to the road, its red-hot shoes had made the peculiar tracks in the snow. Near the camp the tracks ended as if the thing had risen into the air and flew away. The badly shaken men could come to only one conclusion. They agreed that the devil had come down on the Flooks Run road the previous night on one of his nefarious errands and had made those hoof-prints in the snow. Evidently the devil had changed his mind and had gone back to hades without completing his mission. This narrative proved to be one of the most fascinating

yarns to come out of the lumbering era. It was told and retold and embellished upon time after time. It was the subject of much speculation in the lumber camp. Men shook their heads over the meaning of this mysterious visitation.

Gone are the great days of lumbering in Lycoming County. Gone are the sights, smells and sounds of the lumbering industry. The camps, the log slides, dams and sawmills have all decayed and gone back into the soil. In seventy years time a new crop of trees has grown and covered the old scars on the mountains. All that remains of the old log slide days are memories - but, the memory lives on.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH — A RETROSPECT

BY FRED L. GUERNSEY

Having spent over a half century as a Village Blacksmith, I am dedicating these few remarks to the few remaining Village Blacksmiths, wherever they may be.

I'm looking back to my young and happy days — my greatest pleasure lies in thinking of the brave and kind-hearted Blacksmiths with whom I both worked and associated.

I started as an apprentice with my Father at an early age. Both my Grandfathers and Great Grandfathers were "Sons of the Forge". My Father had two Brothers that were Blacksmiths and two Sisters who married Blacksmiths.

My Mother had two Brothers who worked at the trade the greater part of their lives.

Of this large family of Smiths, I have one Cousin left who is still working at the trade.

Looking back just 50 years it cost one dollar to shoe a horse with new shoes and 50 cents for re-setting four shoes. Today many shoers charge eight dollars for four new shoes.

It cost thirty-five cents to set a wagon tire, new neckyokes were one dollar, whiffletrees were fifty cents. A new set of wa-

gon rims and tires on a lumber wagon was eighteen dollars; today it would cost seventy-eight dollars.

A good mechanic received \$1.50 per day, but we got two pounds of round steak for two shillings with a chunk of liver thrown in.

The Blacksmiths of that period were men whose honesty and mechanical skill was beyond reproach, and an inspiration to the rising generation. Honor never allowed them to descend to the low level of deception when dealing with their fellow men.

They were the quality of men who accompanied Daniel Boone in the days of the covered wagon, and also with the builders of the first railroad that carried civilization over the western plains to the Golden Gate of California.

Immortalized by Longfellow, glorified by the world's best painters, honored by his fellowmen and respected by his neighbors. The Village Blacksmith, since the advent of the automobile and commercial truck, has become almost as extinct as the passenger pigeon.

Time was when this formidable army of mechanics was a vital force in the nation's business, and were it not that their passing has been brought about by the orderly pro-

cess of necessity and invention, it would indeed be tragic.

The Village Blacksmith Shop in the early days was on every crossroad and intersection of the main highways.

It was generally of frame construction and mostly of one design, but with plenty of room on either side and rear to accommodate farm wagons and general purpose work.

He built the market, milk and butcher wagons, carryalls, hayrack, surry, jump-seat, and the old familiar buggy.

In this buggy most of the young men and women of that period made their life contacts. While spooning beside the "Babbling Brook", the "Old Rustic Bridge", or the "Old Mill Stream". Sometimes using the "Old Gray Mare" and at others the spirited roadster. Result—the same in either case—

"Wedding hours and orange flowers,

White gloves and wedding rings."

All vehicles were sent to his shop for repairs. Tires, brakes, body plates, axles, springs, and other parts needed replacement and adjustment.

When not busy with these repairs, he turned his attention to farm implements. He would take the old plow-shore, worn down by many years of turning the sod, and weld a piece of steel on its face, as well as a new nose; and make it look like new, extending its usefulness.

The harrow also was shod or plated at broken parts, its teeth sharpened and gauged the exact length below the frame. It also went home like new.

Even the wheelbarrow needed a new tire or the old one made smaller to keep spokes and fellows tight.

The housewife's wash-tub needed hoops to keep it from falling apart.

Not only did he shoe farmers' horses and mules, but he was equally efficient in shoeing light track and buggy horses.

All this, my friends, was accomplished by his skill and the muscles of his brawny arms.

His shop equipment consisted of such tools as a tire bender, mandril, upright hand drill, vise, upsetter, traverse wheel, bolt cut-

ter, stocks, and dies for cutting threads on all sizes, taps for threading nuts, a stout hooping trestle, on which the wheel and tire were placed. A swedge block, and anvil swedges of various sizes and forms, gauges and templets, many made by himself, but nevertheless surprisingly accurate compared with the tools of today. His gigantic task and diversified activities become all the more apparent especially when one considers that his work was done so well.

He never enjoyed the advantage of regular hours and trade unions. Job insurance and social security were unknown. On account of circumstances over which he had no control, he was often compelled to do two days' work in one, but he did it cheerfully, being a slave to duty. Take for instance, a rainy or a real hot day in summer when the farmer could not work in his field. He would take the horses to be shod. Other businessmen did the same, resulting in an overflow of work. As it was never considered good taste to put off until tomorrow what could be done today, he tightened his belt and speeded up.

Although the thermometer might have been well up in the nineties, his determination was not dimmed, and when necessary would work far into the night.

The last nail had to be driven and the last foot smoothed down before taking off his apron and calling it a day. His task was to provide for his family and old age.

Worse still was a slippery day in winter, with sleet covering all roads.

Not a horse could move until his shoes were sharpened. Transportation was delayed, but soon restored to near normal by the ever alert Blacksmith.

Sensing the approach of such storms, he was up early and when the first horse, with feet in burlap bags arrived, the fire was glowing brightly and horse No. 1 in half an hour, often in 20 minutes, was equipped with a set of sharp shoes on his way to work again.

This amazing speed was made possible by the Blacksmith in his spare time, having prepared all sizes of shoes, sharpened, shaped, and hung in place for each horse. Often the customer's name, and name and description of horse was tagged to the shoes, these

all ready for the first winter storm. So through preparedness, he reaped the harvest and earned the gratitude of his patrons.

The history of this unselfish and industrious Village Blacksmith should be an object lesson to the present generation.

The following dictum of William Cullen Bryant, in "Thanasopes" seems appropriate here.

"So live that when thy summons comes
To join the innumerable caravan
Which moves to that mysterious realm
Where each shall take his chamber
In the silent halls of death, Thou go
Not as the galley slave at night

Scourged to his dungeon, but
Sustained and soothed by an unflattering
Trust, approach thy grave as one who
Wraps the mantle of his couch about him
And lies down to pleasant dreams."

In concluding this effort to portray the mechanical and business qualities of the Village Blacksmith as I knew him and as he was known by those who preceded me, I add the following:

"His work is done, His trials are o'er
And he is fully blest,
He fought the fight, The victory won
And enters into rest."

BLOOMING GROVE

*Continuation of a series of selections to be printed from "Blooming Grove"
the historical work of Joseph H. McMinn printed at Williamsport in 1901.*

THE VALLEY

To the present generation the name of Blooming Grove is very indefinite, conveying an idea, even among many Lycoming county born Germans, of a tract of country "from Fairfield to Anthony." Or to the outsider, from Lycoming Creek, at Hepburnville, on the west to the Loyalsock, at Slabtown, (Loyalsockville) on the east; and lying between the northern slope of the range of hills near the Susquehanna River and the steep slope of the spur of the Allegheny mountains bounding the West Branch valley on the north. The chain of high hills referred to rises with rounded summits perhaps two hundred feet above the general plain, and without a single break for ten miles, while the elevated mountain plateau has peaks which attain an altitude of quite two thousand feet above sea level. The "scope of country" lying between these limits, comprises a length, from creek to creek, of about ten miles; while the average width may be reckoned at about six miles. The entire region, being an undulating, well watered, fertile valley, that constantly appeals to the admiration for picturesque beauty and quiet, prosperous, pastoral grandeur. The descendants of the original colo-

nists have spread over the entire territory, and even founded settlements in Ohio, Dakota, Nebraska and other western states. But the *Blumengrofe* of 1804 does not compose so much of the earth's surface, it is

merely a little gem of a valley in the midst of this region. Strictly speaking it is not more than two miles long, by half a mile wide, and is drained by a little brook bearing the modest name of *Bee Tree Run*, which takes its rise in the many delicious springs that occur in the adjacent hillsides.

This valley may be geographically located between Quaker Hill, on the east, and Ball's Mills, on the west, parallel with the West Branch valley, and seven miles from Market square, Williamsport, to the Dunker church, "as the crow flies," north. To travel to it by any public road is a serious undertaking, even at this day. The tortuous course, leading between high precipitous hills, always in a direction away to the westward of the air line, until the romance of the trip is about dying out, when suddenly the charming panorama rolls out before the startled vision. Hill and dale appear in

endless combination, never tiring, but always inspiring, until one blesses the day that directed his steps to this enchanted country.

Blooming Grove should not be studied strictly alone in its history. While it might appear to the superficial observer, to be an isolated community, peculiar to itself, yet the fact is, it has borne a most important

part in developing the religious freedom, which is one of the fundamental principles in our National life, and the descendants of these poor, persecuted christian people have taken to all parts of the land their pure lives, their frugal habits and their plodding industry, which forms the basis of the most enduring part of our National character.

PIONEERS

As early as 1770 emigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland and Holland fled to America to escape religious persecution, as Quakers or Presbyterians and others as mere adventurers, but all of strong, energetic, moral and intelligent character. Having heard from hunters, surveyors or missionaries, wonderful stories about the beauty and fertility of the valley of the West Branch of the Susquehanna, they made their way up this stream as far as the Indian treaty boundary (Lycoming Creek) and settled along the alluvial bottom of the Loyalsock. Some penetrated the dark wilderness as far up Mill Creek as the present thriving village of Warrensville. These people were either slaughtered by the Indians, carried into captivity or driven from their homes, so that the whole country was devastated and abandoned from 1778, the time of the "big runaway," until after the peace treaty in 1783. After this time new settlers came in large numbers and "squatted" wherever the old improvements had been made.

A colony of English Quakers came in soon after the return, and settled the region now known as *Quaker Hill*, where they built a meeting house and school house, and established a burying ground. In 1796 Elihu and John Wilson settled on the high ground overlooking the Loyalsock, about a mile east of Warrensville, near what is now called Christian Hill. They slept in their covered wagons for three weeks, while their cabins were being built. These people

came from New Jersey, and avoided the sandy plains along the river, thinking them to be barren as they resembled the unfruitful section of the state with which they were familiar. So they selected home sites in the heavily timbered hill country, reasoning that such gigantic timber could only be grown upon very fertile soil. This was a popular reasoning, and the most fallacious and most unfortunate that ever befell the early settlers. For, when the late comers were compelled to take up the swampy low-lands, or move on to regions far away, they soon found that the scrub growth was easily removed, the swamps readily drained, and the soil of incomparable fertility, setting the key for the common saying, "to tickle it with a hoe and it would laugh with a harvest." One large section has always been known as the *Paradise Country*, a name equally applicable to the whole extent of seventy miles of the West Branch Valley. It is said that the German emigrants had suffered severe deprivation in the mother country, from the scarcity of fuel, and when they found that they could possess these great forests for a few dollars an acre, they were captivated by the prospect, and scorned the scrub covered barrens, as they called the low-lying river lands. Succeeding generations, in some cases, explained that the title to the valley lands was defective, others that fever and ague seized everybody who settled along the river; both of which were true to some extent.

SETTLEMENT

From the time of its earliest discovery by white adventurers, the region of country within a hundred miles of the Indian town

at the confluence of the two branches of the Susquehanna river, was known to the outside world as the "Shamokem country,"

from the name of the prehistoric native town called Shamokem, now Sunbury, so that the German emigrants came to Lycoming, or Lacomik, in the Shamokem country.

The land about Warrensville was cleared in 1802 by Samuel Carpenter, who, after a time, erected a saw mill, a grist mill and a fulling machine. The Dutch settlers had returned to the Loyalsock and cleared up farms and made improvements along that stream, notably Scott's grist mill and Wyckoff's tannery. The Quakers were well settled about Quaker Hill, so that there must have been a fair widening out of the old Indian trail, by the time the Germans came to take up their abode in the wilderness. So far as the usual course of travel at that day can be traced, it would appear that the first of these people, perhaps fifty in number—men, women and children—came in on foot, carrying their few mechanics tools, cooking utensils, clothing and food upon their backs or upon their heads. They left Germantown by the turnpike to Reading, thence by what we now call Pottsville, Ashland, Mt. Carmel and Bear Gap to Danville. This was the public road of the day and led through an unbroken forest and barren mountain waste, all the way from Pottsville to Danville—from the Schuylkill to the Susquehanna. After crossing the North Branch at Danville, they followed the Indian trail up the Mahoning Creek by Washingtonville, (of today) through the Muncy Hills and down Glade Run to the West Branch, west of Muncy (old state road.) Thence by the public road over Sand Hill at the Loyalsock, and through

the "great swamp" to Low Miller's. From this point they took the Sheshequin path up Bouser's Run, to the Union school house of today, thence through the deep, dark canyon to the summit, or by Quaker Hill, where they left the path and descended into the densely timbered basin which was to be their future dwelling place. It may be possible that the 1804 party came in the same as the party of 1817, who traveled over the above route until a little west of Muncy Creek, when they followed the road along the foot of the hill to Mill Creek, near Scott's place, thence to the Buckley farm, where they forded the Loyalsock, to Reeder's and Tallman's, thence over Christian Hill, near Wilson's, and on to the place of settlement.

Jacob Kurtz went on foot to Philadelphia to meet his father. Money was scarce, he had but fifty cents in his pocket. This, with a loaf of bread, was his outfit for a trip of two hundred miles. His father bought an old mare and truck wagon which carried his motherless children and baggage up the country. In crossing the Loyalsock they came near drowning, by the colt getting fouled with the mare in the current. The old man cried like a child and exclaimed: "To think of crossing the great water safely, to be drowned in this little stream." With this party Mrs. Hauser carried her child in a basket, as she walked all the way, and Michael Stroble brought his daughter, Christina, up in a wheelbarrow. These people came over the route described above, which appeared to have been the only one familiar to them for many years afterward.

PERMANENT COLONISTS

May 20, 1805 is a day to be ever kept in sacred remembrance by all Blooming Grovers, wherever they may live, for on this day they first saw their haven of rest in the foreign land. The sight was inspiring and comforting, for the dogwood and rhododendron were in full bloom, and their white petals glistening beneath the dark green foliage of the forest trees, appealed to their natural love of flowers, and they exclaimed "*Blumengrofe*," "flowers in the woods," which has been their talisman through three generations. In spite of this beautiful tradi-

tion, it is more than probable that the name *grew* upon them, and was not a sudden inspiration. There appears to be good reason for believing that it was first suggested by their English Quaker neighbors, whose curiosity would lead them on "*First Day*" to go over and "see how the Dutchmen were coming on." They found that indefatigable toil had made the wilderness "blossom like the rose," and in commenting on it, called it a "blooming grove." The Germans caught the familiar "blumen" (flowers) and imitated the rest, and so accepted the term as

the regular name. It is certainly a compound of German and English, genuine Pennsylvania Dutch. Its early acceptance is shown in an inscription on the fly leaf of a German Bible given to Isaac Kurtz, by his school teacher, Christopher Kiess, as follows: "Blumengrofe, Hepburn township, Lycoming county, Pa., 15th February, 1841. Seek ye first the kingdom, etc."

In the early days letters to friends in Germany would tell of the flowers in the woods and the name Blumengrofe so glowingly, that the imagination in some cases was excited beyond what the actual facts warranted. At one time when a newly arrived party reached the top of the hill which commanded a view of the valley, the outlook was so disappointing that one woman exclaimed, "Is that your Blumengrofe? I can see nothing but black stumps." And no wonder, for what is more unattractive than a newly burnt clearing?

It was not long before the blue token of civilization was curling up through the tree tops, from the fire place of each pioneer cabin, for they lost no time in getting an opening for future sustenance. But struggle as they might, they could not escape the clutches of the frost king, who came upon them as though angry because of their intrusion. Before they could realize that the summer was ended, terrors encompassed them, such as they had never dreamed of, and before the grip of winter was loosened under the touch of the genial sun, the sturdiest hearts quailed for the sake of their loved ones. With a ready ax, and the overhanging trees, they could replenish the great fireplace, and keep their single apartment cheerful and comfortable by the constant blaze on the hearth-stone. But clothing was not provided for such hardship and

exposure. The food supply became exhausted and starvation hovered over them for many tedious days. When suddenly the warm sun began to shed its rays through the tops, melting the ice and snow as if by magic, and before they had forgotten the rigors of winter, the flowers were in bloom again. As an illustration of the suddenness of the change from intense winter to the mildness of May, it has been recorded that on April 11, 1818, rye was out in head.

After the season had settled in this, their first springtime, so that men could go about, some of the sturdiest of them, by way of Indian trails, (for there were no roads for many after-years) took across the hills to Williamsport, in search of food for their famishing people. Although the settlers in the "big valley" were of a different religious faith and nationality, they were imbued with the spirit of hospitality that seemed to pervade the very atmosphere. It may have been left by the aborigines with whom it was considered a high virtue given them by the Great Spirit. The Dunker settlers did not return empty handed, but with the liberal response to their appeal, went also the knowledge of the fishing grounds at the foot of Hepburn's lane and at Jaysburg. Here for many after-years, with each recurring spring, came the "dippers from Blooming Grove" to lay in their annual supply of shad and other fish, which they salted down for future use. They were called "dippers" by the ignorant because they fished with dip-nets; but by the more intelligent, though none the less sacreligious, they were called "dippers" from their mode of baptism, which was observed by curious persons who had followed them to their settlement.

NEW MEMBERS

Since April 4, 1968 list

Mr. and Mrs. Harold R. Bock
Mr. William M. Bower
Mr. and Mrs. William R. Brink
Mrs. Emma L. Conway
Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Crowe
Mr. John P. Crowe
Miss Ruby Eckert
Mr. Henry O. Feese
Mr. and Mrs. Richard P. Foresman
Mr. and Mrs. Walter K. Hartman
Mr. and Mrs. Edward P. Heether
Mr. Robert Hemperly
Mr. Gary P. Kingon

Mrs. Ed. Lewis
Mr. C. Daniel Little
Mr. and Mrs. Laurence P. Maynard, Jr.
Miss Eleanor J. Miles
Mr. Walter R. Rice
Dr. Mendal F. VanValin
Mr. and Mrs. Gail Webster

COURTESY MEMBERSHIPS:

Roland E. Barto & Family
Steve Buck
J. W. Durrwachter
Paul K. Bloom
Henry F. Frey