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LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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1973-1974

MEMBERSHIP MEETING PROGRAM
LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

February 21, 1974 (8:00 p.m.)

George C. Deffenbaugh, Supervisor of Social Studies in the Williamsport Area School District, will give an illustrated talk on "India."

March 21, 1974 (8:00 p.m.)

Dr. Robert H. Ewing, retired Professor of History at Lycoming College, will talk on "Reminiscence as History."

April 18, 1974 (8:00 p.m.)

John W. Heisey, former Director of Research at the Historical Society of York County, York, Pa., will give an illustrated talk on "Handwoven Coverlets." Members are urged to bring any coverlets in their possession for display. This will be a dinner meeting at the Wesley United Methodist Church in Williamsport.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members:

Since our last Fall issue of the Journal, your Society has gained 101 new memberships, involving 150 individuals, for an increase of \$370 in new income. We are conducting a continuous campaign, and with your help we can grow in numbers and dollars. We should have at least 1,000 members on our rolls.

Your Museum is constantly seeking new artifacts to expand its widely diversified material for permanent filing and exhibit display. During the past two years we have acquired the past history of the Williamsport Rotary Club, the Keystone Shortway, the Williamsport Wheel Club, and a vast amount of information on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

In January we invited the newly organized West Branch Valley Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame to permanently utilize your Museum as the depository for its present and future program. We have its acceptance in a letter from Sol "Woody" Wolf, its president and the first Lycoming County recipient to receive this coveted honor.

Recognizing that today's events become tomorrow's history, we shall continue to seek historic material from many other County groups and organizations whose records should be kept in perpetuity. Last year 73 members and non-members donated artifacts to be added to our many other permanent collections. In 1972 there were 118 donors.

Before throwing out any age-old, or even present, artifacts which could have some real historic value, we urge that you consider donating same to your Museum.

History is a very important part of living — to recognize the past and how it affects the present and the future.

It is with great appreciation that our Society accepted in January a check from Grit Publishing Company for \$5,000 to assist in our operations for the year 1974-75.

Sincerely

Charles E. Noyes, Sr., President

OUR MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

In September, 1973, Lycoming College announced a new program whereby students could act as interns in the community. Through the Art Department of Lycoming College, the Museum was one of the first institutions of the community to accept the help of these students. We are now in the second semester of this program, and presently have the following interns spending time with our collections: Pat Stalgaitis, Karen Lockwood, Karen Knouse, Liz Yaro, Betsy Younger, and Howard Walker. They are working with Operation Museum cataloging the railroad collection, and helping to mount exhibits.

This program in cooperation with Lycoming College supplements the continued volunteer work done by many society members.

We are continuing to display a number of temporary special exhibits which are listed below. In addition to the special exhibits, we now have the following permanent installations, several of which have been added this past year; Indian Gallery; Colonial Rooms; Canal, Railroad, and Highway exhibits; the Military History of Lycoming County exhibit; the Victorian and Lumbering Galleries; and the Hall of Industry featuring the Gristmill, Blacksmith Shop, and Woodworking Shop. During the next six months we hope to complete exhibits of a General Store and a one-room schoolhouse.

SPECIAL EXHIBIT SCHEDULE FOR 1974

Exhibit of the Month

Daguerreotypes	January 15 - March 3
Victorian Titles	March 5 - May 5
Fourth of July	May 7 - July 7
Little League	July 9 - August 25
19th Century Medicine	August 27 - October 13
Silver and Plate	October 15 - December 1
Sabres, Swords, and Bayonets	December 3 - January 20, 1975

Special Wall Exhibits

Edison Phonographs	February 3 - March 30
Community Arts Festival	Dates to be Announced
Victorian Gowns	May 14 - July 7
Early Railroad Records	July 9 - September 1
Beehives and Baskets	September 3 - October 20
Victorian Needlework	October 22 - December 8
Christmas Special	December 10 - January 6, 1975

Collector's Corner

Glass Bottles	January 2 - February 17
Scrapbooks	February 19 - April 7
Ironstone Ware	April 9 - June 16
Baseball Cards	June 18 - August 25
Ladies' Fans	August 27 - October 13
Coins and Currency	October 15 - December 8
19th Century Pressed Glass	December 10 - January 27, 1975

In addition to the special exhibits listed above, there are periodic mini-exhibits in the corner cupboard and the bubble cases in the main lobby.

LIFE MEMBERS

In the Spring of 1968 the Historical Society had five life members. Now their number has grown to sixteen:

Dr. Lester K. Ade	Mr. Hugh MacMullan
Dr. June E. Baskin	Miss Margaret MacMullan
Mrs. John O. Cook	Mr. J. R. Maiolo, Jr.
Mr. John G. Detwiler	Mr. Arthur Petter
Miss Ida M. Dittmar	Miss Mary E. Riddell
Mrs. J. Paul Hively	Mrs. John Sloan
Mrs. Morris M. Housel	Mr. and Mrs. Franklin T. Ulman
Miss Elizabeth C. Kackenmeister	Miss Mary E. Ulmer

Life membership payments of \$150.00 are placed in the Lycoming County Historical Society Trust Fund. The income from each member's contribution returns to the Society each year the equivalent of the annual dues.

STATEMENT CONCERNING THE ARCHIVES

The Archives of the Museum are for the collection, preservation, documentation, and exhibition of historical material related to *Lycoming County*.

A gift should be of fine quality and in good condition with all pertinent information accompanying it. The emphasis is on past history, but contemporary material is welcome — material which may become valuable historically, particularly of the early 1900's. There is a need for histories of long-established, important manufacturing plants and business firms, their notebooks and original records. Dates, or an approximation thereof, on everything are important.

PHOTOS - There should be identification of names of persons and places, and-or any connection with a person.

DOCUMENTS, DEEDS, WILLS, LAND GRANTS, OLD MAPS, and other legal papers make a good addition to the files.

MANUSCRIPTS, BROADSIDES, PAMPHLETS, TOWNSHIP HISTORIES, DIARIES, AUTOBIOGRAPHIES, AND LETTERS relating to Lycoming County are welcome. Single letters written by an historic person make good exhibition pieces but have no great value, except possibly for the autograph, unless they contain significant reference to events and personages. Important, however, are letters by one individual written over a long period.

THE COLLECTION HAS GROWN AND SPACE IS BECOMING LIMITED FOR DUPLICATED ITEMS.

BIBLES - We have many, of all sizes and bindings. The detached genealogical pages therein are indeed important.

SCHOOL BOOKS - We have duplicates, triplicates, and more, of all subjects and grades of old school books.

NEWSPAPERS - They are fragile and ephemeral. We lack the proper facilities for them. The J. V. Brown Public Library has all the local papers, from the beginning, on microfilm.

SCRAPBOOKS - The great number we have is crowded into a small space. Of special value are those of local endeavors and cultural activities.

BOOKS - Most books belong in the local library where they have the staff and space to take care of them. Their fine Pennsylvania room contains many important historical and genealogical books on the state of Pennsylvania. We do welcome books on the history of Lycoming County and those relating to its events and industries.

Gladys Tozier

WILLIAMSPORT'S MUSICAL HERITAGE

Theaters Spring up in City after 1850
as Desire for Cultural Advantages Increases

The last half of the 19th century ushered in the lumber days when Williamsport was known as a town of millionaires. With the rapid increase in population and wealth after 1850, there developed a greater awareness of, and desire for, cultural advantages.

This interest resulted in the construction of the first of a group of theaters which bear testimony to an exciting atmosphere of legitimate theater and musical concerts through the years.

Ulman's Opera House was built by Isaac Ulman in 1868. Located in Market Square, it was the first theater with stage and scenery in the city. Until its erection all entertainments of a theatrical nature were given in Doebler's Hall with nothing but a platform for a stage.

With the arrival of the Academy of Music in 1870, the opera house had only variety shows. It closed as a theater in 1874.

The Academy of Music occupied the Elliott block on the southwest corner of Fourth and Pine Streets. Skylights in the center well of the upper floors of the building still give evidence of the structure's original purpose.

In 1884 the building was enlarged by the addition of an annex, making the full length of the building 280 feet and increasing the seating capacity to 1,165.

Prices of admission in 1888 were listed as 35 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents, and one dollar. The elegance of the occasion found the women wearing dresses with enormous puffed sleeves and cartwheel hats which were never removed during the performance. No escort was worth remembering who failed to send a corsage. The floral arrangement was pinned on the shoulder midway between the puffed sleeve and the cartwheel hat.

With the opening of the Lycoming Opera

House in 1892, the city's cultural life expanded. The house was established May 19, 1891, with the issuing of a charter to a board headed by Henry W. Watson, president, and John D. Guinter, secretary-treasurer. Members of the building committee were Emanuel Andrews, Fred H. Sweet, and Charles R. Stearns. The opera house stood four and a half floors high just east of Laurel Street on Third. The cost of the building had been \$150,000. In 1903, \$30,000 more was spent on remodeling the interior and exterior. Fire destroyed the opera house on May 31, 1915. Thus ended the existence of what was probably Williamsport's most lavish theater. Nearly all the leading artists and stars of that day were seen on its stage. Sousa's Band was a frequent attraction.

In 1906, announcement was made that Fred M. Lamade planned to build a new theater. His plans were brought to public notice in a centennial edition of the Williamsport Sun in July, 1906.

"The opera house owner has recently acquired the lot south of City Hotel on Pine Street, and on this will be erected a new family theater with skating rink in the rear."

The Family Theater was built in 1907 at a cost of \$40,000. Seating capacity was 1,150. Ten years after its construction the name of the theater was changed to the Majestic; after two more decades it became the Karlon. In later years main events of the theater's old-time tradition were the Community Concert series, a few road productions of stage shows, and annual dance recitals by local studios. The greatest of theatrical figures appeared on the stage of this theater, including the Barrymore's and actors of their caliber. In the musical world, Madame Schuman Heinck, Paul Whiteman, and Lawrence Tibbett gave performances there.

Year 1899 Brings Introduction of Music
to Williamsport Public School System

By the start of the 20th century, the value of music in the school curriculum was beginning to be realized. Records indicate that the first classroom instruction by special teachers came to Pittsburgh in 1844. The introduction of music in other large cities followed in more or less close succession.

In Williamsport, music was first introduced into the public schools in October, 1899. Eleanor Hoagland was the first music supervisor. Only the primary teachers engaged in the experiment the first year, and only a small number of those teachers knew anything at all about music; none had studied it for the purpose of teaching.

The next year music was extended through the intermediate grades. Miss Hoagland visited 82 schools twice a month. She requested that pitch pipes be supplied all teachers.

In 1905, Miss Jessie Kline became music supervisor. By that time music had extended into the high school, and progress was being made in all grades. Miss Kline concluded her work as music supervisor in May of 1910. At the end of the school year a concert was given by 1,400 children from all over the city.

In 1910, Lillian M. Reider became music supervisor. Much of the story of the development of music in the public schools of Williamsport is embodied in her work. She put considerable emphasis on teaching school children to read music and to sing on pitch. She trained grade school teachers to carry out the music program, and made periodic visits to each grade to check the progress.

Observance of National Music Week was instituted in the Williamsport schools in 1923, at which time hundreds of school children from the elementary grades combined with the high school glee club in presenting mass concerts.

One of the earliest ambitions realized by Mrs. Reider was the formation of the Williamsport High School orchestra in 1914. When the new high school was built, Mrs. Reider trained two dozen instrumentalists to play for the dedicatory program.

Mrs. Reider felt it was important to train children at an early age to provide a nucleus for high school material. Toward that end she organized a grade school orchestra in 1914. Violin classes were formed, and the membership in these classes eventually reached 235 in the grades and high school. Five instructors were required.

The first violinist in that first orchestra was a freshman student — Osborne L. Housel — who was later to become director of instrumental music at the Williamsport High School, and who, in 1947, reorganized the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra as its conductor. Pianist was Eleanor Sebring, now Mrs. Parker R. Karnan, 335 1/2 Woodland Avenue.

After Mrs. Reider had organized the orchestra, C. S. Shields assumed the duties of director. Mr. Shields also directed the Young Men's Christian Association orchestra which was made up for the most part of high school students. He also directed the grade school orchestra which made its initial appearance at a high school Assembly on May 8, 1915.

A pinnacle in Mrs. Reider's ambitious undertakings was the organization of the high school band in 1925. The band was formed to respond to a request for a musical unit for a state celebration.

With the support of Mayor Hoagland and such individuals as Ernest Davis, Walton Bowman, Charles Burke, Charles Brownell, and Frederick Manson, the organization of the band was realized. The Teteque Band and the American Legion

Band helped by donating instruments. The Parent-Teacher Association aided greatly by subscribing funds for instruments and for the salary of the band director. This group continued its financial support until the Williamsport School Board made allowance for the band in its budget.

Rehearsals of both the band and orchestra were held in Trinity Parish House because of the objection of the high school faculty to the "noise."

Another musical project for which Mrs. Reider was for the most part responsible was the securing of a Moller pipe organ for the high school. In her visits to the city schools, Mrs. Reider aroused the enthusiasm of all the school children to bring pennies for the organ fund. A committee of citizens was formed with Charles G. Burke as chairman to raise the needed money. As a result, the organ was presented to the school October 5, 1922.

T. LeRoy Lyman served as school organist for some years. Later, Paul Daugherty filled the post. Finally, students were permitted to play the organ.

When Mrs. Reider resigned as music supervisor in 1935, her interest did not wane. She was active in the Susquehanna Valley In-and-About Music Club and the National Music Educators Club. She served as a past president of both. She was prominent in the Pennsylvania State Education Association, having been chairman of the music section in 1932. She was given an honorary membership in the Williamsport Music Club.

Because her chief interest was in her former students, the Lillian M. Reider Male Chorus was formed in 1936. It was comprised of persons who had sung in Mrs. Reider's male quartets between 1919 and 1935. The chorus remained together until Mrs. Reider left the city to live with her son at West Dennis, Mass., where she now resides.

After the high school band was first organized, Charles Noll and William Gow-ers were early directors. In 1927, George Lehman became band and orchestra director. He was succeeded by J. Maynard Wettlaufer in 1930. In 1936, Mr. Wettlaufer left Williamsport to accept the position of music director in the schools of Freeport, Long Island.

Following Mr. Wettlaufer, Osborne L. Housel became director of instrumental music at the high school. Taking over the high school band when there were 54 members, Mr. Housel built it into one of the best in the state with a membership of more than 100 student musicians. The band today has increased from its original size of 25 members to about 123. Forty-three years have seen the orchestra membership grow from 25 to more than 50.

The orchestra of 1914 consisted of violins, cellos, clarinets, cornets, drums, and piano. The instrumentation today is about 13 violins, 5 violas, 4 cellos, 2 string basses, 4 flutes, 4 clarinets, 3 saxophones, 2 oboes, 1 bassoon, 5 French horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 tuba, 1 tympani, 3 percussion, and a piano.

In the early 1920's, Miss Emma Kiess was in charge of the glee clubs. An extensive choral program developed during the past 30 years in the high school under the direction of Miss Kathryn Riggle, who started her duties there in 1925 and retired in 1956.

(Editor's Note: These are the eighth and ninth installments of a series describing the history of music in Williamsport as compiled by Mrs. Glen Russell, in 1951, of the Lycoming College music faculty.)



DR. MAURICE A. MOOK

January 22, 1904 - October 18, 1973

"Dr. Mook 'retired' to Lycoming College in 1969 after twenty years of outstanding teaching at such distinguished universities as Pittsburgh, Ohio Wesleyan, American Brown, and Missouri, capped by another twenty years at the Pennsylvania State University where he received the 'Distinguished Teacher Award' in 1963. Far from retiring, Maurice continued his dynamic teaching — at Lycoming because he wanted the closeness and atmosphere of a small college . . .

"As the editor of a number of Maurice's articles, I had the unique privilege of exploring the inner thoughts of his mind as we would discuss a particular article. As we became close friends, I came to understand that his scholarly zeal to examine any subject thoroughly and accurately had its motivation in an acute desire to know people and communicate with them. Stereotypes were anathema to Maurice. He viewed individuals and cultures as unique. He might use rigorous well-defined methods and concepts to study patterns of behavior

and modes of living, but he never let any astute generalization gleaned from his material obscure the fact that each group was unique and that its people were individuals rather than an amorphous mass. Maurice was 'concerned' about people.

"In this instance, 'concern' has an intensified meaning. It is a word used by members of the Society of Friends to indicate that a particular topic is of utmost importance and worthy of study, thought, prayer, and action by both individuals and the group. 'Concerns,' almost by definition, involve people. Maurice Mook was the personification of the Friends' concept of 'Concern.' He strove valiantly to understand his subject, whether an individual artist such as Severin Roesen or a group such as the Amish. He wrote and taught with insight into, compassion for, and appreciation of his fellow man."

(From the tribute to Dr. Mook written by Joseph P. Laver, Jr., in the LYCOMING COLLEGE REPORT for October, 1973.)

SOME SPECIAL INCIDENTS

(A very special incident!)

About the year 1803, the indignation and sympathies of the citizens of Williamsport, and of the whole valley, were highly excited by an occurrence which took place in the then wilderness, about a mile the other side of Jersey Shore. It appears, from the village newspapers of that day, that a young lady suddenly appeared at a lonely cabin, almost in a state of nudity, in great distress from cold and hunger, and her limbs and wrists galled and bloody as if they had been chafed with a rope. For some time she could scarcely speak. At length she recovered strength enough to say that she had been traveling on horseback from her uncles in Kentucky, where she had been at school, to Montreal, where her parents resided. She had been accompanied by one Benjamin Connet, a Canadian, either an agent or servant of her father, whom he had sent expressly to conduct her home. Not far from the cabin, in a lonely part of the road, he had presented a pistol at her, compelled her to dismount, stripped her, robbed her of all her money as well as her clothing, tied her to a tree, and left her there to perish with hunger or be devoured by wild beasts. She had remained in that situation all night, when, after the most desperate struggles, she had extricated herself. After being refreshed, she went with the family and pointed out the tree and the path she had beaten around it in her struggles to get loose. There was something artless in her appearance; and her modest demeanor and delicate frame left no doubt in the minds of those who saw her that her statement was true. She appeared to be overwhelmed with distress at the thought of her situation. Her name she said was Esther McDowell. The kind people of the cabin soothed her distress, clothed her, and took her on as far as Williamsport, where she was lodged with a worthy and pious family until the news could be conveyed to Montreal.

In the meantime, public indignation was highly excited against the villain Connet; the chivalry of the West Branch was aroused, and scouts and handbills were sent

out in all directions. Rev. Isaac Grier, Judge James Davidson, and James McClure were among those who took special interest in the affair, and who contributed considerable money in sending to Canada for the villain. He had twenty-four hours' start, however, and had eluded all observation; for no one had seen any stranger pass, answering his description. Two or three weeks had elapsed, and no news was heard of the villain: no letters had been received from Montreal nor had any discoveries been made concerning this mysterious affair, except that a bundle of man's clothes had been found hidden near the tree where the robbery was committed. These might have been left by the robber, who had shifted his suit. Some people were malicious enough to insinuate that the young lady had robbed herself; but her deportment in the family where she lodged was a triumphant answer to any such base insinuations. She was lady-like in her manners, highly intelligent, and possessing a well-cultivated mind; and if not pious, at any rate piously disposed. She rather modestly avoided than sought society, and would only converse with persons of the most sedate character. Time, however, wore away; no news was received from Montreal, and the number of the suspicious began to increase. The clothing found near the tree had been recognized as that of a young tailor, who had lived for some time in a neighboring town, and had lately moved away. Some of those who knew the tailor happened to visit Miss McDowell, and there, forsooth, they found the very face which the young tailor had worn upon her shoulders. Here was a development. Since the secret was out, she confessed that she was the daughter of highly respectable Quaker parents in Philadelphia; she had been beguiled into evil ways, but detesting the career of vice, she had fled from the city, and, trusting to her needle for support, she had, with no less ingenuity than enterprise, established herself as a gentleman tailor in one of the villages on the West Branch (either at Jersey Shore or Muncy). Among those with

whom she had worked in this business were James Hutchinson, of Milton, and John Neal, of Muncy, both of them tailors. She succeeded tolerably well in her new sex and profession; but eventually becoming tired of it, she adopted the stratagem described above. Her duped, but still sympathizing, friends restored her to her disconsolate parents, and it was learned afterwards that she went to the West under a new

name and was married. The whole affair was some months in progress before its final development, and after it was out, many a wise one chuckled as he said to his neighbor, "I t-o-l-d you so!"

(From *HISTORY OF LYCOMING COUNTY*, published by D. J. Stewart, 921 Arch Street, Philadelphia, 1876.)

IN APPRECIATION

Our grateful thanks to the many ladies who baked cookies and made sandwiches for our Christmas program on December 13, 1973: Mrs. Jane Ingersoll, Mrs. Edith Wright, Miss Jean Little, Mrs. Catherine Hollenbeck, Miss Grace Pealer, Miss Lenore Losch, Mrs. Lyell Spangle, Mrs. Samuel Long, Mrs. Laura Manning, Miss Margaret Horn, Miss Helen Foucart, Miss Ida Mae Dittmar, Mrs. Edward Neff, Mrs. Harold Taylor, Mrs. Robert Marshall, Mrs. Randel Laylon, Mrs. Robert Herz, Mrs. Anne Gstalder, Mrs. Jane Derr, Mrs. Helen Hofer, Mrs. Charles Noyes, and Mrs. Kathryn Clute.

And our thanks go, too, to Richard Mix and his sons Scott and Andrew who ushered at the concert.



COMMENT ON OPERATION MUSEUM

"The American Indian"

Most interesting — well organized in presentation — clearly presented. Made me appreciative of the efforts and interest given to the preservation of Lycoming County's past. I feel the Museum is an equal and superior to any other museum of its size. I felt a personal pride in its credit to our county.

Mrs. Francis O. McCanna
Jersey Shore School System



CORRECTION

Will our readers kindly make a correction in Mr. Carn's poem on page 20 of Vol. IX, No. 2. The last word of the tenth line should be "foe," not "fee."

THE TIADAGHTON ELM

Death comes finally to all things. The historic, once magnificent Tiadaghton elm is dead. For many years her heavy branches have been wired to keep them erect. Tree surgeons filled her wounds to keep her alive. They estimated her growth to be 600 years. Storm and lightning, age and decay have wrought their havoc. The last severe storm in 1972 sheared her in half. It is to be regretted that this noble tree did not survive for the bi-centennial celebration in 1976.

The tree was on the borderline of a farm at Jersey Shore, on the west bank of Pine Creek, the farmland extending south to the Susquehanna River. It was a Council tree, where the Indians often held their Councils, before the arrival of the white men.

It was here, under this large elm with its great, spreading branches, that more than a hundred hardy pioneers met together on July 4, 1776, almost 200 years ago, to declare themselves free and independent from Great Britain. Thus the tree acquired her fame.

These colonists, mostly Scotch-Irish and German, were stirred to anger by the Boston incident and other accumulated grievances. Many had fled religious and political persecution in Europe and were ready to fight for their new-found liberty. Similar Declarations were made in other Pennsylvania communities, but none with the remarkable coincidence that on the very same day, of which the Jersey Shore settlers were totally unaware, the Declaration of the Colonies was being ratified by the accredited representatives to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

The setting for this meeting under the elm, to assert their rights and renounce their allegiance to England, was at the junction of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and Pine Creek, the latter of which was called the Tiadaghton by the Indians. A plain extended for miles in every direction, and several blockhouses and rough-hewn log forts had been built to command the view. According to tradition, John Clark wrote the document, and 23 frontiersmen, the famous Fair Play Men, signed

it. They called it the Pine Creek Declaration of Independence. History and tradition mention, participants, Thomas, Francis, and John Clark, William Campbell, Adam DeWitt, Alexander Donaldson, John Jackson, Adam Carson, Henry McCracken, Robert Love, Hugh Nichols, Samuel Horn of Horn's Fort across the river, and Alexander Hamilton. Adam DeWitt's "stillhouse" furnished the "spirits" for the occasion.

The signers, as legend has it, went to Fort Horn on the Susquehanna, not far away, to bury the original document, contained in a copper box, within the stockades of the Fort. The keys were entrusted to Hamilton, Clark, and DeWitt. Patrick Gillfillan and Michael Quigley, Jr., were chosen as dispatch riders to take a copy to the seat of government in Philadelphia. They left on horseback, travelling along Bald Eagle Mountain and the Susquehanna River. Near Dalmatia they were ambushed by Indians and robbed of their horses. They escaped and proceeded on foot to Harris Ferry, but there were arrested by Tories as spies. An Indian girl, befriended by Quigley, who spoke their language, freed them and they went on, hidden in a hay wagon. On July 10 they arrived in Philadelphia, there to learn that the Continental Declaration of Independence had been signed in Independence Hall and bells rung in celebration. They returned with the news and urged the settlers to join the national fight for freedom. Most of the men enlisted in the county militia immediately.

About 100 to 150 families had taken land between Tiadaghton Creek (now called Pine) and Lycoming Creek — land that the Provincial government said belonged to the Indians. It was disputed, undeveloped territory, beyond the limit of authorized provincial government. They made their own laws which were rigidly enforced by a tribunal of three men, rotated and elected annually by the whole body, to settle all land ownership and border disputes. This code came to be known as the Fair Play system and the men as Fair Play men. A large percentage of the settlers and the signers of the document were Fair

Play men. Alexander Hamilton, one of the signers, was of Scotch-Irish origin and one of the first settlers in Pine Creek Township, Clinton County.

It is thought that the original document, the Pine Creek Declaration of Independence, was lost during the "Great Runaway" of 1778, when the Indians and Tories burned Fort Horn. No copy has ever been found.

The State of Pennsylvania erected an historical marker at this spot, reading:

"TIADAGHTON ELM"

"Under this elm, on July 4, 1776, resolves declaring independence were drawn prior

to news of action by Congress at Philadelphia. This was an expression of the spirit common to the frontier and led by the famous Fair Play men."

Each year the Jersey Shore residents have held a celebration, with parade and other activities, under the elm, rededicating themselves to the principles of patriotism, justice, and fair play. The action taken on that long-ago day made us Americans. The deed, and the vision of the memorial tree, will linger long, and shine in our memory.

Gladys Tozier

Nov. 30, 1973

THE HOUSE OF MANY STAIRS

By K. W. Bennet and C. V. Welker

In the village of Pennsdale, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, stands a little stone house on the hillside, with a varied architecture and a varied history.

The variety of its architecture arises from the fact that no two rooms in the house are on the same level — each room is either higher or lower than its neighbors, having connecting stairways of from two to eleven steps. Each stairway leads to a landing or small hallway from which its objective room opens. There are seven stairways in all, making a total of sixty-seven steps; and, if the outside terraces are included, one hundred and three. Because of this idiosyncrasy of building, the house has been known in recent years as "The House of Many Stairs."

The beginnings of the little house are unknown, but it probably owes its genesis to the effort of some hardy pioneer to provide protection from the hidden menace of the wilderness.

The western end is the oldest and shows that the original plan was for a small but conventional two-story building with an attic, crude in construction yet built for gentle living.

The ground floor contained but one room which served for both living room and kitchen. Entrance to this room is made through one of the two front doors. The room is unchanged, just as it was in the olden days. The fireplace is in a corner of the wall with an opening almost square — a usual feature in houses of the period. In it hang the old crane with its cooking utensils, and around the hearth is the ironware of colonial times.

Down one step from the kitchen is the cellar — really a cave in the hill — and so constructed that nothing freezes, even in the coldest weather. Its walls are of white-washed stone, and for either ventilation or escape one stone was left out and the opening covered with a grating. In later years, during tavern days, this cave made an excellent wine cellar.

From the cellar a stairway leads to the second floor and follows exactly under the rake of the stairs leading to the attic.

The second floor is divided into a narrow hallway and a bedroom of generous proportions with numerous windows and a shallow fireplace. This second floor hallway opens on the garden level and constitutes one of

the chief charms of the old house.

The dormer window in the attic commands a sweeping view of the countryside — a point of vantage in pioneer days, for the earliest tradition in connection with the old place is that of a rallying point for settlers during Indian raids and massacres. Its green sloping lawn was enclosed by a wooden stockade, and here the inhabitants of the frontier found sanctuary during troublous times. Then the window under the roof made a splendid observation post for determining whether the person was friend or foe who sought admittance at the stockade gate.

The time of its transition from a pioneer home to that of a place of rest and refreshment for travellers and wayfarers is not known. Pennsdale, the village, was not settled until 1798, but as early as the pre-Revolutionary period members of the Society of Friends occupied log cabins in the nearby wilderness, whence they had come attracted by the early land transactions.

The earliest known date in connection with the old house is 1790. At that time it was an inn, known as the "Bull's Head Tavern." For many years a swinging sign on a tall pole by the roadside displayed the head of a huge and ferocious bull.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century the Genesee Road was built — a corduroy highway extending from Muncy (several miles southeast of Pennsdale) over the Allegheny mountains to points on Towanda Creek, where it intercepted highways leading to the Genesee country in New York. From a remote village on the frontier, Pennsdale was now placed on the chief artery of travel between Philadelphia and Rochester. With the road came the stagecoach, and the tavern needs must be enlarged to meet its increasing patronage.

Its most acute want was a parlor, so a parlor was forthwith built. Apparently this second addition to the house followed no preconceived plan. With the building of the parlor, room after room was added until the height of the original building was reached.

The parlor is four steps up from the kitchen, facing the garden and opening on

a side road. The fireplace is quite shallow with a stone-faced whitewashed opening, surrounded by a wooden mantelpiece. Above the mantleshef is a large wooden panel which was originally occupied by a map of the house. One can picture mine host standing before this map of an evening, extolling the resources of his landed possessions to transient guests. Either side, on the ends of the chimney breast, are high cupboards which correspond to those used for storing maple sugar in New England.

Eleven steps from the parlor take one to a narrow hall from which an odd-shaped bedroom opens; seven more steps lead to another tiny hallway from which entrance is made to another room. This room is one of the most interesting in the house. Along its entire north wall, opposite the windows, is an old musket cupboard with four doors in which firearms were kept for emergencies. Two flights of stairs lead to a dormer window in the main roof which was used as a lookout by the defenders in the musket room during frontier uprisings. Also, from this same window the arrival of the stagecoach was watched.

The last addition to the house was the taproom. This was built in front of the parlor. In making the taproom addition to the second installment, the common stone wall was removed to the height of a bar counter and capped with wood to serve as a rest for the liquid refreshment that passed over the top. The ancient bottle cupboards are still there, with a few early American bottles, reminiscent of the days when the flowing wassail was a national institution.

The exact time when Indian troubles ceased in this part of the country is not known. On May 5, 1793, John Kirely, the first Quaker schoolmaster, recorded in his journal: "Joseph Moore, John Parish, and John Elliot sat in meeting with us, being on their way to an Indian treaty." This section of Pennsylvania was considered the very outpost of civilization until the aborigine, thoroughly cowed, turned his face westward.

Then the stockade surrounding the inn came down. Benches appeared on the lawn, and a watering trough was placed by the

roadside for horses and with it a wooden pump with a long iron handle.

Then came the railroad supplanting the stagecoach, and the village was once more relegated to a remote place by the wayside. But the old inn remained an honored institution in the neighborhood.

About the sheet iron stove in the taproom the men of the countryside were wont to gather. On this neutral meeting ground the local husbandmen exchanged opinions on the production of the harvests and the results of the autumn killings. Here the wise-aces of the community, after their fashion, settled the affairs of nations. The town gossips could sit around the fire as long as they pleased and visit with friends — for the price of a drink.

The inn was also a center for social activities, such as entertainments and country dances. To avoid the taproom contingent, guests to these affairs used the side door entrance to the inn parlor, and the spacious bedroom of the original building served for both ballroom and auditorium.

Between dances, the rustic beaux and belles promenaded in the garden, which was accessible from the second-floor hallway; and because of this custom, the ballroom became known as the "Garden Parlor."

One of the oldest natives of the village remembers, as a small boy, attending a medicine show in this room. After the entertainment an Indian traveling with the show thrilled the youth of the village by shooting pears off a tree in the front yard with his bow and arrows.

Then came a time when the old place was "fall'n on evil days." A notorious gang of horsethieves and outlaws had a resort in the Muncy Hills. When tracked to their lair, they would disappear only to reappear at the Bull's Head Tavern, which they used as a rendezvous. The house with its bewildering stairways and numerous exits was admirably suited to their needs. Small chance indeed for a constable to corner his quarry in such a place. Everything else failing, the opening in the wine cellar was a means of escape if the fugitive were not too corpulent.

How it must have irked the gentle Quakers to have the old inn with its innumerable associations fall into disrepute — almost as great a trial to them as losing their fine horses. About 1850 the last landlord sold out and went west. The inn was purchased by a Friend and, with but one exception of short duration, has been in the possession of a member of that sect ever since.

The Quakers were well known Abolitionists, and Pennsdale was an important station on the Underground Railroad. The old house was one of several places in the village where runaway slaves were concealed. Their hiding place can be seen today — a loft in the gable end of the house, to which entrance is made through a sliding panel in the side wall of the lookout dormer. Here they were secreted by day; then, under the cover of darkness, were sent on their way over the Genesee Road to the Elklands, hence over the Allegheny Mountains to New York state and Canada.

"History repeats itself," quoth Thucydides, ". . . events . . . are very likely, in accordance with human nature, to repeat themselves at some future time — if not exactly the same, yet very similar."

An event, "very similar," occurred when a fine macadam highway was laid over the route of the old corduroy road, and the inn came into its own under modern conditions.

After many years it again opened its doors to the traveling public for rest and refreshment. But with a difference. In place of the burly landlord of former days, youthful hostesses greeted one at the door with an invitation to "Enter and make thyself comfortable." And in place of the taproom frequenter who tarried for the price of a libation, guests also stopped for a price, but usually the price of a meal, deliciously cooked and daintily served.

A visit to the inn at this time was a step backward into the manners and customs of a century ago, especially if the arrival occurred after sundown. Then the flickering glow of candles through many-paned windows and the leaping flames in the fireplaces cheered the modern visitor as they

had the way-worn traveler of the stage-coach in days long past and gone.

No effort was made to trick out the old place with any scheme of decoration. Barring the plumbing and telephone, its interior struck no modern note. It was sparsely furnished with articles consistent with its earlier periods — chairs and tables being most necessary, chairs and tables predominated. A few utensils peculiar to frontier life were scattered about, including the old tar bucket that swung on the axle of the stagecoach.

The furniture was painted black, an austere contrast to the whitewashed walls and the bare, time-mellowed white pine floors. These floors are laid with six to twelve inch boards, the wider of which are in the upper stories.

Most rooms retain the original chair rails, and all windows and doors have very deep plaster reveals.

The original designer and builder of the house must have had as great a penchant for cupboards as he had for stairways. There are cupboards large and cupboards small, cupboards for various purposes, no room so small but has its cupboard for storage — an unusual feature in architecture of so early a period.

On the garden frontage, the defensive proclivities of the old house are still existent.

OLD OAKS PARK

The syndicate having sole control of Old Oaks Park, about twenty-seven and one-half acres, intend to sell the cleared ground off for building lots; that portion consisting of the grove of fine old oaks will probably remain quite a number of years as it is, affording a delightful resort in warm weather for families residing close to it. Louisa Street will cut through the grounds on the north side of the race course, and Campbell Street will have the spring of elegant water close to one side of it. By the way, why not secure a couple of acres of the grove as a site for the Williamsport Hospital? Can a better one be found in the city? (July 23, 1889, *Gazette and Bulletin*.)

Here the door and windows which swing on original butterfly hinges are of double construction. The exposed side, when opened against the wall, is paneled; and, when closed, shows a battered surface with studded nails in a design.

The window frames are held together with wooden pegs, and the cornice is very simple in character, almost crude, with no frieze board whatever.

Though representing three building periods and put together without rhyme or reason, the little house has attained an unobtrusive dignity that the small honest things in architecture usually achieve.

And since it is in accordance with human nature for events to repeat themselves, very recently the swinging sign by the roadside again came down, the tables and chairs were removed, and the household goods of the private landowner were once more established under its roof-tree. The old house returned to its original status, a home.

(Between 1807 and 1816 Job Packer built a two-story log pottery works next door to the House of Many Stairs. It was called the Elizabeth Pottery where all types of pottery were made, and the pottery was sold throughout the eastern section of the country. The house is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Elwood F. Brant.)

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JACOB BECK

A Pioneer of the Liberty Valley

(1794 - 1875)

By Berton E. Beck, D. D. S.

Many were the difficulties that had to be overcome by the Beck and Miller families when they left the populous and prosperous southern part of Pennsylvania and traveled to the newly organized Lycoming County. Here in the early 1800's they purchased land in the wilderness that was then known as the Block House Settlement . . .

The early name for the village of Liberty was Block House, and Block House Settlement appears on the deed given to Jacob Beck in 1820, locating his property in what was then Lycoming Township, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania.

The Liberty Valley area is drained primarily by Block House Creek, being joined by Pack Horse Run, Black's Creek, and Zimmerman's Run, an old name for Texas Creek. These streams form Little Pine Creek, which joins Big Pine at Waterville, making this the largest Creek in the world, for all other streams of this size are called rivers . . .

In 1787 the Pennsylvania Assembly granted 10,000 acres to the Academy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. This tract was then located in Lycoming Township, Northumberland County. In 1795, Lycoming County was organized, and in 1804 the northern half became Tioga County.

The dividing line between the two counties running east and west passed through about the center of the Academy land. Later in 1823, two new townships were organized, Liberty Township in Tioga County and Jackson Township in Lycoming County. Thus part of the Academy land was in Liberty Township, and part in Jackson Township, in about the center of what is now known as the Liberty Valley . . .

In 1823, a post office was established in the village and given the name of Liberty.

About this time a new township was organized and given the same name. With the township, the village, and postoffice now known as Liberty, the original name of Block House ceased to exist; but it remained long in the hearts and minds of the people.

Charles Williamson was a promoter who firmly believed in advertising. By handbills and other communications, he let it be known among the Atlantic coastal settlements and in Europe that land was for sale at a cheap price in the Genesee country of New York. Many persons heeded the call, making their way to Williamsport, then over the Williamson Road to the "Promised land."

The officials of the Episcopal Academy were influenced by Williamson's enthusiasm, and they too advertised their land for sale. In the already populous area of southern Pennsylvania, the price for that rich farm land had soared to un-thought-of heights. Many people sold their farms at what they thought was a very good price and turned their eyes northward . . .

According to family tradition, Andreas Beck (Jacob's father) sold his property in Northampton County in 1812; a deed recorded in the Court House in Easton confirms this sale. At that time, George (Andreas' brother) was twenty-seven years old, married to Marian Steigerwalt and the father of two small children. Along with Andreas, Rachel (Andreas' wife), Daniel, and Jacob, they left Northampton County in the fall of 1812, moving to Lycoming County.

The families are reported to have lived for two years near Newberry, now a part of Williamsport.

What personal property the two families brought with them is anyone's guess. Home

furnishings and farm equipment were meager and primitive. They likely had two wagons drawn by oxen, and a number of cows and young cattle.

What a journey it must have been! No matter whether their road led north and west over the intervening mountains and hills, or west to the Susquehanna River and then north to Lycoming County, it would be a tortuous course over the hills and vales, often a quagmire in the hollows or valleys and a rough rocky trail over the hillsides. Frequently, tree stumps had been cut even with the ground and the heavy wagons bounced over them . . .

They finally reached Newberry, though it may then have been known by the original name, Jaysburg. Where they lived for the next two years is not known, but they probably rented a farm. Eventually there were to be eight children in the Miller family, but at this time there were only six. Elizabeth and Catharine were young adults, Susan barely in her teens, and there were also three boys, John, George, Jr. and Daniel.

The two families were united in one common aim: both were seeking suitable farm land. Winter was not a good time to travel around trying to determine the condition of the ground beneath the snow. The pioneers often did not want the low-lying land along the rivers and large streams, for even in dry weather the ground under the big trees seemed wet and spongy. They preferred the more hilly land that was well drained.

Both families likely had copies of a prospectus the Academy had distributed, listing the surveyed plots by number, extolling the fertility of the soil, the large areas of level land on the hilltops, the valuable timber, and last but not least, the liberal terms of sale.

According to tradition, the Academy gave a buyer who made an initial deposit a negotiable article of agreement to purchase valid for seven years. At the expiration of the agreement and another small payment, he received a deed to his property by signing a mortgage. A bonus of 50 acres was given to a purchaser of 100 acres, and if

the man had a trade, he was also given a cash bonus of \$100, to apply on his mortgage . . .

During the winter the Beck and Miller families had become close friends, and they decided that, if possible, they would buy their land so they could be close neighbors. Between the four young people in the two families, acquaintances soon ripened into friendship, and before long romance was budding as Elizabeth and Catharine were paired with Daniel and Jacob.

As soon as the snow was off the ground that spring of 1813, the men of the two families began to look for available sites in the southern part of Lycoming County. Not finding suitable locations, as soon as their spring planting was done, they loaded camping equipment on a wagon and set out to investigate the Academy land.

Driving north on the Williamson Road they finally came to the steep slopes of Laurel Hill. Reaching the crest, they crossed the level land on top of the mountain and started down the northern side. Before them lay a large valley, which later was to be known as Liberty Valley. Seemingly, it was surrounded by mountains. From a high point they stopped to feast their eyes. All they could see was an expanse of green. The low hills were smoothed out flat, while far off to the north were the Blossburg Mountains . . .

Going to the foot of the mountain they came to a sign nailed to a tree which read: "You are now entering a ten thousand acre tract belonging to the Academy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, which has been surveyed into farm plots, numbered, and are for sale. For information see the agent at the Block House Hotel." Miller checked the first numbered plot they saw, with his list, and found it one of the plots that had been offered to him . . .

Ascending a hillside they came to a large expanse of nice laying land, with a numbered plot, with arrows pointing left and right to other numbered areas. On this practically level land the road led straight north. Near the next blazed line with a new number, they came to where, many years before, a large pine tree had fallen and

lay directly across the right of way of the road builders. They had chopped out a twenty-foot section and rolled the log to the side of the road, making a good landmark for the area.

Another mile and the road left the level land and dropped down a steep decline to cross a branch of Pine Creek, which a few years later was to be known as Block House Creek. Here was Anthonyson's famed BLOCKHAUS, a favorite stopping place for travelers. Anthonyson is reported to have been a genial host when he wanted to be, but a thieving rascal when the opportunity presented itself. The hotel was located in about the center of the Academy land, so it made a good place to leave the team and wagon for a few days.

Many travelers carried their camping equipment, and Anthonyson had prepared a camping site for their accommodation. For this he charged a fee, also charging for the use of the feed troughs the animals used, and for the use of the stone bake oven, if the travelers wanted to tarry a day to rest and bake a supply of bread.

Andreas and the others planned to make use of one of the campsites for a few days . . .

Upon inquiry, they were told there was a large area lying west of the hotel between the Williamson Road and the State Road, and here would find a trail rather than a road to follow to the end of the valley . . .

Checking the numbers on the surveyed plots, they followed the blazed lines, criss-crossing the lots to get a better idea of the timber, location of springs, and general lay of the land. The remainder of the day was spent sitting on the big log, discussing and making comparisons of this area with the other two places they had visited . . .

The price that the pioneers each paid for their land has been derived from figures taken from the mortgage signed by Jacob, July 7, 1820, which reads in part, ". . . in the sum of four hundred sixty four dollars, . . . conditioned for the payment of two hundred thirty two dollars after a stay of three years (without interest) . . ."

If each person paid \$464 for 150 acres, the cost was a little over \$3 an acre. Twenty-six years later, 1846, Andreas' grandson, George Beck, paid \$600 for 100 acres, with no bonus of any kind though George too was a blacksmith, the same as his uncle Jacob . . .

The deal completed, the agent again assured them that the Trustees of the Academy and he personally were interested in their welfare. He shook each one's hand, bade them good-bye, mounted his horse, and with a wave of his hand rode away.

No proof places this transaction in 1813, but according to family tradition there was an agreement of purchase, valid for seven years. As Jacob received his deed on July 7, 1820, most likely the original purchase was indeed 1813 . . .

(Our archivist, Miss Gladys Tozier, chose these paragraphs as a brief resume of Dr. Beck's book. Anyone desiring to read further may do so as the book has been placed in the archives of the Museum.)

NOTE: Dr. Beck passed away January 15, 1974. We received the following note from Mrs. Beck: "To the Historical Society and Board of Governors, Thank you for your kind words of sympathy and praise for his literary contributions. He loved his Pennsylvania and the Society, and we often wished we lived near in order to be active and participate personally. Again we appreciate your kindness. (signed) Anita M. Beck."

LONG-DELAYED DRINKING FOUNTAIN

Yesterday the drinking fountain to be erected on the Court House pavement by the Young Women's Christian Temperance Union, was hauled down from the Philadelphia & Erie freight station, and delivered at its destination. The pipes have been laid and connections made, so that all remains to be done is the placing of the fountain in position and turning on the water. If the people will only patronize it, the ladies will have no reason to regret their action (July 23, 1889, *Gazette and Bulletin*.)

THE JOURNAL OF JAMES ECROYD

By Mrs. Charles E. Ecroyd, Pennsdale

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

James Ecroyd, of whom I have been asked to give some account, was of an English family; and was born at the ancient home, Edgend, near the village of Marsden in Lancashire where the English branch of the family is still located.

He was the son of Henry Ecroyd of Edgend. The names of Henry and James have appeared in the family for many generations.

Edgend is about fifty miles north of Birmingham, which was the home of the Priestley family.

The date of James Ecroyd's birth was November, 1767. Perhaps the three epochs in his life were his birth in 1767, his sailing from Liverpool to America in 1795, and his becoming an American citizen in 1799. His death occurred in Philadelphia in 1825, at the age of fifty-eight years.

He was well educated, and had a pleasing and lovable disposition; he was rather literary in his tastes and had a keen love for the country life and the out-of-doors. He was popular in his homeland, and his many friends found him a pleasing addition to their company on hunting excursions.

Family History Long.

His father died in 1784, and James Ecroyd, being the eldest son, was by the English custom heir to quite a large estate; a part of which dates back in the family name to 1541. There is one ancient house of earlier date known to belong to the family as early as 1320.

Being young and restless, James Ecroyd's desire to travel caused him to relinquish his right to the English homes, and bringing a goodly amount of money with him, he came to America to invest in farming lands in this country, as so many were doing at that time.

The young man of twenty-eight years left Liverpool in August, 1795. He brought

with him a quantity of books, some in Latin and some in French, beside those in English, and very few other articles of interest, with the exception of some handsome silverware, and the old family Bible which was a valuable family possession since 1595, and is still more a treasure today with 133 years added to its age.

The Ecroyd Bible

Just a note about this old Bible might be of interest.

The first complete English Bible was in 1535 (just sixty years before our date); then came the Great Bible in 1539; and sometime after that, the Geneva Bible which was very generally used. To combat the popularity of the Geneva Bible, the Bishop's Bible was brought out. One of its characteristics is that the end of each book it has the initials of the Bishop who translated that section. It was really an improved Great Bible — translated in 1568, and the first edition was a folio.

The editions evidently were quickly exhausted, as the Bible came into more common use after the establishment of the Church of England; and the editions came out rapidly for a few years.

Our edition was of 1595 (twenty-seven years after the first) and is about a tenth or a twelfth, printed by deputies of Christopher Barker, printer to Queen Elizabeth. It is called the black letter edition, referring to the kind of type.

It is so far down the line of editions that it has not much money value as an early one — but as a family heirloom, dating back to the year of its printing, 1595, it is highly prized. This is now the property of Dr. Henry Ecroyd of Jamestown, Rhode Island.

After an extremely stormy voyage which continued two months, he finally arrived at his destination, Baltimore, late in October. His diary, which was regularly kept

during the entire voyage, with the state of the wind and the weather recorded each day, shows that there were but fifteen days of the fifty-eight enroute which were of fair or pleasant weather.

And yet, strangely too, he does not mention the loss of any of those on board, nor any serious damage to the vessel. He writes on October the 11th, "The gale increased to a most tremendous degree. Several of the seamen told me they did not ever remember seeing the sea so rough in all their lives in summer." On the 16th he writes: "Boisterous all day; at night the wind increased; about two o'clock was the most severe we have yet experienced, and the sea broke so dreadfully over the ship that it reached the sailor in the main yard-arm."

After reading such a record our imagination can readily appreciate his pleasure of anticipation as he makes his last two days' records: October, the 24th:—"At four o'clock in the morning the Pilot came on board; and we saw the light of Cape Henry's lighthouse at three o'clock on the western shore. And after tacking about several times in the Bay, we were obliged to cast anchor in seven fathoms of water, Cape Henry being S.S.E."

October, the 25th:—"A sharp clear morning, wind northwest. Made New Point Comfort about 11:00 A.M. From the clearness of the day we have a most delightful view of the shore covered with the most beautiful pine-woods, and here and there a house. Distance of sailing from Liverpool to Baltimore reckoning 200 miles for the Chesapeake Bay — 4,944 miles; from the 30th of August to the 27th of October."

Compared with the present route and schedule we can at least be thankful once more that we do not now have to travel as they did 130 years ago.

James Ecroyd went immediately to Philadelphia to visit at the home of his friend, John Haworth, who had come to America some time earlier from his English home called Shuttleworth Hall, very near Edgend.

One Reason for Visit

The daughter of this old neighbor, about

four years later, became Mrs. James Ecroyd. Possibly she, rather than the great forests in Pennsylvania, was the cause of James Ecroyd's desire to come to America.

His diary giving the account of his journey to Lycoming County is quite uneventful and very brief. It gives the general direction of his travels, and his observations on the condition of the soil with regard to its agricultural value. His travels commence after a visit of a few days in Philadelphia. He rode a horse, although the second day out he speaks of being in company with two wagons of provisions, and there being four on horseback.

Of course, he must have heard enthusiastic descriptions of the Pennsylvania lands for sale through his friends, the Priestleys, whom he had known well in England for he came very directly to this section of the state.

It is interesting to note how entirely absorbed he seems to have been with the purpose of selecting land, and to the present day student of psychology, he would seem to have been in just the correct frame of mind to be the eager purchaser of any parcel of land which a would-be-seller could present at all favorably.

Displeased with Land

As he traveled, his route lay from Philadelphia to Pottsgrove, to Reading, to Maiden Creek, Berks County, where he notes: "The hills are beautiful, but the soil entirely washed away." The land below Reading he calls "In a wretched state of agriculture."

At Maiden Creek he wrote also: "The land is increasing in value."

Then comes a German settlement among the Blue Mountains, Miller's Tavern, and here he says: "We experimented at sleeping in the open, lying on our blankets," and then, "The journey resumed very early in the morning through a way quite cultivated, past Leidenburg Tavern to Roaring Creek Water, and a small mean tavern." Here, evidently, he did not tarry long, although, "he had some conversation with people at the tavern." He was very poorly impressed with the agricultural prospects. He pushed

on to Catawissa, his next stopping place. "The land in the neighborhood of Catawissa town on the North Branch of the Susquehanna, which has been improved, is very much advanced in price." This land interested our traveler for he writes, "Crossed the river in a boat to look at a plantation of about 200 or 250 acres. The man asks 2,000 pounds in sale, but his neighbor tells me it might be bought for 1,500 pounds money down, currency."

Next he crossed the country towards the Friends' Settlement at Fishing Creek, (now Millville, Columbia County), "lodged at a small tavern a few miles short." He looked the farms over and diagnosed the soil as "stiff and cold," probably referring to a clay soil, although his diary went on, "About Fishing Creek I found some of the richest land I have yet seen. A tract of land to sell belonging to Owen Biddle, 300 acres of capital land; asks 3 or 4 pounds per acre, but 'tis very poorly watered. 100 acres of it are cleared and John Eves of the mill recommends it very much."

The next entry in his diary: "Was at meeting at Fishing Creek; staid there the night. Saw a young man from Muncy, named Samuel Watson, and he recommended a lot belonging to Joseph Budd, of Philadelphia."

Came on to Muncy

The next day he rode on to Muncy, to Henry Shoemaker's tavern. The location of this tavern was on the north side of Muncy Creek, at almost the exact location of the concrete bridge on the Susquehanna Trail between Muncy and Halls.

Henry Shoemaker told the traveler "to go farther back to buy land on account of the greater facility of growing clover and of breeding cattle."

"This account," James Ecroyd says, "is partial; he having large tracts of land to sell 200 miles back."

Evidently he was going to see all the way to the Loyalsock where his friends, the Priestley's, had land, before buying for he "went on the next day to Robert Whitacre's Tavern, 3 miles." It is a question whether Robert Whitacre had a tavern at

about the location of the Twin Runs on the Susquehanna Trail, or whether he kept the Bulls Head Tavern at Pennsdale.

The Bulls Head Tavern was afterwards kept by a man named Jones, and later became the home for many years of the Masters family; then of the Benjamin Warner family; and within the past five years was known as the "House of Many Stairs Tea Room". It is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Morris.

At Robert Whitacre's Tavern he met with John Hill and John Huckle, two English farmers from a near settlement on the Loyalsock Creek.

"They gave me," he says, "every information in their power. They had traveled a great deal in search of land, but found no situation equal to this part here with them."

So James Ecroyd "went with John Hill to Hillsgrove and found land far superior," he states, "to any I had ever seen since coming to America."

Much Land for Sale

James Ecroyd remained six days at Hillsgrove and then returned along the Loyalsock and found a great deal of land for sale; much of it belonging to Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia, and much of it to the Priestley's, beside many tracts, or warrants, belonging to Rev. William White, of Philadelphia, who was bishop of Northumberland County.

He left Muncy at once in company with John Huckle, (who was a brother-in-law of John Adlum), and went directly to Northumberland where he spent the day with Joseph Priestley, Jr.

The narrative, from the time of his leaving Philadelphia, November 10, to the record of his spending the day with his old friend, Joseph Priestley, Jr., at Northumberland on his return journey, covers only fifteen days.

After two or three more entries in his diary which have no particular interest for us, James Ecroyd's little journal stops very abruptly, and the next report we have of

him is the copy of some extracts of a letter which he wrote to his friend, Miss Martha Haworth, whom he afterward married.

Lost in Mountains

The letter gives his own account of his experience when he was lost on the Mountains of the Loyalsock — when they were covered deeply with snow.

This occurred on the 30th of January, 1796, three months after arriving in America. He had been at John Hill's house at Hillsgrove for about two weeks, finding it necessary to wait there because of the deep snow which prevented the accomplishment of his business connected with the inspection of the land in which he was interested.

On the morning of January 30, which was clear and very cold, he went out with his gun, thinking to go along the edge of the mountain for deer, which were very plentiful. It was about 10 o'clock and his intention was to return in time for dinner. Soon six or seven deer came along and James Ecroyd became interested in following them. He shot and wounded one, but as he did not kill it he pursued hoping to have another shot and end the suffering which he had caused. At first, he noted well the course he was taking, but some time later, becoming absorbed in the chase he failed to observe his direction. By mid-afternoon he realized that he had gone entirely out of his intended course and he and his four dogs had completely lost their way. He decided that it would be best to follow a little stream, supposing from its course that it must join the Loyalsock within two or three miles of Hillsgrove.

Slipped into Water

It was after dark when he reached the main stream and by a series of mistakes which he made in direction — by his having slipped into the water when crossing the stream on a pine log, and by his body becoming benumbed with cold — he says "my ideas respecting the course I had taken began to be more confused."

There was no response to the firing of his gun.

"Now was the time," he wrote, "that I ought to have made a fire, in which case my sufferings had been of little moment, but how to effect this was of no small concern, having none of the usual apparatus with me. This, therefore, induced me to try if I could to keep walking and before morning reach John Hill's."

Twelve below Zero

"But I had scarce proceeded one mile when the cold began so to benumb me that I found it impossible to proceed, and without fire I could not survive the night; for according to Dr. Priestley, the thermometer that night was twelve degrees below zero. In order to make a fire I cut a piece of my shirt, and rolling it up in my hand scattered some powder on it, and flashed my gun, and after several ineffectual attempts, blew it up into a blaze." The expression "flashing his gun" probably refers to a gun of the flint lock type which is equipped with a little cup or pan to hold the powder, and when the trigger is pulled the powder becomes ignited, and so flashes a blaze.

Having succeeded in getting a blaze, he was able to make a small fire of dry leaves and twigs from within a hollow tree, and some bark also.

Feet Were Frozen

He then found that his feet were frozen, following the wetting they had when he slipped into the stream. He wrote — "In attempting to remove my shoes I found them frozen to my feet, and when I took off my stockings nearly all of the skin came with them, so that my suffering was intense."

His suffering kept him awake; the night passed; also two more days and two more nights; he labored to plod on a little each day; the wolves howled at night; some deer came and went; the stock of powder was so small that it had to be conserved for kindling the very necessary fire.

Forced to kill Dog

Finally he resorted to the killing of one

of the faithful dogs, both for food and for beneficial service to his suffering feet.

He tried to send one dog with a written message, but it could not be persuaded to leave him.

Found by Searchers

Finally, the morning after the third night out, when he was too exhausted to do anything more than to lie quietly by his failing fire and wait for the warmth of life to fade out of his own body as well, the dogs suddenly began to bark, and two men of the searching party came upon the scene.

The searchers had given up any hope of finding him alive, and therefore had brought nothing with them that day suitable for his immediate comfort in this distressed condition, so one man had to return to the settlement for further assistance while the other one remained with James Ecroyd for another night in the open.

Carried to Muncy

On his fifth day out he was carried by his rescuers on a litter down the Loyalsock. Part of the time the litter was dragged over the ice. He was taken to Muncy to the house of Daniel Tallman, and there was cared for during a long illness.

Dr. Benjamin Rush, who so heroically fought the yellow fever scourge in Philadelphia, and who was also one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, hearing of the serious accident to his friend James Ecroyd, secured for him the services of a successful English surgeon, Dr. Lathey, who was at that time at Muncy. Dr. Lathey afterward married Miss Mary, the daughter of Samuel Wallis. He had all the attention possible, and after many weeks his health was restored, although his feet were crippled.

Names of Rescuers

In James Ecroyd's account of his rescue, he mentions only two of the party by name; one of them was Isaac Swain, and the other was Abraham Webster.

It was Abraham Webster, who, when a small child, with his two little sisters, was

carried off by the Indians. One of the children was thrown into Seneca Lake and drowned because of her continual crying. The other girl lived to womanhood among the Indians and is said to have married an Indian Chief. But the boy, Abraham, was restored to his family after twelve years of captivity.

Abraham Webster was the great-grandfather of Miss Hannah Webster, one of the officers of this society.

It is interesting to note that at the close of James Ecroyd's diary there is a page of cash accounts wherein is an entry of an amount of money for Isaac Swain and another amount, rather larger, paid to Daniel Tallman. Both are dated in 1796, and we believe were given the two men who rescued him, in appreciation of their tender care during the long illness resulting from the injury.

Purchase Wild Land

James Ecroyd's accident was undoubtedly a great hindrance to him during the remainder of his life, but it does not seem to have altered his decision to purchase land in the Loyalsock region, nor to have checked his enthusiasm, for as soon as he was able to be on foot again he resumed his negotiations for the purchase of six tracts, or warrants, of land containing 1,982 acres along the waters of the Loyalsock. These tracts contained from 300 to 400 acres each, and are fully described and bear individual names by which the former owners had acquired them from the Commonwealth. The names Liberty, Randolph, Belmont, Perseverance, Hope, and Fertility appear on his first deed which was from "Joseph Priestley, the younger," and Dr. Benjamin Rush, of Philadelphia, to James Ecroyd, of Muncy township, and dated June 5, 1796.

There were several other purchases continuing over a period of nearly ten years and including tracts named Manchester, Salem, Richland, Belmont, Somerset, Bellevue, Fairfield, Springfield, Hopewell, Williamsburg, and Jay. These were mostly along the Loyalsock, or waters of the Loyalsock. A number of the deeds are still in the possession of the family. They bear the signa-

tures of Dr. Benjamin Rush, Thomas Rush, Joseph Strong, Rt. Rev. William White, Joseph Priestley, Samuel Wallis, and a number of others.

Owners Made Profit

Why James Ecroyd allowed the men from whom the first tract was bought to induce him to make more purchases in the same neighborhood is not an easy problem for us of this day to solve, although we can see the good business ability displayed by the Priestleys, Dr. Rush, Rev. William White and the others who made their purchases for about \$0.04 per acre, selling it to any Englishman who would buy it at a price of \$1.10 and \$1.50 per acre, and as one deed states, "in silver milled dollars."

Some have explained the lure of the Loyalsock region by calling our attention to the fact that the mountainsides were densely forested and the trees very large and splendid. Although the valley is narrow and, as we in this century know it, it seems quite unadapted to the raising of large crops, yet, in late November of 1795 the ground was probably frozen and thickly covered with leaves, and it may have been covered also with snow. Under such conditions it would be impossible in the limited period of six days to make close observations over so many thousands of acres, and it is probable that he drew his conclusions as to the richness and fertility of the soil from the size and vigor of the forest trees. Perhaps he could not even see the stones and rocks for snow.

Lived at Elkland

After making these purchases, James Ecroyd lived several years in Elkland, choosing a location for his home which was pronounced by Robert Sutliff, an English relative and traveler who visited him, as remote and solitary, even for that section.

He owned and operated a sawmill, and also a gristmill, in Elkland. The mill dam and the race connected with these are still traceable. He also took an active part in the interests of the Friend's meeting.

There are two reasons given for James Ecroyd's living only a few years at Elkland.

The inconvenience and difficulty of access of the home in the mountains was so great and the location so far removed from any of her family that his wife was not comfortable, and absolutely refused to live longer in that locality, to which place she had found it necessary to travel by horseback all the way from Philadelphia, and her two-year old child, Henry, accompanied her in the same manner. The other reason was the problem of the difficulties attending the education of their children.

They therefore moved to Muncy, where they lived for some years. The location of James Ecroyd's Muncy home has nothing now to mark it as the house is gone and the site entirely obliterated, and it was long ago sold by his family.

Returned to Philadelphia

The glimpses of the later years of James Ecroyd's life are so meager that it is difficult to pick out very much of local interest. He gave up farming and was back in Philadelphia several years before his death, which occurred there in 1825 at the age of fifty-eight years.

He became an American citizen as soon as possible after coming to this country, and his naturalization certificate dated 1799 is one of the interesting papers in the family's possession.

He left a record of a useful Christian man.

His oldest son, Henry Ecroyd, remained in Muncy township where he married Catharine Whitacre, the daughter of Joseph and Catherine Adlum Whitacre, and he lived to the good old age of eighty-seven years on his farm named after the English home, Edgend. It is interesting to note that Edgend, Muncy, now the home of Miss Katharine Ecroyd Kirk, was built previous to the year 1800 by Dr. William Kent Lathey, the same excellent physician, who was so successful in his service rendered James Ecroyd after his near tragedy in the woods.

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DURING 1973:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
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| Mrs. Norman Ingersoll | |
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NOTE: These are donors to the Museum collections. Those who gave donations for the auction last June are not included.

THE NEWMAN ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

The NEWMAN one-room SCHOOL, which was established as an educational institution in 1872, and remained in use until 1955, will be open to our members and the public on April 18, 19, 20 and 21 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Our Society Museum, which has custody of the school will be in charge. The school is located between Pennsdale and Hughesville on U. S. Route 220.

LYCOMING COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

LYCOMING COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

OPERATING STATEMENT

April 1, 1973 to March 31, 1974

Checking Account - April 1, 1973 \$ 2,516.93

RECEIPTS

Dues from Members	\$ 4,796.00	
Admissions to Museum	682.99	
Lycoming County Commissioners	6,000.00	
Williamsport Area School District	4,000.00	
City of Williamsport	1,000.00	
Williamsport Area School District - Title III Funds	3,000.00	
Rentals - Meeting Room	430.00	
E.S.E.A. Arts Centre	675.00	
Antique Auction	3,719.98	
Gift Shop - Income in excess of Expense	863.98	
Dinners & Bus Trips - Income in excess of Expense	453.35	
Interest and Dividends	896.94	
Bldg. Pledge payment	500.00	
Other - Contributions, Pay Telephone and Misc.	710.01	
	<u>27,728.25</u>	
FUNDS AVAILABLE	<u>\$30,245.18</u>	

EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$17,341.00	
Social Security Taxes	1,214.75	
Blue Cross - Blue Shield	425.29	
Insurance	1,151.20	
Printing - Journals and Brochures	1,168.23	
Office Supplies, Postage and Telephone	1,258.32	
Power, Light and Water	3,306.32	
Heating - Fuel Oil and Repairs	1,703.12	
Bldg. - Cleaning, Supplies and Repairs	557.22	
Payments to Other Historical Societies	700.00	
Other - Dues, Exhibit Exp., Traveling, & Misc.	774.13	
	<u>29,599.58</u>	
Excess of Funds over Expenses	<u>\$ 645.60</u>	

Non-Operating Additions and Other Credits

A/C's Receivable - decrease	\$ 1,500.00	
Funds Advanced-1974-75 -Grit Publishing Co.	5,000.00	
Gift Shop Inventory - decrease	62.80	
	<u>\$ 6,562.80</u>	
	<u>\$ 7,208.40</u>	

Non-Operating Expenditures & Other Debits

A/C' Payable - decrease	\$ 316.73	
Title III Funds - decrease	2,126.30	
Other Deferred	60.00	
Equipment purchase - Bldg. Wiring	219.61	
	<u>\$ 2,722.64</u>	

CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE - March 31, 1974 \$ 4,485.76

LYCOMING COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

BALANCE SHEET

March 31, 1974

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Checking A/C - Fidelity Nat'l Bank of Penna.	\$ 4,485.76	
Savings A/C-Wmsport.Nat'l Bank - Artifacts sold	812.74	
Gift Shop Inventory	658.72	
Petty Cash - Change Accounts	80.00	
	<u>6,037.22</u>	

TRUST FUNDS INVESTED

Federal Home Loan Bank 8.05% Bond	\$10,125.00	
First Federal Savings & Loan-Junior Historians	2,048.45	
First Federal Savings & Loan	1,667.35	
110 - shares of Affiliated Fund	990.00	
2 - shares Consolidated Cigar	60.00	
12 - shares Sun Oil Common Stock	828.75	
	<u>15,719.55</u>	

FIXED and OTHER ASSETS

Land	\$ 15,000.00	
Building - Architect	18,034.98	
General Contract	233,952.55	
Heating and Ventilating	50,324.00	
Electrical	19,655.95	
Furniture, Fixtures and Other Bldg.Equip.	6,504.81	
Display Equipment, Cases, Materials, etc.	20,006.91	
Victorian Period Room	4,762.04	
Artifacts	69,271.63	
	<u>437,512.87</u>	

TOTAL ASSETS \$459,269.64

LIABILITIES and FUND BALANCE

Accounts Payable	\$ 1,004.77	
Deferred Income - Title III Funds	410.99	
- Advanced by Grit Publishing Co.	5,000.00	
	<u>\$ 6,415.76</u>	

FUND BALANCE 452,853.88

TOTAL LIABILITIES and FUND BALANCE \$459,269.64