Contributors to this Issue


DR. LOUIS WINKLER, State College, Pennsylvania, is a member of the Department of Astronomy at the Pennsylvania State University. His article in this issue on David Rittenhouse, the early American astronomer, is the eighth in his series on Pennsylvania German astronomy and astrology.

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ELEANOR YODER, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a native of Somerset County and of Amish and Mennonite background in her own family heritage, offers in this issue the results of a questionnaire study of the incidence and process of nicknaming among the Amish and Old Order Mennonites in Western Pennsylvania and the adjoining areas in Maryland. The study was made in connection with her work in the Department of Folklore and Folklife at the University of Pennsylvania.

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COVER:  
In this century we have seen two distinct phases in the melding of ethnic influences in Pennsylvania—in other places, too, but especially in Pennsylvania.

One is the blending of racial strains, racial characteristics, and racial patterns of thought, a blending which goes on relentlessly, no matter how much any one group may fear the loss of something distinctive and precious. The identifying and the recording of the Pennsylvania Germanic-American way of life lest it be irrevocably lost were major factors in bringing the Pennsylvania German Society into being in 1891, although premonitions of the acculturation eventually to take place had haunted both scholars and laymen long before that time.

The second phase may well have grown out of the first—an emphasis upon one aspect after another of the putatively endangered culture, with the result that distinctive or peculiar qualities may in some cases have been exaggerated.

Clouding the picture is the fact that, in the past, at least, there was a tendency to jump to conclusions. A prime example of making over-hasty assumptions exists in the case of two types of tableware, spatterware and Gaudy Dutch. Somebody, when antique collectors first became interested in these bright and cheerful dishes, termed them Pennsylvania Dutch because it was in the German-speaking areas of Pennsylvania that they were commonly found. The appellation clung, long after it became quite clear that both were of (European) English origin. A comparable condition is true of what we call blue-sponge or sponge-blue spatter. The first time the writer came upon a piece of it in an antique shop and inquired of the long-established dealer what it was he was told, “This is the oldest kind of Pennsylvania Dutch spatterware; they made it before they ever started putting schoolhouses and roosters on spatter.” It was not until years later, when a piece marked “ELO,” the letters standing for East Liverpool, Ohio, appeared, that investigation made it clear that the ware is not really spatter nor is it Pennsylvania Dutch in origin, though by long use and association it was, has been, and is a legitimate occupant of Dutch Country cupboards.

It all adds up to the fact that instead of glibly terming everything which bears a heart or a tulip Pennsylvania Dutch we should mind our P's and Q's and try to make sure of what it is. However, the
adjuration works two ways: Before we assert that something is not Pennsylvania Dutch, let us make sure that it is not. And then—and it is here that we tread upon almost new ground in a discussion of the provenance of antiques—let us see whether whatever it is we are talking about represents, just possibly, the blending and melding mentioned above.

In particular, let us take a long, hard look at the perforated cardboard wall mottoes which are so frequently termed “Victorian samplers,” a spoken or unspoken implication being that since they are Victorian they must also be (British) English in origin. Only yesterday, it seems, they hung, tiptilted, over the doorways of every living room, parlor, dining room, and hallway—or perhaps it just seemed like every doorway. Whether it was in Maine or Maryland, Vermont or Pennsylvania, or points near by, they looked pretty much alike, with the common characteristics of gaily colored wools, decorative lettering, and an uplifting sentiment. The wording seems always to have been in English, no matter where they were found.

Justifying inclusion in a study concerned with ways of the people is the fact that these mottoes constitute an excellent example of the “do-it-yourself” school of thought—a century or more before the term became a catch phrase. The idea of doing things for oneself, so often forced upon us today as stark reality because we can find no one else to do them or cannot afford the service, should it be available, was less an obstacle than a pleasing challenge in the time of Queen Victoria—who was probably as highly regarded in America as she was revered in England. Securing servants was far from being the problem it was to become later; a great many people—and we are speaking particularly of women—had a great deal of time on their hands. Inventiveness and experimentation in home decoration became the order of the day—the “day” perhaps not starting quite so early as 1837, when the young queen came to the throne, but being well past its high noon by the time she died in 1901.

Since judgment by one’s peers was little to be concerned about in a time when no one appeared to have an edge over anyone else at the starting point, the amateur could very often pick out her place in the sun and sit there without running much risk of being forced to move over. Women in the 19th Century took to the genteel home arts with a zeal which might range from just a little more than casual interest to do-or-die devotion. An enormous boost was given to appropriate feminine cultural pursuits by the boarding schools, though for the most part only girls from economically favored families could hope to attend. Pennsylvania was notable in having a number of outstanding boarding schools, academies, and seminaries within its borders; a contemporary writer, in discussing historical needlework, mentions more than 40 for girls of all ages.

On the academic side, a young lady at one of these seats of learning would typically be exposed to an impressive array of “branches,” which often boiled
down to a little composition and grammar, a little mathematics, a little French, and a smattering of such other subjects as geography and science, with side excursions into poetry and elocution. She would probably also learn to paint on china, to create parlor ornaments of surprising variety, to sing by note, and perhaps to master the intricacies, if not of the piano, at least of the parlor organ. All these achievements, however, took second place—not in the schools alone but in homes throughout the length and breadth of the land—to developing skill with the needle... not merely for workaday purposes but for fancywork.

Fancywork! It seems to have been the battle cry, the rallying point, the be-all and end-all for veritable armies of American women in the Victorian years. Following the essential artistic restraint of the simple dwellings of colonial times and the drabness of interior decoration in the years closely succeeding the Revolution, suddenly there was freedom, economic freedom, at the least, to let oneself go, to adorn one's home to his—that is, to her—heart's content, and even engage in that delightful, if often frustrating, cultural pastime of keeping up with the Joneses. Well informed writers have devoted volumes to the subject of Victorian ornamentation and there is no need to go into the matter here. We should note, however, that more stitchery—a little, plain; a great deal, fancy—of one kind or another took place than seems to have been the case at any other time in American history. Houses filled up with gewgaws; clothing came to be loaded with fripperies; there seemed to be an over-lushness of everything except, possibly, a sense of proportion.

But—we were speaking particularly of wall mottoes. Though their years mark them as belonging to the Victorian period, they hark back to earlier prototypes—the samplers worked, often without undue enthusiasm, by generation after generation of little girls. A younger might start what was to be her once-and-for-all masterpiece of needlework (sampler-making was far too demanding and tedious to become habit-forming!) before she was six. On the other hand, she might not have developed the necessary muscular coordination, to say nothing of seriousness of purpose, before she was ten or even twelve.

Creating this sampler was not just busy work, nor was the finished product merely ornamental. It constituted a file or record of the numerals and of the letters, upper and lower case, which she might need at some future date to mark the linens she would have in her own household. Not everyone in the 18th or early 19th Century knew how to read and write, and the sampler could be a handy source of reference when one had occasion to embroider a capital J, for instance, on a linen pillow case, so that it would not look like a capital I or L. (One remembers that the fraktur Vorschriften often executed by schoolmasters in German-speaking Pennsylvania for outstanding students also served as sources of reference in time of need.)

So the sampler came into being—a piece of square-meshed fabric as the base, with, as we have observed, the numerals and the alphabet recorded, often in a variety of sizes and sometimes of designs; the name of the needleworker and perhaps her place of abode, especially if that abode happened to be one of the

**The chalice as a motif on a wall motto which had no accompanying “sentiment” is unusual. While some of the woolen identification is missing, “Drawn... June, 1852” is still fairly distinct. 6 by 6½ inches.**

**Black-on-white “mourning” sampler by Elizabeth Ann Smith, 1849. Such samplers are less commonly found than many other types. 13½ by 12¾ inches.**
boarding schools (in which case the name of the “instructress” would probably be included, for diplomatic reasons); moral sentiments, often calling attention to the shortness of life; normally, the date of completion; and fanciful decorations in cross stitch or a simple embroidery stitch filling in any otherwise bare spaces. It is the decorations which especially appeal to us today—angular little flowers, running vines, birds, butterflies, dogs, squirrels, deer, human figures, and buildings.

Not in the main stream of sampler-making, but as a related tributary are the darning samplers (often English than American); mourning samplers (generally in black and white); and the commemorative type (a broad term which includes such individual creations as, for example, a representation of one’s village, a bit of picturesque scenery, or—more ambitious in scope—a map.) One superlative privately owned specimen of a map-sampler made in eastern Pennsylvania on the edge of the Dutch Country is a large representation (about 16 inches by 20) of the Commonwealth, showing the counties, major cities and towns, streams, and mountains. It is hardly necessary to observe that the types mentioned in this paragraph appear to be adult in conception—and more mature than childlike in execution.

Although serious studies of book length have been made of the sampler as a part of our culture, only desultory or casual attention has been given to the Victorian motto—and then as Victorian decoration or as a kind of antique rather than as an evidence of persisting folkways. Right here, though, is the starting point for an analysis of the wall-motto type of decoration: the 18th- and early 19th-Century sampler, an actual need for which, in a later, more literate age, ceased to exist. The creative impulse existed, however, and probably in much stronger degree than had been the case earlier, when youngsters had to be stimulated, cajoled, prodded, or even shamed into undertaking the project. (One poor child is said to have put her feelings on the subject into a permanent, stitched record: “I done this in my 11th year and I hated every minute of it.”) Everything needful was at hand by the mid-1800’s—new, ready-made patterns; yarns more brilliant and varied in color and thickness than the little girls of an earlier time had had access to; and an overwhelming degree of encouragement and approval in and beyond the immediate family circle.

The patterns, wherever in the country they were being used, were in most cases freshly imported from Germany—Berlin, in particular. In fact, a general name for the broad category of needlework in wool was “Berlin work.” “Berlin” also applied specifically to an especially popular type of yarn. A purist might point out that in a rigid sense the term Berlin work should apply only to a design laid out on square-meshed canvas imported from Berlin, the tiny squares then to be filled in with colored yarns in appropriate stitching techniques according to a pre-determined pattern.

Counting the minuscule squares of the background in order to achieve a faultless piece of work must have been, in itself, a formidable chore. However, as time went on, the operation became simplified, and instead of transferring a pattern to canvas the needleworker could purchase a pre-printed and pre-colored pattern. Her most challenging problem then was no greater than matching her yarn to the colors stamped on the background piece. As a rule, simple cross-stitch was the technique employed, or cross-stitch with minor variations.

The pre-printed background pieces were of stiff cardboard or a sturdy cardboard-like type of glazed paper with row upon row of geometrically precise perforations. The holes were small and closely set in sections intended

![Image](image_url)
for small completed objects, but larger and more widely spaced for the heavier yarn which would be used in pieces as big as wall mottoes. Since the holes had already been created, no further piercing of paper need take place by the needleworker. Even if she added original elements of decoration to the existing pattern, she would make use of the perforations already there.

We should not overlook the role of American magazines in supplying the needleworker with patterns. Godey's and Peterson's were probably at the head of the list in popularity, with Leslie's and Harper's Bazar not far behind. There were also lesser publications devoted largely or entirely to needlework, many of them more or less ephemeral in nature. Today's collector is likely to concentrate on Godey's or Peterson's and to choose bound volumes over single copies. Widely popular was Household Elegancies, a comprehensive volume by Mrs. C. S. Jones and Henry T. Williams, published in 1875. And, of course, the art supply stores, which existed in larger population centers, could always be counted upon to supply inspiration as well as supplies.

What went onto the perforated cardboard as decoration represented a strong departure from the abundance of detail found on the old, "true" sampler. This was an age of moralizing—not the lugubrious, death-conscious type of moralizing found so often on early samplers, but a combination of piety and sentimentality. Missing were alphabets, numerals, and personal data. Floral, live-figure, and other decorative devices were used only to the extent that they contributed to or enhanced the message. Perhaps they were abandoned because they appeared too "young," even naive, in a day of increasing sophistication; we have no way of knowing.

As we see them now, wall mottoes tend to separate, without overtones of either doctrinal or ethnic distinction, into about five major categories according to the sentiments expressed on their colorful surfaces—very loose categories, to be sure, since it is out of the question in some cases to draw a reasonable line of demarcation. These broad groupings may be termed the patriotic; the religious; the moral (which obviously lends itself to overlapping with the religious); the sentimental or affectionate; and the good-wishes type.

"United We Stand, 1776-1876" would hardly be classified as other than patriotic, especially since the sentiment is backed up by an eagle clutching a bundle of arrows in its talons. "Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread" would be assigned without hesitation to the religious category, as would "The Lord Is My Shepherd" and "Thy Will Be Done." "Knowledge Is Power" and "Kind Words Can Never Die" might well be considered moral, and "What Is Home Without a Mother?" and "Forget Me Not," sentimental. (One, lost to a collector who got to the antiques dealer first, will probably always be a matter of regret to the writer: "What Is Home Without a Mother-in-Law?") The intent of "Welcome," "Old Arm Chair," "Sweet Home," and "Peace Be to This House" seems obvious. Perhaps a sixth category should be made to include titles or fragments of such popular hymns as "I Need Thee Every Hour," "Abide with Me," and "Lead. Kindly Light."

Strictly ornamental: the picture frame—unusual in that the perforated paper is dark rather than light in tone. An advertising card from Brown and Keller, Stroudsburg, Pa. 10 by 6 inches.
A touching little piece of work by Ada Snavely (1862-1867), daughter of Benjamin and Eliza Snavely, Lancaster County. According to the record, the child died when she was four years, ten months, and four days old. Mounted on moire ribbon; 6 by 2 7/8 inches.

A researcher attempting strict classification might be hard put to defend one designation over another in such cases as “As Thy Days So Shall Thy Strength Be,” “Be on Thy Guard,” “Tune Thy Harp to Songs of Praise,” “Walk in Love,” or “The Old Oaken Bucket.” Perhaps it would be better not to attempt a classification at all, but simply note that, in toto, in the thinking of those who created them, mottoes constitute a somewhat comprehensive summary of well-liked phrases or lines of the day, religious and secular—or, possibly, religious and philosophical.

Since there was little variation in the physical size of wall mottoes (about 9 inches by 20, inside the frame, give or take a fraction of an inch either way), and since not all popular quotations were of equal length, the device of the rebus was employed, sometimes with happy results but occasionally also with unfortunate ones. Over and over, we find “No Cross, No Crown” done as a rebus . . . but with uneven degrees of success, especially as to the design of the crown. (Children in one Up-country Pennsylvanian family stoutly maintained that the crown in the motto on Grandmother’s wall was not a crown at all, but a birthday cake with lighted candles!) “Tune Thy Harp to Songs of Praise” turns out satisfactorily if the harp takes on the shape of an actual harp—something which did not always happen.

Not infrequently, original decorative touches presumed to be in keeping with the sentiment itself were employed, not as substitutes for a word as in the case of the legitimate rebus, but as reinforcing elements. A loaf of bread in “Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread,” an open book in “Knowledge Is Power,” a fairly well detailed building in “Home, Sweet Home”—these may have been either pre-designed or original with the needleworker. The shepherd’s crook and the lamb in “The Lord Is My Shepherd” seem to have been pre-designed in some cases but originating with the needleworker in others. There are collectors of mottoes who define the boundaries of their purchases by choosing only those which show obviously original touches.

It is often difficult now to visualize the splendor of a motto when it was new because the background cardboard tended to dry out and split along the perforations with age; moreover, the colors faded according to the strength of the light to which they were subjected over the years. For whatever reason, many surviving specimens seem to have sustained water damage—possibly because after they had been taken down from the wall they were stored away under the eaves in the attic. One part of the motto usually did not fade, however—the sheet of colored shiny paper placed directly behind the cardboard itself to lend sparkle to the finished piece. Sometimes, bright tinfoil rather than paper was employed for this purpose. The colors of this backing did
not necessarily complement those of the yarn, and today's collector tends to discard the sheets if they are not harmonious.

The frames used for wall mottoes exist in some variety, those of slender, hand-whittled walnut in a "rustic" pattern strongly leading in popularity. These were known as "butterfly" frames when mill-stamped pieces in the shape of a cluster of leaves or of a butterfly with open wings were glued on where the members crossed at the corners. Instead of the so-called butterflies, sawed cross-sections of walnut shells were occasionally used, or small white porcelain knobs or glass or brass buttons of various shapes and sizes.

Tramp-carved frames of cigar-box mahogany are found now and then. The chances are at least fair that some of these were made as replacements for the structurally flimsy carved walnut frames. Simple gilded quarter-round frames are also found, often but not always with gesso between the wood and the gilt. Cyma-curved, ogee-curved, and crown moldings come to light less frequently than other types. Perhaps most pleasing to present-day tastes is the slightly rounded ebonized plaster frame with a superimposed repeated gilt design in the form of a foreshortened sunburst.

The use of perforated cardboard did not stop with wall mottoes, although most of the material seems to have been devoted to that purpose. One hears of a fire screen in this medium, but the writer has not seen one. Wall mottoes lasted as long as they did because they were under glass; large surfaces without such protection were vulnerable to every vicissitude of temperature, humidity, and handling; they soiled quickly and tended to disintegrate rapidly. Small pieces have fared better, especially the elaborate book marks, often mounted on heavy ribbon, which were highly popular gifts for birthdays and Christmas. A book mark might be even more elaborate in design than the most detailed wall motto. The rebus was a favored space-saver, and fancy embossed papers with crimped and pierced edges were frequently used as reinforcements for the cardboard or for the ribbon. Among ribbons, the favorites seem to have been moires, iridescents, and those with woven-in designs. When, in addition, beads were substituted for part or all of the yarn decoration, and fringe, cord, and tassels were added to serve as finishing end-touches, the book mark tended to take on real magnificence.

Three-dimensional objects were created, too: needle cases, calling card cases, comb or brush cases, bureau trinket boxes, handkerchief boxes, collar button and shirt stud containers, wall pockets of uncertain purpose—and still others. While the ramifications of Victorian decoration in general are exceedingly extensive, there is a recognizable degree of likeness in what was done with perforated cardboard and yarn.

A grouping of four small pieces, each complete in itself. These pieces may have been done as practice exercises, but there seems to be no reason to suppose that they are parts of objects originally larger in size. Largest piece at bottom: $3\frac{3}{4}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

A do-it-yourself project abstracted from Peterson's Magazine for January, 1888, and mounted as though it had been completed. At a distance of only a few feet, the viewer could as easily believe wool-on-paper as the ink-on-paper it really is. $20\frac{3}{4}$ by $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Household magazines were fertile sources of ideas for fancy needlework, especially Berlin work. Among such publications, Peterson's was especially popular. $9\frac{1}{2}$ by 14 inches.
Should a potential purchaser in an antique shop in Pottstown, Kutztown, or Reading buy an attractive wall motto on the assumption that it is probably Pennsylvania Dutch? In Hartford, Boston, or Rutland, can he safely assume that it is of New England origin? In old, traditional samplers he had a little more to go on, because place names were frequently recorded. Often, almost as useful as place names were surnames; a sampler bearing the patronymic of Gehman, Yerger, or Oberholtzer might have originated anywhere—but the chances were greater for Pennsylvania Dutch provenance than for New England. Similarly, such names as Bradford, Wentworth, and Winfield were at least somewhat likely to be indicative of New England origin, as opposed to Pennsylvania.

Unlike the sampler, the wall motto, minus both place name and surname, gives us no overt clue. If reasonable documentation shows that its maker was a Dutch Country resident, we may note first of all that it is Victorian, and then add that this particular specimen probably has a right, too, to the designation of Pennsylvania Dutch. If we know that the maker was descended from a long line of New England forebears who remained resident in New England, we should probably be safe in assuming a New England provenance. In other words, there is no internal evidence—or if there is, it has not thus far been reported.

Whether New England or Pennsylvanian, wall mottoes, or, rather the messages and sentiments they convey, give us pause, for there is more here than meets the eye. “Bless This House”; “Be Not Weary in Well Doing”; “He Leadeth Me”; “No Cross, No Crown”—
One of the popular mottoes deriving from hymnology. Although the markings in the upper right corner barely show in the photograph, the words “Merry Christmas from COL, 1878” are stitched onto the paper. 20% by 8½ inches.

these, coming to us of the past, bring home rather forcibly the fact that a one-time set of values—values on a wide, not a merely local scale—has suffered an eclipse in the present. They serve to remind us with equal force that the old values were held in common by some who in their daily converse used the English tongue and by others who spoke German.

We find wall mottoes with about equal frequency in and out of Pennsylvania, but if any one geographical territory or section of the country has an edge on any other, Pennsylvania—and this observation is backed up only by the experience of the writer—gets the nod. At the same time, we must recognize that the easy mobility of our times enables an antique to get as far from home, and as fast, as the person who buys it.

Wall mottoes were common decorative currency once. They were displayed, cherished, and given honorable treatment. Then, as times and tastes changed, they passed into oblivion. Today they are being cherished once more; they are being sought out, repaired, and imitated—all indications of renewed popularity. We can make better perforated paper nowadays than was made a hundred years ago—but it is just possible that, as the wheel turns and one cultural cycle succeeds another, we have done little if anything to improve upon the sentiments of which our ancestors—whether English or German—approved.

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Except as noted, objects shown are in private collections. Photography by Bryden Taylor, Stroudsburg, Pa. Measurements of illustrations are exclusive of frames.

Not an actual rebus, but the cross, heart, and anchor, a favorite combination of symbols, combine to make an interesting focal point. 20% by 8½ inches.
Pennsylvania German Astronomy and Astrology VIII: David Rittenhouse

By LOUIS WINKLER

David Rittenhouse was a frail boy who had little formal education. He spent the first thirty-four years of his life in the Germantown and Norriton areas. By the time he had lived out more than half of his life he was still an obscure but competent clockmaker. Nevertheless he became one of this country’s patriots and first astronomers. His scientific accomplishments, mostly astronomical in nature, were so outstanding that he was certainly one of the greatest scientists this country has produced. This article is primarily a brief description of Rittenhouse’s involvements in Southeastern Pennsylvania before he moved to Philadelphia.

David was born on April 8, 1732 (Old Style) in a stone house (see Figure 2) built by his great-grandfather, Wilhelm Rittinghausen (or Rittinghuyzen) on a tributary of the Wissahickon Creek near Roxborough. Wilhelm, who later became known as William Rittenhouse, spent the first thirty years of his life near Mühlheim, before he migrated to Pennsylvania via Amsterdam. In Pennsylvania he achieved distinction by constructing and operating the first papermill and being chosen as the first Mennonite minister. While David's grandfather, Klaus, had been a strict Mennonite, David's father, Matthias, leaned toward Quakerism which was the religion of David's mother. David's religion, however, in both youth and maturity was limited to a belief in God and rare visits to Presbyterian churches.

While a youth David's father moved to Norriton where he tried to make a farmer out of David. David had neither the desire nor robustness to pursue this occupation and convinced his father that it would be best if he set up a workshop of his own. Within the year at the age of seventeen David had constructed his first clock.

During his teens a few persons appeared to have influenced him considerably. His father supposedly taught him some of the rudiments of reading and writing and his elder uncle willed him a chest of carpenter tools and books. David set up his shop with these tools and carefully studied one of the books in particular, an English version of Sir Isaac Newton's Principia. This book is perhaps the single most important in the history of modern science, particularly in astronomy, and was of vast importance in David's life. What little formal education he did receive, the most influential was due Patrick Menan, a farmer and surveyor, at Marble Hill, and Thomas Barton, a young emigrant from Ireland who was educated at the University of Dublin. Menan's interests show up directly in the career of Rittenhouse since Rittenhouse was a capable mathematician on an international scale as well as an outstanding surveyor of state boundaries. Thomas Barton not only became Rittenhouse’s brother-in-law but remained influential throughout their lives.

Much of what we know of the details of David's youth is found in the memoirs of William Barton, Thomas' son. Historians are of the opinion that William Barton and other contemporaries of Rittenhouse have colored their recollections of him so as to compliment him and parallel his youth with Newton's. The recollections are to the effect that as a boy Newton constructed a wooden model of a windmill and a large wooden clock driven by water, while David made a wooden model of a paper mill and a (grandfather?)

Figure 2: Birthplace of David Rittenhouse (Courtesy of Popular Astronomy)
Further both neglected their farming duties while engaged in extended scientific reverie, and both spent time in attics pouring over written scientific material. Perhaps the most outstanding parallel however was that David independently invented fluxions, a forerunner of the important and basic mathematical discipline of calculus. Newton of course had been credited with this discovery many decades earlier. In this writer's opinion the discovery supposedly made by David was just wishful thinking started by Benjamin Rush in an eulogy for Rittenhouse in 1796.

While living at Norriton until 1770 Rittenhouse's competent craftsmanship was becoming quite evident. He built a number of grandfather clocks of which some bore the inscription "Norriton". By 1776 he was constructing a telescope for use in conjunction with his astronomical studies. It is thought that this telescope was the first to be constructed in the United States. It is now in the possession of the American Philosophical Society and is shown in Figure 3. By 1767 he had completed work on his most remarkable clock and started work on the first of his two famous orreries. As many as forty of his clocks are said to be extant. Many are still in operating condition and reside in various institutions and homes in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The 1767 clock was outstanding artistically as well as mechanically. The case of the clock was a Chinese Chippendale with black, gold, and silver on a blue background. The face of the clock has numerous dials which indicated seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, and the equation of time. The calendar portion of the clock even provided corrections for leap years. A portion of the face included replicas of part of the solar system including the earth-moon system and the five planets visible to the unaided eye. The clock also struck every fifteen minutes and could be

The equation of time was a regular almanac entry which indicated the difference between mean and apparent solar time and was used for setting timepieces with astronomical observations.
set to chime any one of ten tunes. The clock shown below (Figure 4) is now housed at Drexel University.

The mechanisms, however, which he fabricated at Norriton that drew most attention to him were his orreries or models of the solar system. These orreries were much more precise and complicated than the small orrery in his 1767 clock. While a number of outstanding orreries had been constructed in Europe prior to his none achieved his precision. Orreries were particularly interesting devices in the 18th Century since they emerged shortly after Newton’s *Principia*. Orreries could be used to illustrate the known structure and dynamics of the solar system. Pictures of the first and second orreries are shown in Figures 5 and 6, respectively, and are now housed at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania, respectively.

The only clock that Rittenhouse made which was for scientific use is the plain one with the long pendulum shown below. This was used in connection with observations of the planet Venus. On June 3, 1769 Venus transited or appeared to cross the disk of the sun. Rittenhouse’s observations were made from a specially constructed observatory (see Figure 8) on the Norriton farm. Because the sun was so high in the sky during transit the observers had to lie on their backs to observe it while someone supported their head. Accounts of the observations indicate that large numbers of the local people came to witness the curious event.

The results of the Norriton observations not only helped to catapult Rittenhouse into international fame but many precedents were set. The special purpose observatory which was later used privately was one of the first significant ones in this country. This research effort apparently was the first sponsored in this country by an agency, the American Philosophical Society. Observations of the transit were being made from many points on earth making this one of mankind’s first international efforts in research. Rittenhouse’s efforts yielded astounding accuracy in determining the distance to the sun to within 0.02%. The accomplishment brought this country some of the first significant scientific recognition from the European continent.

Although David Rittenhouse left his Pennsylvania German environs in 1770 he retained some of his connections with the German language through much of his mature scientific life, mainly via German language almanacs. It is likely that he spoke some German at home during his youth, but in any event he did study the German language with Thomas Barton as a teenager. His only literary work appeared in 1789 which was a translation from German to English of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s “Miss Sara Simpson, or the Unhappy Heiress”. Modern critics view the work as fairly good.

When Rittenhouse moved to Philadelphia he somehow found time to make almanac calculations in addition to holding down many important political and scientific jobs. This writer has compiled a list of
The almanacs computed by Rittenhouse by locating his name or including the few references made by Drake or the Philadelphischer Staatsbote.

- **Father Abraham's Almanack** 1775-1778.
- **Father Abraham's Pocket Almanack** 1776-1778.
- **Gantz Neue Verbesserte Nord-Amerikanische Calendar** 1777, 1779-1782 (see Figure 9).
- **Neue Verbesserte Zuverlässige Amerikanische Calendar** 1777.
- **Universal Almanac** 1773-1777.
- **Virginia Almanac** 1774-1780.

Although no calculator's name appeared on **Father Abraham's Pocket Almanack** it was included in this list because most identical entries were found here and in **Father Abraham's Almanack**. Furthermore, both almanacs were published by Dunlop. This writer cannot help wondering just how much the surrounding Pennsylvania German community affected young David in his chosen areas of interest. In nearby Germantown Christopher Witt and Christopher Sauer, two noteworthy figures, and contemporaries of Rittenhouse, were particularly involved in a number of astronomically related areas. Witt's involvement with the comet of 1743 has been discussed in Article III of this series, his clockmaking interests in Article V and the unique astronomical-astrological device from the 16th Century in Article VI. Not only did Sauer learn clockmaking from Witt but Sauer was responsible for publishing the popular Der Hoch-Deutsch Amerikanische Calender from 1739-1758.

In all the almanac issues in which Rittenhouse's computations appear some form of astrology was found. The question then arises, did such an outstanding astronomer of the 18th Century believe in astrology. In Rittenhouse's case the belief did not appear to exist since he considered astrology as "a spurious offspring of Astronomy" as well as "evidence of human depravity."

Regardless of the degree to which the Pennsylvania German community influenced him he did not forget them since his calculations appeared in two German language almanacs. It is evident that the Pennsylvania German community did not forget him since the 19 December 1776 issue of the Philadelphischer Staatsbote included German language and style almanac advertisements and referred to "... Calculation von unserem grossen Mathematiaco und Astronomo Herren Rittenhaus ...

"Various authors have credited Rittenhouse with calculations in numerous almanacs not appearing in the list below. Dozens of almanacs with the name Abraham Weatherwise, for example, are credited to Rittenhouse. This is nonsense since both Rittenhouse's and Weatherwise's name appear on the 1775 issue of the Universal Almanac and the 1777 and 1778 issues of Father Abraham's Almanack. Further, Weatherwise gives part of his biography in the 1782 and 1783 issues of Weatherwise's Town and Country Almanack and it is not Rittenhouse's. Dozen's of almanacs with the name Anthony Sharp are also credited to Rittenhouse. Several circumstantial arguments can be given to the effect that Sharp is not a pseudonym for Rittenhouse. Extrapolation or interpolation of a calculator's name in some almanac issues to other almanac issues to determine the calculator's name in issues without names is an unsatisfactory process. Many almanac series are known to have a calculator's name appear in discontinuous fashion over extended periods of time.


19 December 1776 issue.

These almanacs were referred to in the issue mentioned in footnote 6.

Statements made in his oration before the American Philosophical Society.

Figure 8: Norriton Observatory (Courtesy of Popular Astronomy)
Sociological Aspects of Quilting
in Three Brethren Churches
in Southeastern Pennsylvania

By SUSAN STEWART

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM

Quilting may be honestly termed "an ancient craft." The word "quilt" came into the English language from the Old French "culite," which itself was derived from the Latin "culcita" or "culcitra," meaning a stuffed mattress or cushion. The art was popular in the Middle East during the time of the Crusades, and, as early as the 12th Century, there are examples of the practice being adopted by Western Europeans, and used for padding in body armour.¹

Perhaps the most apt definition for the many items which are deemed to be "quilts" is: "a textile sandwich in which the lines of stitching hold the filling in place between two layers of material."² In other words, quilting involves working with at least three layers of material, one of which may be seen as being a "stuffing," and entails the use of stitches which may be decorative, but which serve mainly to connect the three layers of material together.

Quilting largely died out in Europe after the 16th Century, but found a revival in colonial America, where quilts have been made for over three hundred years.³ The quilts the first colonists brought with them were quickly worn out during the American winters, for there was no native cloth industry and little importation of cloth from Europe. Warren Roberts has placed quilting among the "salvage crafts" and the

²Ibid., p. 19.
first quilts were certainly of this variety, being made in random pattern from salvageable scraps of material into what were called “crazy quilts.” Jonathan Holstein writes that for many American women,

It was welcome work, often the only escape from grinding labor, and the only means of expressing feeling for color and design. Quilts were also for show, perhaps the only or main spot of color and strong visual excitement in the house. They were no doubt the characteristics of Pennsylvania German folk art of those settlers who came to this country between 1683 and 1775; “stylization of form and flat use of color, with motifs drawn from the earth, the heavens and the animal kingdom,” were particularly suitable to quilting designs. Sunflowers and trees of life, the tulips and six-pointed stars, hearts and stylized lilies, the colors of red, yellow, black, green, ivory and blue peculiar to Pennsylvania German barn paintings—all these can be seen echoed in quilting patterns.

With industrialized bedspreads and pre-fab bed coverings, the art of hand quilting died out for a time, but examples of fine needlework can still be found, often done by rural church-women. This paper will examine the quilting practices of three particular groups in one general area—the Indian Creek, Palmyra, and Spring Creek Churches of the Brethren of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

The problem I originally set out with for this paper was one dealing with the boundaries on creativity set by a traditional craft. However, as my fieldwork progressed, I saw that this problem was just one facet of the overall meaning of the traditional craft of quilting holds for the women of the three churches. Thus the paper has widened in scope to a functional one—the role that quilting plays in the lives of the women, and consequently in the life of the Brethren Church.

The method I have used is a conglomerate of research, personal interview, questionnaire, correspondence and participant-observer. My grandmother taught me how to quilt several years ago as part of a Fine Arts independent study, and I found that an intimate

Contrary to Mrs. Pullan's opinions, it is the salvaged patchwork quilts which are today held by col-


Quilting frame used by women at Spring Creek Brethren Church, Hershey. One of several types.
knowledge of the craft was invaluable during interviewing, and for formulating questions. Church pastors responded best to formal correspondence and written answers, while the church women seemed most open to personal interview, rather than questionnaire (see the copy of the one used and sent back by Adis Arbogast of Spring Creek Church). The women seemed to be confused at times by the latter.

**Quilting Questionnaire**

**I**

Name: Adis Arbogast  
Address: 22 Peach Avenue  
Phone: 533-7803  
Place and date of birth: Upshur County, W. Virginia  
May 5, 1898.

1. How old were you when you learned to quilt?  
2. Who taught you how?  
3. Did your mother and grandmother make quilts in the same way?  
4. Can you remember some quilts you knew as a child? Has your family handed down its quilts?  
5. What was your first quilt like?  
6. Give descriptions of other quilts you have made, including their names.  
7. Did you usually quilt by yourself or in a group? If in a group was this family, friends, church members?  
8. Did you ever sell a quilt? Who bought it? What is a fair price for a double-bed quilt?  
9. Did you have a certain number of quilts made to bring when you got married?  

**II**

1. Are your quilts usually patchwork or appliqué, or another type?  
2. When you make patchwork do you use scraps or buy new material?  

**III**

1. What makes a good design?  
2. Do you usually make up your own designs, follow traditional patterns or use a combination?  
3. Where do traditional designs come from?  
4. Are there any designs particular to Hershey, the Pennsylvania German settlers, or all of Pennsylvania that you know of?  
5. What makes a good design?  
6. What are some quilt names and why are they called that?  
7. Do certain colors go well together on a quilt? What are the most common quilt colors?  
8. Do you always use a white background?  
9. Do you know any designs that have to do with a. humans and animals  
b. vegetables and flowers  
c. geometric designs  
d. religious symbols  
Please name and describe them.  
10. If you ever embroider on your quilts, do you use crewel, cross-stitch or another type? What kinds of designs are embroidered?  
11. When you sign a quilt do you put your initials, your full name, the date and the place?  

Quilt is attached by being sewn at "short ends" to cloth hooked to frame. Cotton strips are pinned to emergent edges to secure it further.
6. What kinds of frames are there? How are they made and what kind of wood is best?
7. If you use a frame, did someone make it for you? Who?
8. What kinds of material can be used as “filler”?
9. What sizes do quilts come in—are there standard measurements you could tell me?
10. What quilting stitches do you know? Which is your favorite?

IV

1. Did you go to quilting bees in private homes? If so, what were they like? What room were they held in? At day or night?
2. Is there a difference between the quilting bee and the quilting party?
3. Who went to quilting parties (or bees)? Did everyone quilt? Men too? Were they usually in the winter?
4. What games were played and what food was served?
5. Does anyone still have quilting parties at home that you know of?
6. How long have Spring Creek women had a quilting group?
7. Do the same women usually come each time?
8. Do you know of any other churches that have quilting groups?
9. Where did the idea of a church quilting group come from?
10. Do you know any stories or superstitions about quilts or quilting bees you could relate?
11. Do you know the verses to “Aunt Dinah’s Quilting Party”? Do you know any other songs associated with quilting or songs often sung at quilting parties?
12. Did you ever make a quilt to give as a present? Was it for a friend, a bride, a minister or someone else?
13. Do quilts tell stories? If so, how?

   Please add any further information you might have about quilts, the people who make them, and quilting events.

   For example, Stella Brubaker of Spring Creek Church told me in person that the traditional designs she knew, she learned from her mother, but in response to the more formal, written question, “Where do traditional designs come from?,” she answered, “Museums.” Guides for fieldwork which I consulted included Roberts and O’Suilleabain.4

   **The Brethren Church in South-Eastern Pennsylvania**

   The “Brethren” movement began in the late summer of 1708 when three women and five men, including the man who was to become the leader of the American Brethren, Alexander Mack, were baptized in the Eder River near Schwarzenau in the province of Wittgenstein, Westphalia, in the western part of the Prussia-Rhine Valley.5 In 1719 a large group of the Brethren left Germany under religious persecution for Germantown, Pennsylvania, under the leadership of Peter Becker. On December 25, 1723 the first congregation of the Church of the Brethren in America was organized at Germantown.6

   The Church of the Brethren has been known by many names. They have been called the “Dunkards” because they believe in baptism by immersion under water, “Anabaptists” because, as members of a larger group of Protestant sects, they reject and deny infant baptism, “Wittgenstein or Schwarzenau Baptists” in reference to their origin, and “Germantown Baptists” in reference to their first place of organization in America.7 The Brethren hold to seven “articles of faith”:

   1. Believer’s baptism
   2. Church is composed of baptized regenerated Christians
   3. Believers are united in Christ in the Holy Communion
   4. There will be no “servitude of the flesh” (force in religion).
   5. Each congregation should administer its own government.
   6. There will be no bearing of arms (non-resistance)
   7. There will be no taking of an oath.8

   In 1728 there was a separation between the Ephrata Brethren, under Conrad Beissel, and Peter Becker’s Germantown group. The split was philosophical as well as physical, as the Beissel group preached celibacy and other reforms, separating men and women into different houses with marginal “family” members joining from the community at times of worship. Beissel had served Becker as an apprentice weaver and had

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been baptized by him, so the split was not without some bitterness."

The Germantown Brethren grew from their original congregations in Germantown and Indian Creek. In 1724 the male members organized their first evangelistic tour, to visit the German settlements in the Pennsylvania wilderness, and in 1754 George Balsbaugh and George Henry came from Germany and settled on a tract of land which they willed to the church, and which was later to become, in 1848, the stone church of the original Spring Creek congregation. In 1892 the first Palmyra Church was dedicated.30

The Quakers of Eastern Pennsylvania strengthened the Brethren non-resistance doctrine and suggested to them a uniformity of dress.31 Originally a Pictist sect, the Brethren have remained conservative throughout their history, although not so much so as some of their Anabaptist neighbors, the Amish and Mennonites. Originally the men and boys, women and girls sat on different sides of the plain meeting house on low, backless wooden benches, and until the middle 1960's in the Indian Creek, Spring Creek and Palmyra Churches, the elder members sat on sex-determined sides of the church with the entire congregation sitting by mixed families of progressively younger age as one approached the rear of the church. Donald Durnbaugh has noted:

They sought to follow the special instructions of Paul in I Corinthians 6: 3-15, that while prophesying or praying, women should have their heads covered, and men should appear with uncovered heads. In some churches all of the women of a particular congregation will wear for worship the traditional white lace caps or veils . . . The observance has often pointed to an interpretation of the proper or Christian vocational roles for men and women.32

Today mostly the older women who have grown up in the Brethren Church are the only ones who wear the white prayer caps in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Of the 203 women in the Indian Creek congregation, only 28 wear prayer caps, and most of these women are over 60 years old. Echoing Durnbaugh's comment on "vocational roles," Pastor J. Herbert Miller of Spring Creek Brethren Church has said "First, women's role in the Church of the Brethren has been traditionally that of a homemaker and mother, playing a secondary role in the life of the church."

Separation of the sexes, while not completely Beissel-like, has always been a minor tenet of the Pennsylvania Brethren churches. In some areas the first church buildings were called Love-Feast Houses with kitchens for the purpose of preparing the agapé meal, and upper

lofts designed for sleeping guests, a wall dividing the women's quarters from those of the men. Such separation encourages strong sex-role identity, and in the 1950's mother-daughter and father-son associations were extremely popular.

Other church rules included prohibition of musical instruments in the church, dancing and card-playing. I made the mistake of asking Annie Burcher, 89, of the Indian Creek congregation if she remembered any quilting bees with dancing in her youth. "Oh my," she said, "We don't believe in that, dancing. But," she added, "you know, we did know how to have fun." The Brethren believe that marriage is a divine ordinance and cannot be dissolved by courts of law. Hence divorce is forbidden, and divorced persons are not admitted to membership in the church until the death of the divorced husband or wife."

The Brethren Church, like many others, was strongly effected by the evangelical movements of the latter part of the 19th Century. The initial missionary expedition of 1724 blossomed forth into a full-fledged world missionary program. The Spring Creek church lists first among its goals "to preach and teach the Word," and the Church World Service established headquarters in 1948 at New Windsor, Maryland, to train missionaries and send them all over Europe, Africa, Asia and South America. Young people, especially young men, in the church now serve approximately two years each in the Church World Service. Their travels around the world and exposure to different cultures have been a catalyst inducing change within the church itself.

Within the past twenty years the Brethren Churches have undergone a great deal of internal change. The abandoning of the prayer cap, and installation of organs and other musical instruments into the church were of strong impact. In addition, the war in Vietnam made conscientious objection an identification with a larger part of "the world." A recent issue of the Messenger, the denominational magazine, had an article on the similarities between "Dunker" and modern non-conformist dress among young people.

**Quilting and the Church**

With the growth of evangelism, women found a new role in the church. Pastor J. Herbert Miller of the Spring Creek Congregation at Hershey has said:

The association between quilting and missionary work came out of the interest of our denomination in world missions in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Many of these missionaries who went out were women and the women of the church identified strongly with them. One way in which they raised funds was through their quilting work. Thus quilting and missionary thrusts became related.33

Brumbaugh, p. 195.
2Carper, p. 1.
3Ronk, p. 13.
4Durnbaugh, p. 61.

35Brumbaugh, p. 558.
Pastor Miller believes that quilting grew up as a church activity because of its original popularity in the home and as an outgrowth of the relationship between home and church predominant in the church's early history. Some of the Brethren homes were built with moveable walls on the first floor so that they could either be pushed up to the ceiling or pushed back and the whole first floor could be used for worship. Following the service, worshippers would hold a meal together in the private homes.

The phrase “at the home of John C. Zug” is typical, for women had no place of their own in the church to hold their society meetings. The Palmyra group met on the second floor of the A. B. Carper Box factory; the original Spring Creek group, which began in the 1920's, met in private homes; and the Indian Creek Ladies’ Aid Society met on the second floor of a Harleyville clothing factory for a time. Amy Hartley of Indian Creek remembers it this way: “I’m seventy-five now, and I was a little girl then. In the room above the clothing factory there was a pot-bellied stove. The ladies paid my husband, who was a little boy, and gave him two quilts. One of them was a Rising Sun quilt.” Annie Bucher remembers the original church reaction, “a lot of people said we shouldn’t quilt in the church.”

Adis Arbogast, a member of the Spring Creek Brethren, remembers quilting bees in the churches of her home town, Junior, West Virginia. But the Pennsylvania Brethren did not allow quilting in the church until the Ladies’ Aid Societies had been in existence for quite some time. By then they had more than proved themselves. In its first year the Palmyra group “quilted six quilts for others, made and sold 10 quilts, 21 sun bonnets, 24 pieces of underwear and 91 aprons.” The price of quilting a quilt was $1.25 each, and their income the first year was $187.66.

The Indian Creek Sisters’ Aid Society each year made a free comforter for Sallie Styer for the use of her “rooms, heat and electric.” Some excerpts from the minutes of the society during the 1930’s show the scope of its activities:

January 8, 1938—“sewed on two Rising Sun quilts.”
September 10, 1938—“sewed on Evangelists’s wife quilt and the Rising Sun quilt.”
July 15, 1939—“We quilted on one quilt for blind Mary Alderfer. Some of the sisters finished one quilt through the week. Harvey Zeigler offered his bus service to some of us to see Sarah Shisler off on the ship to Africa, September 8. Fare 2.75 dollars each.”
November 25, 1939—“sewed on a pointsetta quilt.”
January 6, 1939—“Worked on the border of a very fine quilt for a lady from Trooper. Read a letter from Sarah Shisler from Lisbon, Portugal on her way to Africa. Also read a card from Martha Martin asking us to state how many read the whole New Testament in the last year.”
December entries tell of donations of “a ton of coal,” “five dollars worth of groceries,” bed linens, clothing and shoes for needy Harleyville residents. In March of 1943 they made “154 garments for Greece, 12 serge dresses for Greece, and 20 dresses for the Philippines’ missions. Palmyra women today fill orders from Brethren Service workers for food, clothing, soap and comforters. In the past 18 years they have donated 10 quilts to evangelist’s wives, quilted 314 quilts and demonstrated quilting at the Hershey “Pennsylvania Dutch Days” festival each August. Helena Kruger, who migrated to Hershey from Russia in 1924 with her Mennonite husband, remembers the supplies sent to them upon their arrival by the Spring Creek women:

People were very kind to us . . . so many things were brought that we couldn’t use. There were seventy-five sunbonnets. I am used to looking around; in a sunbonnet you have to look straight
ahead. So I couldn’t use seventy-five sunbonnets, but I still have one, and I am going to keep it.” She later joined the Spring Creek congregation and has been a missionary in Northern Europe and Greece, and worker in the Church World Service at New Windsor for the past thirty years.

Last year the Spring Creek women knotted over two hundred comforters for relief as part of the Church World Service. In the past three years the ladies’ quilting group at Palmyra has made donations of $2,500 each year to foreign missions and church programs. Some of the Indian Creek quilts, especially the intricately quilted “Autumn Leaf” quilts which have become a sort of specialty to the group, have brought as much as $250 apiece. However, the price paid for a quilt is never comparable to the worth of the many hours put into it by so many women. The women modestly say that the Mennonite and Amish, “particularly in Snyder and Juniata counties, are much better quilters. They sell their quilts and run their schools on the money, you know.” They add that “you can’t get such nice material any more as you used to.” Several of the Indian Creek women work for the Peter Becker Home, a Brethren institution for the elderly in the area. Three of them are cooks there, and a portion of the Aid Society money goes to the home every year.

In 1916 a brick church was built at Palmyra, and a part of a large kitchen “where the present lavatories are now” was used by the Aid Society. In 1936 a new addition was built and the women were given the larger room that they use today. The Indian Creek women were given “a room of their own” in 1953, and the Spring Creek Aid society moved from their “little place boarded up in the basement” to a larger, windowed room at about the same time.

Thus by a combination of piety and frugality has quilting in the Rummel of Brethren women famous in "quilting your religion in everything you do." As the Days Festival held every August at Hershey, Pennsylvania.

All three groups contend that there are certain "norms" (my term) for quilting-making. Measurement uniformity appears in the rule of "11 stitches per inch, and never less than 8." There is also a

Quilting as Religious Expression
Pietism has been described as "the process of putting mysticism into action in everyday life," and the quilts of the Brethren women are believed to be done "under the eyes of God." Pastor Miller of Spring Creek has said, "The Brethren Church holds the idea that whatever you do, you should do well. You display your religion in everything you do." Pastor Donald Rummel of Palmyra Church wrote in personal correspondence, October 24, 1973:

I would concur with Pastor Miller of the Spring Creek Church that "everything that is done is done in the eyes of God" (Col. 3:17). I would elaborate, however, and point up the fact that in early years the church was the center of social life for its members. This is true also for the Amish and Mennonite. The Church of the Brethren had always emphasized fellowship. In a male-oriented culture both secular and religious, and with younger women being almost wholly devoted to the needs of the home, it seems to me that quilting groups became an acceptable and creative activity for older women. Whether we like to admit it or not, the Pennsylvania Dutch with their hard-working frugal attitudes, could justify this type of recreation and crafts because of the financial contributions which could be made from sales. Thus by a combination of piety and frugality has quilting come to be accepted in the Brethren churches.

The skill and ability to "do it right" has made the Brethren women famous in "quilting circles." As early as the 1940's the Indian Creek women were quilting for clients as far away as Texas and North Carolina, and the women of Palmyra and Spring Creek have become well-known through the quilting exhibitions they put on during the popular Pennsylvania Dutch Days festival held every August at Hershey, Pennsylvania.

All three groups contend that there are certain "norms" (my term) for quilting-making. Measurement uniformity appears in the rule of "11 stitches per inch, and never less than 8." There is also a

standardization of sizes, which the Spring Creek women say emphatically are "the right sizes": 40x60 inches for a crib quilt, 72 inches in width and 108 in length for a single bed quilt ("Years ago they made them 72 inches in width and 72 inches in length," says Stella Brubaker, "but then your feet got cold."). Modern mattress sizes have influenced the craft, as the women say that "Double beds need a 90 by 108 inch quilt, queen-size take a 96 by 108 inch one, and king-size beds take a quilt 108 inches square." Other standards exist for individual quilts. For instance, Annie Bucher says that "Autumn Leaf" quilts must have 384 leaves. She should know, since she has made one of them a year for the past thirty years.

In an interview with Helen Fruehwirth, leader of the quilting group at Spring Creek Church, she outlined the following steps in "the right way of making a quilt, not the way that craft woman over at the park does it." The women at Spring Creek also say, "The books are altogether wrong. They tell you to baste, and that's all wrong. They say you take a backstitch, and that's all wrong." Mrs. Fruehwirth says to follow the method outlined here, and "remember what you start with is what you end up with":

1. Figure out the size of your quilt and how much material you'll need. (Most of the women buy their materials, muslin, gingham and calico cotton, at local fabric stores. Scraps are only used for relief comforters in most cases.)

2. Make a pattern out of cardboard and draw a design onto the material with light chalk or pencil. Each patch should be cut out separately.
3. When you make patches, always hold the pencil the same way—away from the patch. Use the same seam margins the whole way through.

4. Join the patches together. Some quilts use patchwork and appliqué. Some parts of the sewing can be done by machine, but in the older days people only used their hands. You must always backstitch when you stop.

5. When the top is joined together, you put on the border. You can make it any size, but you never put on a bigger border that what your patches are. Good quilts have mitred edges at the borders, but that uses more material. You usually make a border out of a background fabric. Now the top is done.

6. Then you sew your backing on the frame. It should be made of the same material as the background. On a patchwork quilt you give three inches to the backing because the patches stretch.

7. Now you get a filler. We use glacéed dacron batting,
“Mountain Mist.” People used to use glacèd batting before, and some people used flannel sheets or blanket sheets.

8. Now you put on the top and you quilt it. You take a few stitches at a time. It's better to start it slow. Until you learn to control the needle, you'd better take your time, and you should use a quilting design that fits your quilt. For the quilting on the border you should use feathers, chains or diamonds.

9. When you're finished quilting you bind it or turn the back in and whip stitch. We make our own bias binding out of the same material sometimes.

When you make a quilt, let your imagination run away with you.

Most of the women who quilt come from rural agricultural backgrounds which are similar to some degree, and therefore their quilting experiences also coincide. Of the approximately twenty women I talked to, all had had mothers who quilted, and could remember especially “Log Cabin,” “Turkey Tracks,” “Flying Geese” and “Round the World” quilts. These quilts the women call “old-fashioned” for they are worked in patchwork rather than appliqué, using salvageable scraps, and made for utility as much as beauty. Many women remember a “good” appliqué or all-white quilt which was used when guests came to visit. Although several women had been taught to quilt by their mothers or grandmothers (all of whom seemed to know how to quilt), many women did not learn until they were in their forties or fifties and joined the Ladies Aid Society.

Of those who did know how to quilt, most had made simple “nine-patch quilts” when they were little girls, and had perhaps finished one or two quilts by themselves as marriage gifts for their children. Fannie Grove of Hershey remembers:

I had one quilt that I pieced when I was ten years old. I would go into my mother, I remember. She was in bed, and I would ask her what to do. When I had it pieced she had it sent out to the church to be quilted, someone there did it.

The Spring Creek women knew some local names for quilts such as “Perkiomen Valley,” “Point Trevor-ton,” “Liverpool,” “Beaver Springs,” and “Beavertown” quilts, but Annie Bucher of Indian Creek says, “The names don’t really mean anything, they’re just names, what we call them.” Most names come from animals, vegetables and flowers, geometric designs and religious symbols, such as:

Northumberland Star
Grandmother's Flower Garden
Rosy Wreath
Sunbonnet Babies and Overall Boys
Butterfly Quilt
State Flower Quilts
Double Irish Chain
Wild Goose Chase
Vine of Friendship
Fool's Puzzle
Polka Dot
Diagonal Stripes.”


Beulah Moyer knots a patchwork comforter. In knotting, one piece of thread is tied through each patch and knotted to secure it.
There seems to be a standard sex-role determination of the work of quilting. Women do the needlework and men make the equipment—the frame. In the introduction to *The Standard Book of Quilt Making and Collecting*, Marguerite Ickis writes:

The quilting craft, which is so deeply rooted in the home, offers a binder to hold its conflicting interests together. Father and the boys will find pleasure in making the quilting frame, and its supporting stands, and in keeping them in top-notch condition. The girls can easily join in making the quilt blocks and will enjoy stories about the pieces and patterns.\(^3\)

The women of Spring Creek Church can clearly tell how a frame is made, although they have never made them themselves. Helen Fruewirth said, "You have to use a frame suited to your quilts. You don't have to use a frame like this. You can get some sticks and a carpenter's trestle. You drill holes in the trestle and in the sticks, and then you use twenty penny spikes to hold it. Any husband can do that." The other women echoed, "Now you get a husband to do that." Adis Arbogast rememberd quilting frames from West Virginia that used C-clamps and ropes and could be pulled up and put onto the ceiling when not in use. "I tell you, a lot of those colored people who originated in the South do that," she added.

Esther Kauffman of Spring Creek remembered a story about a man who used to quilt and said, "I had a picture of him," but that was all she could recall. Fortunately, Annie Bucher of Harleysville could fill in some details: "His name was Reverend Sellerich and he came from Newport News. He and his wife came and quilted with us a few times. We said, 'Just look at Amos quilting.' Out West I heard of a Lutheran preacher who quilted. That's the only ones I ever heard of."

**The Socio-Artistics of Quilting**

Quilting seems to be unique as a form of artistic expression because it is adapted to the expressive needs of both individuals and groups in most cases. The values held in evaluating the craft are quantitative and qualitative, but not necessarily creative—in other words, designs are freely copied and handed down, and a rigid method pre-determines the execution of the art. A quilt is admired for tiny, even stitches in close proximity, the more quilting that appears, the more valuable the quilt, and those designs which are most "old-fashioned," most familiar, are preferred. A quilting design must be affirmed as an antique as well as a work of art. In all of the Indian Creek Ladies Aid Society minutes, encompassing several hundred quilts, only a handful of designs are mentioned.

The most original feature of quilting design appears in its striking visual use of color. Adis Arbogast of Hershey says, "It is a rule of thumb to select colors that enhance and harmonize," and Esther Musselman of Harleysville has re-arranged, taken off, and re-sewn many of the 384 leaves on her "autumn leaf" quilt, "the colors and patterns look just right." It is interesting that the "plainer" the Anabaptist group, the gayer and more finely designed are the quilts. While Brethren women use pastel calicos juxtaposed against darker colors most frequently when doing patchwork, the Amish and Mennonite groups are known for their bright appliqué and patched designs in boldly colored patterns such as Rising Sun, Tree of Life and Flower Garden, with extremely intricate quilting stitch designs. In a culture where life is dressed in somber grays, blacks and deep purples, the quilts provide an interesting contrast as an outlet for color expression.

Quilts serve more of a sociological function today in the Brethren churches than a creative one. I would suggest that this sociological function works on three different levels: externally, the relation of the group to the outside church and community; internally, the relationship and dependency of the group members to each other; and individually, the psychological aspects of the craft and meanings it holds for each woman who practices it.

The first function, the external, serves as a means of expressing tradition from the group to the outside, both the church and the "world." The Brethren Churches in this study have undergone some radical internal changes in the past few years, as briefly noted above. Pastor Miller describes his Spring Creek congregation:

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\(^{3}\)Ickis, p. viii.
Our membership has many three generation families in its makeup. However, many of our young people move away from our community. Some leave our church and join the church of a husband or wife, while others bring their husbands or wives into our fellowship. Our present membership represents a cross-section of many denominations as well as those who have grown up in our church.

We believe that the teachings of Jesus are to be applied to the very practical aspects of all of life. I would need confess that within our church as in many churches there has been some erosion of this basic stance.

This high degree of mobility and infusion of new religious backgrounds has brought the rejection of the prayer cap by most younger women and other changes. "Younger women have been invited to join and learn the quilting art, but it is usually the older women who choose to participate," says Palmyra's Pastor, Donald Rummel. In a sense, quilting in the church is a way of validating tradition, of showing the worth of an old way of doing something. For the older Brethren women it is a way of keeping ties with the way the church used to be, and exerting an economic voice in the way the church is now. Floyd E. Mallot wrote:

The Dunker elder bought an automobile and stepped on the gas; out of the window went his broad-brim, followed by his wife's bonnet, followed by his whiskers.39

For years the women of the Brethren Churches had no political role in the church structure. The Indian Creek women told me that the women "elders" in their church were Annie Bucher and Amy Hartley, meaning that they were over the age of seventy. When I asked about women deacons, they said that only men were deacons in their church. Although Pastors Miller and Rummel report instances of women becoming more involved in church government, these women are for the most part younger. Thus the quilting groups use their meetings not only as artistic expression, but simply as expression in the church and community.

The second sociological function, the internal, is certainly not peculiar to the Brethren church women. The quilting "bee" or group quilting party, has been known since colonial times as a means of fellowship and amusement: "The sociability of the quilting party offered blessed release from the monotony of seeing the same faces and performing the same chores everyday." A description of a quilting party in the 1830's from a play written in 1900 shows such sociability:

The interior of an old-fashioned kitchen. There is a great fireplace, with a fire burning. To the right are strings of onions, dried apples, hams, etc. hanging from the rafters. The kitchen is lighted by many tallow candles. A set of quilting frames are at the left. All the young people are in the center of the stage, singing under the direction of the schoolmaster and the eye of Grandmother Redthorne and Deacon Elliott. At the song's conclusion, the girls go to the quilting frames and set them in motion, and the young men bashfully stand by. The Brethren church women have restricted the quilting bee to an all-women affair, but this does not hamper what Annie Bucher has called "the fun" of talking and laughing and making something with friends. In Annie's memory, quilting has always been a kind of recreation, "When I got married I had so many quilts. We had no movies or anything like that, so we made quilts together. To tell you the truth, it was people's only pleasure."

Adis Arbogast remembers, "We had a little fair in our town (Junior, West Virginia) and we did quilting and sang that song, you know, 'Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party,' in the parade." Fannie Grove remembers that "the boys would take the girls home" and Helen Fruewirth added, "There was tricks in those days. We weren't angels. We sort of had to invent our own recreation." Stella Brubaker added, "When people were like that, self-sufficient, they were happier."

Many of the women who do quilting in the Brethren churches are in their 60's to 80's, and have no families left at home to care for. For many of them, raising families and doing work in the home is the only life they have ever known. Thus a home-oriented craft in a social setting provides fellowship and a cure for potential loneliness. "You have to have free time to be in a quilting group. When your family is all gone, it's nice to meet in fellowship with a group," said Fannie Grove of Spring Creek Church. Annie Bucher, of Harleysville, in her late eighties, who says, "Those people over in the Peter Becker Home are really old, you know," told me: "We sure have fun. We bring our lunch, and sometimes something special, especially if there is a birthday."

Quilting is a craft which requires a great deal of patience, for the work is divided into long, laborious stages with little variety in type of work done at a time. The women are remarkably cooperative, and if a member prefers one stage of the work to another, she is encouraged to center her activities around that stage. Twenty Palmyra women come regularly to the quilting bees, while ten is the average at Indian Creek and five to seven at Spring Creek.

Another cooperative aspect of quilting comes from the quilts themselves. Originally, every visit to another woman's home was also a time for "trading patches." Helen Fruewirth says, "People exchanged scraps. That

38Robacker, p. 2.
way there was a lot of variety in the designs." Several kinds of quilts are made of appliquéd blocks made by several women to be pieced together as a gift. Stella Brubaker remembers helping to make a "Turkey Track" quilt for a friend. The woman sent her friends a white square each, and asked them to put their names and a design on it. The Spring Creek women made a "Remembrance Quilt" for a woman whose son died in Vietnam—it was embroidered with symbols of his favorite possessions and different periods in his life. Stella Brubaker offered this description of a "Friendship Quilt" in her reply to a questionnaire:

Friendship quilts are made by different members of a family, each one making a block, putting on a date, and name in embroidery. Make blocks from scraps of material that were left from making dresses, blouses, shirts, etc. of children or grand-children.

It is interesting that she specifies the "Friendship Quilts" as being a family-centered type of quilt, while she herself helped to make a similar quilt for a friend, (see above) although she did not call it a "Friendship Quilt."

Benjamin Botkin recorded the New England practice of "Memory Quilts" where relatives and neighbors of a deceased woman would open up her scrap bag and stitch together bits of dress materials she had worn into a quilt for her surviving family.3 Earl Robacker writes of the popularity of what he calls "Friendship Quilts" in Pennsylvania, where each contributor would finish a block and sign it, or chain-stitch her name on an otherwise finished quilt. They were made on the occasion of an important anniversary, a birthday or other special day. He tells of one friendship quilt that served as a memorial to the recipient. In all-over design the needlework showed her house, the trees, the river, flower gardens, names of family and friends and representations of familiar objects.4

The third function of quilting is an individual, psychological one. While the first two functions strengthen the woman's role in church and society, and provide a sense of friendship and recreation, the third function increases her self-esteem as a craftsman and reinforces her view of her life and her world, for quilting is to a large extent a memory or nostalgia activity and was so even when it was not such an anachronism.

In early America little girls often learned to sew before they went to school at the age of six, and needlework is still held to be a woman's art in our society. In many parts of the country, including Pennsylvania, girls were expected to have made "a baker's dozen"—"twelve and one" quilts—by the time they were married. Twelve of these quilts were to be for everyday, and the other was for good.5 Marguerite Ickis records that the thirteenth quilt was called "The Bride's Quilt" and was the most elaborate of all. It was started at the time of a girl's engagement.6 Carl Carmer wrote in Stars Fell on Alabama:

Mattie Sue Knox's parents made each of their daughters make a hundred quilts before she could get married. There was quite a few waitin' round for Mattie Sue Knox to finish. The preacher was visitin' her Pap when she took the last stitch.7 And old colonial rhyme, adapted from Devon, England, goes as follows:

At your quilting, maids, don't dally, Quilt quick if you would marry. A maid who is quiltless at twenty-one Never shall greet her bridal sun. 

In Pennsylvania there was a custom of throwing a cat into the center of a quilt held by four unmarried girls to see which would be the first to marry.8 From Pennsylvania German Wills we learn that "often the first in a long and varied list of objects for the mother stood the feather bed with curtains and bedding," for the husband bequeathed the quilts and coverlets to the wife even though it is presumed that she made them.9

The quilts hold close association to women's acculturation in an earlier society, rites of courtship, marriage and family practices. For the women of the

5Marguerite Ickis, Questionnaire on Quilting, Pennsylvania Folklore, XVIII:4 (Summer 1969), inside front cover.
6Russell Gilbert, Pennsylvania German Wills, Pennsylvania German Folklore Society, XV (1950), 8.
7Ickis, p. 259.
8Ickis, p. 259.
9Don Yoder, Questionnaire on Quilting, Pennsylvania Folklife, XVIII:4 (Summer 1969), inside front cover.
Brethren Churches they are a way of re-creating an individual sense of home-ness and sharing it once again, not only once a week with their friends, but through “comforters” sent to people overseas.

Because of this association with the past, all quilts are “memory quilts” for the women who make them. Questions about quiltmaking in the past evoked a whole train of memories for the women I interviewed. An example is this bit of dialogue carried on by the Spring Creek women:

*Stella Brubaker*: They used to make quilts so much smaller then. I have one my mother made when I was sixteen.

*Adis Arbogast*: Yes, they only reached the sides of the bed.

*Esther Kaufman*: And under them we used a chaff bag.

*Adis Arbogast*: We called it a straw tick, that’s what we used.

*Stella Brubaker*: No, it’s a chaff tick and it was covered with a feather tick, a big bag with feathers in that we used sometimes instead of quilts.

*Fannie Grove*: When I went on my wedding trip the people put new straw in the tick, and my husband had to help me in. So I slept between the straw and the feathers.

*Adis Arbogast*: I’m a West Virginian. We called it straw. We had nice clean straw.

*Stella Brubaker*: We had it too. We didn’t use old straw. Did you think we got it out of the cow’s stable?

*Helen Fruewirth*: It was hard to get out. You’d have had to use a derrick.

*Fannie Grove*: I had never slept under a feather tick. We went to Virginia. We went on the train and I had a wonderful time.

*Helen Fruewirth*: The chaff bags were on the farm. I don’t know if people in town had them or not.

*Adis Arbogast*: Oh, people in town wouldn’t have straw.

It is interesting how Fannie Grove’s memories trailed off to pictures of her wedding trip during the conversation—typical of what happens when women quilt. My grandmother was unable to finish a quilt made of patches of her mother’s dresses because of the memories it evoked of the deceased woman, so she asked me to finish it.

A great grandmother wrote in a letter in the 1930’s of a quilt she had picced while her family was growing up:

> It took me more than twenty-five years, nearly twenty-five, I reckon, in the evenings after supper when children were all put to bed. My whole life is in that quilt. It scares me sometimes when I look at it. They are all in that quilt, my hopes and fears, my joys and sorrows, my loves and hates. I tremble sometimes when I remember what that quilt knows about me.”

“Ickis, p. 270.

**Projections**

Pastor Donald Rummel of Palmyra has said that “quilting is a dying art here as it is everywhere.” This would not seem to be the case, as the women of the three Brethren churches I studied each year seem to bring more women in their fifties into the fellowship, women who have perhaps never quilted, but whose families are no longer home, and who need the friendship of the quilting group. These women could have no better teachers than the patient and firm sisters of the Aid Society. It can be projected that as long as the church faces internal change and problems, the women will exert a steady, conservative force in a traditional direction. Annie Bucher invited me back every Wednesday to quilt, “and you come to church here some Sunday, too. You’re a Brethren, I’ll bet.” When I told her I wasn’t she encouraged me to come anyway.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Don Yoder, “Questionnaire on Quilting,” *Pennsylvania Folklore*, XVIII:4 (Summer 1969), inside front cover.
Women of Spring Creek Brethren Church work on pink, white and blue "Irish Double Chain" quilt. Clockwise from left corner: Helen Fruewirth, Adis Arbogast, Stella Brubaker, Fannie Grove and Esther Kauffman. Mrs. Brubaker, Mrs. Grove and Mrs. Kauffman have belonged to Spring Creek their entire lives and wear prayer caps.

Close-up shows that the appliqué and patched design is done in plain squares, with intricate circular quilting design.
Nicknaming in an Amish-Mennonite Community

By ELEANOR YODER

[This paper focuses on the use of nicknames in a segment of the Pennsylvania culture, the Amish and Mennonite groups, and includes material from replies to questionnaires sent to the families in the Southern Somerset County (Pennsylvania) and Garrett County (Maryland) communities.]

I. INTRODUCTION

"Biographies crowded into a word," a name "given with the nick of the head," and applied by "observers of persons in addition to their proper names." These are the comments of H. A. Long in discussion of the universal phenomenon of nicknames.1

Historically, nicknaming reaches into primitive society where it was used to conceal the real identity of the person and as protection from the enemy.2

In modern society, George Shankle believes, Americans use nicknames more than any other people. No name, he states, is too sacred or base "to shorten, lengthen or modify into affectionate, humorous or abusive sobriquet."3

More specifically, the rampant use of nicknames in Amish society has been noted. Maurice Mook says "nicknaming runs rife" and seems to exceed that of any other group of which we have adequate information.4

Tourists travelling through the "Dutch Country" are often amazed at the repetition of names on rural mailboxes; both family names and personal names. This may be confusing in very practical terms. Consider the possible difficulties of the rural Pennsylvania mailman who serves 437 families with the surname Stoltzfus. He has aptly been described as "holding one of the most frustrating jobs in the United States postal system."5

II. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO NICKNAMES

In understanding some of the basic social elements of Amish Society one can also understand some of the obvious reasons for the practice of using nicknames. Firstly, the system of endogamy of the group limits the number of family names, and secondly, the widespread use of biblical names given at birth. Traditionally the lack of evangelism is also noted as a deterrent of variation in family names.

Walter Kollmorgen, a sociologist who did an extended study of Pennsylvania Amish said in 1942 that most Amish had one of about a dozen family names.6

In addition to the above stated reasons for the preponderance of nicknames, one can theorize still further their existence in the Amish Society. In a folk-culture individuals tend to be de-emphasized in favor of the group. Constant pressures are brought to bear for conformity. In the Amish society as in other folk societies there are norms to be maintained within the group and social pressure usually prevents a person within the group from straying too far from them. Perhaps then an argument can be made for the use of nicknames, not as simple discrimination between two persons with a similar name, but as serving to distinguish the individual in a broader sense. Might it be a method for setting someone (or oneself) "apart from the crowd" or community?

Not to be discounted is a possible link between nicknaming and revenge. Again, when one fully understands the social and religious values which govern the daily life and relationships in the community, another possible reason for nicknaming surfaces. From the birth of an Amish child he is constantly reminded to "love them neighbor as thyself," "return good for evil," and to suffer injustice rather than offend another person. Psychologically the individual becomes attuned to venting hostility on a "low keyed" basis; any open and direct hostile behavior brings with it severe feelings of guilt and disapproval from the community.

A writer from the Somerset County Community noted this function of nicknaming: "The Pennsylvania Dutchman is at his best when dealing out titles with a stigma or touch of mockery attached. He is likely

3George E. Shankle, American Nicknames (New York, 1937), preface.
4Maurice Mook, "Nicknames Among the Amish," Pennsylvania Folklore, XVII:4 (Summer 1968), 111-112.
to be long-suffering when injured, and not retaliate. But in a subtle way, he sometimes gets his revenge.” She goes on to describe various incidents which took place between two or more persons, in which there were apparently hostile feelings, with the result that nicknames were given in terms descriptive of the incidents.\footnote{Rhoda Bender, “The Dutch Had a Name for Him,” The Casselman Chronicle, I:4 (December 1961), 11.} Certainly not all the names denoting personal attitudes are to be viewed as negative aggression. The counterpoint to this is their use to convey feelings of solicitude and affection. Public display of affection and use of endearing terms, frequently heard in the larger American Society, are noticeably absent among these people. Nicknames seem to function as the equivalent to such expression.

Finally, a function of folklore that has been noted by various folklorists in relation to other aspects of folklore applies to the use of nicknames. It provides an indirect method for the expression of attitudes and behavior.

### III. Types of Nicknames

One of the most frequent means of distinguishing between persons with the same name is by a middle initial. Depending on the locality, a child is given in addition to his personal name, either the first letter of his father’s name or the first letter of his mother’s maiden name.

Other nicknames may derive from a shortening of a name as Hen for Henry, or Dan for Daniel. Often then, the wife is referred to by her husband’s nickname, i.e., “Dan Mary.” This practice is not limited to shortened names. There are also reported cases where the husband is identified by his wife’s name.

Descriptive nicknames show a wide variation in many Amish communities. These may refer for example to physical characteristics such as Long Dan or Fat Sam, or may refer to the kind of occupation of the individual or the location of his home. The location of many Amish homes and farms on unmarked rural roads may be another factor in this group.

Other names derive from a humorous happening or may be a name given by a young child unable to pronounce a name or a certain word properly. As alluded to previously, nicknames are given for “unacceptable social habits, or strange ways of behavior.” Troyer notes that this type of nickname is seldom used in direct conversation with the person.\footnote{Lester O. Troyer, “Amish Nicknames from Holmes County, Ohio,” Pennsylvania Folklife, XVII:4 (Summer 1968), 24.}

### IV. The Somerset-Garrett County Community – A Source

My interest in Amish nicknames was aroused by reading of the wide variety in several Amish commu-
nities and also by recollections of the high incidences in the Somerset-Garrett County community while growing up as a child. Living in the community I attended a two-room country school which only Amish and Mennonite children attended and it seemed that almost every one of the 45-60 students did have a nickname at one time or another. Some were very temporary, but many of the nicknames given have followed the persons into adult life. It should be noted too that there were times in the school when nicknaming was theoretically taboo on school property but somehow the practice persisted.

V. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Being aware that over the years there were negative reactions to the use of nicknames I nevertheless decided to examine the present attitude toward this practice as well as to compile a list of nicknames which have been used in the past and/or are still being used. The questionnaire was written in a one-page letter form. The first part of the letter was constructed to introduce myself and to give a brief description of the variation of nicknames, thus hoping to indicate the kind of material being sought. The latter part of the letter was in the form of questions (see sample in appendix) and was in part taken from the Folk Cultural Questionnaire or Nicknames by Dr. Don Yoder which appeared in Pennsylvania Folklife.9

The questions were as follows:

1. List the nicknames you remember from your childhood; include the explanation that went with the nickname.
2. Did women as well as men have nicknames? Did married women ever go by their husband's nicknames?
3. Do you recall any interesting shortening of names?
4. Do you recall any rhymes, stories, or local songs or poetry involving nicknames?
5. Do you have any nicknames; your children?

The questionnaire was sent to 210 families in the Somerset-Garrett County communities. This Amish-Mennonite settlement is historically a relatively old Pennsylvania Dutch settlement. Its origin dates to the pre-revolutionary era and it has remained a rather isolated and conservative community.

The Somerset-Garrett County group comprises churches of four different plain sects: Old Order Amish, Beachy Amish, Conservative Mennonite and Old Mennonite. Most of the 210 questionnaires were sent to members of the first three groups. Ninety-two were sent to Old Order Amish, sixty-five to Conservative Mennonites, and forty were sent to Beachy Amish members. Fourteen were sent to current members of the Old Mennonite group but who had previously been affiliated with one of the other three. These families had earlier cooperated with researchers from the Johns Hopkins University Genetics Department.

From the 210 questionnaires mailed out there were forty-nine replies received. The distribution from the various groups was fairly constant.

There were 27 different family names represented with Yoder comprising about 32% of the total. Other frequently appearing names were: Beachy, Bender, Kinsinger, Miller, Brenneman, Tice, Beitzel and Schrock. For more specific breakdown of family names and distribution of church groups see appendix.

A self-addressed envelope was included with the letter for reply. A majority of the replies were received within four weeks after being sent out. The length of the replies varied from yes and no answers on the questionnaire to five-page letters. The material varied from brief reference to the requested information, with a great deal of general community and family news, to the carefully organized list of nicknames and explanations accompanying them.

VI. MATERIAL FROM THE REPLIES

Nicknames - Although the compiled list of nicknames (see appendix) includes over 400 names, for only about half of these was any explanation given. There are several additional names not used in face to face conversation, and because of their delicate nature these names have been omitted from the published list.

There are the usual shortening of names as Dan for Daniel, Hen for Henry and Sam for Samuel. Approximately 25% of these can be classified as shortening of the personal name.

The Amish practice of using a middle initial in conjunction with the first name appears in the list; however, its significance must be recognized for its infrequent appearance. The common usage of this form of nickname in conversation is not well represented. This practice and the shortening of names is so familiar that apparently it is not recognized by the users as a form of nicknaming. In one very brief reply, the informer commented that "It has very few nicknames in our small settlement" and was signed by a shortened form of the informant's name.

The identification of the wife by her husband's personal or nickname seemed somewhat more representative. There were repeated references to Alie Ket (Eli, - Katherine or Kate) and Dewy Fannie (Mrs. Dewy [Noah] Beachy). Included in this list were also Gink Annie, Ben (Eli) Edna, Red Don Kate and Sam Barb. A variation of this was a name given to a wife to rhyme with her husband's nickname thus: Alice Ipes was the wife of Sammy Blitz. Again the common use of the husband's name is much more frequent than the replies indicate.

But not always is the husband's name used to identify his wife, on occasion the reverse is true. Oma Milt is distinguished from another Milton Yoder by his wife's name Oma.

Children too inherit their parent's nicknames – Yankee Allen and Yankee William were so named for their father Yankee Christ. Grappa Albert and Grappa Sam were the sons of Grappa who was a "crow shooter." Piney Shoemaker's children (he was a squirrel hunter) are identified by that name: Till Pine, Oil Piney and Horne Piney. In conversation this may be extended to the third generation. One hears reference to Joe's, John's Pete, that is, Pete is the son of John who was the son of Joe.

Perhaps the most colorful nicknames come from the category which reflect the individual's personality, occupation and location, or his involvement in some humorous incident.

Long (Tall) Suss Dick (thick) Dan, Curly John (also Fuzzy John) were well known members in the community. Fat, Skinny, Bowlegs, Flaxie, Chunk, Foxy (he had red hair), Humpy (poor posture), Paddle (big feet) Peegee and Stiffy (he ran stiff-legged) all speak of physical traits. Glee Eli (or Alie) was frequently mentioned in the replies. He was small in stature compared to another Eli Yoder, and spellings varied: "Little Eli" Glay or Glee Ale, Alie or Alie.

Hecka Sam lives "in the sticks" or "back in the mountain." His father was known as Wild Bill and Rowdy Bill because "he was wild" or "rowdy." River Mink was distinguished from another Mink Yoder by the location of his farm along a river. Both Minks had the personal name Menno. Similarly Conrads are known as Coon.

Axie Yoder was rather well known in the area for his ability to temper axes. Eema Choe (Bee Joe) was a bee-keeper and Posey Sam was renowned for his knowledge of flowers and general artistic inclination. Bella Hans was another legendary character. He was a wagoner and the proud owner—and driver of a superb team of horses which he decked out in bells.

Locker Henry and Locker Paul are sons of Locker Eli and own a slaughter-house, freezer-locker plant. Locker Mary is the wife of Locker Henry.

You can be sure of contacting Barney (Ervin Yoder) by checking the local telephone directory. There are three Ervin Yoders and one is listed as Barney. He was given the name in elementary school for his dog named Barney.

Slop and Slop Dora are the names used to refer to the late Daniel Swartzentuber and his wife Dora. The explanations for the origin of his nickname vary. He was a a cook for a gang of workers who moved houses. One said he earned the name because he was so sloppy. Another said it was because he dropped the dish rag into the soup, while a third version said the dish rag was found in the soup.

Another prominent source of nicknames is from mispronunciation of names or words, usually by children. Thus Christian J. Bender became Gix. Other examples are Hoofy for Ruth, Gib for Clifford, and a grandmother was known as Dus because a child's attempt at Grossmommie came out Dus.

Perhaps it should be noted here that in some cases a literal translation of the actual Dutch nickname was given. In other cases a phonetic spelling of the Pennsylvania Dutch term was reported. For an example of this see Abara Ale in the appendix.

As stated before, about half of the nicknames did not have an accompanying explanation and many of these sem totally unrelated to the personal name. One informant simply said that he always used nicknames without wondering why or how they originated.

Names given in mockery or even hostility do appear. Heilich Levi was named "because he was given to testifying in church."

Yankee was often given to a person suspected of shrewd business dealings. Dawna Hans was so dubbed because he shot at his neighbors' pigeons and was "an eternal reminder of his unneighborliness." Another incident refers to the dealings between neighbors: Crist sold John a horse which later was discovered to be blind in one eye. It was evened up when John sold Crist a cow "whose fourth milk spigot was on the blink"—Crist's disgruntled feelings were eased by naming his friend Dreditzich John (three-teated John), a derisive title that clung to him for years.10

GENERAL ATTITUDES

As is evident in the replies, there is a wide variation in attitude toward nicknames. Attempts have been made, as noted before, by the area schools to eliminate nicknaming, and some of the churches have discouraged their use. Apparently the Old Order Amish Church has mentioned it in their Ordnung or church rules.

An Old Order Amish informant in his reply went to great length to state his reason for not giving the desired information. He quoted biblical passages to explain, not only that nicknames should not be used, but why he should not act as "an instrument in furnishing names as these." Although he conceded that he would condone using identifying initials and names such as Long John or Short John, he indicated that he objected to the type of nicknames that "were sort of a reflection of those who used them as well as of those they were used for." Another said her parents had not approved of using nicknames and that they had considered it disrespectful. Still another said she was "never so much for nicknames" but believed that

10Bender, pp. 10-11.
family histories are very interesting and sometimes can be a help to our own lives, if we do it to the honor and glory to God."

Two letters carried a definite negative attitude toward the request for information. One wondered "what lasting value anyone will receive from this type of research" and another wanted "to know the purpose," and "what will be done with them."

For the most part, however, the general tenor was one "of not knowing many nicknames" or at least being unaware of the reasons for them. The following excerpt would seem to be a good example: "As far back as I can remember there were nicknames, and I think they will continue as it seems quite natural for people to give nicknames from generation to generation." The informant then went on to list the names he could remember but without giving the person's real name. Similarly, another gave only his own nickname (a shortened form of his personal name), but gave no others because "it might cause hard feelings," although as he said, "it would be interesting to do so."

On the other hand, there were those who readily accepted and used nicknames, perhaps in many cases without wondering the "whys and wherefores" of those names. One 80-year-old Amishman recognized the humorous side of nicknaming and added his own bit about his nickname: "Well, as far as I am concerned they can keep on cutting names short. Just as long as they don't cut the 'Y' from Yoder."

VII. Summary and Conclusion

The prevalence of nicknaming in Amish society has been noted by various researchers. The Somerset-Garrett County Community is no exception. From the 210 questionnaires sent out to families in the community forty-nine replied. From these and from personal knowledge of the community a list of more than 400 names was compiled.

They include the usual shortening of names; the Amish practice of using a middle initial in conjunction with the first name was noted. Identification of a wife or children by the husband's name or nickname is common. An individual's physical make-up, his personality and behavior provide for colorful nicknames. Occupation and location too are used in assignment of nicknames.

In a society where personal and family names frequently occur identically in the same freundschaft or community, nicknames flourish. But in addition one may theorize that a nickname serves to give a broader identification in a folk society where the development of the individual is secondary to that of the community. It is a medium for an outlet of humor, mockery and hostility, where these could probably not otherwise be openly displayed. It may also provide for expressing thoughts and feelings of affection where more overt behavior is not deemed appropriate. As Rhoda Bender put it:

"Yes, the Dutchman can always find a name for you. So if you live in Somerset County, you had better watch your step. If you stray, someone may label you with a nickname that will keep green, for several generations, the memory of your little fall from grace."

Bender, p. 11.

LIST OF FAMILY NAMES IN NUMERICAL RANK

| Yoder (69) | Mast (3) |
| Beachy (17) | Zook (3) |
| Bender (14) | Beiler (2) |
| Kinsinger (13) | Orendorf (2) |
| Maust (15) | Summy (2) |
| Miller (11) | Wengerd (2) |
| Brennenman (9) | Coblentz (1) |
| Beitzel (8) | Graber (1) |
| Tice (8) | Kauffman (1) |
| Schrock (7) | Nisley (1) |
| Petersheim (6) | Opel (1) |
| Swartzenzuber (6) | Scheffel (1) |
| Peachey (5) | Sommers (1) |

LIST OF PERSONAL NAMES IN FAMILY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEACHEY</th>
<th>BRENNEMAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin S.</td>
<td>Albert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Eli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David E.</td>
<td>Ernest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin E.</td>
<td>Floyd (Mrs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer D.</td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irvin M.</td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan N.</td>
<td>Milton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menno</td>
<td>Noah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah E.</td>
<td>Noah (Mrs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah M.</td>
<td>Olive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah S.</td>
<td>COBLENTZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman D.</td>
<td>Homer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman E.</td>
<td>GRABER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pete E.</td>
<td>Amos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon D.</td>
<td>HERSHEYBERGER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon D.</td>
<td>Atlee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEILER</td>
<td>Elmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Ervin N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonas</td>
<td>KAUFFMAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEITZEL</td>
<td>Alvin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleland</td>
<td>Amos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin</td>
<td>Andy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>KINSINGER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elvin</td>
<td>Abe A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorman</td>
<td>David A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>Daniel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>Eli D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilbur</td>
<td>Henry R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEENDER</td>
<td>Henry S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>Ida (Mrs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin M.</td>
<td>Jonas D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>Jonas H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elam</td>
<td>Noah D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enos</td>
<td>Ray S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roy S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>Samuel A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey S.</td>
<td>MAST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loren</td>
<td>Delvin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>Edwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman</td>
<td>Ernest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oren</td>
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</table>
### LIST OF NICKNAMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NICKNAME</th>
<th>PERSONAL NAME</th>
<th>REASON GIVEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abarra</td>
<td>Eli Miller</td>
<td>Grower of strawberies (Abarra, German Erdbeere)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>Wife of “Sammy Blatz”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>Mr. Eli</td>
<td>Identified by husband’s name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>Alvin Miller</td>
<td>Shortened name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arlene</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>“Attentive to flowers”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>Will Yoder</td>
<td>“For potato chips”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>“Used it as a by word”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>William Schrock</td>
<td>“Given by father as a child”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>Had blue eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>Raymond Schrock</td>
<td>Name given in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>Had bells on his team of horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Named for his dog Barney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Used to ride wild horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Take off from Buffalo Bill of the West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>“From Will to Bill and Buffalo Bill to Biff”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>He had “bow legs” tall and skinny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Was called Deb then changed to Belder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Liked to shell (“blick”) beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>In school he talked of Ben Green in “Treasure Island”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Wife of (Ben) Eli Kinsinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>From gang which moved houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Baby chick salesman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>To distinguish from neighbor also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Ernest Beachy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>To shorten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>To shorten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Signs thus to avoid writing it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>Biblical “Christ”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer</td>
<td>William Yoder</td>
<td>From school days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Carried a fertilized hard boiled egg for lunch. Name given by grandmother

To distinguish from the other Clarence Yoder

Salesman, "carried gossip"
Short and heavy set

She worked as a cook
Had curly (Furry) hair

From school days

Son of Christ Yoder
Had horse named Duke

Wife of Dewy

Wife of Dewy

Child of his "Dutch" accent
A short man

He walked by mirror saying, "Hi Fritz!

Because he is the opposite
Redhead hair, color of a fox

Flaxen haired girl in a dark haired family

Shot pigeons

Heavy set man

Had yellowish hair

Because he is the opposite

Redhead hair, color of a fox

Flaxen haired girl in a dark haired family

Fat Boy
He is fat

Often said "golly"
Wife of Gid

He wore heavy glasses
"Crow shooter"

"Glee" (small man)
From school days
Wife of "Gink"

Child's attempt to say Christ
Child's attempt at "Glee"
Child's attempt at Clifford

"Used to pass out candy"
From comment he made
"Because no matter what he is doing when someone passes his farm he steps working and looks (gooks)

Poor posture

His father would speak to him with "Hey Chon!"
(SON of Hey Chon?)

Wife of Henry
Testifying in church, and probably given more in mockery than in respect.
Lives next to a mountain "in the Hecks"

From name of boy in school
Child's attempt at Ruth
Shortening of name
From Matt and Jeff comic strip
"Simplification of name"
From a boy's name in school
From Spanish class
To shorten name
Drives fast horses
For his dog named Jack
For "Short"

From school days
There were three, this one came from Kansas
To shorten name
(see Boop)

"Tearing by a boy"
"To shorten it"
To shorten name
To shorten name
To shorten name
Owns locker plant
Son of Eli
Wife of Locker Henry
Son of Eli

"Because he was extra slow"
Named for his "rabbit dog"

Child's attempt at nickname Mink
Wife of Milton Herschberger

Had dirty shoes in school

Shortened form

He lives on the mountain

Mim was her request

Stephan of Daniel Helmuth

Was always reading a book about

Peter and Peggy

Peg had big feet

Child's pronunciation of Wilma

Wilma's name is Oma

Made axes "by hand"

In the book about

Was reading

Toes of a horse

Would say names in school

Peg

Masculine

Anna Yoder

She would pretend to sleep when
dishes were to be done

Peg was always reading a book about

Peter and Peggy

Peg had big feet

Peg had horse named Randy

Lived by a river

Randy's horse named Slow

Wanted to be named for a horse that was slow

Wrote a brown kerchief

Wore a brown kerchief

Stuffy

Sleep

Sam Barb

Shbeck

Smiley

Sneyer

Simon Liddy

Shock

Stook (also Stoky)

Snappy Brownie

Skeetis

Suckers

Twisty

Tedd Redwood

Tom

T-Bird

Tob

Ted

Toppy

Taddie (or Toddle)

Tootz

Tina

Tonna

Tonda

Til

Tain

Told

Tita

Tofzz

Tate

Tiny

Tom

Tim

Tootie

Ung Bill

Vint

Vert

Willy

Wontz

Wonne

Youich

Yoni Lit

Yoni

Yoni Bevy

Yankee Allen

Yankee Crisp

Yahn

Yone

Yuck

Yommm

Wife of Red Dan

Would say names in school

Roy S. Ray S.

Red hair and beard

To Shorten name

"Nearly always had a smile"

He smoked a pipe (also known as Dick Dan)

He could run (or fast)

From a humorous happening

Given as a child

Name given when he did cooking

Wife of Daniel Helmuth

Given in school

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Don Yoder, "Amish Folk-Cultural Questionnaire No. 3." *Pennsylvania Folklore*, XXI:3 (Spring 1967), 37.
1. Orchard Fruits

In Union and surrounding counties, which was my home district, most all types of fruit were grown, but mostly for family use and near local town marketing, which was rather limited. Apples were the main fruit crop. In those days, cider, vinegar and apple-butter were a must for every farm family. With the clearing of land for the family farm went erection of the home buildings, together with family garden, small apple orchard, and planting of fruit of all kinds near the buildings. Thus, each family had its vegetables, some field crops and fruit of some sort from the very beginning. Of course the tree fruits were delayed to the bearing age, which required several years. During this period all kinds of wild fruit were utilized. So there was a period, prior to the bearing apple orchard, which usually consisted of one to a few acres, when wild and scattered trees provided the fruit for the family larder. The very first orchards to appear were apple. But it often happened that seedling apple trees were scattered over the farm land. These were saved and tided the family along until the small orchards came into full bearing.

Years ago, when birds and all insect enemies were plentiful, fruit trees required very little protective attention. Even pruning was often left to nature. Yet the trees kept on bearing heavy crops and almost perfect fruit, year after year, for a great length of time. Some trees reached giant size, almost oak-like. For some of the old apple trees a two or three foot trunk diameter was not uncommon.

With the disappearance of the forests and protective birds and insect enemies, the noxious ones took over and protective measures became necessary. The tent caterpillar and apple borer were among the first of the pests to arrive on the scene. Circles of pine tar were spread around the tree trunks and base of large limbs to keep the caterpillars from crawling up. The web nests of the mature larvae were burned. This was done with a corn cob soaked in kerosene and fastened on the pointed end of a long pole and flame applied to the scattered nests among the branches. A pocket knife and a pliable piece of wire were used to cut out or punch out the larvae of the borer in the burrow under the bark. For scales, soft soap and lye washes were among the first remedies used. Later came lime-sulphur and bordeaux sprays, and still later the arsenate and oil sprays for SanJose and oystershell, and other scale and other insect pests.

To some extent the practice of hanging pieces of iron, old horse shoes, chains and the like on trees, as well as pounding iron nails into the trunks was indulged in, believing that it would cause the trees to bear heavier crops of better quality at an earlier age. My observation did not bear out this contention.

The almanac did play a part in the orchard work. Some old-timers insisted on picking winter apples in the "dark of the moon," believing that the apples would not bruise or rot as easily in winter storage. Pruning was done in the "new moon" so as to induce quick healing over the pruning cuts and accelerate new growth. Here, too, there seems to be no proof that
the moon in any way exerts any influence on this particular work. The proper variety of apples, proper care in picking and handling and storage are the real requirements for good keeping. The same with pruning: proper pruning under favorable growth conditions gives best results. Another belief was that thick coatings of ice insured a heavy crop of apples the following year. This might possibly have some influence on the insects and protection of leaf and flower buds. I never made close observation of these facts.

2. THE DOMESTIC APPLE

The favorite varieties of apples grown in our immediate neighborhood were: Early Harvest, Yellow Transparent, Red Astrachan, Duchess of Oldenburg, Esopus (Spitzenberg), Cathead (one of the oldest semi-sweet varieties), Sweet Bough, and Sheepnose (seedling, striped red and yellow oats harvest, sweet apple).

Summer Apple Varieties:

The most popular summer and early fall apples were: September Rambo, Maiden’s Blush, Wealthy, Early Smokehouse, and McIntosh.

Winter Varieties:


Of the early tart varieties, Yellow Transparent, Red Astrachan and Duchess were perhaps the most popular. Yellow Bough was easily first choice of the sweet apples. For fresh or out-of-hand eating, and sauce and pie, Yellow Transparent and Red Astrachan were hard to beat; for general culinary use and applebutter the Duchess was superior. Yellow Bough was the finest all-purpose sweet apple. September Rambo was unquestionably the number one summer apple. In the winter group for color and good keeping quality Ben Davis probably ranked first, but for flavor and all purpose Rambo and Smokehouse (the winter, not the September) seemed to have first choice.

Yes, very many of the older varieties are now on the rare list. For example, Early Harvest, Red Astrachan, the Pippin group, Russet, Baldwin, Wolf River, Pound Apple, Belleflower, York Imperial, Cathead, Sweet Sheepnose, Twenty Ounce, and London Lady are some of the unavailable.

3. OTHER ORCHARD TREES

Next to the apple, the peach (Prunus Persica) was probably the most important fruit tree. The early Pennsylvania peaches were from seedling stock and generally came true to the parent stock. The Red or Indian Peach was the one most common. This was a small to medium-size fruit with red or white and red skin and white red-tinged flesh of a delicious tartish flavor and free-stone, rarely cling. The trees were grown in dooryards, fence corners or fence rows and were fairly large and of spreading habit, trunks often attaining foot diameters. These seedlings were probably originated from the Wild Peach of North Carolina and Tennessee. A little later came the Chinese White and Yellow fleshed varieties and the beginning of peach orchards on a small scale. The trees were budded or grafted on native stocks. The first popular varieties were: Elberta (early and late, yellow freestone); Belle (white cling); Crawford (early and late freestone); and Champion (white-fleshed, freestone).

Cherry trees (Prunus Avium). The cherry is one of the most important of the stone fruits. Mazzard is the native stock of our sweet cherries—black, red and amber. Prunus Avium includes the sweet cherry varieties and Prunus Cerasus the sour cherries. Our first cherries were mainly seedling, either Mazzard, the native, or Mahaleb, the imported, from the Old World. But cherries do not come true to parent stock; to insure true type fruit, grafting is employed. In early times, for cherries, cleft or top grafting was the method used. The most common varieties for black cherries, in early times were: Early Purple Guigne, Chapman, Knight’s Early Black, Black Tartarian, Bing and Schmidt. The red and yellow are the so-called Spanish cherries. Royal Ann is the chief yellow variety; reds are of the Napoleon or Spanish and Rockfort groups. Governor Wood, light colored; Black Tartarian, black; and Lambert red are good representatives of the Ox Heart group. The Dukes—May Duke, May Cherry, Morello, etc.—are a cross of the sweet and sour cherry. The Sour Cherry, Amarellas group consists of the earliest, sourest, smallest variety—Early Richmond; and a larger, darker variety—Montmorency. On our farm we had most of those different groups and varieties.

Pear trees—Pyrus Communis, the Domestic pear. Many of our early Pennsylvania pears were of seedling origin and known under local names as Bottle Pear, Honey Pear, Butter Pear, Calabash Pear, Watermelon...
Pear, Choke Pear, Harvest Pear, Winter Pear, etc. The standard varieties of early times were LeConte, Garber, Bartlett, Seckel, and Keifer, Clapp's Favorite, and Winter Nilis. Of all these Bartlett, Clapp, and Keifer are probably the best known and most widely planted. Pears, like apples, are easily grafted or top-worked. Quince or even thorn stocks can be used for dwarving work of pears.

Early Pennsylvania Plums

Prunus Domestica is the European type of plum of Asian origin brought to the United States. Our early period plums belonged to this group. These are the regular old-time plums as: Green Gage, Lombard, Bradshaw, Yellow Egg, etc. Plums were often distinguished by color, as: "Red, Blue, Yellow and Green." Some were freestone, some cling. At our place, the yellow clings were called "Quetsch" by the Dutch folks. Large, sweet and firm-fleshed plums were called Prunes—Italian, German, York State, etc. The smaller and clustered plums were Damsons. The native wild plum (Prunus Americana) was plentiful and the fruit in great demand for jelly-making.

The Quince, Pyrus Cydonia or Cydonia oblonga is one of the most ancient fruits of history, dating back to Egyptian antiquity. It arrived in America with the early settlers and kept moving with them. There was very little variation in texture, size, taste or color, as a result the fruit was classed under the simple collective name: Quince. It was not a fresh fruit dessert, but in culinary practice used for Quince honey, jelly, marmalade, or preserves or for flavoring other fruit preparations. For these purposes it was very popular and practically every home had a few trees in yard, garden, or fence row.

Pears seemed to have more local names than any other fruit. Under pears, I have mentioned some of them.

Persimmon (Diospyros Virginiana) was not plentiful but occasional in our neighborhood. This was the wild species, native to our South and brought North. There is a Chinese-Japanese species with earlier and later fruits but this is rare in our district. The native persimmon was small and ripened late; the fruit became edible after heavy frosts and was mostly eaten in the raw fresh stage. Occasionally, it was sugared and dried like dates or made into marmalade or jam.

Wild Cherry (Prunus Serotina) was a common wild tree of the forest, field and roadside. It was a valuable lumber tree and the fruit was much used for wine, as spirituous liquor for medical purpose or favorite drink. The bark also possessed medicinal qualities.

The domestic Crabapple (Pyrus Baccata), of Siberian origin, was much planted and in favor with the early settlers. Hyslop was the common species grown. The tree was of long life, large and spreading and bore handsome red fruit of pleasing flavor. The fruit was mainly used for cider (Crabapple Wine), eating fresh, spiced, and dried for winter use and for jelly. Crabapple jelly was a specialty.

The wild species (Pyrus Coronaria), commonly called: Wild Crabapple or Wood Apple, and by the Dutch people: Hols Abbel. This was a small shrubby tree, with ornamental very fragrant flowers in May. The fruit grew in clusters; was small, greenish-yellow and of a very spicy aromatic scent. The small apples were too acrid to eat raw but were used for jelly and often put in barrels of vinegar to increase the acidity.

Apricot, Prunus Armeniaca, was a fruit quite frequently grown. There were some very good seedling varieties. Of the named varieties, "Moorbark" was the best and most popular. This was a large, sweet, reddish-yellow fruit. The Russian varieties were smaller and golden yellow but also very sweet. The apricot is a special dessert fruit, eaten fresh, canned, or preserved. It is a handsome ornamental tree, the first of all fruit to blossom. The fragrant pinkish-white blossoms add charming beauty to any home.

4. Grapes and Grape Arbors

The European Grape, Vitis Vinifera, the wine grape of the Rhine River Valley, was introduced to the New World but was never extensively grown. The Old World vineyards never came to perfection in the New World. Our domestic grape does not stem from the European stock but from our Native Wild Fox Grape. In the eastern United States the European grape was a failure due to the grape pests—phylloxera, mildew and grape rot. Some of the older varieties of domestic grapes selected from seedling stock or natural hybrids were: Grien Golden, Eaton, and Moore. A little later came the Concord (blue), Catawba and Delaware (red), and Niagara (white). The Concord of the native type was the most popular and widely grown. It was originated by Ephraim Bull of Concord, Massachusetts. For wine, jelly, jam and all culinary purposes it was the ideal grape. The Red and White varieties were the fancy ones for dessert or out-of-hand eating.

Wild grapes were very plentiful in early times and were extensively used for wine, jellies and preserves of various kinds. Those most frequently used were: Speck grape (a large blue musky-flavored species of the Fox grape); Pigeon grape, Vitis Aestivalis, was one of the best for jelly or wine. Vitis Vulpina, the common late frost grape, was the best for off-the-vine eating, and a favorite food of the Ruffed Grouse. The Pigeon grape was the preference of the one-time plentiful Passenger Wild Pigeon; this fact accounts for its local name—Pigeon Grape.

Grape vine trellises and arbors were common sights in early rural and urban homes. Trellises were usually built along garden paths or the walks leading to the house, kitchen or some spot in the dooryard. Very
often a yard or a garden fence served the purpose of a trellis. Arbors were designed, more or less, for ornament, shade and comfort. They were often fancy and elaborate wood structures painted white. As a rule they arched the main path or walk to the house, porch, or doorway.

5. Fruit Harvesting

Before the invention of our modern mechanical gadgets, hand work was universal. Fruit, whether for storage or immediate household or culinary use, was hand-picked or gathered. Usually, the picking was done by women or teenagers of the family. Only the more strenuous kind, like picking of winter apples, was done by men. For cider-making, a man shook down the apples and the women and children gathered them in sacks or bags ready to take to the cider mill or press.

Fruit to be stored was put in baskets, boxes, or crates, to be hauled to the place of storage and there placed in bins or storage barrels. The common house or kitchen cellar was the usual storage place. In those days before the advent of house furnaces, the average cellar was dark, cool, and fairly dry and fitting for fruit storage. Sometimes apples were packed in paper in barrels and covered over with straw in a warm part of the barn where they kept quite well. The apple hole in the garden was a very much used method for apple storage for family use.

This process was simple. The highest, dryest spot in the garden was selected. A place large enough for the amount of apples to be buried was leveled and tamped down, a trench of about a foot depth dug around the perimeter to drain away surplus water, then straw was placed on this bed upon which the apples were arranged in cone shape with a post in the center to support the top cover; the apple pile was covered over with long rye straw or corn fodder sloping lengthwise from the center to the edge or perimeter, then a few boards or poles were placed in a like manner and again covered with straw and the whole covered over with a heavy covering of earth.

6. Preservation of Fruits for Drying

In early times fruit was dried mostly by oven-heat—in the outdoor bake oven or kitchen stove. Regular dry houses were not uncommon. It was of small rectangular shape 8' by 10' or 10' by 12', as a rule, with no windows and one door opening. Tight and dark was a requisite for fruit drying. A small stone or brick furnace was used for heating. A slow, moderate, and steady heat gave best results. The fruit to be dried was spread thin on wooden slot trays, crates or boards as they were called. These were conveniently hung on supporting strings or ropes from the rafters or overhead ceiling which ever the case was. Occasionally the fruit was stirred or turned over on the trays so that quick and even drying resulted. This method was the one employed where large amounts of fruit were dried. For small batch drying the kitchen stove was used or the outdoor bake oven after the baking was done. Sun drying was sometimes resorted to, but the oven method was the one mostly used.

Storage was very important. The dried fruit was put up in muslin bags or heavy paper pokes, sacks as they were called by the older people. Years ago when coffee was roasted and bagged whole and home grown, the coffee bags (Arbuckle, Lion, etc.) were ideal for this purpose, especially for small amounts of fruit. The important thing was to have the containers tight enough to keep out insects, but still allowing air to prevent moisture collecting which would cause mold and staling. After sacks, the next of importance was the storage. This place had to be dark, dry and cool. Usually it was a small, dark upstairs room with shelves or chests in which the fruit was kept until time to be used. At this point the fruit was ready for winter use. Dried apples (Schnitz) were used for Snits pie (Schnitz Boi) or the once so common and highly delicious boiled snits and dumplings (Schnitz un gnepp), the cuisine dish of Pennsylvania Dutch fame. Dried peaches with the pits or dried pears (Hutzla) were boiled and sweetened and eaten that way, as were many of the other dried fruits.

7. Preservation of Fruits by Preserving

In jelly making the juice of the fruit was the part used; equal parts of juice and sugar and then boiled to jelly consistency. Jam making differed in that the fruit juice and mashed pulp were sweetened and boiled to a rather thick stage but thin enough to allow easy spreading. Marmalade or preserves were made by pitting and paring the fruit, cutting it in small pieces, adding sugar or honey to sweeten, then heating thoroughly but not boiling fine. For butter, especially grape, the whole berries were boiled and mashed through a colander to remove the seeds and skins and then sweetened and boiled like jam. Peach and pear butter was made the same as applebutter, only pear or peach snits were used instead of apple snits. The so-called honeys, whether apple, pear, or quince, were made by paring the fruit, then grating the flesh finely, adding the sugar and a little water to start boiling, and boiling to a thick, smooth stage; put in glasses, covered, and stored in dry, cool places.

In the world of standard spreads, butter, molasses, applebutter (Lattwaerrick) and schmear-kase were the old-time standards. In the Pennsylvania Dutch home, no meal was complete without that. Every family had to have its applebutter. It was easy to make but took quite a bit of work. The apples had to be gathered, the cider barrel washed and soaked so as not to leak, then the trip to the press and the cider made. Kettle wood had to be readied, a copper kettle and wooden
stirrer had to be on hand. This part usually took place the day before the actual boiling. On the night before some neighbors would gather in the home and help prepare the snits. It took a bushel of snits to a barrel (32 gallons) of cider. This made about six gallons of applebutter.

Early next morning the kettle was washed with a bit of cider to remove any copper corrosion. After that it was put on the fire and partly filled with cider. As the cider boiled down it was filled after with fresh cider from the barrel until all was boiled down to the point where the snits could be put in without running the kettle over as it was called. After this the actual boiling and stirring began which had to be kept up until the product was finished and removed from the fire. The stirring was a long tedious task and different members took turns at it or sometimes couples—boy and girl—one on each side of the stirrer handle.

A smiling Betsy, a bashful Randal, hung-on to the stirrer handle. Anyway the stirring is what makes the product fine and smooth and keeps it from settling to the kettle bottom and burning. Burning bitters and ruins the whole product. The test for proper thickness for good keeping was made by dipping a little of the boiling on a saucer and when cooled drawing a spoon through the center. If it remains parted without a tendency of running together quickly, then it is ready for the sugaring and flavoring if desired. Ten pounds of sugar was sufficient for average sweetness. The favorite flavors were ground cinnamon, cloves, or sassafras root bark. All these were added just before removing the kettle from the fire. After the product was slightly cooled, it was ready for the containers—vats, crocks or jars, whatever was desired. For long keeping jars with sealed lids are best; half gallon or gallon crocks of glazed stone were all convenient also. Vats (wooden, never metal) and large crocks are cumbersome to handle, but at one time were much used. The wooden vat was called Lattwaerrick Schen-ner by the Dutch people. Any place that is dark, cool and dry is fitting for storage. If properly boiled and stored, applebutter will keep for several years. Even when stored in crocks covered with wooden lids, I have known applebutter to keep well for two years or more, only it becomes thick, and could be sliced almost like liver.

Like applebutter, all other preserved fruits required cool, dark and dry storage. An upstairs closet was ideal for this purpose.

As to snitzings and applebutter parties, I can't say much. In our immediate neighborhood we just didn't have them. The night before the boiling, one or mass close neighbor families might drop in and help prepare the snits for next day boiling. The women folks usually did all of this work, unless there was a mechanical parer used. In that case a man or boy operated the mechanism. The apples, if of medium size, were pared, quarter and cored; in case of extra large apples each quarter was halved. While the women were thus engaged, the men sat back and indulged in neighborhood gossip. On the kitchen table was a large pitcher of fresh cider and tin cups, a pan of apples and a dish of cookies. All members of the group were free to help themselves. The affair was sort of a Bee or informal gathering rather than a party. The same was true of the applebutter boiling next day. Only, in this case, if neighbors gave a helping hand, an extra dinner (noon meal) was served.

8. PRESERVATION OF FRUITS BY CANNING

Early method of canning fruits was much the same as today, but the actual canning method was entirely different. At that time there were no pressure cookers, heat gauges or cold packing systems nor fruit freezing. The fruit was boiled in kettles on top of a kitchen stove, as a rule wood fired, until the fruit was thoroughly heated, then put into the container, with only natural fruit juice added and rarely if ever sweetened. Sweetening was done when the fruit was used.

The first containers that I remember were tin cans and glass jars of one or two quart size. The cans were sealed by pressing the tin lids down upon rosin strings. The glass jars were either round or octagonal shape with glass tops or lids and a wire clamp to tighten the lid. There were two types of clamps. One type was a double round wire contraption with side hooks or
clamps which was forced down over the lips or rim of the jar and held the lid firmly in place. The other was a wire that ran across the top and bottom of the jar and down the sides of the jar with a nut and thumb screw in the top center. This screw was turned down and held the lid. For sealing, rosin strings or narrow black rubbers under the glass lid side were used. The Mason jar with porcelain lined zinc screw lid came in the 1850’s. Some older Mason jars had the date 1858 molded in the glass jar body.

The canned fruit was invariably stored in cupboards or on shelves in the house cellar.

9. Preservation of Fruit Juice: Cider, Wine, Cordial, etc.

Most all early farm families did make wines of some kind or other. In my neighborhood, Blackberry, Grape and Wild Cherry were the leading wines. Elderberry blossom and dandelion blossom were occasional specialties. Gooseberry wine was a favorite in some sections but less common than the other wines.

The early Pennsylvania immigrants of Germany brought with them plants of the European Wine Grape, Vitis Vinifera. The Wine Grape proved a complete failure in the eastern United States because of the attack of the grape louse, mildew, and rot, all of which were non-existent in the Old World and fatal to the European grape. Our native grapes of wild origin were not greatly affected by these pests, but for wine purposes they were much inferior to the European Wine Grape. In short, this fact accounts for the lack of grape vineyards and grape wine in early Pennsylvania.

In my particular neighborhood, Quince Cordial was unknown. Blackberry or more exactly the Dewberry, which made a far better wine than the High Blackberry, was the preferred wine for Blackberry Cordial.

Apple Cider was the popular, standard fruit drink of early Pennsylvania. It was the least expensive of all fruit drinks and suitable for all family use. No other fruit drink could take its place.

How was cider made? That is a big question. It would take volumes to answer it fully. But, briefly, apple cider, besides the other ciders such as pear, cherry and peach, is made by grinding and pressing the juice out of apples, the number one fruit of America. In early days many of the farmers had contrived small hand-made grinders and presses of various kinds and designs which were used to make cider in small amounts. But local presses for custom cider-making appeared early and like grist, flour, and saw mills served the local community well. It was to these that the apples were hauled by team and wagon. The procession to and from the press began in the early morning and, in the busy season, continued often till long after dusk. At times a dozen teams might be waiting turns at the press.

Whether or not any of these early presses were run by wind or water power, I do not know. Horse power seems to have been one of the first used. Later, after the steam engine, steam provided the power, and still later, gasoline.

The storing for winter use depended on the particular purpose for which the cider was to be used. Hard cider was probably the most common use, for this fresh cider was put in sassafras or whiskey barrels and left to undergo neutral fermentation. If greater strength was desired, wine or alcohol liquor was added. Sweet cider, non-alcoholic, was fresh cider boiled to prevent fermentation, and sometimes slightly sweetened with honey. Applejack, I believe, was a mixture of hard cider and brandy. Domestic vinegar was fresh cider with some vinegar, vinegar mother and water added and left to ferment. I don’t know what cider Royal was.

10. Lore of Fruit Harvesting and Preservation

One of the oldest and most quoted maxims in apple lore: “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” In reference to personal characteristics of children behaviorism, an old Pennsylvania German proverb states it thus: “Der Abbel fallt net weit von der Schtamm.”

Translation: “Child like parent or chip from the old block.” In reference to apples thus:

“Far marjets, middak, and owets,
embois Schpot.
Immer hen mar lattraerick, budder,
odd er malassisch brot.”

Translation:
“For breakfast, dinner and supper, sometimes late
There’s always applebutter, butter or molasses bread.”

A few contribution lines by the Questionnairee:

Apples and Cider on a Winter Night

Say, old boys and old gals, too,
Maybe, youth agree this is true.
When the cold winter winds blow
And the out-door world is covered with snow,
There is nothing more be-witchin’
Than sitting by a table in a warm kitchen,
On a cold and stormy winter night,
And just forget the world outside.
Deeply engrossed in a card or checker game;
For simple amusement without gain or shame.
A pitcher of cider and a pan of apples to lend cheer
And keep away the blues of worry and fear.
Hail! old boys. Hol! old gals,
Let apples and cider and us be pals;
On such a night and every night.
When all is cold and drear outside.

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Folklore in the Library: Old Schuylkill Tales

By MAC E. BARRICK

In his recent collection of essays published under the title *American Folklore and the Historian* (Chicago, 1971), Richard Dorson comments at length on the close relationship between local history and folklore. "Local history," he notes, "is in a very large sense traditional history . . . . In the literate civilizations, where the facts are endlessly stored in print, and populations are crammed in vast cities, the personal sense of history has all but vanished—save in the local community. And community annals receive short shrift from the professional guild" (p. 148). Folklorists tend to overlook a very useful source of information valuable in the comparative study of tales and legends, the files and publications of local historical societies. Pennsylvania has an abundance of these, each county generally having a county historical society and sometimes several smaller local historical groups. In addition occasional teachers, journalists, lawyers or others feel compelled to serve as self-proclaimed annalists, preserving written notes, files, or memoirs about local events. Many of these publications hold little of importance to the folklorist, being strictly statistical or overly concerned with documentable facts.

As an example, there is a recent booklet by William W. Britton, *Some Early History of Upper Strasburg, Pennsylvania* (privately printed, 1972), which is a detailed account of the various building lots in that Franklin County community, with a running commentary about the several owners of each, their wives and children, and their occupations. But even this type of document has a memorate or two of interest. In mentioning William McClellan, the local schoolmaster in 1911, Britton adds: "One of the pupils seemed bent on causing discord and confusion almost every day. (Billy) McClellan thrashed this boy nearly every day and sometimes twice. One day, when things had been running on an even keel, this boy jumped into the aisle and yelled, 'I have a notion to get hellish.' The professor was working at the blackboard at the time. He turned halfway around and said, 'Sit down Mark, you have never been anything else.'" The incident is not folkloric perhaps but certainly borders on the traditional local legend. Unfortunately few of the souvenir pamphlets produced in conjunction with local centennial celebrations contain material of this kind.

Once in a while a local historical society falls under the aegis of an enlightened soul who directs its interests and it publications into the area of local folklore and folklife. No student of American folklore can afford to overlook the *Papers of the Bucks County Historical Society* published when Henry Mercer was the guiding light in Doylestown. They contain a wealth of valuable information about early folk beliefs, practices and technology, with occasional tales and legends thrown in. Ella M. Snowberger's *Recollections of Bygone Days in the Cove*, an annual series of reprints from her columns in the Morrison's Cove *Herald* between 1933 and 1942, are another useful source.

Since much of this material is privately printed, often in very limited editions for local distribution only, it is easily overlooked by historians, librarians, and bibliographers. Such a neglected item is Ella Zerby Elliott's *Old Schuylkill Tales*, "published by the author" in Pottsville, 1906, at the time of the local Old Home Week celebration. Mrs. Elliott noted that "it is not altogether the aim or purpose of the writer to compile the data of the early chronological facts of the history of Schuylkill County, but rather to preserve the tales and reminiscences of the early settlers" (pp. 32-33). Many of the early settlers, born in the 1820's and 1830's, were still alive in 1906, when Mrs. Elliott interviewed them, not with the scientific concern of the modern folklorist or social scientist of course, but other documentation lacking, her record of the currency of tales, superstitions, and practices becomes the more valuable.

Mrs. Elliott was also the author of the *Blue Book of Schuylkill County: Who Was Who and Why in Interior Eastern Pennsylvania, in Colonial Days* (Pottsville, 1916) and much of the earlier *Old Schuylkill Tales* deals with strictly historical material, such as the discussion of the places, dates, and people important in the development of Pottsville, Orwigsburg, Schuylkill Haven, Pine Grove, and other communities in the area. She traces the history of the local coal industry from its origins in 1776, when twenty tons of coal were moved by wagon to the U. S. armory at Carlisle to be used for experimentation, through the establishment of the major coal companies, down to the beginning of the 20th Century.

'The present copy, purchased from William Thomas of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania (see his *Catalogue No. 73: A Select List of Books Relating to Pennsylvania* [1973], No. 219), is one of eight known. The National Union Catalog lists seven copies, including those in the Philadelphia Free Library, the Pennsylvania Historical Society, and the Schwenkfelder Library.
As is frequently the case with the collection and study of local history, certain subjects lend themselves easily to the accretions of legend and imaginative coloring. In Mrs. Elliott's book, two areas are especially susceptible to legendary development, tales about Indians and stories of runaway slaves. Many are the houses in south-central Pennsylvania that are identified as hiding places or stations on the Underground Railway. Any old building with a secret passageway or an inaccessible cellar is automatically supposed to be such a station. Mrs. Elliott discusses one such house belonging to a Quaker in Pottsville (pp. 249-256), though her primary source of information is the recollection of one neighbor woman forty years after the event. No one can be entirely certain about such matters, considering the secrecy which surrounded these activities. Before one takes too much pride in the generous attitude of Pennsylvanians toward the escaped Blacks, it should be noted that Mrs. Elliott also thought it a fact of unusual import to mention that unknownst to most, "a colored woman lies buried in what was, in the 'fifties, called Mt. Laurel Cemetery" (pp. 200-201).

Though the Indians were gone from the Schuylkill County area by 1830, some residents still recalled the last harmless of them: "The Indian was known as Tecumseh and was an idle and dissolute fellow who lived on the hill above the Odd Fellows' Cemetery. He was detected in stealing from a neighbor, and with his wife was brought before a Justice of the Peace to answer the charge of theft. The poor squaw broke down and sobbed and cried like her white sisters might have done under a similar circumstance. This disgusted the red man who said to the 'Squire: 'Squaw no good. She cry. Me no squaw, me Injun brave, me not cry. Ugh!' Tecumseh was let go, by stander paying the costs and fine imposed" (pp. 280-281).

Local residents also remembered more famous Indian legends, such as the account of the kidnapping and subsequent rescue of Regina Hartmann (pp. 24-26)

and another story in which a man called Old Dress outwitted a party of murderous redskins by convincing them that he was not alone but was defended by a party of soldiers (pp. 33-38). Of course Schuylkill County also has its variant of the most widespread of all Indian legends, the Lovers' Leap, "told of an Indian maiden, Wanomanie, who sprang from the highest point of the rocky crags on the pinnacle of Sharp mountain . . . into the declivity below and was killed. All because her father Sagawatch would not allow her to marry the dusky lover of her choice. It was said that on moonlight nights, in harvest time, she could be seen on a misty evening, through the clouds, taking the spring into the abyss below, her lover a close second, taking the leap after her, and Sagawatch leaning over the crest of the mountain to watch the lovers going to their certain death" (p. 146).

As Dorson notes, "The Indian has exerted a powerful influence on the American mind quite disproportionate to his numbers. . . . White men have spun a kind of bastard folklore about the romanticized redskin, symbolized in the Lovers' Leap legend, but this synthetic folklore has become traditional and merits analysis" (American Folklore and the Historian, p. 39). Such legends generally are etiological, but the present example serves as the basis or explanation for a ghost story.

Mrs. Elliott was especially interested in stories of ghosts and witches. She often asked for them specifically in her interviews (see p. 263), though most of her concern lay in debunking them. She suggests that the Indian ghosts just mentioned "were apparent to those who had been imbuing too freely of spirits of another brand, or . . . they were the innocent victims of hallucinations of the brain" (pp. 146-147). Ghost stories are often the result of mistaking an animal or other object for a wandering spirit. In one such case, a boy passing the haunted site of a hanged murderer's grave hears a noise and sees a white form behind him. As he tries to jump a fence, he falls and the creature is upon him—licking his face, for it is Wasser, the old white farm dog (pp. 83-86).

A similar story was told by John Wagner of Pottsville, who, born in 1811, was 95 when interviewed: "There were no ghosts or witches about Pottsville that I ever heard of. In the Lykens Valley, when I was a young man, there were great disputes over fences. Wherever these feuds existed the witches were said to come together at night and dance on the disputed lines and at the nearest cross roads. I went to a party one night and had to pass Koppenhaver's where the witches were said to be. It was very dark and late when I came home. As I neared the place I saw something white coming toward me. I did
not run, I could not. When it came close I found it was a white calf? (pp. 263-264).? 

Two stories involve the discovery of the cause of strange noises in supposedly haunted houses. Near Red Church, below Orwigsburg, was an old stone house supposedly haunted by the ghost of a German refugee who hanged himself in a tree near the house. Several men, to prove their courage, entered the house at night and discovered that a loose shutter striking the lightning rod made a peculiar noise that sounded like the rattling of chains. The other “haunted” house was in Mount Carbon, but in this case the noises were caused “not by a ghost but a frugal German who was building a house for himself nearby, hard at work with an axe cutting out the joists for his own use. The house on examination, afterward, was found to have been dismantled, too, of its doors and other appurtenances” (p. 279).

Of course Schuylkill County had its share of traditional ghosts, those mentioned in almost every collection of American ghost tales, such as the Indian ghost that guarded a lost treasure in the mountains near Swatara (pp. 145-146; motif E291), a headless horseman (p. 106; motif E422.1.1.3.1), and the Will-o’-the-Wisp that haunted Long Swamp in West Brunswick township, supposedly marking the burial place of “the head of a trunkless man, who had been buried on the edge of the swamp, . . . who could not rest, but floated or wandered about to prevail on some one to listen to his tale, remove his remains and bury them in consecrated ground” (pp. 91-92).

The story of the murdered peddler is told so frequently in Pennsylvania and the adjoining states that one is tempted to believe that it may be based on a historical incident occurring in that area. Mrs. Elliott’s version is worth quoting at length:


2Pp. 101-106. Motif E281: Ghosts haunt house; E402(d): Ghostlike noises cause owner to abandon farm. Another story of a site haunted by the ghost of a man who hanged himself (motif E111.1.1) is mentioned on p. 106. This is related to J1782.3(c): Loose beard or splinter vibrates in the wind, is thought to be a ghost.

3Motifs F491: Will-o’-the-Wisp; E231.3: Ghost light hovers over hiding place of body; E520.1.3: Ghost light haunts burial spot; E412.3: Dead without proper funeral rites cannot rest in grave. The Will-o’-the-Wisp or Jack-o’-Lantern is a common theme in Pennsylvania folktales; see Hoffman, art cit., p. 35; Henry W. Schoemaker, North Mountain Mementoes (Altoona, 1920), pp. 318-335; Eugene Utech, “J. Raymond Bear’s Olde Tyne Ghost Tales,” Keystone Folklore Quarterly, 12 (1967), 214, 224-225; Gehman, art. cit., p. 52.

4See the extensive bibliography provided by Baughman, motif E334.2.1(e): Ghost of murdered peddler seen near burial spot, to which add Jones, Things That Go Bump in the Night, pp. 86-87.

Near Pinedale lived a witch doctor, who was suspected of working these spells of witchcraft, yet was quite doughty to have accused him of it. A German peddler was murdered. His body was found under a lone pine tree on the edge of the open, his pack rifled, all his valuables and some of his clothing removed. The witch doctor was suspected of the crime, yet no one dared openly accuse him of it. The peddler was buried under the tree where he met his untimely end. The grass withered and never grew again, and the snow which fell to a great depth all around the spot, would melt at once, as it fell about the tree. The country people saw strange sights, and one young man, returning home late at night, reported that he had seen the peddler, whom he had known well in life, running around the tree pursued by a man with an axe. So great was the dread of the spot, that no one ventured to pass the grave if they could avoid it, but there were rumors of moans and cries in that vicinity, heard from a distance.

Mrs. Kate Bender, wife of the late George Bender, of Pottsville, tells the story most entertainingly, and furnishes the sequel to the old tale: “One day our uncle Gabriel made us a visit. He told us that the mystery of who killed the German peddler was at last solved. It happened this way. They were sitting in the big country store of an evening, swapping stories as was the country custom. The talk was mainly on hunting, and the game thereafter, my uncle having started it by buying some powder. The witch doctor was present, and never much of a talker, he said: ’I heard of a man who was killed, once, with an axe. He ran around and around a tree and begged the man with the axe not to kill him. If you do, he said, you will hang for it. You will be found out. If in no other way, the chickens will dig the news out of the ground, (Wan die hinkle es ausen treck gratz muhs’). Everybody understood it, but no one dared accuse the witch doctor, for everyone feared him. Dwelling on the thought of his crime had doubtless finally unhinged his mind, or, it may be, he thought no one would recognize in the story, that he was the murderer. His moodiness increased, and shortly after this he hung himself to a tree. He was buried near the spot, but the peddler’s remains were removed to a corner of the cemetery, that the settlers might have peace, and then he could rest. When they were dug up, a number of chickens were permitted to scratch in the freshly thrown-up earth, that the peddler’s saying might be verified; and the green grass grew over the spot and covered his grave undisturbed and unmolested thereafter” (pp. 103-105).

Though belief in witchcraft is mentioned throughout Old Schuylkill Tales the author generally dismisses it as a form of obsolete superstition. Such belief is generally
erally noted as a characteristic of German farmers, who held witches responsible "if the bread would not rise, the butter would not come, infants withered away, crops were blighted, the cows would give no milk" (p. 103), or if the milk was bloody, or the horses and other animals died.18 On one occasion, an Irish maid of all work claimed that a stopped clock had been bewitched: "She took the poker and gave three vigorous raps on the back of the clock saying with each rap: 'Come out, ye Divil, come out.' Whether or not the dust and grime fell from the wheels with such vigorous treatment is not known, but the clock went steadily after" (p. 207). Witches were thought to have the ability to transform themselves into cats, rats or ovens, and it was generally believed that they acquired their power through the use of magic books, *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, and *The Long Hidden Friend* by John George Holman (sic) of Berks County (see pp. 55-57, 240-241).19 One curious section of Mrs. Elliott's book describes how a German immigrant named Huntsicker used the *Books of Moses* to achieve his own desires and to force thieves to return goods stolen from his neighbors (pp. 57-67).20 Curiously, no mention is made by Mrs. Elliott of incantations, charms or other magic practices invoked to counteract the power of the witches.

Numerous tales appear throughout the book, some of them traditional, but the majority of them are local anecdotes or memorates. One of these put into the mouth of a schoolteacher is of ancient origin and international currency:

A fine horse that had followed the chase, borne for another's master to the wars and held an honored place in the stud of high pedigree in the nobleman's stables, had the misfortune to break his leg, and instead of being shot, as was ordered, to end his misery, was traded off to satisfy the cupidity of a dishonest groom. He fell into bad hands, where he was obliged to follow the plow. Menial labor broke the poor creature's spirit and at last it lay down by the roadside, to die. A benevolent man, passing that way, took the branch of a tree and attempted to brush off the loathsome, big bottle flies that had settled in and about the wounded leg, glistening in its putrefaction. When the old war horse raised his head and spoke, beseeching the man to let the flies alone. "These pests, he said, have had their fill. If you drive them away, a new horse will take their place and I will suffer the more." (p. 157)21

Other tales, though localized by Mrs. Elliott, have international counterparts in the folklore indexes and in other collections. Among these is the numskull tale of the constripts who cannot distinguish between right and left:

[Henry Rheinheimer, captain of the local militia] had drilled the country bumpkins and yokels until flesh and blood could stand no more. His was the inventive genius that placed a straw on one foot of each of the awkward squad and a wisp of hay on the other, and instead of the "right" and "left" which they could not learn he used "hay-foot, straw-foot," over and over again until he was so hoarse he could shout no more. (p. 75)22

Another is the story of Squire Witman's watch:

Daniel De Frehn, of Pottsville, relates the following: It was during a term of court in the seat of justice at Orwigsburg. "Squire Witman was approached by a fellow lawyer who asked him the time of day. The 'Squire felt in his waistcoat pocket for his watch when he discovered it missing and said: "I changed clothes this morning and left my watch in my other vest." After a time he betook himself again, and being inconvenienced by the want of the chronometer sent a man from court with a message that the bearer should be entrusted with his watch which he had forgotten. The man returned and said the maid-servant had already given the watch to a man, who said the "Squire had sent him for it. 'Squire Witman had doubtless been overheard. The thief made good his escape and the watch was never recovered. (pp. 76-77)23

The story of a butcher who escapes from a pursuing bear by cutting slices of meat from the beef carcass he is carrying (pp. 174-175) is undoubtedly a true incident, but similar stories are frequent in folk literature (cf. motif 671.1).

A number of anecdotes fall into the category of Rude Retorts (motif 1369). One, "Not a Foot Washer," suggests several current jokes about boys who, told to wash their hands, want to know where their wrists begin, or suggest washing only the hand they eat with:

18Cf. p. 240. Thompson and Baughman list these beliefs as motifs D2083.1: Cows magically made dry (see George L. Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* [Cambridge, Mass., 1929], pp. 162-167); D2083.2: Witches make cows give bloody milk (cf. Samuel Bayard, "Witchcraft Magic and Spirits on the Borders of Pennsylvania and West Virginia," *JAF*, 51 [1938], 56-57). D2084: Bread kept from rising (Kittredge, pp. 170-171); D2084.2: Butter magically kept from coming (Kittredge, pp. 167-170; Brendle and Troxell, pp. 105-107); G2634: Witch causes sickness; G2654.1 Witch causes death of animals.

19Motifs G211.1 ff.: Witch in form of domestic beast.

20The bibliography on these books is extensive, but see especially A. Monroe Aurand, The "Pow-Wow" Book (Harrisburg, 1929); Robert H. Byington, *Powwowing in Pennsylvania*; *KPQ*, 9 (1964), 111-116; Brendle and Troxell, pp. 150-151.


22Motif J215.1. This is the Aesopian fable of the Fox and the Hedgehog cited by Aristotle (*Rhetoric*, II, 20); see Ben Edwin Perry, *Aesopica*, I (Urbana, 1952), 490, No. 427. For additional references see Thompson and Baughman, to which add these literary treatments: Sancho de Mataró, *Lisandro y Roselia* (1542; ed. Madrid, 1872); *La boda de Santa Cruz, Floresta española*, I (Madrid, 1910), 91; La Fontaine, *Fables*, XII, 13.

The boys ran barefoot during the hot summer months and when they went to bed they must all first wash their feet. Bob hated water and to slop his pedal extremities in the foot bath when he was tired and sleepy was almost more than he could endure. Coming home one night from a busy day playing around the foundry, for he had a taste for mechanics, he was more than usually black. He did penance, however, by washing his face and hands and then carefully washed off the tops of his feet, leaving the soles black and dirty but dry. Susan detected the imposition at once and the following conversation ensued: “Oh! Bob, why didn’t you wash the soles of your feet? You must go back and wash them over again. You will make the bed clothes all dirty.” “Dirty! Huh! How? You don’t stand up in bed, do you?” said Bob. (p. 200)

Another tells of Sandy, a Scotsman, whose “auld wife” is badly gored by the bull. He bought a full suit of black clothes, including a high hat and red necktie, in preparation for the funeral. Contrary to expectations, the wife recovered, causing Sandy to complain, “Be the jumpin’ Moses, . . . sae folks ’ill ne’er dec” (pp. 128-130). A third example of the Rude Retort also has wide circulation:

[The Rev. Wm.] Barnes had been very much annoyed by the frivolous conduct of several young people in the church and he publicly reprimanded them from the pulpit. One of the young women became very much incensed at the action of the clergyman and arose to go out but not without first showing her contempt at the reproof by laughing aloud. Mr. Barnes said: “Good-night, daughter of the Devil!” “Good-night, Father!” said the girl. (p. 178)

Numerous stories are told about local preachers, who are a very important factor in American folk-culture, both as subjects and as purveyors of folklore. Since one of the minister’s most vexing duties is raising money for building and other projects, he often resorts to cleverness. Several anecdotes in Old Schuylkill Tales relate such cases. One preacher, attempting to raise $5000, is asked by a member of the congregation how much he himself was giving. “I will give $500,” he answered, “but I charge $500 for my three hours work, time and traveling expenses. You do not expect a man to raise $5000 in cash for nothing, do you?” Another deals with the building of the Roman Catholic Church at New Philadelphia:

The priest was a fine man and very energetic. He did all he could to clear off the debt and pay for the building of the church, but the people were poor and the struggle a hard one. At last it was all raised except a certain sum for which he pleaded for in vain. One Sunday he locked the church door and placed the key in his pocket and told the assembled congregation that no one could go out until he had paid the sum of ten cents. Those that had no money could borrow from their friends. Many paid at once but others could not and those that had the cash were finally stripped of all they had by the borrowers. Twenty cents was still lacking when the bank treasuries were exhausted, when there was a tap on the window, and a hand was extended from outside with a silver quarter between the forefingers and the door was unlocked. A man outside who had been listening, becoming tired of waiting for his wife to prepare the dinner, furnished the quarter and the debt was cancelled. (p. 224)

And, of course, as in every collection of preacher stories, there is one of a pastor who does not practice what he preaches, but says instead, “Do not do as I do, but do as I say.”

For the folklife student, Old Schuylkill Tales has many other attractions—discussions of festive occasions, such as Battalion Day (pp. 72-76), public hangings (pp. 81-82), corn huskings (with the traditional activities associated with finding a red ear) (p. 46), the Fourth of July (p. 265), and political ox roasts (pp. 269-270); mention of folk foodways (pp. 86-88); and indication of marginal folk beliefs, such as an objection to instrumental music on religious grounds (p. 176). A casual reference sheds light on the origin of the slang term mick for an Irishman, suggesting that it derives from the patronymic prefix Mc rather than from a contraction of Michael, as generally stated.

Of interest to folklorist, historian and sociologist alike are the discussions of local eccentrics and members of now obsolete professions, peddlers (pp. 92-93, 103-105), the town watchman (pp. 277-278), drovers (p. 287), and an Italian organ grinder who bought a house and paid for it with thirty thousand copper pennies (pp. 274-275). The book’s major value is not its contribution to cumulative historical knowledge, since most of the documentary evidence contained in it is available from more accessible sources. Its worth lies instead in the insight that it provides into public opinion of the day, as revealed in the mention of politics, religion, and other controversial subjects, and in the fact that it preserves the oral history of a passing generation, long before the preservation of oral history was recognized as a legitimate activity of historians.

23The finder of a red ear was entitled to a kiss; see Hoffman, JAF, 1 (1888), 131. For a possible origin to this obscure custom, see Ames Long, Jr., The Pennsylvania German Family Farm (Breinigsville, 1972), p. 463. See also the references to the Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, VII, 526, No. 8160.

48
MILLS AND MILLING
IN PENNSYLVANIA
Folk-Cultural Questionnaire No. 33

Mills of various sorts were once important features of Pennsylvania's rural landscape. The miller was an important functionary in every community, and farmers were dependent upon the local mills for their various services. In this questionnaire we request materials from readers on the various types of mills and their place in Pennsylvania rural culture.

1. The Gristmill. Describe the gristmill that your family used to process its grains. What was the power used, and how was it transferred, i.e., if water power, what sort of wheel or turbine was involved? Describe the mill dam, races, and water system. How far was the mill from your farm? Who owned it; was it a family affair? Describe the process of taking grain to the mill to be ground, especially if you yourself remember participating in it. How much grain of various sorts was normally kept at home for kitchen use? Describe finally the actual grinding and refining processes involved in milling the various grains. How did the miller collect his toll?

2. The Sawmill. Describe the sawmill that your family used when it had timber to process into lumber. Describe the power system used. Was the sawing apparatus the circular saw or the older up and down saw? What sorts of other tools were used around the sawmill—rail carts or wagons, clamps, canthooks? When was the mill operated during the year? Did the mill structure have a heated room?

3. The Fulling Mill. Describe the fulling mill, used in earlier days to process cloth. In pioneer times, before fulling mills were available, the neighborhood gathered for a "fulling frolic," "waulkin' frolic," or "kicking match," in which cloth was fulled by "kicking" it by foot in sudsy water. If you have information on this earlier process, write it out in detail.

4. Other Types of Mills. From older times one hears of additional types of mills in rural Pennsylvania, as for example oil mills and carding mills. What was their purpose, and if you are acquainted with them describe their machinery for us. What was an apple mill? And finally, were sorghum mills ever used in Pennsylvania?

5. Millwrights, Millstones, and Mill Machinery. In the case of the grist mill, describe the machinery involved. Some of our readers with technical knowledge of mill machinery will be able to add diagrams showing how each machine was connected with the power source. Who designed the earlier mills, i.e., who were the millwrights as they were called? Where did the millstones come from, and how were they manufactured? What was the principle involved in setting them up for grinding?

6. Grain Bags and Flour Bags. Describe the grain bags used in earlier times? How much grain could they hold? What material were they made of? How were they marked for individual ownership? Describe the flour bags or sacks, either of paper or textile, which millers used for selling processed flour of various sorts. Do you have any examples of these from local mills that we could photograph?

7. The Mill and the Mill House. Did the miller and his family live in a part of the mill structure, as was often the case in Europe, or did he have a separate residence? If separate, did the actual mill building have any heated rooms where business and social visits could be carried on during the winter?

8. The Miller in the Community. Describe the miller as a member of the local community. Did he ever take apprentices apart from members of his own family? Did he ever wear any specific miller's costume of any sort?

9. Present Day Mills. List names and addresses of any of the older traditional grist mills that you know to be still operating in Pennsylvania.

10. Lore, Dialectology, and Iconography of the Mill. As usual, we ask for songs, rhymes, and other lore about mills, millers, and milling. Readers who know Pennsylvania German are encouraged to list the terminology of milling, names for parts of mills, tools, and processes, in the Pennsylvania German dialect. Those of you who may come from miller families may have photographs of milling scenes from the 19th or early 20th Century. Will you please inform us of these?

Send your replies to:

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25th PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH Kutztown Folk Festival

June 29, 30 – July 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1974

For The Folk Festival Brochure Write To:
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An invitation to become a subscriber to the Society's periodical Pennsylvania Folklife, now in its twenty-third year, published five times annually, in Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer, plus a colorful Folk Festival supplement. Each issue appears in a colored cover, with 48 pages of text, and is profusely illustrated. Subjects covered include: architecture, cookery, costume, customs of the year, folk art and antiques, folk dancing, folk medicine, folk literature, folk religion, folk speech, home-making lore, recreation, superstitions, traditional farm and craft practices, transportation lore and numerous others.

The purpose of the Pennsylvania Folklife Society, a non-profit corporation, is three-fold: collecting and displaying the lore of the Dutch Country and Pennsylvania; studying and archiving it; and making it available to the public.

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