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COVER:
Jacob Maentel’s portraits of Jonathan and Rebekah Jaquess (now a part of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Collection in Williamsburg, Va.) are but two of many works of several folk artists featured in this issue of Pennsylvania Folklife.

Layout and Special Photography
WILLIAM K. MUNRO
FOLK ARTIST JACOB MAENTEL OF PENNSYLVANIA AND INDIANA

by Mary Lou Robson Fleming

INTRODUCTION

Jacob Maentel was a nineteenth century American folk artist whose work is well-represented in the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Virginia. Maentel "created dozens of profile and full-face portraits of his contemporaries in half- and full-length poses," but there are only three known signed examples of his work. One of these is a portrait of Mr. Jonathan Jaquess, a resident of Posey County, Indiana. It, and a companion piece, Mrs. Jonathan Jaquess, "are representative of the height of Maentel's style and imagination." Moreover, "the initial publication of this pair in 1954 eventually led to the proper identification of dozens of other works created by the artist during his earlier period of activity in Pennsylvania."1

Thrall-Mentel-Mumford memorial column in Maple Hill Cemetery, New Harmony, Indiana.

JACOB MAENTEL

Maentel, a German immigrant who lived and worked for a time in several locations in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, spent his last years in Indiana where he is buried in New Harmony's Maple Hill Cemetery. The marble Thrall-Mental-Mumford memorial column — probably erected at the turn of the century — is located at the top of the hill in the cemetery as the road turns left. Maentel's grave is marked by a small (16 x 14 x 4 inch) headstone with only the initials "J. M." on top; no dates are given. The lot also contains five other graves with identical headstones with no names; only initials and dates are given. On the headstone of Maentel's...
The headstone on Maentel's grave has only his initials — "J. M." — engraved on the top.

elest daughter, Louisa Maentel Mumford, is engraved "L. M., 1822-1901"; on her husband, Thomas Mumford's, is "T. M., 1804-1891"; a younger daughter Amelia's stone says "A. M., 1830-1909; Maentel's granddaughter, Mary Mumford Thrall, and her husband, Eugene Skinner Thrall, have stones marked "M. T., 1845-1921"; and "E. S. T., 1843-1889." If Jacob Maentel's wife, Catherine (last noted in the 1850 census), is buried there, her grave is unmarked.

The dearth of information on Jacob Maentel's gravestone is indicative of what has been known of his life generally. His birthdate, for example, and the date of his arrival in Indiana — where he went to seek the help of a friend, Jacob Schnee — have always been conjectural. Indeed, Maentel's birthdate has been so garbled in Indiana records (the dates ranging from 1763 through 1780) that some researchers have thought there might have been two Jacob Maentels. When he died in 1863 there were no newspapers printed in New Harmony, and the only record of his death is a handwritten note found in the Working Men's Institute Special Collections: "Old man Mentle, one of Napoleon's old soldiers, died today (April 28, 1863) he was near 100 years old, born June 15, 1763"; no source is given. His place of origin has been established by his naturalization papers (York County, Pennsylvania, 1815) which show he was a native of Kassel, and owed allegiance to the king of Westphalia. According to some researchers, Maentel emigrated to the United States around 1805 and entered through the port of Baltimore.

The Maentel papers, a private collection, contain little material contemporaneous with Maentel's life, but they do preserve the hearsay evidence that has been passed down by family members. For instance, in 1939 Jacob's great-granddaughter, Louise P. Hill (1874-1958), wrote that the Maentel home near New Harmony had been destroyed by fire, and that only a manuscript medical book, written in Maentel's own hand (he was a physician as well as an artist), was saved from the flames. According to Louise, her mother, Amelia Mumford Hill, told her that Maentel was born in Kassel, Germany, around 1774, and that he had served for seven years in Napoleon's army as the great man's secretary. He had "seven or nine" sisters, one of whom had married "a General Smith," but the fire had "destroyed their miniatures and his discharge papers." Louise added, "He had some talent in painting." Mary Mumford Thrall had repeated similar family traditions, adding: "He was a farmer and fond of painting." Jacob Maentel had not then been recognized as a major folk artist.

Louise P. Hill also wrote that her great-grandmother's name was Catherine Weaver, and that she had been born sometime around 1810 in Baltimore, and confirmed in the First German Evangelical Reformed Church in Frederick, Maryland in 1818. Although the birthdate is obviously wrong (the oldest child of Jacob and Catherine Maentel was born in either 1820 or 1822), the migration pattern is consistent. The history of Western Maryland shows that the Swedes, who had arrived in Cecil County in 1645, had migrated inland by 1649 and were followed by the Germans, who had fled the Palatinate in great numbers in 1710-11. By the time of the Revolution, a large number of Germans had settled in Western Maryland, and it is quite possible that the Weavers had joined the group in Frederick. Catherine Weaver's mother, whose maiden name was Gutt, came from Alsace-Lorraine according to Louise
Hill, who also tells us that Catherine married Jacob Maentel “who was much older than she (about forty years),” and they moved to Harrisburg. Concerning the Maentels’ move to Indiana, the Hoosier state, — according to granddaughter Mary Mumford Thrall — was not their original destination. After noting that Jacob Maentel knew the Schnee family in the East, this Maentel descendant writes that: “He (Maentel) had started with his family to Texas when some were taken sick and they came to New Harmony to their friends (Schnees), the father [Jacob] going on, and the mother and children being taken by Mr. Schnee to what was afterwards Pelhamtown. He found work for the boys.”

Here we can establish some dates and facts that will help to place the background and timing of Maentel’s arrival in Indiana. Both the Maentels and the Schnees had lived in several townships in Lancaster County, in that portion which in 1813 became Lebanon County. Jacob Schnee (1784-1838), to whom the Maentel family historian referred, opened the first print shop in Lebanon, Pa., and published several German newspapers, almanacs, religious imprints, and textbooks for the parochial school of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church. He also published the Journals of the Pennsylvania Legislature in German, and is best known for his imprint, the first German edition, of Weems’ Das Leben des Georg Waschington which he translated and printed for Philadelphia publisher Matthew Carey in 1810.

In 1813 Jacob Schnee was licensed as a Lutheran minister in Reading; his last pastorate before going to Indiana was at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Middletown, Maryland across Catoctin Mountain from Frederick where — according to the confirmation records of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (now
On his way to Texas sometime around 1836, Maentel sought help for his family from old friend Jacob Schnee. This painting of the 1828 Schnee house, Schneeville, Posey Co., Ind., was painted by Nat Youngblood, Jr., for the 1984 Schnee Bicentennial. An award-winning artist, Youngblood, of West Middletown, Pa., was for many years art director of the Pittsburgh Press.

the United Church of Christ) — the Weavers lived. It is quite possible that Maentel and Schnee were both in Frederick for the festivities honoring Lafayette when the Revolutionary War hero was the guest of the American people for the second time in 1824-25. It is more than probable that it was sometime during this period when both resided in Maryland that Maentel learned of his old friend’s plan to establish a utopian community near New Harmony; perhaps he even saw the constitution for the new venture at Schnee’s parsonage. However it came about, there is no doubt that Maentel knew Jacob Schnee was in Indiana when he sought the aid of his friend sometime around 1836.11

Jacob Schnee was well able to help the Maentels; at the time of their arrival the Schnees occupied a fourteen-room house at what was then called Schneeville. (In October, 1843 the house was sold to William Creese Pelham, and the area was renamed Pelhamtown.) If the Maentels had traveled by way of the Ohio River and disembarked at Evansville they would have ridden over the new state road between that town and New Harmony; a road built in 1835 by a state commission of which Schnee was a member. This road would take the Maentels to the Schnee’s doorstep, two miles east of New Harmony. It was a simple matter to find “work for the boys,” since Schnee had 806 acres of cropland (leased for twenty-one years from the Owen Community), as well as cattle, hogs, sheep, an orchard, vineyards, and three mills. When Maentel returned from Texas, Schnee most likely assisted him in locating suitable farmland, as Schnee was president of the Posey County Agricultural Society and Fair, which the Maentels certainly would have attended.

Maentel may have been lured to Texas by the Revolution of 1835 which resulted in the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Texas in 1836. Perhaps the looming financial panic of 1837 was also a contributing cause. In Texas great tracts of inexpensive land were available to settlers, and large numbers of Germans migrated there from Europe as well as from the United States, building flourishing German colonies on the outskirts of established towns. But even so, some puzzling questions remain. If the Maentel birthdate of 1763 is correct, why would a man in his seventies — a man with young children — undertake such a back-breaking adventure? Could it be that he was not really that old? In order to find out, it would be necessary to check baptismal records in Germany, and that raised another question: Did those records survive the devastation of World War II?

A search in Germany soon brought the answer to both questions. Herr Klaube, from the Office of Preservation of Culture, City Archives, Kassel, sent the following reply to questions about the Maentel family:

In the second World War a large part of the Kassel Church Books, especially those of the nineteenth century, sadly were
NEW INFORMATION

As this issue of Pennsylvania Folklife was going to press, an answer to queries concerning the Maentel family made to the Hessian State Archives (following the advice of Herr Klaube, see endnote 12) brought the following new information about the folk artist from archivist Dieter Pelda:

Enclosed you find 3 extracts from the church book of the Oberneustädt (Upper New City) congregation of Kassel for the years 1776, 1778, and 1780. You can see from them that Johann Adam Bernhard Jacob Mentel was born on October 15, 1778. . .

From the church book of the Oberneustädt congregation of Kassel, Baptism 1776, Sept. 11, Christine Dorothee Marie, of the beadle of the illustrious principal post office, Friedrich Mentell and wife Elisabeth born Krügerin, born 4th of the same.

Godparent: wife of Mr. Giebel, treasurer of Jesburg. Marginal note: died 7 October 1861 in the old city congregation here.

From the church book of the Oberneustädt congregation of Kassel, Baptism 1778, October 25, Johann Adam Bernhard Jakob, of the beadle of the illustrious principal post office, Friedrich Ludwig Mentel and wife Elisabeth born Krügerin, son, born the 15th of the same.

Godfather: the veterinarian Mr. Kersting in Hanover, whose place was proxied by the manufacturer Mr. Balkeisen.

From the church book of the Oberneustädt congregation of Kassel, Baptism 1780, Christiana Dorothea Sophia, of the beadle of the illustrious main post office, Friedrich Ludwig Mantel and his wife Elisabeth born Krügerin, their daughter was born October 4 between 11-12 o'clock and was baptised the 11th of the same. Godparent was Mrs. Kroeschel of the village mayor's office of Marburg, the father's sister.

As is readily apparent, this adds considerably to our knowledge of Jacob Maentel, for it definitely establishes his birthdate and gives us the names of two of his sisters and a paternal aunt, as well as the names of friends of the family.

New City's Records

Knowledge of the 1778 baptismal date should also be helpful in confirming or refuting another tradition — the belief that Jacob Maentel was forty years older than his wife. A search of the baptismal, confirmation, and marriage records of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (now the United Church of Christ) of Frederick, Maryland by scholar Marianne Ruch brought the following information from her:

The confirmation record of Catherine Weaver is found in the records of Pastor Jonathan Helfenstein (volume 2-10) for 1818 . . . There is no marriage record for Catharine and Jacob Maentel, although they could have been married in that church. There is a gap in the marriage records from [1816?] until September 12, 1830.

Was Catharine German? Weaver is not a German name; it would be Weber in German . . . The Baptismal Index shows two Catharine Webers, one born to John and Maria Weber on September 23, 1800 and baptized December 7, 1800; the other born to John and Catharine Weber on November 7, 1802 and baptized April 4, 1813.

Entering into the realm of speculation, I would guess that, if one of these is Catharine Weaver, it is the latter. If she was born in Baltimore, and the family removed to Frederick where they joined E & R Church and had Catharine baptized at age 10, then this would make her 15 going on 16 when confirmed and 16 going on 17 when married. Their first child Louisa was born in Harrisburg . . .

A memorial plaque in St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, New Harmony, lists eldest daughter Louisa's
Anders Ferguson. All three of these families—the Fraser near Cynthiana on Indian Creek. Settled in Kent County on the eastern shore of Maryland. Rebekah had two sisters, Elizabeth, who married William Casey, and Mary, who married Alexander Ferguson. As family members have always believed.

**JONATHAN AND REBEKAH JAQUESS**

Jacob Maentel painted Jonathan and Rebekah Jaquess in 1841, about five years after his arrival in Indiana. The finished works are as fine an example of “full-face, full-length, large-scale, complex portraits of subjects in interior settings or detailed landscape backgrounds” as Maentel ever produced. The “interior setting” of Rebekah’s portrait preserves the work of another important American folk artist (of which more below); and the “detailed landscape” against which Jonathan is shown has symbolic as well as commemorative significance. Both pictures, in short, repay detailed study; a study that must begin with a look at the lives of the subjects themselves.

Jonathan Jaquess, Jr. (1753-1843), was born near Woodbridge in Middlesex County, New Jersey. At the age of twelve he was a cabin boy and he followed the sea until he was twenty-seven. He became captain of a sloop trading with the West Indies, and when the American Revolution began, Captain Jaquess received letters of marque and reprisal from the Revolutionary government with license to prey on British merchant vessels. After many feats of derring-do, he became a Minuteman, served as a recruiting officer in New York, and was at Yorktown when Cornwallis surrendered.

After the war Jaquess purchased a third interest in a sloop and engaged in coastal trading until 1789. According to tradition, the Jaquess family then joined a Boone party migrating down the Wilderness Road through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky, where land was forty cents an acre. At that time Jonathan Jaquess was thirty-nine years old, married to a second wife (the former Esther E. Koy) and father of four children. Two years after their arrival in Kentucky, Esther died. In 1791 he married Rebekah Fraser Rankin, widow of John Rankin and mother of two children. Jonathan and Rebekah became the parents of nine children.

Rebekah Fraser Rankin Jaquess (1762-1849), was a granddaughter of Hugh Fraser, who at the age of seven was abducted in Paisley, Scotland, and indentured to William Cummings, a Quaker who lived in Woodbridge, New Jersey. Upon reaching manhood, Hugh married Peggy Cummings, his master’s daughter, and settled in Kent County on the eastern shore of Maryland. Rebekah had two sisters, Elizabeth, who married William Casey, and Mary, who married Alexander Ferguson. All three of these families—the Fraser Clan migrated to the Kentucky wilderness and settled near Cynthiana on Indian Creek.

In the summer of 1801 something extraordinary happened to the Fraser Clan that would deeply influence their lives, and which helps to explain the background of the Maentel portraits of Jonathan and Rebekah. In nearby Bourbon County, Kentucky, the Cane Ridge Church at Paris held a revival meeting for all denominations that was attended by several thousand people. As many as seven preachers at a time—perched on tree stumps and the tailgates of wagons—exhorted the throng for five days and nights, as people wandered from one group to another. The thrust of the message was that the new nation had a unique destiny, not only to free people from ancient political tyrannies, but also to free people from the formal creeds and ecclesiastical organizations that clouded the simple message of the Bible: to love one another in Christ. Just as Jesus had fasted for forty days in the wilderness, the pioneers in the Kentucky wilderness had hungered for God. The Fraser Clan experienced the emotional and spiritual cleansing of the Second Great Awakening. It is this Pentecostal experience that Jacob Maentel captured in his portraits of Jonathan and Rebekah Jaquess.

In 1800 the Indiana Territory was carved out of the Old Northwest Territory. Thereafter, Kentucky hunting parties, including Daniel and Squier [sic] Boone, had dared Indian attacks to hunt in the territory and had recrossed the Ohio River with wondrous tales of abundant game and rich farmland. In 1811, a decade after the Pentecostal experience, the three branches of the Fraser Clan, headed by Jaquess, Casey, and Ferguson, decided to move to the Indiana Territory with their children and grandchildren. A committee, headed by Jaquess and Casey, visited Vincennes and filed for patents at $1.50 an acre for 2000 acres of wilderness in what is now Posey County. Experienced pioneers, they decided on a new approach: the next few years were spent in surveying, clearing land, building cabins, and planting orchards. These were excellent preparations as there were forty-four settlers (all linked by kinship and marriage) relocating; the largest group of Kentucky migrants who moved together into southern Indiana.

By September 1, 1815, they were ready. Some of the men and boys (with wagons and animals) set out by land, following the Red Banks Trail from near Cynthiana, Kentucky to Henderson, Kentucky. Here they crossed by ferry to Diamond Island. The rest of the men and the women and children left from Augusta, Kentucky and traveled down the Ohio on three flatboats loaded with their belongings. The flatboats arrived at Diamond Island on September 25th; their cargo was loaded onto the already-waiting wagons, and the migrants crossed to West Franklin, Indiana. From there they followed an old buffalo trail that come through the area south of what is now Cynthiana, Indiana, to their new homes.

As soon as they arrived the men built a schoolhouse, and Jonathan Jaquess opened his home to the
Photograph (ca. 1915 by Doane Foto, Mt. Vernon, Ind.) of original portrait of Jonathan Jaquess painted by Jacob Maentel in 1841, when Jaquess was eighty-eight years old. (Courtesy of Judith W. Lindell.)
Photograph (ca. 1915 by Doane Foto, Mt. Vernon, Ind.) of original portrait of Rebekah Jaquess, aged seventy-nine, painted by Jacob Maentel in 1841. (Courtesy of Judith W. Lindell.)
Methodist circuit rider, setting aside a "preacher's room," where the minister could rest, write, and hold church services. Theirs was not an isolated community. Five months before their arrival, George Rapp's Harmony Society had moved to their new home on the Wabash River from Harmonie, Pennsylvania; they were building the town of New Harmony, nine miles to the southwest, for their eight hundred members, and their well-stocked stores furnished supplies for the surrounding country. In 1825, when the Harmonists decided to move back to Pennsylvania, Robert Owen purchased New Harmony and established his New Moral World. Rebekah Jaquess' son, John Rankin, became a member of Owen's community, which broke up in 1827. In 1834 seven families of the Fraser clan, headed by Rankin, established Goshen, a co-operative labor community, on Garrison Jaquess' farm. This failed in 1835 and the town of Palestine, later renamed Poseyville, developed on their acreage. In the Maentel portrait of Jonathan Jaquess the eighty-eight-year-old pioneer is shown standing on a pier, pointing to a full-rigged ship apparently sailing out of the harbor. Underneath Maentel had written: 

There all the ships [sic] company meet.  
Who sailed with their savior beneath.  
With shouting each other they greet.  
And triumph o'er [sic] sorrow and death.  

Thus the background of the picture commemorates Jonathan's early life and career, including his Revolutionary War service, and symbolizes his religious fervor, a fervor he never lost. Thomas S. Hinde, who had written the couple's memoirs in 1842, gave this account of Jonathan's death: In 1843, at the age of ninety, "when the old patriarch realized his sojourn on earth was coming to a close, he was seized with religious fervor and began shouting 'Glory!' and praising the Lord and clapping his hands until, his strength failing, he could no longer bring them together. Thus the venerable pioneer departed for the region of eternal bliss."  

Rebekah's portrait, too, reflects the Pentecostal experience of 1801. In the open Bible on the arm of the Windsor chair in which she is sitting, Maentel wrote: "For we know that were our earthly house . . . dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the . . . heavens." In the bottom right-hand corner is written: Rebecca Jaquess, Aged 79 Years, painted in the Year 1841 (her tombstone is inscribed Rebekah Jaquess; on her husband's portrait the spelling is Jacques); there is no signature. Jonathan's portrait was signed by the artist: "Jacob Maentel fecid" (Jacob Maentel he made [it]). (On one of the only two other pictures he is known to have signed, the spelling is Mántel.) On the question of whether or not the pictures are good resemblances we have the following comments: Hinde who, of course, actually knew them, noted that he "was shown a pretty good likeness of the two old people." Contemporary Poseyville artist Charles Hirsch, a lifelong friend of the Jaquess family, said: "The likeness as portrayed in Maentel's portraits can be seen in descendants today."  

THE JAQUESS PARLOR  
The portrait of Rebekah Jaquess, with its background view of the family parlor, has caught the interest of scholars of American folk art. Harold L. Peterson, an authority on early American interiors, has identified Rebekah's chair in the portrait as "a green bamboo-turned Windsor chair with a left-handed writing arm . . . rare if the aberration is exactly portrayed." The last recorded mention of Rebekah's chair has been found in a 1915 account of the Fraser Clan's centennial reunion at the Jaquess' farm. A large billboard was erected by the yellow gate at the foot of the lane leading to the house. According to a newspaper account, the family tree and the Maentel portraits of Jonathan and Rebekah were displayed on the board, and "Grandma Jaquess' chair" was placed nearby. A 1784 Lutheran Bible, together with the communion service and baptismal bowl used by the Reverend John Schrader (Rebekah's son-in-law) in the Jaquess' house, are on display at St. Paul's Methodist Church in Poseyville. There has been some conjecture about the green plaid floor covering noticeable in the Maentel painting. In her description of Rebekah's portrait, Mary C. Black, an authority on the artist, describes it as "a plaid rug."

Harold L. Peterson describes it as "a tartan check . . . evidently a painted floor cloth." It has also been suggested that the floor itself — made from wide poplar boards of random width — was painted. But the floor covering may very well have been a hand-loomed carpet in a tartan plaid, since the family's pride in its Highland origins was so strong. A long descriptive poem in the style of Sir Walter Scott (read at both the 1865 and 1915 family reunions) lists two spinning wheels — a large and a small — and a loom in the cabin, and there were fields of flax and also sheep to furnish materials for weaving.  

The parlor chair and the floor covering are certainly of interest, but the most important discovery in the room concerns the wall stencils. Nina Fletcher Little, whose American Decorative Wall Painting is considered the standard authority on the subject, says that "... the small picture of Rebekah Jaquess is of great documentary interest because it shows a rare contemporary view of an interior . . . against a blue stencilled wall, the three border designs . . . may be recognized as Moses Eaton patterns." According to Janet Waring, an authority on Moses Eaton (1796-1886) — the best-known and most prolific of the itinerant wall stencilers in New England — the folk artist married and settled
down on his farm in Dublin, New Hampshire. But, she adds, “One suspects that he never quite mastered the restless itinerant’s blood, for tradition states that the freedom and adventure of the road tempted him to an excursion west.”

There was, of course, no proof that Moses Eaton had ever worked in Indiana, but it was impossible not to wonder whether, in this case, tradition might not prove to be correct. Could the wall stencils actually have been Eaton’s work? The fact that they might have been was a major factor in the decision to preserve the Jaquess parlor when it became possible to do so. In fact, the restoration of the parlor and its opening in 1980 as the Jaquess Parlor Museum made it possible to answer the question about Eaton’s workmanship once and for all.

THE JAQUESS PARLOR MUSEUM
Katherine Jaquess Johnson was the last of the family to own the Jaquess’ portraits and the Jaquess farmhouse. In September, 1959, Katherine sold the paintings to Robert Carlen, a New York art dealer; he, in turn, sold them to Williamsburg. When she had the farmhouse remodeled, workmen had exposed some of the stenciled walls, but she did not, she said, remember ever having seen the Windsor chair in Rebekah’s portrait. 39

Local artist and historian Charles Hirsch had bought a property known as the Lockwood House; it is one of several large Jaquess-related houses in Poseyville. In the attic he found a small, humpbacked trunk made of pine and covered with pony hide; it was marked “Cynthiana, Ky., H. Jaquess, 1785.” 36 It held family memorabilia, including a pair of handmade glasses with side pieces ending in eyelets for ribbons to be inserted to tie around the head; they are exactly like those pictured in Rebekah’s portrait. Hirsch had also attended a “yard sale” at the Jaquess house in 1959, and he remembered seeing there a ship model that was apparently used by Jacob Maentel in his portrait of Jonathan. The model was hand-carved wood about eighteen inches long and six inches deep at the thickest part of the hull, and had three masts. Hirsch had “seen it on the mantel in the old farmhouse many times; it was in bad condition, and was bought at the sale by a man named Wardrip who lived out in the country.” 36 It was also Charles Hirsch who first told me he had heard the stenciled walls in the farmhouse were intact under many layers of wallpaper.

I first saw colored prints of Rebekah and Jonathan Jaquess at the same time I met a Jaquess’ descendant, Judith Werry Lindell. In 1975 Judith had inherited from her mother a collection known as the Fanny Jaquess Papers; she, too, was intrigued by the Maentel portraits. We spent many exciting moments looking into a battered chest filled with scrapbooks, pictures, diaries, letters, and even several checks for five thousand dollars each — shares due unknown heirs of an English property.

It was Judith who told me of the imminent razing of the Jaquess farmhouse. She called on a November day in 1975 saying it would be torn down, and mentioned the possibility of getting a souvenir. I immediately suggested we try to get the whole house. Consequently we called Ralph G. Schwarz, the president of Historic New Harmony, Inc., 37 and told him of the house’s importance, and of the fact that Charles Hirsch thought the stencils depicted by Maentel in Rebekah’s portrait were still intact under the parlor wallpaper. We asked if he would be interested in saving it from demolition.

Fortunately for us Schwarz, in the course of his researches, had acquired a library of books, articles, and prints about Maentel and Eaton (along with material related to other documentary artists connected with the community); thus, he was well aware of Maentel’s importance, and knew of the possibility that Moses Eaton had visited the community before 1841. Schwarz was definitely interested, and he and his assistants joined us immediately for the ride to the farm to talk with the present owners, the Jesse L. Marse family. On the way, Judith told Schwarz that she and her brother, James Werry, might be able to persuade their friends to give the old farmhouse to the preservation project in exchange for the moving of the building.

When we arrived, Mrs. Marse graciously invited us to sit in Rebekah’s parlor, a modest little room with nothing to suggest all the work that would take place in it during the next five years. Later, while the restoration architects examined the structure, Judith and I walked to the field in back of the house. The dwelling was located on a gentle knoll overlooking a valley. Judith pointed out the family cemetery about 250 yards downhill where Jonathan — one of six known soldiers of the American Revolution interred in Posey County — and Rebekah are buried.

Down in the lower valley we could see the sulphur springs. In the wilderness days of 1815 when the Kentucky pioneers arrived, bears, panthers and wolves shared the water hole; Indians hunted wild game. By 1865, when the Fraser Clan held its fiftieth reunion at the Jaquess farm, all was gone except one ancient walnut grove. This was now America’s cornbelt, and cattle were drinking from the springs or standing in the coolness of the grove. Sadly Judith and I turned away from the sunny November landscape — the harvest in, the land ready for rest. We were sobered by the thought that soon all connections with Jonathan and Rebekah, except their grave site, would also be a thing of the past.

It was not long before the old house, now on wheels, began its journey down the farm roads to New Harmony. It was placed in a field outside town so preservation and restoration architect Rose A. Broz could begin the tedious work of stripping wallpaper, making drawings, taking measurements, and analyzing paint.
Schwarz made the decision to preserve the parlor only, and workmen began to tear away other parts of the structure. Winter snows and rains held up work for a while, and when Broz returned later, she found another treasure awaiting her. The wall of the hall, now an outside wall, had released strips of wallpaper and exposed other unexpected stencils. These were recorded along with paint analysis. By now the time had arrived when it was essential to move the remains indoors, as old plaster crumbles easily; so as soon as the stencils were traced, the best panels were chosen, carefully cut, crated and packed; the parlor, hall and porch were carefully dismantled; and the whole trucked to a warehouse in New Harmony to await the study of how this precious piece of history could best be presented and used to tell the New Harmony story.

Eventually it was decided that the parlor would be incorporated into New Harmony's decorative arts series as the 1840's unit, and Ralph Schwarz had his architect design and build a concrete cocoon to mount it. The decorative arts series begins with a log house for the pioneer period, followed by the Harmonist Lenz House from the 1820's, and the 1830 Owen Period House Museum. The new Jaquess Parlor Museum would be attached by a runway to the latter. Future plans include restoration of the original Jaquess porch and front door to the entry, then incorporating an adjacent building to develop a Maentel and Eaton gallery.

In the course of her work Broz prepared a report for Historic New Harmony which compared the Maentel painting with the actual stenciled walls in the Jaquess house. She had removed thirteen layers of wallpaper and found the stencils not only intact, but also "very accurate"; just as Maentel had painted them, "although the arrangement is slightly different." The borders in the Maentel painting were identical to those found in the room, but Maentel had used artistic license to remove the ceiling border from the area above the window and place it at the top of his picture.
The restored Jaquess House parlor now installed in the Decorative Arts Museum at New Harmony, Ind.

Ralph Schwarz ordered two-by-three-foot colored enlargements of the Maentel portraits for closer study, and made a trip to Massachusetts to visit the Boston Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. That organization holds the Moses Eaton kit of stencils found by Janet Waring in the attic of Eaton's Dublin, New Hampshire, house. The stencils found in the parlor of the Jaquess house and in Maentel's painting of that parlor were compared with known Eaton stencils in the East, and with stencils in the Moses Eaton kit. Two are identical to those found in the Eaton-decorated Thompson house, the others (with one exception, identified below) came from the Moses Eaton kit.

In the parlor of the Jaquess house Eaton divided the wall into vertical sections "by eye," with each division not less than seventeen—nor more than twenty-four inches wide; this irregularity is exaggerated in the Maentel painting. The corner vertical was used only once, thereby giving a continuation of the design around the room. The stencils were also placed "by eye," resulting in some irregularities in spacing and alignment. They are identified as the baseboard border; chairram border; ceiling border (leaves); vertical division; double stencil quad circle; flower spray with center circle; flower spray, and quad leaf spray. The double stencil quad circle is found neither in Waring's identification of Eaton's work, nor in the artist's stencil kit.

New stencils were cut from drawings made in the parlor and hall for use in the restoration, and the paint was scraped and analyzed. The Broz Report lists the results: the stencils are accurate in color and are limited to dark red, dark green, and very dark blue; the baseboard is described as a dark charcoal color; the trim is listed as pink with a slight salmon tinge; the walls were found to be gray. In amplifying remarks Broz points out that dark charcoal was a practical color, and explained the salmon pink trim was due to the yellowing of the oil through the years in Eaton's flat, oil base paint. She felt the gray walls required a longer explanation, and made several points in connection with them, the first being that in the Maentel portrait the walls are blue. She also notes that Prussian blue was a common color for walls and, most importantly, points out that "Prussian blue can be browned by high temperatures and the white lead darkened by exposure to sulfurous products of combustion such as coal smoke." We may underscore that quotation since it is particularly applicable to southern Indiana. Bituminous coal, with its high sulfur content, is not only mined extensively here today, but also was widely burned in open fireplaces until it was replaced relatively recently by gas, oil, or electric central heating. After almost a century-and-a-half, the walls have had ample time to turn gray ("brown").
CONCLUSION

My first sight of the restored Jaquess parlor was a memorable one. Judith Lindell had dropped in occasionally to help paint stencils, and when the work was finished she called and asked me to come see it. We agreed to meet at the Owen Period House (it had been the home of Captain G. W. Saltzmann who was killed at Bull Run, and his wife, Louisa, daughter of Jacob Schnee), and as we walked through it, Judith warned me to prepare for a shock. We entered the runway which attaches the old museum to the new, and we were met by a “bonus” gift from the hallway — a colorful array of pineapple, oakleaf, and sunburst stencils on ochre walls with pink trim. We looked through the door into the parlor, now ablaze with color: Prussian blue walls with salmon pink trim, just as Maentel had portrayed it.

The room was empty with the exception of two easels which held enlarged copies of the portraits of Jonathan and Rebekah Jaquess. According to the Broz Report, Maentel painted Rebekah sitting between the two windows on the west wall. The house on its original site faced west; the restored parlor is placed in the same direction. To the right of the parlor door into the hall, a portion of the wall showing evidence of the original stencils was left as proof that Moses Eaton did indeed visit Posey County before 1841. 13 Historic New Harmony could now announce with confidence that Eaton was the itinerant journeyman who decorated the walls of the Jaquess house. The Jaquess parlor thereby gains in importance in the field of early American decorative arts, as it expands the known area in which this craftsman worked.

As for Jacob Maentel whose tombstone bears only his initials, his life is commemorated by his work; an epitaph only the artist could write. And for Jonathan and Rebekah Jaquess, Maentel’s gift to them was immortality in the memory of man; their portraits record their belief in the gift of immortality from God. As for the visitor to the Jaquess Parlor Museum, he has a rare experience — as did Alice in Through the Looking-Glass — the experience of stepping into Maentel’s picture!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank the following for the help they have given me in the preparation of this article: Marianne Ruch, Judith W. Lindell, Letitia Mumford, Charles Hirsch, Ralph G. Schwarz, Historic New Harmony, Inc., Kenneth S. Jones, Donald R. Brown, Janet H. Anderson, Katherine Jaquess Johnson, Rose A. Broz, Aline Cook, Working Men’s Institute, Dr. William T. Parsons, Gloria Cox, Randall M. Miller, Klaus Wust, Nat H. Youngblood, Jr., and Herr Klausen (City Archives of Kassel) and Dieter Pelda (State Archives of Hesse) of the Federal Republic of Germany.

ENDNOTES

2Ibid., p. 142.

13Ibid., p. 141. The dimensions of the portraits are: Mr. Jonathan Jaquess, 17 5/8 x 11 1/4; Mrs. Jonathan Jaquess, 17 3/4 x 11 3/8.

14Variations in the spelling of “Maentel” are used as found in the sources.

“Thomas Mumford, Hertford, England, was sent by Robert Owen in 1828 to teach carpentry in the Machure School of Industry, New Harmony. Examples of his work are the altar in St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, and a reclining chair (pre-Morris chair) in the Old Faubonner Home, New Harmony.


16In the possession of the Mumford Family, Griffin, Ind.; it consists mainly of printed material with the exception of the family tradition material used in the body of this article (all the quotations are from letters found here), and the manuscript medical book by Maentel, written in educated High German.

17Gloria Cox to Mary Lou Fleming, Poseyville, Ind., Nov. 19, 1987:

18“In attempting to pinpoint the arrival of the Maentels in Indiana, we might make a cursory examination of Posey County legal records. . . The Posey County Probate Court accounting of the settlement of the estate of Jacob Schnee lists Jacob Maentel among the creditors of the Schnee Account Books. . . Also in 1837 Catherine Mentel opened an account with William Price, a farmer living between New Harmony and Stewartsville, where the Maentels settled. It is known that Maentel painted portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Price which were destroyed in the tornado that struck Griffin in 1925. . . A more exhaustive search may reveal further evidence. . . Have you checked John and Jacob Mantle who lived in Washington Co. 1820-1830?


20It is interesting to speculate on the epidemic which was sweeping the Ohio Valley and which caused the Maentels to stop in Posey County. That there was a sickness prevalent is revealed in the Gellert Schnee Court accounting of the settlement of the estate of Jacob Schnee (1834), lists Jacob Maentel among the creditors of the Gellert Schnee Court Accounting of the Settlement of the Estate of Jacob Schnee. . . Gellert was Jacob’s eldest son) containing business letters of the Schnee Mills. Jacob Schnee had written his partner, W. E. Stewart, a lawyer in Mt. Vernon, that “the machinery was down” because his son-in-law, Jacob Bauer, had been sick for ten days. In another letter Schnee wrote that he had turned back from a buying trip to Louisville because he had become ill on the journey. Schnee’s wife Catherine died at fifty-one on February 13, 1837, and Schnee himself died at age fifty-four on August 14, 1838. No New Harmony newspapers for those dates have been found to reveal the cause of death. A Kentucky diarist, writing in December 1835, recorded that cholera was raging and described the horror and fear of the disease.

21(from the Fanny Jaquess Papers, a private collection in the possession of Judith W. Lindell, New Harmony. Fannie was a great-granddaughter of both Jonathan Jaquess and Jacob Schnee.)

An Asiatic cholera epidemic in 1832-33 had brought to New Harmony the documentary artist Karl Bodmer, a member of the entourage of Maximilian Prince zu Wied (see his Travels in the Interior of North America, 1834) whose illness prolonged his visit to the American scientific art to the community. It is interesting that both Bodmer and Maentel were in New Harmony as a result of epidemics. Today an exhibit of the Bodmer Collection in the Maximilian-Bodmer Museum in New Harmony is one-half block from the Jaquess Parlor Museum, the parlor where Jacob Maentel in 1841 painted the portraits of Rebekah and Jonathan Jaquess, which now hang in the Abby Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg.


3. Burials, 1805: Week 6-13 March — congregation O.D. — family name Mentel — entry Friedrich Ludwig M., beadle of the illustrious General Post-office, age 74 years 10 days.

The following people assisted in locating Jacob Maentel’s baptismal and birth record:

Randall M. Miller (ed.), Germans in America: Retrospect and Prospects, Phila., 1984) to Mary Lou Fleming, Philadelphia, 20 August 1987, giving address of contributor Klaus Wust, a native of Westphalia; Klaus Wust to Mary Lou Fleming, N.Y.C., 4 September 1987, giving address of Stadtarchiv Kassel, F.R. of Germany; Marianne Ruch to Mary Lou Fleming, Derwood, MD, 12 September 1987, the query in German language had been posted asking a search for 1760-80 baptismal record or a military record in Napoleon’s army; Herr Klaube, City Archivist, Stadtarchiv Kassel, to Mary Lou Fleming, Kassel, F.R. of Germany, 30 October 1987. Quoted. Translation by Ruch; Dr. William T. Parsons to Mary Lou Fleming, Collegeville, 4 Nov. 1987: “Mentel and Maentel are exact equivalent pronunciations. Mentel is a Hessian dialect spelling and is probably what the family used centuries back, before they paid much attention to a Standard German spelling . . . Maentel is the accepted spelling both in the U.S. and in Germany today . . . The lists (are) from O.D.G., the Upper Neustädter Gemeinde, the Upper New City Community and the Hofgemeinde, the Court Community Records”;

Dieter Pelda, archivist to Marianne Ruch, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, 7 January 1988, reporting no birth entry for Mentel/Menten in 1731; and giving marriage record of Frederick Ludwig Mentel, 1759. Quoted. Translation by Ruch; Archivist Dieter Pelda to Mrs. James M. Fleming, Jr., State Archives of Hesse, Marburg, 29 January 1988, giving birth/baptism records of Jacob Maentel and two sisters, plus the name of a paternal aunt and friends. Translation by Ruch; also, Kenneth S. Jones to Mary Lou Fleming, Worcester, MA, 18 January 1985, sending naturalization paper. Quoted.


“Black, p. 141.


Ibid.
UP ANOTHER RIVER:
FOURTEEN DAYS ON THE ST. JOHNS
by Richard Matthews

The captured Confederate Steamer, Darlington, used by the Federal forces to search for and seize the Governor Milton. (Frank Leslie's Illustrated, Dec. 20, 1962.)

The 68 ton steamer Darlington proceeded with caution, south, up Florida’s St. Johns River as the blue coated men aboard intently searched for signs of a small river tug known to be secluded in one of the many streams and waterways which flowed into the river. It would have been a strange sight indeed to local inhabitants if they watched the activity on the Union vessel being operated by its regular Negro captain and crew. And if the voices of the soldiers drifted ashore the listeners would have heard a strange language, one of German-English mix with sing-song inflection. For these men aboard the small river steamer were from the Lehigh Valley in Pennsylvania, many of them of Pennsylvania German origin who continued to speak the local dialect while in Union Army service.

The year was 1862 and on this warm, early October day, companies E and K of the 47th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment were carrying out a mission to find, seize and return with any Confederate steamers thought to be hiding on the St. Johns. This small army force was commanded by Captain Charles Yard of Easton, Pennsylvania. Accompanying the Darlington, which itself was a captured Confederate steamer, was a small convoy of gunboats under the command of a U.S. Navy lieutenant.
The Confederate Steamer, Governor Milton, captured by Federal forces in the St. Johns River, Florida. (Frank Leslie's Illustrated, Nov. 22, 1862.)

At a point approximately two hundred miles up the St. Johns River from its estuary at Jacksonville, the small steamer, Governor Milton, was discovered anchored in a small stream. The Governor Milton, a 68 ton river tug — used to tow rafts of lumber to saw mills — was named for Florida's wartime governor who committed suicide. The point where the sequestered boat was found was near present-day DeLand, and situated about halfway between Daytona Beach and Orlando. (The headwaters of the St. Johns River rise in Brevard County near Melbourne, and the river flows northward into Lake George, the halfway point along the river course which lies in present-day Ocala National Forest, and then north again to Jacksonville.)

Corporal George Nicols of Easton, Pennsylvania serving in Company E of the 47th Pa. — he would be advanced in rank to first sergeant — recorded the excitement of the search and seizure of the Governor Milton:

At 9 PM, October 7, discovered the steamer Gov. Milton in a small creek, 2 miles above Hawkinsville; boarded her in a small boat, and found that she had been run in there but a short time before, as her fires were not yet out. Her engineer and mate, then in charge, were asleep on board at the time of her capture. They informed us that owing to the weakness of the steamer's boiler we found her where we did. We returned with our prize the next day.

I commanded one of the Small Boats that sent in after her. I was Boatman and gave orders when the headman jumped on Bord [to] take the Painter with him... when I struck the deck I demanded the Surrender of the Boat in the name of the U.S. After we had the boat an officer off the Paul Jones, a Gun Boat, was with us he ask me how soon could I move her out in the Stream. I said five minutes. So an Engineer, one of the colored men helped me. And I will say right hear he learned Me More then I ever knowed about Engineering. Where we Started down the River we was one hundred and twenty five miles up the river. When we Stopped at Polatkey [Palatka] to get wood for the Steamer I went out and Borrowed a half of a deer that hung up on a out house and bee hive for some honey for the Boys. I never forget the boys.

The Darlington arrived back in Jacksonville on the morning of October 9th with Captain Yard's detachment aboard. It was proud escort to the Governor Milton which closely followed with a mixed crew including Corporal Nichols.

This expedition up the St. Johns River was but a four day interlude in the two week "battle" of Jacksonville. This expedition, sent to assault the gun emplacements on a bluff overlooking and guarding the river, brought favorable press notices and military commendation to General John M. Brannan. This brief incursion made with a limited force (47th Pa., 825 men; 7th Connecticut, 647 men; an artillery section of 41 men, and one cavalry company of 60 men, for a total of 1573) occurred in October of 1862 when any military success brought comfort to the North. This was a time of discontent with the progress of the war.

General Brannan's mission was to reduce the Confederate fort located about six miles upriver on a commanding bluff. A secondary objective was to take control of Jacksonville and destroy all that might be supportive to the Rebel cause. Success would bring Federal control of the river and show the Union presence in the
Mayport Mills, mouth of the St. Johns River, Florida. This was the initial landing site for Federal troops sent from Beaufort, S.C., to destroy Confederate defenses in the Jacksonville area. (Harper’s Weekly, Oct. 25, 1862.)

State of Florida. As Brannan had orders to retire after completing his mission, this military action was actually a raid rather than a sustained military operation. Brannan was supported by a gunboat flotilla of seven steamers commanded by Captain Charles Steedman.

The expedition embarked from Beaufort, South Carolina, on Tuesday, September 30. The transports arrived at the entrance to the St. Johns River at 8:00 A.M. the next morning, and by noon weighed anchor and entered the river. Landing of troops began at nightfall and continued until most were on shore by 9:00 P.M. This initial landing was made at the town of Mayport on the south shore, a small town built around a lumber mill. (Mayport still exists on the western edge of the U.S. Naval Air Station.) Small landing barges called “flats” were used to bring the men ashore, but the cavalry horses were thrown overboard to swim which was standard practice for that day. About midnight of October 1, troops of the 47th Pennsylvania were reembarked and carried a few miles upstream to Buckhorn Creek. These troops landed at 2:00 A.M. and were immediately mired in marsh and swamp while unsuccessfully attempting to ford the Greenfield Creek. Finding the ground completely impassable, the men were reembarked on flats which were pulled by the accompanying gunboats. The assault force once again boarded the ship and proceeded another short distance up river and landed at the head of Mount Pleasant Creek. The time was now 6:00 A.M., and the men of the 47th had not a resting sleep in 48 hours.

About the same time that the landing was made at the second position, 6:00 A.M., the rest of the regiment was embarking back at Mayport. This second portion, of battalion strength, landed in support of their comrades at Pleasant Point at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, October 2. Now the line of march began toward the rear of the bluff. To Colonel Good and his men the fort on the bluff was a formidable bastion.

But to its defender, Lieutenant Colonel Hopkins, who had arrived just a few days before the Yankees appeared, the fort presented many weaknesses. It had been built to fire down on ships attempting to move upstream to Jacksonville. There were no effective defenses constructed to guard against assault by land from the south. Without extra troops to protect his rear Hopkins felt he had little chance of success in maintaining his position. He had small arms ammunition for but one hour of action and no troops to throw out as a blocking force.

Early in the morning of Thursday, October 2, Colonel Good’s Pennsylvanians marched through the pine thickets toward the bluff. They were guided by a contraband named Israel in the direction of Parker’s Plantation which lay on the narrow road leading to the bluff. The Navy added its contribution by advancing up the river with its gunboats, but the cavalry and artillery were unable to land due to the marshy surface. The going was difficult, men moving through mud and water up to their hips before emerging onto solid ground. Colonel Good sent back to the landing for a six pound field howitzer which arrived about 12 noon, at which
The terrain was mostly marsh and swamp, so during much of the Florida campaign Federal troops struggled through “mud and water up to their hips before emerging onto solid ground.” (Harper’s Weekly, April 8, 1863.)

time the column was again moved out toward the enemy position. About an hour later the 7th Connecticut came up to join the 47th Pennsylvania in driving away some Rebel forces. Firing began and continued while the Union column advanced another three miles. The howitzer was used to good effect with canister and shell, and it probably was at this time that the Confederates were convinced that they were facing a large and determined force.

At 3:00 P.M. Union skirmishers came upon an enemy outpost which showed signs of a recent withdrawal. The men were halted to destroy the tents and equipment and to send back captured ammunition, arms and accoutrements.

Another mile brought them to a second enemy camp which had also been evacuated moments before. Private Brecht of Allentown, Pennsylvania, a member of Company K, wrote home of this action in German:

It was an unusual day for us on the way, always through bush, marsh, swamp and water . . . We worked through with sixty bullets per man on the side, and five days rations on the back but we made it. Colonel Good was at the head of the regiment on foot and was strong and happy and even the Connecticut Regiment could not keep up with us and were always a good piece behind. Before we reached our camping place we passed two rebel camps which we could see were abandoned in a hurry, one left his hat and one left his saber, because of the swampy terrain, the horses could not follow us.

After destroying the tents . . . we pushed on again under the guidance of a negro who escaped from the fort but four weeks previous . . . The country soon became marshy after leaving the last camp and it was found necessary to build a corduroy road for the howitzer . . . Night came upon us . . . We moved to the river bank to bivouac for the night under cover of the gunboats . . . one mile below the fort. I was glad to stop and get hot coffee and dry stockings.  

By nightfall the tired troops came to a creek which was close under a hill giving protection from the enemy. Here they bivouacked for the night and awaited orders to attack the fort. Little did they know as they slept fitfully in fear of the action to come that the Rebels were abandoning the fort.

The next morning the men awakened early, had their breakfast of coffee and crackers and then formed in column to move to the attack. By early afternoon the gunboats on the river began shelling the bluff in earnest. Receiving no answering fire, the boats defiantly passed close and under the battery and receiving no enemy fire were assured that the fort was abandoned.

Word was sent to the attacking troops. Colonel Good received the message a few hours before reaching the bluff at 5:00 P.M. It would be a few more hours before the main body of troops arrived. It must have been a relief to those boys of the 47th not to have to face the enemy's guns.

This was the regiment’s first military operation. Raised in August of 1861 by Tilghman Good, an Allentown hotel-keeper, two companies were recruited in Easton, four companies in Allentown, one company in Catasaqua, one company in Sunbury and two companies in Perry County.

In September the 47th left Camp Curtin for Washington, D.C., and during that winter manned the forts across the Potomac River in Virginia. On January 27, the men boarded ships for Key West, Florida, where
Battery on St. John’s Bluff, Florida; captured by Union troops on Oct. 3, 1862. (Harper’s Weekly, Oct. 25, 1862.)

they were engaged in garrison duty at Fort Taylor. The regiment remained there until June 18, 1862, when it was shipped to Hilton Head, South Carolina. Other regiments stationed in the area were soon sent North, but the 47th remained and made its headquarters at Beaufort across the sound. It was from Beaufort that it departed to the St. Johns River.

And after returning from Jacksonville to Beaufort the regiment would fight its first battle at Pocotaligo, South Carolina. Soon thereafter it would return to Key West again, but in early 1864 the 47th was assigned to the XIX Corps and shipped to Louisiana to participate in the Red River Campaign.

Then in early July of 1864, the regiment again boarded steamers to join the fighting on the James River. Arriving in the Petersburg area, the orders were changed to have the XIX Corps join the VI Corps in the defense of Washington and in the pursuit of Confederate General Early in the Shenandoah Valley. The battles of Opequon and Cedar Creek brought severe losses to this much traveled regiment.

* * *

Back on St. John’s Bluff the fort was stripped of captured guns and ammunition on October 3. By the next day a wharf was completed which facilitated the loading of the dismantled guns and cases of ammunition. By Sunday General Brannan’s troops had moved up river to Jacksonville which was found to be nearly deserted. A landing was made and three companies were sent out as pickets about a mile from the wharf. Enemy troops were encountered and an exchange of fire took place but through the cooperation of the gunboats on the river a brief shelling sent the Confederate troops into the countryside. By Monday October 6, Captain Chamberlain reported: “. . . [it] was a gala time with the boys, before the General found out what was going on, almost every store and shop on the street was broken into. Most of them had been closed for a long time but there were goods in a few. A drug store was the best place. The boys pulled everything open and such a medley as they brought away . . . The General soon put a stop to this indiscriminate plundering.” And it was also on this Monday that the steamer Darlington set off up the river in search of the Governor Milton.

By Friday the Darlington had returned to Jacksonville with its prize. The guns had been removed from the fort on the bluff and the Brannan Expedition was ready to return to Beaufort. Captain Woodruff and his Perry County boys of Company D were ordered to “blow up the fort which was done with the most terrific explosions filling the air for a great distance with fragments of timber and sand. And thus came to an end Fort Finigan on St. John’s Bluff, Florida.”

The exploits of the 47th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment which served over four-and-one-half years in the Civil War have been documented by Lewis G. Schmidt in his recent, privately published book, A
Capt. Henry D. Woodruff, Co. D, 47th Regiment, P.V., was in charge of the men who blew up the fort on St. John's Bluff.

Capt. Coleman A.G. Keck, of Co. I, 47th Regiment, P.V., was another member of the Brannan Expedition to northern Florida. (Charles B. Gellig, Jr. Collection.)

Civil War History of the 47th Regiment of Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers. This story of a short two-week foray into the Confederacy is based on a section of that book and is but one of many interesting accounts of this regiment's unique history.

ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., pp. 209-10.
3 Ibid., p. 215.
4 Ibid., p. 220.
AN APPRECIATION OF RUSSELL WIEDER GILBERT

by William Fetterman

Russell Gilbert was born September 3, 1905 at Emmaus (currently Emmaus), Pa. He received his A.B. degree from Muhlenberg College in 1927, and was awarded his Ph.D. in Germanics from the University of Pennsylvania in 1943. From 1930 until his retirement in 1970 he taught as a professor of German at Susquehanna University, and until his death remained active in the life of the school, the community, and the church. In 1931 he married Viola E. Kemmerer, their union being blessed with a daughter, a son, and several grandchildren. Prof. Gilbert died February 19, 1985 at Selinsgrove, Pa.

As a creative individual his death marked a great loss in Pennsylvania German folk culture, for Prof. Gilbert was the only Pennsylvania German academic authority who also became a significant and prolific poet. His major studies include his Ph.D. dissertation Jacob Appet: Der Ritter Underm Zuber (1943); Pennsylvania German Wills (1950); and A Picture of the Pennsylvania Germans (1st. ed. 1947; 2nd. ed. 1958; 3rd. ed. 1962 [2nd printing 1971]; 4th ed. [unpublished] 1983). The two volumes of his collected verse are Bilder un Gedanke (1975), and Glotz un Schliwwere (1987), both published by the Pennsylvania German Society. Other poems may be found in issues of 'S Pennsylfawnish Deitsch Eck (Prentzen Barba, ed.); Der Reggeboge (Frederick Weiser, ed.); The Historic Schaefferstown Record (C. Richard Beam, ed.); and Da Ausauga (Fereinicht Pennsylvania Deitsch Fulk).

It was my good fortune to know Russell Gilbert briefly during the very last years of his life. During his last ten years he was very sick with cancer, yet it was during this period that he wrote much of his finest verse. I always addressed him as "Professor Gilbert" to show my formal respect and sincere admiration of his academic, artistic, and personal integrity. Prof. Gilbert would probably not have liked my mentioning his illness as being particularly significant, for while it was not a secret, he was never one to complain or make anything special of it. He did not give in to self-pity, nor did he have the least desire for any special consideration from others. Although weak and frail in body, his powerful, self-sustaining mind and will were an inspiration to those who knew him.

Russell Gilbert was a rare individual. Judging from his portrait in Bilder un Gedanke, he seems to be unemotional and humorless; a very intently focused, stern, even inhibiting personality. But there is little in that portrait which tells of the real man. His voice had a deep tone, with a somewhat raspy quality. He spoke with a very deliberate and measured cadence, giving full emphasis to every single word. When he spoke, he spoke directly to you, as if peering into one's innermost depths. When spoken to, he listened with equally rare attention. He was a warm-hearted and considerate man, both distinguished and unpretentious. He was full of life, and in his work he consistently reaffirmed discoveries of beauty and insight. It was a marvelous experience to be in his presence, for the excitement he found he profusely and eloquently shared with those around him.

Although much of his poetry was deliberately not humorous, he had a great sense of humor. He loved to hear, and tell, stories. I remember one story that he especially enjoyed telling:

It was during one of the periods in the eighteenth century when the settlers feared being massacred by the Indians. So a Pennsylvania German farmer, having first hidden his wife and children in the root cellar, made ready to meet the attack. The farmer positioned himself behind a rock, ready with his long rifle. Suddenly out of nowhere, an Indian jumped up behind the farmer, with his tomahawk raised and ready to strike. In terror the farmer threw down his rifle and cried "Schlag mich net! Schlag mich net!" ("Don't strike me! Don't strike me!") The Indian dropped his tomahawk in surprise and said, "Ei! Kansch tu aw Deitsch schwezet?" ("Oh! Can you also speak Pennsylvania Dutch?")

Prof. Gilbert always considered John Birmelin (1873-1950) the greatest Pennsylvania German folk poet, but during his last years (while rewriting the fourth edition of A Picture of the Pennsylvania Germans) he came to regard Conrad Beissel and the Ephrata Cloister as being too easily underestimated or overlooked in social and artistic influence. Gilbert's own work may be said to be very much an individualistic extension of these often critically separated poetic traditions, which in Gilbert's work became a unique synthesis and summary of Pennsylvania German folk poetry at its most artistic. In common with Birmelin, Gilbert shares the qualities of direct lyricism, play with language, personal expression, the quick turn of phrase, and the continual study and exploration of verse forms. In common with Beissel, Gilbert shares the qualities of rich and heady imagery, and the use of metaphor as an ecstatic and passionate revelation of spiritual insight — verse being a discipline through which to gain insight and at the same time express this to others.

Whether or not Gilbert's verse should be considered folk poetry is a controversial subject; some assert that only oral, and not written literature, can be properly called folk poetry. However, several dialect recitation pieces such as "Heemweh" ("Homesickness") by Henry Harbaugh, or "Der Deitsch A-B-C" ("The
Dutch A-B-C") by Harvey Miller, were originally literary compositions. If one agrees that written and oral verses have equally valid claim to being considered "folk poetry," one should not be blind and accept only what is most popular or generally known as being "folk." No, Russell Gilbert's verse is not "popular."

Through his verse Gilbert conscientiously chose to expand the very concept of what "folk poetry" is. Although he loved Birmelin's verse, Gilbert found Birmelin's work flawed in the sentimental but trivial and humorous "occasional" or "greeting card-type" poems. As an example, Gilbert cited Birmelin's short poems to Spring, which he criticized as being delightful music, but intellectually vapid. Gilbert was also dissatisfied with the majority of Pennsylvania German dialect poems; he considered them too narrowly humorous and nostalgic. While it might be correctly said that Gilbert broke from this mainstream, popular tradition, he wrote ever mindful of the fact that utilizing a traditional art form need not mean stagnation, but actively necessitates change and innovation. Tradition is constantly inventing itself, and in doing so, continually redisovers and renews itself anew.

In terms of the historical tradition which Gilbert both broke from as well as worked within, the work of Henry Lee Fisher (1822-1909) illustrates a precedent for Gilbert's modernity. Fisher wrote during the 1870's-90's about the rural Pennsylvania German folk life of his boyhood, a sentimental and nostalgic chronicle of the passing scene. Fisher also made translations into the dialect. Clearly, Fisher is well in line with the larger approach to poetry, the style Fisher worked within became sufficiently popular and well-known. There is no question but that Fisher is a significant Pennsylvania German folk poet.

Gilbert broke away from the nineteenth century mentality of Pennsylvania German "folk" verse. Where Fisher was interested in general outward appearances, Gilbert became concerned with images only as keys to open inner experiences of both the past and present. Gilbert was very consciously a "modern" poet concerned with contemporary life on its own terms, rather than taking solace from the past. His style was most pronounced in being short-lined and tightly-rhymed lyric forms, although he also took delight in experimenting with free verse and pictographic forms (i.e. "concrete poetry," where the text forms a picture of itself). For example, the 1965 poem "Ken Baam! Ken Katzegrautte!" ("No tree! No Catnip Tea!") is a typographical arrangement of a tree; a refreshing reinterpretation and insight into the very nature of fraktur and notation.

Gilbert was especially modern in his approach, not only because of his attention to contemporary concerns, but in his formal approach towards verse itself. Gilbert may be said to have been a structuralist poet. He once explained his working method to me, showing me some thirty or forty sheets of typing paper, each filled with hundreds of thinly-written dialect words, collected continuously over a period of time. These words were written down either because of their appealing sound, their peculiarity of meaning, their rhythm, or simply because of personal interest. He also had sheets containing stray lines or couplets written on the spur of the moment. A finished poem came into being from this study and experimentation process, a method he used consistently even throughout his last, masterful years of composition. Yet the genesis of a poem usually was in a personal moment of revelation, the linkage of a particular thought with a specific object or poetic image, the "flash of inspiration." It was here that his delicacy and mastery of technique became truly decisive, for now his sheets of "stray notes" became the building blocks from which the finished poem emerged.

The range of subjects treated in Gilbert's verse continues to challenge and reward the reader. He can be disturbing, as in "Die Uhrrezechh" ("The Hands of the Clock," 1967) or in 1979's "Der Mann Imre Dutt" ("The Man in the Paper Bag") in which he questions the direction of society and the responsibility of the individual. He can be tender and playful — and is — in "Die Windelschapel" ("The Safety Pin") written in 1967, and in "Die Liewe Kinner" ("The Dear Children") written in 1984. He can also be elegiac, as in "Am Tschockeri" ("At the Tschockeri," 1965), his own personal favorite; or in "En Alder Greemer, Der Blechschmitt aus'm Bloobarrig" ("An Old Peddler, the Tinsmith from the Blue Mountain," 1984), a semi-autobiographical "farewell" poem.

Of his many fine poems, the mystical insight that he so clearly expressed in his work is well represented in "Wann Beem Uns Saage Kenna" (1973), the first verse being:

Wann Beem uns saage kenna,
Was schunn sie gsehne hen,
Dee't viel verschdennich mache,
Net verschdanne im Gerenn.

(If trees could tell us,
What they have seen,
The incomprehensible in life's rush
would seem sensible.)

For me, Russell Gilbert was the wise-man as artist. He was one of those rare souls who could hear trees speak, who could hear the music of rain on a tin roof, who could feel the wind...

The joy and puzzle of Gilbert's verse is that, although he wrote modern verse, he did so in the increasingly ar-
chaic and obscure language of Pennsylvania German. After the publication of his first collected poems in 1975, he wrote almost all his dialect originals with accompanying English translations, in order that his later poems would be more generally accessible. While Gilbert's English translations do not have the same lyrical quality as his dialect originals, his later translations are a model of clarity and economy, and achieve a directness in expressing thought and sensation which was Gilbert's primary purpose for writing in the first place.

Russell Gilbert very consciously used the Pennsylvania German dialect to address serious and contemporary concerns, rather than using it to write humorous doggerel or "nostalgic greeting-cards." He wanted people not only to remember and emote, but to think and question as well; to become more receptive and joyful to the beauty that can be and already is in life. His unique aesthetic vision, told in an honest and singular voice, remains as his great legacy to Pennsylvania German culture.

NOTES TO SELECTED GILBERT POEMS

My thanks to the Pennsylvania German Society and the Society's publications editor, Pastor Fred Weiser, for allowing me to make a selection of Russell Gilbert's poems for inclusion in Pennsylvania Folklore. The first six poems are from Bilder Und Gedanke, and the last six are from Glotz Un Schlöwwere. Both volumes are available from the Pennsylvania German Society, P.O. Box 397, Birdsboro, Pa. 19508.

1. "Ich Wott, Ich Waer en Gleeni Grott" was Russell Gilbert's first poem. Gilbert only translated the last verse. This poem reveals Gilbert's strong affection for Birmelin's verse, particularly in Birmelin's translations of Mother Goose (Mammi Gans) rhymes.

2. "Der Filosof" is a semi-autobiographical poem written in 1964. Gilbert wrote only a few verses in the 1940's, and during the mid-1950's he wrote many dialect hymns and some Psalm translations for dialect church services. It was only in the mid-1960's that he began to write his own highly personal poetry in earnest. The translation is his own.

3. "Die Uhrezczeche" is an excellent example of Gilbert's social consciousness, written with passion and simplicity. The translation is his own.

4. "Es Miehlraad" is definitely one of the most musical poems Gilbert ever produced. Although Gilbert at first glance seems to be less musical than Birmelin, that is not really the case; it is rather that Gilbert found his own music. Birmelin is often easier on the tongue in recitation, while Gilbert has more of the stop-and-go rhythm of a Lutheran choral. This particular poem presents Gilbert in a delightfully-flowing rhythm which is nonetheless punctuated by the "schlipp schlapp" syncopation of the sound of the water wheel. Gilbert did not originally translate this.

5. "Nordpol, Siedpol": short, sweet, and to the point. This philosophy was also expressed in his 1950's dialect hymns. The translation is his own.

6. In "Mei Schproch Is Wie En Blumm" the philosopher on the stump takes delight in his gift of expression. "Schproch" is die Muttersproch, a feminine noun better expressed in English as "she," rather than the neuter "it." The Pennsylvania German dialect was Russell Gilbert's first-learned language, and so die Muttersproch — literally "the mother-tongue" — echoes as a prominent autobiographical element. This translation is based on Gilbert's incomplete English version.

7. "Zwee Daddeldauwe Imme Gewidderregge": After the publication of Bilder Und Gedanke in 1975, Gilbert entered the most mature stage of his development as a poet. Many of Bilder's poems have no English equivalent, or have only a few obscure words defined. Gilbert now realized that it was important to provide his own English translations to accompany the dialect originals. As a result, he freed himself to explore language and versification in a highly elastic manner, resulting in a more intensively meditative body of work. This poem seems almost trivial, but he turns it around in the last line. The translation is his own.

8. "Ruhich die Summernacht"—ah! the gentleness and ease, and even the subtle irony that communicates so delightfully his tenderness... The translation is his own.

9. "Far Waxe In Die Ewichkeit": even though he was very critical, Gilbert was a decided optimist. When he provided negative criticism, it was not to mar, but to beautify. Strongly opinionated, he was also always open-minded and willing to see things from a different perspective as well. The translation is his own.

10. "Deel" is particularly concentrated with images which, rather than folding inward, unexpectedly open into an unspoken and unanswerable question. The translation is his own.

11. "Die Liewe Kinne" is a very late poem, but one which shows off many of Gilbert's finest points in structure, content, and style. The translation is his own. The bracketted word "Draam" in the third verse is as in the original typescript. Notice also the translation bracket in verse five, where Gilbert characteristically, as in other of his later poems, provides further clarification of a word or phrase in an academic, yet personal, aside.

12. "En Alder Greemer, Der Blechchmitt Aus'm Bloobarrig" was Russell Gilbert's last poem. It is again semi-autobiographical, but involves a larger cultural consciousness. The form is free verse, a form that interested Gilbert, and one he might have liked
to use more which becomes significant, as this is his final, "farewell" poem. The original translation in the typescript, reproduced faithfully in the version published in Glatz Un Schliwierre, is only an abbreviated translation, introduced by the following statement: "The poem in free verse is based on Gilbert’s imaginary characterization in prose (Der Reggeboge, July 1979, p. 7 f.)." The translation that appears here is my own version, which originally appeared in Da Ausauga, Fall 1985, and is based upon Gilbert’s own fragmentary English translation.


SELECTED POEMS

1. ICH WOTT, ICH WAER EN GLEENI GROTT

Ich wott, ich waer en gleeni Grott
Un hett dann nix zu duh,
As hupse in de Felder rum,
Wie'n froher, gleener Bu.
Ich weess, ich bin en rechter Geess
Un kann aa nix verschteh;
Dumm is der Mensch in dare Welt
Un oftmols mechodich glee.
Die Grott, die hupst, der Mensch, der mupst
Un weess net, was er will,
Wohar er kummt, wuhie er geht —
Ach hett er doch en Brill!

Im Tschun 1943

2. DER FILOSOF

Der Filosof sitzt uffme Schtumbe,
Er rollt Gedanke in en Glumbe,
Idee-e reibt er rum un zamme,
Die warre, gfeehrlich grosse Flamme.
Sie zische heess in alle Ecke,
Verbrenne Hols un darre Hecke;
Die Welt watt Esch un kennt verlumbe,
Du aarmer Filosof am Schtumbe.
17. Nowember 1964

1. I WISH, I WERE A LITTLE TOAD

I wish, I were a little toad
And so had nothing to do,
Than hopping around in the fields,
Like a happy, little boy.
I know I am a complete goat
And can not understand;
Mankind is stupid in this world
And often immensely small.
The toad, hops, the man, sulks,
And knows not, what he wants,
Whence he comes, Whither he goes —
Oh, if he only wore spectacles!

In June 1943

2. THE PHILOSOPHER

The philosopher sits on a tree stump,
And rolls thoughts into a lump.
He rubs ideas around and together,
Which become dangerously big flames.
They hiss hotly into all corners,
Consuming wood and dry brush;
The world turns to ash and could go to ruin,
You poor philosopher at the stump.
3. DIE UHREZEECHE
Schutunne kumme, Schutunne gehne;
Muss mer sich glei draagewechn.
Was mer net recht zeitlich dutt,
Bleibt gewechnlich gans kabutt.
Barmedickel arnschlich schwinge,
Wolle Zeit als Koscht verschlinge.
Schutunne kumme, gehne weck,
Uhre schlagge — unne Zweck?
Dreht in Dauer, Uhrezeeche!
Daage, Yaahre viel verscheche.
Mensch, du kennecht im Dreck verrecke,
Loss, o loss dich zeitlich wecke!
10. Maz 1967

3. THE HANDS OF THE CLOCK
Hours come and hours go,
A fact to which we must adjust.
What is not done punctually,
Usually remains undone.
Pendulums swing ardently,
Prone to consume time as fare.
Hours come, then depart,
Clocks strike — without purpose?
Turn constantly, clock hands!
Days and years frighten much away.
Mankind, you could perish in filth,
Let, oh let yourself be awakened in time.

4. ES MIEHLRAAD
Wasserraad
An der Miehl —
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Wasser geht
Iwwer’s Raad,
Rum es dreht,
Gaar net schteht.
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Wasser kummt,
Wasser geht —
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Dreht un dreht.
Driwwer schteht
Miehl un Schtee.
Wie es fliessst!
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Wasser, giess!
Wasser, schiess!
Schlipp, schlapp,
Schlipp, schlapp.
Iwwer’s Raad
Immer noch!
Maahl, o maahl,
Miehl, o Miehl!
Mehl, meh Mehl!
Schlipp schlapp...
19. August 1967

4. THE MILL WHEEL
Water-wheel
At the mill —
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Water goes
Over the wheel,
Round it turns,
Totally not motionless.
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Water comes,
Water goes —
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Turns and turns.
On the other side is
The mill and grindstone.
How it flies!
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Water, pour!
Water, shoot!
Schlipp schlapp,
Schlipp schlapp.
Over the wheel
Yet again!
Grind, oh, grind,
Mill, oh, mill!
Flour, more flour!
Schlipp schlapp...
5. NORDPOL, SIEDPOL

Lewe is Kamf,
Grieg un Schtreit;
Lewe is Lieb.
Friede un Freid.
Nordpol! Siedpol!
Welt dreht rum,
Schpinnraad grumm.

3. September 1969
An meim Geburtsdaag
(On my birthday)

5. NORTH POLE, SOUTH POLE

Life is struggle,
War and strife;
Life is love.
Life is suffering,
Peace and joy.
North Pole! South Pole!
The world revolves
Like a crooked spinning wheel.

6. MEI SCHRÖCH IS WIE EN BLUMM

Mei Schproch is wie en Blumm,
So farwiche schee un dufdich.
Mer losst sie waxe grumm,
Sie watt en bissli schufdich.

Sie kennt verwelke wann
Mer roppt sie ab unziedich,
Mer sott sie wessre dann,
Ihre Dod net unvermeidlich.

Mei Schproch is wie en Blumm,
So dufdich schee un farwich.
Mei Schproch, wa nie net schtumm,
Verdascht, verhungert, scharwich!

18. August 1973

6. MY TONGUE IS LIKE A FLOWER

My tongue is like a flower,
With fragrant beauty and color.
One lets it grow crookedly,
Becoming a bit shabby and base.

It can wither if
One plucks it untimely,
One should water it,
So its death be not inevitable.

My tongue is like a flower,
With fragrant beauty and color.
My tongue, never grow silent,
Nor die from thirst, hunger, or neglect.
7. ZWEE DADDELDAUWE IMME GEWIDDERREGGE
Gewidder schtret mit Wedderleech, 
Laut Graches gege Lichterschtreech; 
Die Beemnescht schockle gredfich rum, 
En Bledderdans verschreckt die Blumm. 
Zwee Daddeldauwe zucke Kepp, 
Sie schmutze Schnawwel graad un schepp, 
Eng schiewe nanner unne Schtreit, 
Ach, liewe besser as wie Leit.
17. Tschulei 1977

7. TWO TURTLEDOVES IN A THUNDERSHOWER
Thunder quarrels with lightning, 
Loud cracking against bolts of lights; 
The tree limbs rock vigorously, 
A dance of leaves frightens the flower. 
Two turtledoves twitch heads, 
They kiss beaks straight and wry, 
Tightly push each other without strife, 
Oh, love better than people.

8. RUHICH DIE SUMMERNACHT
Ruhich die Summernacht un schtannehell 
Sichelt der Mond as wie'n dinni Scheib; 
Schepper, der Gross, henkt schepp im Leib, 
Rinnt awwer net. Ken Luft, ken Windgegnell. 
Friedlichi Nacht, en Quell erfrischt dei Rett, 
Daat un daafft die Bledder un Graas, 
Weckt der Mut un kitzelt die Naas; 
Ungezifferschlof as wie Kinner gerett. 
Englisch Eil guckt scharf un yammert “Who-who?” 
Schweiges dutt doch yederem gut. 
Nacht schloft ei, macht wacker des Blut, 
Annere Veggel zwitschere “Ruhich du!”
20. Tschulei 1977

8. TRANQUIL THE SUMMER NIGHT
Tranquil the summer night and starry bright 
The moon cuts with a sickle like a thin disc; 
The Big Dipper is suspended slanting in body, 
But does not leak. No breeze, no sound of wind. 
Peaceful night, a spring refreshes your speech, 
Bedews and christens the leaves and grass, 
Wakens the spirit and tickles the nose; 
The sleep of vermin like children saved. 
English owl stares sharply and moans “Who-who?” 
Silence is good for all, you see. 
Night goes to sleep, but stirs the blood, 
Other birds twitter “Quiet you!”
9. FAR WAXE IN DIE EWICHKEIT
Die Welt en mechdich grosser Karreb,
   Mit alle Sadde Farreb,
   Mit viel Geleggeheit
   Far waxe in die Ewichkeit.

Die Welt en feiner Kunschtkalenner,
   Wu bringt schun all die Enner
   Schier zemme aus re Zeit,
   Far waxe in die Ewichkeit.

Die Welt en ungeheieri Kansel,
   Mit iwwerall en Fransel,
   Wu yeders breddicht heit,
   Far waxe in die Ewichkeit.

Die Welt en langer, breeder Schpiggel.
   Deel Mensche schmeisse Briggel;
   Doch annre liewe weit,
   Far waxe in die Ewichkeit.

Die Welt verfluchder Haufe Kehrich.
   Fars Gut un Schee mich wehr ich;
   So sodde all die Leit,
   Far waxe in die Ewichkeit.

2. September 1979

10. DEEL
Deel Mannsleit sin wie Haahne,
    Un deel wie Hinkel gewe ei;
Deel Fisch hen gaar ken Graahne,
    Un ann're voll mit Schdecherei.
's gebt Hunde as net blaffe,
    Die menschde halde 's Maul net zu;
Moll guckt mer an die Katze,
    Die bringe ihre eegner Luh.
Was sin des fer Gebeier?
    Deel schdehne nidder, ann're hoch.
Es gebt aa so verlappte,
    Deel schee, de Eggner ihre Schproch.
Heit kann mer viel erwaarde,
    Mer weess net, was noch schppeeder kummt:
Verloss dich druff! Viel Neies
    Zu uns noch summt un dann verbrummt.
8. Tschun 1981

9. TO GROW INTO ETERNITY
The world a very large basket,
   With all varieties of color,
   With much opportunity
   To grow into eternity.

The world a fine art calendar,
   Which already puts together
   Almost all the ends from a period of time,
   To grow into eternity.

The world an immense pulpit,
   With everywhere a fringe,
   Where each one preaches today,
   To grow into eternity.

To world a long, broad mirror.
   Some human beings throw clubs (abuse);
   But others love far,
   To grow into eternity.

The world a cursed heap of sweepings.
   For the good and beautiful I do my best (I resist);
   So should all the people,
   To grow into eternity.

10. SOME
Some men are like roosters,
   And some like hens submit;
Some fish have no bones at all,
   And others are full of pricks and stings.

There are dogs which do not bark,
   Most do not keep quiet;
A turn to the cats,
   And they bring their own reward.

What kind of buildings are these?
   Some stand low, others high.
There are such neglected ones too,
   Some beautiful, the language of their owners.

Today one can expect much,
   One does not know what still comes later:
Depend on it! Much that is new
   Will still hum pleasantly to us and then end in cacophony.
II. DIE LIEWE KINNER

Kinnergschpiel,
Grundgewiehl.
Sing un schpring —
Fingerring.
Schwimmt wie’n Fisch,
Gsund Gegrisch,
Wasser schpritzt,
Sunn wu blizt.
Kinner [Draam]
Graddle ’n Baam.
Amschelnescht,
Wind wu drescht.
Hinkelwoi,
Schiff ahoy!
Kind guckt nooch
Himmelhoch.
Draamerei,
Kinner frei.
Eisner Reef
Fliegt wie’n Schtreef.
[Reef schpringe: Rolling an iron hoop with a wooden
stick was common fun in my boyhood.]
Sonneblumm,
Sume drum
Waxe uff,
Veggel druf.
Kinnerenschlof
Graad wie’n Schof;
Wibberwill
Nachts nie schtill.
Geili, Hos’s!
Reide loss!
Laut Gelach
Fliesst wie’n Bach.
Bobbli heilt,
Seifzer weilt;
Lieb macht dod
Mitleidnot.
Kinnergrafft,
Baam voll Saft;
Yedes Laab
Goddes Gaab.
1. August 1984

11. THE DEAR CHILDREN

The continual play of children,
Rooting in the soil.
Sing and run —
The ring.
Swims like a fish,
Healthy shouting,
Water squirts,
Sun that flashes.
Children [Dream]
Climb a tree.
Robin nest,
Wind that thrashes.
Chicken hawk,
Ship ahoy!
Child follows with a glance
Heaven-high.
Continued dreaming,
Children free.
Iron hoop
Rolls like a streak.
Sunflower,
Seeds round about
Grow up,
The birds upon them.
Children asleep
Like a sheep;
Whippoorwill
At night never still.
Horsey, Giddap!
Let him ride!
Loud laughter
Flows like a brook.
Baby cries,
Sigh lingers;
Love eliminates
The need for sympathy.
Children’s strength,
Tree rich with sap;
Every leaf
God’s gift.
12. EN ALDER GREEMER, 
DER BLECHSCHMITT AUS’M BLOOBARRIG

Der alt Blechschmitt aus’m Bloobarrig,
Imme Heisel verlumpt, en Dreckloch,
Sei Schtubb voll gutricehiche Blumme
un Blanse,
Sei liebschä - un basilich - die Schtinkblumm.
Roscliche Blechkanne mit farwiche Blanse
Un gleene Blummeheffe uffem Fenschdersitz
Gucke raus nooch der Sunn.

Der alt Blechschmitt waar oft net daheem:
Vun Blat zu Blat iss er rumgeloffe,
Fer sei Blechegscharr zu verkaafe,
Graad wie aa die Gebotts- un Daafscheimacher
Als uff em Land rumkumme sin.
Blechschmitt un Kesselgreemer!
Hot sich nie net begreemt -
Was er nix alles ghatt zu verkaafe!

Heerscht die Haahne widder am Greche aus’m Blech?
Kuchemodde fer Grischtdaag, Tee- un Kaffikanne,
Fettamschle, un schpeeder Ladanne,
Blech ausgschnidde, nuffgklempt, gedreht,
Geboge, ghammert un Lecher neig schla gge,
Aa schee gfarrebdi Arawet in Blech.
Der Greemer hot net rumgschtanne un gebeddelt
Mitme Beintblech in der Hand.

Ihm hot der Dreck daheem nie nix ausgemacht.
Nur die scheene Sache sehnt er:
Sei BLECHWAAR un sei BLECHEGSCHARR
Un nadierlich sei BLUMME.
Ee Marrye finne ihn paar Nochbere uff’m
Schockelschtuhl,
En halb Blechvolk kalder Kaffi uff em Disch,
En Blechkesselvolk heeeser Kaffi uff em Offe;
Es Kohlefeir waar noch net aus,
Noch ruhich un dischder am Brenne;
Der alt Blechschmitt waar aa ruhich - er waar yo dod.
DER KINSCHDLER? ER LEBT HEIT NOCH!

4. Disember 1984

12. AN OLD PEDDLER, THE TINSMITH FROM THE BLUE MOUNTAIN

The old peddler from the Blue Mountain,
In a little hovel rested, a dirt-hole,
His room filled with fragrantly-smelling flowers and plants,
His favorite - and most fitting - the marigold.
Rusty tin-pots with colorful plants
And little flower-pots on the window-sill
Look out following the sun.

The old tinsmith was often not at home:
From place to place he is walking about,
For selling his tin-work,
Just as also the birth- and baptismal-certificate-makers
Are always coming around the countryside.
Tinsmith and kettle-peddler!
Has himself absolutely not complained -
That he doesn't have everything to sell!

Do you again hear the rooster crowing from the tin?
Cookie-cutters for Christmas, tea- and coffee-cans,
Fat-burning-lamps, and later laterns,
Tin cut-out, edges turned-up, twisted,
Bent, hammered and holes punched-in,
Also beautifully colored work in tin.
The peddler has not stood-around and begged
With a tin-cup in the hand.

For him at home the dirt has never made any difference,
Only the beautiful things he sees:
His TIN-WARE and TIN-ART
And of course his FLOWERS.

One morning a couple of neighbors found him on the rocking chair,
A half of a tin-cup of coffee on the table,
A tin-pot full of hot coffee on the stove;
The coal-fire wasn't out yet,
Still peacefully and servicefully burning;
The old tinsmith was also peaceful - he was dead then.
THE ARTIST? HE STILL LIVES TODAY!
HOLY IMAGES: A BRIEF STUDY OF FOLK RELIGIOUS BELIEF

by Erick D. Slazinski

The focus of this study is the investigation into the folk religious belief that God continues to give humanity physical signs of His love and existence. Visions which people have had — and which are almost impossible to prove or disprove — and “questionable images” — images that are only seen under special conditions or lighting — are not within the scope of this paper. This paper will concentrate on the purely physical: that which has been seen and photographed, but which has been proven to be a mystery to science.

Usually so-called holy images are known only on a local level, and of the two cases examined at length here, the first — which concerns an image that appeared on a dyed Easter egg — is known primarily to members of the owner’s family and residents of her hometown. The second, however, concerns a photograph known as “Jesus in the clouds”; a photograph which its owner has been generous in distributing and which, therefore, is more widely known than the egg image. Brief consideration will be given to a holy image known worldwide: the Shroud of Turin.

Holy images may be defined as images with a significant meaning which have been imprinted on matter by a process which in the normal way is inexplicable; in a way, in fact, which can only be explained by a power — God — which is above man’s power of comprehension. To the people involved they are considered to be miracles: “events contrary to the laws of nature worked by a super-human agency as a manifestation of its power.” Yet everyone need not believe in these miracles for, as one Episcopalian minister was quoted as saying, “you might consider certain miracles as non-events and still be a good Christian.” The belief in these miracles, then, constitutes an additional faith — folk religion. Folk religion is a “traditional (adopted, then adapted) level of religion in a literate (educated) society; it is unofficial, and relatively unorganized, but is related in time to prevailing religions.”

These holy images may also be seen as Divine revelation, for “... God reveals himself through angels, through dreams, through oracles, through visions and locutions, [and] through natural phenomena.” Revelation through nature could be defined as natural revelation, but the term “general revelation” is preferred because “natural” implies no supernatural intervention — a quality which all holy images possess. One must remember that “not only the occurrence of divine revelation, but also its very nature, content, and variety are exclusively God’s determination.” Of course, to the people involved, there is no doubt of the images’ authenticity; indeed, a brief proof of authenticity is given in each case. And, although that raises the age-old question (asked, appropriately enough, by Pilate of Jesus’) “What is truth?” that too is outside the scope of this study. Guided by the rule that in the area of folk religious belief (as in many others) “men should not rush into conclusions, but keep their minds open for such time as may be necessary,” this study will focus on what believers see as the positive aspects of these miraculous objects.

The first holy image to be considered is that imprinted on an Easter egg; an Easter egg dyed by my maternal grandmother, Mrs. Blanche Roberts of Middleville, New York. Mrs. Roberts is a widowed homemaker who led a normal, charitable life until Holy Saturday, March 27, 1978. On that day she was dyeing Easter eggs with her son and two nephews. Of twenty-five eggs dyed that night, one was unique. It came out of the purple dye with a darker purple image clearly visible — an image which is the exact shape of the “chalice used to hold the wine during Mass.”

Mrs. Roberts’ Easter egg, showing deeper purple chalice image against purple background. (Evening Telegram, Herkimer, N.Y., 27 March 1978, p. 1.)
When Grandmother Roberts first saw the egg "she felt cold chills." But after consulting with another son and her two daughters later in the evening, she decided there was nothing to fear; that it could be a sign (perhaps from her husband, Kermit Roberts, who had died two years earlier) that peace would descend on the family. The next morning she took the egg to the Reverend David Tern, before the nine o'clock Mass at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Middleville. The Reverend Tern also thought the egg special, saying "I don't know how unusual it is, but it certainly seems more than a coincidence."

The Roberts family concurred with the Reverend Tern when they gathered for the traditional Easter festivities. They all believed the image on the egg was the result of some divine influence, and that it had some divine significance. Later Mrs. Roberts had the egg x-rayed at Mohawk General Hospital in Mohawk, New York. The x-ray proved that the egg had nothing abnormal inside it. Already certain that the dye, which was store-bought (and which had dyed the other eggs — including the other purple-colored eggs — normally) was not responsible for the image, the Roberts’ family took the x-ray examination as proof that their egg was indeed something special.

The image on Blanche Roberts’ egg and its color are both rich in symbolism. "The word colour denotes a hiding or distorting of the truth," so the x-ray was essential in proving the egg hid nothing. On a religious color wheel purple lies between the Father’s red and the Son’s blue; it is the “colour of man’s possible kingship and Self authority . . . Purple is also associated with the man Jesus Christ, King, a state reached only through sacrifices . . .” One must also remember that this miracle occurred only hours before the holiest day in a liturgical church: Easter Sunday, the day Jesus rose from the dead and destroyed death, a death He suffered for the sins of mankind.

The death of Christ took place on a cross, and a chalice was the "receptacle of the blood of Jesus Christ at the crucifixion . . . What is essential to the chalice . . . is the quest for purity." Moreover, the "blood contained in the chalice is the mediator between spirit and body." All of this symbolism gives meaning to the believer of the idea that this egg is a sign from the spiritual realm — Heaven — to the physical world. Indeed, to the Roberts’ family, which had just been through a period of great sacrifices (sacrifices which might be seen as a symbolic shedding of blood with its resultant purification), this symbolism lent credibility to the idea of peace blessing them. If the method of revelation seems strange to some, believers feel that “God has chosen to reveal himself in different times and in different modes.”

The second holy image concerns a picture known as "Jesus in the clouds." The story of this picture begins on an airplane flight from Rome to New York City. On this flight a woman — name unknown — saw a beautiful cloud formation "in the form of jelly rolls." Fascinated, she photographed the formation, but upon receiving the developed pictures found not her remembered "jelly rolls," but a photograph which many now believe shows an image of Jesus in the clouds. She was puzzled about this since all the other pictures from the strip were hers and were what they should have been. The woman took the negatives to the New York Police Department, and Sister Maureen Christi was asked to examine the photographs and the film.

Sister Christi conducted several chemical tests which indicated the pictures were authentic, but more tests were requested. This time the Sister had the assistance of chemists and mechanical engineers from Rochester and Schenectady, New York. These tests too "ruled in favor of the photo." All of this information was presented to the owner-photographer, who subsequently gave the picture to Sister Christi. According to the Sister, the picture of "Jesus in the clouds was [then]
printed on special photographic paper for a few close friends. But something happened; these few friends had a few friends and so on. I used up all my personal paper. So, I prayed, and part of that prayer was ‘God, what about that vision photograph you gave us? I can’t afford the money for the paper to give out. All those that are being asked for, should I start charging for them? At two dollars for a 5 x 7 print it looks like a swell way to make some easy money.”’

Sister Christi’s prayer was soon answered and she became the possessor of one hundred sheets of 8 x 10 inch paper; enough paper to print two hundred pictures. After a few good test prints, she ran into a streak of bad luck, and at “‘print number 4, [the] enlarger bulb burned out; at number 6, [the] timer button broke off; . . . numbers 8 through 18 are all fogged, [and] all of the rest of the paper seems fogged. [I] must get a new box.”

On the way to the dealers, Sister Christi had a faith experience and ended up downtown, at St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church. There, she says, “I talked with Jesus, oh, how I talked, I put forth everything. For two hours, I talked, prayed, praised and thanked Him.”

As a result of this prayer, an arrangement is made whereby Sister Christi promises: “I’ll do the work and always have a supply of prints. I’ll never charge money and never accept money and you [God] supply the paper and the people to pass it on to.”

Miraculously, according to the Sister, her photographic paper was no longer fogged, and more paper was available when she needed it. But she does exact a price for the prints: “. . . for every print given out, a prayer of thanks and praise must be said by everyone, to the Lord, when he or she receives the photograph.”

One who did receive a photograph, a friend of Sister Christi’s, noticed that when the picture is slowly rotated, fifteen clear and distinct faces can be seen on it. There are “‘twelve male faces, two female faces and one baby. All visible on the original vision. All part of the vision’s design.”

Sister Christi, too, feels part of a design; she is very grateful to be part of “God’s gift to us, His children.” But even though all the evidence points to an authentic image, nothing official (even on a diocesan level) has become of the picture. Nevertheless, everywhere Sister Christi goes there is always a demand for the photograph; folk religious belief in it continues to grow.

This belief is encouraged by a symbolic connection believers see between the photograph and the transfiguration of Christ: “. . . Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up a hill to pray. While he was praying, His face changed its appearance, and His clothes became dazzling white . . . a cloud appeared and . . . a voice said . . . ‘this is my Son, whom I have chosen . . . ’”

This Biblical passage also has two significant examples of symbolism — the color white and the clouds. White “is used to denote rejoicing . . . thus representing the undifferentiated spirit.”

And, during the Middle Ages, it was popular to depict God as an eye or as a triangle (or in combination) usually appearing in the clouds.

Altogether the Biblical passages and the perceived symbolism provide a base for folk religious belief in the authenticity and significance of the image; many have affirmed that it has greatly influenced their lives for the better.

The third and final holy image to be discussed is the Shroud of Turin. The Shroud dates back at least to the thirteenth century when it was in the possession of Geofry de Charnay, who may have acquired it in a crusade. Today it belongs to the Roman Catholic Church due to the death, in 1984, of the ex-king of the House of Savoy.

But if the Shroud of Turin truly is the Shroud of Jesus then it dates back to A.D. 33 when “. . . it was evening [of the] Preparation Day, that is, the eve of the Sabbath, [and] there came Joseph of Arimathea, a councillor of high rank . . . [who] went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus . . . Joseph brought a linen cloth and laid Him in the tomb which had been hewn out of rock.”

But the purpose here is not to pursue or summarize the vast amount of research connected with the Shroud, but to discuss the resulting folk religious beliefs surrounding it. In this case the object is known worldwide as an exact photographic image which is also anatomically correct — including the direction of the flow of the blood. Moreover, the thumbs are contracted which could have been caused by a piercing of the wrists, and the Shroud also contains accurate threedimensional data which ordinary photographs do not.

Finally, “a light yellow pigment lies on the very topmost surface of the threads. The coloring has not soaked into the threads as one would expect of pigments that have been painted or rubbed on.”

Even the threads next to the burn marks (from a fire in 1532) contain the pigment, not altered by the heat.

The Shroud and all of its mysteries also contain much symbolism. The symbol of Jesus Christ Himself, which, for each person means something special; something unique. The Shroud also contains color symbolism. Yellow is the color of the Holy Spirit and is the color of the meditating force and flow of life itself. “Yellow is pure love . . . the colour of gold, the untarnishable spirit and indicates the luminous radiance of the divine state.” This is important since Jesus was the embodiment of true love and was the radiant force of the Divine Kingdom on earth.

Although the Shroud is believed by many to be authentic, the real question, the question of whether or not it was actually the burial shroud of Jesus Christ, “will remain forever outside the bounds of proof.”

Therefore, belief (or not) in it will always be a personal matter that falls into the area of folk religion. Such holy
images as those discussed above will always exist, for mankind needs objects of faith. As William James said: “The inner need is . . . [for] something . . . majestic . . . [for] objects for adjectives of mystery and splendor derived in the last resort from the Godhead who is the founder and culmination of the system.”¹³ This is due, in large part, because “we believe our eyes.”¹⁹ In New Testament times Thomas (the doubter) was the embodiment of this characteristic. So “God created . . . the world of objects . . . to serve a sacramental purpose, namely to be the instruments of fulfilling relationships between man and God.”⁴⁰

The image on the Easter egg, the photograph of Jesus in the clouds, the Shroud of Turin; each is special in one way or another; each has special properties, and each has satisfied certain circles of believers. Whether the group is large or small the effect is usually the same: a deepening of faith for the believer. For “faith cannot rest exclusively on reason, and it would be a sorry age that did not leave room for signs and wonders.”⁴¹

ENDNOTES

²Ibid., p. 48.
³Dr. Hilda A. Kring, lecture, Grove City College, January 1985.
⁵Henry, p. 9.
⁶John 19:38, King James Version.
⁹Ibid.
¹⁰Ibid.
¹³Ibid., p. 49.
¹⁴Ibid., p. 36.
¹⁵Ibid., p. 37.
¹⁶God Revelation and Authority, p. 10.
¹⁸Ibid.
¹⁹Ibid.
²⁰Ibid.
²¹Ibid.
²²Ibid., p. 2.
²³Ibid.
²⁴Ibid.
²⁵Ibid.
²⁶Ibid.
²⁸Church Monastery Cathedral, p. 49.
³²National Geographic “‘The Mystery of the Shroud,’” p. 748.
³³Ibid., p. 751.
³⁴Church Monastery Cathedral, p. 48.
³⁵Ibid., p. 49.
³⁶National Geographic “‘The Mystery of the Shroud,’” p. 752.
⁴⁰Readers Digest “Believest Thou This?,” p. 48.
Richly colored paintings with flattened figures in varying scales of size arbitrarily distributed over the surface, like a tapestry, form the core of works by Lamont Alfred “Old Ironsides” Pry. Airplanes, the circus, animals, flowers, birds, landscapes, and genre scenes are among the topics of “Old Ironsides’s” paintings. Pry’s most common media are house paint, poster paint, or enamel, but he has used wax crayon, acrylics, and watercolors also. Most of the time he paints on cardboard, at other times on board, canvas board, or paper. Pry executed his paintings after his entry into the Carbon County Home for the Aged in January, 1968, when he was almost forty-seven years old. Later, he moved to the new Carbon County Home, Weatherwood, and resided there until his death on November 28, 1987, at the age of sixty-six. He continued working
William Ferris has stated in his book, *Local Color: A Sense of Place in Folk Art*, that we can deepen our appreciation of the work and the life of folk artists by examining them both. 1 “Old Ironsides’s” life is especially important because many of his major works are based directly on personal experiences. Unfortunately, much of what little has been written about his life is inaccurate.

In an effort to learn more about the artist I traveled to Weatherly, Pa., and interviewed him at the Carbon County Home. I also interviewed his brother, George Pry, and his nephew, Keith Pry, by telephone. “Old Ironsides’s” early paintings were once nailed to the inside of a garage at the former Carbon County Home where they were discovered, purchased, and preserved by Sterling Strauser. 2 He developed a close friendship with Mr. Pry and generously shared his insights into Mr. Pry’s work with me. The results of my investigation reinforce William Ferris’s dictum about the need to study both the life and art of folk artists.

Lamont Alfred Pry was born to Alfred H. and Elizabeth Maecher Pry on February 21, 1921 in Mauch Chunk, now Jim Thorpe, Pa. His older brother, George, his nephew, Keith, and his sister, Dorothy, still reside there. Before his death, so did his younger brother, Harry, with whom Lamont was very close. Pry does not remember painting or sculpting as a child or teenager. He attended the local Asa Packer Grade School and quit after the ninth grade. He left his hometown when he was 19. In January, 1941, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps along with three other friends in Allentown, Pa., an early indication of Pry’s love of airplanes. Planes in which he or his friends flew are commemorated in some of his most important works.

“Old Ironsides” Pry took his boot camp training at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., and eventually joined the 14th Air Base Squadron of the 3rd Air Force. From there he was sent to the 27th Bombardment Squadron at Bowman Field in Louisville, Kentucky. 3 While on a reconnaissance flight in a B-25 bomber, his plane was in an accident. Pry recalls that the bomber’s wheels were lowered too quickly and that it hit a stone wall. One man on board was killed, but Pry pulled through after four weeks under an oxygen tent. 4

Pry was sent to Shaws Field in Laurel, Mississippi. While there, he met and married Virginia Logan and had two daughters and a son by her before the marriage ended in divorce. He spent some time at Galveston, Texas; at Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas; and at LaGuard General Hospital in New Orleans where he served as an orderly. 5 Previously, he had worked as an MP and radio man. In mid-1943, he returned home to Mauch Chunk to help care for his ailing mother.

After serving his country, Lamont Pry turned to the civil service and was employed at the Jackson, Mississippi, Veteran’s Hospital and later at the Annie M. Warner Hospital in Gettysburg, Pa. Here he met the head nurse, Susan Maury. Her name appears in several of his paintings in a variety of ways, such as “Susan Maury,” “Susy,” and “Mrs. Susan Maury Pry.” Although they were only friends, “Old Ironsides” felt deeply enough about her to dedicate many of his paintings to her. In several of the inscriptions on the paintings he refers to her as his wife. Pry also worked as an attendant at the Allentown State Hospital, at St. Luke’s in Bethlehem, Pa., and at the Frederick Memorial Hospital in Frederick, Md.

During 1947 Pry married again, this time to Myrtle Binder, whom he described as a “pretty girl.” Several members of her family suffered from Bright’s disease of the kidneys. She, too, was stricken, spent months in the hospital, and died before a kidney transplant could be arranged for her in 1952. One night she was in desperate need of blood at Coledale Hospital. Mr. Pry was a student pilot at nearby Lehighton, Pa., during this period and got a pilot friend, Jakie Arner, to fly him in a Cessna from Lehighton Airport to Wilkes-Barre where the Veteran’s Hospital had the blood waiting for them in a Red Cross truck. Despite these efforts and those of her doctor, Mrs. Pry died shortly thereafter. Lamont Pry suffered a heart attack after his wife’s death. It was from the trauma of these events that “Old Ironsides” was to fashion his art.

In *Airplane In Flight*, Pry memorializes his pilot friend, Jakie Arner, and mentions “Susan Maury Pry.” Executed in poster paint on cardboard, the colors are restricted to pink, light blue-gray, white, black and brown. Integral to the composition are the unpainted areas which contain the printed dedications. Broad horizontal ribbons of color envelop the flying plane. Over the colored portions of the painting are elongated dots, sometimes almost commas of white paint, which enliven the picture with their rhythmic placement. They are a decorative device that Pry uses often, although not in every work.

Proof of this is Pry’s painting of a *Wing-Walker*, done in house paint and glowing silver enamel. Pry knew the pilots of the two planes between which the wing-walker hangs suspended on a ladder, but he claims to have taken much of the composition from a magazine that he had read at the former Carbon County Home.

Also painted at the old Carbon County Home and based on a magazine illustration is Pry’s *Gettysburg’s Greatest National Parachute Jumping Champion*. It commemorates the “U.S. Army Air Corps” and “Susan Maury Pry, Chief Nurse, Annie M. Warner Hospital.” Executed in enamel on cardboard, Pry’s palette is limited to an odd combination of oxblood, light blue, and white which he handles impressively. Broad areas of color flow against unpainted areas filled
In Memory of Jackie Arner Pilot; acrylic on cardboard, 9" x 17½"; Epstein/Powell American Primitives, New York City.

The Wing Walker; enamel and silver radiator paint on cardboard, 33" x 29"; The Strauser Collection, East Stroudsburg, Pa.
with Pry’s printed dedications. He repeats a simple but effective design motif around the parachute and animates his central image with one arching, undulating band of white, perhaps a cloud, and balances the upper left border with another.

Most of Lamont Pry’s works are based on magazines that he read at either the Old Carbon County Home or the new one, Weatherwood. A few paintings like his Goodyear Blimp, executed with poster paint and cardboard shortly after “Old Ironsides” had spied one, were composed without the use of magazines or other compositional aids. Television shows have inspired a small number of works, like his Baseball Player, done in poster paint on cardboard, but most of his genre scenes and animal pictures were produced with the assistance of photographs in magazines.

Many of Pry’s later paintings no longer use dots, dashes, or commas in the body of the work. In Hephaesus Horses in Autumn, done in poster paint on cardboard from 1980 or later, the commas are confined to the sky and the dots to the horses, but here dots are utilized to make a frame for the painting as well. In his paintings from roughly 1981 onward, the dots tend to be found in the borders and not in the works themselves.

Dots are used on only three sides of the composition Fishing at Mr. T.’s Farm. The dots balance the large fish pond to the right in which Pry has sketched both the fishermen and the fish. The work is done in poster paint on cardboard and is typical of Pry’s later works. This painting was painted from memory, after a fishing excursion, according to Mr. Pry. Again, this relates to his personal life, as he has fished all his life.
Two Owls; watercolor on cardboard, 15½" x 20"; Epstein/Powell American Primitives, New York City.

Fishing at Mr. T's; gouache on cardboard, 12" x 16¾"; collection of Andrew and Jean Tuzinski, Andreas, Pa.
The circus is another of "Old Ironside's" major themes. His interest in this subject was piqued in the 1950's when he found some yellowing photographs of his father's in the attic. His father, Alfred, explained that although he was born in nearby Hauto, Pa., as a young man he had worked on his brother Robert's 500-acre farm in Wheaton, Minn., and that when the Sells-Downs-Flotow and Grey Circus came through town, he joined them as a dresser and animal helper. He spent about ten years traveling over the West and the South before returning to Pennsylvania. After marrying, Pry's father worked for the Central Railroad of New Jersey and as a miner.

Lamont, whose middle name is Alfred, had a close relationship with his father and followed in his footsteps in many ways. In the 1950's and early 1960's before the Central Railroad went bankrupt, he, too, worked for them as a car inspector and as part of a section gang, while living at home and taking care of his diabetic mother. During this period, Pry was also a member of the Marion Hose Company #1, the oldest volunteer fire company in Carbon County. Pry and his brother, Harry, and Harry's son, Keith, belonged to the company's clown band. They played at charitable functions and at their annual carnival. Pry remembers selling tickets door-to-door and selling balloons at the carnival itself. He rode on the fire engine playing the bass drum, while Harry played the cymbals and Keith played a cor-net. He also dressed up in a red, white, and blue clown-like costume with an umbrella to cheer on the Jim Thorpe (formerly Mauch Chunk) High School basketball team. Pry became a local celebrity as a one-man rooting section for the team in the early 1960's.

After the death of his mother and his entry into the Carbon County Home, Pry created a number of circus paintings on cardboard. One of these, *Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus*, is the largest work, measuring 29 inches by 53 inches. It is executed in house paint on cardboard. It is chock-a-block with images, including a tent, a wagon, animals, performers and an especially colorful clown. A smaller work, *The Great Hoxie Brothers Circus*, 21 inches by 28 inches, is a dazzling painting energized by dots and commas and lots of pure, bright colors. Commentary is scattered across the surface, along with animals and costumed stunt riders. Included is a horse climbing a ladder, a prop that Pry had used as a clown at times himself. Also, there are several allusions to "Old Ironsides" and to "Mrs. Susy Pry."

"Old Ironsides" Pry has said that all of his clowns are to some extent self-portraits. In his *Volunteer Fireman's Carnival* executed in poster paint on cardboard, the large clown figure holding balloons is clearly labeled as being from Weatherly, Pennsylvania, a town close by Pry's hometown of Jim Thorpe and one which he visited as a member of the Marion Hose Company's...
clown band. This self-portrait, unobscured by a large number of other figures, sports a lavishly and intricately patterned costume that is a veritable crazy-quilt of designs. The clown's traditional baggy pants and leggings are segmented into vertical strips with heavy black outlines that encircle areas of lush pink, aqua, and white that are filled with black dots, commas, and slanted lines. His upper torso is covered with circles that are echoed in the ornamentation of the balloons and umbrella that he holds. The overall composition is simpler than in many of Pry's other circus paintings, but the task of balancing the spaces of cardboard left unpainted with those exploding with painted designs is much more difficult because of the complexity of the patterns, and Pry has managed it quite deftly.

I have located one sculpture by Pry, which was inspired by memories of his father, according to the artist. A white-painted wood circus wagon with a zebra on the side is labeled above: "Sells-Downs-Floto-Grey Circus," in red paint. Red is used for the outfit of the man on top of the wagon, and around the white wheels with black spokes. A wooden zebra pokes its head from the rear of the wagon, and four white horses with black hooves and black commas decorating their bodies pull the wagon.

Before entering the Carbon County Home, Pry made other sculptures as well. He scavenged crates from a local supermarket and leftover house paint from cans in the town dump to fashion birds and bird houses which he set out in his yard. Pry really created an environment for himself by arranging a row of them along his fence. He also built wooden airplanes and painted them. Once in the Carbon County Home, Pry found some old flag sticks and made more birds, using the sticks to position them in flower beds around the grounds. He based these on birds pictured in books or magazines.

While full-length figures occur often in his works, there is a portrait head by "Old Ironsides" that is especially interesting. It is the only portrait head by him that I have found, and the only one he remembers painting. Pry has said that he thinks he copied Man's Head from an old McCall's magazine. The man looks like Christ. Wherever he got his inspiration for this work with its white interior frame, broad gray border, and purple and black exterior frame, Pry's imaginative transcription presents us with an unusual and fascinating visage. Although Pry has won many ribbons in county fairs and local art exhibitions and has been shown in several museums, he deserves far wider recognition for powerful paintings like this.
**Man's Head:** acrylic on canvas, 24" x 19\(\frac{3}{4}\)"; collection of Nancy F. Karlins Thoman, Glen Ridge, N.J.

**ENDNOTES**

2. Sterling Strauser and his wife, Dorothy, both artists, were the first to bring the work of “Old Ironsides” to the attention of the public. They must be credited with introducing the work of folk painters Justin McCarthy and Charles Dieter, also.
3. This information and other personal data presented in this article, unless otherwise noted, comes from an extensive personal interview with Mr. Pry on April 3, 1985.
4. “Did “Old Ironsides” get his nickname as a result of surviving this crash? According to him, no. He claims that Sterling Strauser gave him the name in the 1970's.
5. The La Guard General Hospital is cited in Mr. Pry's United States Army discharge papers.
SYNOPSIS OF THE PENBURNE QUINTET

by Leland D. Baldwin

INTRODUCTION

by Edward W. Chester

The large scale historical novel plays an important role in American literature, with Karl Rolvaag chronicling the area around Minnesota in his *Giants in the Earth*, and James Michener the eastern part of Maryland and Virginia in *Chesapeake*. Then there is the late Leland Baldwin, whose fictional and factual treatment of Benjamin Franklin served as the focus of an article which appeared in the Autumn 1987 issue of *Pennsylvania Folklife*.

In his "Penburne Quintet" Baldwin has done for Western Pennsylvania what Rolvaag and Michener did for different areas of the United States. The middle volume in the Penburne series, *The Detectable Country*, appeared in print in 1939; the prominent American novelist James Branch Cabell was of the opinion that it was as good as the Civil War epic, *Gone With the Wind*. As for the unpublished first, second, fourth, and fifth volumes in this series, they cover the time from the French and Indian War (1754-63) to the mid-1830's, a period of approximately eighty years.

During the last decade of his life (the 1970's) Leland Baldwin brought his "Penburne Quintet" to its final version. He then prepared the following synopsis of these novels, and also drew up several complex genealogical tables which include the various characters who populate the "Penburne Quintet." There is a vast world to be discovered by those adventurous enough to read these five novels from beginning to end. Numbers one, two, four and five are on file at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Pittsburgh.
Fur Traders Attacked by Indians. (Harper’s Weekly, May 23, 1868.)

SYNOPSIS

The Penburne quintet consists of five novels based on the life and family of John Penburne, a Pennsylvania ironmaster, from the time of the French and Indian wars to the rise of Pittsburgh as an industrial center. Each novel stands on its own bottom but together they tell a continuous story. The titles follow:

*The Drums Draw Near*: The Stirling Chronicle; laid during the French and Indian Wars in Pennsylvania.

*The Fourteenth Fire*: The Penburne Chronicle, laid during the Revolution in Western Pennsylvania.

*The Delectable Country*: A novel of the Keelboat Age and the Whiskey Insurrection. Published in 1939 and briefly a best seller. In 1966 it was republished in paperback by Popular Library.

*Greenbay*, or, *The Reivers*: Recounts the endemic warfare between the town and the lawless elements remaining from the chaotic days from which the region was just emerging.

*A Gentleman of No Consequence*: Social, religious, and political life of Pittsburgh, 1830-34.

The *Introduction* at the opening of the first volume explains the provenience of the quintet and is assumed to be the work of Gideon John Penburne, Jr. ("Jay"), editor of the first two volumes and author of the other three. The first two novels are stated to be a new edition of "Two Family Chronicles," first published in 1879 in a limited private edition.

The assumed author of the first chronicle is James Stirling the Tory, who fled to England during the Revolution, and the assumed author of the second is John Penburne the Younger, born and reared among the Ohio Indians and known to them first as Little Feather and then as He-Who-Stands-Between-the-Logs. However, both authors are members of the Stirling family, one of the few prosperous Catholic families in Pennsylvania, ironmasters of Dayspring Iron Plantation on the Susquehanna. They are sensitive and self-doubting autobiographers who in old age sit down to examine their experiences, *but neither is aware of what the other is writing or has written.*
The two novels are interrelated and recount a few of the same events, but each stands on its own feet. The emphasis in each is on different characters, and of course the development of character continues throughout. Since their plots are outlined in the accompanying synopses I will not attempt to recount further details here. Suffice it to say that a Sterling daughter kidnapped by Indians and later married to an Indian has made a link of blood and acquaintanceship between the Stirlings and the Indians. Young John Penburne (Jack Little Feather), is the son of Dickon Penburne and his cousin Maun de Trouville (The White Woman); she was brought up among the Indians and was a sharer of their hopes, fears and superstitions. Eventually John goes to live at Dayspring, then later to the Ligonier Valley during the Revolution. It is during the war that his twin sons, David and Stephen, are captured by the Indians, though they will appear in the later novels.

The theme of the first two novels is the portentous clash of Indian and white culture on the Pennsylvania-Ohio frontier during the French and Indian Wars and the Revolution. My intention has been, as nearly as I can, to write a prose epic in fictional form of the dreadful dilemma confronting the red men as the terrible and all but faceless white armies draw near.

The novels set forth as types the desperate attempts of the Indians to stem the white tide — first by allying themselves with the French, typified by “Queen Maun”; second by opposing both French and English, typified by the Delaware Prophet, the Black Minqua; and third by allying themselves with the Americans, typified by White Eyes, the Great Delaware statesman who sought to make his nation a Fourteenth Fire in the Great Council of the Thirteen Fires — the American Confederacy. Each protagonist in turn occupies the center of the stage, but other characters appear throughout.

In portraying these attempts to escape their dire dilemma I have drawn on the Indians’ lore, their songs, their legends, their belief in the occult, their institutions, and their view of man’s place in nature. I stress also the firm nature of friendship, often formed because of mutual dreams, as the result of which one friend might lay down his life for the other. Many of the characters are historical, but especially the Delaware Prophet and White Eyes, though of course each has had to be fitted to fictional necessities.

The third novel, *The Delectable Country*, is placed at the time of the Whiskey Insurrection (1794) when wilderness was giving way to pioneer settlements.
hero, a young keelboatman called David Braddee, is a
foundling but actually one of the lost Penburne twins. He
is torn between the freedom of the wilderness and
the attraction of dawning civilization, and goes through
a series of metamorphoses. From keelboatman he turns
to the study of law, then after being unjustly imprisoned
as a whiskey rebel he resolutely goes back to the tur-
bulent life of the rivers. Still torn between two extremes
he finally swings to Methodism and becomes a circuit
rider and dies in a blizzard. Was the ministry a true call-
ing or merely an escape? The reader must decide for
himself. John Penburne appears from time to time
throughout.

The fourth novel, Greenbay, or The Reivers, is set in
mountainous Westmoreland County between 1794 and
1833 when the jetsam cast up by the Revolution is still
plaguing society. On one side is the mountain clan, the
Thessalys, conscious transplants of the reivers of the
Anglo-Scottish Border, and dominated by a redoubt-
able and vindictive old woman, Shira Thessaly. On the
other side are the people of the towns — notably
Ligonier and Newtown (Greensburg). John Penburne is
now the master of Bonnybess Iron Furnace in the
Ligonier Valley and one of the judges of the
Westmoreland Court. Owen Greenbay, the bastard of
Stephen, John’s second lost twin, and also a connection
of the Thessalys, has chosen the law and so is arrayed
against his mountain kinsmen.

Over the years events build up to a final clash in
which the Thessalys are killed or driven out. The occa-
sion is the murder by the Thessalys of a young man,
Frank Reeder, who has come to court Owen’s daughter
and who is unjustly accused of murdering her. Actually
Frank is the son of Victoria Sedley the bastard daughter
of Stephen and so Owen’s half-sister. Under the cir-
cumstances Victoria and Stephen (who are not on the
scene) get the impression that Judge Penburne is respon-
sible for Frank’s death.

A Gentleman of No Consequence deals largely with
John Penburne in extreme old age, and gradually going
blind with cataracts, and the title is a sneer at the in-
evitable stain on anyone who has been an Indian. He is
much in Pittsburgh because his incompetent son,
Gideon John, is ruining his foundry business and has
taken up with gamblers. Worst of all, Ben Ullom, an in-
fluential lawyer and a relative of the Thessalys, blames
the Judge for the ruin of the clan and proposes to
destroy him by destroying his son and grandsons. The
Judge, now enfeebled by old age and almost completely
blinded by cataracts, deals as best he can with his family
and financial problems, aided by Owen and by Jay
(Gideon John, Jr.), the promising son of the feckless
Gideon John.

This is the situation when Stephen (the lost twin) ap-
ppears as the impresario of a theatrical troupe headed by
the beautiful but amoral Victoria Sedley. The two
promptly join Ben Ullom in his plot to ruin Judge Pen-
burne. Ben Ullom twists the law. Steve uses the gam-
bling debts of Gideon John (not realizing they are
brothers) and the fascinating Victoria seduces him (Gid-
eon John). David Braddee, son of the keelboatman, has
been a Presbyterian minister, but is unfrocked because
he has married a Catholic. When his wife dies David
becomes a street preacher and starts (with his grand-
father’s help) a library and night school for laborers. In
a fluke election the laboring element make him mayor
of Pittsburgh much to his dismay, but he finds the of-

Pittsburgh had become a haven for runaway slaves
and a gang of slave catchers led by Fenn Crawford plan
to take about thirty of them, but are foiled by David
and the Judge. Thereupon Fenn Crawford attacks
David and when they struggle for a pistol the slave cat-
cher is fatally shot. Thereupon David’s enemies put him
in prison — but he finds it an opportunity to examine
his soul and determines to become a Catholic priest.

Meanwhile Gideon John has become deeply involved
in gambling debts and is saved only by the Judge’s in-
tervention. Thereupon Victoria Sedley threatens him
with a paternity suit and when Gideon John’s meek wife
hears of it she commits suicide to “set him free.”
Gideon John finds the courage to shoot himself. Owen
has long known that Steve was his father, but now he
finds evidence that Steve is the Judge’s son — the long
lost twin. When he confronts Steve with this knowledge
the man is overwhelmed by remorse.

A few days later David and the Judge are arraigned in
federal court (Ben Ullom as prosecutor) for violating
the Fugitive Slave Law. As the sessions close and Ben
and a marshall emerge from the court, Steve stands talk-
ing to Cass Crawford, the twin of the slave catcher
David had shot. Steve points out Ben and identifies him
as David — and, indeed, there is a superficial
resemblance. The slave catcher crosses the street and
shoots Ben, and the marshall shoots Cass Crawford.

In mid-May (1834) Owen and Jay take the blind old
Judge on a visit to the scene of his boyhood, the site of
White Woman’s Town, and they ascend to the top of
the Roche de Boeuf. As the old man rises to greet the
sun as he had done as an Indian boy, a puff of wind
pushes him to the brink and he falls to his death just as
his mother, the White Woman, had seventy years before.
Owen and Jay carry the Judge’s body back to the
Ligonier Valley for burial. On the way, at Wheeling,
they learn that a steamboat, the Indian Queen, has
blown up; among the victims is the entire Victoria
Sedley troupe.

The foregoing accounts are sketchy, and leave out
most of what happened — particularly the roles of the
women, good and bad, courted and sometimes married
by the Penburne men.

My intention has not been to write shockers or sex
sagas, tho inevitably there is a sufficiency of both, but
to follow the development of the region in which I was
born and brought up, and about which I have written a
number of monographs.

Anyone who likes to savor words and ideas at leisure
knows that the historical novel, while entertaining in its
own right, also offers an understanding of the texture of
the past that can never be found in textbooks or even in
biographies. The tradition at its best depends less on a
crowded succession of sexual encounters and hair-
breadth escapes than on loving delineations of
background and character, and on an accumulation of
events and minor crises that march steadily toward an
overwhelming denouement.
FREE LIST AVAILABLE

Dr. William T. Parsons, Archivist, in his final term at Ursinus College before retirement, is sorting, arranging and making tally lists of photos, almanacs, manuscripts and cassettes of the Pennsylvania German Archives. New shelving slots will assist people interested in the Archives and will facilitate future research there. To reduce the books in his personal library to items he needs for his own research, Parsons has many folk culture books and local history items to sell. Many are out-of-print and all are at some discount or below current price. All are subject to prior sale. For a free list of these available items, send a large, stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Dr. William T. Parsons, P. O. Box 712, Collegeville, Pa. 19426.
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The Kutztown Folk Festival is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Folklife Society, a nonprofit educational corporation affiliated with URSINUS COLLEGE, Collegeville, Pennsylvania. The Society’s purposes are threefold: First, the demonstrating and displaying of the lore and folkways of the Pennsylvania Dutch through the annual Kutztown Folk Festival; second, the collecting, studying, archiving and publishing the lore of the Dutch Country and Pennsylvania through the publication of PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLIFE Magazine; and third, using the proceeds for scholarships and general educational purposes at URSINUS COLLEGE.

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