

Historic Old Houses In Historic Bellefonte

From a Paper, by Miss Mary Hunter Linn, Read Before the Womans' Club of Bellefonte, on Monday Evening March 28, 1932.

The most casual observer of a relief map of Pennsylvania will not at once see the broad range of the Allegheny mountains running in a north-easterly direction from about the middle of the Maryland border. This great barrier of not one mountain, but many, divides the central and western part of the State from a southeastern district of scattered hills.

In this rolling country, at least until 1730, were settled most of the immigrants who came into Pennsylvania. But soon the same spirit which had brought their fathers and grandfathers, in many cases themselves, in "fearful voyages" across the Atlantic urged them to leave the fertile lowlands they had cultivated and go further inland. In the great Cumberland valley they came face to face with the mountain barrier and the greater number of them took the path of least resistance into Virginia and the Carolinas.

Later, especially after the Indian land purchases of 1758 and 1768, many of those "giants in the earth" set themselves to conquer the mountain wilderness and up the rivers and creeks they came, along streams whose waters had long before broken their way through the mountains. Naturally the land along the rivers and larger creeks was taken up first and there we find the older towns.

In what is now Centre county, the eastern agricultural part, nearer to the West Branch, and Bald Eagle valley heard the cheerful ring of the surveyor's axe and the merry shouts of advancing settlers' long before the Revolution. Aaronsburg is older than Bellefonte.

It was not until the very early 1700's that the rich ore fields of Nitany valley became an attraction to the ironmasters in the lowland counties. Col. Samuel Miles and Col. John Patton, from Philadelphia county in 1791, and Philip Benner, from Chester county in 1793, (two of them urged, I am sure, by their iron-loving Welsh blood), blazed their way into the very heart of the present county. In the following year, 1794, John Dunlop came from Hopewell township, Cumberland county, with the same end in view.

Miles, Patton and Miles erected Centre furnace, the first blast furnace in the county, and Philip Benner the first forge at Rock Iron-works.

John Dunlop came to the neighborhood of Bellefonte. The next year his father, Col. James Dunlop, and his brother-in-law, James Harris Esq., son of John Harris, founder of Millintown, joined him. Col. Dunlop had been in the iron business before the Revolution, in which he had a brilliant military career, and later rendered distinguished civil service in Cumberland county.

In 1776, he, in partnership with John Dunlop and Col. Miles (whose interests in Centre county were always represented by his sons, Joseph and John) built Harmony Forge where John McCoy now lives, near Milesburg, called Harmony because it united the rival interests of the Dunlops and Miles. Part of the McCoy house was built by the Miles owners in 1793.

In 1795 Col. Dunlop and James Harris laid out a town on the Griffith Gibbon warrant application of 1769. There is a well preserved tradition in the Harris family that in the year of the founding, Tallyrand, the renowned French statesman, then a refugee in this country, with his host, Col. John Patton, came down from Centre Furnace and dined with the Harris. Mrs. Harris, daughter of the older founder and wife of the younger, took their guests to see the Great Spring which must have had much to do with the choice of a town site. From an exclamation of the Frenchman on seeing it, Mrs. Harris named the new village Bellefonte.

This tradition of Tallyrand's visit to Bellefonte seems to be verified by his Memoirs (not published until 1892). He alludes to a visit to the interior of Pennsylvania and to a letter of introduction, given him by Hon. Samuel Mendenhall, to "Col. John Patton in the country." The spring at that time must have been indescribably beautiful in its heavily wooded surroundings. Near the spring was the Indian mound, as we children used to call it, when as a great treat we were allowed to go down and play on it, and Spring creek winding around to receive the overflow, and, beyond, Halfmoon hill and the mountains.

There is a tragic story which has its ending in the Indian mound, and also illustrates the hardships of the early settlers. Before the laying out of the town William Lamb had built a saw mill where the Gamble mill now stands. Witness: Lamb street. In the severe winter of 1787-88 Daniel Turner, living where Roopsburg now is, left for Clearfield county to hunt and trap. His family ran out of provisions and his wife came to Lamb's to borrow some meal. Going back she took a different path. The children started to meet her on the usual one. They got bewildered and spent the night on the hills, the boys taking off their coats to cover the younger children. When it was light they could not wake the two youngest, and the flakes of snow had covered their little bodies. They were buried on the side of the mound.

The first house built in the town was that of Col. Dunlop, on the north-east corner of High and Spring streets. In it was held the first court of Centre county, the Quarter Sessions of November, 1800. Colonel Dunlop died in 1821. In 1827 the house and lot were conveyed to George Valentine, one of the Valen-

tine brothers who, in 1815, with their mother, Ann Bond Valentine, came from Chester county. The year preceding their coming, John Dunlop's premature death, caused by a fall of earth in one of his mine banks near the town, had robbed the county of a very energetic iron master.

The Valentines at first leased and, in 1821, bought John Dunlop's iron property. To the house on High street George Valentine added the wash house in the rear of the kitchen and the lower side of the front part of the house. The entire house was of the native limestone as were also the large spring house and the stable where the post office now stands. The Valentines were in possession of the property until its conversion to business uses by the White brothers. James Harris, the other founder, erected, in the outskirts of the town, on the banks of Spring creek, a large comfortable stone house. It stood in a grove of beautiful trees, with Halfmoon hill for a background, and was called "Marlbrook" from the stream which wound its way through the grounds, and on whose banks the deer were frequently seen in the early mornings and late evenings. In 1829, shortly after the death of James Harris, the place was sold to Valentines and Thomas.

William A. Thomas first lived there. He fitted out the house very handsomely. The mahogany doors he brought from the old Walnut Street theatre in Philadelphia. The conscience of the "plain friend" he was, troubled him in such a house and in a few years Abram Valentine, another member of the firm, a friend also, but perhaps not quite as "plain" a one, took the house. Mr. Thomas then bought from Mrs. Elizabeth Simpson, daughter of Colonel Dunlop, the stone house and grounds on the banks of the creek, a little distance below the Lamb street bridge, a property still owned by one of his descendants. In the times of the "Willow-bank," as it was called later, was a place of great hospitality.

Before 1800, probably in 1797, John Dunlop built the house now known as Crider's stone building. He sold it in 1811 to Thomas Burnside for \$3500. Judge Burnside lived there until his death in 1851. He was one of the able lawyers who for many years made the Centre county bar rank second to none in the state, outside of Philadelphia. Twice appointed President Judge, he was commissioned Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania which office he held when he died.

Next in point of time William Petrikin, a Scotchman, coming from Carlisle in 1795, a man of much political ability in Cumberland county, built on the corner of High and Spring streets (Decker Garage). He was the first merchant in the town. His sons were all men of note and ability living in several counties of central Pennsylvania. In 1797 Adam McKee built a tavern where the house of Dr. Dale now stands. Also, in 1797, John Hall, who had come from Delaware at the solicitation of Mr. Harris, built a house and first blacksmith shop on the lot now in possession of Mrs. Harry Yeager. He made the iron gates at the old entrance to the cemetery.

In the same year Alexander Diven built a house close up to the Dunlop property at the corner of High and Spring, now the Ott house, and it probably was the greatest deal of that remaining. Later "Honest John Blanchard" another of the powerful lawyers of the famous bar, came from Vermont, in 1815, married one of Evan Miles' daughters and added the part now C. F. Tate's residence and shop. It was then a plastered house. Edmund Blanchard, son of John, tore out the plastered stone front and built the present front of Hummels-town stone.

John G. Lowry came from Donegal, Lancaster county as early as 1795. He married a daughter of Richard Miles and built the Walter Cohen house. He came here, as an accountant for the Dunlops, held various offices and in 1828, when the finances were in the worst kind of a condition, he accepted the position of county treasurer and put the financial credit beyond scandal. He and Joseph Williams, who came before 1797, were in the first session of the Presbyterian church. Where the house of the latter was located, has not yet been ascertained.

A post office was established in 1798. To that time the address of Bellefonters was Northumberland. There was not a rapid selling of lots until after the organization of the county and the location of the public buildings in the town in 1800. It was a hotly argued question whether Milesburg, on its level, low lying land at the head of navigation on Bald Eagle creek, and not hilly Bellefonte, though it did have the Great Spring, was not the proper place for the county seat. The liberality and enterprise of the founders who gave bond to the Governor of the State for lands to be delivered to the town saved the day.

If tradition proves worthy again, a trick, surely not played by the staid proprietors, may have helped to decide. Some Bellefonters "rooters" attached to a flatboat, loaded with furniture borrowed from a convenient house, and dragged the boat up Spring creek to Bellefonte. Then a messenger was hurried to Lancaster, where the Legislature was sitting, with an affidavit that the first boat of the season had arrived in Bellefonte, thereby making Bellefonte and not Milesburg the head of

Chicago, Convention Champion of 1932



Chicago Stadium in which the Democratic National Convention will be held. Inset—Melvin A. Traylor, member of the Civic Committee which obtained the Convention for Chicago

CHICAGO has jumped into a long lead over other cities in the race for winning convention assignments, and particularly the two great assemblages of Democrats and Republicans in June puts Chicago well in the lead and gives the "Windy City" an opportunity to stage these colorful affairs as a curtain raiser to the "Century of Progress" which will be a headline attraction in 1933. Already the convention pot is boiling merrily as committees of prominent business men are organizing to receive thousands of visitors in Chicago during June.

One of the leaders who has helped to bring the blue ribbon convention assignments to Chicago is Melvin A. Traylor, president of the First National Bank and a business man with a fair for tackling big jobs. Mr. Traylor, a native of Kentucky, has achieved na-

tion and international fame in finance and business by his distinguished service in Chicago, Texas and throughout the Middle West. He was one of the delegation headed by E. N. Hurley and Mayor Cermak of Chicago who bid for Washington and clinched their bid for the National Democratic Convention with a fund of \$200,000.

Chicago has exceptional facilities for entertaining both Republican and Democratic conventions within a single month. Already the engineers are at work with blue prints to arrange the interior of the huge Chicago Stadium where both conventions will be held. The assembling of both conventions promises to be a great spectacle, for the arena where delegates will be seated will accommodate between 8,000 and 10,000. Circling the arena are 16,000 seats where guests and visitors may be accommodated.

Surely a town inhabited by men of such generosity, enterprise and invention deserved the honor. The generosity of the proprietors took concrete form, recorded in an indenture made June 26th, between the proprietors and their wives, on one part, and Andrew Gregg, William Swanzy and Robert Boggs, trustees for the new county, named Centre, on the other. This indenture describes a tract called "Innocence," on part whereof has been laid out to the town of Bellefonte, and grants to the trustees half of the proceeds from the sale of the part not yet laid out in town lots, of the unsold lots of said town, as well as of the lots already sold, and all the public square. This money was to be used for the support of an Academy or public school, for building a court house, prison, and other buildings for the safe keeping of public records.

In the original plat they had provided lots for the Presbyterian church, the academy and the graveyard.

At once more rapid growth set in. Roland Curtin, Senator, an Irishman, who in his student days had barely escaped the guillotine in revolutionary Paris, came from Milesburg and opened the town's second store where Hazel and Company now are. In the residence, in 1815, was born his son, Andrew Gregg Curtin, to become in 1860 the great "War Governor." George Hazel's dining room and the room above, with their great thick walls, are a part of that house.

In 1801 there were resident in Bellefonte besides those whose names we have already mentioned: William Alexander, later (later had a tavern on site of the Elk's Home, and in 1809 one on the Garman House site); Conrad Kyler, Weaver; John McCord later resided Corner of Lamb and Spring in the Albert Schad property's; George McKee, tanner (the Casebeer lot); Samuel Patterson; William Riddle, mason; George Williams, carpenter; Abraham Lee, Isaac Lee; John McKee, shoemaker; Jeshur Miles, cabinet maker, (site of Mrs. Showers' boarding house) and John Miles, lawyer.

In the first decade several lawyers who had qualified at the first session of court, became residents, namely: Johnathan Walker from Northumberland, Charles Huston from Williamsport, Robert T. Stewart from Dauphin county, and David Irvine, Thomas Burnside came in 1804.

The first of the medical profession in the town, Dr. William Harris, a British subject from Nova Scotia and a kinsman of the younger founder, died in 1806. Dr. Daniel Dobbins came in 1807 and shortly afterwards, Dr. Constans Curtin who built the stone house torn down a few years ago for the erection of the J. O. Heverly building.

The assessment list of 1808 gives us, in addition to those we have already mentioned: Adam Beamer, tavern; (where the B. and B. store is. He was succeeded by Benjamin Lucas in 1809; William Beatty, storekeeper, single; Charles Cadwallader, storekeeper, (the Richelieu); Patrick Cambridge, storekeeper, (Residence probably at corner of Howard and Spring, now the residence of Miss Parker, William Kerr, shoemaker, (the late Mrs. Jacob Smith's lot.) Jesse Cookson, stonemason (Centre Democrat lot); Thomas Hall, blacksmith, single; Philip Grove, wagonmaker, (Miss Benner's house); Daniel Hammer, tailor; Robert Hutchinson, storekeeper, (First Nat. Bank); William McClure, Elizabeth McKee, (Dr. Dale's lot, probably widow of Adam and mother of John at that time keeping tavern there); Jeremiah Minning, tailor, (part of Garman lot); Elisha

Moore, (W. I. Fleming's lot); Benjamin Patton, tavern keeper, (First National Bank lot); Israel Pennington, tavern keeper, (Brockerhoff house lot); William Pettit, millwright, (built and lived in the house now owned by Mrs. Clayton Brown); William Riddle, (D. R. Foreman's lot, listed No. 1 in the town plat); John Pierce, tanner; William Rodgers, forge hammer (now N. E. Spangler's lot); Dr. Thomas Wallace (father-in-law of James M. Petrikin, lawyer and artist); William Welch, shoemaker; Rev. H. E. Wilson, (minister of the Lick Run and Bellefonte churches); John Wilson (in Dr. Brockerhoff's tenant house on Spring street and Cherry alley); Hudson Williams, mason, (Bellefonte Trust Company lot); Isaac Williams.

Hamilton Humes came from Lancaster county in 1809 and rented James Smith's grist mill, (now the Borough pumping station, formerly Gamble's Mill.) He later built the Conrad House (Temple Court) and the stone house and store, the Allison Apartments and the Shaffer store in the Keystone Gazette building.

John Rankin opened a store in 1810 and in 1813 bought from Thomas McClellan a lot with buildings on the corner of Allegheny street and Pike alley and built for a hotel a large stone house, sold in 1844 to H. N. McAllister, a most able lawyer, for a dwelling house. It is now the block owned by Mrs. Robert G. H. Hayes.

In the census of 1810 the town had 303 inhabitants, nineteen of whom were free negroes. (To be Continued in an early issue.)

MENTAL HOSPITALS MUST MEET DEMAND
As the population of the Commonwealth continues to increase, population of the state and county mental hospitals, supervised by the bureau of mental health of the department of welfare, has shown a similar tendency. Better facilities for care, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, conducive toward greater confidence in the institutions, undoubtedly has also contributed in a measure to the larger number of patients. The general unemployment situation throughout the State has made it more difficult to arrange for recovery or sufficiently restored mental patients to leave the institutions, due to unsatisfactory home situations, poverty, and lack of employment opportunities. There have been an increased number of appeals for relief from maintenance charges for patients. State and county hospitals for mental diseases for the month of January, 1932, housed a total of 26,817 patients as against 25,889 for the same month in 1931, and 25,113 in 1930. There were 617 patients admitted during last January while 446 were discharged. The population of state institutions for the feeble minded has grown from 5105 in 1930 to 9755 in January, 1932.

AN INHERITANCE
Judge—Chicken stealing again, Rastus? Have you anything to say, any excuse this time?
Rastus—Deed yes, Judge. It ain't mah fault, Jedge; it's de fault ob mah ancestors—mah high up ancestors.
Judge—How so, Rastus?
Rastus—Well, Jedge, mah ancestors came over in de Mayflower, an' evah since Ah was born Ah has an uncontrollable desire foh Plymouth Rocks.

—Read the Watchman and get all the news.
—Get your job work done here

Talks with Editor

This column is to be an open forum. Everybody is invited to make use of it to express whatever opinion they may have on any subject. Nothing libelous will be published, though we will give the public the widest latitude in invective when the subject is this paper or its editor. Contributions will be signed or initialed, as the contributor may desire.—E.D.

Dr. Wieland Takes Fling at Legislators and Bankers.

West Haven, Conn. 3-15-32
To the Editor of The Democratic Watchman,

Sir,
The New York papers of this evening carry several columns giving an account of a scathing indictment of the manner in which close to two billions of American money has been recklessly loaned in foreign countries, as just delivered in the Senate by Senator Hiram Johnson, of California. These loans were mostly made while the gullible folk of this ocean bound, continent covering country were singing the lullaby of "prosperity" and "keeping cool with Coolidge,"—in fact attending to pretty much anybody's and everybody's business except their own. The loans enumerated have in a very short time shrunk in value nearly one billion dollars. It all makes a "sordid" story as Johnson says, and his sharp criticism of the haste and carelessness of the bankers making these often silly "gift edge" (this is a favorite expression of Republican candidates for office in Centre county) loans, bears careful reading.

The last time I chanced to hear Mr. Johnson speak in the Senate he made a strong plea for an appropriation for a certain agricultural experiment station at Rome, Italy. This idea of American dollars going out to "roam" (the pun I picked up in the far West!) did not at all please Senator John Sharp Williams, of Mississippi, who aimed at him the most stinging sarcasm. Johnson in turn seemed a bit heckled, and as he said, "did not see why he should be subjected to this foul abuse." Then Williams got up in what I should call a somewhat deliberate or even slouching attitude and walked over to Johnson's desk demanding an apology for those remarks. This Johnson rather gracefully gave I should say. Johnson, who is a well set man, and an extremely lucid, even a born "orator," was in nowise blighted in his reply; nor did he even suggest that he could slap three such men as Williams, despite the near to menacing attitude of the latter.

The whole incident seemed little above opera bouffe to me. All my life I have been amazed at the light hearted manner in which everywhere throughout the country legislative bodies incessantly vote away tax monies, and keep the States and the Nation forever in debt. The theory is even shamelessly advanced that States, municipalities, and nations are not safe unless in debt. Thus is what Tolstoi has called "the ever-deluded workingman" bedeviled forever. Debt, Debt, Bonds, more Bonds, interest ever resting on the working man's chest as he sleeps. That's not civilization! It's where Hell begins. And when to it all the bankers begin to fumble with the liquid capital it all becomes torture. Wouldn't it be better to trust a few signed Democrats for a little while?

Very respectfully,
G. R. WIELAND.

WHO WILL BE POSTMASTER AT STATE COLLEGE?
The term of post-master George Glenn, of State College, having expired the Department has issued an order that a Civil Service examination be held to determine whether he or someone else will be his successor.

To be eligible for the examination, an applicant must be a citizen of the United States, must reside within the delivery of this post office, must have so resided for at least two years next preceding the examination date, must be in good physical condition, and within the prescribed age limits. Both men and women are admitted. Under the terms of the executive order, the Civil Service commission will certify to the Postmaster-General the names of the highest three qualified eligibles, if as many as three are qualified, and the Postmaster-General will select one for nomination by the President. Confirmation by the Senate is the final action.

Applicants will not be required to assemble in an examination room for scholastic tests, but will be rated on their education and business training and experience. The Civil Service commission will make inquiry among representative local business and professional men and women concerning the experience, ability, and character of each applicant, and will assign ratings upon the evidence secured.

Nothing will be permitted to appear in the evidence upon which ratings are assigned which might even suggest the political affiliation of any candidate.

The office pays an annual salary of \$3,500. The last day for receiving applications will be April 12.

—If San Jose scale is serious, applying the dormant spray of lime-sulphur solution is a timely practice. Give the trees a thorough drenching, say State College entomologists.

—Get your job work done here

RABBIT TRAPPERS JARRED BY GAME WARDEN'S DECREE

Visions of a lucrative rabbit trapping business faded when Ralph A. Liphart, Allegheny county game warden, said only persons with special permits are allowed to trap rabbits for sale to the State.

When announcement was made that the State Game Commission would pay fifty cents for each live rabbit trapped in Pennsylvania citizens, and particularly, farmers, envisioned a prosperous enterprise. Rabbits are plentiful and easy to capture, hunters say.

However, Liphart broke the prosperity bubble by announcing that special permits are necessary and that it is quite difficult to get such a permit.

In fact, he said, only nurserymen and fruit growers are allowed to have permits, and then they are granted only when the nurseryman or fruit grower proves that rabbit are damaging his trees or plants. Rabbits sold to the State will be used to restock game reservations.

Chase that Cough
5¢ WILSON'S 5¢
BOX COUGH DROPS BOX
HONEY-HORSEROUND-MENTHOL

Extra Dollars
WANTED—fifty dollars! The more the committee figured, the more apparent the need became. They couldn't turn in the Aid Society's books with a \$50 deficit.

It was Mrs. Miles who solved the problem. "We'll raise the money!" she declared confidently. Rapidly she outlined her plan. "If the members will donate eggs and butter," she explained, "I'll get the customers, sell it and turn in the profits!"

All week the Miles' telephone was busy—gathering in the produce, selling, arranging deliveries. It was a jubilant committee that totaled up the receipts. "Sixty-six dollars and ten cents, clear!" they reported. "Thanks to Mrs. Miles and her telephone!"

The modern farm home has a telephone

Farm 13
COLDS, AND FOR SMOKERS, SINGERS, SPEAKERS WILSON'S COUGH DROPS
of Honey, Horsehound Menthol... 5c

Good Printing
A SPECIALTY at the WATCHMAN OFFICE

There is no style of work, from the cheapest "Dodger" to the finest

BOOK WORK
that we can not do in the most satisfactory manner, and at prices consistent with the class of work. Call on or communicate with this office.

Employers, This Interests You
The Workman's Compensation Law went into effect Jan. 1, 1916. It makes insurance compulsory. We specialize in placing such insurance. We inspect Plants and recommend Accident Prevention Safe Guards which Reduce Insurance rates. It will be to your interest to consult us before placing your insurance.

JOHN F. GRAY & SON
State College Bellefonte

MODERN WOMEN
NEED NOT SUFFER monthly pain and delay due to colds, nervous strain, exposure or similar causes. This new Diamond Brand Pills are effective, reliable and give QUICK RELIEF. Sold by all druggists for over 45 years. Ask for—
GHICHESTERS PILLS
"THE DIAMOND BRAND"