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OUR HISTORICAL REVIEW

Short Sketch of a Famous Pioneer

CAREER OF CONRAD WEISER

The Name of Weiser Intimately Associated With The Early History of Pennsylvania—Descendants in this County.

XXXVIII.

Of distinguished individuals, who were actively engaged in this region of country, at an early period, or who resided within the bounds of the several counties, of which a history is attempted, Conrad Weiser is the most prominent.

The name of Weiser is intimately associated with many of the leading events in the history of Pennsylvania, from 1730 to 1760, especially in all the important Indian treaties during that period. It is a name which every German should delight to honor, for the disinterested benevolence of the "Indians' Friend," and friend of humanity. Several of our most influential men of Pennsylvania have descended from Conrad Weiser. He was the great-grandfather, on the maternal side, of the Honorable Henry A. Muhlenberg, late of Reading, and of Doctor Muhlenberg, of Lancaster.

Conrad Weiser, son of John Conrad Weiser, was born at Herrenberg, in Wittenberg, Germany, November 2nd, 1696. His father had sixteen children, Mrs. Weiser died May 1st, 1709. Shortly after her death John Conrad Weiser, with 8 of his children, in company with several of his countrymen, left Germany; and arrived at London, in June. Several thousand Germans having arrived at the same time, were maintained at the expense of Queen Anne, upon whose invitation they had gone thither. In December about four thousand of them embarked for America. They arrived at New York June 13th, 1710. In the autumn of this year, John Conrad Weiser, with his family, and several hundred German families, were transferred, at the Queen's expense, to Livingston District, where many of them remained till 1713. Two younger brothers of Conrad's, George and Christopher, had, before their father went to Livingston District, been apprenticed by the governor of New York, to a gentleman on Long Island.

It was assigned to these Germans to manufacture tar, and raise hemp, to re-ay freightage from Holland to England, and thence to New York. The business proving unsuccessful, they were released of all freightage. More than half of the families in Livingston District, now resolved to leave and settle at Schoharie, 40 miles west of Albany. Previous to going there, they sent deputies to Schoharie to consult with the Indians, touching their locating there; for one of the chiefs, five of whom had been in England at the time these Germans were there, granted the queen a tract of land for the use of the Germans. The names of the chiefs were Te-ye-nee-ho ga-prow, Sa-ga-yeen qua-prah-ton, of the *Maquas*; Elow-oh-kaom, Oh-nee-yeath-tou-no-prou of the river Sachem.

John Conrad Weiser was one of the deputies to Schoharie. After returning from the Maqua country, in which Schoharie lay, a number of families moved thither in the autumn of 1713; some to Albany, others to Schenectady—Weiser had moved to the latter place, and remained with one Johannes Meynderton, during the winter. Here he was repeatedly visited by Quagnant, a chief of the Maquas, who proposed to take Conrad, the subject of this notice, with him to his own country, and teach him the language spoken by that nation. By the consent of his father, Conrad accompanied his instructor, and now lived among the Indians.

While with Quagnant, and acquiring a knowledge of the Maqua tongue, his sufferings were beyond description. He had scarce clothes to cover his nudity, much less to protect him against the inclemency and piercing cold of a severe winter; to all this was added, that often times he had not wherewith to satisfy hunger. Still, to heighten the sufferings of this young stranger among savages, they repeatedly threatened him, when they were drunk, with death, to escape which he had to secret himself, till reason had given them a "sober second thought" to restrain the execution of their threats upon him. While the patient young scholar was among the savages, his father moved in the spring of 1714 to Schoharie, accompanied by upwards of one hundred German families.

In the month of July, having mastered that language, Conrad left Quagnant; he returned to his father's house, and as occasion demanded, he was interpreter between the Germans and Maquas or Mohawks. Several families of the Ma-

qua nation lived within a mile of his father's house. Conrad was poorly compensated here as interpreter. In his Journal he says: "So lagen auch allezeit Maquaische hie und wieder auf der Jagd, da es oefters was fehlte dass ich viel zu dolmetschen hatte, aber ohne Lohn."

The Germans here, amid trials and difficulties, ever incident to new settlements, made, in a few years, considerable improvements. Their flattering prospects were, however, wholly blasted. Owing to a defect in their land titles, they were dispossessed. Many of them left Schoharie in the spring of 1620; came to Pennsylvania, and settled among the Indians in Tulpehocken, now Berks county. The Weiser family however remained till 1729, when Conrad left with his wife and five children, Philip, Frederick, Anna, Madlina and Maria, and came to Pennsylvania. He settled half a mile east of the present site of Womelsdorff. His father, John Conrad, remained at Schoharie till 1746.

He left then on account of the dangers which he apprehended from the French and Indians, who had already murdered several German families at Schoharie. Soon after his arrival at the house of his son, Conrad, he died at the advanced age of nearly ninety.

Weiser's profound knowledge of the Indian character, and an intimate acquaintance with their language, attracted the attention of Governor Gordon, of the Province of Pennsylvania, shortly after his arrival at Tulpehocken. As interpreter and Indian agent, having received that appointment from the governor, he accompanied the noted Shikelay, of Shamokin, and Cchachjuav, from his residence to Philadelphia.—[Prov. Records.

He was now nearly constantly absent for years, on Indian missions, on behalf of the Province of Pennsylvania. He and Shikelay were appointed by the treaty of 1714, "as fit and proper persons to go between the Six Nations and the government, and to be employed in all the actions with one another, whose bodies, the Indians said, were to be equally divided between them and us; we have one half—that they (Indians) had found Conrad Weiser faithful and honest—a true and good man, and had spoken their words, and our words, and not his own."—[Prov. Records.

In 1736, Governor Thomas commissioned him a justice of the peace. Now in a threefold capacity—interpreter, Indian agent and justice of the peace, to which was added that of colonel, in 1756. He continued his public career for many years. His was emphatically an active life. In September, 1736, the chiefs of the Six Nations were expected at Philadelphia, to confirm a treaty that had been made in 1732; Weiser was active on this occasion, as we learn from the Provincial Records. "Conrad Weiser, our interpreter, about the beginning of September, 1736, advised from Tulpehocken, that he had certain intelligence from some Indians, sent before him, that there was a large number of those people, with many of the chiefs, arrived at Shamokin, on the Susquehanna, upon which he was directed to repair thither to attend them, and supply them with necessities on their journey to Philadelphia."

"On the 27th of September, the chiefs came with Weiser to the president's house at Stenton, being near the road, where a suitable entertainment was provided for them; on the next day the honorable proprietor, Thomas Penn, and some of the council, with other gentlemen, coming thither from Philadelphia; after dinner a council was held at Stenton, September 28th. The council continued till the 29th, then adjourned to meet Oct. 2nd, in the Great Meeting House, in Philadelphia."—[Prov. Records.

In the year 1737, he was sent to Onondago, N. Y., at the desire of the governor of Virginia. He departed quite unexpectedly, towards the close of February, on a journey of five hundred miles, through a wilderness, where there was neither road nor path, and at a time of the year when animals could not be met with for food. It was an unpleasant journey. In a letter, he says, "There were with me, a Dutchman and three Indians. After we had gone one hundred and fifty miles on our journey, we came to a narrow valley, about half a mile broad and thirty miles long, both sides of which were encompassed by high mountains, on which the snow lay about three feet deep; in it ran a stream of water also three feet deep. The stream was so crooked that it kept a continual winding from one side of the valley to the other. In order to avoid wading so often through the water, we endeavored to pass along the slope of the mountain—the snow now being three feet deep, and so hard frozen on the top that we walked upon it, but were obliged to make holes into the snow with our hatchets, that we would not slide down the mountain, and thus we crept on. It happened that the old Indian's foot slipped, and the root of

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TO RECLAIM WASTE LAND

Something That Should Interest Our Farmers

GREAT CHESTNUT GROVES

C. K. Sober's Novel Experiment With Chestnut Trees—Expects Some Large Returns—100,000 Trees Under Cultivation.

The following article is taken from last Sunday's *Press* and bears on a point that will not fail to interest many of our farmers and those who have large areas of waste mountain land. C. K. Sober is well and favorably known to most of our readers having extensive lumber operations in the eastern portion of the county for many years:

There are coal oil, kings, steel barons and Napoleons of finance, but within the next five years Coleman K. Sober, of Union county, will be the chestnut king of the country. He is the owner of the largest chestnut grove in the United States. It comprises 205 acres of land on which there are growing over 100,000 chestnut trees. Mr. Sober's object has been to solve the problem of rendering productive and profitable the millions of acres of wild mountain land in this Commonwealth.

C. K. Sober is a wealthy lumberman whose home is in Lewisburg. His attention was first attracted to the culture of chestnut when he was a lad of twelve on his father's farm. While his father was grafting fruits the boy insisted that he graft small chestnut trees. The old gentleman laughed at the idea as preposterous. Five years ago the boy, now a man past fifty, put into execution his early idea, and it is a demonstrable proposition that he will have an income of thousands a year from his chestnut orchard within the next few years.

UTILIZING WASTE LAND.

The trees are all growing upon what would otherwise be waste mountain land, soil that could not even be profitably utilized as sheep pasture. It is such land as is found in every county of the state where lumbering operations have denuded the soil and left it a wilderness of underbrush and tangled vine. This fall Mr. Sober harvested his first crop, thirty bushels of Paragon chestnuts, the market value of which is \$7 per bushel. He distributed the crop among his friends.

The Sober chestnut groves are located on the mountain sides that inclose Irish Valley, six miles from Paxinos Station, and about eight miles from Shamokin. Irish Valley is a beautiful and fertile depression walled in to the east and the west by parallel spurs of the Alleghenies. The sides of the latter are sloping and rocky, originally covered with oak, sap pine and chestnut timber. The pine and oak were cut down a generation ago, leaving the chestnut standing in place. Some of the latter was marketed and there has since grown up a second growth of this timber.

The method pursued by Mr. Sober in beginning his chestnut grove experiment was to cut down the standing trees on this land in the fall. The following spring young shoots would appear around the stump of the fallen tree. These shoots were grafted with scions of the Paragon nut, a chestnut that was originally raised by W. L. Shaffer, of Philadelphia, from a foreign nut planted eighteen years ago. This Paragon nut is about five times the size of the average American chestnut. It is crisp and sweet and differs from the Italian chestnut, which is coarse and tasteless, or else has an acorn flavor which is decidedly unpleasant. The first scions used in grafting the Sober trees were obtained from W. H. Engle, of Marietta, Pa.

Ninety per cent. of the trees in Mr. Sober's groves were grafted during the first year. The Paragon scions were cut in February and laid away in sand, and the grafting process began in early spring. The first grafting was done by Mr. Sober himself with the assistance of a farmhand or two. Last year he employed eight nurserymen for five weeks, each man grafting on an average of 300 trees per day. Last spring the same number of men were employed for the same period. Ninety per cent. of the grafts were successful.

The "cleft," or wedge graft, which was originally used, has been entirely superseded by the "tongue," or whip graft. This graft is held in place by a wax, the formula of which is original with Mr. Sober, and is made as follows: To two pounds of rosin there are added one pound of beeswax and one-half pound of beef tallow. This melted together and worked like taffy will stand any weather. This was colored so that the work of each man can be distinguished by the color of the wax used.

BEAUTIFUL MODEL FARM. Mr. Sober has expended something like \$50,000 in developing and maintaining the model farm of which his chestnut groves are the boundary.

The principal chestnut grove stretches

along the bordering mountain side for nearly a mile on the right hand side of the road. It consists of 130 acres. An eighty-acre grove crowns the hillside to the left. The roads leading to the chestnut groves are bordered with cherry trees, forty feet apart. Between the farmhouse and the mountain are orchards of peach, pear, apple, cherry and other fruits, embracing over sixty acres. The chestnut trees begin bearing in a very small way the second year. The third year the burrs increase in number and as high as three pints of chestnuts have been gathered from a three-year-old tree not more than six feet high. The four and five-year-old trees bear from two quarts to half a peck, and as the tree grows the yield increases proportionately.

A GROVE OF 100,000 TREES.

There are today on the Sober farm 100,000 trees, which will bear from one pint upward of chestnuts next fall. If a general average of one quart per tree be estimated for the yield of the groves the product in round numbers will be 3125 bushels of chestnuts. At the low rate of \$6 per bushel an income of \$18,750 is assured. Allowing \$3750 for the expenses of protecting and gathering the crop the net profit to Mr. Sober will be \$15,000. And this from land which for agricultural purposes would not bring \$3 per acre. As the grove increases in size and age there must, if necessary, be a weeding out. But while the number of trees will be reduced the productiveness of the grove will not be lessened.

Mr. Sober's idea for the reclaiming of waste land, and in which he is endeavoring to interest arboriculturists all over the country, is the transplanting of young chestnut seedlings. The establishment of a grove from planting the nut he regards as a process entirely too slow. There are millions of young chestnut seedlings on otherwise waste land on which can be grafted the Paragon scion with no expense beyond the cost of grafting and protection against the enemies of the chestnut. These enemies, in the order of their danger, are fire, weevil and thieves.

The Sober groves are protected against fire on two sides by fire roads; wide avenues denuded of timber and then burned over. In the fall all the brush gathered in the grove is heaped in piles and permitted to lie until midwinter when the ground is covered with snow. Then on a rainy day the brush piles are saturated with kerosene oil, large hinged frames of pine boards covered with asbestos are set up to protect the trees in the vicinity and the brush piles are fired.

DANGERS OF FIRE.

The men on the place are fully instructed as to their duties in case of fire: last winter a fire started on an adjoining property. All the hands on the farm were summoned, and, armed with stable forks, they cleared a stretch of ground two rods wide of every stick and leaf and scored the soil to a depth of several inches. They were prepared to "back" fire to protect the chestnut grove, but a falling rain rendered this precaution unnecessary.

Next to fire the chestnut weevil, whose product is the fat, white, grub familiar to chestnut eaters, is the most destructive enemy of the nut. It is a beetle about half an inch long with sharp mandibles, which enables it to bore through the burr and into the nut and there deposit its egg. The grub finds its way into the ground, after the nut falls, where it burrows and remains until spring to come forth as a winged insect and propagate its kind in like manner.

Mr. Sober has made a close study of this insect for the past five years and has at length hit upon a plan to prevent its ravages and ultimately destroy it. The ordinary game chicken he finds is the greatest enemy of the chestnut weevil. A brood of one hundred game chickens in a grove of twenty-five acres will in the course of a few years reduce the multitude of chestnut weevils to a minimum. Sheep turned to pasture in a chestnut grove with the chickens assist in keeping the grass and undergrowth cropped close, thus aiding the fowls in their scavenger work. Experiments on the Sober farm demonstrate that of all chickens the ordinary American game fowl is the greatest destroyer of grubs, worms and insects.

MR. SOBER'S INSECT TRAP.

Although a business man with a wide range of investment, Mr. Sober is also an inventor of marked ability. Most of his devices have never been patented. One night last summer farmers driving to market saw a dozen lights twinkling in widely separated places on the Sober farm. They smiled to themselves when they learned that they were insect traps set in the garden and fields. They consisted of a circular sheet iron dish or pan, three inches deep, filled with water and with a light covering of coal oil. In the centre was placed a small lamp, while rising above this lamp, and extending from the surface of the oil to a height of

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COL. DUNHAM AT A SNAKE DANCE

Among the Moqui Indians of Arizona

DESCRIBES STRANGE PEOPLE

A Short Sketch of Their Manner of Life—Live in the Cliffs and Observe Weird Customs—A Ceremony That is Truly Remarkable.

(Col. D. S. Dunham is well known to the many readers in Bellefonte. For several years he was editor of the Bellefonte Fountain. After that he devoted his time to writing for the *Griff* and other periodicals. For a time he was a tipstaff in our court. Having reached advanced age, several years ago he concluded to accept an offer from his daughter to make his home with her at Pasadena, Cal., where the balmy breezes of the Pacific slope would be more congenial than the rigors of our climate. Being a versatile writer and a keen observer of unique and original events, the Col. very thoughtfully sent us a description of the weird snake dance by the Moqui Indians of Arizona, as witnessed by him, which is exceedingly vivid and intensely interesting.—Ed.)

The Moqui Indians live in Arizona, one of the great wonderlands and richest territories of this country in minerals. The Moquis are the strangest people on earth without exception. There are about 2000 of them and they link the present generation back to the ages gone by. Personal experiences are more interesting than dry facts that can be gleaned from libraries.

Coming over a high ridge we looked northward across a valley five miles wide. There were several thousand patches of growing corn in this valley, which make these portions of the country look green. The soil is of a sandy character, and the corn had been planted without plowing. The small ears come out on the stalks close to the ground. In this valley there is scarcely a house to be seen. On the opposite side of the valley rises abruptly a solid stone ridge some 400 to 600 feet. On the top of this stone ridge are the villages of the Moqui, or Cliff Dwellers. There are but two trails leading up to the dwellings. These strange people perched up there have lived thus for unknown generations. This is the Gibraltar of the desert which has preserved the remnant of the otherwise extinct Cliff Dwellers.

The United States government gives every Moqui family who will come down from the heights and build a house, every door, window, floor and roof for it, besides farming implements and seed, but the dusky natives prefer to live upon the barren mountains while they pack all their wood, water, food and everything up those two trails.

Before telling of the antelope and snake dances, I will write of the home life of these strange people. Weird and unique as those dances are, the people are even more interesting. A stroll of a few minutes brings us to where the stone houses are piled one on top of another at the edges of the cliff. At the bottom of the trail women can be seen filling earthen vessels containing from 4 to 8 gallons of water. Each woman puts her load in a cloth sack, one part of which is swung over the forehead and the other part holds the water vessel in the small of the back. On the same trail there are burros, some have loads of wood, others corn, others melons and others different produce. Meeting a Moqui we asked him why he didn't move his home down in the valley instead of packing everything up there. His reply was: "All right now; women pack water up, burro pack wood and food. Fine up there together."

At 14 minutes after 5 o'clock on the 24th of August, 1901, the dancers appeared. From a cistern like room at the north side of the narrow street the "antelope men" came out of the lower room by a ladder. A small boy leads them. They march three times round the square chanting and making time with a stick composed of turkey feathers. As they go by the cottonwood clump each stamps heavily with his right foot on the plank under which are the snakes. Then come the snake men—28 of them—in single file, keeping time as they step and circle around the square. Each tramps heavily on the plank covering the snakes. Their costumes personify savagery in all its weirdness.

Finally the snake chief starts on a peculiar hop down the line, while the antelope chief puts his arms around the snake chief's neck and together they dance round and round. Then, as they hop to the snake den, the snake chief runs his bare arm down the opening beside the plank in among the creeping mass of snakes and pulls out a long, hissing, live rattlesnake, and puts it in his mouth, holding the reptile about four inches back of his head, while the tail wriggles on one side and the head on the other, the brilliant little eyes staring and the tongue snapping viciously, but the snake

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FACT, FUN AND FANCY.

Bright Sparkling Paragraphs—Selected and Original.

"He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool. Avoid him."
"He who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is simple. Teach him."
"He who knows and knows not that he knows, is asleep. Wake him."
"But he who knows and knows that he knows, is a wise man. Follow him."
—From the Arabian Proverbs

A level-headed man is one who always agrees with us.
The optician cannot always remedy short-sightedness.

The fellow with a poor memory seldom forgets his troubles.
Most women bookkeepers pride themselves on their figures.

The fewer clothes a burlesque actress wears the more airs she puts on.
Smoking in this world isn't such a sin that it leads to smoking in the next.

A dude who is a graceful dancer can be described as "light at both ends."
Charity may begin at home but reform is usually practiced on some one else.

POOR MAN AGAIN.

Schley Spent His Savings to Defend His Honor.

The savings from 45 years of active service in the United States navy have been eaten up by the expenses of the inquiry by which Admiral Schley hopes to clear his record as a naval officer. Since the adjournment of the public session the admiral has been staying at the Arlington hotel, attempting to extricate himself from the financial tangle caused by the inquiry. He finds that every cent of \$20,000 which he had expected to leave to his family, in addition to all the prize money which he will get for his part in the Spanish-American war, has been spent on the inquiry. Financially the admiral is worse off than he was almost half a century ago when he entered the naval academy.

As a retired rear admiral the Government will give him \$5,625 a year as long as he lives, but the money with which he had hoped to assure the comfort of his wife, should anything happen to him, is gone. Mrs. Schley insists that the money has been well spent, and her children agree with her. Schley is not so confident now that the money is gone. During the inquiry he did not hesitate a moment at incurring any expense. Now the summing up shows the balance a long way on the wrong side.

"I cannot say I wish I had it back," said Admiral Schley, "but I do wish that I had the assurance that I had a year ago that my wife would never come to want."

It is more than probable that some of the admiral's admirers who are members of Congress will introduce a bill at the coming session to reimburse him for the expenses.

Warrants at the treasury department show that Sampson has drawn \$32,000 prize money. The larger part of this came as his share of the spoils of the battle of Santiago. The amount of Schley's prize money will be about \$5,000.

Hog Cholera Raging

Sugar Valley Journal: Cholera in all its severity and fatal result is attacking the fattening hogs in Greene township. Upwards of 100 porkers have already died and many more are sick. A partial list of the losses to date is as follows: John Augustine, 12; John Esterline, 11; Fred Womelborg, 8; Jefferson Eckle, 6; Albert Schrader, 7; A. J. Mark, 3; Samuel Frankenberg, 11; Mrs. Troutner, 1; John Mizner, 4; Mrs. D. L. Stamm, 1; Noah Cramer, 10; Frank Miller, 1 and others.

Fewer means has been tried to check the ravages of the disease, but to no success.

Killed While Walking in Her Sleep.

The body of Miss Emma Heister, 45 years old, clad only in her night dress, was found Monday morning along the Pennsylvania railroad tracks near her home at Ryde, Mifflin county. Miss Heister was subject to walking in her sleep and it is believed she wandered from her home while in a somnambulist state and was struck by a train.

Committed to Jail.

During the past week a man named Harry Boddorf, of near Runville, in Boggs township, was arrested on the charge of shooting his wife and daughter and using violence in other ways towards them. It seems that he came home under the influence of liquor and became rantankerous. His case will come in the quarter sessions next week.

State Won Easily.

The game of foot ball at Williamsport, on Saturday, between State and Lehigh, was well attended. It was a walk over for State as they won easily by a score of 35 to 0. Lehigh was no match for the home team.