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NATIONAL EDITORIAL
ASSOCIATION

Thoughts of Yesteryear

A couple of weeks ago the Union Press-Courier printed a facsimile of a news story that told of a tragic train wreck up near Eckenrode Mill in the early days of both the railroad and, for that matter, also of Patton. That was back in 1892. Prior to the turn of 1890 the only really settlements worthy of note in this section north of Loretto and Ebensburg were Carrolltown, and then down the Susquehanna to Cherry Tree. In the 1890's Hastings, Spangler, Patton and Barnesboro came into being with the coming of the railroad and the opening of major coal developments.

The circle of highway from Patton, to Carrolltown, to Spangler, to Barnesboro, then to Hastings and on back to Patton was generally known as "around the horn" because of its cow horn appearance on the map. It was a good long drive for a Sunday swain and his lady, and also was a popular summer drive by horse and buggy. Roads all were unimproved. Only Patton in the late thirties had any paved streets—and for that matter good permanent roads came to the north of the county only after World War I.

Ebensburg, being the county seat, also had much interest to the folks of the north county. Back in the late 1880's and early 1890's a "plank road," constructed of timber, was in use between Carrolltown and Ebensburg, and was located on the highway generally used until a few years back. But the plank deteriorated and the good old earth again furnished the base for traveling. In fact, there were three roads between Carrolltown and Ebensburg—the so-called "Old" road, out to the north of Randall's Dam; the "Middle" road, practically the same right-of-way of present Route 219, and the "Plank" road.

However, in later years, around about 1910, when there still certainly was no evidencing of what the automobile would do to revolutionize communication and travel, the Northern Cambria Street Railway line came into being, and really served the people well for a period of about 15 years. Linked together with this electric car service were Patton, St. Benedict, Spangler and Barnesboro, on the main line, and Carrolltown, with a spur line having a junction near Baker's Cross Roads, at which location Sunset Park materialized.

The introduction of street car service linking these towns quite naturally to some degree isolated Hastings, not included in the system. In the south of the county a street car line also sprang into operation between Ebensburg and Johnstown, and it had always been the thought to connect the two lines. In 1906-07 plans actually did materialize for a line from Patton to Altoona. But capital never materialized. In fact at one time plans called for connecting lines from Barnesboro clear through to Bedford. But the street car system died a natural death brought about by the growth of automobile sales and of hard-surfaced highways.

But most every resident of this section middle age and over will always hold within their memories the glamor and the facilities that the Northern Cambria Street Railway Co. afforded the general public. In the beginning, the fare per zone was a nickel, so that one could ride from Patton to Carrolltown for 15¢, or from Patton to Barnesboro for the magnificent sum of a quarter of a dollar. And there were special discounts for commuters who bought 50 tickets at a time. Later, of course, the fare rates were raised.

About the only lark some of the younger folks had back in those days when entertainment features as now accepted were not known, was to take a street car ride. Maybe the swains from Patton made their point of destination Carrolltown, if they didn't have the two-hits necessary to make a trip to Barnesboro. But they probably had just as an enjoyable an evening as the youngster who sits at the wheel of a "jalopy" today.

But one great big advantage, also, that the street railway gave the people, young and old, in this section, was the outing afforded at Sunset Park, created by the railway concern to augment business at the junction point of the Carrolltown spur. Really in early days nothing more than a large picnic ground, it was accessible to all who were within reach of the street cars. And the company made much ado of every event throughout the summer months.

Regular Sunday afternoon and evening concerts were held during the summer seasons as an inducement to attract people to the park. Basket picnicking was promoted and was thoroughly enjoyed by both young and old, and particularly by younger couples with small children. Sunset Park was the outstanding recreation spot in this area—and all this was even before the large auditorium was constructed.

And, after construction of the auditorium, owned and operated by private interests, the park came into even greater prominence. Better dining and dancing both were standard features and basketball became a really intensely interesting sport for several years, with teams from all along the line and from even quite far away, featured. Local rivalry drew large crowds. Sunset Park was in its glory not only in the summer months, but all through the year.

Each year a number of outstanding outings were always looked forward to by our population. Perhaps the greatest picnic of all time in Northern Cambria County were the annual Business Men's Picnics at Sunset. The Northern Cambria business men had an association at that time, but likely their highlighting accomplishment was their picnic—open to all—and all who could possibly attend did so. Then there were labor picnics, many church picnics, farmers' picnics, and so on.

Who of the readers don't remember the annual Scottish Fairs, with its large attendance and the fascinating interplay of the Highland bag, the sword dance, etc., and the Scottish poetry. Most of the procession of the Scottish Fairs came from the Barnesboro area, and the late Richard Reuther, for many years a department store operator there, was one of the promoters of the outings. "The Scottish Fairs" was a day, everybody who could find time was "Scottish" for a day.

Sunset Park also was the logical place for the holding of political rallies, and both major parties availed themselves of the opportunity. A number of national politicians, created at Sunset Park, and smaller fry by the more expeditious political doctrines. Even commercial convention meetings took place there. And all because of the Northern Cambria Street Railway line and its park promotion.

In the middle of the 1920's the street car business gave its last gasp, after struggling along for several years. We feel all of the folks whom it served so long and faithfully for so many years were sorry to see it go, even though so many of them no longer perceived its benefits of good roads and a sunny car. It brought the folks of the several communities together in friendly cooperation. It brought order and respectability to many who otherwise never would have had the opportunity.

UNCLE SHAM



And it helped all of the larger communities along the line. It brought out-of-town trade to stores in Patton, in Barnesboro, and Carrolltown that never would have materialized without the street car. It afforded entertainment to people in neighboring towns. Many of us well remember how the old Morley Theatre in Barnesboro drew large crowds at its winter road shows, and the Morley Theatre, for the benefit of the younger generations, booked the same high-caliber road shows that held forth at the Mishler in Altoona and the Cambria in Johnstown, and ran all the way from burlesque to some of the best drama of the ages.

The management was confronted from time to time with the elements of the weather. Particularly heavy and drifting snows taxed its clearing operations from time to time. The Carrolltown spur was hardest to keep open because of the initial application of effort always being put forth on the main line when storms came. Interest of the people in opening the line can be attested by the fact that several times during the duration of the service Carrolltown folks voluntarily came to the company's assistance in clearing the tracks by shoveling snow by hand between the town and Sunset.

The Northern Cambria street car line was always a subject of the standard jokester. However, it was an institution with all the towns it served. Only when through power failure or storm it failed to function, did the people really appreciate it. More than the commercial advantage it offered us, can't we be remembered the pleasures it afforded. A street car ride, anywhere, always was an adventure to our youngsters—and maybe, also, to the older people.

Northern Cambria County has gone a long, long way from the time of our street cars. But we had just as pleasurable times in the tempo of those days as we are enjoying today. Perhaps it was at a somewhat slower pace, but maybe that's what did make matters so pleasant. When the "Sunset Military Band" gave its concerts on Sundays, that was something to attend. Those concerts, by the way, always were advertised as "Sacred Concerts."

"As I See It"

By . . .
STATE SENATOR
JOHN J. HALUSKA

We are informed by the daily press that Cambria County Federation of Clubs is to give a huge testimonial to Andrew J. Gleason who formerly was solicitor for the Federation. We learn that Senator Duff and Martin, along with Governor Fine, will take part in paying tribute to Mr. Gleason at the Oriental Hall at Gallitzin.

We wonder whether this is really a testimonial or the opening gun of the 1962 campaign. And, again, we wonder whether these outstanding figures will actually be present or later on will send a telegram to the banquet committee expressing their inability to attend, which is usually the case on most occasions of this type.

Just what good Mr. Gleason has done the Federation of Clubs is unknown to anyone. However, it is true that a great deal of good was done him by acting in this capacity. We know that the clubs, especially those located in the Southern part of the County, were called upon in every campaign to make handsome donations to Mr. Gleason. He received thousands of dollars from this source, and it may be that the Federation of Clubs is so delighted in getting rid of him that a testimonial, celebrating this great occasion, is certainly worthwhile—captioned "Good Riddance."

We wonder just how long club members will be played for suckers in the days to come; they should know by this time that neither Mr. Gleason nor any District Attorney has any right, under the Law, to permit the operation of slot machines. Especially is this true when the District Attorney will take it upon himself to inform the club members that during a certain portion of the year, they are permitted to have the machines in operation (that is in the portion which the District Attorney calls "legal") and then, in another portion of the year, he informs them that the machines must be taken out. All club members know that the State Police or the Federal Government can and will, at their own discretion, take care of this matter in the very near future. We, personally, find no fault with those operating slot machines; first, because no person is forced to play them and, secondly, the clubs of Northern Cambria County have been very charitable in the past, and the monies derived from this source were freely given to charitable institutions.

But, if slot machine operation is permitted solely to line the pockets of Mr. Gleason, or to further the political whims of any District Attorney, then we say it is time the slot machines be taken out entirely.

In Cambria County it has been a crime, to say the least, to note the pressure put on clubs at Election time, for political donations. The day must come when all the clubs must put their house in order and put them—us on a business basis in competition with other liquor dispensers.

All retail licensees are making huge profits without the aid of slot machines and other gambling devices. The clubs, under the law, have many more concessions than a liquor licensee. They are permitted to be open after the usual closing time and shut place—have many more concessions than a liquor licensee. They are permitted to be open after the usual closing time and shut place—have many more concessions than a liquor licensee.

Therefore, there is no reason whatsoever why the clubs cannot be put on a paying basis, still remain charitable, be an asset to their community and be free to operate their business in a manner very without political corruption and political donations.

So, it appears certain to us that the testimonial to be held at the "Oriental" is not paying tribute for services rendered, but is a thing of rejoicing such as a man would have in his heart, who, after having served a long term in the Federal Penitentiary, is, once again, free to face the public on his own.

Punxsy Groundhog Only Reliable One

The Punxsutawney groundhog is the only one to be trusted, according to Congressman Leon H. Gavin. The Pennsylvania Republican told his colleagues in Washington they shouldn't pay any attention to phony prophets on Groundhog Day, Feb. 2. The only reliable prediction, he said, is the one from "the great prognosticator of the weather and world meteorologist from Punxsutawney, Jefferson County, in my district."

"I sincerely hope there will be no attempts to discredit this great seer as has happened in the past by a lot of synthetic groundhogs," Gavin said. Public Spaghetti Luncheon Today At St. Benedict. The Ladies Aid Society of the St. Benedict Presbyterian Church will serve a spaghetti luncheon beginning at 12:30 p. m. this Thursday, Jan. 31. A group under the direction of Mrs. Joseph W. Symons will have charge of the luncheon. The public is invited to attend.

North of County Deserves Representation

THE PEOPLE of Northern Cambria County—roughly a third of the county's population—are about to go down for a long campaign. This is what the Democratic Party machine is about to try to shove down their throats: A slate of three "county district" assemblymen—all from the south of the county, all, in fact, from the immediate suburbs of Johnstown.

TOGETHER with the two assemblymen elected from the city, the Cambria County delegation to the lower house of the Legislature could be composed entirely of lawmakers from the extreme south of the county.

PLACES OF INTEREST In CAMBRIA COUNTY

OLD ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH There is nothing quite so interesting as the study of old churches in our communities and the cemeteries adjoining them. It is our privilege to write a short account of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church near Carrolltown. It is located in the Hart's Sleeping Place region.

It may be reached from Carrolltown by taking the road leading to Spangler. Before reaching St. Benedict a road sign will direct one to the church. The other public road leads from Carrolltown by way of Sunset Park to Baker's Cross Roads. One must turn left to the road leading to Hastings. This road follows substantially the Old Kittanning Path. You continue on this blacktop road until you come to the first earth road turning off to the left. At once you will see a large sign giving the following information: "Saint Joseph Mission Church—Hart's Sleeping Place—Founded 1820—Prince Gallitzin Masses Sunday 9:00 A. M. Holydays 8:00 A. M."

You will follow the dirt road for less than one-half mile when all at once you will see the beautiful old church in full view to your right. There is ample room to park an automobile. I would suggest that you enter this friendly church edifice for its doors are always open during the day.

Built By Gallitzin About 1820 The church was built by Rev. Father Gallitzin about 1820, some say 1822. It was dedicated by the Prince-Priest in honor of St. Joseph on Sunday, Oct. 10, 1830, by celebrating Mass and the Sacrament of Baptism of children. The church is built of logs which are still in place as its stands on the original foundation. The church proper is about 44

feet long and 32 feet wide with a high ceiling of about 18 feet. You enter by way of a vestibule. You ascend 4 steps of filled stone about 8 feet in length and smooth as though planed. You enter the church in the center aisle. There are 14 rows of pews handmade out of heavy timber on the one side and 9 rows on the other side, with a short row. It is from this side that a stairway leads to the choir loft. On Christmas Eve, 1946, there were 25 voices in the choir. The choir loft is supported by two attractive heavy pillars.

In the days of Prince Gallitzin a small apartment was used by him. It contained a small dining room, a couch and small sleeping room. The sacristy was connected with the kitchen. There is a small bell on the top of the roof which contains a bell not unlike those of the old one-room school houses. There are 2 windows on each of the long sides. A small flue is on the outside on the east cemetery side of the church.

Legends On Stained Windows The following legends are to be found on the stained windows: "Father Lemke's First Meeting with Prince Gallitzin—I will merely call attention to a few of the many things recited in these legends. Both Prince Gallitzin and Father Lemke were intimately associated with St. Joseph's Mission."

"John Weakland Defends Prince Gallitzin." John Weakland and wife donated the ground on which the church is erected. John defended Father Gallitzin from an assault.

"Father Lemke Welcomes to America Abbot Boniface Wimmer." Abbot Wimmer received the Benedictine vows of Father Henry Lemke, OSB.

Before leaving the church you are asked to view through a glass which shows part of the original structure, which still is the framework of the present church. It was constructed of logs between 12 and 18 inches thick. The exterior is now covered with white asbestos shingles.

In the cemetery which almost surrounds this old church rest the remains of many of its early parishioners who labored faithfully and earnestly as members of the church. In the cemetery buried along the walk on the east side of the building, one will see 2 gravestones—one reciting as follows: "In Memory of John Weakland, Died October 15, 1850. Aged 96 years 6 months," and on the adjoining gravestone: "In Memory of Catherine Weakland, Wife of John Weakland, Died February 20, 1861, in the 92 year of her age."

The beauty of the old church and its pleasant surroundings has been seriously marred by the unsightly work of stripping of coal. One sees this ghastly sight before you get to the beautiful and dignified church. Practically all

around the church we see the coal removed leaving high ridges of earth and deep gullies. It appears that those who have taken out the coal should at least place the earth in the unsightly ruts and depressions caused by the removal of coal. It almost seems like vandalism on the part of those who did it.

You are now ready to leave this interesting old church and to retrace your steps. May I suggest that when you come to improved road that you turn left past Hart's Sleeping Place monument and travel a short distance and then look to the left and you will see the old church again—white, clean, dignified and reminding us of the influence it has exerted in the past and even now in its age not only points the way to better living but makes us better for having seen it.

When at Carrolltown drive into the cemetery adjoining the church and see the monument of Father Henry Lemke, who followed Prince Gallitzin after his death in ministering to the flock at St. Joseph's Church.

Next week Father Gallitzin and those associated with him at Loretto.

Folk Music Feb. 12 At Mount Aloysius



EVELYN YURENOVICH Evelyn Yurenovich, senior member with the colorful Tambourine college from Duquesne University, is pictured playing the romantic tambourine.

This group of singers and dancers, who have gained fame throughout the nation, will appear at Mount Aloysius Junior College, Cremona, on Tuesday, Feb. 12, at 8 p. m. Admission price is \$1.50 with tickets on sale at the college.

Miss Yurenovich plays, sings, and dances with the celebrated Tambourine.



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