

# Churning Mill Wheels Brought Prosperity To Huntsville Folk

## Town Was In Its Heyday A Half Century Ago; Community Dates Back To Settlers Of 1790

Among many back-country communities now awakened to the touch of summer and welcoming an annual influx of summer residents is Huntsville, whose quiet unspoiled beauty today is little changed from half a century ago when the village was in its prime and rated as of more importance than did Dallas. It is fast becoming the nucleus of a fine summer colony but from the highway few of the new places are to be seen, nestling as they do well back behind rich verdant growth.

The little dirt roads of Huntsville are steep and sharp-curved. The houses are white, neat and comfortable. Here swings a little front gate, fastened by an ancient hasp, and guarded on either side by lilac and syringa bushes. There grows a brilliant trumpet vine, tied to the simple post with a bit of old leather shoe string. Here are fine old trees, sloping farm lands and a busy little brook singing its precipitous way down descending levels of water chiseled grey rocks, much as it did when the first little dam was put across it by the beavers before the advent of man. There are old abandoned roads leading off the macadam, steep, moist and cool where grass grows between the wheel tracks and feathered ferns bend into the roadway.

### Suggestive of Scottish Lake

Even the big artificial lake has taken on a lovely natural shoreline through the years. On foggy days its ragged shape is suggestive of a

Scottish Lake. In sunshine it nestles among the unspoiled mountains with the clear-colored loveliness of England.

Pioneer settlers were attracted to the natural water power at Huntsville as early as 1799. The settlement was briefly known as "Baldwins Mills" until the arrival of William Hunt in whose honor Huntsville was adopted.

This same William Hunt, first storekeeper of the little village, according to William Penn Ryman, Dallas historian, complained of the extravagance of his own family in the use of sugar, declaring "that if they had their full swing he really believed they would consume 40 pounds a year."

On the subject of early industries Ryman says that Jehiel Fuller was credited with having a "still" in his home up to 1799, which later disappeared as "the country was not enough cleared about there at that day to make a distillery at

that point pay."

### First Settlers Built Dam

The first settlers built a crude dam in the narrows where the beavers had preceded them, and leading from this an open water race conveyed water to the mills below. A larger dam was built a few years later, and the race was replaced by a close flume bound with heavy metal hoops.

Ewart Bogardus in "Early Recollections," writes, "There was a very good water privilege to supply these mills before the country was settled and the forest was cleared away, but the advance of civilization has lessened the supply."

Local road conditions in the early years are reflected in Ryman's report of the burial of Ephraim McCoy of Dallas about 1818: "When McCoy died the nearest burying ground was at Huntsville, and there being no driveable roads yet open between Dallas and Huntsville, McCoy's body was carried by the pallbearers about two miles to the Huntsville burying ground for interment."

The cemetery referred to here lies on a steep side hill overlooking the picturesque valley and remains today the only burying ground of Huntsville. It was given to the community in 1798 when a young lad was killed by a falling tree and had been buried where he fell. An acre or more of the land was then set aside by the owner, as was a frequent custom, for subsequent interments.

### Truman Atherton, Postmaster

The weather-worn slab of dull field stone which marks this first grave reads, "Philetus Fuller who departed This Life March 13, 1798 in the 16th year of his age." His is the only grave lying north and south in the bramble-grown cemetery. All others lie east and west.

Many references at this time point to Huntsville as a more important community than Dallas, then known as "McLellansville."

Bogardus writes, "The first post office established back of the mountain was at Huntsville. Truman Atherton was the first postmaster, appointed under the John Quincy Adams administration. He held the office until about 1847 when he resigned and Major Abed Baldwin was

appointed as his successor. Truman Atherton occupied quite a prominent place in the respect of his neighbors, holding frequently, two or three township offices at the same time and representing his country two years in the legislature of Pennsylvania."

In fact, Truman Atherton was Huntsville at this time. It was he who gave the lumber for the Huntsville church, undenominational, built in 1843, and 13 years later decided to them the land on which it stood, with as much ground surrounding it as they desired. They modestly requested five feet beyond the foundation walls.

It was during these first 13 years that the congregation appears to have differentiated itself as of the "Christian" persuasion, a new sect then crystallizing throughout the United States. Pastor today is Rev. C. H. Frick.

### Dr. Rogers Well Liked

Dr. Joel Jackson Rogers, friend of Truman Atherton, and only physician for miles around, was another important townsman of the early years. He lived to the age of 84 and still is affectionately remembered by many who describe him during his final winters as always with a heavy plaid shawl around his shoulders. He had been kicked by a horse and working his arms into a heavy overcoat was painful. His son, the late Dr. Lewis L. Rogers, was an X-Ray specialist of Wilkes-Barre.

Dr. J. J. Rogers came to Huntsville from Huntington, soon after his marriage in 1851 to Sarah Carolyn Rice, daughter of Jacob and Sarah Cooke Rice of Trucksville. He purchased the homestead built by Burr Baldwin, some twenty years earlier, with its fine colonial doorway, its delicate eyebrow window, wide hewn floor boards and engaging wooden carved door latch all of which endure today in excellent preservation.

Huntsville has several interesting old houses, and the Rogers house is one of the best known, clinging as it does to the steep side hill, close by the road near the cross roads. It is guarded by a pair of towering pines, much as it was when Dr. Rogers remodeled it for himself and his bride 85 years ago. Among other extensive improvements, he added an office and apothecary shop where his wife put up most of his prescriptions for him.

Study of old records kept by this versatile and beloved country doctor brings to light the simplicity, the ruggedness, the hardships of that time.

His diary, accounts, prescriptions and case histories run along currently in one varied recital, carefully penned on long narrow ledgers, early entries now having become too faded to decipher.

Dr. Rogers came to Huntsville while it was in its ascendancy, lived through the full flower of its prosperity and was still there after its industries all had died or moved away and it had taken its present day place of dignified retirement.

### Was Thriving Community

Huntsville was in its heyday 50 odd years ago. In addition to several saw and grist mills it boasted at least three stores, two hotels, a hat factory, a tin shop, an undertaker, two blacksmiths and a wheelwright.

Business over the whole country was expanding, railroads were being built. Huntsville forged ahead expectantly. Surveyors for the Lehigh Valley Railroad had been studying the best route from Wilkes-Barre and a way through Huntsville was under consideration. But the plan was abandoned and when in December, 1886, the first train pulled into Dallas, the star of Huntsville fell.

### LEHMAN TOWNSHIP

The proposed budget of the Lehman Township School District for the fiscal year, beginning July 6, 1953, is open for inspection at the home of the Secretary, Huntsville-Idetown road.

Final action on the proposed budget will be taken by the Board of Directors at a meeting to be held Tuesday June 9, 1953 at 8:00 P.M. in the High School building. By Order of the Board, Lewis V. Ide, Secretary

### LEGAL NOTICE

Sealed proposals will be received and publicly opened and read by the Supervisors of Dallas Township, Luzerne County, at the Dallas Township High School, at 7:30 o'clock P.M., EDST, on 2 June

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### Chairmen of Antique Show



Pictured above are chairmen of the committees for the antique show being sponsored by the Prince of Peace Auxiliary at the Parish House June 11, 12 and 13: left to right, Mrs. Charles W. Lee, advisor; Mrs. Paul Goddard, co-chairman; Mrs. Jonathan Valentine, chairman;

Mrs. Donald Clark, co-chairman; Mrs. Calvin Hall, publicity; not present were Mrs. H. R. Weaver, admission chairman and Mrs. Robert Maturi, snack bar chairman. Among the exhibitors are the following: Ray Shiber, Primo Berrettini, Dallas; J. D. Laidacker, Shick-

shiny; Mrs. Edwin Hogg, Kingston; Mrs. Emma Clark, Montrose; Mrs. Lee Eldridge, Mrs. Doris La'ly, Binghanton; the Reynolds, Montrose and Mrs. Kathleen Wurster, Williamsport.

1953 for the purchase by the Township of:

1 Crawler Tractor, equipped with hydraulically controlled bucket loader and bulldozer combination, with 1 Ford-Ferguson rubber tired Tractor and Loader to be taken as a "trade-in."

Proposal forms, specifications, form of contract and instruction to bidders may be obtained at the home of the Secretary, Board of Supervisors, R. D. 1, Trucksville, Pennsylvania.

The Supervisors reserve the right to reject any or all proposals.

A. GEORGE PRATER  
Secretary of Board

### LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT Articles of Incorporation will be filed in the Department of State of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at Harrisburg, Pa., on Friday, May 29th, 1953, for the purpose of obtaining a Certificate of Incorporation of a proposed business corporation to be organized under the Business Corporation Law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania approved May 5, 1933, as amended. The name of the proposed corporation is Dr. David's, Inc. The purpose for which it is to be organized is to operate a retail shoe store or stores, including buying and selling at retail shoes, findings and other merchandise generally handled by retail shoe stores.

Arthur Silverblatt  
Attorney

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### LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, County of Luzerne, ss: John Andrejko, Plaintiff, v. Anna Andrejko, Defendant.

In the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County, No. 938, May Term, 1953.

To Anna Andrejko, Defendant: You are notified that John Andrejko, the plaintiff, has commenced an action of divorce against you which you are required to defend.

Robert Sherrock  
Sheriff

Thomas F. Farrell, Jr.  
Attorney for Plaintiff  
519 Miners Nat'l. Bank Bldg.  
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

### To Dine Workers

Board of Management of the Back Mountain YMCA will entertain its volunteer workers at a dinner at Irem Temple Country Club Monday night at 6:30 p.m.

### Offers To Feed Calf

James Huston, Old Toll Gate Feed Service, has announced that he will feed any calf given to the Library Auction for four months on the Purina Feeding program.

Mr. Huston made the offer at the Auction Dinner Monday night at the Country Club.

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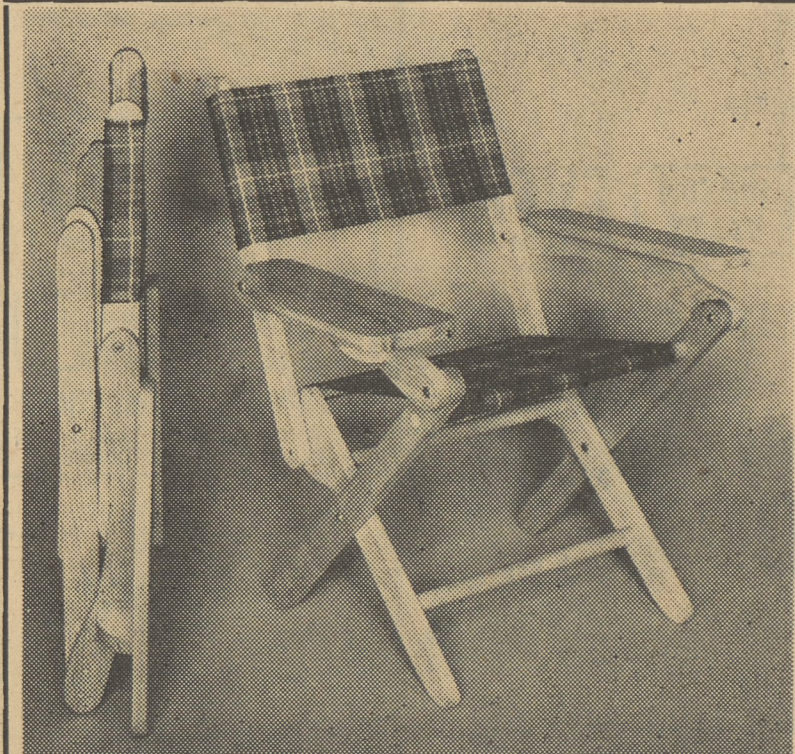
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DALLAS, PENNSYLVANIA

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