

The Jacobsburg Record

February, 1976

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JACOBSBURG AND ORAL HISTORY

As an adjunct to its more traditional types of work, the research committee of the Jacobsburg Historical Society has been working on an oral history program. While much information gained via taping sessions doesn't match the accuracy of dedicated field and library research, oral history definitely has value. The subject of an interview might not have all of his facts completely straight, ^{but} the interviewee often can provide rich anecdotal details about a time or place. A taping session can thus preserve what might eventually be lost forever.

The research committee has taped interviews with several persons since it has begun work. In September of 1974 the committee had the good fortune to visit Mr. Will Henry, of Nazareth, who has since passed on. Mr. Henry gave an excellent interview, reminiscing about gun production as he saw it at Boulton, about the nineteenth century appearance of the various areas now included in the park, and on other topics of interest to Jacobsburg 'buffs'. Other interesting persons who have been interviewed as part of the oral history program have been Miss Mary Henry Stites and Mrs. Annie Engler. Miss Stites provided a general overview of the Henry family and its impact on the industrial history of our locale in the 18th and 19th centuries, while Mrs. Engler discussed the Jacobsburg area. (Mrs. Engler's grandfather was an innkeeper at Jacobsburg.)

The research committee is presently arranging future interviews and tape sessions. We are also anxious to find other sources that might be of value in the overall piecing together of the Jacobsburg-Boulton story. If any readers are aware of persons with first-hand knowledge of the pre-World War I era in the Jacobsburg area (who might be good subjects) the committee would appreciate leads or 'tips' concerning such persons.

— Robert Newell

COLONIAL CRAFTS IN '76

While you are making your summer vacation and celebration plans, don't forget to mark your calendar for Saturday, July 17, 1976! This is the day of our Third Annual Colonial Craft Fair. It's not too early to start palnning, as this will surely be a busy year for everyone. If you will be able to help us on the day of the fair, please drop a note or phone me at your earliest convenience. We can use assistance for set-up and take-down, as well as in parking cars and in the kitchen and refreshment area.

We are also looking for groups or individuals who might be interested in volunteering their services to provide entertainment of some sort; (puppets, folk music, dance demonstrations, etc.)

Any ideas or suggestions that will help make our Fair a success will be gratefully accepted.

— Bobbie DiGerlando
R. D. #1, Box 325
Wind Gap, Pa. 18091
759-7239

PROGRAM NOTES

Board Meeting Wednesday, March 3, 8:00 p. m. at the home of Mrs. Beers. Archeology Committee Meeting Monday, March 15, 7:30 p. m. at the home of Charles Sandwick, Sr. Open to Members. Saturday, March 13, 9 to 5, YWCA Flea Market in Centre Square, Easton. We have taken a table. Thursday, March 25, 8:00 p. m. at College Hill Presbyterian Church—General Meeting of the Membership. See page 4 for additional program notes on this meeting and its speaker.
HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 1976 DUES? HAVE YOU SECURED A NEW MEMBER? DO IT NOW!!!!

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The Express, Easton, Pa., January 19, 1973, carried a picture of an old stone house in Bushkill Township and below it a story by Virginia Parry with a four-column heading 'Old Building May Be Saved'. The identity and location of the building are succinctly stated in one sentence: "Known as the Benade House, this building stands off Belfast Road near Bushkill Creek in what was Jacobsburg." The Express of July 22, 1973, also had a picture of this dwelling with an editorial captioned 'Let's Save This House'.

Why is it called the Benade House? The reason is that it was the home of Andrew Benade, a retired bishop of the Moravian Church, from 1848 to 1850. The census of 1850 shows two households in the dwelling, one consisting of Andrew and Maria Benade, aged 81 and 61 respectively, and his daughters by a previous marriage, Maria Ann and Lucia. The other household was that of Charles E. Benade, 36, a vise manufacturer, and a young lad of eight named Andrew Benade, presumably Charles's son, from which we might suppose that Charles was a widower. (Charles later married a daughter of Judge William L. Sebring of Easton.) At any rate, Charles was a son of Andrew and Maria (Henry) Benade.

What on earth induced the venerable bishop to dwell in Jacobsburg? It's a long story, one which goes all the way back to 1821, following the death of William Henry, formerly of Nazareth, who built the Boulton Gun Works during 1810-1813.

An abstract of a document recorded in Miscellaneous Book 1, page 231, at the Northampton County courthouse, follows: Andrew Benade of Lititz, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and Maria, his wife, for \$3,000, assign to Matthew S. Henry, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, one sixth part of the estate of the late William Henry, Esq., of the City of Philadelphia, deceased, as per his last will and testament and an annexed agreement between the heirs. This assignment was dated 18 August 1821 and recorded 12 September 1821.

Unfortunately, the \$3,000 was invested in Matthew Henry's enterprises at Jacobsburg, and by 1845 the accrued amount of Matthew's indebtedness to the Benades was \$3,418.50, as allowed in a judgment granted by the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County on 27 January 1845. Finding Matthew and his partner Sidney A. Clewell in default, the court on 24 June 1845 commanded Sheriff Samuel Adams to sell the property of which Matthew Henry and Sidney Clewell were named as terre tenants, consisting of land 'containing 135 acres plus 78 perches strict measure' and improvements including a large frame forge, 30 by 40 feet; a large two-story stone house; five one-story stone or log houses a stone office, 16 by 20 feet; a frame coal house, 35 by 40 feet; a frame blacksmith shop, 20 by 25 feet; five stables, some log and some frame; two apple orchards and a spring.

On 29 July, 1845, Sheriff Adams sold this property (including the indebtedness due the Benades) at public vendue for \$6,010, the highest bidder being Andrew Benade, clergyman, of Bethlehem. There followed five years of negotiations with prospective buyers to dispose of the property. In 1848, probably for reasons of economy, the Benades moved into the two-story stone house.

In a subsequent article, we expect to report more fully concerning Andrew Benade, his family and his descendants.

— Charles M. Sandwick, Sr.

"AND AT 22 SHE'S ONLY JUST BEGUN"

Thus does the Lafayette Alumni News of January, 1976, introduce an in-depth review of June Sprigg's important new book (her first) published by Alfred A. Knopf in November, By Shaker Hands. Ms. Sprigg, a 1974 graduate of Lafayette, and last year elected its youngest trustee, has compiled a fascinating story about this interesting religious group who flourished in the 1840's, their handiwork, their customs and beliefs. It is illustrated with 125 drawings by her own hand. Not only is the book absorbing to read, but it is of outstanding quality typographically — it will make a handsome conversation piece for any coffee table. The author is at present a fellow at the duPont Winterthur Museum, where she is pursuing her master's and working on her second book, a study of 18th century women in America.

MATERIAL ACCUMULATING FOR FUTURE JACOBSTOWN MUSEUM

The Jacobstown Historical Society has been given the nucleus of a hand tool division for our future museum. Our benefactor prefers to remain anonymous for the present, but his thoughtfulness is nonetheless appreciated.

Among our logging tools are a very large saw and a bark spud. Harvesting implements include a wood-tined fork and a sickle for cutting grain. Hammer tongs represent the blacksmithing trade; and for carpentry we have two wooden planes. In the domestic department we have a ribbed washing stick, which was the forerunner of the washboard made from a series of rollers. We also have a wide variety of cutting tools, chisels and other hand tools.

— Virginia Lopresti

ONLY A FEW WEEKS, AND WE WILL BE NEEDING DIGGERS ! ! ! !

Joe and Virginia Lopresti put in an intensive period of digging at the tannery site last year, before winter closed in on them; and although probably only a few more weeks of good weather would probably have brought that particular dig to completion, there is no doubt that they welcomed the enforced rest period. We could detect no attitude of frustration whatever on their part. They accumulated an impressive body of information about the old tannery and its layout and operation, and we feel there is still more to come in the final stages. They had some faithful helpers from time to time, but they deserve much more, particularly in the form of steady help rather than intermittent sojourners. Their work is becoming increasingly important as it progresses, and will continue so. Please keep your eye on the weather conditions, and as soon as the trees begin to bud (you know when!) be on the lookout for word from Joe and Virginia that digging will start up again. This summer we want to move it, and you can help—and have fun, too.

Incidentally, we have just learned that an Archeology Club has been formed and is already active at Lafayette, supported and funded by the College. Their first interest is probably the site of the old Indian village at Martins Creek, where they already have clearance to excavate. Would it be too much to hope that they may also become interested in the Jacobstown digs?

And on the subject of archeologists, someone (we failed to ascertain who) contributed the following gem: "The archeologist, it is said, is a student of the artifact. That harsh, unlovely word, as sharply angled as a fist ax or a brick, denudes us of human sympathy. In the eye of the public we loom, I suppose, as slightly befuddled graybeards scavenging in grave heaps. We caw like crows over a bit of jade or a broken potsherd; we are eternally associated in the public mind with sharp-edged flints and broken statues. The utter uselessness of the past is somehow significantly incorporated into our activities.

"No one, I suppose, would believe that an archeologist is a man who knows where last year's valentines have gone, or that from the surface of rubbish heaps the thin and ghostly essence of things human keeps rising through the centuries until the plaintive murmur of dead men and women may take precedence at times over the living voice. A man who has once looked with the archeological eye will never see quite normally. He will be wounded by what other men call trifles. It is possible to refine the sense of time until an old shoe in the bunch grass or a pile of nineteenth century beer bottles in an abandoned mining town tolls in one's head like a hall clock. This is the price one pays for learning to read time from surfaces other than an illuminated dial. It is the melancholy secret of the artifact, the humanly touched thing."

— Loren Eisely in The Night Country

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION FROM OUR PRESIDENT

In the performing of her duties your president finds it necessary to handle a large quantity of correspondence and also to do a lot of other writing for matters pertaining to the Society. I have been very fortunate in having the volunteer services of a very capable typist, Helen Tait Brown. Thanks to her the material which goes out from the Society has a professional appearance. Thank you, Helen.

— Catherine S. Beers

THE BOULTON COOKBOOK

This month the Boulton Cookbook and its readers are singularly fortunate! A real treasure of a recipe! Mrs. Howard Culver consented to undertake the truly hard job of working out and reducing to exact measurements her old family recipe for sugar cake. In its original form it consisted of the same ingredients but instead of cups of flour it would have been handfuls; instead of two eggs it would have read 'enough' eggs, and so on!

So all lovers of good sugar cake check your ingredients and butter your pans -- and don't skimp on the butter holes on top.

Many, many thanks to you, Virginia Clewell Culver, for your hard work and generosity in sharing this sought-after recipe with us all. All we can say to her husband Howard is, "Lucky Man!"

— M.H.S.

MORAVIAN SUGAR CAKE

Boil 2 medium-size potatoes with 1/2 teaspoon salt, or enough for 1 cup of mashed potatoes. Keep 1 cup of potato water. Dissolve 1 yeast cake in a little warm water and add 1 Tbsp. flour and 1 tsp. granulated sugar (mix like a thin paste) and let raise a short time.

The recipe: 1-1/2 cups granulated sugar	1/2 cup melted shortening (butter and lard)
1 cup mashed potatoes	1 cup potato water (cooled)
2 eggs (well beaten)	1 cup milk

Mix together and add the raised yeast mixture and 6 to 7 cups sifted all-purpose flour or enough flour so dough does not stick to spoon or fingers. Then with floured hands, knead until dough does not stick to dish. Set in a warm place (not hot) to raise overnight until double in size. (About 5 to 7 hours). Put in greased pans with dough divided equally into 6 medium-size pans till double in size. Top with melted butter and press small pieces of butter into dough to make butter holes, and sprinkle brown sugar mixed with flour:

1/4 lb. butter -- for holes
About 1 lb. light brown sugar
2 Tbsp. flour

Bake at 350° for approximately 20 minutes.

— Mrs. Howard Culver
(Virginia Clewell Culver)

(And thank you, Miss Mary Henry Stites; we hope your misbehaving bursa will calm down with the coming of warmer weather. We all missed the 'Boulton Cookbook'! — Ed.)

GENERAL MEETING, MARCH 25, WILL BE 'TOO GOOD TO MISS'

Mark that date — it is an important one! Not only because it is a general meeting of the membership of the Society, but likewise because of the speaker secured for the occasion by our secretary, Hilton N. Rahn: Dr. Willard Ross Yates, ^{former} Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Lehigh University. Dr. Yates, a native Oregonian, earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Oregon, and his doctorate at Yale. He came to Lehigh in 1963 as dean, and since 1972 has been in Lehigh's Department of Government. He has authored a number of published articles, about equally divided between government/politic subjects and studies of a local nature and of local import, evidence of the thoroughness with which he has fitted himself into the Lehigh Valley scene since his arrival. He served as chairman of the editorial committee of the Bethlehem Book Committee and produced in 1968 the first volume of a History of Bethlehem, "The First One Hundred Years"; in the same capacity he is at present working on a second volume, "The Golden Years, 1841 - 1920." Perhaps his best known, and certainly not least important book is his History of the Lehigh Valley Region produced in 1963 as Historian of the Joint Planning Commission, Lehigh-Northampton Counties

His talk on the coming occasion will be on "The Founding of the Anthracite Iron Industry of the Lehigh Valley," a subject well related to Jacobsburg/Boulton, and a process which culminated in the establishment of the Crane Iron Company at Catasauqua. (Could William Henry's blacksmith at Nazareth properly be regarded as one of the pioneers in the anthracite process?)

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Student - \$2.50	Individual - \$5.00	Sustaining - \$10.00
Family - \$12.50	Contributing - \$15.00	Organizations - \$25.00

Check Enclosed \$ _____

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Please return this application with your check made payable to Jacobsburg Historical Society, and mail to;

Miss Margaret H. Taylor, Treasurer
733 Paxinosa Avenue
Easton, Pa. 18042

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