A Century of Brickmaking at Berlin Junction: A History of the Alwine Brick Company

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Abstract
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After his death, in 1895, his sons William and Lewis Alwine continued the business under the name Alwine Brothers Brickyard, and later William's son Charles Emory Alwine would become president of the firm. Following Charles Alwine's retirement, and three generations of Alwine leadership, ownership of the company was transferred in 1978 to the Glen-Gery Corporation of Reading. This article chronicles the history of the Alwine Brick Company from its beginnings to its final years, including more than a century at Berlin Junction, Adams County, Pennsylvania. [excerpt]

Keywords
Adams County Historical Society, ACHS, Adams County, Pennsylvania History, Brickyard, Alwine, Paradise Township, Spring Grove, Alwine Brothers Brickyard, Alwine Brick Company

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A Century of Brickmaking at Berlin Junction
A History of the Alwine Brick Company

by Duane F. Alwin, Ph.D.

Introduction

The Alwine family name had been associated with brickmaking in York and Adams Counties at least since the early 1850s, when Peter Samuel Alwine started his first brickyard on a farm in Paradise Township of York County.1 He learned the trade of brickmaking during his youth and by the age of seventeen had become a skilled artisan. He learned how to make bricks by working in the spring and summer months at a brickmaking operation in Peach Bottom Township, located in the southeastern corner of York County. He did not set up his own brickyard until later, and following his marriage to Catharine Dahlhammer in 1860, he moved his brickmaking facilities to the farm where they settled in Paradise Township, near the Borough of Berwick (now Abbottstown) in Adams County. During that time, Mr. Alwine also engaged for varying periods as a schoolteacher, country merchant, and farmer. Later, he established a brickyard at Spring Grove in York County, and eventually another at Berlin Junction, near New Oxford in Adams County. Over the years, he attained a reputation as a man of considerable learning and sound business judgment.

After his death, in 1895, his sons William and Lewis Alwine continued the business under the name Alwine Brothers Brickyard, and later William’s son Charles Emory Alwine would become president of the firm. Following Charles Alwine’s retirement, and three generations of Alwine leadership, ownership of the company was transferred in 1978 to the Glen-Gery Corporation of Reading. This article
chronicles the history of the Alwine Brick Company from its beginnings to its final years, including more than a century at Berlin Junction, Adams County, Pennsylvania.

**Peter S. Alwine**

Peter Samuel Alwine, was the youngest son of nine children born to Samuel and Mary (Schaffer) Allwine. He was born in North Codorus Township, York County, Pennsylvania, on November, 4, 1831. He and his descendants used the ALWINE spelling of the family name, although the family descends from Johannes (Hans) Jacob and Catharina ALLWEIN, progenitors of many Allwein, Allwine, Alwine and Alwin families in North America. His father, Samuel, was born January 12, 1792, in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, the youngest son of Conrad and Catharine Allwein, in an area that would later become Lebanon County.

The 1830 federal census lists Samuel and Mary Allwine living in Codorus Township on the western side of York County, and in 1840, 1850 and 1860 they were living in Paradise Township, York County, on the border with Hamilton Township in Adams County. During this time, at least for part of it, Samuel and Mary lived on the church farm at Paradise and worked for Rev. M. Lekeu, the priest of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Paradise) Church (see fig. 2). Peter S. Alwine was educated in the country schools in North Codorus and Paradise Townships of York County, and as a young man, he taught in the common schools for twelve terms in Jackson and Paradise Townships. During these years, he apparently taught school during the school year and learned brickmaking over the summers.

Peter S. Alwine married Catharine Dahlhammer, daughter of William and Sarah (Sour) Dahlhammer, on September 20, 1860, at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Paradise Township, York County, near Abbottstown.

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(see fig. 1). Although he was raised in the Catholic faith and married in the Catholic Church, Peter and his family became members of the Lutheran community in Paradise Township. There are a number of different family narratives about why this was the case. One in particular refers to a conflict between Peter Alwine’s belief in modern science and his Catholic clergyman’s resistance to allowing such beliefs among his parishioners. According to Jerome Allwein, “Mr. Alwine was a great reader and student of Modern Science, the reading of which books Father Manns (Rev. Peter Manns, S.J.) had forbidden,” and that owing to these differences with Rev. Manns, Peter Alwine left the Catholic faith. He and his wife became members of St. John’s Lutheran Church in Abbottstown, and their thirteen children (Emma Jane, Sarah Ellen, Ida May, Harvey D., Samuel Willis, William Clayton, Lewis Henry, Cora Ann, Edward Romanus, Percy Elmer, Emery Staunton, Laura Kate, and Paul) were all baptized there.

Reproduction of photograph of Peter S. and Catharine Dahlhammer Alwine, taken about the time of their marriage in 1860. [Photo contributed by Doug Alwine.]
In the 1850 federal census, when Peter Alwine was still living in his parents’ household, his occupation was given as “farmer.” By 1860 he is listed in the federal census of that year as a “common school teacher.” Eventually, he devoted full time to the pursuit of brickmaking as a vocation—in both the 1870 and 1880 federal censuses his occupation is given as “brickmaker.” A biographical entry for Peter S. Alwine in Gibson’s 1886 History of York County, Pennsylvania confirms much of his early life history.

By that time, he had clearly put his brickmaking business on the map. Indeed, the location of Peter S. Alwine’s brickyard and residence can be found on the 1876 map of Paradise Township published in an Atlas of York County Pennsylvania, and the location of the Paradise brickyard can be seen in the detail of that map shown in Figure 2. The lower right quadrant of this detail situates a “Brick Yd.” near the residences indicated for “P.S. Alwine” and “Wm. Dollhammer” (William Dahlhammer was Peter Alwine’s father-in-law). The village in the lower left quadrant of this detail shows the eastern edge of the Borough of Berwick (in adjacent Adams County) that would eventually become known as Abbottstown. The road marked with the number 311 in the vicinity of Abbottstown follows the route of the present-day Federal Highway No. 30 (the Lincoln Highway). This route, as can be seen, angles from left to right in a northeasterly direction. The general location of Peter S. Alwine’s brickyard was south of this road. It can be found on present-day maps—on the east side of Moulstown Road (marked as number 310 in this extract), a few miles south of the intersection of Federal Highway 30 and the Moulstown Road, which is about two miles east of Abbottstown.

Using the Geographic Names Index System (GNIS), one can obtain an idea of the location of this Alwine brickyard. Search for “Abbottstown” in Adams County, and then once a mapping system is selected, follow the Federal Highway...
No. 30 east for less than two miles to the intersection with Moulstown Road; then, less than a mile south of U.S. 30 to the east, off the Moulstown Road, one can find the location of the Paradise Brickyard.

The remnants of clay mining are evident at this location today, although it was often typical in those early days for brick makers to go to the site where the bricks were to be used and make them on location. It would take many wagon loads of bricks to build a house, and if the construction site was more than a few miles away from the brickyard, transportation costs would have been prohibitive. It was common to employ temporary or mobile kilns.

The 1876 map also shows the location of the farm of John Alwine, Peter S. Alwine’s older brother, which is likely to be the spot where their parents, Samuel and Mary Alwine, were living at the end of their lives. Note that the location of John Alwine’s farm is very near the Catholic Church and Farm in Paradise Township (designated as “Cath.Church”) on the map), which is consistent with the information that at one time they lived on the church farm at Paradise and worked for Rev. M. Lekeu, as noted above.
In 1885, Peter Alwine moved his Paradise brick manufacturing enterprise to Berlin Junction, near New Oxford, Adams County, and established his residence there. Ten years later, Peter Alwine died unexpectedly on May 9, 1895, in Adams County, *intestate*, leaving it to the court to dispense with his estate. His widow, Catharine Alwine, and his heirs petitioned the Court of Common Pleas of Adams County to settle his estate. Peter Alwine’s land holdings at the time of his death consisted of 31 parcels of land, amounting to nearly 400 acres, including a large 125-acre mansion tract in Oxford Township where he and his family were living at the time of his death. The remainder consisted of various other pieces of land, largely small 2-5 acre tracts of woodlands (which provided wood to fire the kilns used in the making of brick), scattered throughout Oxford and Hamilton Townships, and Paradise and Jackson Townships of York County. Relative to the time period in which he lived, Peter Alwine was a moderately prosperous man. After the sale of these real properties, the estate totaled nearly $9,000.

*Fig. 3*

Gravestone for Peter and Catharine Alwine, St. John’s Lutheran Cemetery, Abbottstown, Pennsylvania.

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At the time of Peter Alwine’s death, the eldest sons, Harvey, Samuel, William, and Lewis, had already established themselves and had married, and the three eldest daughters, Emma, Ida, and Sarah were also married by that time. William and Lewis Alwine would take over the family brickmaking enterprise. The five youngest children—Edward, Percy, Emery, Laura, and Paul—were all minors at the time of Peter’s death.¹⁰ Thereafter, Catharine Alwine took up residence in the Borough of Berwick (Abbottstown).¹¹ She died on March 19, 1923. Peter and Catharine Alwine, and many of their children and grandchildren, are buried at the St. John’s Lutheran Church Cemetery (LA) located behind the church on the east side of North German Street in Abbottstown (see Fig.3).

**Brickmaking**¹²

Brick is generally considered one of the strongest and longest-lasting building materials used throughout human history. The earliest bricks were made from clay mud and were dried by the sun—a process often attributed to the ancient Mesopotamians. The early Romans discovered how to “burn” bricks by baking them at high temperatures in kilns, and kiln-baked bricks were introduced to many parts of the Roman Empire. Bricks are typically made from some combination of sand (silica), shale and clay, plus other natural ingredients, and until the development of effective means of transportation, bricks were typically made close to where they were to be used.

All bricks are made from clay, but it is important to understand that some clays are more useful for brickmaking than others and that clay alone is not sufficient for making bricks; sand and other material, such as shale, must also be used.

There are two basic types of bricks—soft mud bricks and stiff mud bricks—terms which refer to the processes used to shape the clay mud. *Soft mud* is the “term used by brick
makers to describe mechanical brick molding processes that mimic hand molding and thus use relatively soft mud which is pressed or thrown into molds.” 13 Stiff mud, on the other hand, is used by brick makers to denote the “wire-cut” or “stiff mud” process “by which clay is extruded through a die and cut into bricks using wires.”14 The material used in the stiff mud process typically includes a greater clay content. The bricks produced by the Alwine Brick Company were made by the soft mud process, the two main ingredients being shale and sand, with very little clay.15

There are several important steps involved in making bricks, from the mining of the clay or shale (called winning), to the production of the clay mud that is its main constituent (called tempering or pugging), to the molding of the bricks, drying them, and ultimately to the burning of the bricks in the kiln and then cooling them. In the beginning, manpower and horsepower would have been the principal means by which the first stages of the process were implemented. Later on, machine power took over, wherein steam shovels were used to extract the clay and shale from the quarry. Machines were then employed to grind and pulverize the coarse material, and conveyor belts would feed ground shale and clay into a brick molding process by which the mixture would be formed into brick material and subsequently inserted into molds.

Depending upon the source of the raw materials, a certain amount of crushing and grinding may often be necessary to pulverize the coarse clay and shale into the desired consistency. Once prepared, the material is mixed with water in preparation for molding. This process—called pugging—was done by hand, until the pugging mill was invented in the 1800s to mix the water-soaked clay. This stage was ultimately aided by horsepower, in which horses or mules were used to circle the chamber of the pug mill to drive the revolving shafts that mixed the material. Later on, this process was accomplished by machine power.

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There were a number of different methods to mold or form the soft and malleable “mud” into the shape of bricks. In the 1800s, this was essentially done by hand, and an occupation, titled “brick molder,” came into being, described by the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.\textsuperscript{16} According to Doug Alwine, at the Alwine Brick plant,

...brick molds were made of wood, and were typically soaked in water for a period of time prior to use in order to get the wood thoroughly soaked. Then sand was poured into the mold and quickly dumped out prior to pressing the mud into the mold. The sand stuck to the wet mold and then acted as a release agent to make it possible to dump the brick out of the mold. The choice of sand also helps determine the final color of the brick. Sand and water are cheaper than oil and it was applied by simply scooping a little sand into the mold, swishing it about to cover all the interior surfaces and then dumping out the excess, a process which takes about three seconds. After a few dozen uses, the mold has dried out a bit and is placed back in the tub to re-soak and another one selected from the tub."\textsuperscript{17}

Machine-molded bricks were made by placing the wet clay material into a machine that pressed the wet mix into previously prepared molds. Early brickmaking machines, such as the steam-powered machine invented by Henry Martin around 1858, pressed the brick mud into wooden molds. The original Martin machine relied on manpower to dump the bricks from the mold onto a wood pallet, although descendants of this machine performed this operation mechanically.\textsuperscript{18}

After the process of molding, the “green brick” (bricks before they are fired) would have to be dried for some period of time, and after leaving the molds, bricks would typically be stacked in some fashion and either placed in the open air or in enclosed dryers that utilized excess heat from the kilns. At the
Alwine Brick plant, after molding, the bricks hardened for 24 hours in 300-degree dryer tunnels, and then were hand-loaded into firebrick kilns. 19

The next stage of the process is “burning” the bricks in kilns whose temperatures reached nearly 2000 degrees Fahrenheit. These kilns were built from “firebrick,” that is, bricks made from material with a high silica content, which resist high temperatures. The people who operated these kilns were called “burners” or “bakers.” In the modern era, kiln burning became a relatively standard technology. Although the implementation of the process may have varied, depending upon the historical period and the practices used by any particular brickmaking operation, the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (4th edition) lists the occupation of “burner” or “kiln burner” for the type of work comprising this stage in the process of brickmaking.20 Inside the kilns at the Alwine plant, the bricks would bake for four days and cool for another three, taking about one week from the time raw shale entered the crusher until it became finished brick.21

The color of brick is determined by several factors. An important one is the minerals in the clay material, particularly the presence of iron. Brick with high iron content will become red or pink as the iron oxidizes. Those that are rich in lime, but lack iron, will tend to turn yellow or cream. Other factors that affect the exact color of the final brick are the temperature, the position of the brick in the kiln, and the amount of air let into the kiln at the later stages of firing the brick. Because of the variation within the kiln in these latter factors, there can be a wide range of color amongst the bricks within a single batch and from batch to batch.22

By the middle of the twentieth century, the Alwine Brick plant housed 10 fire-brick kilns, each 60 feet in diameter, in which approximately 85,000 bricks were burned at one time.23 Later, the number of kilns was increased to 13, and production
was thereby increased. The kilns employed the forced-draft firing technology for brick kilns developed by John C. Boss of Elkhart, Indiana. Mr. Boss had patented several inventions in the early 1900s for the efficient burning of bricks, and William C. Alwine had installed the Boss-type cast iron burners that used coal as fuel. Later on, the burners were converted to the use of natural gas, and one person noted that when the kilns were running, the Alwine Brick facility used as much power as the borough of New Oxford.

**History of the Alwine Brick Company**

As noted, the Alwine Brick Company at Berlin Junction in Adams County was predated by two earlier brickyards in neighboring York County, established by Peter Alwine in the late nineteenth century. Here we provide a chronology from these early beginnings through to the eventual demise of the Alwine Brick Company.

**The Paradise Brickyard**

Historical sources for York County provide some information on Peter S. Alwine’s early brick manufacturing business. Gibson’s 1886 *History of York County, Pennsylvania* gives the early history of the Alwine brickmaking business, as follows:

_In the year 1858, P.S. Alwine began burning bricks on his farm in this township and has continued this business in the same place ever since, even during the exciting times of the civil war. At this yard, about 300,000 bricks were made annually, or about 8,000,000 in twenty-six years of its existence. About 3,000 cords of wood have been consumed in burning the bricks. Mr. Alwine owns a large yard and kiln at New Oxford, and one at Spring Grove. At each of these places he manufactures about 700,000 bricks annually._

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The details provided by this entry are largely consistent with other sources, although most sources suggest that he began making bricks much earlier, probably around 1851. Whatever the case, as this narrative indicates, Peter Alwine began his own brickmaking operation in Paradise Township, and eventually he would set up similar plants at Spring Grove (Spring Forge), York County, and later at Berlin Junction, near New Oxford.

**The Spring Forge Brickyard** 28

In the spring of 1880, Peter Alwine began building another brickyard and a home in the grove of Dietrich Swartz’s farm in Spring Forge (now Spring Grove), Pennsylvania. This farm can be located on the map of Jackson Township provided by the 1876 *Atlas of York County*. 29 The brickyard was completed in July of 1881, and ten men were employed. The clay pits were located in the Codorus Creek area, and mules were used to pull carts of clay over small railroad tracks to the site of the brick kilns. In 1884, a flood destroyed this facility, when the waters of Codorus Creek overflowed its banks. 30 It was reported that two horses, the stable, the brick shed and all the wood were lost. The brickyard was moved to higher ground, and by 1886, this yard was producing 700,000 bricks a year. 31 The storage yard for the finished bricks was located close to East Street in present-day Spring Grove. They were sold to local housing contractors and also shipped to York and Baltimore. After their father’s death, sons William and Lewis Alwine continued to operate the business at the intersection of East Railroad Street and the Western Maryland Railroad site until about 1910 when the supply of clay was exhausted.
The Berlin Junction Brickyard

Although the original brickmaking operations of Peter S. Alwine were located within the boundaries of York County in Paradise Township, they were just a few miles from Abbottstown in Adams County. In 1885, he relocated the Paradise brickyard to Berlin Junction near New Oxford, between Gettysburg and Abbottstown (the place name “Berlin Junction” referred to the junction of two railroad lines). Mr. Alwine had discovered the desirable Oxford Shale Formation in Adams County and built a crude “fair weather” operation in an open field at Berlin Junction (such as that shown in fig. 4). At this location, the firm had access to a railroad siding, as well as to the shale of that area. This eventually grew to become the Alwine Brick plant at Berlin Junction, an installation that existed until 1978 when the ownership of the company was transferred to the Glen-Gery Corporation.

Early brickmaking operation in Adams County. [Photo contributed by Doug Alwine.]

The Berlin Junction plant was situated adjacent to the Baltimore & Harrisburg railroad on the south side of New Oxford, which makes it relatively easy to locate. It is possible to see both the location of Berlin Junction on present-day maps and the site of the nearby Alwine brickyard. Using GNIS, one can search for “Berlin Junction” in Adams County. Once a
mapping option is selected, the user will note the road marked “Brickyard Road”—this indicates the location of the former Alwine brick factory.

Following Peter S. Alwine’s death in 1895, his two sons, William and Lewis Alwine, acquired the brickmaking business. After learning this trade in their youth, they were fully capable of carrying on the family brickmaking tradition. They became equal partners, and in 1915 the partnership was incorporated under the name “Alwine Brothers Brick Company.” Lewis Alwine eventually settled in Spring Grove, in Jackson Township, York County, where he engaged in the manufacture of brick at the Spring Forge brickyard for several years. William Alwine remained in New Oxford, similarly engaged in making brick at the family’s Berlin Junction factory in Oxford Township. Both men are listed as brickmakers in the 1900 and 1910 federal censuses. Several other Alwine men—brothers, sons and nephews—were employed in the Berlin Junction factory over that period of time, both in the yard and in the office, and one daughter of William Alwine, Kathryn Alwine Livingston, was involved in the administration of the company.
The early twentieth century history of the Alwine Brick Company is summarized in an entry for “Lewis H. Alwine” in George Prowell’s 1907 History of York County, which I excerpt here:

LEWIS H. ALWINE, manufacturer of building brick at Spring Forge, Pa., Spring Grove P.O., is one of the progressive businessmen of that place, and widely and favorably known. ... Lewis H. Alwine was well educated in the country schools, finishing his scholastic course at the age of seventeen, at which time he began working with his father in the brickyard. At the age of nineteen, he commenced teaching in the country schools, and thus continued during the winter months, while in the summer he still gave his services to his father. During that period he thoroughly learned the brick business, so that in 1890, when he and his brother William formed a partnership, under the style of Alwine Brothers at Berlin Junction, where the father had had a branch factory for a number of years, he was thoroughly competent. Later Mr. Alwine moved to Spring Grove, purchased a plant and installed new machinery to accommodate the present annual output of 2,000,000 bricks. The brother William is interested in this plant, but devotes most of this time to the Berlin establishment. A large local trade has been built up, and the remainder of the product is shipped to York and Baltimore. The brick of this factory is of a superior quality, and finds a ready sale. The machinery is of the latest pattern, and the kilns are square in construction, both coal and wood being used for burning. The firm controls a very large business, which shows a steady and healthy increase.
Although Lewis H. Alwine was a director of the Alwine brick manufacturing business throughout the remainder of his life, the Spring Forge plant was closed down around 1910, when he turned his full attention to other pursuits. In 1906 he helped establish the Pennsylvania Knitting Mills in Spring Grove and became its vice-president.35 Thereafter, he purchased the Codorus Hosiery factory in York.36 His brother, William Clayton Alwine, continued in the brickmaking business at Berlin Junction, as reported in the 1920 and 1930 federal censuses.37 The 1930 federal census lists William C. Alwine as “president” of a brickmaking factory at Berlin Junction. From that point onward, the Berlin Junction plant was the sole producer of bricks under the Alwine name.

The Berlin Junction plant produced both machine-molded and hand-molded bricks. It is not known when, but possibly in the late 1800s, a brick molding machine, produced by the Posey Iron Works of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was installed.\(^3\) The Posey machine followed the basic design of the brickmaking machine invented by Henry Martin (see endnote 19). It did essentially the same thing as the hand molders, but with greater efficiency: “It pressed the mud into the mold with a lot of pressure so that the corners and edges of the bricks were well formed, while the hand-molded bricks tend to have missing corners and small voids.”\(^3\)

William C. Alwine’s son, Charles Emory Alwine, eventually became the company’s manager. Charles attended Lehigh University, and in 1924 he earned a degree in electrical engineering. For two years following his college graduation Mr. Alwine was employed by the Philadelphia Electric Company. In 1926, however, he became affiliated with his father in the Alwine Brothers Brick Company, and in 1930 he assumed the management of the company. The name of the firm was changed to the Alwine Brick Company in 1935, and in 1956 Charles Alwine became the president of the company, a position he held until he retired in September of 1975.

Charles Alwine had a distinguished professional career. He was at various times the president of the Structural Clay Products Institute, Northeast Region. He was also active in community affairs, serving as president and a director of the Farmers’ and Merchants’ Bank of New Oxford, chairman of the New Oxford Municipal Authority, and treasurer of the New Oxford School Authority, an office he held for ten years.\(^4\) At the time of Charles E. Alwine’s retirement, there were apparently no Alwine family members to undertake the management of the company, the first time this had happened in its 125-year history—over four generations—and the company was consequently sold.
Estimates vary, but at its peak it was reported that the Alwine Brick Company could turn out as many as 40 million bricks per year. At the time of his retirement from the management of the company in 1975, Charles Alwine stated that “the Alwine brickmaking technique had changed little since Peter Alwine’s day, except in the mechanization of handling the bricks. Soft mud still is pressed by hand into 9-pocket wooden molds that have been ‘lubricated’ with sand to keep the individual bricks from sticking when the mold is overturned.”

In 1951, the Alwine Brick Company celebrated its 100th anniversary. At that time there were 90 full-time employees of the firm, 13 of whom were Alwine family members. Around the time of its 100-year anniversary, the Glen-Gery Corporation of Reading, Pennsylvania, acquired one-half ownership of the Alwine Brick Company. In 1958, several family members tried to regain full control of the company, initiating an effort to purchase the stock Glen-Gery held in the company, but this effort failed. When Charles E. Alwine retired, full ownership of the Alwine Brick Company was transferred to the Glen-Gery Corporation, and it became known as the Alwine Brick Division of that company. There is an aerial photo of the Alwine Brick Company plant in Robert Bloom’s 1992 History of Adams County, which contains the following caption: “The Alwine Brick Company, now part of Glen-Gery Brick, manufactures facing and paving bricks which are shipped to a wide area from the plant near New Oxford.” At the time of Charles E. Alwine’s retirement in 1975, the Alwine Brick Company was the largest producer of colonial type, hand-molded brick in the U.S., with 130 employees turning out millions of bricks a year.
Projects for which the company has provided special orders for hand-molded bricks included the restoration of Pennsbury Manor (see fig. 8), the estate in Falls Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, which was the American summer home of William Penn. Located on the Delaware River about 25 miles north of Philadelphia, construction of the original manor house and estate began in 1683 and Penn spent considerable time there until his final return to England in 1701. The property remained in the Penn family for several years, but by the end of the eighteenth century most of the original land had been sold and the manor house and outbuildings were in ruin. In the early 1900s, local Quakers began a movement to create a permanent memorial to William Penn, which eventuated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s acquiring the original site. The reconstruction of the manor house according to its original design began in 1937. The Alwine Brick Company supplied the colonial-style brick for the project. The latter property is on the National Register of Historic Places.45
The Alwine Brick Company also furnished the brick for the Independence Hall Mall, in Philadelphia, and Colonial Parkway Bridge (on Route 199), spanning Colonial Parkway in York, Virginia. Additionally, among many others, the company furnished the brick for the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company building in Providence, Rhode Island, and the Liggett and Myers Company building in Durham, North Carolina. Local projects included some of the buildings at Gettysburg College (see fig. 9), and the Adams County courthouse addition in Gettysburg.

After the company was sold to the Glen-Gery Corporation, the Alwine Brick plant continued to make bricks, as well as concrete blocks, until production ceased in 1993. At that time, the New Oxford facility served primarily as a brick sales and shipping center, employing twenty people. For safety reasons, in January of 1999, the old brick plant was dismantled. It is also worth mentioning that during the Glen-Pennsbury Manor House, William Penn’s Summer Home, built in 1683-1700. Reconstruction began in 1937 using bricks manufactured by the Alwine Brothers Brick Company, New Oxford, Pennsylvania.
Gery era, there was another brick manufacturing company with Alwine ties that emerged, called “Manor Brickcrafters,” which specialized in the production and marketing of hand-molded shale brick. It was begun in 1967 by David B. Alwine, a grandson of Peter Alwine, who endeavored to continue the Alwine brickmaking tradition. The company was located west of New Oxford in Mt. Pleasant Township near the intersection of U.S. Route 30 and Brickcrafters Road. Mr. Alwine attracted local investors and hired an engineering firm from New York to design the plant. It was a modern plant that produced quality bricks under the Manor Brickcrafters name, but it ultimately lost out in competition with the Glen-Gery company, which was still producing bricks at the Berlin Junction plant. When the Manor company folded under the pressure of competition, it was purchased by the Glen-Gary company, which continued to produce bricks at that location.
Recently, the Glen-Gery Corporation sold the property that housed the original Alwine Brick plant at Berlin Junction to the Trenwyth Company (an Oldcastle company), but it is not known how the property will be used. The old brick building that originally served as the headquarters of the Alwine Brick Company is in the early stages of its demise. There, as in many parts of Pennsylvania, as well as other parts of the country, one can occasionally find the remains of the brickworks of an earlier time. Once the old kilns were reduced to rubble and the old clay pits covered by a dense growth of trees and bushes, all that remains are the place names associated with these earlier times, offering clues to these vanished relics of brick manufacturing (see fig. 10).

![Fig. 10](http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/ach/vol18/iss1/5)

*Brickyard Road at Berlin Junction. The location of the former Alwine Brick Company, Brickyard Road runs east and west for about a mile between Hanover Street and Carlisle Pike in Oxford Township, Adams County.*
Endnotes

1. Information concerning the history of the Alwine Brick Company was obtained from several historical sources, newspaper articles, as well as personal correspondence from Charles E. Alwine with family members. Historical sources that mention the Alwine brick manufacturing establishments include John Gibson, *History of York County Pennsylvania* (Chicago: F.A. Battey Publishing Co., 1886); George Prowell, *History of York County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1907), vol. 2; Robert L. Bloom, *A History of Adams County Pennsylvania, 1700-1990* (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Adams County Historical Society, 1992); and “Charles Emory Alwine,” in *Pennsylvania: The Heritage of a Commonwealth: Family and Personal Records*, ed. Sylvester K. Stevens (West Palm Beach, FL: The American Historical Company, Inc., 1968), volume 4. The author also acknowledges materials furnished by Ray Alwine, Marlin L. Alwine, Nancy Allwein Nebiker, and Jim Hoffheins. I am especially grateful to Douglas Owen Alwine—a descendant of the Alwine brickmakers, who worked during summer vacations from school and college at the Alwine brick plant—for detailed comments and suggestions on early drafts of this article. His father (Philip Edgar Alwine) worked at the Alwine brick plant most of his life, as did his grandfather (Percy Elmer Alwine). Doug also furnished several photos used in this article.


Township, York County, Pennsylvania, 401; Eighth Census of the United States (1860), Inhabitants of Paradise Township, York County, Pennsylvania, 703.


5. Marriage Records of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Paradise, York County (McSherrystown, Pennsylvania: John Timon Reily Historical Society, n.d.)


7. Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Inhabitants of Paradise Township, York County, Pennsylvania, 401; Eighth Census of the United States (1860), Inhabitants of Paradise Township, York County, Pennsylvania, 701; Ninth Census of the United States (1870), Inhabitants of Paradise Township, York County, Pennsylvania, 182B; Tenth Census of the United States (1880), Inhabitants of Paradise Township, York County, Pennsylvania, 16.


9. Estate records were obtained from the Clerk of Courts, Adams County, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

10. Records obtained from the Orphans’ Court, Adams County, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

11. Twelfth Census of the United States (1900), Inhabitants of Berwick Borough, Adams County, Pennsylvania, E.D. No. 4, 47A.


14. Ibid., 312-313.


17. Personal correspondence, Douglas Owen Alwine, December 1, 2011.

32. Although this photo (and others of the same site) of an early brickmaking operation were in the possession of an Alwine family member, they were unlabeled, and we do not know whether or not they are of the original Alwine brickyard. The depiction in fig. 4, however, is certainly consistent with such a possibility and the circumstances suggest this is a plausible, if not definitive, interpretation.


35. Ibid., 911.


38. The Posey Iron Works is no longer in existence, but a descendant of the Posey brick machine, called the Lancaster AutoBrik® machine, is sold by Kercher Industries, headquartered in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. In 1983 the Kercher Machine Works purchased the assets of the Posey Company, and thereafter produced mixing equipment, brickmaking equipment, and aggregate drying equipment similar to that previously manufactured by Posey. See the brochure for the Lancaster AutoBrik® Machine Production System at the following URL: http://www.lancasterprd.com/client_images/catalog20029/pages/files/brick_machine_brochure.pdf


http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/ach/vol18/iss1/5


42. “Alwins Sue in Equity to Secure Stock,” *The Gettysburg Times*, August 1, 1959, 1 and 3.


45. See http://www.pennsburgmanor.org

46. Documented by the Library of Congress—see the following URL: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/related/?fi=name&q=Alwine%20Brick%20Company.

47. My research indicates that exterior bricks for four buildings built in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s came from the Alwine Brick Company—the College Union Building (CUM), the Fisher-Sieber Health Center, the McCreary Science Building, and Apple Hall dormitory. I acknowledge the assistance of Carolyn Sautter, Dave Swisher and Ruth Miller of Gettysburg College in establishing these facts.

